

# Continuity IQ

from  DSPN

December 2006 **Fast Facts for Our Valued Friends and Clients**

Here are some bullets and brain teasers about current events from your friends at DSPN. In this issue, we feature information about testing and exercising. If you'd like to forward this message to your colleagues, just click the "Forward Email" link at the bottom of this page.

## Fast Facts about Tests and Exercises

### Did you know....

1. Tests and exercises not only help you find gaps in your plans, they also provide many other benefits as well.
2. Exercising is a great way to increase general awareness of your organization's plans.
3. Because plans for a single entity are often built in isolation, exercises provide an effective way to increase coordination among entities.
4. A vigorous exercise program is effective in clarifying roles and responsibilities of key participants.
5. Testing and exercising is a great way to improve the performance of key individuals.
6. One side effect of an exercise is that executives are often motivated to increase their support of the program.
7. When employees participate in exercises, they improve their confidence that the plan will work during a real emergency.
8. When public and private sector organizations exercise together, they foster cooperation that is beneficial, even if the anticipated disaster never occurs.
9. When an exercise does not produce the intended results, the problem most commonly lies in one or more of these areas: scope too large, purpose not clearly defined, too many objectives.
10. It takes practice to write good objectives for an exercise. The key is to make each objective measurable.

## Brain Teasers

### True or False:

1. The National Incident Management System (NIMS) defines 4 types of exercises.
2. A drill is a type of exercise that tests, develops, or maintains skills in a single

- emergency response procedure.
3. A tabletop is a type of exercise that involves key personnel discussing simulated scenarios in an informal setting.
  4. A functional exercise is a good way to test interdependent groups of functions within an entity.
  5. The private sector is more experienced than the public sector when it comes to performing full-scale exercises.

## Check your answers here...

### Answers to the above questions:

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1. True. [NIMS defines drill, tabletop, functional, and full-scale.](#)
2. True. A common use for a drill is to test new equipment.
3. True. Tabletops are a good choice if you want to conduct an exercise in a structured, low stress environment.
4. True. A functional is a good choice if you want participants to perform their assignments in real time.
5. False. Full-scale exercises are more common in the public sector, where multiple agencies often join forces to plan and execute full-scale exercises, sometimes across jurisdictional boundaries.

## Readiness Check

### Hard-to-remember details:

1. When you design an exercise, are you careful to make the objectives participant-focused and measurable?
2. When writing events and messages for a departmental exercise, do you solicit writing assistance from within the department?
3. When preparing a simulation, do you test all equipment shortly before the event begins?
4. When preparing for a functional exercise, do you equip your observers with tools to help them look for specific actions?
5. Does each of your plans include a Corrective Action Log that can be reviewed by auditors to determine if plans were actually updated following an exercise?

## New From DSPN

### Check these out on our website:

1. DSPN's Free Resources Page now has Homeland Security's [Ready Business Brochure](#).
2. To help you find back issues of this newsletter, we've added a [Newsletter Archive](#) to our website. Check it out.

## Contributors to This Issue

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## Comments and Contributions



### Tell us what you think...

Thanks to all of you who have sent us comments about this mailing.

In responding to recent incidents, did you discover an interesting detail that you would like to share? If so, send it along and we'll consider it for a future issue. If you want us to print a comment or submission about your company, be sure to give us permission when you write.

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