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Emergency Management in Higher Education: Challenges and Solutions

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Emergency Management in Higher Education: Challenges and Solutions

Abstract

Tragic events throughout the world such as the Columbine High School Shooting of 1999, Beslan Elementary School terrorist attacks in 2004, the Virginia Tech Shootings of 2007 and numerous natural disasters have forced a stark conclusion: Our schools are not impenetrable (Gidduck 2005). A new field has emerged to combat this problem, Emergency Management. Through the late 20th and early 21st century, Emergency Management has been increasing its presence on the campuses of our Institutions of Higher Education. However, these programs face four main challenges that hinder their progress: budget and finances, executive support, training and exercises, and their placement in the organizational chart. For Emergency Management to be fully effective on campus, the Emergency Manager must intentionally integrate his/her work within the political relationships, that is the power and influence relationships, on campus. Emergency Managers need to focus on the political aspect of their job in order to institutionalize Emergency Management. They can accomplish this by using three best practices, consistent documentation, intentional building of executive support, and development of positive community linkages.

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EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION:
CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

By

Robert C. Morford

A Senior Thesis Submitted to the
Eastern Michigan University
Honors College

In Partial fulfillment of the Requirements for Graduation
with Honors in Political Science

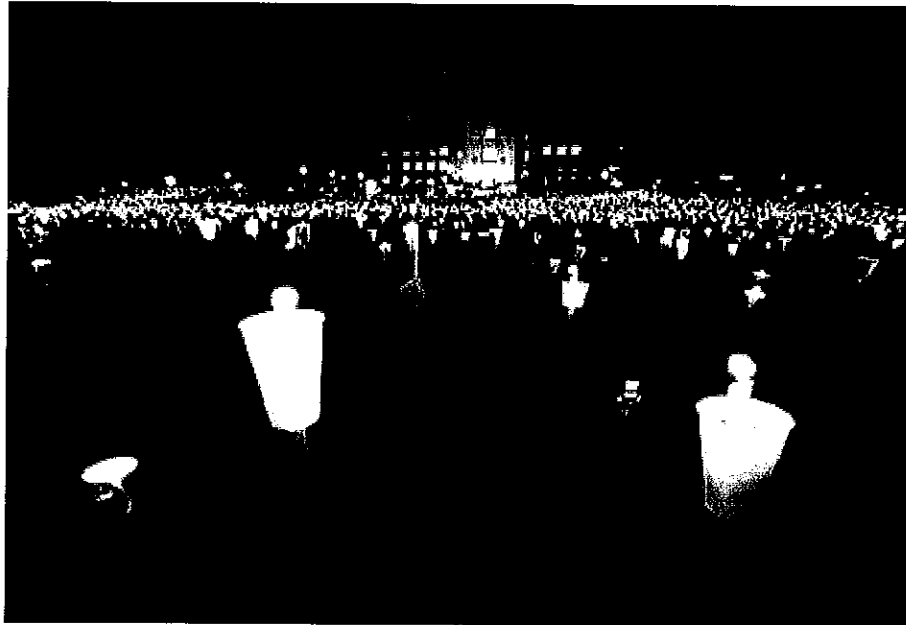
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Emergency Management in Higher Education:
Challenges and Solutions

By: Robert C. Morford

Supervising Instructor: Dr. Joseph Ohren



Honors Thesis

April, 2012

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Abstract

Tragic events throughout the world such as the Columbine High School Shooting of 1999, Beslan Elementary School terrorist attacks in 2004, the Virginia Tech Shootings of 2007 and numerous natural disasters have forced a stark conclusion: Our schools are not impenetrable (Gidduck 2005). A new field has emerged to combat this problem, Emergency Management. Through the late 20th and early 21st century, Emergency Management has been increasing its presence on the campuses of our Institutions of Higher Education. However, these programs face four main challenges that hinder their progress: budget and finances, executive support, training and exercises, and their placement in the organizational chart. For Emergency Management to be fully effective on campus, the Emergency Manager must intentionally integrate his/her work within the political relationships, that is the power and influence relationships, on campus. Emergency Managers need to focus on the political aspect of their job in order to institutionalize Emergency Management. They can accomplish this by using three best practices, consistent documentation, intentional building of executive support, and development of positive community linkages.

Introduction

When disaster strikes, most of us think of first responders such as firefighters, police, and emergency medical services (EMS). There is no reason we shouldn't. They are, after all, the people we rely on to quickly respond to our plea for help. However, behind the scenes, away from the fires and destruction, is an equally important responder.

An Emergency Manager is working diligently to coordinate all the responders and equipment needed to protect lives and property (Drabek 2). As Mark Wesley, Emergency Management Director at Eastern Michigan University (EMU) says, like the stage manager, the Emergency Manager works behind the curtain to make sure the actors, the fire, police and EMS, meet their cues (Wesley 2012).

The work of the Emergency Manager did not begin with the first 911 call, nor does it end when the responders return to their base. Quietly working behind the scene, the Emergency Manager works through the full cycle of any disaster: preparation, mitigation, response and recovery. If the manager has been effective, his or her work will result in effective coordination of all the governmental and private sector responders for the benefit of all the people touched by a disaster (Drabek 2007, 2).

The mission of Emergency Management is "to protect communities" from every type of emergency and disaster. This critical mission requires the manager to work in collaboration with many constituencies. To be effective, an Emergency Manager must intentionally "create and sustain broad and sincere relationships among individuals and organizations" (IAEM 2008, 1).

