2021

ICS TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

ADULT EDUCATION AND CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES

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Cover picture – Alex Chau, the senior ICS instructor with Alberta Justice and Solicitor General, teaches an ICS 200 course in 2016.   Alex was co-teaching the course to assist a new instructor but teaching ICS 200 also ensure his teaching skills are up to date for the course.   (Picture provided by Tom Cox)

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INTRODUCTION

"Great leaders are great learners." Thad Allen

Thad Allen was the National Incident Commander for Hurricane Katrina and the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill.   There is always something more to learn and teaching ICS is one of the best ways to learn a lot more.   I have never delivered an ICS course where I did not learn something from the participants.

There is a saying "You can have it fast, you can have it good, or you can have it cheap – pick two".   In the classroom, there may be a similar trade off: You can have experience, you can have knowledge, you can be an excellent teacher.   Most people have one or two, few have all three.   Great ICS instructors have all three; there is credibility and learning accumulated from actually doing ICS.   It is one thing to read the slides, it is another to know why each bullet on the slides is there, what it means, and being able to convey why it is important.   If you do not know how to engage a class and show your passion, how do you expect to do well in the classroom?   You will be strong in two; focus on getting better at the third, whichever one that is.

For 2021, I have added a few comments on video-delivery.   The argument of "Video-delivery works/video-delivery doesn't work" is moot in the middle of pandemic restrictions.   Like all methods of delivery, video-delivery has some advantages and some disadvantages.   Having run the pilot assessment for video-delivery of ICS Canada courses and having seen or delivered multiple courses, I will offer some observations on what works and what the challenges are.

Al Fraser, with the City of Edmonton has put two articles together on adult education: "Adult Education" and "Effective Presentation Skills". He has a Bachelor Degree in Adult Education and is providing some of the research and information he has learned over the years.   Knowing the students and the student needs is one part of building your adult education skills.

Watching almost four hundred potential ICS instructors present the ICS materials during the Train-the-Trainer sessions, there are some basic classroom skills that the instructors need to help the adult learner.   Some of the observations and suggestions for improving your presence have been included in the third chapter "Classroom Management".

Great leaders are great learners.   We hope you are able to pick up some valuable pointers so you have the classroom skill and understanding to add to your ICS knowledge and ICS experience.

CURRENT CHALLENGES IN THE CLASSROOM

Whether in the classroom or in a video-delivery, people are learning less.   The computers and phones allow multi-tasking, yet we ban their use while driving because we simply are not as good at multi-tasking as we think.

Laptops and tablets are major distractions.   You wouldn't let students leave for 35% of a class and say they "passed" the course.   Yet, we allow participants to zone out for an average 35% of the class when they are on their devices.   It is worse than that during video-delivery.   In one I-300 class I was involved with, the top students were in the program 65% of the time and the lowest student only spent 18% of the time in the course and 82% of their time in other apps and programs.   With those numbers, we are only providing check-in-the-box training and no understanding of ICS whatsoever.   If saving lives and responder safety were truly a Priority, no organization should tolerate these numbers.

As well, we have reduced the interaction intentionally or unintentionally.   Classroom I-100s have given over to on-line self-study I-100s.   I-200 is being offered on-line, without the group work, instructor stories, the ability to ask questions, and with limited application.   We provide e-books/digital files, we deliver more courses by video-conferencing, students take less notes (or none at all), and we shorten exercises to make up for lost time.   This is not conjecture, as the next articles demonstrate.

STUDENTS, PUT YOUR LAPTOPS AWAY

https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/
https://www.learningscientists.org/blog/2019/2/21-1
https://www.bbc.com/worklife/article/20200910-the-benefits-of-note-taking-by-hand
https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/heres-why-you-should-take-notes-hand-instead-with-laptop.html

Having people take notes with paper and pen may be viewed as archaic.   But long-hand note-taking is the best way to ensure students retain critical information.   Simply put, people who used computers to take notes were slightly better at retaining facts.   But those on computers performed significantly worse at understanding and applying concepts than people who wrote things down long-hand.   From PPOST to Management by Objectives to building the Operations Section to Briefings, those who take longhand notes have a better understanding and retention of the concepts.

"WRITE THIS DOWN"

Although people are provided the student reference guides, there is no guarantee they will interact with them.   Research shows that people simply do not learn unless they are writing things down.   Typing on a computer has limited benefits for recording facts, but when it comes to learning concepts (which is what the I-200, I-300, and I-400 courses are all about), hand-written notes are miles ahead of simply listening, listening and doing, and/or listening and typing.   We are teaching concepts and their

application.   Writing key notes and concepts down is the single best way to have people learn those concepts and their application.

In any of my courses, whether in the classroom or on video-delivery, whether an introductory course, an advanced position-specific course, or a Train-the-Trainer, everyone in my courses knows the words "Write this down!".   It refers to a phrase to help them remember, a gap in the curriculum, an improvement in the doctrine, an example worth understanding, or a reference worth exploring further. "Write this down!" is a signal that if they aren't engaged, they had better get engaged real fast.   At the same time, it has to be something worth remembering.

If they aren't writing, they are not engaging, comprehending, and applying.

STANDARDIZED TRAINING

I had a good discussion with a national organization about some of the issues of the ICS Canada curriculum.   "They know how to do their job and just want to get the job done.   They can't understand why they have to sit in the classroom and deal with unknown pathogens on a train, gym collapses, and lost children."   The curriculum is specifically designed to get people away from their comfort zone.   It is to make them think about the process and principles, rather than the details.

Tailoring your instruction to the audience improves engagement, but it also risks the one huge advantage of ICS; if you change ICS, you have removed the ability for anyone to come and immediately assist you.   As soon as you make one single change to the system, whether it be priorities, positions, titles, or forms, you have thrown a wrench into the system.   I have observed people come to a stop trying to figure out what changes have been made – one change makes everyone suspicious that more changes have been made and those suspected changes may blindside you.   On the "purist" side, I have seen situation where people have gone into Incidents where no changes have been made to ICS and have recognized that they immediately fit in and can operate.   I received two phone calls within minutes of one another with people saying "NOW I understand why you can't modify ICS!"   That all starts in the classroom.

ICS is standardized training.   Everyone in Canada should be receiving the same course, the same content, and the same understanding.   That is for any organization or any discipline in any part of Canada using the ICS Canada materials.

Your starting point for delivering ICS to any audience must be inter-operability.   But that will make engagement a challenge.   That is why I use a lot of analogy; showing how ICS applies in novel situations or showing how policies, plans, and procedures are actually ICS.   One challenge for all instructors is to provide relevant and engaging examples to audiences outside of your experience and knowledge.   How do you make ICS relevant to plumbers or municipal staff unused to responding or organizations that don't use ICS?   This may be where "know your audience" comes in and doing some additional research.

