



Incident Management Training for IT Operations

Sprint 2

Poor Communications Creates Hidden
Costs

COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES

Structured Communication Enables Psychological Safety

WHAT HAPPENS WITHOUT STRUCTURE

Junior engineers hesitate to speak up
Introverts get drowned out
Strong personalities dominate decisions

WITH STRUCTURE

Status updates create equal airtime
Roles define who speaks and when
All perspectives are surfaced
Critical information is shared early

When psychological safety is low, critical information never surfaces.

Communication Patterns That Work in Incident Response

SHORT — Focused on essential information

OBJECTIVE — Observations rather than opinions

TIME-BOUND — Updates at defined intervals

ROLE-BASED — Only relevant responders speaking

PREDICTABLE — Formats and cadence provide structure

Structure creates speed. Discipline creates clarity.

Incident Response Example

INCIDENT PARTICIPANTS

- Cautious security engineer
- Analytical database specialist
- Assertive product manager
- Collaborative product manager

WITHOUT STRUCTURE

- Long explanations
- Competing priorities
- Repeated clarifications
- Overlapping conversation

Without structure, communication becomes the bottleneck

Incident Response Example

WITH STRUCTURE (INCIDENT COMMAND)

- Status updates are standardized
- Decision authority is clear
- Airtime is controlled
- Communication cost drops dramatically

WHY THIS MATTERS

- Time is the most valuable resource
- 30 sec delay x 40 updates = 20 min lost
- Poor communication creates hidden coordination cost

CAN Report

A BRIEF status update

Conditions

What was or is happening? (*past*)

Actions

What's being done? (*present*)

Needs

What are the needs? (*future*)

CAN REPORT

- **Tactical**
- **Short** (60 seconds/ 80 words)
- **Identify CONDITIONS, ACTIONS, NEEDS**
- **Bullet points for clarity**
- **Provide updates**
- **Verbal or written**

This is Dante Jackson, Liaison Officer for Marlys Corp.

CONDITIONS:

On March 2nd @ 22:00 PST there was a Core Production release. A script led to subscribers being disconnected from the network. The number of subscribers affected is unknown at this time.

ACTIONS:Currently:

1. determining the number and location of subscribers affected
2. identifying which script caused the incidents

NEEDS:

1. determine the fix for the identified script
2. rerun the script to restore services
3. identify steps to prevent related service disruptions

This concludes my report.

Breakout Room Exercise

- **Incident Commander:**
volunteer or be appointed
- **Everyone writes a CAN Report** (including IC)
- **Leave time** for each person to present & receive feedback
- **IC selects one** person to present in the main room
- **Cameras on!**

IMS Briefing

A report to external stakeholders

Introduction

Who you are

What was or is happening

Main points

Numbered, distinct

Summary

What did you just tell them

IMS Briefing

- **1-2 minutes** (longer than CAN)
- **Used to update press, public, executives, stakeholders**
- **Useful for business impact**
- **Non-technical, more story**
 - consider the audience
 - less jargon, more empathy
- **Verbal or Written**
- **Curate your information** (tip of the iceberg)

Breakout Room Exercise

- **Incident Commander:**
volunteer or be appointed
- **Everyone writes an IMS Briefing** (including IC)
- **Leave time** for each person to present & receive feedback
- **IC selects one** person to present in the main room
- **Cameras on!**

Breakout Room Exercise Incident Timeline exercise

- **Incident Commander [IC]:
volunteer or appointed**
- **Preceptor will describe mission
objective and rules of
engagement for Incident
Timeline Exercise**
- **Participants will access Incident
Timeline written narrative via
the exercise resource section**
- **CAN reports and/or IMS
briefings developed and
delivered based on preceptor
instructions**

Two Communication Tools

CAN Report

- **C**onditions, **A**ctions, **N**eeds
- Brief, not a story
- 60 seconds or less
- Needs = short term
- Used for internal teams

IMS Briefing

Introduction

- Who you are, time now
- How long briefing will last
- How many points
- What was/is happening

Main Points: numbered

Summary

- Empathy
- Set next briefing time
- Additional info at this time?

Less technical

Reduce anxiety by giving info

Communication Patterns That Work Best in Incident Response

Short

Focused on essential information.

Objective

Observations rather than opinions.

Time-bound

Updates at defined intervals.

Role-based

Only relevant responders speaking.

Predictable

Formats and briefing cadence provide structure



Questions and Wrap Up