This paper examines the challenges facing practicing Emergency managers at institutions of higher learning in the United States and Canada based on their input. This

is important because the challenges they face can be understood as limitations on their effectiveness in accomplishing their mission to protect their campus communities in the event an emergency or disaster strikes. These challenges can, and probably will, reduce the effectiveness of the Emergency Management system when responding to an emergency. Failure to identify and solve factors that limit the effectiveness of emergency plans and responses means that students, faculty, staff and guests of the institution may be placed at greater risk of harm.

The importance of Emergency Management is not always obvious to key decision makers in a college community. It is difficult to prove the importance of work that may appear wasteful in a budget where every dollar is fiercely sought and protected. After identifying four key challenges faced by Emergency Managers working at Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), I propose a framework for developing effective responses to these challenges. Like the “fire triangle” that requires three items for every fire to exist, my proposal suggests a triangle of best practices for Emergency managers on campuses and elsewhere who want to build and sustain those “broad and sincere” relationships with key administrators and decision makers that are so critical to effective, and thus life-saving, Emergency Management.

Emergency Managers must have a broad base of professional and technical knowledge. These tools open doors based on the manager’s expertise, but effective managers must also be experts at building and sustaining collaborative relationships. In short, they must be good politicians as well as technicians.

My analyses and proposals focus on the political function of the Emergency Management job description and particularly on the need to develop effective relationships within the political hierarchy of the IHE he or she serves. To be effective,

the Emergency Manager needs a seat at the table. Seated at the table, the Emergency Manager will help the IHE protect the lives, property and environment of everyone on campus.

A Brief History of Emergency Management

Emergency Management as we know it today is a relatively new field. Formal fire departments were developed under Benjamin Franklin in 1736. The first modern police force was developed in London following passage of the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. Not until 1976, with the passage of the Disaster Recovery Act, did modern Emergency Management come to be.

Emergency Management has always been an essential function of government. Some disasters are just too big for local jurisdictions to handle. Historically in the United States, after a major disaster occurred, Congress would convene and pass legislation providing emergency financing for relief. Many times this money would be funneled through the American Red Cross.

The first American Red Cross disaster response was in 1881 when a forest fire in Michigan burned through a million acres in 24 hours. The fire claimed almost 300 lives and left thousands homeless. New Red Cross chapters collected food and supplies that were shipped to Michigan to assist the 14,000 people in need of help.

Before the Red Cross existed, the U.S. War Department was the main responder to disaster in the country. After the fire in Michigan, the Red Cross proved it could respond to large disasters and President Chester Arthur and the U.S. Senate officially recognized the American Red Cross by signing the Treaty of Geneva, March 16, 1882.

The Red Cross has a congressional charter from 1905 that tasks the Red Cross, “...to maintain a system of domestic and international disaster relief, including mandated responsibilities under the National Response Plan (NRP) coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).” (American Red Cross n.d.). (The charter was updated to include FEMA and the NRP after their creation.) This was the primary way disaster relief was coordinated until after World War II.

After World War II, Emergency Management began to take shape in the form of Civil Defense programs aimed at protecting the United States in case of a nuclear bomb strike. The Department of Defense began emergency preparedness programs in the 1950’s throughout the country, including advertising campaigns such as “Bert the Turtle.” The 1950’s were a relatively quiet time for natural disasters, which allowed for a focus on foreign threats.

The 1960’s entered with vengeance as three major natural disasters shook the country, including the Hebgen Lake Earthquake, Hurricane Donna, and Hurricane Carla. The loss of life and property from these disasters caused the federal government to take a new approach to Emergency Management, and in 1961, the White House created the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

As more disasters occurred, the federal government realized that it was not prepared to handle large natural disasters. Through the 1960’s, ad hoc legislation was passed to deal with each individual disaster, delaying response and creating confusion. In the 1970’s, Emergency Management functions could be found in five different agencies. According to the National Emergency Management Association, the distinction between wartime civil defense initiatives and natural disaster relief efforts was unclear; civil defense workers had “national security” status and dealt with critical production issues

and “protection” of civil population from foreign attack. Disaster relief was seen by Civil Defense as an unrelated, benign task. Federal response to emergencies was often fragmented and slow (Bullock 2003, 1-12).

In 1974, the Disaster Relief Act was passed providing federal funds for emergency preparedness and disaster relief. Housing and Urban Development now possessed the greatest power of the over 100 federal agencies with emergency response requirements. This pattern continued down to state, and sometimes, local levels.

Frustrated with fragmented responses to their states, Governor’s called for the creation of a lead agency in Emergency management. Thus, under President Jimmy Carter, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was born, and so was modern Emergency Management (FEMA 2010).

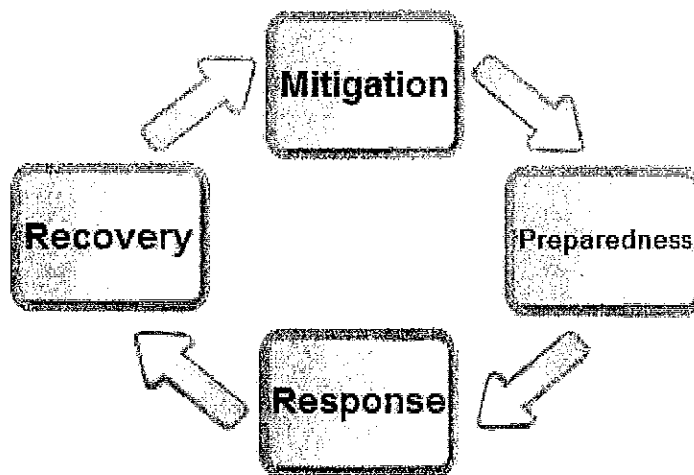
The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York, New York on September 11, 2001 forever changed Emergency Management. Emergency Managers were forced to deal with a new threat, terrorism. No longer was a hurricane our worst fear, another human being was. For the next four years, resources were transferred from domestic natural hazard preparedness and response to terrorism prevention and response. FEMA had its focused changed from natural hazards to policing. This change reared its ugly head in 2005 when Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast.

