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# Medical Practice Planning Priorities

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Creating Plans for Continuity of Care

Bob Rogers 2006

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*“No medical practice should be without  
a disaster plan.”*

- Dr. Neil Baum, Urologist  
New Orleans, December 2005

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# Seminar Syllabus Learning Objectives

1. Gain an appreciation of the **need for continuity planning** for practices and businesses of all sizes.
2. Learn the **key terms** used to discuss archiving, continuity, backup, and disaster recovery.
3. Review **common issues and problems** that should be considered in continuity planning.
4. Understand the basic actions required to **move from paper to digital records**.
5. Learn the basic steps taken in the **development of a continuity plan**.
6. Make a **self-assessment** of your practice.
7. Determine actions you need to take to **secure your practice**.

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# Seminar Syllabus Topical Outline

- Recent attention given to “continuity”
- Challenges to continuity
- FAQs and a few definitions...
- Three case studies
- Recommendations for practice continuity planning
- Creating digital records (a suggested method)
- Self-assessment tools
- Action plan
- Seminar quiz
- Summary

# Recent attention given to “continuity”

## Events causing reconsideration of approaches to business/practice continuity

Year	Event	Year	Event
1977	Foreign Corrupt Practice Act of 1977	1996	AOL Server Overload
1979	Three Mile Island Nuclear Accident	1996	HIPAA Regulation
1980	Savings & Loan Failure	1999	Victoria Secret Server Overload
1982	Tylenol – Cyanide Laced Pills	2001	Enron Bankruptcy
1987	First commercial computer virus	2001	WTC/Pentagon Terrorist Bombing
1988	Illinois Bell, Hinsdale Fire	2002	Worldcom Bankruptcy
1989	Exxon Valdez Oil Spill	2002	Sarbanes-Oxley Act
1990	Drexel Burnham Lambert Bankruptcy	2003	SARS
1992	Great Chicago Flood, Chicago River	2003	Northeast Power Blackout
1993	WTC Bombing	2004	Four Hurricanes Within 6 Weeks in Same Region
1994	Northridge Earthquake	2004	Southern Asia Tsunami
1995	Oklahoma Bombing	2005	Train Derailment with Chlorine Gas Leak Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

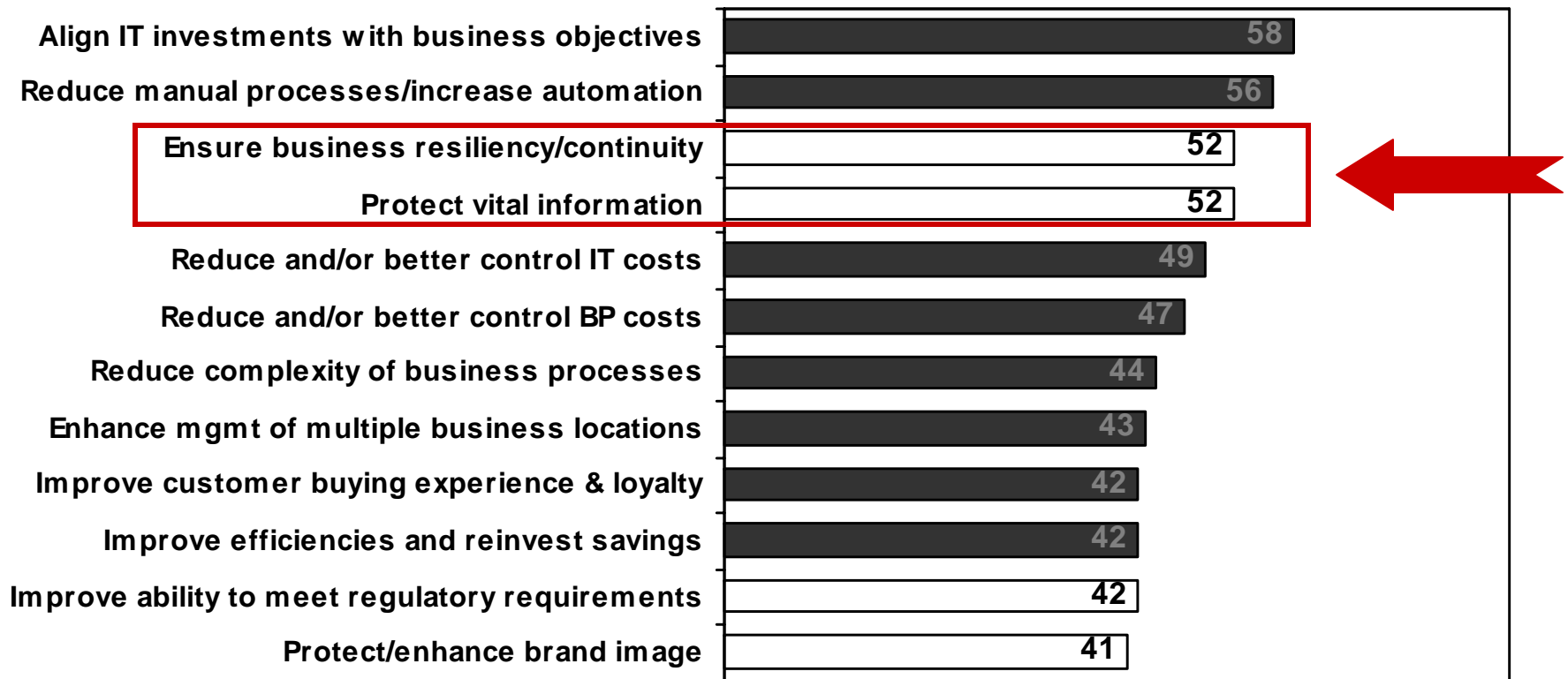
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## Recent attention given to “continuity”

- *Two out of five enterprises that experience a disaster will go out of business within five years.* - Aftermath: Disaster Recovery, Gardner Group, US, September 2001
- *80% of businesses affected by a major incident either never re-open or close within 18 months.* – AXA Insurance, UK, September 2004

# Recent attention given to “continuity”

## Top 12 business priorities (of 23 tested) in US companies



Percent Rating a High Priority (4 or 5)

Source: IBM IT Services Wants & Needs Study, Jan 2005

# Challenges and perils to continuity

A/C Failure	Evacuation	Microwave Fade	Static Electricity
Acid Leak	Explosion	Network Failure	Strike Action
Asbestos	Fire	PCB Contamination	Swimming Pool Leak
Bomb Threat	Flood	Plane Crash	S/W Error
Bomb Blast	Fraud	Power Grid Outage	S/W Ransom
Brown Out	Frozen Pipes	Power Outage	Terrorism
Burst Pipe	Hacker	Power Spike	Theft
Cable Cut	Hail Storm	Power Surge	Toilet Overflow
Chemical Spill	Halon Discharge	Programmer Error	Tornado
CO Fire	Human Error	Raw Sewage	Train Derailment
Coffee Machine	Humidity	Relocation Delay	Transformer Fire
Condensation	Hurricane	Rodents	UPS Failure
Construction	HVAC Failure	Roof Cave In	Vandalism
Coolant Leak	H/W Error	Sabotage	Vehicle Crash
Cooling Tower Leak	Ice Storm	Shotgun Blast	Virus
Corrupted Data	Insects	Shredded Data	Water (Various)
Diesel Generator	Lightning	Sick building	Wind Storm
Earthquake	Logic Bomb	Smoke Damage	Volcano
Electrical Short	Lost Data	Snow Storm	
Epidemic	Low Voltage	Sprinkler Discharge	

Source: Contingency Planning Research, Inc. 2003

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# FAQs

- *What is a practice continuity plan?*
- *How does practice continuity planning differ from a disaster recovery plan?*
- *Why should small practices care about continuity planning?*
- *Doesn't it cost a lot of money to implement continuity planning?*

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# A few definitions...

- Archive
- Backup
- Practice Continuity Management
- Practice Continuity Plan
- Practice (Business) Interruption Insurance
- Data Security
- Disaster Recovery

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# A few definitions...

- Archive
  - primary version of a piece of inactive data
- Backup
  - copies of active production data
- Practice Continuity Management
  - ...anticipating incidents which will affect mission-critical functions/processes and ensuring response in a planned and rehearsed manner
- Practice Continuity Plan
  - sets out clear roles and responsibilities to address all requirements essential to keeping the practice running and disruption to patients and employees to a minimum

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# A few definitions...

- Practice (Business) Interruption Insurance
  - protects a lost earnings stream; earnings defined as revenues minus expenses (PND, 2002)
- Data Security (HIPAA)
  - security regulations require the integrity and availability of ePHI; including backup, disaster recovery and emergency operations
- Disaster Recovery
  - traditionally focused on IT recovery of data and operations

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# Tools

- Vendor Resiliency Business Continuity Planning Questionnaire
  - <http://www.drj.com/eab/q&a/bcpvendorquestions.doc>
- Sample Disaster Recovery Plans
  - <http://www.macm.net/pdf/rp.pdf>
  - <http://www.uark.edu/staff/drpf/>
- Risk Analysis
  - [http://www.windowsecurity.com/articles/Risk\\_Assessment\\_and\\_Threat\\_Identification.html](http://www.windowsecurity.com/articles/Risk_Assessment_and_Threat_Identification.html)
- Good Practice Guide to BCM
  - 2005 Business Continuity Institute, Ltd.
  - <http://www.continuitycentral.com/>

# Case study one of three

- Where:
  - Bay St. Louis, MS
- When:
  - August 2005
- What they do:
  - Pediatrics practice
- Incident/peril:
  - Hurricane Katrina
- Problem:
  - Bldg, records, computers destroyed; patients & staff scattered
- Case Source:
  - ComputerWorld, Jan 06
- Key actions:
  - When danger was imminent, saved contents of EMR system on tablet PC
  - Evacuated family
  - Evacuated with practice phone directory
  - Reconnected with patients and staff from remote location
  - Re-established broadband connection thru a partner
  - Re-established practice temporarily in trailers

# Case study two of three

- Where:
  - Manchester, UK
- When:
  - October 2003
- What they do:
  - Market research
- Incident/peril:
  - Fire in bldg next door
- Problem:
  - Denied access to premises
- Case Source:
  - AXA Insurance, September 2004
- Issues:
  - Denied access =
    - No phones
    - No databases/computers
    - No key phone directory
    - Inability to do research
    - Inability to complete projects due same day
    - Inability to notify clients
  - Failed to meet deadline for important customer

