


10 Step Process

TABLETOP EXERCISE



School Emergency Operations Plan Exercise Toolkit, Part 1 of 11.
Colorado School Safety Resource Center (Department of Public Safety), Governor's Office of Homeland Security, Division of
Emergency Management (Department of Local Affairs) 2011

Step 1: Assess Needs and Determine Scenario

- **Research**
 - Look at your hazard analysis
 - Review the history of incidents
 - Risks and Vulnerabilities
 - Current Concerns
- **Choose a hazard to test**
- **Develop a draft scenario**
 - Take 10 minutes to compose a quick narrative utilizing the scenario you have chosen

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Step 2: Purpose and Scope

What is the purpose of the exercise?

- Are you testing a new or revised plan?
- Have you seen a problem that needs to be resolved?
- Is there a new law or regulation?
- New staff and students?

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Step 3: Scope

Exercise scope consists of, but is not limited to, the days and hours of the exercise, the location/sites for exercise play, the number of exercise participants, and the type of exercise.

Defining the scope helps determine the number of controllers/evaluators needed and where they will be needed.

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Step 4: Who Should be Involved

- **Who should be on your planning team?**
- **Who should be involved in the exercise from the school district / charter school?**
- **Who should be invited from other agencies / jurisdictions?**

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Scope and Purpose

Take 10 minutes and write a purpose statement and define the scope.

Write down the planning team members and invitees to the exercise

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Step 5: Develop Objectives

- **Utilize the S.M.A.R.T. method of developing objectives:**
 - S = Specific – What exactly do you want to accomplish
 - M=Measurable – Can it be measured, how?
 - A=Achievable – Can you get it done in the time given?
 - R=Realistic/Relevant – Will it lead to desirable results? Are you ready?
 - T=Timely – When will it be accomplished?
- **Take 5 minutes to develop 1-2 exercise objectives**

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Step 6: Developing Injects (MSEL)

- **Where do you want the exercise to go?**
 - Expected Actions
 - What do you want the participants to do?
- **What do you want tested during the exercise?**
 - New parts of the plan
 - One or more of your universal procedures (evacuation, shelter-in-place, etc.)
- **How do you want to present the injects?**
 - Verbally presented to the group as a whole
 - Given to specific people in positions that are then tasked with responding to the information
 - Written detailed events (problems) related to groups for discussion

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Injects

Take 10 minutes to develop 3-5 injects for your exercise scenario

Write Major and Detailed Events

Prepare Messages

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Step 7: Timeline

- **When do you want to hold the exercise?**
- **Create a list of actions that need to be taken prior to the exercise**
 - Is the plan complete – in draft form?
 - Are supporting documents ready (communication plans, maps, phone lists, media contacts, etc.)
 - Invites sent
 - Food
- **Develop a schedule (very important for functional and full-scale exercises)**

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Step 8: Logistics

- **Food / Refreshments**
- **Advanced Materials to Participants – Plans, procedures, etc.**
- **Sign-in Sheet, Handouts, Injects, Evaluations**
- **Presentation Method (PP, Flip Charts, Verbal, etc.)**
- **Room Set Up**

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Timeline and Logistics

Create a draft schedule leading up to the exercise

Make a list of logistical concerns that must be addressed prior to the exercise

10 Minutes

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Step 9: Conducting the Exercise

- **Facilitator(s):**
 - Ground Rules
 - Safety and Security Precautions
 - Introducing the Objectives, Narrative and possibly Injects
- **Exercise Controllers:**
 - Controlling the pace and flow
 - Handling problems as they arise
 - Distributing messages
 - Aim for in-depth problem solving
- **Evaluators / Evaluation Method**
 - Exercise Evaluation Guides
 - Handout Evaluation at the End

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Ground Rules

- This is not a test of current capabilities and plans. It is a discussion of probable responses to a hypothetical emergency and consequent cascading events.
- The exercise will be an open dialogue. All ideas and input are welcome.
- Finger pointing is not acceptable.
- One person speaks at a time.
- The scenario will be accepted as is. However, the facilitator may make modifications at her discretion.
- No hypothetical resources are available.
- There should be no expectation of issue resolution.

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Controllers and Evaluators

Who can you use in your community to fulfill the roles of Facilitators, Controllers and Evaluators?

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Step 10: Hotwash and After Action Report

- **Hotwash – Directly after the exercise**
 - What worked
 - What needs improvement
 - Lessons Learned
- **After Action Report – Written Report**
 - Objectives Realized
 - Strengths / Areas of Improvement
 - What actions should be taken and who is responsible for that action

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Action Steps

Gap / Need Identified	Actions Needed	Point Person	Due by:

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