Hurricane Katrina flooded the city of New Orleans after its complex and crucial levee system failed. Failures at the federal, state and local levels all contributed to the deaths of thousands of people and the “near death experience” of one of America’s great cities. After Hurricane Katrina, Emergency Management, and the people overseeing Emergency Managers, saw a weakness. They introduced “All-Hazards Planning,” covering every hazard, ranking floods and terrorism right next to each other. This is

where we are today.

What is Emergency Management?

Emergency Management is defined as the discipline dealing with risk and risk avoidance (Haddow and Bullock 2003, 1). FEMA defines Emergency Management as, “...Organized analysis, planning, decision-making, and assignment of available resources to mitigate (lessen the effect of or prevent), prepare for, respond to, and recover from the effects of all hazards. The goal of Emergency Management is to save lives, prevent injuries, and protect property and the environment if an emergency occurs.” (Federal Emergency Management Agency 1995, 1-6). In simple terms, Emergency Managers attempt to prevent disasters from happening; and when a disaster does strike, Emergency Managers will have helped prepare their community to be ready to respond quickly and effectively, to lessen the negative effects of the event on the community’s residents, property and environment, and to promptly begin recovery. We call these, “The Four Phases of Emergency Management.”



Source information: (U.S. Department of Education n.d.)

Phase 1: Mitigation

Mitigation looks at long-term solutions to reduce risk. Mitigation uses financial incentives such as flood insurance, land-use planning, design, construction and structural controls to mitigate the effects of hazards. The results with mitigation are rarely immediate, but when they show themselves, the question of, “Was it worth it?” will become very clear.

Mitigation Plans form the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The planning process is as important as the plan itself. It creates a framework for risk-based decision making to reduce damages to lives, property, and the economy from future disasters. Hazard mitigation is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from hazards (FEMA 2010, 1).

Phase 2: Preparedness

Preparing to handle an emergency includes plans or preparations made to save lives and to help response and rescue operations. Evacuation plans and stocking food and water are both examples of preparedness. Preparedness activities take place before an emergency occurs. These plans may consist of a Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, Continuity of Operations Plan, Building Emergency Plan and more. They are designed to spell out how we are going to handle and how the public should handle an emergency.

Phase 3: Response

Response is putting your preparedness plans into action. Responding safely to an emergency includes actions taken to save lives and prevent further property damage in an emergency. Seeking shelter from a tornado or turning off gas valves in an earthquake are

both response activities. Response activities take place during an emergency. Using the National Incident Management System, Emergency Managers assist first responders in responding to an emergency by getting them supplies, analyzing information, tracking costs and resources and seeing the event through to the end.

Phase 4: Recovery

Recovering from an emergency includes actions taken to return to a normal or an even safer situation following an emergency. Mitigation immediately begins again in this phase as there is usually a blank slate to use and so the process restarts. Recovery includes getting financial assistance to help pay for repairs, creating after-action reports, and providing support services for those who are having mental health issues and more. Recovery activities take place after an emergency and can continue for years.

These four phases, working together, create the Emergency Management process. FEMA prescribes, “to treat each action as one phase of a comprehensive process, with each phase building on the accomplishments of the preceding one. The overall goal is to minimize the impact caused by an emergency in the jurisdiction” (FEMA 1996, 1-4). Each phase supports the other to provide quick, efficient, life-saving responses to disaster.

Survey Design

To examine the major challenges experienced at IHE’s by practicing Emergency Managers an online survey was drafted to draw out the opinions of Emergency Managers to provide quantitative and qualitative data. A professor in the Department of Political Science at Eastern Michigan University and the University’s Emergency Manager then reviewed a draft of the survey. The final survey was produced considering their input.

The survey was distributed using surveymonkey.com to 790 higher education Emergency Managers. The mailing list consisted of personal contacts and the Disaster Resilient Universities listserv maintained by the University of Oregon. Data were collected from January 24, 2012 through February 29, 2012. Of the 790 people who received the survey, 56 responded, a 13.3% response rate. To protect the privacy of participants, no information is provided in the survey report regarding specific institutions. The full report, including the rankings of all of the challenges and solutions presented by the respondents, can be found in appendix A.

Survey Demographics

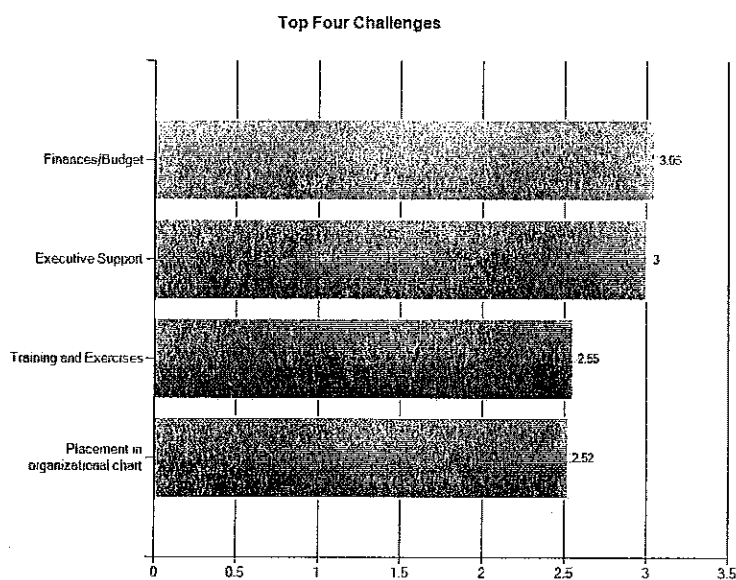
Respondents were generally male (73%), under the age of 35 (32%) and possessed the title of Emergency Manager or Coordinator. Seventy-seven percent of respondents stated that they are “extremely familiar” with the Emergency Management policies, procedures and techniques at their school, with the majority being in their current position for 2-5 years (31%). Survey respondents report being familiar with the operations of their school’s Emergency Management program and have the experience to understand the dynamics involved.