# Case study three of three

- Where:
  - East coast, US
- When:
  - 2003
- What they do:
  - Family practice
- Incident/peril:
  - Broken water pipe
- Problem:
  - Overnight, water leaked on computers and flooded admin office
- Case Source:
  - Medical Economics
- Key actions:
  - EMR databases maintained by application service provider (ASP)
  - Admin files backed up at close of each day
  - No data lost; same day recovery



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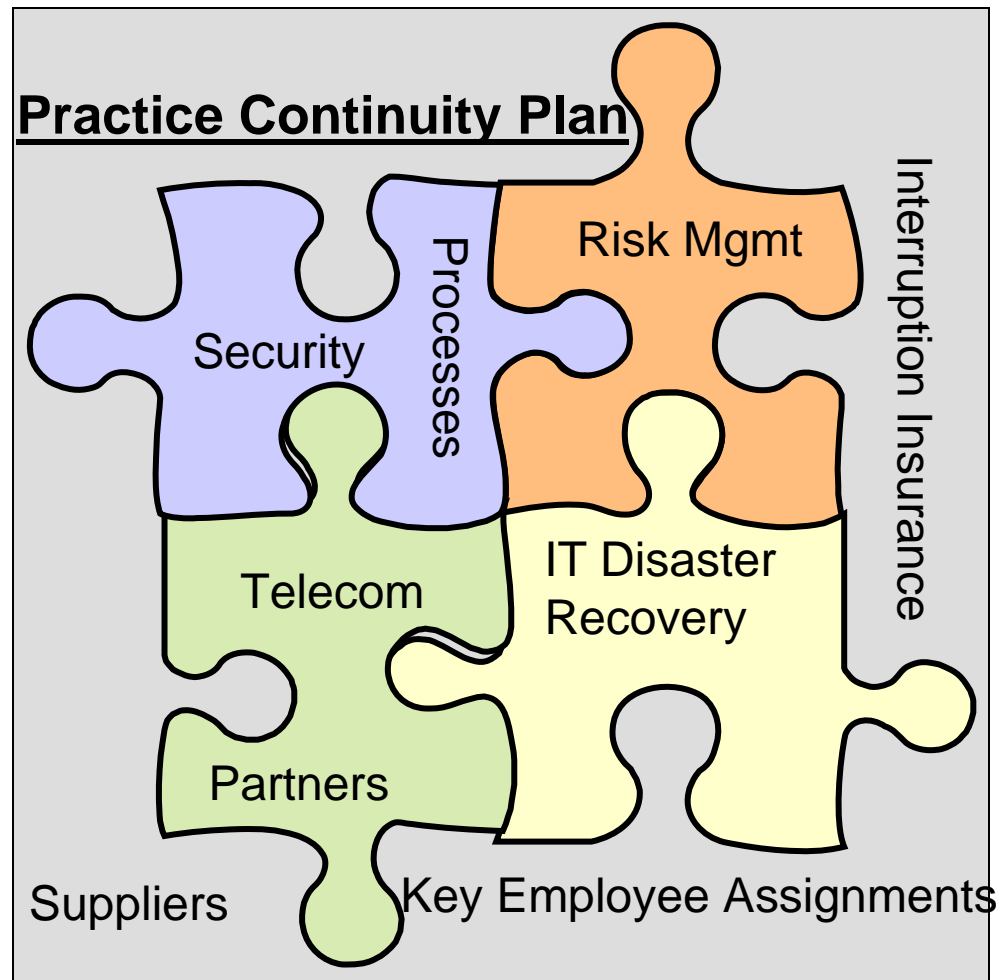
# Recommendations for practice continuity planning

- Create a **continuity plan** that fits
  - Solo physician/dental practice
  - 100+ physician/dental practice
- Maintain all records in **digital** form
  - Patient records (demographic, insurance, clinical, histories, etc.)
  - Practice directory (frequently called vendors, email, voicemail, phone numbers, URL bookmarks, etc.)
  - Forms, templates, photographs, continuity plan, backup plan, recovery plan, contracts, etc.

# Why bother with continuity planning?

- Putting in place a [practice continuity plan](#) has helped others to:
  - Avoid financial losses
  - Meet legal requirements
  - Avoid loss of market share
  - Protect the safety of assets, including employees
  - Enhance their reputation.

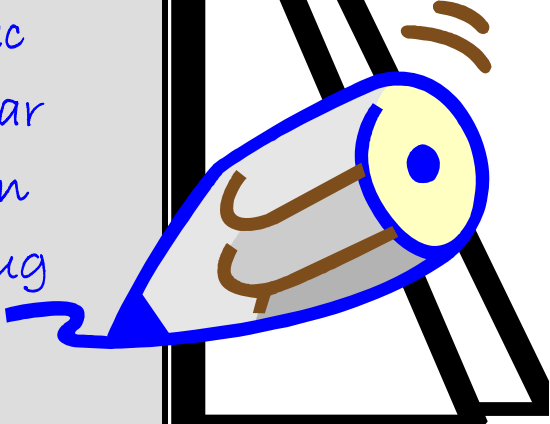
# What does the plan include?



# What does the plan include?

Sample action item from a draft plan

<u>Action</u>	<u>Review Dates</u>	<u>Acquisition Date</u>	<u>Owner</u>	<u>Funded</u>	<u>Tests Rehearsals</u>
Create plan and acquire services to forward selected practice phone numbers.	15 Oct 10 Nov	15 Nov	Mary Jones	\$557.	15 Dec 15 Mar 15 Jun 15 Aug

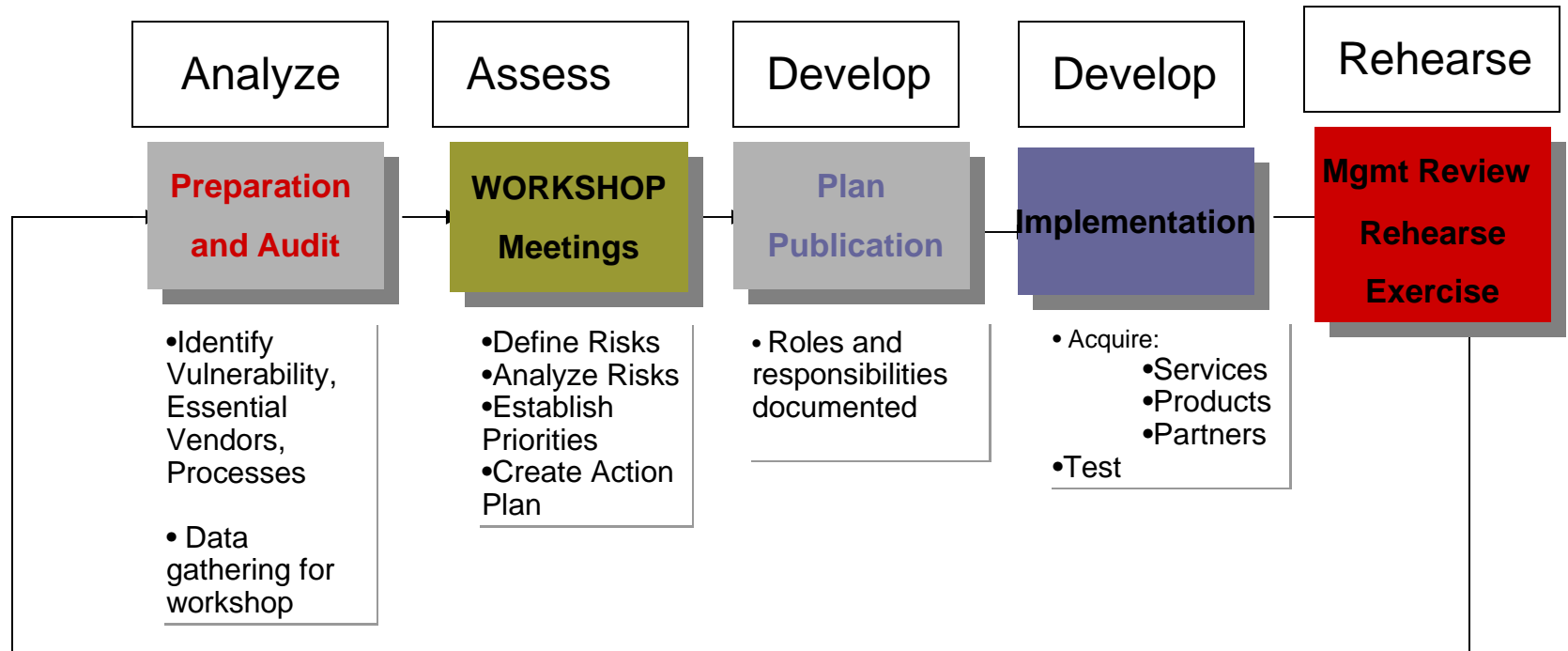


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# More Recommendations...

- Overview of Continuity Planning
  - Practice continuity management life-cycle
  - Major planning steps
  - Your management review
  - A logical planning method

# Overview of Continuity Planning (Practice continuity management life-cycle)

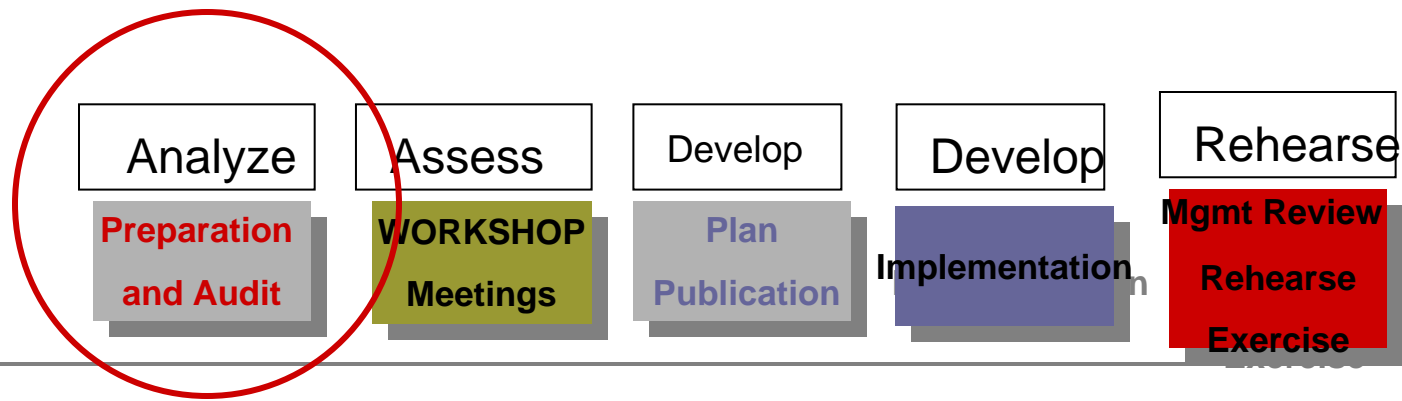


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# Practice continuity management life-cycle

