## Risk Management 10-Step Checklist

One – Identify and clarify the organization's risk tolerances to those you are trying to manage.
(E.g., "I never expect you to call me about X, Y or Z, but if Q happens, the sun had better not set
on that situation.")
Two – Ask for more risks. No matter how many risks have been identified, be sure that those
around you know you expect to hear more. And ask for them in full sentences, including both
cause and effect. Make it a ritual at every meeting, but remember that risk is out in the future.
It's not an opportunity to whine.
Three – Don't dismiss the mundane risks. Ask about them frequently. Champion the tedious!
Four – Pick the "top" risks. Don't try to get someone to manage the "top 50". Sticking to the
"top 5" or "top 10" is a more realistic goal. And don't think just because it's outrageous that it's
a good "top risk". The good top risks are those that have the highest impact and the greatest
common likelihood.
Five – Delegate. And get others to do likewise. Everyone should have a finger in the risk pie.
The more distributed the responsibility for risks, the more likely it is that someone will actually
have visibility as it comes closer to reality.
Six – Revisit "dodged bullets". If the organization avoided a catastrophe or had a near-miss with
a client, spend some time trying to figure out where the bullet came from in the first place. Talk
to teams about it. Don't punish them for risk avoided, but be sure you know it will be avoided
again next time.
Seven – When looking at strategies, embrace the mundane. Physical checkups are boring, but
they prevent a lot of health problems. We should become the organization's doctors.
Eight – Look for strategies that solve more than one ill. If there are a host of problems, find the
strategies that cover like a blanket. In many cases, they are pedantic, but they do the job.
Nine – Celebrate success (which often looks boring). Remember that non-events are exciting in
the risk management community. "Nothing happened," is the greatest celebratory review.
Ten – Lather, rinse, repeat. Don't stop at one cycle through this process. Do it over and over
and over and over and over and over and over and

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