

Hostage Negotiation

Objective:

Explorers should be able to respond to a hostage crisis and handle the scene using team resources. Explorers should be able to successfully communicate with the hostage taker, determine pertinent facts and develop a plan to resolve the crisis.

Foreword:

Incidents involving barricaded subjects, hostage takers, or persons threatening suicide represent especially trying and stressful moments for law enforcement personnel who respond to them. Any number of triggers could have set off the hostage taker. A hostage negotiations team will have to be prepared to deal with mentally ill persons, distraught persons and even suicidal persons intent on carrying out a mission. Hostage negotiators not only want to rescue hostages but want to bring the hostage taker out as well.

Team Structure:

A four person Explorer hostage negotiation team will consist of the following:

- 1) Primary Hostage Negotiator
- 2) Secondary Hostage Negotiator
- 3) Coach
- 4) Intelligence Coordinator

Primary Negotiator

I. Upon arrival on the scene the Primary Negotiator shall report to the on-scene commander (typically the judge).

A. He shall debrief the officers who originated the call.

B. He shall obtain as much information as possible about the situation prior to making contact with the barricaded subject.

II. The Primary Negotiator shall be responsible for the initial contact and ensuing negotiations.

A. He should attempt to put the perpetrator at ease, thereby making resolution of the problem imminent.

B. Keep communications open.

C. Elicit useful information.

D. Achieve safe surrender of the perpetrator with

dignity.

III. The Primary Negotiator should be aware of the following important principles:

A. Be conscious of both verbal and non-verbal language.

1. Listen actively --- Being able to effectively assimilate and understand what is actually being said and interpreting the various underlying meanings and messages.
2. Feedback --- giving back to the person information received from him/her so as to assure them that you are understanding their messages.
3. Empathy --- The intimate understanding of the thoughts, feelings and motives of another.
4. Content & Feeling --- Understanding the difference between what is said verbally and what message is really being given.

B. Self Acceptance and Value Clarification is important --- Understanding your own and others' values and being aware of those areas that trigger deep emotions in yourself and others.

C. Have Checkpoint Summaries --- Brief reviews of the main points discussed about issues and demands.



IV. Important suggestions for the Primary Negotiator:

- A. Ask the suspect to give up.
- B. Allow (encourage) the suspect to ventilate.
(Solicit information from the Hostage-Taker)
- C. Ask general questions --- for the following reasons:
 - 1. It encourages ventilation.
 - 2. It takes the pressure off the negotiator.
 - 3. It lets the suspect do the work (talking).
 - 4. Specific questions elicit specific answers.
- D. Listen to the suspect --- for the following reasons:
 - 1. It allows us to search for clues.
 - 2. We can pick up tactical information.
 - 3. It demonstrates our concern in the suspect's problem.
- E. Be honest, upfront and sincere.
- F. Develop a trust relationship.
- G. Develop a "we - they" relationship.
- H. Avoid a critical tone.
- I. Avoid approval or disapproval in your statements unless necessary.
- J. Orient the hostage-taker to problem solving.
- K. Ignore the hostages --- give them minimal attention.
- L. Stall for time.
- M. Avoid deadlines.
- N. Divert any negative train of thought.
- O. Investigate alternatives communicated by the hostage-taker.
- P. Avoid telling the suspect how to solve his/her problems.
- Q. Check with team leader and Command Post before making any commitments.
- R. Do not give away what can be bargained for.
(Remember, trust is an intangible item that brings future rewards.)
- S. Don't negotiate demands for weapons, drugs, or hostages (additional/exchange)
- T. Present the police position realistically, but neutrally.
- U. Be willing and ready to be authoritative.
- V. Be aware of tactical considerations.
- W. Approach face to face negotiations cautiously.
(Avoid, if possible)
- X. Avoid civilian negotiators.
- V. The Primary Negotiator is responsible for a follow-up report of his/her part in the incident.
 - A. This report shall consist of any information that he/she feels would be helpful in future contacts with the perpetrator.
 - B. He/she shall include comments on the general goals of the negotiations and those tactics used that were positive or negative.



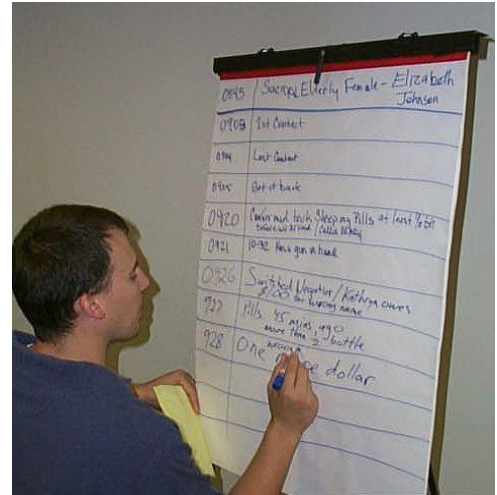
Secondary Negotiator

- A. The Secondary is responsible for monitoring the negotiations so as to give feedback to the primary negotiator in regards to:
 - 1. The use of skills,
 - 2. Inflection,
 - 3. Tempo,
 - 4. Trigger words,
 - 5. Interpretation of messages given by the perpetrator,
 - 6. Any other useful information.
- B. The Secondary Negotiator has the same responsibilities as the primary negotiator except he/she does not engage in actual conversation unless introduced by the primary negotiator for specific purposes.
- C. The Secondary controls access to the primary negotiator, thereby freeing him for negotiations only.
(All messages (information) goes through him)

- D. He shall disseminate any information from the primary to the on-scene commander via the messenger.
- E. The secondary is the only person in direct contact with the primary negotiator during actual conversation.
 - 1. He/she is the funnel for all information coming into the negotiating room.
 - 2. He/she shall carefully monitor the primary negotiator for signs of stress and should constantly offer moral support and encouragement.

Coach

- A. When requested, he will respond to the Command Post reporting to the On-Scene Commander.
- B. After being apprised of the situation and all intelligence gathered to that point, he will, if possible, make a preliminary evaluation of the emotional state of the perpetrator(s).
 - 1. This information will be passed to the On Scene Commander.
 - 2. He will then be assigned as part of the "think tank."
- C. He will continue to monitor the ongoing negotiations and will offer any information or advice that he deems important and useful.
- D. After the situation is resolved, he shall make himself available for any follow up support deemed necessary by the On-Scene Commander, such as:
 - 1. Meeting with the negotiators,
 - 2. Press,
 - 3. Family,
 - 4. In case of the use of emergency petition, responding to the hospital for follow up.
- E. The Coach performs important functions:
 - 1. Psychological assessment,
 - 2. Give advice to the Primary Negotiator
 - 3. Support of the team (tactical & negotiations),
 - 4. Emotional support to any hostages,
 - 5. Training.
- F. Keeps track of the "big board" (write information on a chalk board so all team members can evaluate and understand what is happening.
 - 1) makes a "do and don't talk about this" list
 - 2) keeps track of trigger words
 - 3) writes important information such as identifiers, timeline of HT history, etc.



Intelligence Coordinator

- A. The Intelligence Coordinator (a trained negotiator) is responsible for assigning persons to gather information about:
 - 1. The perpetrator(s),
 - 2. The hostage(s),
 - 3. The physical scene.
- B. All Intelligence comes to him/her for dissemination.
- C. The Intelligence Coordinator shall use, in order of preference, these personnel for intelligence gathering:
 - 1. Investigative Personnel
 - 2. Trained Negotiators
 - 3. Special Operations Division Officers
 - 4. Uniform Personnel
- D. Intelligence gathering should center on these areas:
 - 1. Individual Description
 - 2. Historical Background
 - a. Criminal
 - b. Mental
 - c. Medical
 - d. Family
 - e. Financial
 - f. Close Relationships

- g. Significant Events
- 3. Activities this date.
- 4. Compatible information regarding victims or hostages.
- 5. Physical description including entrances and exits of the barricaded area.

What Kind of People Take Hostages?

The Paranoid Condition (Schizophrenia)

- A. Including delusions of reference --- reference everything to himself.
- B. Expectation of trickery or harm and questioning the loyalty of others.
- C. Hyper vigilance, scanning for threats or taking unneeded precautions.
- D. Thinking that others are spying on him, spreading rumors about him, betraying him or planning to harm him.
 - 1. He may experience hallucinations, especially voices commenting on his behavior --- He may believe that his thinking and/or behavior is controlled by an external force.
 - 2. Delusions of persecution, grandeur (glory) or jealousy.
 - 3. Anger, argumentativeness and occasional violence (including suicide).
 - 4. Guardedness and/or secretiveness which may result in social withdrawal isolation and sexual confusion.
 - 5. He believes that he is an important person who is misunderstood and unappreciated --- hypersensitivity as indicated by a tendency to be easily slighted.
 - 6. Restricted affect as indicated by a cold, unemotional appearance, a pride in being "objective, rational and unemotional", no sense of humor and an absence of passive, soft, tender and sentimental feelings.
 - 7. Unrealistic concern about autonomy or sexual identity.
 - 8. His demands may be unusual or bizarre.

Negotiation Guidelines --- Paranoid Conditions:

- 1. His need to explain may offer an opportunity to establish rapport.
Allow him to vent --- (Let him talk, try to stay with concrete topics)
- 2. Do not try to argue him out of his delusions.
- 3. Try to ally yourself with his perspective without sounding insincere.
- 4. Avoid use of family members as they may be part of the delusional system.
- 5. There may be a negative attitude toward the mental health profession.
- 7. Do not stare or get too close (expanded body space).
- 8. Good negotiators may be rejected with time.