Another technique is to ask the participants if they can provide an example from their experience or a large incident they would respond to and work through the "translation" of what would be/was done and how it would be described and improved using ICS.

Tailoring a course for one audience is dangerous for a number of reasons.   It implies ICS can be modified.   It suggests ICS does not work for that discipline and must adapted in order to succeed. It puts the focus on "how do you normally respond" rather than "If you needed assistance, how can others immediately help you?".   It is almost certain to put the focus on the tactics and remove any understanding of the Objectives and strategies.

The standardized curriculum introduces challenges that explain why students may not be engaged, may not grasp the concepts, and may struggle to pass the exam.   It also explains why we demand instructors meet the course standards, present all the material, do the group exercises, and suggest using examples to illustrate the point and engage the class.

VIDEO-DELIVERY

With Covid-19, video-delivery has stopped any debate over whether video-delivery is better than the classroom or not.   It doesn't matter.   If video-delivery is the only viable option, you will deliver by video or have no emergency management training whatsoever.   I am not referring to the self-study, on-line course, but the video-delivered I-200 with all the exercises and group work.

I do have very strong feelings, based on the feedback from instructors in the higher-level courses about the effectiveness of the training.   It is here to stay, it does have some huge advantages, and instructors and platforms are improving as their experience with deliveries grows.   Video-facilitation is a skill and it is different from the teaching skills in the classroom.

I just had the privilege to watch a three-hour overview of "How to Facilitate Video-Delivery".   The three presenters gave a perfect example of "What not to do".   Literally. I have copious quantities of notes on how they talked about engagement, but then only allowed one person to participate.   They talked about how people have difficulty sitting in front of the computer, but then talked for an hour and a half without taking a break.

Video-delivery is more challenging than the classroom and the classroom is challenging enough.   The curriculum was not designed for video-delivery.   The natural breaks in the material work in a classroom, but instructors need to "force" breaks to avoid having people sit in front of a computer for too long.

I ran a pilot assessment of I-200, I-300, and I-400 courses by video-delivery and had the opportunity to observe multiple courses, with a wide variety of instructors from across North America, and participate in multiple courses.   My observations and recommendations on video-delivery have been accepted by both the Alberta Emergency Management Agency and ICS Canada on a national basis.   Along with the recommendations on platforms, adherence to standards, exercise conduct, and student interactions, I would offer the following observations of the nature of video-delivery as compared to the classroom:

CONNECTIVITY

You need to have a good connection, camera, mic/headset, and workspace environment.   Without those four, you will struggle to engage the students.   Having co-workers and phones interrupting the presentation is immediately distracting.   Either you have the four or you shouldn't be delivering.

On the other hand, not everyone will have good connectivity on their end, let alone a good camera, mic/headset, and workspace environment.   I get it.   Shutting off cameras and muting mics only helps to a certain degree.   After that, one person is holding the entire class up.

You cannot solve their connectivity.   As long as you have a good, clear audio and video into the internet, you have no control over someone's bandwidth, internet connection, work environment, or speaker/camera/microphone problems.

The participant sign-up instructions should include a clear statement of how one person with connectivity issues will be addressed.   The solution should not be holding everyone else back.

VIDEO-DELIVERY TAKES LONGER – MUCH LONGER

The I-200 course takes 20% longer than the classroom.   I am not talking about just learning the platform – as the months have gone by, everyone has done multiple Zoom, MS Teams, Webex, and Google Classroom meetings and training.   They know the clickology of most platforms now.   They know if they have bandwidth and connectivity issues.   The extra time required is because the video-delivery platform has small lags in connections, the inability to hear more than one person at any time, limited interaction, and the requirement for clearer instructions.   Everything adds up.

The result is that any I-200 by delivery requires new strategies such as:

- Extend the training time by 20%
- Reduce the slides and content by 20%
- Take fewer breaks and go into lunch/extra time by 20%
- Talk 20% faster
- Provide 20% less examples and illustrations

The reality is that you need to do a combination of all of the above or simply add another ½ day to the course.   Nobody seems to want to add another day, so the instructor is forced to determine what to cut.

NEED FOR MULTIPLE INSTRUCTORS/FACILITATORS

You can save money by not having travel time/costs for both the students and the instructors.   Like most emergency management lessons learned, there are also additional costs (that nobody wants to acknowledge, let alone build-in).   Unless you build in more instructors and facilitators, you will deliver a less-than-optimum course.

You will need one instructor for every break-out room or two break-out rooms at most. Bouncing in and out of rooms risks having groups struggle with the exercises. The facilitator does not have to be an ICS instructor, but should be someone who knows ICS and understands the purpose of the exercise.

The instructors/ facilitators can also:

- Help participants with signing in/equipment/connectivity issues.
- Monitor the chat function
- Provide variety in the instructor presentations (be careful that you aren't competing for face-time to tell your story or provide your explanation. It's already 20% overtime!)
- Cover off if you lose connectivity or need to take an emergency call.

Video-delivery is a perfect place for you to offer co-teach/observation opportunities for new instructors, those who don't teach very often, or instructors from other disciplines. I have never watched another instructor (new or experienced) where I did not get a better perspective, story, example, illustration, delivery method, or new idea. Why aren't you taking the same opportunity to learn?

Yes, I know some consultants do not allow new instructors or co-teaches because of the impact a poor delivery may have on the contract and their reputation. As well, you don't want competitors to see what you are doing and lose a competitive edge. I get it. But why aren't you reaching out to "safe" organizations, such as your cooperating and assisting agencies, and inviting their instructors to join your video-delivery?

MORE ENGAGEMENT IS NEEDED

Good instructors are saying "I am exhausted after a video-delivery." If you are not exhausted, then you should be doing an honest assessment of how engaged your students are. The very nature of video-delivery prevents a large amount of the interaction and engagement. For example, only one person can speak at a time. In the classroom and the real world, we are more engaged when we are actively trying to determine which conversation to follow and pay more attention when multiple conversations are going on. The video-delivery sucks the life out of that engagement.

I compensate with more energy and excitement but also forcing more participation. The best instructors will have a list of the students' names and check off every time you ask them a question. Asking questions in a random order is more likely to keep them paying attention. Asking the question, waiting, then identifying the student forces everyone to think about what is the answer rather than just the one person. I actually had a student thank me for asking everyone the same number of questions; she felt that in other courses only "favoured" people got asked. As a rough guide, for a ½ day delivery, everyone had three or four checkmarks beside their name.

