 **Postmortem Checklist**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Incident Data Collection** | **Root Cause Analysis** | **Lessons Learned & Action Item Design** |
| ❐ Describe high level impact in executive summary  ❐ Clarify impact:  ❐ Users affected  ❐ Regions affected  ❐ Customers affected  ❐ Classify severity categories  ❐ Complete the incident timeline fields for MTTx measures | ❐ Sufficiently detail all contributing root causes  ❐ Use 5-why's or other root cause technique to ensure sufficient depth  ❐ Identify the trigger  ❐ Decide which root cause categories are indicated | ❐ Explore what went well, what didn't work, and how we got lucky  ❐ Use lessons to derive action items  ❐ Make sure every action item has an associated item in the tracking system  ❐ Make sure you cover 2 most critical types: Mitigate & Prevent |

|  |
| --- |
| **Action Item Checklist** |
| ❐ Are the action items realistic and vetted with product owners?  ❐ Have you considered ways to improve both prevention *and* resolution time?  ❐ Have you considered similar or "rhyming" incidents and their corresponding action plans?  ❐ Have you considered how to automate ways to prevent humans from making mistakes?  ❐ Does your postmortem have at least one Critical Priority or High Priority action item? If not, is the risk of recurrence accepted by stakeholders?  ❐ Have you negotiated the execution of action items with the responsible group(s)? |

|  |
| --- |
| **Review/Approval/Socialization** |
| ❐ Has your postmortem been reviewed/approved per your team policy?  ❐ Has any blameful language been removed/modified?  ❐ Have you shared your postmortem with the original incident stakeholders?  ❐ Have you shared your postmortem with your team?  ❐ Is the postmortem available from your dashboards and tools?  ❐ Is your postmortem blameless and focused on system improvements? |

**Glossary:**

* Severity categories: Severity categories to assist in analyzing incidents
* 5-whys: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/5_Whys>
* Trigger: The point in the timeline at which the incident impacts production
* Rhyming incidents: incidents that are similar in nature but may not be exact repeats of each other
* Executive Summary: Used for high level reports, i.e. for those with shallow production knowledge.
* MTTx: Mean Time to x (x=(detection|escalation|mitigation|resolution)