Half of the institutions the respondents represent have a population greater than 25,001 and most of them are categorized as a University (82%). Only 10 colleges and community colleges responded to the survey, representing a lack of Emergency Management in those levels of IHE. Of the schools which responded, half of the EM programs are staffed by only one person, the survey respondent, and forty percent have 2-4 employees.

Survey Discussion

Each respondent was asked to identify the top four challenges they face in the Emergency Management program at their school. They ranked these challenges with the greatest challenge being number one, the next most challenging two, and so on.

I assigned a numerical weight to each response with the “Greatest Challenge” receiving a weight of four, the second challenge a three, and so on. I then averaged all of the responses based on this weighting scale. The graph below illustrates the results of the top four challenges as reported by respondents.



As illustrated in the chart, the four major challenges reported by practicing Emergency Managers on college campuses are finance and budget, executive support, training and exercises, and placement in the organizational chart. These

four challenges were closely ranked, perhaps implying that there may be some factors that relate to all four issues.

An analysis of the qualitative responses offered by respondents also suggests a direction for strengthening the practice of Emergency Managers. While the first three issues were all reported to be “moderate hindrances” to effective management, the issue of placement of the Emergency Manager in the college’s organizational chart was seen as a “significant hindrance.” Managers also expressed frustration at their lack of progress in

alleviating these concerns.

One way to explain these issues and concerns is to state that it appears those Emergency Managers and their departments do not have a “seat at the table”. When college executives establish priorities for action and budget, Emergency Managers do not appear to be sufficiently placed to advocate and win the personnel, organizational and financial resources they need to be fully effective.

This view of the problem suggests that Emergency Managers need to pay more attention to the political aspects of their work. They need to have the skills to navigate the power and influence relationships as they exist on each campus. They need to be better politicians!

Triangle to the Ideal

In order to solve the top four challenges that Emergency Managers have expressed they are struggling with we need to look at something larger than just the individual problems. We need to look at the political structure of each IHE. According to Webster’s Dictionary, politics is defined as the social relationships involving authority or power. This authority and power are vested in the people above us such as the President of our school, our executive director and more. It is doubtful that you would ever find a Chief that would deny additional funding to an Emergency Management Office if it were offered. However, why does the President and the Provost not always feel the same way?

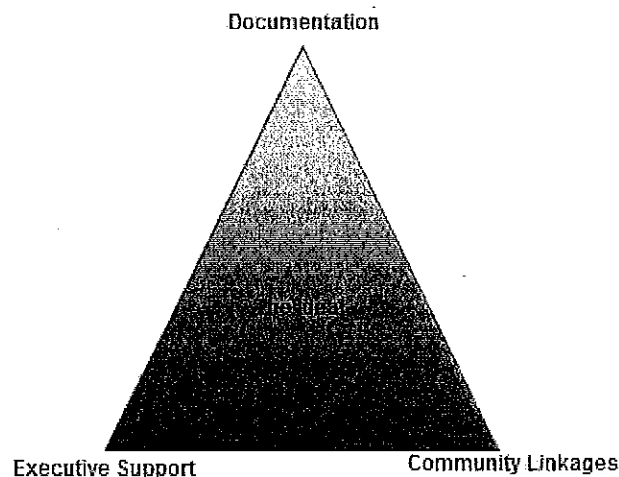
There are many different answers to that question. That is why we need to understand how to use the power and authority relationships on our campus to our advantage.

Emergency Managers need to be able to navigate these power and authority relationships on their campus to be successful.

How might Emergency Managers win the personal, organizational and financial

resources they need to be fully effective? I propose three best practices to focus on when navigating the political realm of the campus. These three practices may be seen as forming a triangle for success in working with the politics of the campus. These practices are accurate, consistent, and useful documentation; intentionally building executive support; and, establishment of positive community linkages both on and off campus. The responses of the survey respondents, the literature, and my own experience suggest a triangle of "best practices" in the political arena of Emergency Management that can help to place EM "at the table" of power and influence on campus.

If used properly, these three practices can help an Emergency Management program reach what I call, "The Ideal."



The three best practices I propose can be visualized as a triangle. Each of the "legs" of the triangle must be present for the "ideal" program to exist. For example, in fire safety education, the image of the "Fire Triangle" is regularly used. In this triangle there are three items that every fire needs to survive and grow; heat, fuel, and oxygen. Take away any of those components, the fire goes out. The same is true for this triangle.

All three components must be present. If one is lost, the fire of an ideal program goes out.

Another aspect of the theory is the ability to shift focus as needed. Going back to the Fire Triangle, imagine your Emergency Management program is a fire and you, as the fire, want to grow and thrive. Now, let us say you have a whole house to burn, plenty of fuel, but the house is on Mercury. You have the fuel but you do not have the oxygen you need. If you have great documentation in your program now, you can continue that work and refocus your efforts on building Executive Support or Community Linkages, like already having the fuel but needing the oxygen.

Now let us examine each part of the triangle in more detail, drawing our comments from survey respondents.

Documentation

According to Rainey, the first two steps in guiding planned change in public organizations are, ensure the need and, provide a plan. To ensure the need, you must verify and persuasively communicate the need for change (Rainey 2003, 171). To do that you must consistently document the actions of your program and show why the school needs you. Survey respondents expressed this in their responses. One recommended using an outside consulting firm to show the benefits of having an Emergency Management program (More, Vito, and Walsh 2012, 364).

Some other ideas included simply listing your needs and explaining why they are a need and creating informational releases such as weather reports before a large storm, briefings for a concert or sporting event, and other reports prior to an event that can go far in showing executives and the community what you do.

Other respondents said they create after action reports for almost every large

emergency event on their campus to show what went well in the response and what could have gone better. In creating those reports and distributing them to the school's leadership, they can show a need and help the school fix what went wrong filling that need.

After Action Reporting is a crucial component of the consistent documentation method. These reports give Emergency Managers an opportunity to apply their expertise to real world situations. When an event occurs, be on scene and be involved. After everything is mostly settled, ask for a meeting of everyone involved to assess what happened and get feedback. Then, create an after action report, distribute it and keep issuing updates. As one of the survey respondents said, "Make it real."

For example, Eastern Michigan University had a pipe break away from its hanger in November, 2012 in its library. This small accident caused the building to be closed, minor flooding, the relocation of multiple offices and the closure of the basement for a few months. This type of event allows an Emergency Manager to step in and assess what was handled well and what could have gone better. It provides an opportunity for executives to see your work in real world applications and to see you coordinating the event.

The second part to documentation is to publicize this information. Make sure that you, your Chief, your Executives and especially your community know your work, accomplishments and worth. You can compile volumes of work but if it is not distributed and explained, it is worthless. This must be done in accordance with any security restrictions of course and in consultation with your superior (UNICEF n.d.).

Executive Support

Executive support was identified as one of the top four challenges faced by Emergency Managers but it is also one of the three methods to reaching the ideal of Emergency Management. Among the key challenges that concern Emergency Managers is the presence of active support from college administration, including the President, Provost, and Executive Board. This challenge can also incorporate support and cooperation from the many departmental leaders found on a typical college campus. Survey respondents indicated that some upper management at their schools say, “We should do that.” Then, there is no action and nothing happens. From personal experience, this is a very common occurrence.

There are two factors proposed by Riley that will help us gain the support of our executive leadership. This first is to “Build Internal Support for Change and Overcome Resistance.” Cite the successes you have had in the past, using your consistent documentation, and how the improvement of your program will promote those successes in the future. This is where After Action Reports can become very useful. Rainey also notes that it is important to, “...create psychological ownership by disseminating critical information and providing for meaningful... feedback...” (Rainey 2003, 64). In other words, you have to provide more than just numbers and facts. You have to present a truth that influences their emotions and stirs them to act (More, Vito, and Walsh 2012, 364)

It is crucial to do this so that you can complete the next factor in influencing change, “Ensuring Top Management’s Support and Commitment.” Using your documentation above and building internal support you will eventually find a champion for your program and take risks to achieve the change needed (Rainey 2003, 67)

Survey respondents also emphasized getting upper management involved in the work of Emergency Management. You can do this by running tabletop exercises with your executives; have the President in the Emergency Operations Center when you run tests; have every member of your executive leadership participating in full-scale exercises and keep them busy. This is how you, “Make it real.” Admittedly, this process will probably begin with a fifteen-minute tabletop exercise where you can barely introduce the scenario. Do not be discouraged.

As one survey respondent noted, you must muster great amounts of personal motivation and you cannot give up. Building relationships is a critical skill for an Emergency Manager. Building executive support is a never-ending, cyclical process. You must constantly work towards building this support and you may see the outcomes wax and wane, not to mention when executives leave and new executives start. Using the ideas above, you have the opportunity to develop lasting executive support and eventually “institutionalize Emergency Management [at your school].” Through it all, you must push to be heard and make your cause known.

“God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.”

- The Serenity Prayer, Reinhold Niebuhr

Community Linkages

“External power and politics influences internal power and politics” (Rainey 2003, 143). The third part of the triangle is to intentionally develop and maintain links within the community you serve and the community in which campus is located. Rainey

says, “The general level of [community] support for a particular agency...affects its ability to maintain a base of political support” (Rainey 2003, 104).

This is also called interacting with your environment. Researchers and experts now regard organizational environments, and the challenges of dealing with them, as crucial to analyzing and leading organizations (Rainey 2003, 81). Rainey provides a list of general environmental conditions that an organization may encounter:

- Technological Factors
- Legal Conditions
- Political Conditions
- Economic Conditions
- Demographic Conditions
- Cultural Conditions

In this section, we focus primarily on the political conditions that have an impact on the organizational environment, particularly outside the IHE structure. However, all of the above factors play into our profession and should be taken into consideration in the future.

Linkages with the community show the campus as a whole, not just the administration, what you do and your worth. Getting involved in the community also opens you up to assistance from your local fire department, information sharing with your County Emergency Management Office, and possible funding support from a foundation. Developing these relationships can help you in the other two parts of the triangle.

According to Rainey, public organizations need, “...support from...mass publics, or broad, diffuse populations, and (especially) from attentive publics - more organized groups that are more interested in specific agencies” (Rainey 2003, 101).

Mass publics include the students, staff, faculty and guests at your IHE. It also encompasses the community that surrounds you. Their support, as said above, is needed for the success of a public program. You can build this community support by educating the public about what you do in an emergency, what they can do to prepare for an emergency, and a wide range of other outreach programs. Basic customer service principles such as being friendly, welcoming, and responsive can also garner this support. The general level of public support for a program influences its ability to maintain a base of political support (Rainey 2003, 101). This means that if you have the support of the community, you will have the support of your superiors.

