

UNIT 3: FIREGROUND DECISION MAKING

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OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- Explain the need for a logical thought process.
- State the difference between Classical Decision Making and Naturalistic Decision Making (NDM).
- Assess an incident scene and determine whether Classical Decision Making or NDM is the appropriate decision making model to use at a particular incident.
- State the importance of knowing when to be proactive and when to be reactive.

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INTRODUCTION

- Difference between:
 - Classical Decision Making
 - Naturalistic Decision Making
- Command sequence:
 - Which is more effective?

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NEED FOR A LOGICAL THOUGHT PROCESS

Confusion on arrival

- Need for immediate action
- Have only limited resources
- Many decisions must be made
- Many distractions

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PROACTIVE VERSUS REACTIVE

Proactive--who/what leads

- Incident leads
- Incident Commander (IC) leads

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PROACTIVE VERSUS REACTIVE (cont'd)

If reactive

- Safety is jeopardized
- Poorly defined objectives
- Lack of an effective strategy
- Inappropriate tactics
- Increased growth of incident

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POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Respond to mistakes
- Don't compound mistakes

May have only one chance to do it right

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STAY PROACTIVE

- Use a logical thought process
- Take time to gather your thoughts

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INCIDENT-SCENE DECISION MAKING

- Classical Decision Making
- Naturalistic Decision Making

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CLASSICAL

- Gathers information
- Analyzes information
- Determines problems
- Determines and prioritizes solutions
- Selects tactics
- Issues directives to implement tactics

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CLASSICAL (cont'd)

- Learning critical cues for an incident type not previously learned
- Evaluating and comparing
- Used during evaluation and planning

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CLASSICAL (cont'd)

- Little or no previous experience with incident type.
- Do not direct tactical operations until there is a plan.
- Plan must be based on critical cues.
- Tactics chosen from several options.

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NATURALISTIC

- Looks for critical cues
- Relates those cues to previous similar situations
- Recalls previous conclusions, results, and actions
- Issues directives

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NATURALISTIC (cont'd)

The greater one's experience on the same type of incident, the greater one's ability to read the subtle differences at any incident of that type, draw refined conclusions, and direct the most appropriate actions to provide a solution.

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NATURALISTIC (cont'd)

Basing decisions on outcomes from previous experience can produce action results much faster than following a step-by-step intellectual process.

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NATURALISTIC (cont'd)

- Used when decision maker has adequate experience or training for the incident type
- Almost instant recall, including interrelationships
- Always the first method that is done by the brain

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NATURALISTIC (cont'd)

Decision maker must recognize when there is insufficient information to use the Naturalistic Decision Making method.

- Little or no experience or training with this type of incident.
- Recognizes that the cues are very unfamiliar.
- Feels lost, overwhelmed, or in a panic.

Then use classical!

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NATURALISTIC (cont'd)

Decision maker will use classical method to evaluate naturalistic actions that have been ordered in a specific situation to ensure that what is being done is achieving desired result.

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SUMMARY

- Difference between Naturalistic Decision Making and Classical Decision Making
- How decisions are made at an incident scene and how they can impact the entire situation
- How important it is to have a logical thought process in the midst of confusion and chaos
- Importance of being proactive at the incident scene

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