

# EXERCISE DESIGN 101

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# BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- **Why are you conducting the exercise (legislation, regular cycle, follow-up exercise, directive from your leadership, real incidents, etc.).**
- **Who needs to be involved in the planning?**

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- **Who & what are you testing?**
- **Consider the findings of your HRVA, historical data, new threats such as climate change, etc. to create the scenario.**
- **Have the support of your organization's leadership (senior and any other leadership).**

# W-5

- **Who - do you have the right people/agencies at the table?**
- **What - what are you testing & what type of exercise are you using?**

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- **Where - where will the exercise take place?**
- **When - establish the date and time**
- **Why - why are you conducting the exercise?**

# GETTING THE BALL ROLLING

- Pull together an initial planning team (keep it fairly small to start – 6 to 10)
- Determine the exercise format (tabletop, functional, mock)
- Determine who and what you want to exercise
- Determine who else needs to be part of the planning group (depends on the type of scenario)
- Be realistic (base this on your industry, past incidents, etc. )
- Assign tasks to the planning team.
- Everyone needs to know their own plan.
- Create the scenario – “keep it real”.
- Plan for success.

# TASKS

- **Tasks for the bigger planning group:**
  - Observers (preferably from several participant agencies)
  - ~~Signage for the exercise~~
  - Video & pictures
  - Moulage
  - Scenario setup
  - Props
  - Communications – media/public/parents

# “GO-LIVE”

- **Expect the unexpected and be prepared for stuff to go south in a hurry.**
- **Keep a few injects in your back pocket in the event that the exercise goes flat.**

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- **Ensure that everyone involved is aware of the “no duff” x 3 in the event a real incident occurs.**
- **Observers need to pay close attention to everyone involved and have the authority to shut down the exercise immediately**



# THE DEBRIEF/HOT WASH

1. Ensure all participants are involved
2. It should be held immediately post exercise
3. Ensure the environment is “safe”
4. ~~Discuss what went well and what fell short~~
5. Were the goals and objectives met?
6. Was the plan followed (observer & discussion point)?
7. Talk about what can be improved.
8. Do not belittle anyone.



# COMMON MISTAKES

1. The exercise is too complex
2. The exercise is unrealistic
3. No goals or objectives are defined
4. ~~Participants are setup to fail~~
5. Planning is too rushed, good planning takes time.
6. No debrief post exercise.

# POSITIVE OUTCOMES

1. Identifies short comings so the plans can be improved.
2. Participants are better prepared for real incidents
3. Builds better relationships
4. Builds trust
5. Increase confidence

