CONDUCTING THE TTX
**ROOM SETUP: SMALL TTX**

**Characteristics:**

- Large conference table
  - Chairs
- Audio/video
  - Computer
  - LCD projector
    - or overhead projector
  - Screen
- Visual aids
  - Maps
  - Dry erase/chalk board
  - Easel
ROOM SETUP: LARGE TTX

Characteristics:

- Large, open space
- Moveable tables and chairs
- A/V requirements:
  - Computer w/ LCD projector
  - or overhead projector
  - Projection screen
  - Computer speakers
    - if necessary
  - Microphone
    - if necessary
ROOM SETUP: LARGE TTX
PRIOR TO THE EXERCISE

- Set up tables and chairs
  - Follow table layout diagram
- Post double-sided table signs to identify tables
- Print and place pre-exercise role-specific materials and maps on tables
- Set up exercise slide presentation on laptop and test projector
Select a facility that is somewhat secure and conduct training in a closed, private room.

Remind participants to provide valid ID (if necessary).

Table labels should be visible to all participants.
EXERCISE SETUP TIPS

- Provide additional copies of exercise materials (if group is large)
- Have spare forms on hand for participants
EXERCISE FACILITATION
Welcome
Agenda
Introductions
Establish ground rules
Review the purpose and objectives
Conduct the exercise
Hotwash
Closing comments
Adjourn
- Administrative notes
- Opening remarks
  - Exercise Director
  - Sponsoring agency
- Put the participants at ease
AGENDA

- Assists in maintaining timeline
- Respect the time of your participants
  - Stick to it!!
INTRODUCTIONS

- Allows participants to get acquainted
- Community partners
  - Police
  - Fire
  - EMS
  - Hospital
  - Public Works
- Briefly discuss experience
Establish Ground Rules

- Participation is required
- No thin skin, speak freely, respect others when they are speaking
- All participants will fill their normal day-to-day roles as if they were at their own workplace
- If only one issue is solved, then it is a success
  - The goal is quality, not quantity
- Processes and decision making are more important than minute details
- The facilitator's job is to help you come up with the solutions
ASSUMPTIONS AND ARTIFICIALITIES

- In any exercise, a number of assumptions and artificialities may be necessary to complete play in the time allotted.

- During the exercise, the following apply:
  - The scenario is plausible, and events occur as they are presented.
  - There are no “hidden agendas” or trick questions.
  - All players receive information at the same time.
CONDUCT THE EXERCISE

- Narrative
- Scenario
- Break-outs
  - By agency
  - By functional groups
- Briefings
- Questions
EXERCISE HOTWASH

- Review of immediate activities
- Identification of good/best practices
- Identification of areas needing improvement
WHAT A HOTWASH IS NOT

- Gripe / Fault Finding Session
- After Action Review (AAR)
  - Evaluation data not discussed
FOCUS OF THE HOTWASH

- Response procedures
- Exercise purpose
- Solicit participant input to areas of strengths and improvements
- Encourage agencies to conduct their own internal Hotwash to discuss their specific plans and objectives
HOTWASH FORMAT

- Identify 3 strengths to be maintained and built upon
  - Sustaining procedures/operations
  - Best Practices
- Identify 3 potential areas for improvement
  - Remain Positive
  - Where are improvements needed?
  - Identify solutions – not just problems
- Identify 1 critical issue to improve and when it will be accomplished
CLOSING COMMENTS AND WRAP-UP

- Closing comments
  - Facilitator
  - Exercise Director
  - Sponsoring agency
- Wrap-up
  - Administrative notes
  - Last chance for questions
Organize the exercise injects so that all organizations must deal with a question or problem

Give extra encouragement to those who are a little reserved

Avoid the temptation to jump in with the right solutions when players are struggling

Model and encourage the behaviors you want from the participants:

- Give eye contact
- Acknowledge comments in a positive manner
Don’t move too fast!
- You don’t necessarily have to meet all of the objectives
- Nothing may get settled

Push the players past superficial solutions
- A few carefully chosen, open-ended questions can keep the discussion going to its logical conclusion
SUSTAIN THE ACTION

- Use multiple event stages
  - As discussion begins to fade on one issue, introduce the next segment
- Vary the pace
  - Add or delete problem statements and messages to alter the speed of the action
- Maintain a balance
- Watch for signs of frustration or conflict
  - Always remember that the tabletop is basically training, not testing
- Keep it low-key
  - Avoid a bad experience by keeping in mind the low-key nature of the tabletop
CONTROLLING TIME AND PACE

- Keep track of time and keep on schedule – follow the exercise agenda!
- Maintain pace by timing the injects
If the exercise is progressing *too quickly*:

- Delay injects or information
- Introduce conflicting information or a “red herring” via an inject
If the exercise is progressing \textit{slowly} or is \textit{stalled}:

- Jump-start the response actions using a planned or contingency inject.
- Do not interfere as a facilitator, but as a simulator in the exercise.
Let communications and actions evolve naturally
Let participants guide the direction of the response actions
Allow participants to falter
- Address faults in the AAR
Don’t allow participants to act on overheard information
Track communications and actions carefully
Flag key communications and actions for future reference
DEALING WITH ROLE FAILURE

Not all participants are equally prepared to play in the exercise.

- In the event of an exercise breakdown...
  - Identify the weak link (or links)
  - Confirm that their actions (or lack thereof) have significantly hindered the exercise
  - Interfere as a controller to set the exercise back on track
TIPS FOR FACILITATION

- ALWAYS remain neutral, objective, and fair
- Call people by name
- Encourage group members to speak to each other, not to you
- Don’t allow the group to transfer ownership of the process, problem, or recommendation to you
More Tips for Facilitation

- Never say, “I told you so”
- Be confident and be flexible
- Involve the participants whenever you can
- Don’t be afraid to cut off people who are rambling on
- Read the group and respond accordingly
- Preserve the integrity of the group and every individual
- Learn to laugh at yourself
EVEN MORE TIPS FOR FACILITATION

- Provide proper training before an exercise and set exercise goals
- Track all communications and actions carefully
- Allow the exercise to evolve naturally
- Interfere as little as possible
- If failure is inevitable, interfere to save the exercise
QUESTIONS
EXERCISE TOOLKIT
EXERCISE TOOLKIT

- Sign in roster
- Name plates
- Situation Manual
- Folders
  - Agenda
  - Ground rules
  - Discussion questions
  - Participant feedback form
  - Miscellaneous
COURSE WRAP-UP
THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING