

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

TOPIC: Scene Size-Up

TIME REQUIRED: 2 hours

MATERIALS: Computer
Projector
PowerPoint
Portable Radios

MOTIVATION: Many National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) Firefighter Fatality reports list the following recommendation as a critical factor that can influence line-of-duty deaths (LODDs) on the fireground and many other emergency events: “Ensure that an initial size-up of the incident scene is conducted before beginning interior firefighting operations.”

Conducting that initial scene size-up and establishing an effective incident command structure early in the event not only helps the incident run smoothly, but can also save firefighter lives. And with that comes training to ensure this practice is conducted repeatedly at every event to which we respond.

OBJECTIVE: Given a simulated emergency scenario, firefighters will be able to efficiently perform a scene size-up.

ENABLING OBJECTIVES:

EO-1 Identify five areas of importance during a size-up where valuable information can be gained.

EO-2 Identify several strategic factors that must be considered in scene size-up.

EO-3 Discuss importance of a clear and concise size-up.

EO-4 Complete several scene size-up drills

Overview and Purpose:

1. Size-up is the on-going evaluation of problems confronted within a fire situation. Size-up starts with the receipt of an alarm and continues until the fire is under control. This process is carried out many times and by many different individuals at each fire or emergency event. The responsibility of size-up initially lies with the first officer of the first unit or company that arrives on scene. This responsibility is passed up the chain of command as other units arrive with higher-ranking personnel.
2. Every firefighter and officer at the scene should constantly be doing a size-up. Any condition encountered or observed that could impact operations or the safety of firefighters, should be immediately passed up the chain of command.
3. Size-up is the constant gathering of information and knowledge that will protect all firefighters who are operating at the scene of a fire or emergency. The end result of which will almost always insure a successful and safe operation.

Lesson Plan:

The initial size-up and radio report of the first-arriving company at an incident scene is one of the most important actions undertaken by the officer of that company. This initial interpretation of conditions and action plan set the tone, tempo, and volume of the entire first alarm. While over-reaction can be “dialed down” rapidly, usually with little negative effect, a poor evaluation and response to conditions often yields a negative outcome for the entire operation.

- I. There are five major areas of importance during a size-up where valuable information can be gained. They are:
 - A. Receipt of alarm.
 - B. Enroute responding to the alarm.
 - C. Arrival at the fire scene.
 - D. Inside the fire building or area.
 - E. Post-control operations.
- II. The strategic factors that must be considered in size-up are:
 - A. Time of Day
 - B. Life Hazards
 - C. Area of Building
 - D. Height of Building
 - E. Type of Construction
 - F. Occupancy
 - G. Location and Extent of the Fire

- H. Water Supply
 - I. Street Conditions
 - J. Auxiliary Appliances (sprinklers, standpipes)
 - K. Weather Conditions
 - L. Apparatus and Equipment
 - M. Exposures
- III. Size-up actions
- A. A cornerstone of tactical operations
 - B. 360-degree reports of the building
 - C. Communicate the conditions, building construction, basement, etc.
 - D. Declare operational modes by advising actions
 - E. Request additional resources, if needed
 - F. Establish or pass command
- IV: Size-up is an ongoing process of evaluating the situation to determine:
- A. What happened?
 - B. What is happening?
 - C. What is likely to happen?
- V. An inadequate size-up can lead to choosing the wrong strategy, overlooking trapped occupants, and putting firefighters at excessive risk.
- A. On average, 100 firefighters perish in the line of duty annually.
 - B. Incomplete or insufficient size-up factors are cited as contributing factors in firefighter deaths.
- VI. 360 Degree Size-Up
- A. Opportunity to determine not just where the fire is showing from but also where the fire's origin is.
 - B. With only a limited perspective (windshield size-up), a visible first-or second-floor fire may just be a mirage of the fire's origin and actually began in the basement.
 - C. Often when below-grade fires are not identified early and the attack is made from above, fatal results occur.

REVIEW:

Student Performance Objective:

Given information from lecture and practice scenarios, the students will be able to show proficiency in a size-up of an emergency operations scene.