



If you'd like to train your team members to be better prepared for possible incidents or disruptions and, at the same time, test your incident response plans and capabilities, a tabletop exercise (TTX) can help your organization accomplish both goals.

A tabletop exercise is a facilitated, discussion-based event in which participants use a scripted scenario to address the actions they would take – based on current policies, procedures, and plans – in response to an incident or business disruption.

Tabletop exercises provide an excellent forum to examine roles and responsibilities, unearth interdependencies, and evaluate plans; allow you to analyze your organization's ability to coordinate, collaborate, and use information sharing; and test your response capabilities in reaction to a significant cyber incident or disruption that results in a physical or cyber threat.

Our Approach

Avalon approaches TTX engagements by:

- Facilitating a tabletop exercise in which discussion of a scripted scenario is performed in an open, no-fault environment.
- Designing an exercise to enable conceptual understanding and familiarize individuals with their roles and responsibilities
- Examining the capabilities of your organization to prepare for, protect from, and respond to the effects of incidents and disruptions.
- Encouraging participation of response team members from multiple departments, such as information technology, operations, legal, and communications.
- Guiding discussion through questions designed to address the exercise's objectives. Each scenario is presented to participants with injection points, which add details or modifications to the event to further stimulate discussion.
- Requiring stakeholders to make strategic decisions related to the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of your systems and data
- Identifying, through lessons learned, your strengths and weaknesses, as well as resolutions, so your team can be better prepared to respond to legitimate future events through a more mature program.

- Validating the accuracy of recovery procedures and any areas where the response plans need to be revised.

A summary report with key details of the participants, scenario, results, and recommendations based on lessons learned will be provided.

The benefits of using an experienced cybersecurity team, like Avalon, to lead your TTX include:

- Saving time and money by letting our team prepare and direct the exercise while you focus on your daily responsibilities.
- Learning from our industry expertise and experiences with other organizations.
- Receiving tailored scenarios that include the most relevant industry topics and incidents.
- Ensuring group participation and communication, all at an efficient pace.
- Achieving third-party validation of your plan efficacy and testing.
- Obtaining documented methodology, results, and recommendations based on lessons learned.

One of the best ways to be prepared for incidents and disruptions is to practice how your team will respond to a variety of scenarios, and demonstrate the capabilities of your organization's processes, personnel, and technology. This will avoid confusion, last minute scrambling, and delayed response or containment during an actual incident or breach.

Tabletop exercises improve your organization's ability to handle an incident more effectively in the future. You will also be able to demonstrate to leadership, auditors, insurers, and authorities what plans and policies are in place and practiced, helping to prevent incidents, breaches, and crises.

Aside from being an overall best practice for organizations, many laws, regulations, and standards that may apply to your organization require an incident response plan to be in place and tested regularly. We highly recommend performing incident response exercises once a year, at a minimum, and documenting the methodology, participants, topics, outcome, and lessons learned.

To learn more or to schedule a tabletop exercise, contact the experts at Avalon today.

QUESTIONS?

To learn more or to schedule a tabletop exercise, contact:

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