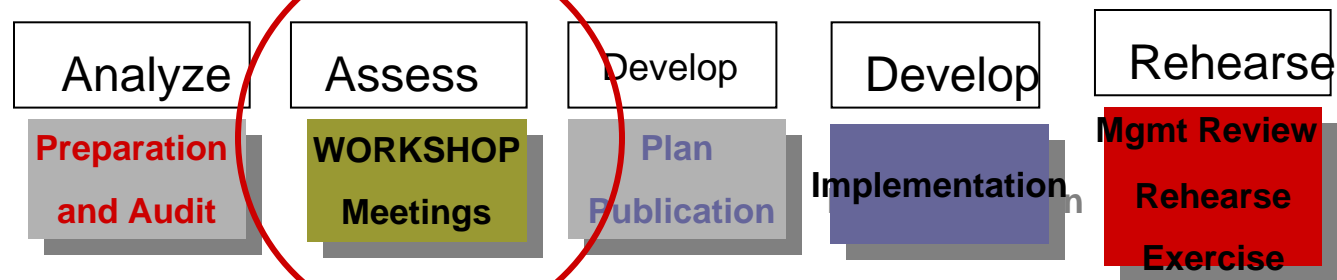
- **ANALYZE** your practice
  - Exactly where is your practice vulnerable?
  - Identify important processes
  - Which processes can you not do without?
  - Which vendors/suppliers are most essential?



# Practice continuity management life-cycle

## ■ ASSESS the risks

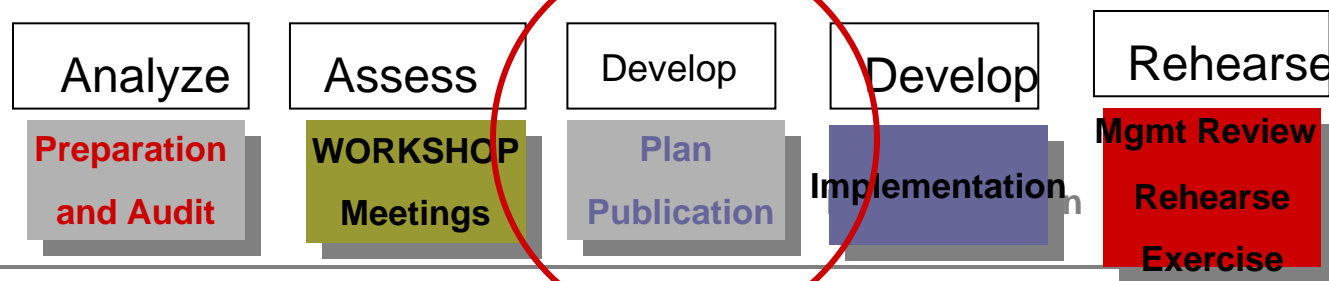
- How likely is the risk to happen?
- How much could you afford to lose if you could not do business for days, weeks or months?
- How would patients and potential patients react if your practice received adverse publicity because you were unprepared for an incident?



# Practice continuity management life-cycle

## ■ DEVELOP your strategy

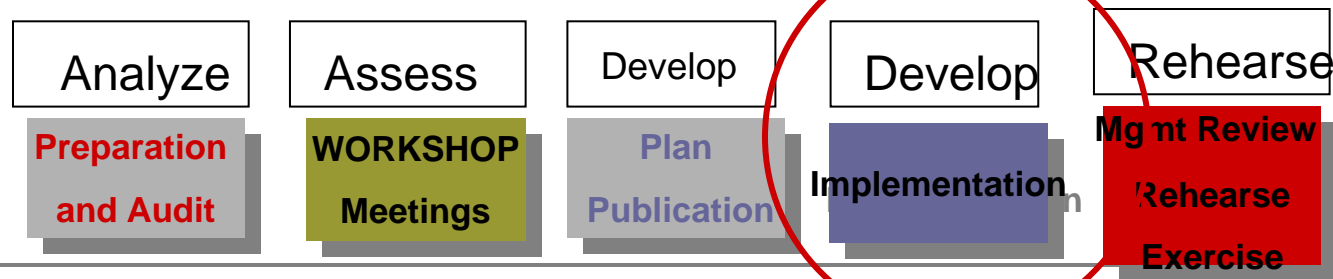
- Accept the risks – change nothing.
- Accept the risks, but make a mutual arrangement with another business or a business continuity partner to ensure that you have help after an incident.
- Attempt to reduce the risks.
- Attempt to reduce the risks and make arrangements for help after an incident.
- Reduce risks to point where you should not need outside help.



# Practice continuity management life-cycle

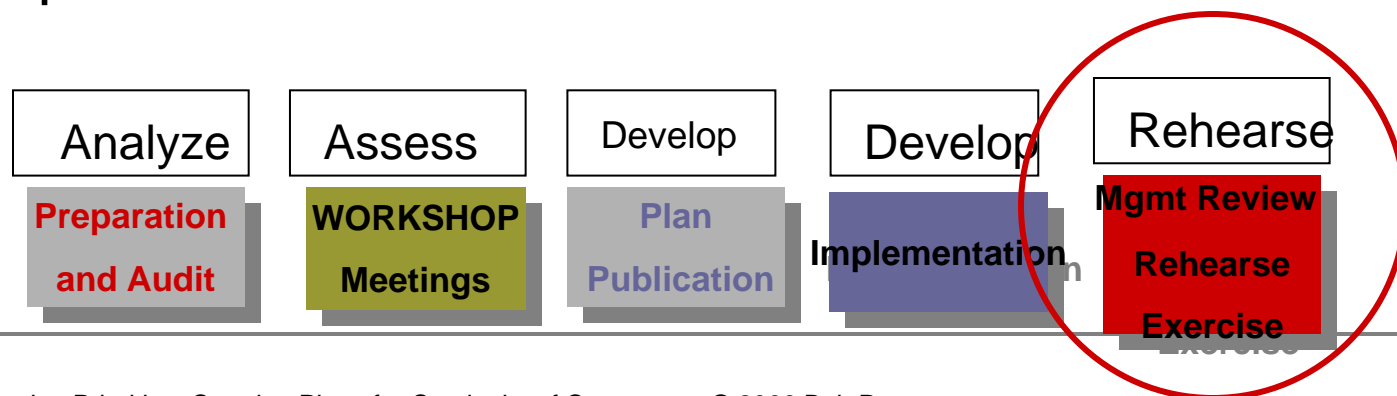
## ■ DEVELOP your plan

- Make it clear who needs to do what, and who takes responsibility for what. Assign backups.
- Use checklists that readers can follow easily.
- Include clear, direct instructions for the crucial first hour after an incident.
- Include a list of things that do not need to be thought about until after the first hour.



# Practice continuity management life-cycle

- **REHEARSE** your plan
  - A continuity plan is a living document
  - Weaknesses are discovered when you put it into action
  - Rehearsal helps you confirm your plan
  - Good way to train staff that have practice continuity responsibilities



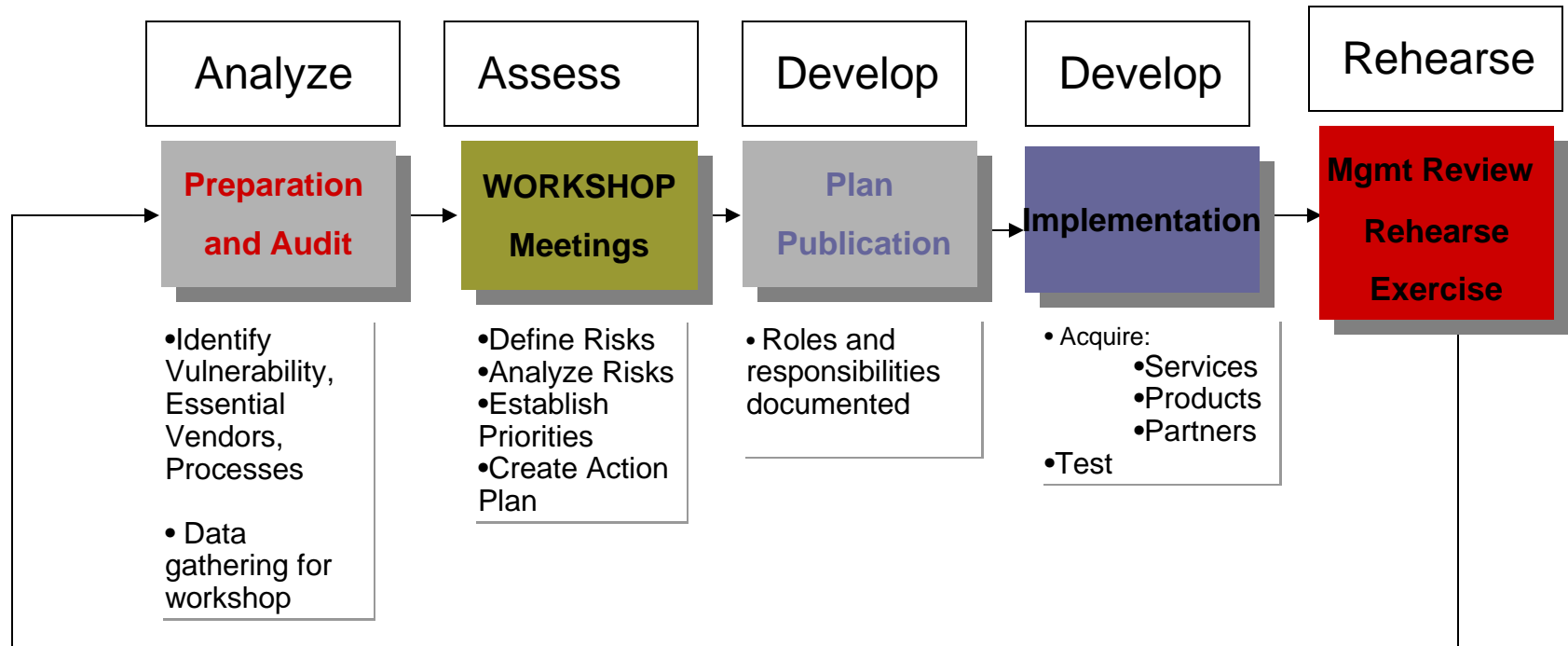
# About Reviews and Rehearsals...