One of the main ways to do this is become a source of information and help to your campus community. The organization, GuideStar, proposes, “Five Qualities That Make You a Good Expert Source.” They are:

1. Be an expert in your specific field or “niche.”

Experts in broad topics are common. What is more valuable is an expert in a certain niche in a broader field. For example, you can be the source of information about Emergency Management on your campus. All of the Public Safety services on your campus would be too broad. Know your specialty and, if a question is out of your niche, refer them to the right person.

2. Possess a solid record of accomplishment.

Sometimes just having the title of Emergency Manager is enough for people to trust your word. “Can you back up what you’re saying with a description of your experience, research, or training?” Always be ready to answer a question with facts or theory. Joining the Disaster Resilient Universities Listserv hosted by the University of Oregon is a great way to find those facts. Simply send out an email

to the group and fellow Emergency Managers from throughout the U.S. and Canada will help you. Periodicals, research papers such as this one, and a simple Google search can help you.

3. Be trustworthy.

“No one likes to be misled with bad information or an incomplete story. Always tell the truth. If you do not know an answer, it is okay to guess, but make sure the person you are talking to knows you are guessing.

It is also important to be upfront about any biases your organization has. If there is a broad range of opinion on your issues, be clear about where you fit on that spectrum. It's okay to have strong opinions and to advocate for them, but you'll win points if you are transparent about your bias, acknowledge that you represent one particular point of view, and even point a reporter to someone who can offer an opposing perspective” (GuideStar n.d.)

4. Be accessible.

“You are no good as a source if people can't reach you when they need you” (GuideStar n.d.). Be sure to publicize your contact information openly and widely. Check your messages regularly and reply promptly, generally within 48 hours, minus weekends. When being responsive, remember the two ways you, as a government agent, are expected to respond: 1) Responsiveness to the public, and 2) responsiveness to the interests of the government (Rainey 2003, 94). Read the book, “*Reinventing Government*,” by Osborne and Gaebler, 1992, to learn more about, “customer-driven government” which proclaims the value of staying in close touch with the customers of government programs and being responsive to their needs (Rainey 2003, 94).

5. Be cooperative and create win-win situations.

“Being a genius or a great speaker doesn't make you a great source unless you give people what they really need.” Focus on the question and make your answers understandable and to the point. “If someone asks about an issue you find boring or inconsequential, don't blow off the question and start talking about what you care about. Answer the question first, then suggest a few additional points” (GuideStar n.d.).

Using these methods can help you garner the support of the public as a source and integral person on campus. However, another group can provide you with help.

Attentive publics are categorized as groups such as fire, police, emergency medical services and other Emergency Management programs that are interested in the public safety field. Elected officials from your city and county also fall under this, as they are attentive to the needs of their constituents. In Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, he proposes that after physical needs such as food and water, safety is the second most important element that people need to reach their full potential (McLeod 2012). Most public officials recognize this and put a focus on the safety of their people. These attentive publics are focused on the success of programs that ensure public safety and, of course, Emergency Management falls into that.

These groups are available to assist you in expressing the importance of the work you do. Take advantage of their mutual interest in public safety and ask them to present on your behalf. As one of the survey respondents said, “There is no need to be shy.”

Have the local fire chief present to your executive leadership and explain why Emergency Management is important for their work.

“A story is a great way to give potential donors personalized insight into what your nonprofit does and the change you're making in the world. In addition, the most compelling stories are told by people who know you best—your clients, volunteers, and partners—as well as your existing donors. In a recent survey, 84 percent of donors said that reviews were helpful when they were deciding whether to give to a nonprofit. Every day new potential donors flock to the Web to research nonprofits. Won't you tell them your story?” (GuideStar n.d.)

Many of your partners have been around longer than the University itself and have years of experience that you can use. When it comes to documentation, for example, they can provide you with historical facts, data, and recommendations for areas to address. These linkages are available and can be useful in your work.

Such outside organizations, especially local Chief's, usually have influence over school administration, especially if they provide emergency services to the school. The local players in government can assist you in developing the executive support you need for a strong program. Do not be shy when asking for help from others. Most of the time, they will be happy to help if they understand what you do to help the University and, most of all, them.

The support of the community has extreme power over those who serve it. It is very important to make sure that you are on the positive receiving end of that power. Use it to your advantage and become the “go to” person to get things done. Be courteous, responsive and communicative with those you serve and they will return the favor.

The Ideal

As suggested above, the political environment of IHE's limits the success of Emergency Management programs. In order to understand what the limitations are, we

need to understand what the goals are. I present the following nine principles, adapted from the U.S. Department of Education Action Guide, as the ideal Emergency Management program at an IHE.

1. Effective Emergency Management begins with senior leadership on campus. The IHE president, chancellor, or provost must initiate and support Emergency Management efforts to ensure engagement from the entire campus community.

This “champion” administrator will have decision-making power and the authority to devote resources to implementing the initiative and subsequently put into action the emergency management plan. Since budgetary realities may force campus administrators to make decisions within select fiscal parameters, it is important to have high-level support to provide both political and financial backing to the effort.

2. An IHE Emergency Management initiative requires partnerships and collaboration. Every department responsible for creating a safe environment and enhancing campus functions must be involved in planning efforts.

IHE’s should identify and engage internal and external partners, and ensure that all planning tasks are performed within a collaborative and integrated approach. This means involving a variety of departments and functions across the campus and reaching out to community partners in the public, nonprofit, and private sectors. Partnerships with such community groups as law enforcement, fire safety, homeland security, emergency medical services, health and mental health organizations, media, and volunteer groups are integral to developing and implementing a comprehensive emergency management plan.

3. An IHE emergency management plan must adopt an “all-hazards” approach to account for the full range of hazards that threaten or may threaten the campus.

