

TECHNOLOGY

Phase III: Preparing for Change



Activity 15: Catastrophizing: Tech Edition

Goals

1. Understand how the program's current technical staff, stack, and roadmap work with unexpected issues (catastrophes)
2. Help programs identify how resilient their staff, stack, and long-range technical strategy are

Prerequisites

None

Who Should Participate?

Program leadership (strategic thinkers), Program management (tactical), Program staff (operational experience)

Length

60 minutes

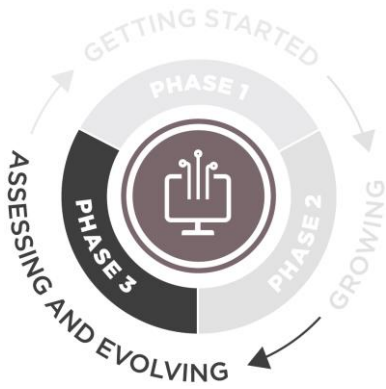
Activity Instructions

1. Brainstorm a list of technical "catastrophes" that would have a significant impact on your program's ability to fulfill its mission. The examples or suggestions can be outlandish - the idea is to think of catastrophic events and how they would be handled.
 - a. Defer judgment - make it clear that stakeholders can say whatever they like.
 - b. Encourage wild ideas - these can lead to creative leaps!
 - c. Build on the ideas of others - encourage stakeholders to "and" each other's ideas.
 - d. Set objectives for the number of ideas to be listed and the time to be spent, e.g. "Let's spend 10 minutes coming up with a list of 30 new ideas."

If no immediate suggestions are given, the activity facilitator can seed the discussion with examples such as:

- What if your technical lead won the lottery and moved to Tahiti?
- What if a key element of your technology stack was discontinued?
- What if a service provider forked the code and became a competitor?

2. Once there is a list of several catastrophes, have participants work together to plot the catastrophes on a risk map with axes of Likelihood and Impact (example on page 2). Once complete, move to Tech Activity: Catastrophizing - Tech Edition Part 2.



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