- Practice Continuity Team:
  - Defines content
  - Sets Schedule for each review or rehearsal
  - Checks the full plan with the minimum of cost and disruption
  - Finds ways to rehearse:
    - paper-based exercises
    - telephone cascading
    - full rehearsal



# Continuous Loop

## (Practice continuity management life-cycle)



**Continuous updating required for employee, technology, and partner changes.**

Source: World Alliances, Inc.  
 Source: Business Continuity Institute, Ltd.

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# A Method for Capturing Your Results

- Analyze **objectives** for survival
- Assess **threats and obstacles**
- Create **strategies** to deal with risks
- Document **actions** in continuity plan

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# A Method for Capturing Your Results

- Objectives
  - Set **objectives** until each Goal will be realized
    - Measurable
- Obstacles
- Strategies
- Actions

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# A Method for Capturing Your Results

- Objectives
  - Set **objectives** until each Goal will be realized
    - Measurable
- Obstacles
  - Define until possibilities are exhausted
- Strategies
- Actions

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# A Method for Capturing Your Results

- Objectives
  - Set **objectives** until survival will be realized
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- Obstacles
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- Strategies
  - Devise until each **obstacle** is overcome
- Actions

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# A Method for Capturing Your Results

- Objectives
  - Set **objectives** until survival will be realized
    - Measurable
- Obstacles
  - Define until possibilities are exhausted
- Strategies
  - Devise until each **obstacle** is overcome
- Actions
  - Create until each **strategy** is implemented
    - **Begins with verb, assigned: funds, owner, due date**

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# A Method for Capturing Your Results

## Brer Rabbit Example

### ■ Objectives

- I. Keep from gittin' snatched.
- II. Avoid traps...
- III. Collect veggies from Farmer Brown...

### ■ Obstacles

# A Method for Capturing Your Results

## Brer Rabbit Example

### ■ Objectives

- I. Keep from gittin' snatched.
- II. Avoid traps...
- III. Collect veggies from Farmer Brown...

### ■ Obstacles

- I.1. Brer Fox
- I.2. Brer Bear
- I.3. *more...*

# A Method for Capturing Your Results

## Brer Rabbit Example

### ■ Strategies

- I. 1. (A) Ol' briar patch trick.
- I. 1. B. Beg.
- I. 1. C. Play dead.
- I. 2. A. Pure guile.
- I. 2. B. Run (hop) like crazy.

### ■ Actions

- I. 1. (A) a. Chart "BPs," locations, and distances.
- I. 1. (A) b. Laminate; carry in wallet.

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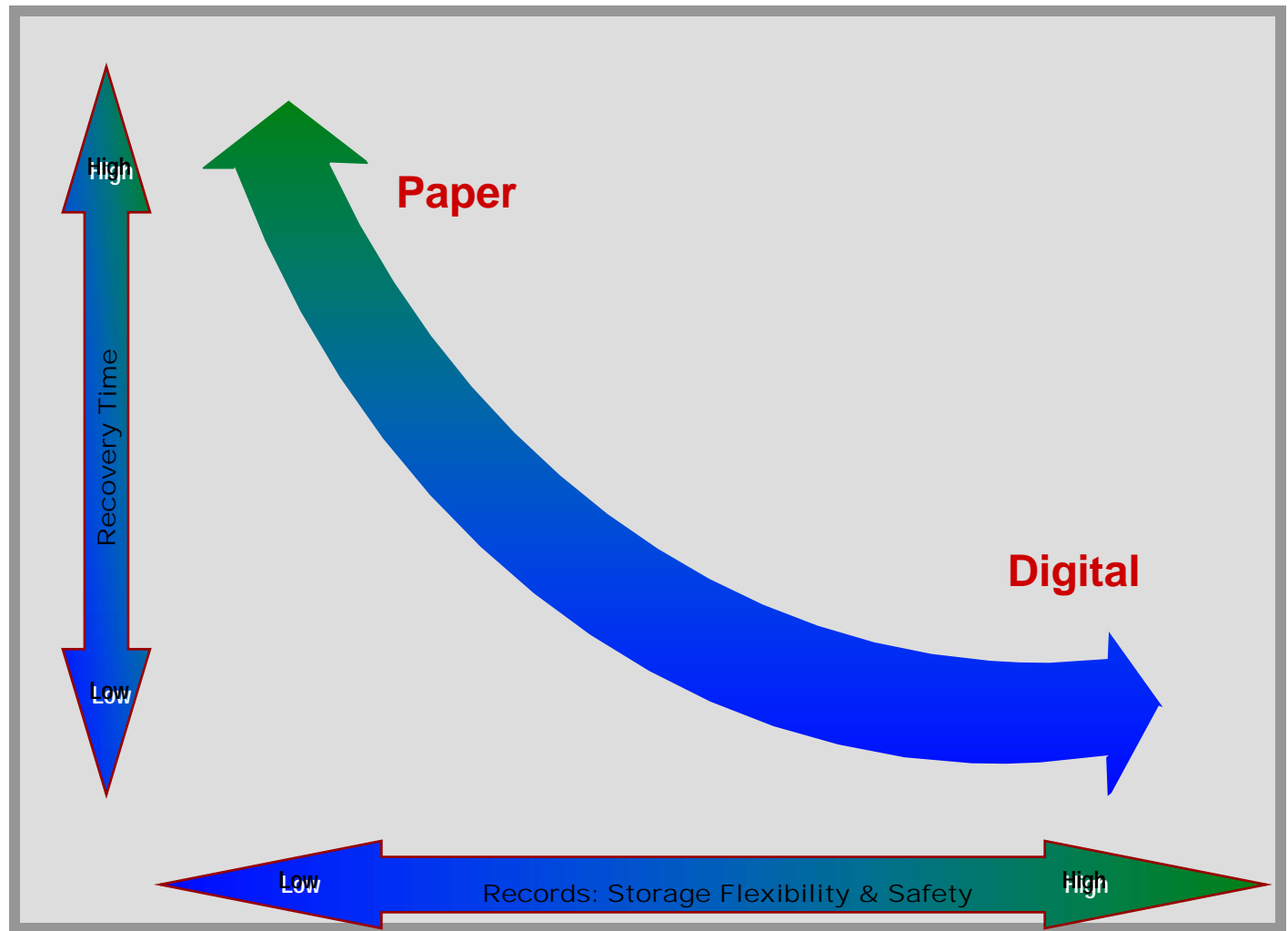
# Digital records

- Maintain **all** records in **digital** form
  - Patient records (demographic, insurance, clinical, histories, etc.)
  - Practice directory (frequently called vendors, email, voicemail, phone numbers, URL bookmarks, etc.)
  - Forms, templates, photographs, continuity plan, backup plan, recovery plan, contracts, etc.
- **Digital** means versatile
  - Cheap storage, cheap backup, cheap archive
  - Access possible **anytime, anywhere**

# Digital Records

## Advantages:

- Store thousands of patient records on a laptop computer
- Create copies in seconds
- Transmit copies
- Remote access
  - Anytime
  - Anywhere



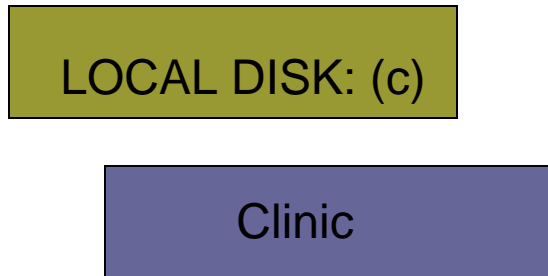
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# Creating digital records: “EMR-*lite*”

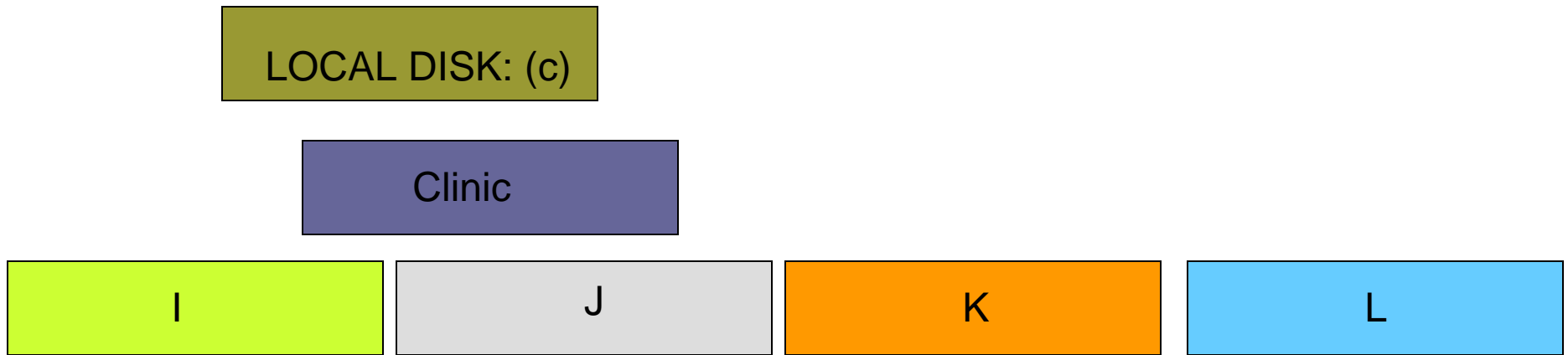
LOCAL DISK: (c)

