

ICS Instruction Tips

Introduction

This section provides tips and techniques for conducting the Incident Command System (ICS) and All Hazard Position Specific (AHPS) Train-the-Trainer courses.

Contents

- Presentation Skills and Delivery Techniques
 - Using Training Aids
 - Managing Challenging Participants
 - Getting Ready: Before the Course
 - Getting Ready: The Day of the Course
 - Tips for Putting Yourself at Ease
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Presentation Skills and Delivery Techniques

Voice/Speech	
Do . . .	Don't . . .
• Speak clearly and slowly. • Use variety in pace and volume. • Speak loudly enough for the back of the room to hear you.	• Mumble. • Use crutch words such as “like,” “um,” or “you know.”
Eye Contact	
Do . . .	Don't . . .
• Look at people's eyes. • Continually scan the group with your eyes. • Be aware of your “blindspots.” Look at the entire group.	• Maintain eye contact with any one person for more than 1 to 3 seconds. • Let your eyes dart around the room or stare at a fixed point in the back of the room. • Look at only one or two people or at only one side of the room.
Posture and Body Movement	
Do . . .	Don't . . .
• Position your body so you face the majority of the people. • Walk around the room while speaking; circulate among table groups during exercises. • Maintain a relaxed but attentive stance.	• Talk to your notes, easel, or board. • Turn your back to part of the group. • Stand in a fixed position or behind a podium. • Slouch or shift your weight from one hip to another.
Energy Level	
Do . . .	Don't . . .
• Demonstrate enthusiasm through your voice, facial expression, and body movement (not standing stiffly). • Be aware of your own energy lows during the day.	• Look disinterested or distracted. • Engage in behaviors that decrease your energy level (e.g., heavy meal, not enough sleep).
Hand Gestures	
Do . . .	Don't . . .
• Use natural and spontaneous gestures.	• Engage in distracting behavior, such as looking at your watch, jingling change, wringing hands, crossing arms in front of you, or pointing at people.

Presentation Skills and Delivery Techniques (Continued)**Using Stories, Examples, & Port-Specific Information**

The use of stories and examples during the training will stimulate discussion among participants. Using ICS-specific examples has an added benefit of allowing participants to discuss the content of the training as it relates to their specific work location.

For the story or example to be effective, it must be:

Appropriate—There must be a clear fit between the story and the learning point.

- Clear—It must be concise and show attributes of the learning point.
- Interesting—It must use realistic events. An element of surprise is also useful.

When using stories, examples, and information:

- Prepare the audience. State the point of the story, example, or information.
- Use transitions to keep listeners on track by:
- Connecting the story/example/information parts (“and then,” “the next thing that happened was...”).
- Close the story/example/information (“so what we learned from this was,” or “from then on”).

Communicate ideas and feelings by:

- Varying the rate, volume, and pitch of your voice.
 - Conveying the mood and meaning of the story/example/information (e.g., excited, angry, discouraged, etc.).
 - Using gestures (e.g., folding arms, pointing).
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Using Training Aids

Overview

Training aids are visual materials that support presentations and other training methods that are used in the course. In this course, you will be working with the following training aids:

PowerPoint slides or overhead transparencies
Video presentations (optional)

Power Point Slides & Overheads



Tips for using PowerPoint slides and overheads are as follows:

- Arrive early and test the equipment.
- If you are using an overhead projector, have an extra bulb on hand.
- Dim the lights in the room (but don't make it too dark). If you can, darken the lights in the front of the room where the screen is located.
- Stand to either side (rather than in front) of the equipment and screen.
- During the presentation, hold the image on the screen only until the participants have had time to grasp the meaning.
- Control attention and avoid distractions by turning the projector off when it is not being used.
- Talk to the participants, not to the projected image.
- Recognize that equipment can fail so prepare to give your presentation without the hardware!

Listed below are some keyboard "shortcuts" that you may want to use when operating a computerized PowerPoint presentation:

Function	Shortcut Keys
Advance to the next slide	N, ENTER, the SPACEBAR, or mouse click
Return to the previous slide	P or BACKSPACE
Display a black screen	B
Return to the slide show from a black screen	B (Second Time)
End slide show	ESC

Using Training Aids (Continued)**Video Presentations**

There are no standard videos for this course; however, videos are imbedded in some of the ICS courses included in the ICS curriculum. These videos will play if you select the “play” button on the computer screen.

If you wish to show other videos that you are providing yourself, follow these guidelines:

For participants to get the most learning out of the video presentations, the instructors must know how to use the equipment and how to set up and debrief the videotape presentation. To use videotape presentations effectively, you should:

Prepare for showing the video presentation

Make sure you know how to use the equipment. Preview the video presentations to gain an understanding of their content. Review the key points in the Instructor Guide and add any additional points about the video that you would like to convey.

Provide instructions.

Before showing the video presentations, tell the students what they should look for, whether they should take notes during the video presentation, and what they will do after the video (e.g., critique someone’s behavior in the film). Visuals are provided to let you know when to show a video and to help you provide instructions.

Play the video presentation.

Before class and during breaks, cue the video presentations so they are ready to start. Adjust the picture and sound and the lighting in the room. Monitor participant reaction during the showing of the videos. Stop videos at the appropriate points to conduct exercises, when asked to do so.

Summarize learning points.

Use the discussion question(s) in the Instructor Notes to summarize the key points you want participants to take from each video presentation.

Managing Challenging Participants

Overview

At some point, you probably will encounter a participant whose behavior will inhibit the productivity of the group. This person could be very negative and challenging or could be trying to help but instead could be keeping others from participating. A difficult participant may also be expressing the thoughts and sentiments of a number of people in the group. It is critical that you deal with difficult people swiftly so that the entire group does not suffer from the poor behavior. Also, by dealing with them immediately, you gain credibility with the other participants, who most likely are waiting for you to do something about the distracting person.

Steps

When confronted with a problem situation, you must remain as neutral as possible so you can identify the best way to handle it. You will find the following three-step approach useful:

- Step 1:** Observe behavior(s) and make assumptions about the reasons for the behavior(s). Refer to the table on the next 2 pages.
- Step 2:** Identify strategies and evaluate them by determining whether the strategy will resolve the problem:
- While preserving the learning climate (trusting, nonthreatening).
- Without compromising the self-esteem of the participant causing the problem.
- Step 3:** Select a strategy.

Managing Challenging Participants (Continued)

The following table describes types of challenging people you may encounter and solutions for dealing with them.

Dealing With . . .	Possible Reasons for Behavior	Strategies for Dealing With Behavior
Silent Participants	May be connected and thinking but internalizing thoughts before speaking. May be shy and unsure. May be distracted by outside problems. May not understand what is going on. May feel superior—may “know it all” already. May be bored. May be resistant.	If you see a sign that they know an answer or agree with a comment, ask them to respond. Be supportive. Talk to them on a break about anything unrelated to the course—get to know them. Don’t embarrass them or put them on the spot. Observe nonverbal behaviors for interest, boredom, etc. Initiate small-group activities or discussions. Include activities that initially allow participants to work individually.
Overbearing Participants	May be well-informed and anxious to share information. May be naturally talkative. May feel defensive.	Don’t embarrass participants or be sarcastic—you may need their skills later. Redirect attention to the rest of the group by saying, “I appreciate your enthusiasm and your comments. Let’s see what others think.” Be receptive while letting them know you’re in charge.

Managing Challenging Participants (Continued)

Dealing With . . .	Possible Reasons for Behavior	Strategies for Dealing With Behavior
Cynical Participants	May have “seen it all” and feel nothing will change the system. May not believe their cynicism is a problem.	Engage them in discussions. Ask them for their suggestions. Do not reinforce cynical behavior by agreeing with, ignoring, or being cynical back to the participant. Ask them what they can control.
Conflicts Between Participants	May have a past history of conflict of which you are unaware. May have different ideas, values, beliefs, or perceptions. May have personality differences.	Emphasize points of agreement. Minimize points of disagreement. Refocus on the objective. Ask a direct, closed question about the topic. Ask that personalities or perceptions be omitted from discussions. Ask each person to state the other’s concern or point of view.

When difficult behavior continues, and you are not able to control it during the course, talk to the person at break time. Offer him or her specific examples of the behaviors you are observing, and try to find the source of the problem and resolve it. Ask the person to help you keep the class positively focused.

