



Emergency Preparedness: Awareness, Communication, and Response Participant Guide





Emergency Preparedness: Awareness, Communication and Response

SITUATIONAL AWARENESS



Gathering Information from the Environment

Practice Situational Awareness

- At home, at work and in the community
- Look for exits and familiarize yourself with the space
- Watch for out of place people, vehicles, or behaviors
- Stay alert and aware of your surroundings
- Avoid electronic distractions. Only use your device when it is safe to do so and keep headphone volume low.
- Scan any new environment for exits, barriers, suspicious people or objects, or anything else unique or unusual.
- Scan familiar environments for anything unusual or out of place.
- Be aware of your biases
- Always have an exit strategy and consider a plan b. Don't forget windows or exits that may be behind you.
- Maintain your calm and engage your senses
- Trust your gut - better to be wrong and safe
- Visualize possible scenarios and plan for what you would do in each case.

PERSONAL SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. continues to face a dynamic threat environment for targeted violence towards individuals or organizations that epitomize personal, political, or ideological grievances. This is further exacerbated by misinformation campaigns that aim to sow discord, shape public sentiment, and even encourage violence against individuals. To reduce the threat to personnel associated with ownership, operation, and maintenance of critical infrastructure, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) recommends following basic security measures which are detailed below.

BEHAVIORAL INDICATORS

Critical Infrastructure owners and their personnel can reduce the probability of becoming a victim of an attack by remaining vigilant and reporting suspicious behavior that individuals may exhibit, including:

Expressing or implying threats of violence	Posting personally identifiable information online with the intent to harm, harass, or intimidate
Prolonging interest in or taking pictures of people or infrastructure in an unusual or covert manner	Unauthorized people trying to enter a restricted area or impersonating authorized personnel
Loitering at a location without a reasonable explanation	Asking specific questions about business functions, security, or employees
Placing an object or package, either in a concealed or hidden manner, that has unexplainable wires or other obvious bomb-like components, and abandoning it or leaving the area	Avoiding security personnel or systems

PERSONAL SECURITY MEASURES

Applying basic security measures can enhance the protection of critical infrastructure and mitigate threats to personal safety.

Being aware of surroundings and nearby activities	Creating a personal or family emergency action plan
Limiting personal information sharing in digital platforms.	Avoiding text messaging or lengthy cell phone use while walking alone
Hiding personally identifiable information and work credentials when in public	Keeping hands free as carrying items may result in further vulnerabilities
Letting a trusted person know where you are going, particularly if outside of daily functions, and when you plan to return	Avoiding suspicious packages, and recognizing potential indicators of a suspected explosive device to notify law enforcement
Changing predictable routines, such as the timing and routes to work, school, or places of worship	Asking for help - contacting security or a co-worker for an escort to vehicle
Staying in well-lit public areas and avoiding isolated streets	Parking in well-lit and attended areas; exercising caution when using underground and enclosed parking
Avoiding leaving personal belongings unattended, even for a few minutes	Heading to nearest public gathering location, police station, or fire department if being followed
Having a cell phone available to make emergency calls	Trusting instincts and being assertive in decision making; calling for help from others or the police if feeling threatened
Carrying simple to use protective tools, such as pepper spray, and a bright flashlight. If maintained on your person, ensure facilities allow entry of such devices.	

For continued information on threats, visit the National Terrorism Advisory System web page at cisa.gov/national-terrorism-advisory-system.

Please visit cisa.gov/hometownsecurity for additional resources.

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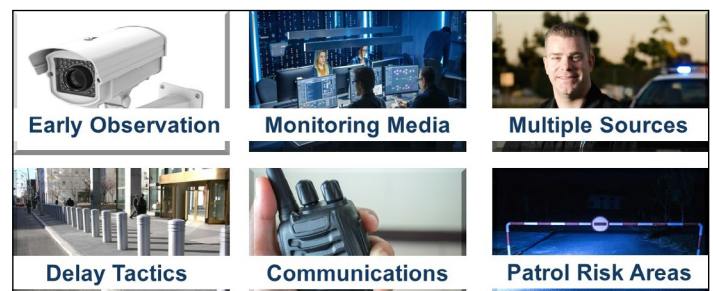
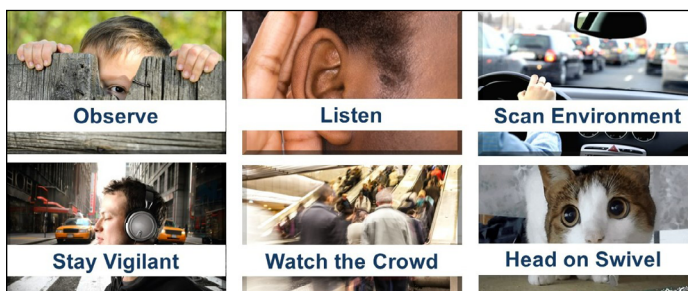
SLAM in the workplace

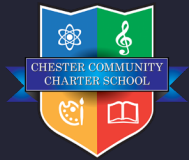
STOP: Take a moment to focus on the task at hand

LOOK: Look for hazards to yourself or others

ASSESS: Decide if you have the training & tools needed

MANAGE: Stop working if you feel unsafe





Emergency Preparedness: Awareness, Communication and Response



What is Bias?