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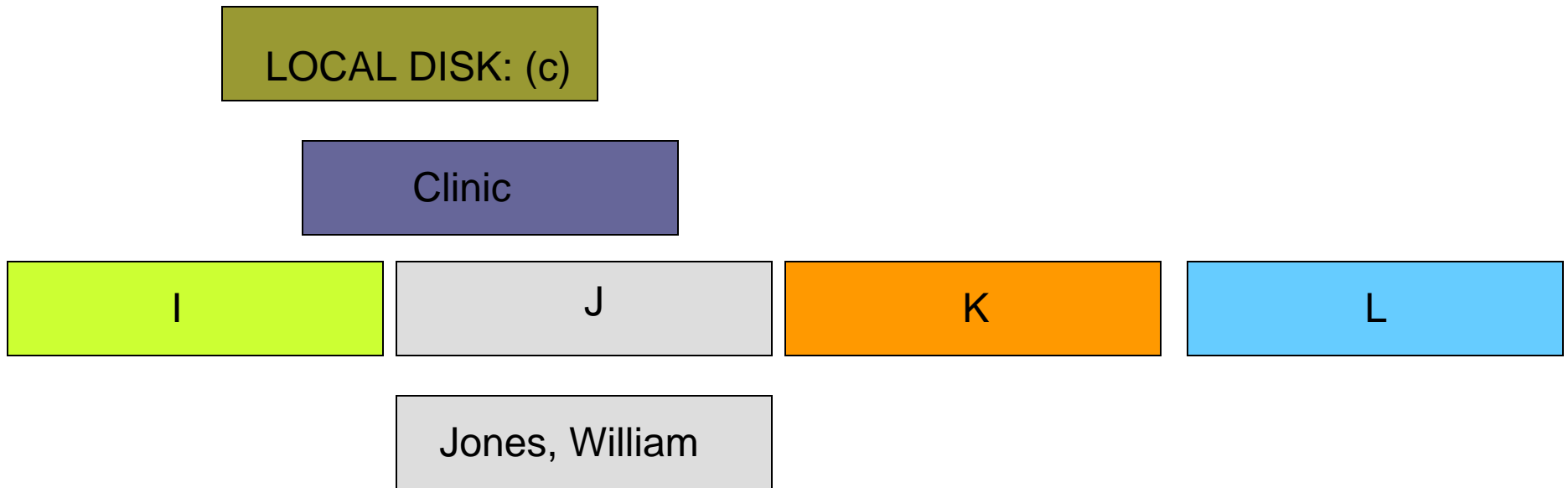
# Creating digital records: “EMR-*lite*”



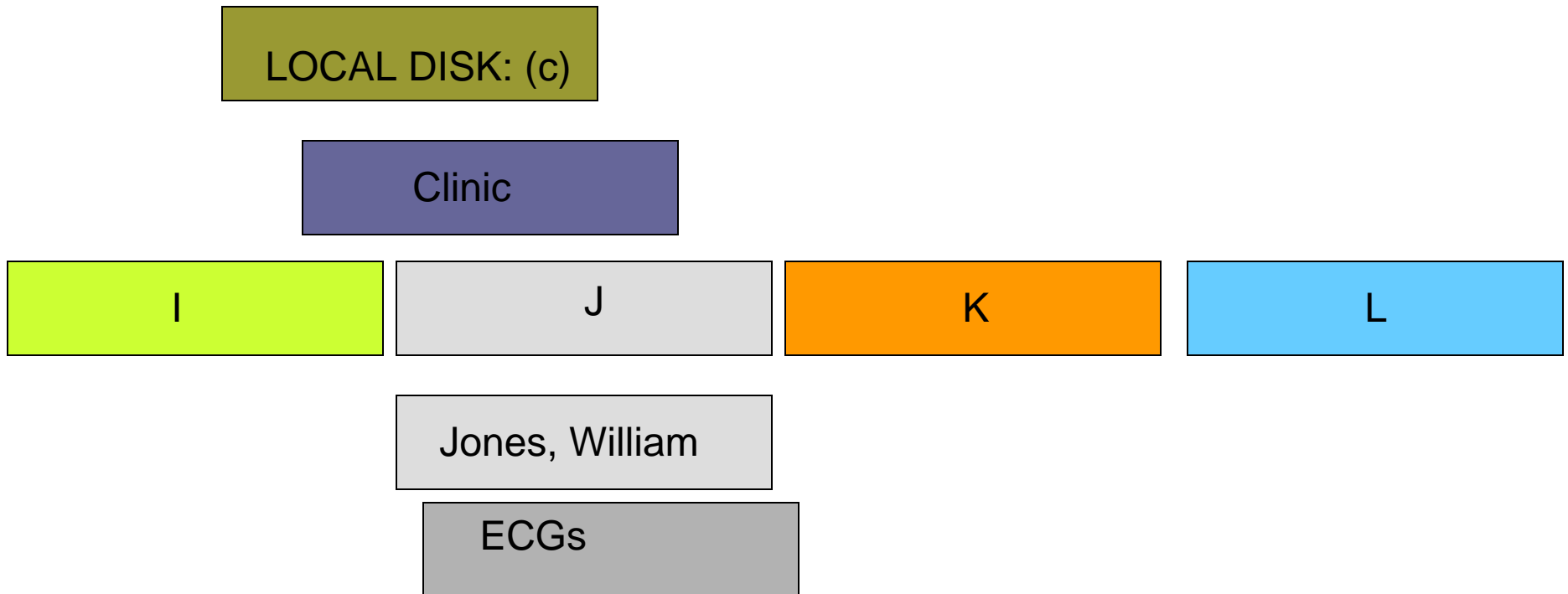
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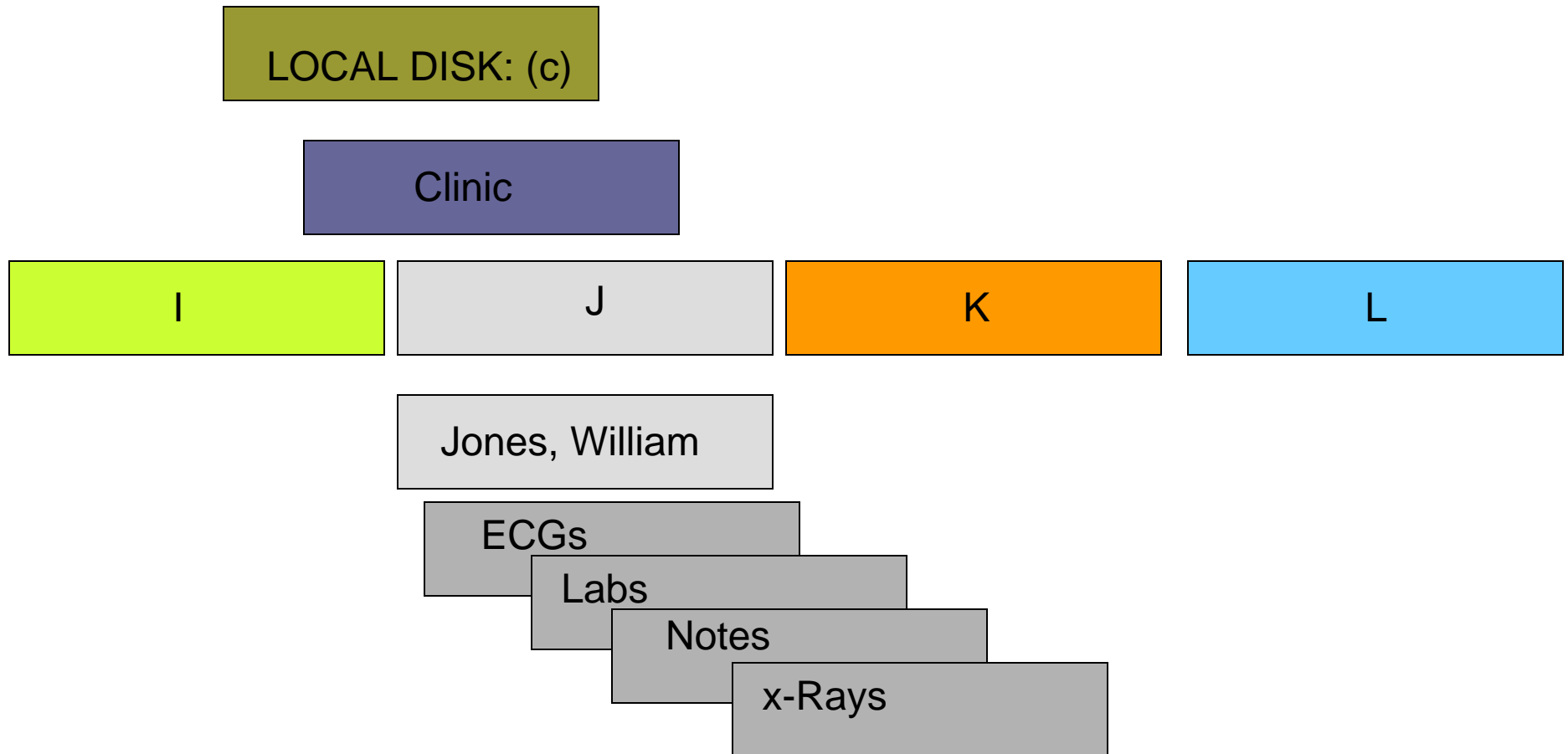
# Creating digital records: “EMR-*lite*”



