

Introduction

RAID: an acronym for Risks, Actions, Incidents, and Decisions.

The Excel RAID Register reflects my tendency to want to keep *things* compact and in one place if possible, and if required, to use the tools available such as Microsoft Excel. The RAID Register is also intended to be very simple to create, modify, maintain, and use without resorting to a database.

The basic principle is that an *item* of interest, such as a Risk, should be identified and recorded in a register in some manner and somewhere. The same could be said for Actions to be taken, Incidents that have occurred, and Decisions that have been made. But often, all four are related in some manner, and I don't like having to have separate registers, one for each (very closely) related item of interest. Furthermore, items such as risks can become incidents when a risk eventuates, and then decisions for actions may be taken. Further still, each item of interest ought to have a unique ID for tracking, identification, discussion, and audit purposes. It seems clumsy to me to create a separate entry with a unique ID say, for a risk with ID 253 that eventuates into an incident with ID 85 in a separate register.

So my approach is to have one register, where if required, the *type* of the item can be changed to suit, but the ID is always constant.

Glossary

The following table is a representation of the RAID Register, with terms added in respective locations to illustrate the meaning of the terms used in this document:

Column Titles →	ID	Priority	Date Added	Description	Activities	...	...
Item(n)	j	element	element	element	...	...	...
Item(n+1)	j+1	element	element	...	...	...	...
Item(n+2)	j+2	element	...	...	...	...	...

How to use

Notes:

1. The RAID Register was developed for use with Excel 2007. It may not work well or at all with other versions.
2. CONDITIONAL FORMATTING: Excel Conditional Formatting rules have been developed to help avoid incomplete entries. For virtually all of the cells, once an entry has been made, the cell to the right (or another) will change colour to indicate that an entry in the highlighted cell is required.
3. COLOURS: Apart from the traditional Red (for urgent, important, or stop) or Green (for go, good, OK), and Yellow (for warning), the colours used in the RAID Register are merely

used to differentiate elements of interest. They can be changed by changing the Excel Conditional Formatting rules to suit your requirements or preferences.

4. **DATA VALIDATION:** Excel Data Validation is used to attempt to prevent invalid entries, such as duplicate IDs or invalid entry types. These can be changed via the Excel Data Validation rules.
5. **Valid Data:** The RAID Register is not *bullet proof*. Some reasonable checks are made on the data entered and typical errors such as IDs being unique. However, if you want to enter meaningless text into a date cell, create non-sequential IDs, or create a description with a single space, then you can. The value(s) that you enter into the RAID Register and the ultimate value that you subsequently derive from your efforts is all up to you.
6. **Invalid Data:** Accidentally or deliberately inserting <Space> or other invisible characters into cells may give you different or even bewildering results. Please beware.
7. Due to the RAID Register being effectively 4 registers in one, a little care and common sense is required with appropriate entries based on the item's **Type**, its **Priority or Risk**, and its **Status or Likelihood**, i.e., it is probably not useful to have a **Status or Likelihood** of *unlikely* for an item that is a decision type. If the values don't suit you, change them.
8. Full data integrity checking, such as ensuring that a date cell is either blank or has a valid date, or that descriptions contain visible and meaningful text, or that the **Date Added** precedes the **Due Date** etc., has not been implemented, please beware. (As Excel does not have a built-in `IsDate()` function, verifying that an entry is actually a date within a reasonable range is awkward and not failsafe, so date checking has not been implemented).
9. The key sequence <Alt><Enter> can be used to assist with cell formatting by inserting additional text rows into cells.
10. Typically the RAID Register will be emailed or made available to all after it is edited. Depending on how this is done, there are likely to be multiple versions available. A layer of management needs to be added to ensure everyone is working off the *current* version even if it is a copy – communication is required.

Setup:

1. Ensure that the RAID Register has a title by editing the Header.
2. The filename and path of the RAID Register has been set up to appear in the Footer so that users know where to find the file, or at least their version of the file.
3. The date that the RAID Register is opened automatically appears at the top right of the first page in the **Today's Date** field. This is today's date obtained with the Excel function `TODAY()`.
4. **Today's Date** is used to calculate an item's number of **Days Left** based on its **Due Date**.
5. The page number and the number of pages visible, based on the currently selected cell filtering, are shown on the bottom right of every printed page.

