Risk Identification Workshop Guide for Public Power Utilities

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Introduction

Welcome to the risk identification workshop guide. This guide provides users with guidance on how to facilitate risk identification workshops tailored for public power utilities. This guide will provide recommendations on planning a risk identification workshop, facilitation tips, and workshop preparation materials.

Whether participants are seasoned professionals or new to risk management, this guide equips them with best practices and sample materials to plan effective and digestible risk identification workshops. Risk identification workshops are an indispensable part of an effective enterprise risk management program, serving as a powerful tool for engaging stakeholders in the risk management process and for building a more mature, transparent, risk-aware culture.

Planning the Workshop

Before the Workshop

Below is a checklist of things to consider prior to the workshop.

Before Workshop Checklist

☐ Identify workshop facilitators and planning team members
☐ Define workshop objectives
☐ Create a budget (could be accomplished at minimal to no cost if handled internally)
☐ Obtain leadership support for the workshop (obtain funding approval if requested)
☐ Identify workshop participants and ideal number of participants
☐ Schedule the workshop and send out all calendar invitations
☐ Design workshop
    o Workshop format
    o Activities (e.g., table activities, discussion questions, etc.)
    o Internal and/or external speakers
    o Assign facilitators
    o Facilitation approach and strategies
    o Assign notetakers
    o Develop a contingency plan
☐ Prepare logistics
    o Venue
    o Seating arrangements
    o Food/beverage supplies
    o Equipment, audio, visual, etc.
    o Printed materials
    o Other supplies (e.g., pen, markers, notepads, etc.)
☐ Develop pre-workshop materials
    o Risk identification forms and instructions
    o Additional reference materials
☐ Closer to workshop date
    o Practice workshop and timing
    o Send out reminders
    o Confirm logistics and speakers

During the Workshop

Below is a checklist of things to consider during the workshop.

During Workshop Checklist

☐ Logistics and Set-Up
    o Seating arrangements
    o Food/beverage set up
    o Audio/video and equipment check
    o Printed materials
    o Participation check-in
☐ Adhere to workshop schedule
    o Housekeeping information (e.g., bathroom, evacuation route)
    o Utilize Prepared prompt questions
    o Encourage stakeholder engagement
☐ Documentation and notetaking
    o Document and collect notes
    o Collect notes per activity
    o Take photos throughout the workshop

After the Workshop

Below is a checklist of things to consider after the workshop.

After Workshop Checklist
☐ Identify any follow-up needed (action items taken on during event) and assign as appropriate ☐ Send notes from workshop (within 72 hours) ☐ Send out participant feedback form (Consider offering this at the event (for a higher response rate) or both options)   o Collect data from participant feedback forms ☐ Brief senior leadership of workshop outcomes and next steps ☐ Start populating the risk register ☐ Follow up with workshop participants if necessary for additional data/information

Sample Risk Identification Questions

Below are some questions to ask the participants during the risk identification workshop (including all categories might affect the guest list, requiring the CFO and HR, or a follow-up discussion).

Risk Category	Sample Risk Identification Questions	Expected Answers
Utility Operations Risks	How might equipment malfunctions or maintenance delays affect service reliability?	Increased downtime, reduced customer satisfaction, potential revenue loss.
	What operational challenges could impact our ability to respond to power outages?	Insufficient response teams, communication breakdowns, inadequate resources.
	Are there risks associated with our supply chain and vendor reliability?	Supply shortages, delayed deliveries, increased costs.
	What are the potential risks related to the aging infrastructure and equipment?	Higher maintenance costs, increased failure rates, potential safety hazards.
	What risks are associated with integrating new technologies or systems into our operations?	Integration issues, system incompatibilities, increased training needs.
Financial Risks	What are the potential financial impacts of regulatory changes on our operations?	Compliance costs, fines, adjustments to business practices or pricing.
	How might unplanned expenses or cost overruns affect our financial health?	Strained budgets, need for additional funding, potential impact on investment plans.
	Are there risks related to revenue collection and billing inaccuracies?	Lost revenue, customer disputes, increased administrative costs.
Environmental Risks	What are the potential impacts of extreme weather events on our infrastructure?	Infrastructure damage, increased repair costs, service interruptions.
	Are there risks associated with environmental regulations and their impact on our operations?	Compliance costs, operational adjustments, potential fines.
	What are the potential risks from natural disasters, such as floods or wildfires, affecting our assets?	Asset damage, service interruptions, increased recovery costs.
Reputational Risks	How might service disruptions or outages affect our public image and customer trust?	Negative media coverage, customer complaints, decreased customer loyalty.
	What are the risks related to negative media coverage or public perception?	Damage to brand reputation, loss of public trust, potential decrease in customer base.
	How can we mitigate the impact of customer complaints and dissatisfaction?	Improved customer service, prompt issue resolution, transparent communication.
Human Resources Risks	What are the risks associated with staffing shortages or turnover?	Reduced operational capacity, increased hiring and training costs, potential loss of expertise.
	How might labor disputes or employee dissatisfaction affect operations?	Disruptions in operations, reduced productivity, potential strikes or legal issues.
	How could health and safety issues impact our employees and operations?	Increased absenteeism, higher healthcare costs, potential disruptions in operations.
Safety Risks	What are the risks associated with accidents or injuries at our facilities?	Increased insurance costs, legal liabilities, operational disruptions.
	How might lapses in safety protocols or procedures impact employee well-being and operations?	Increased accident rates, potential for serious injuries, compliance issues.
	How can we prevent and respond to safety incidents or emergencies effectively?	Emergency response plans, regular safety training, incident reporting procedures.