Bias is our tendency to see the world from our particular lens of experience. It can lead us to ignore the evidence or make assumptions not based on evidence. It can impact what we remember and what witnesses remember. It can create blinders for BIT team members and impact their

ability to build rapport, connect, and create safe/neutral spaces. While we can never remove bias, we can train to make us more aware of how bias can affect decision making.

Types of Bias

- **Confirmation Bias:** Form an early hypothesis and tend to seek or overvalue evidence that fits it or confirms it. Are you interviewing or validating?
- **Dunning-Kruger Effect:** People who are terrible at a particular task think they are much better than they are, while people who are very good at it tend to underestimate their competence.
- **Anchor Bias:** The tendency to rely too heavily on the first piece of information we are given about a topic.
- **In Group/Out Group:** The tendency to be favorable toward the group that is similar to you.
- **Blind Spot:** Ability to spot systematic errors in others' decisions.
- **Availability Bias:** Reliance upon readily available (most recent) information.

Where does bias come from?

- Gender, gender identity experiences, and sexual orientation
- Race/ethnicity, world view, and generational expectations
- Mental illness or physical disabilities
- Different cultures or geographic areas
- Veteran history; and religious or political experiences
- Economic differences; and friend or peer groups



Don't Let Bias Steer You Wrong

- Look at behavior, not appearance
- Be aware of how cultural differences affect behavior in some situations
- Catch yourself if you find you are ignoring things or people based on your biases
- Think about times your biases have made you misread a situation
- Consider each type of bias above and when you have fallen victim to it



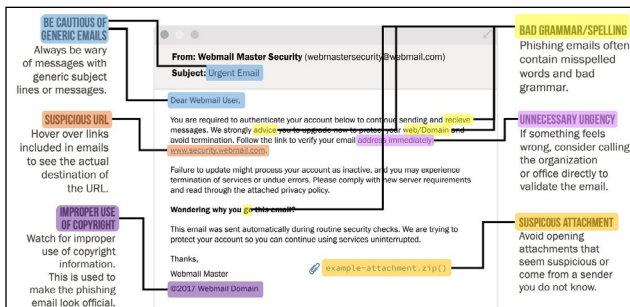
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Creating Predictions of Dangerousness

Large Events

- If you are bumped, check your valuables
- Be cautious of “let me help” set ups that lower your defenses.
- Map out potential escape routes in case of emergency
- If the crowd begins to move, move with the crowd diagonally.
- Don’t stand near fixed objects (stage, stanchion).
- Don’t go low in crowd, this raises the risk of being trampled.



Online

- Keep your device in your control.
- Choose a quality password and keep it secure.
- Be cautious completing quizzes on social media.
- Avoid public WIFI hot spots.
- Know what phishing schemes look like and how to avoid them.
- Review your privacy settings and make sure to log out.

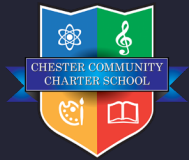
Parks

- Remote areas have limited cell service.
- Let others know where you are and where you are going.
- Have a plan for getting help if you become hurt.
- Headphones reduce awareness of potential threat.
- Know the area and have multiple exit plans in case of crisis.
- Consider carrying a flashlight or defensive weapon (e.g., keys).



Social Gathering

- Make use of a buddy system.
- Use caution when giving social information to people you don’t know.
- Stay and leave with the friends you came with.
- Make your own drink and keep it in your hands the whole time.
- If someone tries to enter your stopped vehicle, sound horn and drive away.
- If drinking, have a plan (sober ride) to get home.



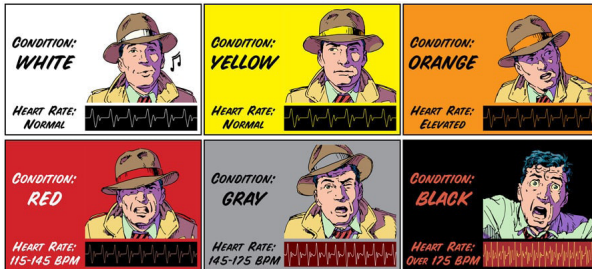
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Interpreting and Comprehending Information

The OODA Loop

Observe | Orient | Decide | Act

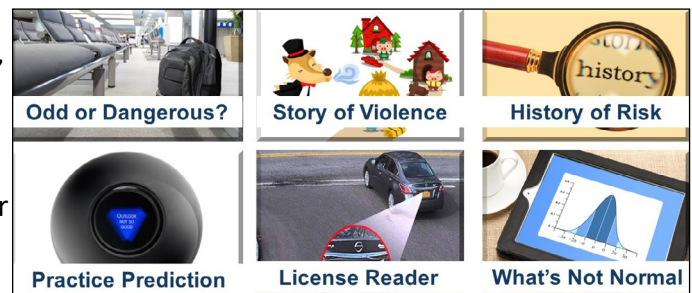


Observe at Condition Yellow

For situational awareness, be at “relaxed alert.” Use all your senses to take in your surroundings. If you are nervous or stressed, you are more likely to have a narrow focus and miss something. Or you may draw attention to yourself. Practice your observation skills and memorizing information like license plate.