Entering Data:

1. When you open the RAID Register, today's date will automatically appear in **Today's Date** at the top right (cell J1).

2. If the due date of an item is:
 - a. after **Today's Date**, then the **Days Left** cell is +ve and GREEN – still have time.
 - b. equal to **Today's Date**, then the **Days Left** cell is 0 and YELLOW – item due today.
 - c. before **Today's Date**, then the **Days Left** cell is -ve and RED – item is late
3. Make sure there are empty rows to enter data into, if not, see section Adding Rows below.
4. Identify a row you wish to enter data into.
5. In the row selected, select the **Type** cell and from the dropdown list select the *type* of the entry from the list of Action, Decision, Issue, or Risk.
6. Select the **Priority or Risk** cell, and from the dropdown list select either Low, Med, or High.
7. Select the **Date Added** cell and enter the date of the item's entry into the RAID Register; you can use the key sequence <CTRL><;> which will enter the current date.
8. Select the **Description** cell and add a description. Be descriptive so that in the future the item's description will still make sense.
9. Select the **Activities and Notes** cell and list relevant activities and notes, i.e., what happened, what's happening, what's planned – whatever is useful to you and your team. When updating the **Activities and Notes** cell later, consider starting each new entry on a new line by using the <Alt><Enter> key sequence and prefixing each entry with the date. You could even *Bold* the date to distinguish different date entries from extended narrative.
10. Select the **Assigned to** cell and assign responsibility for the item to someone.
11. Select the **Due Date** cell and enter the date the item should be delivered/done/closed etc.
12. DO NOT enter data into **Days Left**, the cells contain a formula that calculates the number of days left before the item expires, i.e., the item has not been closed on or before the **Due Date**. If the item's **Status or Likelihood** is "Closed", then **Days Left** will display "N/A", for not applicable.
13. Select the **Status or Likelihood** cell and select the current status of the item from the dropdown list. If you have just entered the item then it is likely to be Open.
14. When the **Status or Likelihood** cell is changed to Closed, the **Date Closed** cell will change to Red until a date, the date of item closure, is entered into the **Date Closed** cell. If an entry appears in the **Date Closed** cell and the item is not Closed, then the **Date Closed** cell will be highlighted Yellow.

Adding Rows

1. To create a row, the user needs to be aware that Excel Conditional Formatting and Excel Data Validation have been used to create the functionality.
2. Select the last row which (used to at time of creation) contain instructions, and Insert as many rows as you want. To repeat insertions, Press <F4>. Test that the cells in the new rows have the desired functionality.
3. Create more Unique IDs by selecting the last 5 good IDs and drag and *autofill*.
4. If you manually enter a duplicate ID, an error will be displayed.
5. If you copy rows and end up duplicating IDs, the duplicated IDs will be highlighted red.
6. Blank IDs will be coloured purple.

Selecting Items of Interest

The Excel Data Filter option has been set so that users of the RAID Register can select what is important to them. For example, if you have a team with Kate, Bob, and John, then John may wish to filter on only those items that are relevant to him; likewise with the others.

A useful feature of the RAID Register is that everything is in one place, but it does become tiresome having to ignore items that are not of interest, such as Closed items. To avoid Closed items say, use the Excel Data Filter for the **Status or Likelihood** column.

Summary

I have found various incarnations of the RAID Register to be useful, I hope others will too.

It is not *bullet proof*. I would prefer if it was, but on balance of cost/effort/complexity/benefit/Excel-limitations, it is functional; if you try to break it you will succeed.

If you find useful adaptations, please share:

<http://dontthinkcheck.blogspot.co.nz/2012/02/project-management-raid-register.html>

If you find problems, please let me know and I will investigate.

Anyhow, there it is. Use it if it suits you, or change it until it does.

Best Regards

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