

ADULT CARE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EXERCISE TOOLKIT

1st Edition
June 2011

Created by:
The Brookdale Center for Healthy Aging and Longevity of Hunter College/CUNY
The Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response – New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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Welcome to the **ADULT CARE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EXERCISE TOOLKIT** - an indispensable resource for selecting, developing and conducting Emergency Preparedness exercises in your facility.

This **TOOLKIT** has been developed specifically for adult care providers so they can quickly and efficiently:

- Select an exercise type based on your facility’s needs and capabilities
- Conduct an exercise as appropriate
- Assess the results of your exercise
- Implement changes based on those results

Section 1: Exercise Development Checklist

Exercises are designed to motivate staff and residents to think or act as they would in a real event. Use this checklist in order to assist you lay the groundwork for your exercise to ensure that motivation occurs. Use this checklist to guide your choice of exercise topic area and keep track of all phases of the exercise.

Section 2: Jobs Aid - Needs Assessment

Job Aids help you assess your organization’s exercise needs. Use this tool to analyze where you may wish to focus your organization’s exercise design efforts. In completing this needs assessment, you may wish to consult such resources as planning documents, demographic or corporate data, maps, and training records.

Section 3: Selecting the Right Exercise for your Organization

This section provides descriptions of the various types of exercises and their requirements (space, equipment, etc.) that you may choose to test your emergency plan. Exercise types most appropriate for adult care are described in greater detail.

Section 4: The Narrative -

Now that you have selected an exercise appropriate for your facility it’s time to create a narrative that will lead participants through the process.

Section 5: Reviewing What You’ve Done - The After Action Report

Now that you have practiced a certain aspect of your disaster plan, the process of looking at what happened and how it can be done better afterward is essential . Whether you call it an *after-action report*, *debrief*, *critique* or *hot wash*, this section will lead you through the steps necessary to complete this task.

Section 6: References

Valuable references used to create this *Toolkit* and for you to explore.

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Exercise Development Checklist

Exercises are designed to motivate staff and residents to think or act as they would in a real event. Use this checklist in order to assist you lay the groundwork for your exercise to ensure that motivation occurs. Developing the exercise involves:

Section 1

- Review your current disaster plan:** what does it tell you about ideal performance – i.e. how are we supposed to implement policies and procedures in the event of an emergency?
- Assess the facility’s capability to conduct an exercise:** what resources can we draw from to design and implement an exercise? (i.e. partner with a sister facility or receiving facility)
- Select the exercise type:** what type of exercise best meets our training needs within the available resources?
- Address the costs and liabilities:** what will the exercise cost in terms of funding, human resources, and organizational liability?
- Gain support and announce the exercise:** how can we obtain the support of those in authority and then use that support to garner support among participants?
- Conduct a Needs Assessment:** use the Job Aid included in this toolkit to find out what are your risk and vulnerabilities, and where do you need to focus your training efforts?
- Define the scope:** put realistic limits on the issues that you identified in the needs assessment
- Write a statement of purpose:** a broad statement of the exercise goal that focuses and controls the whole exercise
- Define objectives:** decide what the exercise is intended to accomplish.
- Compose a scenario/case study:** This is a brief description of the events that have occurred up to the minute the exercise begins in order to set the mood of the exercise and set the stage for later action
- Write major events and list the expected actions:** Major events are large or small occurrences that take place after, and as a result, of the emergency described in the scenario. It may be helpful to think of them as problems requiring a realistic action (i.e. the actions or decisions that you want staff or residents to carry out to demonstrate competence)

Additional Items

- To be determined
- To be determined
- To be determined

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Job Aids - Needs Assessment

Job Aids help you assess your organization’s exercise needs. Use this tool to analyze where you may wish to focus your organization’s exercise design efforts. In completing this needs assessment, you may wish to consult such resources as planning documents, demographic or corporate data, maps, and training records.

What to look for in an emergency plan - while reviewing the plan, ask yourself key questions:

- What responses are currently planned (i.e., what are the hazards that the plan is intended to address)?
- What resources, personnel, and procedures will be used to resolve the problems?
- Are they (responses and resources) different for various types of emergencies?
- Do roles vary according to the type of emergency?
- What training have response personnel received?
- What training is necessary?

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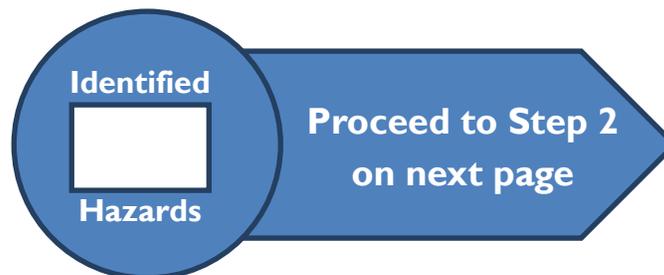
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I. Hazards

List the hazards found in your organization and community. What risks are you most likely to face? Use the following list as your starting point. NOTE: A recently conducted hazard vulnerability analysis of your community would be your best resource.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Airplane crash | <input type="checkbox"/> Terrorism |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building collapse | <input type="checkbox"/> Tornado |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carbon monoxide | <input type="checkbox"/> Train derailment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal storm/Hurricane | <input type="checkbox"/> Winter storm |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disease outbreaks/Epidemic | <input type="checkbox"/> Workplace violence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drought | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Earthquake | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extreme heat | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flooding | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous material (radiation) spill/
release | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hostage/shooting | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Utility disruption | |





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2. Secondary Hazards

What secondary effects from those hazards mentioned in Step 1 are likely to impact your organization?

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- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business interruption | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication system breakdown | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mass evacuation/Population displacement | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelmed medical services | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Power outages | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation blockages | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

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3. Hazard Priority

What are the highest priority hazards? Consider such factors as:

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- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frequency of occurrence • Relative likelihood of occurrence • Magnitude and intensity • Location (affecting critical areas/ infrastructure) • Spatial extent • Speed of onset/Availability of warning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential severity of consequences to people, critical facilities, community functions and property • Potential cascading events (damage to chemical or nuclear plant, etc.) |
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#1 Priority Hazard

#2 Priority Hazard

#3 Priority Hazard

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4. Functions

What emergency management functions are most in need of rehearsal? (e.g., What functions have not been exercised recently? Where have difficulties occurred in the past?) Use the following checklist as a starting point.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alert Notification (emergency response) | <input type="checkbox"/> Public safety |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Public works/Engineering |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continuity of operations | <input type="checkbox"/> Receiving facilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coordination and control | <input type="checkbox"/> Recovery and repatriation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damage assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Resource management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency public information | <input type="checkbox"/> Tracking and accountability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evacuation decision making (emergency, urgent, planned) | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facility preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> Warning (public) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facility shutdown | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health and medical | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual/family assistance | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Notifications and communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Plan implementation | |

5. Participants

Who (agencies, departments, operational units, personnel) needs to participate in an exercise? For example:

- Have any entities updated their plans and procedures?
- Have any changed policies or staff?
- Who is designated for emergency management responsibility in your plans and procedures?
- With whom does your agency need to coordinate in an emergency?
- What do your regulatory requirements call for?
- What personnel can you reasonably expect to devote to developing an exercise?



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6. Past Exercises

If your organization has participated in exercises before, what did you learn from them and what do the results indicate about future exercise needs? For example, consider the following questions:

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- Who participated in the exercise and who did not?
- To what extent were the exercise objectives achieved?
- What lessons were learned?
- What problems were revealed and what is needed to resolve them?
- What improvements were made following past exercises and have they been tested?

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Testing Your Plan. Selecting the Right Exercise for your Organization

This section provides descriptions of the various types of exercises and their requirements (space, equipment, etc.) that you may choose to test your emergency plan. More detailed information follows each exercise overview.

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WHAT IT IS & WHY IT MATTERS

After you have completed all the necessary activities associated with refining your disaster plan, you may think you're finished. In reality, disaster plans are not complete until you practice them. Fortunately, many types of exercises are possible, ranging from simple to very complex. The key is to incorporate practicing as part one's overall business operations.

The primary reason to exercise is to identify limitations within your facility's disaster plan. Exercises present opportunities to fix problems before a disaster happens. Since many emergencies may occur infrequently and your facility may have turnover in staff, exercises give you the chance to orient and train your staff to the facility's plans, policies, and procedures.

KEY POINTS: How to select an exercise that is appropriate for your facility - while reviewing this section, ask yourself the following key questions:

- What staff from my facility will attend?
- How many staff will attend?
- Will outside stakeholders (police, fire, community groups, etc.) be invited?
- How much time can I devote to the exercise?
- What resources are required for the exercise?
- What resources can I bring to bear for the exercise?
- What do I want to get out of the exercise?

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At a Glance

- *Practicing your disaster plan provides clarity in expectations, assignments, and schedules.*
- *It allows for matching staff and stakeholders with the appropriate tasks for their skills.*
- *Focus on building relationships among staff, residents and with stakeholders – preparedness is local.*



Seminar - Overview

FORMAT	<p>The orientation seminar is a very low-stress event, usually presented as an informal discussion in a group setting. There is little or no simulation (orientations seminars do not qualify as a FEMA- recognized exercise). A variety of seminar formats can be used, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture • Discussion • Slide or video presentation • Computer demonstration • Panel discussion • Guest lecturers
APPLICATIONS	<p>The orientation can be used for a wide variety of purposes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing a topic or problem in a group setting • Introducing something new (e.g., policies and plans) • Explaining existing plans to new people (e.g., newly elected officials or executives need an explanation of the EOP and their role at the EOC: new employees need an orientation to operational plans as they relate to emergencies) • Introducing a cycle of exercises or preparing participants for success in more complex exercises • Motivating people for participation in subsequent exercises
LEADERSHIP	<p>Orientations are led by a facilitator who presents information and guides discussion. The facilitator should have some leadership skills, but very little training is required.</p>
PARTICIPANTS	<p>A seminar may be cross-functional, involving one or two participants for each function or service being discussed (e.g. management, policy, coordination, and operations staff). Or, it may be geared to several people from a single agency or department.</p>
FACILITIES	<p>A conference room or any other fixed facility may be used, depending on the purposes of the orientation.</p>
TIME	<p>Orientation should last a maximum of 1 to 2 hours.</p>
PREPARATION	<p>An orientation is quite simple to prepare (two weeks preparation time is usually sufficient) and conduct. Participants need no previous training.</p>



Seminar - Exercise Details

Seminars generally orient participants to, or provide an overview of, authorities, strategies, plans, policies, procedures, protocols, resources, concepts, and ideas. They also provide a good starting point for entities that are developing or making major changes to existing plans or procedures. Seminars are also useful when attempting to gain awareness of, or assess, the capabilities of interagency or inter-jurisdictional operations. Seminars are useful whenever there is a need to provide a common framework of understanding. Seminars are the basic building block of exercise development.

Seminars can be used to deliver a wide range of topics. Although the topics may vary, all seminars share the following common attributes:

- They are conducted in a low-stress environment.
- Information is conveyed through different instructional techniques, which may include lectures, multimedia presentations, panel discussions, case study discussions, expert testimony, decision support tools, or any combination thereof.
- Informal discussions are led by a seminar leader.
- There are no real-time “clock” constraints.
- They are effective for both small and large groups.

Prior to participating in a seminar, participants should have a clear understanding of exercise objectives, which can range from developing new standard operating procedures (SOPs) to attaining priority capabilities. Seminars are typically conducted in a lecture-based format with limited feedback or interaction from participants. They may feature one speaker or a series of speakers from different entities. Lecture content can vary, but often includes the following:

- Current resources
- Current or proposed mutual aid agreements (MAAs)
- Existing plans, policies, or procedures
- Real-world incident or exercise experiences and lessons learned
- Entity directions and goals

Seminars do not typically result in a formal, comprehensive After Action Report / Improvement Plan (AAR/IPs); however, a final report, or Summary Report, should be developed to capture the discussions conducted; issues raised; and, when appropriate, corrective actions that will address these issues.