# Creating digital records: “EMR-*lite*”



# Creating digital records: “EMR-*lite*”



# Creating digital records: “EMR-*lite*”

## ■ Advantages:

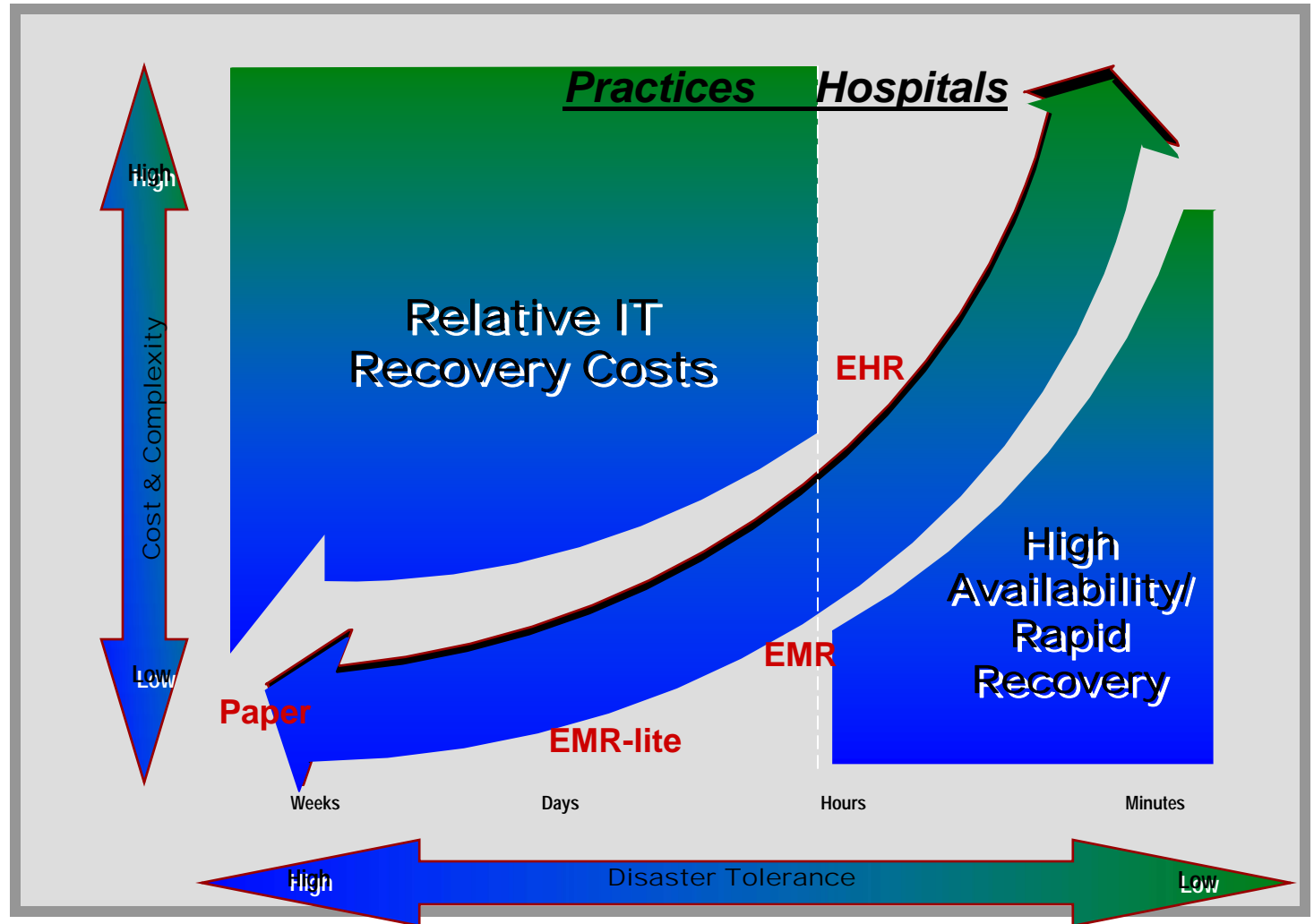
- Uses off the shelf software
  - Microsoft Word ®
  - Adobe Acrobat ®
  - Windows Explorer ™
  - IBM Lotus Approach ®
- Low, one-time cost (<\$800)
- “Household name” brands
- Self-paced implementation
- Works with transcription and/or local data entry
- Approach® DB supports prescription function with query

## ■ Disadvantages:

- Limited database function
- Limited query facility
- No Multi-user access to same record
- No integration with practice management system
- No coding function

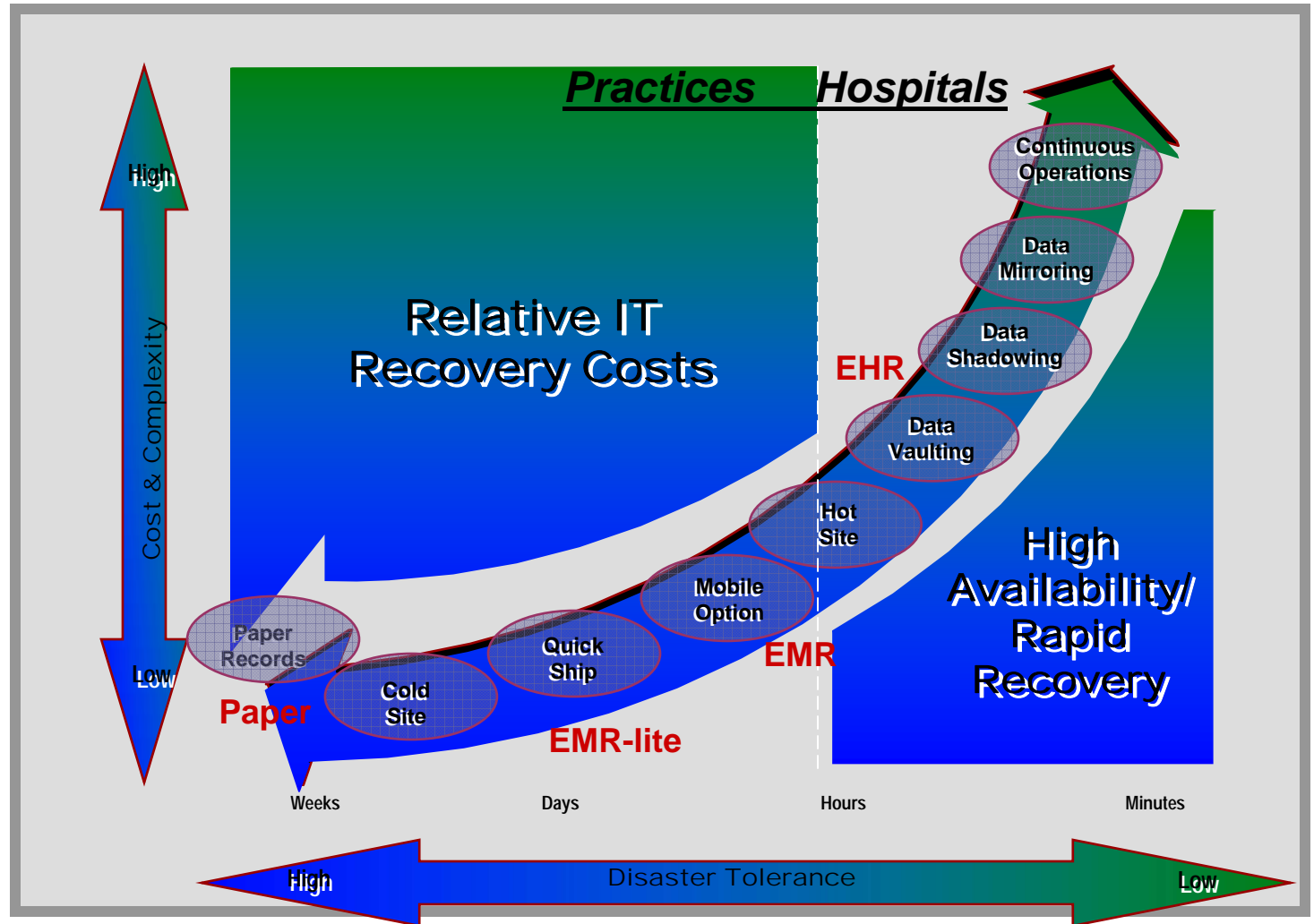
# Which infrastructure strategy is best for your practice?

Recovery strategies...

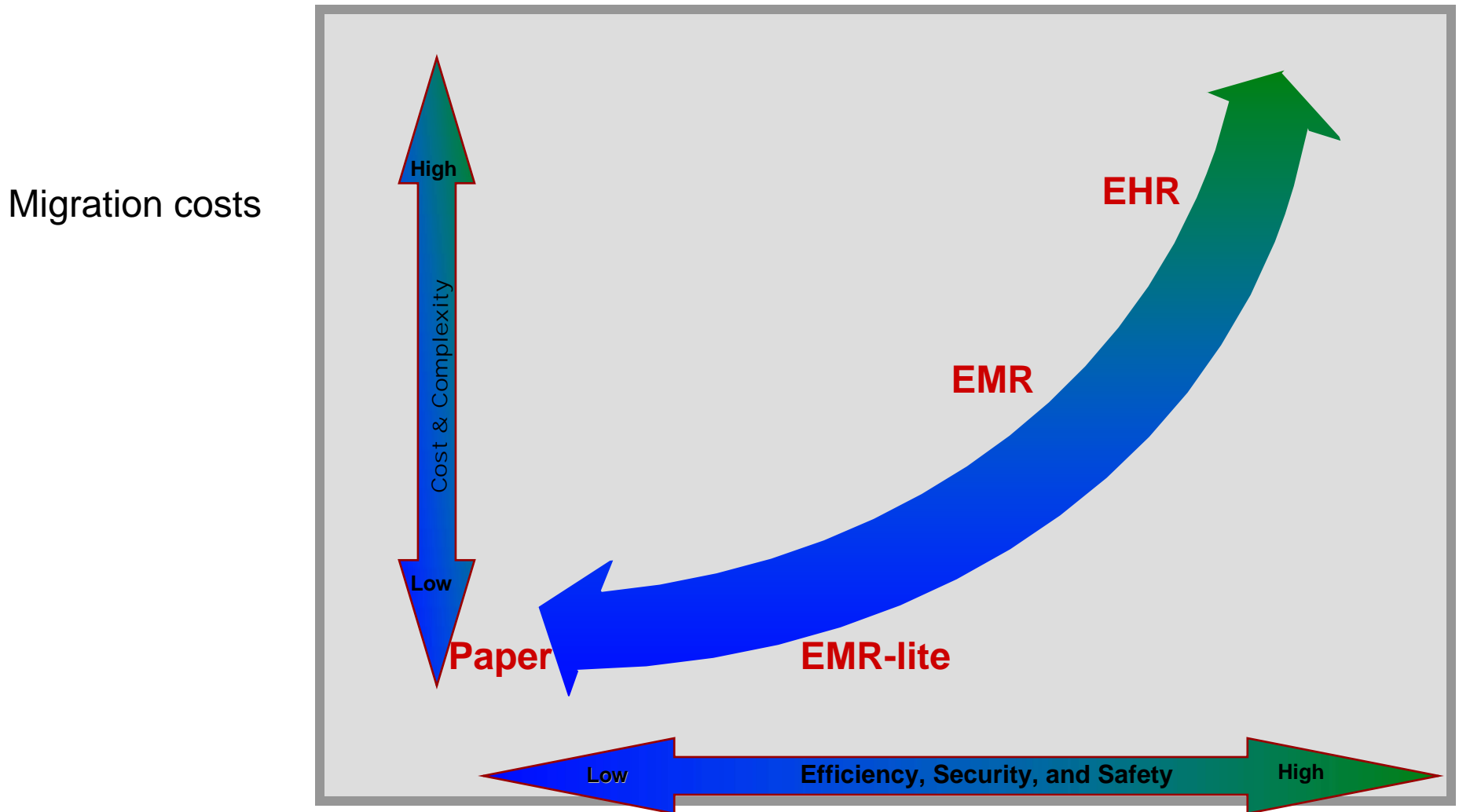


# Which infrastructure strategy is best for your practice?

Recovery strategies selected depend on your needs...