EXERCISES NEED MORE GUIDANCE

In the classroom, one instructor can listen to the activities of multiple groups at the same time.   You can tell the groups that are forming up well, see the people who are not being engaged, and monitor the progress of the activities.   The students also can hear other groups (and steal their best ideas), can tell when an instructor is available to answer questions, and can tell who in the class and in their group is engaged.   Instructors can take a question from one group and answer loudly for all groups to hear. Instructors can let groups know when they should be finished one part of the exercise and should move onto the next question because there are only so many minutes left.   That all disappears in video-delivery.

Groups get off track almost instantaneously.   Yes, they can "wave" or request the instructor, but that assumes they even know that they have gone off-track.   Multiple steps in an exercise become confused and progress may not meet the needs of the exercise.   You almost need one facilitator per group.

The danger with having one instructor or facilitator per group is clear.   Due to time constraints (remember the 20% deficit) and lack of progress in the group, the facilitator does the exercise for the students.   I have seen this occur multiple times.   The whole purpose of the exercise is for the participants to do the exercise, not the instructors.

A couple of ground rules may help.

1. Make the purpose and outcome of the exercise crystal clear.   Excruciatingly clear is better.
2. If there are multiple steps, break down the steps and the exact time allowed for each step (in order to ensure the entire exercise is completed).
3. Like the classroom, allow the groups a couple of minutes to form up, identify what is required and begin to work on the exercise.   They need to figure this out for themselves.
4. Inform the groups that the facilitators will have their video off and mic muted.   They are there only to ensure the group does not get off-track.   They will answer questions, indicate time constraints, and will only jump in if the exercise is off-track or running behind.
5. Without saying so, make each group successful.   If a group struggled, but got one part of the exercise right, let them present what they got right.   They will hear from the other groups where they got off track.   Keep them engaged by showing they were successful on what they got right.
6. The instructor/facilitator cadre should debrief the exercises.   Some exercises work well and people have no problem completing what is required.   Some exercises won't.   You need to understand why the exercise is important, what didn't work, why it didn't work, when should you step in, how it can be approved, and brainstorm how we can do it better.

BREAKS

Video-delivery requires breaks every 40 or 50 minutes.   People can only sit at a computer so long.   Even in the classroom, they can stretch, walk around, indicate they need a break, or hit the washroom during the class without a major interruption to others.

As an instructor in the video-delivery world, you need to be comfortable giving more frequent breaks.   Yes, you are on a roll with the delivery.   You still have to stop more often.

Get comfortable providing more breaks.   Be clear on the rules on breaks:

- You have exactly x amount of time.
- Get out of your chairs, stretch and move around.
- Check emails, hit the washroom, refresh your coffee.
- Breaks are mandatory.   Leave your camera on and your chair empty.
- We will start right at x.   I can see, with your cameras on, that you have returned.

THE DANGERS OF SHORTCUTS

ICS training is important.   It can be used by any organization, for any hazard or use, of any size, at any time.   The purpose is to save lives, keep responders safe, stabilize the situation, and protect property, the environment as well as recognize other priorities such as economy, cultural, reputational and political considerations.

Yet, video-delivery is being used by some instructors and organizations as a short-cut to merely provide check-in-the-box training.   I have seen fourteen-hour courses cut to seven or eight hours by video.   Slides have exam questions highlighted.   Instructors doing the exercises for the participants.   Exercises and slides cut because of the additional time required for video-delivery.   Everyone has an excuse for why this occurs.   It is still an excuse.

Video-delivery requires a different skillset than teaching in the classroom.   It requires more time and energy from the instructor.   It requires greater preparation and rigor in enforcing times and obtaining engagement.   Otherwise, we are simply taking short-cuts for our convenience.

BENEFITS OF VIDEO-DELIVERY

I may sound negative when it comes to the challenges of video-delivery.   That is because people only address the benefits, but fail to identify the associated, and inevitable, costs.   There are no "perfect answers" in emergency management and every solution or lesson learned always has a downside.   The benefits of video-delivery are no different.   This is one of the reasons lessons learned aren't always

learned.   By ignoring the costs, we go for a bright and shiny simple solution and then are surprised when it doesn't catch on or doesn't work.

But there are some considerable advantages to video-delivery.   When we go back to the classroom, there will still be a place for good video-delivery of ICS courses.   This is why adding video-delivery skills and experience to your repertoire may be extremely worthwhile.

Any community that does not have enough participants to hold a course will no longer have to wait for months or years until they can offer a course.   They can put the people into another community or organization's video-delivery.

Travel costs can be reduced.   In remote locations, it may take an instructor a day to fly in and another day to fly out and then the time required to deliver the course.   With video-delivery, travel time and cost savings can be substantial.

Video-delivery demonstrates the concept of standardized training.   Everyone in Canada / The United States is getting the same course; the same curriculum, the same concepts, and the same application. ICS is not for you and your organization.   ICS was designed so that everyone coming to help you on your worst day can fit in quickly and effectively.   The video-delivery with multiple instructors and participants from multiple organizations quickly reinforces that.

Instructors have the chance to work with some of the best.   I recently worked with The Training Group out of Texas to deliver a course that included instructors from Tennessee, Texas, Colorado, Canada, and Michigan.   When you are instructing with some of the best instructors in North America, you will become a much better instructor yourself.

ICS Canada materials have all been translated into French.   Alberta, where I am based, has only one instructor who can tackle French instruction and they have a full-time job already.   Video-delivery allows a French-speaking instructor in New Brunswick or Quebec to deliver an ICS course in French to one person in Alberta, federal partners in the Coast Guard, Transport Canada, Parks Canada, and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency as well as others in Les Francophonie around the world.   I think that is amazing and a unique opportunity.

INTRODUCTION TO ADULT EDUCATION

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April 13, 2014

Malcolm Knowles introduced the term "andragogy" in 1968, and he defined *andragogy* as "the art and science of helping adults learn," and clearly differentiated it from *pedagogy* (the art and science of teaching children). In these two definitions are key differences: in andragogy we help adults learn; in pedagogy we teach children. Knowles held that pedagogy gives the teacher full responsibility for all decisions about learning and places the learner in a dependent role, following teacher instructions.

The andragogy model is based on four underlying assumptions:

1) Adults are self-directing (the learning climate should be one which causes adults to feel accepted, respected and supported).

2) Adults have many and varied experiences (provision should be made for adults to plan their learning).

3) Adults are ready to learn as a result of being at a developmental transition point (they can put the new skills to work now as part of their job, career aspirations, etc.).

4) Adults prefer problem-centered or performance-centered learning (hands on practical skills, kinesthetic learners).