Orient: Baseline, Goals, and Action Plans

While observing the area, what should you look for? First, establish a baseline for what would be normal in a given situation, then watch for anything that deviates from that baseline. Watch for people who are acting overly dominant, either more or less comfortable than others, or more or less interested in the surroundings.



Use what you have observed to make a plan of action.

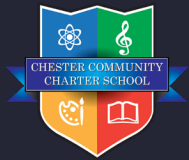
Seconds matter, so having a plan before the threat manifests. Consider your position in the room relative to where the threat might come from. Have an exit strategy and look for items that might be useful barricades or weapons.

Decide on Your Course of Action

Here, using what you have observed and the plans you develop, decide on the best course of action. In an active threat, consider the principles of run, hide, fight as covered on the next page. This decision must be made quickly, so the more you practice SA, the better equipped you will be.

Act Quickly and Decisively

Whatever action you decide is best, take it quickly and with determination. It can be as simple as crossing the street to avoid passing a dark alley or as crucial as running from an active shooting situation. You may only have seconds to save your life or avoid other harm.



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RUN | HIDE | FIGHT



RUN: Evacuate if possible

- Have your escape route in mind
- Evacuate, even if others do not follow, but help others if you can
- Leave your belongings behind
- Keep your hands open and visible
- Follow the instructions of any police officers
- Call 911 when you are safe



HIDE: Find a place to hide in silence

- If you cannot evacuate, hide as best as you can
- Find a place with cover to protect you from shots fired in your direction
- Try not to trap yourself or limit your ability to run if the opportunity arises
- Lock the door and barricade any entrance as much as possible
- Silence your cell phone and turn off any source of noise
- If possible, dial 911 and leave the line open



FIGHT: As a last resort, take action

- Attempt to disrupt, distract, or incapacitate the attacker
- Use improvised weapons - spray a fire extinguisher, throw hot coffee, stab with scissors
- Yelling can be a distraction
- Be aggressive and commit to your action

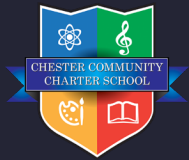
Continue to assess the situation and be prepared to change your tactic. If you run away from an active shooter only to discover that there is a second shooter, you may have to hide or fight. If you have hidden and the shooter passes you by, you may have the opportunity to run. Be prepared to adapt and continue to consider possible courses of action depending on what happens next.

When Law Enforcement Arrives

Their first priority is to stop the active shooter or other threat as quickly as possible. Remember, these officers are also at a heightened stress level and will not necessarily know who is a bad actor vs an innocent bystander.

- Keep your hands empty and raised, with your fingers spread
- Avoid making quick movements toward the officers
- Follow their instructions without stopping to ask for help or information





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CRISIS COMMUNICATION

Follow the directives of your school and agency.

This training is intended to offer best practice theory and practical advice.

Putting this into practice needs to occur within your existing reporting structures, policy, and procedures.

Respond quickly

The longer you delay, the more you lose control of the narrative and allow rumors to take hold. People may also assume that you are guilty of something. Social media will fill the void and your audience is likely to get angrier with every passing minute they don't hear from you.

Focus on the victims

Remember, it's not about you. Whether it's a water main break or a school shooting, the students are and should be the top priority and the focus of all communication in the immediate aftermath.

Don't place blame

This goes along with the previous recommendation. Stay focused on the victims, not who was to blame. That can come later.

Be honest and transparent

Think about what you would want to know if you were on the other side of the microphones. Even if it puts the school in a bad light, honesty is always the best option. It's likely to come out at some point, and being transparent early on shows integrity and lets you control the message. If you are asked something that you don't have the authority to answer, don't just say "no comment" – explain why you can't answer.

Be consistent

Make sure all staff are on the same page and sharing the same message. Consider writing up and disseminating a document with key points and actions each department should take.

Keep your cool

It may feel like the press is your adversary or are trying to catch you up. Remain calm and don't be drawn into an argument.

Avoid personal opinions

Stick to the organizational talking points and avoid sharing personal opinions, as these are likely to be attributed to the organization.

You are always on the record

Assume that there's a camera near you, it's recording. "Off the record" is not a guarantee, so be aware of everything you are saying near the media.