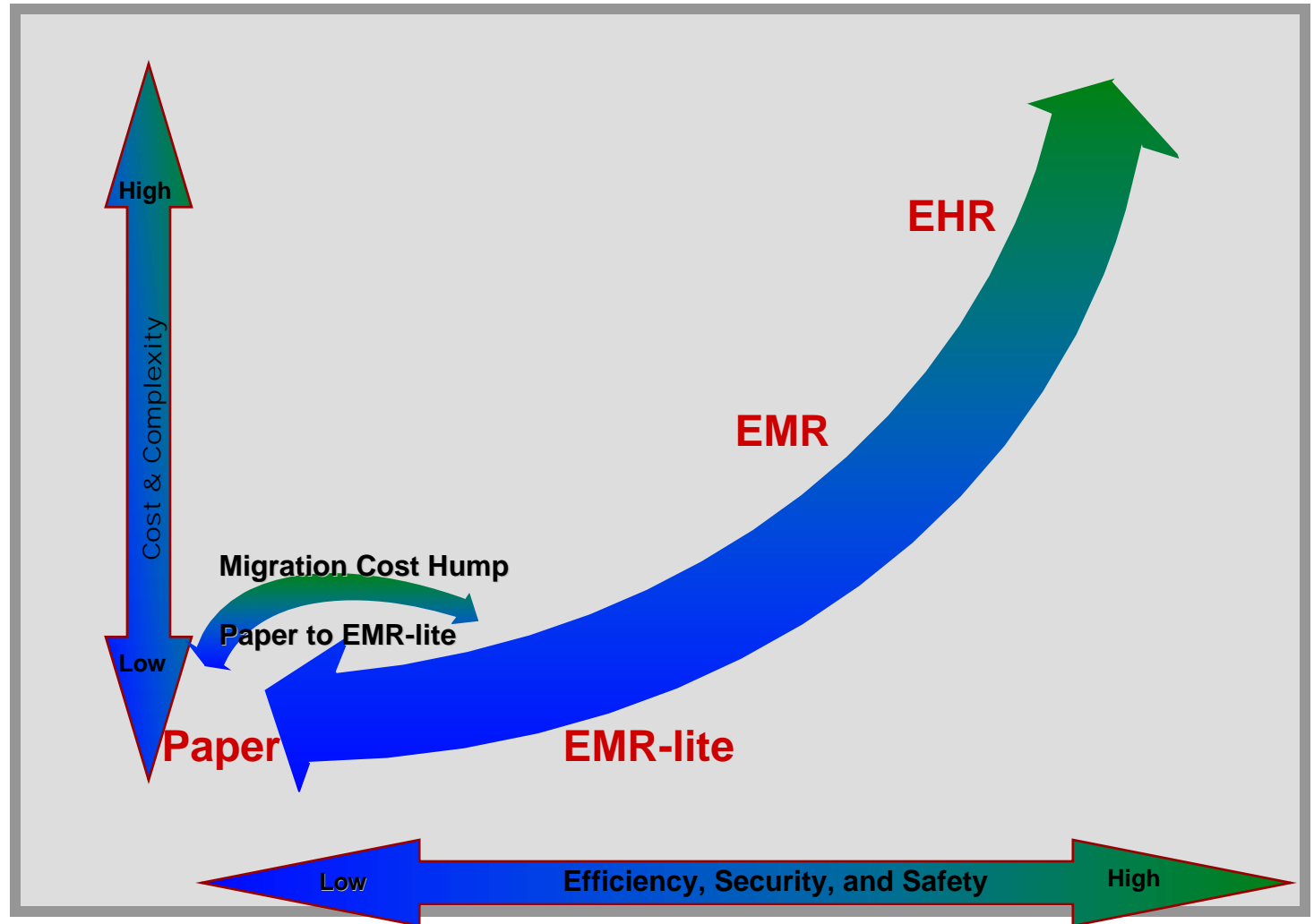


# Cost of Implementation



# Cost of Implementation

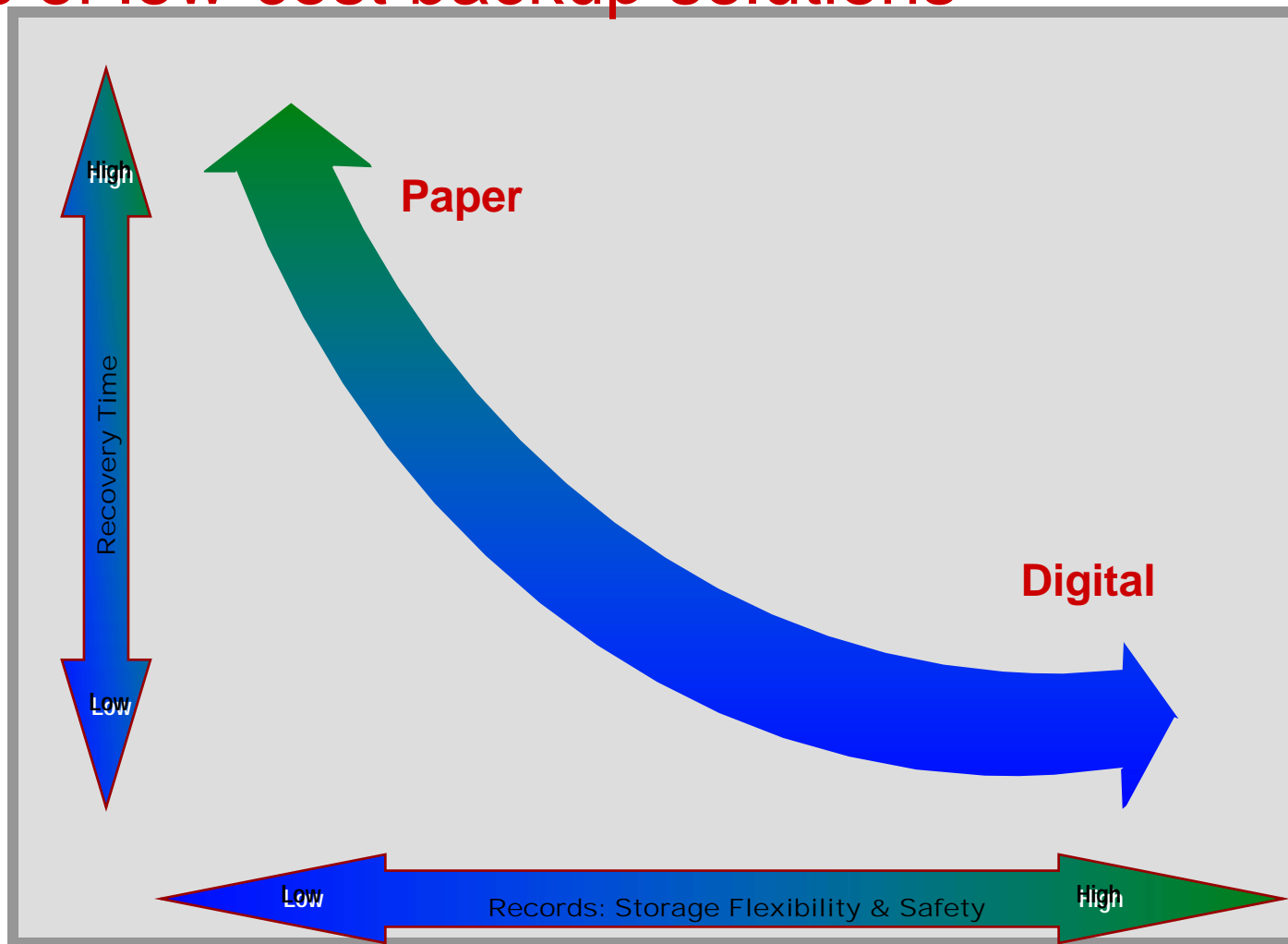
Migration costs depend on needs of the practice (pace, period of record capture, number of patient records.)



# Digital Records: Examples of low-cost backup solutions

## Alternatives:

- Local & LAN Devices
  - Explorer
  - Scheduled programs
- Remote Devices
  - Backup services
  - ASPs



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# Emergency Communications Requirements

1. Connect employees, patients, and vendors
  - Provide access via a single toll-free number
  - Route calls to alternate contact number
  - Listen to prerecorded messages (including broadcasts)
  - Leave messages for specific individuals
  - Send, reply, forward messages from any phone
2. Maintain a “phone tree”

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# Self-assessment

- FEMA
  - <http://www.fema.gov/onsc/coopassessment3.htm>
- Surf Technologies, Inc.
  - <http://www.surftechnologies.net/BCDR.htm>
- Business Continuity Institute, Ltd.
  - <http://www.surftechnologies.net/BCDR.htm>
- IBM
  - <http://www-03.ibm.com/security/services/esurvey/>
- HP
  - <http://www.hp.com.au/services/bc/>

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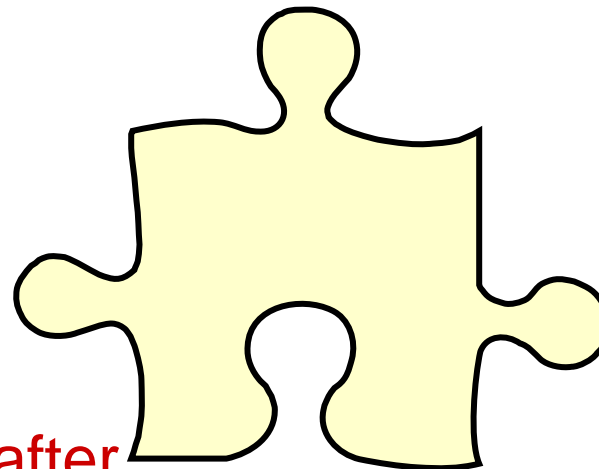
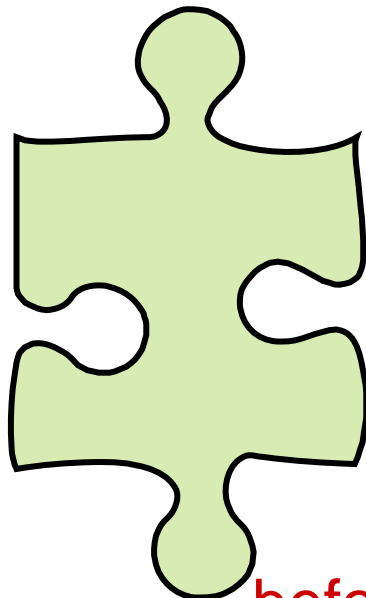
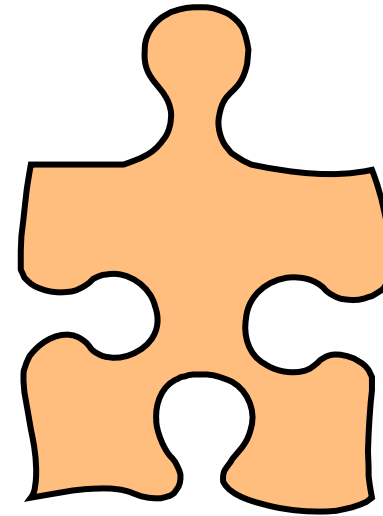
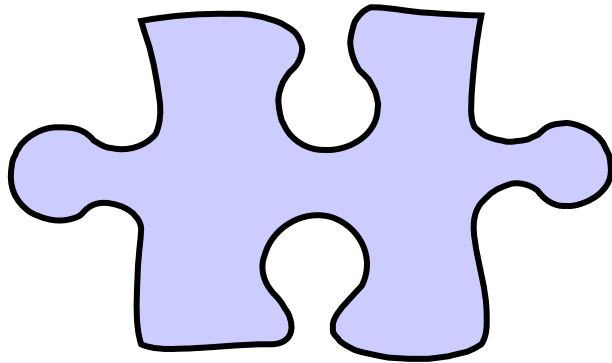
# Self-assessment

- Sample questions:
  - Do your employees know their role following a disaster?
  - Is your practice continuity plan tested annually?
  - Do you know who to contact immediately, how to contact them, what to tell them and where to tell them to report?
  - Do you have a process for making backup copies of practice data and storing copies offsite on a frequent and consistent basis?
  - Is your practice continuity plan and copies of other critical practice documents stored safely off site?