Although learning is governed by the same basic principles for both adults and pre-adults, adults differ from youth in many ways that influence their learning. Adults are different in terms of such factors as motivations, interests, values, attitudes, reaction speeds and learning histories. The conditions imposed by these differences make the teaching of adults uniquely different and require that instructors adjust teaching methods and learning environments accordingly.

Greater Amount of Life Experience

First, adults enter a training activity with a greater amount of life experiences from which they can relate new learning.

Implications

The more an instructor can base his teaching upon the previous experience of the learner, the better and faster the trainees will learn. Instructors should urge trainees to relate new or abstract concepts to their own experiences and to use the past to assist them with the present and future.

A trainee's past experience can in some cases be an obstacle to learning. It is difficult for an adult to learn to do a familiar task in an unfamiliar way, or to view a deeply valued concept in a new light. In these situations, past experiences may actually interfere with new learning.

Different Self-Image

Adults have a different self-image than youth. Pre-adults normally enter learning situations perceiving themselves as being highly dependent on others for direction, while adults enter with an image of themselves as self-directing, responsible, mature, and dependent learners. In fact most adults resist situations in which they are treated like anything other than adults.

Implications

Trainees should not be put in a position of simply being passive recipients of facts.

To facilitate a learning atmosphere, the climate of the classroom should be one of informality, friendliness, and mutual respect.

Trainees should be allowed some degree of contribution in planning/carrying out of specific learning activities and evaluations.

Trainees should also be informed clearly as to what is expected of them, what they will be learning, and the standards by which their performance will be evaluated. This information will not only direct the trainees in the learning process, it will give them clearly defined goals to direct themselves in the training program.

Fear of Failure

Many adults have experienced so much criticism, failure and discouragement in their pre-adult years that their self-confidence, level of aspiration, and sense of worth is damaged. Many trainees, in a state of anxiety, fear failure and rejection by their peer groups.

Implications

The trainee who suffers from the constant fear of failure loses their desire and determination to learn. The good instructor will accent the positive, using every opportunity to praise good work and minimize faults or mistakes. However, it is not suggested that errors be ignored - only minimized.

Expectation to Use Learning

Adults enter learning situations with more specific and immediate intentions to apply newly acquired knowledge than pre-adults, who do not expect to use most of what they learn until much later in life. Adults normally require practical and immediate results from learning.

Implications

For maximum learning to take place, the trainee must believe that the information presented is relevant, purposeful, and meaningful and not the result of whim. The trainee must view the training process as being the catalyst that will enable him/her to perform acceptably on the job.

Teaching methods should emphasize techniques that are problem or situation centered. This type of approach is necessary because adults are more likely to learn and are more interested when they are dealing with problems and situations with which they can identify related needs. Problem-centered methods and techniques also give the trainee personal meaning which promotes learning as opposed to subject-centered which tends to be very impersonal.

Speed of Learning

At about age 20, learning performance begins a slow decline at the rate of approximately 1% a year. The adult learner retains or maintains the power to learn, but gradually loses the speed at which learning is accomplished.

Implications

The slowdown in learning performance ability means shorter lesson assignments for average classes and more time for those classes involving complex subject matter. The skilled trainer will use the breakdown method (simple to complex) when the new learning involves complicated skills or complex ideas, introducing the next operation or idea only after the first has been mastered.

Trainers should also provide encouragement and preface each training session or class with convincing introductory remarks to motivate the best possible performance. A simple appeal to the trainee's personal safety, economic interest, psychological or physiological well-being, etc., might spark an intense interest which might act as a catalyst to learning.

Retaining Information

For the adult, the ability to retain knowledge also declines with age. Forgetting proceeds rapidly at first - then more slowly. However, recall shortly after learning reduces the amount of forgetting, and spaced or distributed practice further facilitates retention.

Implications

Test, repeat, and practice at the next session the work taught at the previous session. Utilize a variety of methods and devices to promote opportunities for practice and repetition. If the instruction involves psychomotor skills, the trainee should be permitted to perform as soon as possible.

The trainer should also evaluate their presentation, throughout their session(s), to ensure the trainees receiving and understanding the knowledge that is being transferred to them.

Ability to See

Visual acuity - the clarity with which we see - is the physiological change most associated with the aging process. It is at its best somewhere in the late teens or early 20s, and then declines steadily until about 40. After 40, a sharp decrease is noted to 55, and then a gradual decrease continues throughout the remainder of adult life.

Implications

Classrooms or other learning environments should be properly lighted. Common problems are too little and/or improper lighting.

Visual aids should be constructed in such a fashion that they are legible by all in a classroom. Strong colours should be used to accent and add richness to visual material. Materials with "shiny" surfaces that cause reflections or glare should be avoided.

When working on a chalkboard/whiteboard ensure adequate time is given for trainees to take notes from the board.

Ability to Hear

Auditory acuity - our ability to hear - also undergoes great physiological change with age. Auditory acuity normally reaches peak performance somewhere between 10 and 15 years, after which there is gradual but consistent decline to about age 65.

Implications

In some cases the loss of audio acuity can account for a trainee's frustration or confusion in certain learning situations. Verbal communication could be filtered or blocked out, thereby having pronounced effect upon a trainee's attempts to learn.

Instructors should see that the learning/teaching environment is free from outside noise distractions. Other helpful techniques for instructors are: (1) speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard anywhere in a classroom; (2) write unusual words, new names, and strange expressions to assist the spoken word; (3) refrain from turning your back to classes while talking as facial expressions and gestures improve verbal communication; (4) change the pitch of your voice often; and (5) repeat questions asked, back to an entire class before answering.

Conclusion

Your teaching should embrace the philosophies and theories of adult education principles. Adults want to be involved in the learning process and want to know what they are going to learn and how they can use this information right away. Adult learners are uniquely different from pre-adult learners in terms of physical maturity, psychological growth and development, and social influence. These factors have a noticeable influence on the learning process. In order to facilitate maximum efficiency and productivity, training philosophies need to relate positively to the training processes and procedures to what is known about adult learning.

You as the instructor will have many challenges ahead of you in modifying our methods of delivery and strategies. Now we must interact more with the trainee. We must not be forthcoming with an answer easily, but must bring the information out through lecture-developmental discussions and not simply lecture.

Over time you will see the ease that which this program may be delivered and you should see immediate results in the class(es) you lead. This new "science" of adult education is something you have been a part of for years; you now have the opportunity to use this science in all of your classes involving adults who wish to learn as adults. *Remember, Andragogy is the art and science of helping adults learn!*

Good Learning!

EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION SKILLS

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APPEARANCE

PHYSICAL

Appearance

a. Dress neatly and tidily - first impressions are important.
b. Carry yourself in a confident and professional manner.

