# Types of Risks

Before you can begin to mitigate risks, you need to know where they exist within your enterprise and identify how they can cause harm. The following table categorizes various types of risk that you may encounter in your enterprise.

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| Risk Type | Description |
| Legal | Every enterprise, no matter the industry, must comply with certain laws and regulations to stay within legal boundaries. Unethical business practices, unscrupulous employees, and negligent management can all place your enterprise in jeopardy. Even poor forensic practices can put your enterprise's ability to successfully prosecute attackers in court at risk. |
| Financial | Your organization likely has expected revenue and profit margins based on a number of calculations, and many different threats can cause your business to fail to meet monetary expectations. Financial risks may seriously affect your enterprise's survivability in a competitive marketplace. |
| Physical assets | Depending on your enterprise's size, you may have a great deal of valuable physical property stored in various company sites. Any physical product that your organization sells is your primary concern. Electronics like computers, industrial machinery, and office appliances are also at risk of being stolen or otherwise damaged. Both human threats and environmental factors may put your physical resources at risk. |
| Intellectual property | Organizations that create and own intellectual property, such as entertainment media, software, trade secrets, and product design, all risk having these ideas and concepts destroyed or used in unauthorized ways. Although intellectual property is typically not stolen in the same sense as physical theft, a threat may infringe on trademarks and copyrights that you have in place. A threat that destroys or alters your intellectual property may make it extremely difficult or even impossible to recover. |
| Infrastructure | An organization must depend on its structure to function at maximum efficiency. Whether physical or abstract, the frameworks that hold an organization together are vulnerable to a number of threats. This is particularly true of any infrastructure that supplies power or facilitates transportation. Infrastructure risk affects the business at its foundational level. |
| Operations | Day-to-day operations are what keep your enterprise running and fulfilling not just its monetary expectations, but also its vision. Your organization is at risk of having its vision compromised if it cannot operate to the extent it needs to. Even if there are no immediate financial consequences, the enterprise risks losing its foothold in the marketplace, and its products or services may no longer be viable. |
| Reputation | The public's perception of an organization may greatly affect its success, and in some cases, may doom it to failure. Businesses often must maintain both great relationships with their customers and how society at large views them. Your organization's brand may be devalued if the public reacts negatively to scenarios such as theft of personal data, unethical business practices, and a decline in the quality of products and services. |
| Health | Whether it's your employees or the customers they work with, people are at risk of harm as a result of your operations. Although high-risk industries like law enforcement have obvious health concerns, even typical businesses can put their personnel and customers at risk by providing unsafe, untested products and services. Physical assets like industrial machinery and electrical equipment may pose significant health risks to employees who use them. |