Source: Surf Technologies, Inc., 2005

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# Putting the pieces together...



...before and after...

# Action plan

<u>WHAT?</u>	<u>WHO?</u>	<u>WHEN?</u>
Conduct self-assessment.		
Perform practice analysis.		
Decide key threats, likelihood, importance.		
Set strategies, assign risks, and decide actions.		
Review relevance to practice business priorities.	(you)	
Rehearse.		

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# Quiz

1. Why bother with continuity planning?
2. What is the difference between archiving and backup?
3. What are five items required in your continuity plan?
4. What is a reasonable price for “EMR-lite?”
5. What are the five steps in practice continuity management life-cycle?

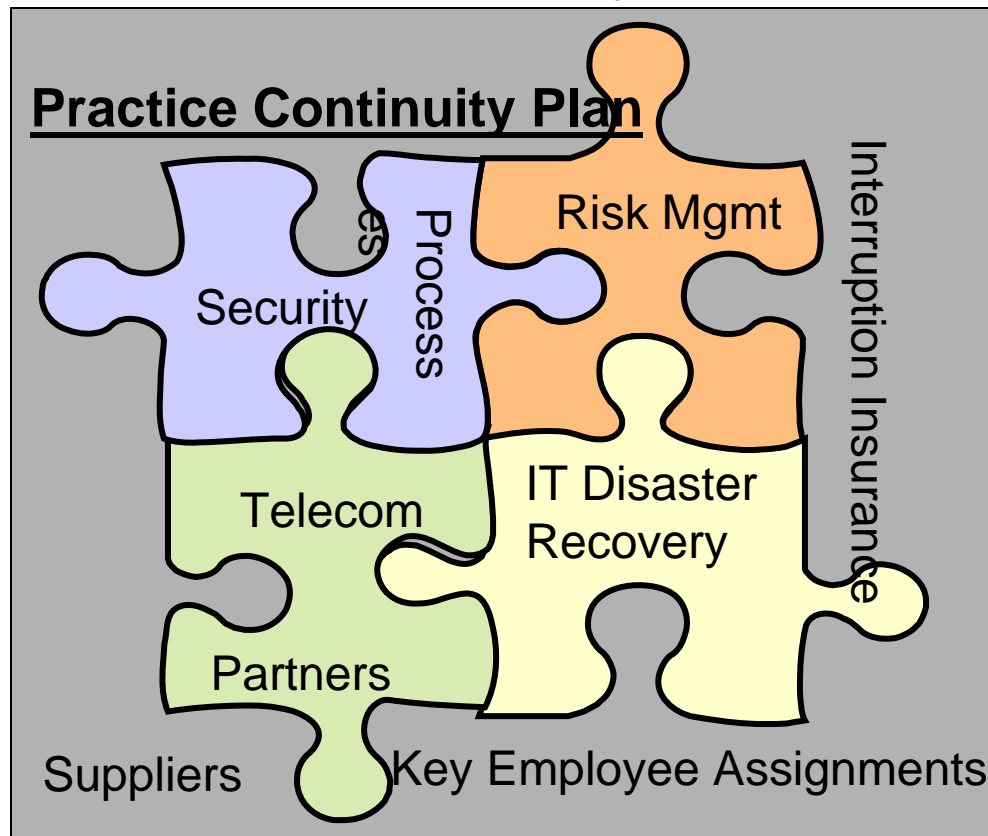
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# Quiz answers

- 1. A practice continuity can help:
  - Avoid financial losses
  - Meet legal requirements
  - Avoid loss of market share
  - Protect the safety of assets, including employees
  - Enhance their reputation
- 2. The difference between archive and backup is:
  - Archive
    - primary version of a piece of inactive data
  - Backup
    - copies of active production data

# Quiz answers

- 3. Five items required in your continuity plan:



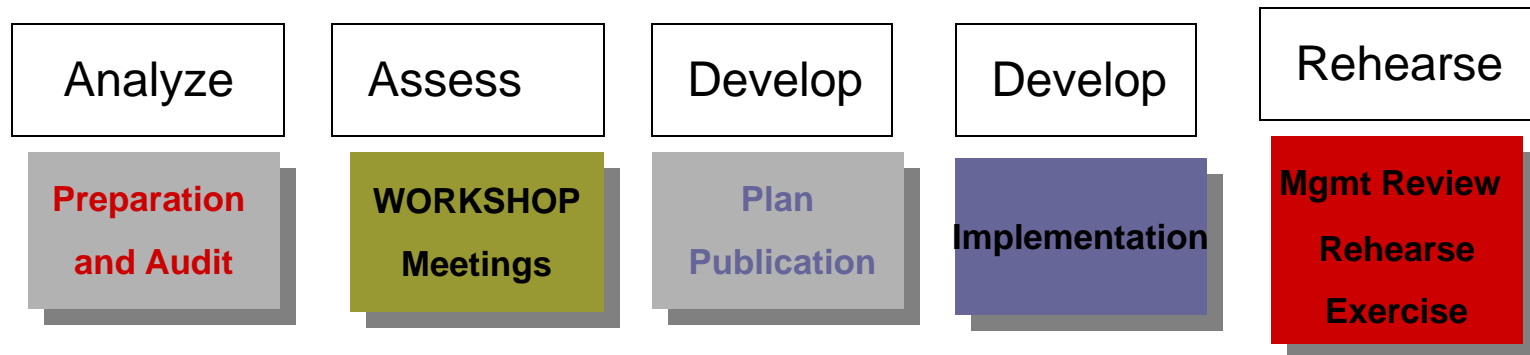
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# Quiz answers

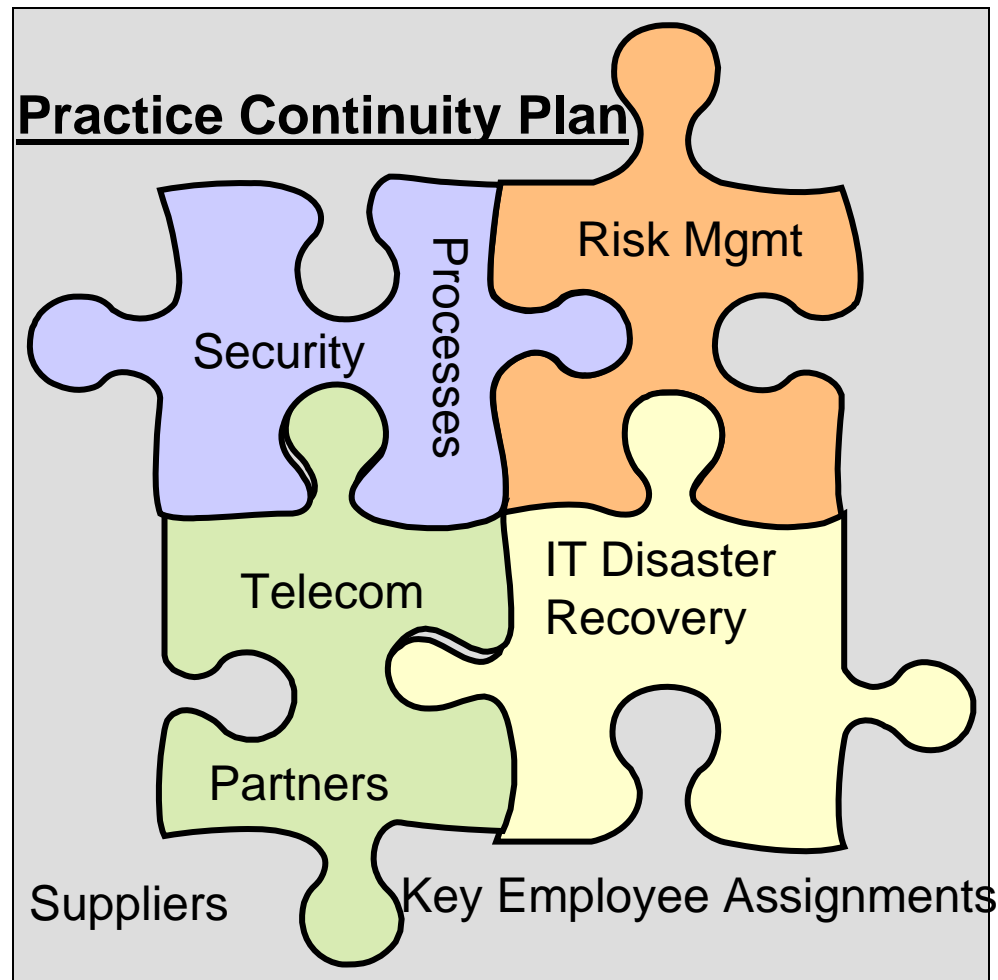
- 4. What is a reasonable price for “EMR-lite?”
  - Uses off the shelf software
    - Microsoft Word ®
    - Adobe Acrobat ®
    - Windows Explorer ™
    - IBM Lotus Approach ®
  - Low, one-time cost (<\$800)
  - “Household name” brands
  - Self-paced implementation
  - Works with transcription and/or local data entry
  - Approach® DB supports prescription function with query

# Quiz answers

- 5. What are the five major steps in practice continuity management life-cycle?



# Summary



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# Summary

*“No medical practice should be without a disaster plan.”*

- Dr. Neil Baum, Urologist  
New Orleans, December 2005

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