Eye Contact

Keep eye contact with the class. This will:

a. keep them alert.
b. make them feel that they are being directly spoken to.
c. make them feel part of the class.
d. give them confidence in you as the instructor/presenter.

Monitor the class' reactions to what you are saying so that you can adjust your talk accordingly.
Do not:
a. stare (intimidate).
b. move your eyes from side to side (distraction).
c. look out the window or at the clock (indicates boredom).
d. look only at the training aids or white board (this can be perceived as impolite).
e. look at your feet or at the ceiling (indication of nervousness or timidity).

Body Movements

Be natural - don't move around too much or too little.
Do not:
a. stand rigid.
b. march.
c. slouch.

Do:
a. move forward for emphasis (e.g. when standing at a podium).
b. relax when talking from behind a desk -this creates some intimacy with a group.
c. slowly and on occasion move from side to side to engage all parts of the class.

Gestures

Do:

use meaningful and appropriate gestures to make a point.
Do not, or at least avoid:
a. play with keys or coins in your pocket.
b. use your hands too much, touching your nose or ears and excessive coughing.
c. use gestures that indicate you are washing your hand of a situation or wringing your
hands because of frustration.
d. use a praying gesture as some may find this offensive or foot tap as this may be perceived as
patronizing.
e. use a pointer, pen, pencil or marker to point at an individual may be perceived as offensive.

VOICE

Volume

• Speak loudly enough to be heard.

Pitch

• Use effectively to convey meaning.

Rate

• Speak more quickly to convey enthusiasm.
• Speak more slowly to emphasize key points or issues.

Do not:
a. speak so quickly that no one can understand.
b. speak so quickly that materials are glossed over rather than well explained so that they   are
understood.
c. speak so slowly that people become bored or drowsy.

Articulation

• Speak clearly, pronouncing words carefully -don't mumble. Control your lips, teeth and   tongue to
assist you.

LANGUAGE

- Avoid "pet" expressions (e.g."O.K.","Like", "You know").
- Do not use profanity.

Tip: Write down your pet expressions on a post-it note (place on your podium as a reminder and have a colleague mate point   out when you use those or others which you should add to your list.

HUMOUR

- Use humour but only appropriately.

METHODS TO PLAN IMPROMPTU TALKS

METHOD I – "P.R.E.P."

P = Point
R = Reason
E = Example
P = Point

Point

- Personal viewpoint.
- Something strong.
- Attention getter

Reason

- Explain why you feel this way.

Example

- Real life examples which clearly illustrate your viewpoint.
- Support material.

Point

- Go back and re-state the point.

METHOD II - PAST / PRESENT / FUTURE

- Past - What happened in past?
- Present - What is present situation?
- Future - Where are we going in the future?

METHOD III - RELATED INCIDENT METHOD

- Use the subject as a reminder of a previous incident.
- Relate the incident or an experience using lots of detail. (e.g. asked to speak on m.v. safety, tell story of your first accident or first investigation of m.v. fatality and the effects it had on you.)

METHOD IV - 5 "W's" AND ONE "H"

What
- What happened?
- What was the cause?

Who
- Whom did it happen to?
- Who is involved?

Where
- Where did it happen?

When
- When did it happen?

Why
- Why did it happen?
- Why are you involved?

How
- How did it happen?
- Are you involved?

N.B. - Be brief. If you are asked to speak on an impromptu basis keep it brief and to the point.

GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPING A FORMAL PRESENTATION

INTRODUCTION

Purpose: The purpose of the introduction is to define the objective of your presentation, motivate your audience and outline what is to be covered.

O = Objective (State what you hope to achieve in your presentation)
M = Motivate (Get people involved at the outset)
O = Outline (What is to be covered)

BODY

Purpose: The body is the most important part of the presentation. The body should cover the essential information, provide examples, and allow for discussion and clarification. What should the body include?

- Teaching points
- Examples
- Exercises, if appropriate
- Periodic reviews
- Opportunities for discussion or questions for discussion

Conclusion

Purpose: To summarize the body in light of the objective, make a concluding statement and stimulate further thought and action.

CONSIDERATIONS IN DESIGNING A PRESENTATION

Time

The length of the presentation may vary depending on information to be covered, time available, and the interest and attention span of the target group (clients).

Time Blocks

The length of time you plan to spend on each part of your presentation should be noted on your document to keep you on track.

Content Coverage

The extent and level of content coverage will vary by target group (clients).

Target Group Level

The level of language used and complexity of content coverage should be adapted to the target group (clients) i.e. cadets, staff, school children, etc.

Method of Instruction

Typically presentations are done through lecture. However, the methods you can use are only restricted by your imagination. Again, the methods you choose should be consistent with the nature of the target group and the amount of time you have.

METHODS FOR PLANNING EFFECTIVE PRESENTATIONS

Methods:

Lecture, demonstration/performance, role plays, videos, slides, group work.

Training Aids:

You should note where the aids you will use are located in your presentation on your document to keep you on track. e.g. cartoons, graphs, quotes, actual equipment, examples, films, samples, charts, manuals, books, newspapers, statistics, audio/visual equipment.

References:

If the presentation is geared toward motivating interest in the subject matter covered, you may wish to provide a list or a bibliography of additional readings, materials, experts (partners), which or who can enhance understanding of the issue.

DISCUSSION LEADING

Advantages of discussion leading:

• Gets participants involved in their own learning.
• Lets an instructor know what participants know about a subject and how they feel about it.
• Taps into the knowledge and experience of a learning group, thus making good use of them as a resource.
• Helps an instructor avoid lecturing participants on subjects they already know about.
• Helps participants retain knowledge better than a lecture ould. Disadvantages of discussion leading:
• Requires more skill from an instructor than straight lecturing.
• Takes more time than a lecture to cover the same amount of material.

Best uses:
- When you need to cover material that participants have some previous experience in or knowledge of.

What an instructor must do before the discussion:
- Set the stage for a good discussion.
- The discussion group should consist of no more than 25. If it is larger, consider establishing sub-groups for discussion.
- Participants should be seated in a manner that will promote discussion. Ideally, they should all see one another easily. Avoid having people sitting in rows, if possible.
- Consider the level of knowledge of the group. In order to discuss, members of the group need to have some knowledge of the topic.
- Consider when this discussion period occurs. Is it early in the morning or late in the afternoon? This may affect their energy level.
- Consider the previous experience of this group. If this is the first time they are asked to discuss something, they may need some prompting. If they have participated in many discussions very recently, they may have become bored with the technique and not wish to participate.
- Consider how comfortable the members are with the group. If the group is new, members will need some time to get used to one another and may feel uncomfortable discussing certain sensitive topics. If the group is well established and cohesive, discussing any topic should not be a problem.

