

1. OBSERVE

In the observation phase, you scan the environment and gather information from it. You are looking for signs of danger with attention to detail. This is what is referred to as a threat or risk assessment.

- Highest Priority
- Head and Eye Movement
- Focal vs. Peripheral Vision
- Weapon Presentation

NTF: When discussing “Focal vs. Peripheral Vision” explain the need to base our use of force actions on our perception of the situation. Our vision tells us where things are. It also depicts movement and light.

Demonstrate this concept if necessary.

2. ORIENT

Once you make observations, you must understand (orient) what your observations mean. What is what you are seeing telling you?

- Situational Awareness
- Establishing a reality (mental image or snapshot of the situation)
- Based on personal knowledge, training and experience
- Static vs. Dynamic thought process

Important Teaching Point: Use the information to form a mental image of the circumstances. That is, synthesize the data into information. As more information is received, you "deconstruct" old images and then "create" new images. Note that different people require different levels of details to perceive an event. Often, we imply that the reason people cannot make good decisions, is that people are bad decisions makers -- sort of like saying that the reason some people cannot drive is that they are bad drivers. However, the real reason most people make bad decisions is that they often fail to place the information that we do have into its proper context. This is where "Orientation" comes in. Orientation emphasizes the context in which events occur, so that we may facilitate our decisions and actions. That is, orientation, helps to turn information into knowledge. And knowledge, not information, is the real predictor of making good decisions.

3. **DECIDE**

Consider options and select a subsequent course of action. There are two types of decision-making processes:

- Conscious vs. Subconscious

Important Teaching Point: Any decision that must be made in a compressed time frame should be trained into the subconscious mind. For example: 2-3% of subjects will resist and go into the fight or flight reflex; therefore, you need to be prepared to react.

Factors that affect speed of decision:

- Genetics
- Mindset
- Training
- Assumptions
- Available tools

4. **ACT**

Carry out the conceived decision. You do it! “Decisions without actions are pointless. Actions without decisions are reckless”.

- The Trained Response
- Slow = Smooth ; Smooth = Fast
- Train to disorient your opponent
- Strategy vs. Tactics

Important Teaching Point: Once the result of the action is observed, you start over and repeat the cycle. In a tactical situation, you want to cycle through the four steps faster and better than your opponent, hence, it is a loop.

By the end of your academy experience, you will have learned how to continually train your subconscious mind by setting up safety habits in your everyday routines. The habits that are most often repeated are the ones that your subconscious mind will use under immediate stress or when you are tired, distracted, or complacent. As a result of this daily ‘training your brain’ on patrol, you will find yourself in a better mental and physical position to win when you are taken off-guard.