

Title:

IT Emergencies: How To Plan For Them

Word Count:

354

Summary:

IT emergencies require advance planning. Don't overbook your staff so they are able to accommodate IT emergencies.

Keywords:

IT emergencies, IT-emergencies, IT emergency, IT-emergency

Article Body:

In a perfect world, there should be no IT emergencies, but it doesn't work that way. Handling IT emergencies are critical to maintaining your customer base and a great opportunity to acquire new business. You cannot afford to staff up to every peak, nor can you afford to fail to meet the needs of an existing client.

Don't Overschedule Your Staff

Generally, you want to schedule at about 75 percent capacity for technical people that don't have sales responsibilities or management responsibilities. This leaves about 25 percent flexibility for non-billable projects, IT emergencies, and new business targets.

There will be peaks that you cannot meet. Then it is all-hands-on-deck and the ability to do triage among customers as well as for a single customer becomes important. This is the time when standardizing pays off

If you're booking someone out in the field for a full day, schedule them eight to 11 in the morning and do the afternoon appointment from one to four. This leaves you some time.

Explain IT Emergencies To Your Clients

Also clients that you have long-term relationships with do understand when emergencies come up and will excuse a rescheduled maintenance appointment. After all, they want to know that you will respond to their IT emergencies too.

If you need to call them and tell them that you're stuck at a client emergency--

the server's down, lightening struck, or there was a fire or whatever-- most long-term clients are pretty understanding if you're running an hour or two late. It really boils down to keeping the communications open, staying in contact with people, making best use of your resources and just don't over schedule on the routine stuff.

The Bottom Line about IT Emergencies

The project work is a lot more predictable generally because you're going to know the requirements a couple of weeks to a couple months ahead of time. Be sure to build some slack time into the schedule to accommodate IT emergencies.

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