Getting Ready: Before the Course

Study the Course Materials

Preparation is the key to the effective implementation of this course. It is a critical element in creating an environment where learning is interesting, challenging, and meaningful to the participants. Follow these guidelines to help you prepare:

- Remember that the ICS Train-the-Trainer is unique in that the instructors are providing a *walk-through or review of the four courses in the ICS curriculum instead of teaching the courses*. The only exceptions to this rule are that the activities and exercises identified in each unit of instruction are delivered as they would be in an actual course.
- Become familiar with this plan of instruction, especially the back section which describes how each unit of instruction will be delivered.
- Become familiar with the design and content of the course units.
- Understand the objectives of the units and the content flow.
- Learn how the Instructor Guide is organized.
- Contact your co-instructor and decide who will review each section of each course in the curriculum.
- Highlight key points.
- Mark up your Instructor Guide with your own words, examples, and experiences.
- Make notes so that you minimize the need to read directly from the text.
- Preview all of the video presentation prior to the course in order to familiarize yourself with the content.
- Complete all of the exercises and be prepared to answer the many questions that the participants will ask while completing the exercises themselves.
- Complete any self-assessment instruments so you will better understand them.
- Determine how to incorporate personal examples where appropriate.
- Rehearse and talk through the material.

Getting Ready: Before the Course (Continued)

Know Your Audience

Answer the following questions about the individuals attending each session. The lead instructor should contact the State point-of-contact to obtain the following information:

- Who will be attending the class? What is the experience level and background of the participants?
- Are there any special issues or concerns?
- How many supervisors will be attending?

Arrange the Logistics

Make sure that you have all the logistics arranged by discussing them with your State point-of-contact and co-instructor.

- Checking these instructor notes so that you know what supplies or additional materials you will be using.
- Taking into account the number of small groups to be formed, handouts and markers required, etc.

Preparing To Work With a Co-Instructor

There are many benefits to working with co-instructors. They can help with the preparation of the course, share in the delivery of the training content, assist in observing participants' reactions to the course, and help in responding to participants' questions and concerns.

In order for instructors to work together effectively, they must work as a team. Following are guidelines for preparing to work with a co-instructor:

- Review the course's content and flow.
- Divide responsibilities for the instruction. Take into account factors such as who has greater knowledge or comfort with parts of the material.
- Agree on ground rules for working together. Define roles. For example, what is your role when you are not presenting?
- Ensure that transitions are smooth. How will the person presenting before you summarize? How will you begin your section?
- Discuss how you will handle exercises. Walk through each element. Determine typical questions participants might ask and how you can handle them.
- If possible, have a "practice run" (by phone) to identify other issues that need to be addressed.
- Finalize logistical arrangements.
- Create a plan to debrief and identify "lessons learned."

Getting Ready: The Day of the Course**Arrange the Logistics**

At the beginning of each day of the course, it is important to arrive early to prepare the classroom, check equipment, distribute materials, and be ready to greet the participants in a relaxed way when they arrive. Listed below are some suggestions for getting ready on the day of the course.

- Arrive at least 1 hour ahead of class time.
 - Organize instructor materials.
 - Make sure the room is set up properly.
 - Check equipment (VCR, monitor, computer projection system). Arrange for technical assistance to be available during training in the event of equipment malfunction. If audiovisual equipment is not needed immediately, roll it into place, mark a spot with masking tape on the floor so it is easy to move equipment into place later, and roll equipment out of the way.
 - Cue up the video.
 - Make sure electrical cords are taped to the floor.
 - Test chart markers to make sure they are visible from the back of the room (some reds, yellows, and other light colors are often hard to see).
 - Place participant supplies and materials at tables.
 - Locate restrooms, break, and lunch facilities, if necessary.
 - Get a glass of water for yourself.
 - Be prepared to greet participants as they enter.
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Tips for Putting Yourself at Ease

Before the Course

- Practice, practice, practice! Know your subject. Practice until you feel comfortable with your presentation.
- Familiarize yourself with the classroom and its environs.
- Mentally rehearse. Imagine walking into the room, introducing yourself, delivering the training content with enthusiasm, leading great discussions, and leaving the room knowing you did a great job.
- Learn how to operate any audiovisual equipment you plan to use. Practice using training aids in advance of your presentation.
- Organize your notes and other materials.
- Write out the first few sentences of your introduction to the class.
- Get as much rest as possible the night before the course.

Starting the Course

- Make sure the classroom is set up and has an orderly appearance.
- Greet participants as they enter.
- Chat with some of the participants before class begins.
- Read the first few sentences of your introduction to the class as you warm up.

During the Course

- Take a few deep breaths before speaking.
 - Radiate enthusiasm.
 - Keep a glass of water handy to alleviate “cotton mouth.”
 - Have a sense of humor (but never tell a joke for the sake of telling a joke).
 - Deliberately look at participants’ faces before beginning to speak. Connect with them. The eye contact should help you to relax because you become less isolated from the audience.
 - Don’t be afraid of silence. Take a moment to gather your thoughts if you feel you are “getting lost.”
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