Know what training objective you are trying to accomplish.

- Plan your discussion session by preparing questions to cover key points you want participants to consider during the discussion period.

What an instructor must do during the discussion:

- Begin the discussion by stating your objective and expectations and explaining how you wish the discussion process to occur. Include the time frame if time is tight.

Use questioning techniques effectively:

- Open the discussion with a well phrased, clear, open-ended question.
- Allow silence following a question. Participants need time to think, to decide to answer, to formulate their answer, to get up the courage to give it. Take a drink of water or simply smile and look around the room to show you're willing to wait them out. If the silence goes on too long, reformulate your question. Avoid answering your own question either before anyone else does or after (to give the "correct" answer).

Use a variety of questions to involve participants:

• Open-ended: To redirect the discussion to a new topic when needed, make participants think of another   aspect, keep things moving along.
• Closed: To clarify a point, solicit particular information, remind participants of an important point (use very few closed questions since they don't promote discussion).
• PPT/Overhead: To involve everyone in the group. This should be the most often used question in leading   discussions.
• Directed: To involve a quiet participant, seek out a point of view from someone with particular experience.
• Reversed: If any participants try to draw you into the discussion by asking you a question, reverse their question to them by asking what they think.
• Relayed: Again, if a participant tries to draw you into the discussion, you may relay the question to the group by asking the group in general what they think of the issue.
• Restricted: If one or a few participants monopolize the discussion, you may give others a chance to speak by restricting a question to another part of the group or room.

Guide the discussion:

• Generate multiple responses. Don't simply accept the first correct answer and move on. Encourage other responses ("Good, what else?", "Good, another example?", "How about this side of the room?").
• Be flexible. Use only those prepared questions that you need to move the discussion to each key topic. You may not need them all if the discussion moves in that direction naturally. Accept that the order in which they come up may be different from the sequence you had envisaged.
• Observe participants' non-verbal. When you see confusion, disagreement or attempts to break in, use a directed question such as ("John, do you have a question?"); or an observation ("Mary, I think you disagree")   to give that person the opportunity to intervene.
• Use paraphrases to ensure you and participants understand a long statement, to encourage shy participants to continue.
• Use recaps to close off discussion of one topic or from one individual, follow it immediately with a question on another topic or to another participant (directed) or part of the group (restricted: "We haven't heard much from this side of the room. I'd like to hear your opinions about...").
• Avoid expressing your opinion or asking leading questions that might bias opinions or make participants   feel manipulated. Remember, if they don't bring out every point, you can add it later.
• Be prepared to intervene with thought-provoking questions or take a challenging position, however, to   stimulate thinking.
• If one participant interrupts others frequently or interrupts someone who has been very quiet up until then, interrupt the interrupter to allow the first speaker to continue ("Excuse me, Joe, I don't think Susan had finished.").
• During the discussion, try to sit down. This position will allow greater discussion amongst the participants.

Manage time effectively:

• Anticipate how long the discussion should last and determine whether you have enough time to meet the objective.
• If the discussion seems to be going off on a tangent, ask the speaker to relate what she or he is saying to the objective.
• Announce to the group that there is five to ten minutes left until the end of the discussion period. Be sure to leave yourself enough time for the conclusion.

What an instructor must do after the discussion:

• In your conclusion, recap the main points of the discussion. Add additional important points that they may have missed ("Other aspects we should consider are..."), link the discussion to the objective and to their job environment.

CHECKLIST ON DISCUSSION LEADING

Discussion leader: _____

DURING THE DISCUSSION, THE LEADER:	YES	SOMEWHAT	NO
Set the stage by explaining the objective of the discussion and the time limit.			
Opened with a well phrased, clear, open-ended question.			
Allowed silent reflection time.			
Used a variety of questioning techniques (overhead, directed, reversed, relayed, restricted).			
Encouraged multiple responses to questions.			
Acknowledged and accepted responses			
Showed awareness of participants' body language.			
Used paraphrases to encourage responses.			
Used recaps to close off discussion and summarize.			
Avoided expressing your own opinion until the conclusion.			
Ensured that everyone had a chance to participate.			
Kept the discussion on topic.			
Used body language to make participants feel comfortable.			
Controlled time effectively.			
Recapped the discussion at the end.			
THE HAND-OUT DISTRIBUTED:	YES	SOMEWHAT	NO
Is it clearly written?			
Is it well organized?			
Will it be useful to me in the future?			

PART 3 - CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

OBSERVATIONS FOR NEW INSTRUCTORS

By Tom Cox

Having taught over 500 ICS Instructors through multiple Train the Trainers, working on explaining ICS to organizations and individuals, and having presented hundreds of ICS courses, I can offer a few tips for those teaching their first few ICS courses – and reminders for those who are teaching their hundredth course.

In the I-200 Train the Trainer, I don't tell participants which module they will be asked to present.   They are supposed to be prepared for all of them.   Anyone can prep for a pre-assigned module to show their best.   You should be doing that anyway.   But the Train the Trainer is not to show how well you can prepare.   It is to show that you are prepared to present any, and all, the modules.   At which point, the participants are self-conscious that they don't know everything they would like, don't have the flow of the material, and don't know the challenges or pitfalls of the module.   True.   But I can tell within four minutes if you know the material well enough to instruct or not.

I ignore the first three minutes of the presentation.   Everyone is nervous, everyone wants to look at their book, everyone is self-conscious.   By the fourth minute, the person presenting finds a rhythm, gets away from their book, stops reading the slide, and begins a more natural and confident presentation. At four minutes, I can tell if you can teach or will need more work.

So, what am I looking for?

1.   You have to be teaching to get good at this

You can't expect to become a good ICS instructor unless you are in the classroom.   The Train the Trainer is often the first time someone attempts to deliver the material.   Reading the material on your own is very different from delivering the material to any audience.   The Train the Trainer delivery is simply to check they know the material and provide the participants their first chance to see how the delivery "feels and flows".   The more you teach, the better you become at it.

Once approved, candidates are required to do one or two co-teaches with recognized instructors. These co-teaches allow candidates the chance to see the entire flow of the course, see how the exercises work along with the challenges for the students doing them, and to gain additional stories, examples, and strategies from experienced instructors.

I have always learned something from watching other instructors and listening to their examples.   You get better by co-teaching, whether it is a requirement, recommended, or for personal development. The more you co-teach, the better you get.

Teaching once a year is not enough to maintain your skills and to build your abilities.