All-hazards planning is a more efficient and effective way to prepare for emergencies. Rather than managing planning initiatives for a multitude of threat scenarios, all-hazard planning develops capacities and capabilities that are critical to prepare for a full spectrum of emergencies or disasters, including natural hazards and severe weather, biological hazards, and violence and terrorism. As defined by FEMA, all-hazard planning “encourages Emergency Managers to address all of the hazards that threaten their jurisdiction in a single emergency operations plan, instead of relying on stand-alone plans” (FEMA 2010, 31). An all-hazards plan should be flexible and specific to the campus and its needs.

4. An IHE emergency management plan should use the four phases of Emergency management to effectively prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Emergency plans at higher education institutions should use the four phases of Emergency Management as the framework for planning and implementation. These were the founding principles of comprehensive Emergency Management when FEMA was created: Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

5. The IHE emergency management plan must be based on a comprehensive design, while also providing for staff, students, faculty, and visitors with special needs.

Every aspect of an emergency plan should also incorporate provisions for vulnerable populations, those which can have a wide range of needs, including language barriers, disabilities, or other special conditions. Thus, any procedures, products, and protocols created to prevent, prepare, respond, and recover from an

emergency must accommodate people with various levels of cognitive ability, knowledge, physical capabilities and life experience.

6. Campuses should engage in a comprehensive planning process that addresses the particular circumstances and environment of their institution.

A high-quality emergency management plan does not simply duplicate another institution's specific model. Rather, the plan must be based on the unique aspects of the campus, such as the academic programs offered, size, geographic location of the campus, number and type of buildings, such as athletic venues and research labs, availability of campus and community resources, and student demographics.

7. An IHE should conduct training based on the institution's prevention and preparedness efforts, prioritized threats, and issues highlighted from assessments.

Routine, multi-hazard training should be conducted with faculty, staff, and other support personnel, focusing on the protocols and procedures in the emergency management plan. Training should be conducted in conjunction with community partners, as well as integrated with responders' expertise, to ensure consistent learning.

8. Higher education institutions should conduct tabletop exercises prior to fully adopting and implementing the emergency management plan.

These exercises should cover a range of scenarios that may occur on the campus, and should be conducted with a variety of partners and stakeholders from the campus and the community. It is important for emergency planners also to evaluate and document lessons learned from the exercise(s) in an after-action review and an after-action report, and to modify the main emergency plan as needed.

9. After adoption, disseminate information about the plan to students, staff, faculty, community partners, and families.

Dissemination efforts should include conveyance of certain plan components to specific audiences, such as relaying shelter-in-place procedures to faculty members, or relaying campus evacuation information to the transportation department. General plans and procedures can be posted around campus or displayed on a Web site. Students, staff, faculty, and all of the varied campus support personnel should familiarize themselves with the plan and its components so they are prepared to respond in an emergency.

Applying the theory to the top four challenges

Budget and Finances

According to the FEMA Office of Program Planning and Analysis, “The current economic crisis has brought the tenuous state of government budgets, particularly with respect to Emergency Management funding, into focus as a major driver of the future environment. Current ... budget forecasts are grim in the short term and could lead to Emergency Management funding sustainability problems” (United States Council of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM-USA) 2010, 1)

The Department of Education (DOE) Emergency Management in Higher Education (EMHE) grant program financed the creation and support of Emergency Management programs at IHE’s from 2008 to 2011 supporting roughly 60 IHE’s. In 2012, the program had its funding pulled and was disbanded (US Department of Education n.d.). This program was instrumental in creating and sustaining Emergency Management programs throughout the U.S. However, when the funding ran out for these

now large offices, they were faced with a challenge. As FEMA stated above, budgets are grim and finding additional funding is unlikely.

As an example, at its peak, the Eastern Michigan University Emergency Management Office, a recipient of an EMHE grant, had three full time staff, a Graduate Assistant, a Student Employee and an Intern. The office outgrew the long-term budget available. As the grant began to close out, staff was forced to leave. Now, one full time staff member, the Graduate Assistant, the Student Employee and an Intern, staff the office. In the University budget, Emergency Management does not exist. All of the pay and budget for the office now resides within the University Police budget, without a specific allocation for the office.

Though this grant was instrumental in developing Emergency Management in IHE's, it was only a short-term fix. To create a long term, sustainable program, Emergency Management needs to be a line item within the University budget with regular funding. Needless to say, in today's economy, this is challenging.

The Triangle to the Ideal can help. In order to get regular funding one item is needed the most; executive support. On most IHE campuses, the administration allocates the budget every year and welcomes input during the process. Using the triangle, we can take advantage of this opportunity.

For the past few months to years, your documentation efforts should have kept the executive leadership abreast of every event on campus from severe weather to concerts to what you accomplished. They should start seeing that you provide valuable information and a crucial coordination tool. This will build trust and an appreciation for what Emergency Management brings to the table.

To further build this relationship and make an argument for Emergency Management, ask for the support, whether written or oral, of local community leaders on and off campus. Contact the Fire Chief as a, "Subject Matter Expert," to tell his or her story of why they support Emergency Management; have the County Emergency Manager explain why it is so important for their program to have a campus Emergency Management program. Also, contact the Student Body President, the leadership of Greek Life, the Residence Hall Association, Faculty Union and Senate, Staff Union and boards, and the like. The buy-in from all four populations on a generic campus - students, faculty, staff, and community partners - is crucial for this to work.

Finally, you must build your relationship with individual executive leaders. Make sure they know you are there to help and teach them. You are there to support to them.

Though the main goal is to develop a champion, do not focus on that. Be personable and be welcoming. Welcome them into being players in the Emergency Management field.