Tabletop Exercise - Overview

FORMAT	<p>The exercise begins with the reading of a short narrative, which sets the stage for the hypothetical emergency. Then, the facilitator may stimulate discussion in two ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem statements - Problem statements (describing major or detailed events) may be addressed either to individual participants or to participating departments or agencies. Recipients of problem statements then discuss the actions they might take in response. • Simulated message - These messages are more specific than problem statements. Again, the recipients discuss their responses. <p>In either case, the discussion generated by the problem focuses on roles (how the participants would respond in a real emergency), plans, coordination, the effect of decisions on other organizations, and similar concerns. Often maps, charts and packets</p>
APPLICATIONS	<p>Tabletop exercises have several important applications. They:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lend themselves to low stress discussion of coordination and policy. • Provide a good environment for problem solving. • Provide an opportunity for key agencies and stakeholders to become acquainted with one another, their inter-related roles and their respective responsibilities. • Provide good preparation for a functional exercise.
LEADERSHIP	<p>A facilitator leads the tabletop discussion. This person decides who gets a message or problem statement, calls on others to participate, asks questions, and guides the participants toward sound solutions.</p>
PARTICIPANTS	<p>The objectives of the exercise dictate who should participate. The exercise can involve many people and many organizations - essentially anyone who can learn from or contribute to the planned discussion items. This may include all entities that have a policy, planning, or response role.</p>
FACILITES	<p>A tabletop exercise requires a large conference room where participants can surround</p>
TIME	<p>A tabletop exercise usually lasts from 1 to 4 hours, but can take longer. Discussion times are open-ended and participants are encouraged to take their time arriving at in-depth decisions—without time pressure. When the time is up, the activity is concluded. Although the facilitator maintains an awareness of time allocation for each area of discussion, the group does not have to complete every item for the exercise to be a</p>
PREPARATION	<p>It typically takes about a month to prepare for a tabletop exercise. Preparation usually</p>



Tabletop - Exercise Details

Key staff, decision makers, and elected and appointed officials are typical participants in a tabletop exercise (TTX). This type of exercise is generally held in an informal setting intended to generate discussion of various issues regarding a hypothetical, simulated emergency incident. TTXs can be used to enhance general awareness, validate plans and procedures, and/or assess the types of systems needed to guide prevention of, protection from, response to, and recovery from a defined incident. Generally, TTXs are aimed at facilitating concept understanding, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and/or achieving changes in attitudes.

During a TTX, players are encouraged to discuss issues in depth, and the environment allows them to develop decisions through slow-paced problem solving rather than the rapid, spontaneous decision making that occurs under actual incident conditions. The effectiveness of a TTX is derived from the energetic involvement of participants and their assessment of recommended revisions to current policies, procedures, and plans.

TTX methods are divided into basic and advanced categories. In a basic TTX, the scenario is presented and remains constant—it describes an emergency incident and brings discussion participants up to the simulated present time. Players apply their knowledge and skills to a list of problems presented by the facilitator or moderator; problems are discussed as a group; and resolution is reached and documented for later analysis.

In an advanced TTX, play advances as players receive pre-scripted messages that alter the original scenario. The moderator usually introduces problems one at a time in the form of a written message, simulated telephone call, videotape, or other means. Players discuss the issues raised by each problem, using appropriate plans and procedures. Player decisions are incorporated as the scenario continues to unfold.

TTXs may be conducted using either breakout or plenary formats. The breakout format uses several breakout groups, which can vary in size but may include as many as 10 to 15 players each, seated at different tables. Common interests or responsibilities determine table assignments. Although the scenario is usually presented to all groups simultaneously, individual breakout groups consider their own probable actions based on plans, policies, and procedures. Each group reports to the re-assembled plenary at the conclusion of each exercise module.



Tabletop - Exercise Details (cont.)

The plenary format groups players in a large room or hall according to function or responsibility. In a plenary TTX, no periods are set aside for small or subgroup discussions. This type of exercise requires active facilitation, sometimes by a team of facilitators. Use of facilitators generally allows more control over discussion direction; facilitators can draw information from players to present a clear picture of issues and objectives. Active facilitation also ensures that the discussion remains focused on issues and policies. A plenary format is useful for exercises involving agencies/organizations that do not have a tradition of coordinated operations. It is also the preferred format if most participants are new to TTXs. This format ensures that everyone hears everything that is said and all players have an opportunity to comment.

- All types of TTXs are usually constructed with the following common features:
- They incorporate group problem solving.
- Senior officials become familiar with critical issues related to their responsibilities.
- They employ the conditions of a specific scenario.
- Personnel contingencies are examined.
- Group message interpretation is examined.
- Participants share information.
- Interagency/inter-organization coordination is assessed.
- Limited or specific objectives are achieved.
- They prepare participants for more complex exercises.