The Antisocial Personality --- (Psychopath, Sociopath)

- A. An inability to maintain a close, intimate, enduring interpersonal relationships.
 - 1. Shows no significant loyalty to individuals, groups or social values.
 - 2. Potential defector / agent.
 - 3. Relationships with others are manipulative and self-serving.
 - 4. Inability to sustain consistent work or social behavior.
- B. Lack of ability to function as a responsible parent.
- C. Maniacentric, Egocentric, callous, irresponsible, impulsive, sexually experimenting, reckless.
- D. Little or no conscience development --- Rationalizes and blames others for his behavior, does not feel guilt or remorse --- amoral.
 - 1. Projection --- "I'm ok --- it's their fault."
 - 2. Inconclusive in polygraph examination.

E. Failure to accept social norms with respect to lawful behavior as indicated by:

1. Repeated thefts,
 2. An illegal occupation,
 3. Multiple arrest,
 4. Felony conviction ...
- F. Low trait anxiety level (not a "worrier").

G. Low tolerance for frustration.

H. May put up a "good front".

1. Extremely cool --- high verbal skills.
2. Manipulative.
3. He may end up interviewing you.

I. The onset of his behavior usually starts before age fifteen.

J. Excessive alcohol or drug use is prevalent.

K. His demands are usually moderate.

L. Punishment does not alter unacceptable behavior.

1. Tough nut to crack --- tactical solution is best.
2. Solution has to be face-saying, otherwise you are looking at a shoot-out.

Negotiating Guidelines --- Antisocial Personality:

1. Keep his egocentricity in mind.
(Ego stimulation & ego threat are prime motivator)
2. Keep him busy.
3. Must be convinced that the safe release of the hostages is to his advantage.
4. Negotiation should be reality oriented.
5. Non-police negotiators will be of marginal value or only make the situation worse.

The Inadequate Personality.

A. Throughout most of his life he has demonstrated in-adaptability, ineffective, poor judgment and inept responses to social, emotional, intellectual and physical stress.

1. Chaotic family relationship.
2. Marital problems likely.
3. Lack of social, physical and emotional stability.
4. Sexual irregularities.
5. Fantasy.

B. He will often be a high school dropout.

C. He may have had a succession of jobs, having been fired from each because of poor performance.

D. He sees himself as a loser, someone who has always failed --- even crimes may have been poorly planned.

1. Long history of things gone wrong.
2. Suicidal potential.
3. Last thing he wants to be reminded of is failure.

E. He can be incredibly manipulative.

1. Calm, cool & polite.
2. Inadequate personality may be example of person who always gets others to do things for him.
3. Negotiate via others (has others do chores for him) --- life long malady.
4. This already surfaced in childhood --- starts at age 4-5.
5. Overindulgence on part of parents.

F. Taking hostages may be his last attempt to prove to someone (wife, parents, or girlfriend) that he can succeed at doing something.

G. The hostage incident, including the attention from authority figures and the media, maybe the high point of his life.

- H. This type of disorder can be recognized by statements such as "I'll show them that I really can do something" or "I'll show them that I am not the scapegoat anymore," etc.
- I. He is in contact with reality, is thinking clearly (although immaturely), can understand the consequences of his actions, and can be negotiated with successfully.
- J. Strong Stockholm Syndrome is possible
"He's not such a bad guy", "I felt sorry for Him".
- K. His demands may be exorbitant at first.

Negotiation Guidelines --- Inadequate Personality:

1. Provide "understanding" and "uncritical acceptance."
2. Help him find a way to end this without having "failed again" --- Build self-esteem.
3. Show understanding and uncritical acceptance.
4. Parents, friends, etc., brought to the scene may cause stronger feelings of failure or embarrassment and cause him to "prove" he can do something "important".
5. Do not introduce non-police negotiators to observe his failure.
6. Consider the use of opposite sex negotiator.
7. After rapport is established, the negotiator may be more authoritative (directive).
8. However, because of all the attention he is receiving, he may not want the situation to end.

The Depressed Subject --- (Maniac, Bipolar).

