

Recovery Readiness: What If the Plan Stops Working?

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Why this matters

A missing resource or blocked planned access can leave a crew between normal work and an unfamiliar alternative. Prepare for that interruption before it happens. Recovery means regaining a verified, authorized arrangement; it does not mean finding a way to keep production moving at any cost.

Objective: Rehearse one plausible interruption and identify the safe response, decision owner and evidence needed for restart.

Key hazards or failure points

Unavailable backup; unclear hold condition; improvised alternatives; unfamiliar duties; lost restrictions during handoff; restarting because the disruption appears over.

Practical controls

- Choose one credible operational interruption for today's task. Identify the approved response and who keeps the work in a safe condition. Use actual procedures; this discussion cannot invent a shutdown or stabilization method.
- Name the decision owner, backup and resources needed to assess the changed situation. Identify what stays restricted while they respond. Alternatives require the appropriate review and authorization before use.
- Agree how status and restrictions reach affected crews and the next shift. Distinguish an ordinary work interruption from conditions requiring the emergency plan. Do not delay evacuation or emergency reporting to finish a recovery discussion.

Verify It in the Field

Use an announced tabletop scenario, such as the designated reviewer becoming unavailable. Ask the crew to identify the affected hold point and explain the prescribed next step. Do not disable equipment, withdraw real protection or stage a surprise failure.

Trace the planned contact and resource arrangement through approved normal channels. Confirm actual availability for the task and shift; record any gap. Do not call emergency services or send a false incident report as an exercise.

Have the responsible person state restart prerequisites and the required verifier. For actual work, record the governing criteria, safe check, actual result, checker and time. A successful tabletop is practice, not proof that physical controls work.

Stop and reassess

Hold affected work when the response is unclear, necessary support is absent or the proposed alternative exceeds authority or approved limits. Escalate, maintain the prescribed safe condition and rebrief after authorized changes. Restart only after required verification and release.

Ask the crew

1. What interruption could defeat today's arrangement?
2. Who keeps the work safe while decisions are made?
3. What evidence is needed before restart?

Use the task plan and required specialist decisions before exposure.

Sources: DOE-HDBK-1028-2009, Vol. 1, pp. 5-16-5-18; OSHA Recommended Practices.

Free next step: [JHA/JSA planning & field-verification worksheet](#)

Expanded guidance and separate forms: toddjeromejenkins.com/toolbox-talks/work-disruption-recovery-readiness

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