All participants should be encouraged to contribute to the discussion. They should be reminded they are making decisions in a no-fault environment. Facilitators should encourage interaction between groups.

During TTX conduct, exercise planning team personnel give a multimedia presentation, facilitate discussions during caucus periods, and moderate ensuing discussion or report-back sessions. At the conclusion of the TTX, the exercise planning team leader provides an overview of the day's activities, followed by comments or closing remarks by members of the exercise planning team.

TTXs require a room in which all participants can view a screen and participants at individual tables can discuss issues without disruption. For this reason, it is ideal to reserve one large room and several smaller rooms (similar to workshop breakout rooms).



Drills - Overview

FORMAT	A drill involves actual field or facility response for an EOC operation. It should be as realistic as possible, employing any equipment or apparatus for the function being drilled.
APPLICATIONS	<p>Drills are used to test a specific operation. They are also used to provide training with new equipment, to develop new policies or procedures, or to practice and maintain current skills. Drills are a routine part of the daily job and organizational training in the field, in a facility, or at the EOC. Some examples of drills run by different organizations are listed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EOC - Call down procedures. • Public works - Locating and placing road barriers under time constraints. • Public health and safety - Site assessment and sampling. • Red Cross - Locating specific types of blood within a time constraint. • Military - Activation and mobilization drill. • Airport - Fire department response to the furthest part of a runway within a given time. • Chemical plant - Evacuation and isolation of spill area and valve system shut-off. • Private sector resource provider - Warehouse readiness drill.
LEADERSHIP	A drill can be led by a manager, supervisor, department head, or exercise designer. Staff must have a good understanding of the single function being tested.
PARTICIPANTS	The number of participants depends on the function being tested. Coordination, operations, and response personnel could be included.
FACILITIES	Drills can be conducted within a facility, in the field, or at the EOC or other operating center.
TIME	½ to 2 hours is usually required.
PREPARATION	Drills are one of the easiest kinds of exercise activities to design. Preparation can take about a month. Participants usually need a short orientation beforehand.

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Drills - Exercise Details

A drill is a coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to validate a specific operation or function in a single agency or organization. Drills are commonly used to provide training on new equipment, develop or validate new policies or procedures, or practice and maintain current skills. Drills are narrow in scope and typically focus on a specific aspect of an operation. For example, drills are appropriate for assessing response time to an alarm, checking the ability of a guard to use a metal detector, or determining if a 911 operator can appropriately direct a call reporting suspicious behavior that may involve terrorism. Drills can be used to determine if plans can be executed as designed, to assess whether more training is required, or to reinforce best practices.

A drill is useful as a stand-alone tool, but a series of drills can also be used to prepare several agencies/ organizations to collaborate in a full-scale exercise (FSE). For example, plans for an FSE may involve response to a simulated radiological dispersal device (RDD) detonation that results in radioactively contaminated mass casualties and a crime scene. Preparatory drills for this exercise might include the following:

- A decontamination drill for firefighters and emergency medical technicians (EMTs) to practice and demonstrate decontamination procedures
- A hotline management drill for law enforcement officials and firefighters to practice investigation and collection of evidence in a radioactive environment
- A hospital triage drill to practice receiving potentially contaminated patients

Typically, attributes of drills include the following:

- They have a narrow focus.
- Results from drills are measured against established standards.
- They provide instant feedback.
- They involve a realistic environment.
- They are performed in isolation.
- Players become prepared for exercises that are larger in scope.



Drills - Exercise Details

For every drill, clearly defined plans, policies, and procedures need to be in place. Personnel need to be familiar with those plans and policies, and trained in the processes and procedures to be drilled.

A drill may start with brief remarks from the exercise planning team leader. Once controllers and evaluators are properly stationed, the drill begins. If no safety issues arise, the drill continues until the process is complete, time expires, or objectives are achieved. During the simulated incident, players must know that they are participating in a drill and not an actual emergency.

Controllers ensure that participant behavior remains within predefined boundaries and that entities not involved in the drill are not unnecessarily mobilized. Evaluators observe behaviors and compare them against established plans, policies, procedures, and standard practices (if applicable). Safety controllers ensure all activity takes place within a safe environment.

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The Narrative - Composing a Scenario

Now that you have selected an exercise appropriate for your facility it's time to create a narrative that will lead participants through the process.

WHAT IT IS & WHY IT MATTERS

An exercise is, essentially, a scenario that simulates an emergency. Part of this is the narrative, a brief description of the events that have occurred up to the minute the exercise begins. The narrative serves the following purposes:

- First, it sets the mood for the exercise. Participants need to be motivated to participate. The narrative captures their attention and makes them want to go on.
- Second, the narrative sets the stage for later action by providing information that the participants will need during the exercise. This makes the exercise dynamic instead of static.

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Characteristics of a Narrative

A good narrative has the following qualities:

- Is usually one to five paragraphs in length.
- Is very specific.
- Is phrased in the present tense.
- Is written in short sentences, lending it a sense of immediacy and tension.
- May develop the situation chronologically (event with warning time).
- May emphasize the emergency environment.

For an emergency with a warning time (such as a hurricane with expected time of landfall), the narrative often outlines the developing situation chronologically.

For an unexpected event (chemical spill, terrorist event), the narrative may be shorter. Or, it may devote more detail to the environment of the emergency (nearby school or hospital) to create intensity of feeling.

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Outlining a Narrative

You can outline a narrative by writing down short (one or two word) responses to the following questions:

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- What event (hurricane, terrorist attack, etc.)?
- How fast, strong, deep, dangerous?
- How did you find out?
- What response has been made?
- What damage has been reported?
- What is the sequence of events?
- What time?
- Was there advance warning?
- Where does it take place?
- What are the relevant weather conditions?
- What other factors would influence emergency procedures?
- What is predicted for the future?

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When you're ready to write the narrative, just take each of the above responses and turn it into a brief sentence. Create subsequent events based on participants' responses and plausible progression of the emergency to maintain the dynamic nature of the narrative.

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Reviewing What You’ve Done - The After Action Report

Now that you have practiced a certain aspect of your disaster plan, the process of looking at what happened and how it can be done better afterward is essential. This process goes by many names – debrief, critique, After Action Review (AAR), and “hot wash” just to name a few.

WHAT IT IS & WHY IT MATTERS

The review process is designed to make learning routine, avoid recurring mistakes and reproduce successes. In practice, this means that all of the staff and stakeholders who participated meet shortly after the exercise or incident to review their assignments, identify accomplishments and look for ways to perform better the next time around.

The United States Army and the United States Department of Homeland Security have excellent guidance and resources for After Action Reviews. The processes they describe are easily translated into the nonprofit and private sector environments.

To minimize losses in short-term memory recollection, this review should be conducted as soon after the event as practical – preferably, the very same day. However, due to work schedules this review may take place days or weeks after. Without this review, individuals are almost certain to make the same mistakes repeatedly.

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1

How to Conduct Your Review

The process requires careful examination, systematic problem solving, group facilitation and minutes to be taken. Certain conditions should be met in order for the review to be successful:

2

- First, frame the discussion as an open dialogue, not a lecture or debate
- Establish and enforce ground rules
- Encourage all staff and stakeholders to be open and honest as they share their experiences
- Facilitators guide the discussion from beginning to end, ensuring that the discussion stays on track
- Introduce the topic(s)
- Transition from one question to the next
- Summarize the resulting action plans

3

4

Although there are several methods to carry out the review process, we have selected and outlined the three below as most appropriate for adult care:

5

- United States Army After Action Review Process
- Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program
- Utilizing the Experiential Learning Cycle to guide the review process

6



United States Army After Action Review Process

The United States Army’s After Action Review (AAR) Process revolves around four questions. According to Army guidelines, roughly 25 percent of the time should be devoted to the first two questions, 25 percent to the third, and 50 percent to the fourth. The four questions are:

1. What did we set out to do?
2. What actually happened?
3. Why did it happen?
4. What are we going to do next time?

UNITED STATES ARMY GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING AFTER ACTION REVIEWS

Do	DON'T
Schedule AARs shortly after the completion of an activity	Conduct AARs without planning
Make reviews routine	Conduct reviews infrequently or irregularly
Collect object data wherever possible	Allow debates to bog down when establishing the
Use trained facilitators	Allow dominating leaders to run AARs
Establish clear ground rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage candor and openness • Focus on things that can be fixed 	Base performance evaluations or promotions on mistakes admitted in AARs
Proceed systematically: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What did we set out to do? 2. What actually happened? 3. Why did it happen? (25% of time) 4. What are we going to do next time? (50% of time) 	Permit unstructured, meandering, disorganized discussions
Involve all participants in discussions	Allow senior managers or facilitators to dominate
Probe for underlying cause-and-effect relationships	Criticize or fault individual behavior or performance
Identify activities to be sustained as well as errors to be avoided	Conclude without a list of learnings to be applied in the future



Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP)

The HSEEP is a capabilities and performance-based exercise program which provides a standardized policy, methodology, and terminology for exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. This process generates a report called a **Hot Wash**.

HSEEP outlines four discussion points that can be used to guide the review process:

1. Expectations – what were the expectations that participants identified concerning the exercise?
2. Outcomes – what positive outcomes were identified while participating in the exercise?
3. Issues – what issues were raised as a result of the exercise?
4. Other – was there anything else that the participants noticed?

HOT WASH MINUTES

[Full Exercise Name]
[Exercise Name Continued]

Hot Wash Minutes
[Hot Wash Date]

Overview

Date and Location. [Jurisdiction] hosted the [Full Name of Exercise] on [Date]. Attendees included representatives from:

[List Agencies and Organizations]

Hot Wash. At the exercise’s conclusion, exercise controllers, evaluators, and players from [Functional Area/Agency] met briefly to discuss the exercise. Discussion primarily focused on player expectations, exercise outcomes, and issues for improvement.

Discussion Points

Expectations. Players identified their expectations concerning the exercise:

[List Expectations]

Outcomes. The following positive outcomes of conducting the exercise were identified:

[List Outcomes]

Issues. The following issues were raised by the exercise:

[List Issues]

Other. The planning group also noted the following:

[List Notes]



Utilizing the EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE to Guide the Review Process

Three simple questions structure the experiential learning approach to debriefing (see sample on next page):

1. **What?** Looking back on the experience (reflective observation) - Begin with an opportunity for participants to piece together their experience and their feelings about it. Encourage them to examine what happened within and around themselves, as individuals and as a team. What were their thoughts, experiences, feelings, hopes, and concerns?
2. **So what?** Interpreting the experience (abstract conceptualization) - Once participants have remembered their experiences, they can find broader meaning by interpreting that experience and formulating new concepts out of that experience. During this phase, bring experiences into dialogue with that is relevant to the specific goals of your seminar, tabletop or drill.
3. **Now what?** Exploring the possibilities for change (active experimentation) - This final phase is about integration of learning so that it can shape the future. This integration may involve individual, whole-group (or subgroup) commitments to continue addressing the issues. It should also solidify how the knowledge, skills, and attitudes developed through the seminar, tabletop, or drill can be applied or transferred to other areas of work through questions such as: What am I going to do with what I have experienced and learned? In what ways are my views of the issues changed by my experiences in this exercise?

Use a variety of reflection approaches and activities that are appropriate for different styles of learning, and skills. These may include:

- Verbal reflection, including group discussions; dialogues with stakeholders and experts; role plays; or group simulation experiences.
- Written reflection, including worksheets, surveys and evaluation forms.
- Artistic reflection, including drawing and creating bulletin boards, videos or posters.

Tie in your evaluation process, goals, and findings to date. The review process can be integral to your evaluation. Not only should the process itself be assessed, but it should generally include dialogue that is relevant to key evaluation questions.

Establishing clear expectations that the reflection time is integral to the improvement of the facility's disaster plan will allow for fully integrating emergency preparedness efforts into the staffs' lives through new skills, attitudes, and perspectives.



1

Debrief - USING THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CYCLE

Use these basic questions as starting points for developing the reflection questions that are specific to your exercise or real world incident.

2

What?

- What did you do?
- What did you think?
- What did you feel?
- What happened?

3

So What?

- What does it mean?
- What difference did our actions make? For whom? How?
- What do you think and feel about it now?

4

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Now What?

- What changes will you make because of what you learned and experienced?
- How will you apply what you've learned to your job?

6



Section 6



References

The following sources, in addition to those people mentioned in the acknowledgements, were used to create this toolkit. Each link, when clicked, will take you to the listed resource.

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