2.   Don't stand by your book!

Your instructor notes are a security blanket.   You need to know your materials well enough that you no longer need your binder.   As long as you are by the binder and reading from the notes, you won't see the reaction of the students, you won't help the flow of the course, and you will find people lose interest.   In the ICS 200 Train the Trainer, I expect people to refer to their books because they are afraid of missing "something important".   The truth is that if you have to refer to your book to remember the main points of a module or slide, you probably aren't ready to instruct.   If you have to refer to your book to remember the minor points, then you are distracting the students from the main points.   In the ICS 300 Train the Trainer or ICS 400 Train the Trainer, staying by your binder or referring to the binder will likely prevent you from being approved.

More importantly, in the classroom, the instant you need to look at your instructor notes, you will lose the attention of the participants.   Immediately.   They see you do not know the material, you have broken the flow of the delivery, and you are losing credibility as being knowledgeable about ICS.   The instructor book is an anchor, not an aid.

3.   Move around the room

In the 200 ICS Train the Trainer, I expect people to stick by their book because it is the first time they are presenting and they are uncomfortable with the room layout, the materials, and the perceived judgement of their peers.

You can use room movement to just keep people more alert – as you move, they will adjust their body to follow you and that movement keeps them from sitting still (and falling asleep!).   The room movement can be used to move between two students bothering the others with their conversation or to get someone to put their cell phone away and focus on the course.   There are some positives, too, such as allowing you to gather their attention by walking to the scree and pointing to a specific bullet on a slide to make a point.

Like anything, don't over-do it.   Excessive movement is distracting.   Standing behind people, especially for any length of time, makes it difficult for them to concentrate on you and may make people feel awkward.

4. Don't read the PowerPoint

The participants can read it for themselves!   The PowerPoint is often more for the instructor – a reminder of the points to be made – than for the student because the bullet points have little explanation to fully develop the point.   Reading each bullet wastes your time and theirs.   Focus on the concept the bullet introduces, which bullet is most important, and/or which bullet is the most likely to be misunderstood.

5. Not every slide or bullet is important

This is one of the toughest things for new instructors to understand and adapt to.   First, they put emphasis on every bullet and every slide because the course implies they are all equally important. Not all the slides or all the bullets are important.   Some are simply "fluff" or, when given two or three or ten points, only one is truly critical.   We cover all the points because there is a reason for each bullet, but we need to understand there are two key reasons for emphasizing some parts more than others.   First, if we emphasize every bullet and every slide, the presentation becomes monotonous. Second, if we emphasize every bullet and every slide, the truly critical points are lost in the noise.

This is one of the toughest parts of becoming an instructor is understanding which bullets and which slides are truly critical.   I may spend a half hour on just one slide if it is important, but then quickly rush over another ten slides to make up a bit of time and to change the emphasis.

This is one of the great debates in ICS then, which are the important slides?   As a Train the Trainer instructor, I try to point out the really important slides and make the participants understand why one slide may be more important than another.   You will find a lot of that emphasis in my other Tips and Techniques handouts, especially the one on PPOST and SMART.

6. Get them using their student manual

The student notes are for them to use.   Make them use them!   I was pleased when we were talking about lack of retention two weeks ago when one of my students quoted me as saying "If you aren't doing all 14 principles, you aren't doing ICS!"   I was pleased because my student quoted me, word-for-word, from a class over five years ago.   The reason they remembered was I gave them an understanding of why that was important, then I made them write it down in their student manual on the front page and I even make them sign it!   The reason they remember is because they understood the importance of the point, they had to understand what they were writing in order to write it down properly and it was on the cover so they could see it whenever they looked at the manual.

I have five or six key things that I have the students write down in their book.   If they write it down, they are more likely to remember it, if they write it down, they are more likely to see it, and if they write it down they are more likely to reference it.

I have students put stars beside key points (such as items that they might struggle with on the exam), I have them put boxes around important points, and I encourage them to use highlighters.

The point is, the more they are engaged with their student manual, they more they are engaged with the information.

7. Give them something simple first

Everyone does Incident Command.   They just don't realize it!   Many of my examples are extremely simple day-to-day things that most people can relate to; mom and dad (Unified Command), a bathtub full of water (PPOST), pennies and nickels (Span of Control and Strike Teams/Task Forces), a hungry dog and a family birthday party.   Once you have them understanding the concept, then take it to emergency management; a small fire, a heart attack on the street, a search for a lost child.   Then I give them a large incident (something recent in the news, usually) to get them to realize that the skills they learn on the small incidents will apply equally to some of the worst disasters in the world.   The large disasters show the importance of understanding the concept, but the small day-to-day examples are the ones they will relate to and learn from the best.

8. Challenge them

I'm always wanting to push the students to get just a bit past what they are comfortable with.   If they can handle a garbage can fire, I will give them the garage fire.   If a garage fire is simple to them, they get the house fire or the apartment fire.   If they can handle the apartment fire, then they get the fire in the town of Slave Lake or the Lac Megantic train disaster.   I try very hard not to give anyone too hard a problem, I want them to be successful, but nobody is going to have it too easy.   They must struggle a bit to see how the principle applies to something just a bit more than they are comfortable with.   One of the great things is when they come back and say "I just saw the same incident but we handled one in class that was bigger!"

9. Have some fun

The students are often stressed out enough as it is!   Having a bit of fun breaks the ice, shows that you want people to enjoy themselves, but still puts the emphasis on "This is important!"   Many of my stories and examples have a key moment of playfulness.   For example, when I use coins to

demonstrate Span of Control and Strike Teams/Task Forces, I always start off with the Canadian dollar coin to represent the Incident Commander.   Instead of saying "This is the Incident Commander", I ask "What is the one position that is filled on every incident?"   When they reply "The Incident Commander", I continue "That's right!   There is always an Incident Commander.   This [coin] is the Incident Commander.   I am the only Incident Commander here – I am the Loonie!   There is only ONE loonie and that is me!   You can't be a loonie!"   But putting the emphasis on me being a loonie, I get across the point that there is only one Incident Commander while everyone gets a chuckle at the same time.

10. Give them another example

If I am talking to fire fighters, I will start off with a fire example, but I will give them a policing example or a public works example as well.   There are a few of reasons for this.   First, if you only give examples from one discipline, the other groups in the course will tune out because you seem to be playing favourites.   Second, you are then showing that the same principle applies no matter what the discipline or organization; ICS works for public utilities, Parks, Search and Rescue, public works, Canadian Border Services and the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.   Third, participants need to understand this is the universal management system that allows all organizations to deal with the response, not just one or two.