- A. Unrealistic sadness, hopelessness --- feelings of inadequacy or worthlessness.
- B. Sleep and appetite disturbance.
- C. Decreased effectiveness at school, work, home or play.
 1. Decreased attention span, concentration or ability to think clearly.
 2. Loss of feelings or pleasure of interest.
 3. Low energy levels --- slowed thinking, movement or speech.
Indecisiveness or decreased mental activity
 4. Loss of interest or enjoyment of sex.
- D. Irritability or excessive anger.
- E. Brooding about past events --- tearfulness or crying.
- F. Psychomotor agitation or retardation.
- G. Depressed appearance --- feelings of inadequacy, worthlessness and low self-esteem.
- H. Hopelessness and helplessness --- recurrent thoughts of death and suicide.
(Not all depressed persons are suicidal and not all suicidal persons are depressed)
- I. He may well be aware of the reason for his depression.
- J. Mood-congruent hallucinations and delusions are possible.
- K. His demand may be "GO AWAY".
Pain / Anger / Conflict

Negotiation Guidelines --- Depressed Subject:

1. If psychomotor retardation is present, you may have to wait longer than usual for a reply --- (response time is slow)
2. Friends and relatives may provoke or escalate feelings of worthlessness and guilt.
3. Beware of sudden improvements which are unrelated to your negotiation.
4. Keep your time perspective in the "here and now."
Hopeless persons cannot imagine a positive future.
5. He will generally have a small body space.
6. He will generally be honest and straightforward with you.
Once rapport has been established, it may be appropriate to be explicitly directive.
7. Beware of "Suicide By Cop."
8. Real world versus abstract concepts.
9. Attempt to postpone action as opposed to changing mood.

10. Use empathy.
11. Be prepared to repeat reassurances again and again, and again.
12. In ALL cases ask: "Are you going to commit suicide?"

The Situational Stress Reaction.

- A. No history of mental disorder.
- B. Clear precipitating events.
- C. Increased anxiety and/or agitated depression.
- D. May feel hopeless, helpless, out of control.
- E. No acceptable option is clear to him.

Negotiation Guidelines: --- Situational Stress Reaction.

1. Allow him to ventilate his feelings.
2. Then, try to get him to describe events as objectively as possible.
3. Have him go back over the options he has ruled out.
4. Review his descriptions of events, --- and place in a more objective, rational perspective.

"Time" Advantage And Disadvantages:

A. Advantage (positive effect) of "Time."

1. Increases basic human needs.
 - a. Biological needs.
 - b. Physical needs.
2. Reduces stress and anxiety.
3. Increases rationality.
4. Allows formation of the stockholm syndrome.
5. Increases the hostage's opportunities for escape.
(Though many think about it, few actually try)
6. Permits better decision making through the gathering of intelligence.
7. Allows formation of negotiator - subject rapport.
8. Subject's expectations are reduced.

B. Disadvantage (Negative effect) of "Time."

1. Exhaustion
 - a. Thinking clearly --- decision making
 - b. Short temper, anger
2. Loss of objectivity (sense of purpose).
3. Boredom.
4. Creeping Up Effect



The Stockholm Syndrome.

The term, Stockholm Syndrome, was coined in the early 70's to describe the puzzling reactions of four bank employees to their captor. On August 23, 1973, three women and one man were taken hostage in one of the largest banks in Stockholm. They were held for six days by two ex-convicts who threatened their lives but also showed them kindness. To the world's surprise, all of the hostages strongly resisted the government's efforts to rescue them and were quite eager to defend their captors. Indeed, several months after the hostages were saved by the police, they still had warm feelings for the men who threatened their lives. Two of the women eventually got engaged to the captors.

- A. The Stockholm Syndrome is a BOND that develops between the hostage and the hostage taker.
 - 1. The stockholm syndrome is an unconscious, automatic, and emotional response to becoming a victim that establishes a bond between the hostage and the hostage taker.
 - 2. It is a survival mechanism consisting of:
 - a. Denial,
 - b. Regression,
 - c. Identification with the aggressor.
- B. Although each individual's reaction to being taken hostage is unique, there is a common set of behaviors that is likely to occur.
 - 1. The hostages may begin to have NEGATIVE feelings toward the POLICE.
 - a. Fear of police weapons.
 - b. "Police" will not let them go.
 - c. Police value money more than their lives.
 - d. Police are supposed to help, not "make things worse."
 - 2. The hostages may begin to have POSITIVE feelings toward the HOSTAGE TAKER.
 - a. They have a shared fear: the police and their weapons.
 - b. They have a shared frustration: they both want to leave.
 - c. They are captives together.
 - 3. The Hostage Takers may begin to develop Positive Feelings toward their Hostages.
 - a. Shared fear.
 - b. Shared frustration.
 - c. Captives together.
- C. Necessary factors for development of the stockholm syndrome.
 - 1. They must be captives together, sharing the same fears and frustrations.
 - 2. Some amount of time must pass.
 - 3. There must be personal contact between the hostages and the hostage takers.
 - 4. The contact must be perceived as positive or "non-negative." (no physical or verbal abuse)
- D. Psychological explanations for the Stockholm Syndrome --- there are numerous theories, but no one really knows.