Virtual Risk Identification Workshop

Utilities can consider hosting the risk identification workshop virtually if schedules or resources do not permit an in-person workshop.

Virtual Risk Identification Workshop Considerations
Preparation
- Choose the Right Platform   - Use a reliable and secure video conferencing tool (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams).   - Ensure all participants have access and are familiar with the platform.   - Agenda and Materials   - Share the workshop agenda and materials in advance.   - Include background information, workshop objectives, and key questions.   - Technical Setup   - Conduct a technical check for audio, video, and screen-sharing capabilities.   - Provide troubleshooting tips and support contacts.   - Participant Engagement   - Limit workshop duration to 2-3 hours with breaks.   - Encourage the use of webcams to increase engagement and interaction.
During the Workshop
- Opening Session   - Welcome participants and review the workshop agenda and objectives.   - Set ground rules for participation, including muting microphones when not speaking.   - Facilitation Techniques   - Use a combination of presentation, open discussion, and interactive tools (e.g., polls, breakout rooms).   - Encourage active participation by calling on individuals and fostering inclusive dialogue.   - Interactive Tools   - Utilize virtual whiteboards (e.g., Miro, MURAL) for brainstorming and documenting risks.   - Use chat and polling features for quick input and feedback.   - Breakout Rooms   - Divide participants into smaller groups to discuss specific questions or departments.   - Assign a facilitator for each group to guide the discussion and take notes.   - Documentation   - Have a dedicated note-taker to document key points and identified risks.   - Record the session (with participant consent) for reference and follow-up.   - Time Management   - Stick to the agenda and allocate specific times for each discussion point.   - Use timers to keep track of time and ensure the workshop stays on schedule.
Follow-Up
- Choose the Right Platform   - Use a reliable and secure video conferencing tool (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams).   - Ensure all participants have access and are familiar with the platform.   - Agenda and Materials   - Share the workshop agenda and materials in advance.

Virtual Risk Identification Workshop Considerations

o Include background information, workshop objectives, and key questions.
• Technical Setup
   o Conduct a technical check for audio, video, and screen-sharing capabilities.
   o Provide troubleshooting tips and support contacts.
• Participant Engagement
   o Limit workshop duration to 2-3 hours with breaks.
   o Encourage the use of webcams to increase engagement and interaction.

Facilitation Tips

Facilitating a successful risk identification workshop requires skillful guidance and thoughtful planning. As the facilitator, consider the following tips to ensure a productive and engaging session.

Facilitation Checklist
☐ Create a Positive Atmosphere
o Set a welcoming tone at the beginning of the workshop.
o Encourage open communication and active participation.
o Foster an environment where participants feel comfortable sharing their insights.
☐ Clearly Define Objectives
o Start by articulating the purpose of the workshop.
o Ensure everyone understands the goals: What risks are we aiming to identify? Why is this important?
☐ Use Structured Techniques
o Employ brainstorming techniques (e.g., mind mapping, nominal group technique) to generate ideas.
o Encourage participants to think creatively and explore various risk scenarios.
☐ Ask Probing Questions (*refer to page 5 of this guide*)
☐ Active Listening
o Pay attention to participants' contributions.
o Clarify any ambiguous statements or ideas.
o Summarize key points to ensure understanding.
☐ Capture Risks Effectively
o Use visual aids (whiteboards, sticky notes, or digital tools) to record identified risks.
o Group similar risks together for clarity.
☐ Encourage Diverse Perspectives
o Involve participants from different roles and backgrounds.
o Seek input from both technical experts and non-experts.
☐ Manage Time Wisely
o Stick to the agenda. Allocate sufficient time for each agenda item.
o If discussions veer off track, gently guide participants back to the topic.
☐ Prioritize Risks Collaboratively
o Engage participants in ranking risks based on impact and likelihood.
o Use voting or consensus-building techniques.
☐ Document Everything
o Assign a notetaker to capture discussions, decisions, and action items.
o Ensure accurate documentation for future reference.
☐ Stay Neutral and Objective
o As the facilitator, avoid expressing personal opinions.
o Focus on the process and outcomes rather than advocating for specific risks.
☐ End on a Positive Note
o Summarize key takeaways.
o Express gratitude for participants' contributions.

Workshop Agenda

Date:
Location:

Timing	Activity	Purpose of the Activity	Preparation and Materials

Risk Identification Workshop – Facilitator's Guide

Event:	
Date:	
Time:	
Facilitators:	

Workshop Objectives
- *[Insert objectives here]*
- *[Insert objectives here]*
- *[Insert objectives here]*
- *[Insert objectives here]*

Timing	Activity	Purpose	Materials	Lead(s)
[1 hour]	**Set-up Instructions** • Move tables and chairs to sit 10 per table • Put writing materials on each table • Food/beverage set up • *[Insert set-up activities]* • *[Insert set-up activities]* • *[Insert set-up activities]*	Ensure workshop location is ready. *[insert purpose]*	• Tablecloths • Pens/markers/paper • Utensils/cups/napkins • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]*	• *[Insert individual names]*
[15 mins]	**Introduction** • Leader's Welcome • Workshop Team introduction • Workshop objectives • Agenda walk-through • Clarify participants' role • Housekeeping (bathroom, breaks, etc.)	Ground the group in what the workshop will entail. *[insert purpose]*	• Projector • Computer/laptop • Screen • Slides • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]*	• *[Insert individual names]*
[30 mins]	**ERM 101 & 1ˢᵗ Activity** • What is ERM • Overview of risks vs threats • Risk identification process • Introduction of utility's strategic goals • Overview of senior leadership's identified risks • *Provide time for participants to fill out the form and complete prior to returning from break* • *Focus on one section of the form at a time (e.g., risk title, proposed risk owner, risk description, root case of this risk, consequences, stakeholders impacted)* • *[Insert additional activities]* • *[Insert additional activities]*	Inform participants of the utility's strategic goals. Encourage participants to fill out risk identification forms and collaborate with others. *[insert purpose]*	• Extra printed risk identification form	• *[Insert individual names]*
[15 mins]	**Break**		• Food/beverage	• *[Insert individual names]*

Timing	Activity	Purpose	Materials	Lead(s)
[45 - 60 mins]	**1st Activity Review** • Interactive activity recommendations – whiteboarding, post it wall, table discussion, group discussion, etc. • Review identified risks • Analyze common categories from identified risks • Develop risk categories • Align with strategic goals • *[Insert additional activities]* • *[Insert additional activities]* • *[Insert additional activities]*	Review identified risks. Develop risk categories. Align risks with strategic goals. *[insert purpose]*	• Writing materials • Post-it notepads • Tape • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]*	• *[Insert individual names]*
[30 mins]	**Preliminary Risk Assessment & 2nd Activity** • What is risk assessment & importance • What is likelihood and impact • What are mitigation strategies • How risk assessment relates to risk identification • Introduce risk assessment criteria • *Provide time for participants to fill out rest of the form and complete prior to returning from break* • *Focus on last section of the form (e.g., risk rating, current mitigations in place, proposed mitigations)*	Introduce risk assessment concepts and risk assessment criteria. Guide participants on how to complete risk rating. *[insert purpose]*	• Slides • Writing materials • Printed materials • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]*	• *[Insert individual names]*
[15 mins]	**Break**		• Food/beverage	• *[Insert individual names]*
[45 - 60 mins]	**2nd Activity Review** • Interactive activity recommendations – whiteboarding, post it wall, table discussion, group discussion, etc. • Review preliminary risk ratings • Agree on preliminary risk ratings • Document current mitigations in place • Document proposed mitigations • *[Insert additional activities]* • *[Insert additional activities]* • *[Insert additional activities]*	Review and agree on risk ratings. Produce preliminary risk assessments. *[insert purpose]*	• Slides • Writing materials • Printed materials • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]* • *[Insert materials]*	• *[Insert individual names]*
[10 mins]	**Closing** • Summary of workshop & thanking participants • Next Steps	Close workshop and provide next steps.	• Slides	• *[Insert individual names]*

Risk Identification Form – Participant Pre-Workshop Material

Risk Title		Proposed Risk Owner	
Risk Description			

Alignment to Utility's Strategic Goal (If Applicable)		
Root Causes of this Risk Are there any specific causes/scenarios that you wish to highlight for this risk? If so, please provide your input below.	**Consequences** List consequences of this risk below.	**Stakeholders Impacted** List stakeholders within the utility impacted by this risk.

Preliminary Risk Assessment

Risk Rating	1	2	3	4	5	Current Controls/Mitigations in Place
Likelihood 1 – rare 2 – unlikely 3 – possible 4 – likely 5 – almost certain						
Impact 1 – insignificant 2 – minor 3 – moderate 4 – major 5 – catastrophic						

Risk Identification Form for Table Discussion/Group Discussion

Table Instructions
First answer questions on your own using the risk identification form. Then, in your table, discuss the following questions in about 20-35 minutes. Record your answers here for sharing with whole group.

What are risks that currently impact your department? List and describe the risk.	What are the root causes of these risks? List root causes below as they relate to the identified risks.	What are the consequences of the identified risks if not mitigated?	Which stakeholders are impact by these consequences?	Likelihood Rating *Work with the table to agree on the likelihood of this risk.*	Impact Rating *Work with the table to agree on the impact of this risk.*	Current Controls/Mitigations in Place