You will always tend to give examples you are comfortable with both due to the familiarity and secondly to avoid making mistakes when describing another organization's response, terminology, and tactics. My two quickest ways to get around that is to provide a "safe" example from an organization not in the room so nobody can criticize any little errors, and by asking the participants to explain how their organization would apply ICS.   Some of my best examples (the Kananaskis country avalanche control, for example) I learned by simply asking "How do you do it?"

11. Try something new

Once you get past the first few courses and feel comfortable with the materials, try something new.   I spend a lot of time trying new techniques for teaching the most critical points in ICS or trying to "brighten up" a dull section of the course.   Now, here is the key: Don't change everything everytime or try too many new things in any one course.   I only try one new thing per course.   In that way, if it works well, I can use it again and if it doesn't work well, it doesn't hurt the course and generally nobody is the wiser.

The advantage of trying one new technique, one new example, or one new exercise in every course is that you keep on raising the bar and within a few courses you will find the students are grasping more, responding better, passing the exam with higher marks and walking out with a much better

understanding of ICS.   Never be satisfied with the course you just gave; be thinking about how much better you can give the next course.

Challenge yourself by teaching to a new group.   You think you have it down for the fire service or search and rescue, then try teaching to the police or to a utility or to an agriculture department.   The Flint water crisis, the 2015 bird flu outbreak, the Zika virus and the Hurricane Sandy power outages all have great ICS stories.   Teaching to a new group will give you new examples and a broader understanding of how ICS can apply.

12. Don't expect everyone to love you or the way you teach

When I was in sales years ago, we were taught in a sales seminar that your strength is also your weakness.   If you do great sales with top-end restaurants, for example, your problem is you do great sales with top-end restaurants which means you aren't doing well in the mom-and-pop operations.   I had two course evaluations for the same ICS course one time.   The first said "Loved your examples and stories.   They brought the course to life!   10/10!"   The next evaluation literally said "You are one of the most excruciatingly bad instructors I have ever had. Told too many war stories and wasted time with too many examples. 4/10".

Your strength will be your weakness.   If you care about your instructional abilities, a review like the one above will really hurt.   I'm a great instructor and my course evaluations are getting pretty close to 9/10 as a class average.   Yet what I remember are three students; one who didn't pass the exam, one that threw his hands up in frustration, and the 4/10 evaluation above.   My strength is I care about every student and any bad evaluation. What should I have done to get that student engaged?   My weakness is that I care about the poor evaluations more than I should.

Even if you are a great instructor, you will have some people you can't please or have a different learning style.   While those hurt, and will always be a challenge, always consider the group as a whole first.   If you are getting 7/10 or 8/10 on average, you are doing pretty good.

When you are teaching ICS for the first few times, expect your presentation to be a little choppy and your examples a little weak.   Those will come with teaching more courses.   Also, ask the students just before the evaluation "What can I do to improve this?"   They will often have well-reasoned, insightful and valid suggestions for improvement.

13. Learn from your students

I have learned a ton over the years from the students in my courses.   I have learned the proper terminology, day-to-day incidents they deal with, the wildest and wackiest ones they have been to and the huge challenges policies and politics bring to a response.   You don't have to be an expert when the

experts may be sitting right in front of you.   I will ask people to provide an example in class, catch them on a break, buy them lunch if it will get me the time to hear the whole story and have had students follow up with an email or a phone call to give me the details I need.   I try to be respectful of their organization, issues of confidentiality and sometimes tell the story without any reference to organization or incident if necessary to keep the confidence of those who tell me the stories.   If you treat the information with both the intent and confidence it was given, you will find that people will tell you quite a bit!

14. Use current examples

I have an ICS student manual from 1983.   There isn't a word different from the student manuals you will be teaching from today.   The only difference is the pictures are black and white and the fire trucks are all 1970 vintage.   So, why don't we use the books rather than creating a new student manual every five years?   There is a huge belief that with modern equipment and modern communications, the disasters of the past will never happen again.   The black and white pictures show that the materials are out of date, despite the fact the words are the same!   If I use an example from the 2003 Kelowna firestorm or the 1987 Edmonton tornado, then people look at me as if I should be locked away in a senior's home because I am senile using those examples.

Already, the 2013 Southern Alberta floods (the costliest flood in Canadian history at this time[1]) are fading into the past and the fires of 2016 and 2020, the tornado of 2019, or pandemic of 2020 will be the reference point in the classroom.   Even when the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill is one of the best examples of multiple strategies you can possibly use in the classroom, people turn off and say "That happened years ago!"   You always need to be updating your examples.

15. Be excited about teaching this!

ICS works anywhere and anytime.   If you aren't excited about teaching this, then why are you in the classroom?   Every class you teach will likely include one person who is going to (reluctantly) be an Incident Commander and every class is likely to have someone who might become a future ICS instructor.   Make it worthwhile for both of them because they both need you to be good at this.

I've had a lot of people say they enjoyed taking ICS with me for one big reason; they could see how much I enjoyed teaching the material.   If they see that in you, your course evaluations will go up, but more importantly, they will remember much, much more of what you taught them.

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[1] Since this was first written, Fort McMurray suffered one of the costliest disasters in Canadian history with the May 2016 firestorm.   Suddenly the 2011 Slave Lake wildfire and the 2003 K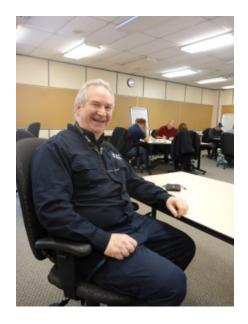elowna firestorm pale in comparison and everyone will forget their lessons as all the focus will be on what happened in 2016.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS:

Al was a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for over 32 years serving in communities across Alberta having worked in general police duties, community relations, public affairs as chief spokesman for the RCMP in Alberta and was in charge of the RCMP Emergency Operations Center which oversaw emergency plans for 109 police detachments. Al was deployed to Bangkok Thailand, by Interpol, in 2006 as the media/diplomatic officer following the Thai Tsunami.

Al is a senior volunteer with St John Ambulance, a non-governmental organization, which provides first aid and CPR training to thousands of Albertans each year and also provides volunteers to provide first aid services at public events. Al has been with St John for over 32 years.

Al has a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Education as well as several certificates and diplomas. He is a Member of the Order of Merit of Police Officers and a Knight of the Order of St John.

Tom Cox is an ICS Canada instructor trainer with experience in seven Type 1 or potential Type 1 incidents.   He has taught over 400 Instructors in Canada.   Tom also teaches a variety of Emergency Management courses and has an interest in public warning and communications failures in disasters.   Tom was Operations Section Chief for the Provincial Operations Centre for the 2011 Slave Lake wildfire, 2020 Pandemic support, and was acting Field Officer for High River in 2013 and for the Southern Alberta floods of 2014.