Executive Support

The second biggest challenge identified by survey respondents is also part of the solution to the other challenges. IHE administration is pulled in many different directions on a daily basis and their time and attention is a precious commodity. Getting a "seat at the table," with them is extremely challenging. However, without their support an Emergency Management program, like few others, will not survive.

For example, a member of the faculty does not need to talk to the President on a regular basis. They are capable of, and sometimes content with, not talking with him or her. On the other hand, the Emergency Manager needs regular contact with the President and all of the executive leadership. Without these connections, we lose our ability to effectively respond in an emergency. The teacher can still do their job without the

connections. Therefore, executive support is both a challenge and solution. They are hard to access yet crucial to success.

Applying the theory I present can become tricky when you are trying to solve what is supposed to be a solution. However, as I mentioned above, this theory allows you to shift between practices to focus your efforts. If executive support is lacking, documentation and community linkages are still available.

Developing a history of documentation, collecting data and compiling it into meaningful information takes time. Building positive relationships with your on and off campus community also takes time. It may be a little while before you are able to start gaining the support of the executive leadership. As one survey respondent stated as their solution, “Persistence.”

Links to the community are critical when garnering the support of campus executives. Local government officials and campus stakeholders have a significant amount of influence over campus administration. Invite these people to speak on your behalf. They may not always be Subject Matter Experts, but they may be able to provide a personal story of how Emergency Management helped them.

As an example, in March 2012, an EF-3 tornado struck a small town in southeast Michigan. In this town lived an employee of a local IHE. The employee was not aware of the oncoming severe weather until she received an emergency alert text message from her employer’s Emergency Management Office. She and her two children took cover. The tornado touched down two miles from her house. If it were not for the work of the Emergency Management Office, that employee may not have been able to properly respond to the warning.

Those types of stories, from the people who lived them, have an enormous impact on executives. It also shows the true reach of Emergency Management. It has no boundaries in today's global society.

A combination of data to show a need from your documentation and the support of the community will eventually prove to the administration the importance of Emergency Management. This will take time and even when you start making progress, you must keep nurturing the relationship. Be persistent, be responsive, and be ready to prove the worth of the program every day.

Training and Exercises

Development and execution can be one of the most challenging, rewarding, and fun parts of the Emergency Management field. Seeing actors playing victims on the ground, fire trucks and ambulances rolling onto the scene, watching how people respond to a scenario, and analyzing how the responders respond is both crucial and important. However, as portrayed in the survey, it is a serious challenge for many Emergency Managers.

Survey respondents stated that executive support, budget constraints, and a lack of staff and time to plan training are all hurdles to running regular and effective training. With budget cuts, training has been harder to accomplish as more reliance is put on volunteers and in-kind donations. Overtime is rarely approved for staff to participate and the purchase of equipment is restricted. Overall, getting the training, no matter the size, is tough.

There are seven types of exercises defined within the Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP), each of which is either discussions-based or operations-based. Discussions-based Exercises familiarize

participants with current plans, policies, agreements and procedures, or may be used to develop new plans, policies, agreements, and procedures. Types of Discussion-based Exercises include:

- **Seminar.** A seminar is an informal discussion, designed to orient participants to new or updated plans, policies, or procedures.
- **Workshop.** A workshop resembles a seminar, but is employed to build specific products, such as a draft plan or policy.
- **Tabletop Exercise.** A tabletop exercise involves key personnel discussing simulated scenarios in an informal setting. Tabletops can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures.
- **Games.** A game is a simulation of operations that often involves two or more teams, usually in a competitive environment, using rules, data, and procedure designed to depict an actual or assumed real-life situation.

Operations-based Exercises validate plans, policies, agreements and procedures, clarify roles and responsibilities, and identify resource gaps in an operational environment. Types of Operations-based Exercises include:

- **Drill.** A drill is a coordinated, supervised activity usually employed to test a single, specific operation or function within a single entity like a fire alarm evacuation.
- **Functional Exercise (FE).** A functional exercise examines and/or validates the coordination, command, and control between various multi-agency coordination centers. A functional exercise does not involve any "boots on the ground" (i.e., first responders or emergency officials responding to an incident in real time).
- **Full-Scale Exercises (FSE).** A full-scale exercise is a multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional, multi-discipline exercise involving functional and "boots on the ground" response (e.g., firefighters decontaminating mock victims).

For an entity to be considered HSEEP compliant, it must satisfy four distinct performance requirements:

1. Conducting an annual Training and Exercise Plan Workshop and developing and maintaining a Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan.

2. Planning and conducting exercises in accordance with the guidelines set forth in HSEEP.
3. Developing and submitting a properly formatted After-Action Report (AAR).
4. Tracking and implementing corrective actions identified in the AAR.

All of this work is enough for a full time staff member.

Now, let us go back to the triangle of success theory to see how this challenge can be solved. The primary problem with running exercises is financing. To solve that problem we can look above. However, there is something different we can add with exercises and training. As one survey respondents stated, "Make it real." Exercises are your chance to make it real.

Start small, look to the documentation you have, especially after action reports, and determine where your jurisdiction needs to improve. Using this documentation, you can assemble an argument for why a training or exercise needs to be conducted. Simply put, show a need. This is why documentation is so important.

Next, go to your community, particularly other public safety agencies, and express that you have identified a training need on campus and ask for their support and participation. Having the agencies that serve your campus on board is important when you move on to the next step.

Finally, you need the support of the administration on campus. As with budget, employ all the resources that the triangle presents. Clearly show the need for training and how it affects the students, faculty, staff, and guests who are on campus. Also, mention how it may affect the area surrounding campus, which probably has a mix of students, residents, and businesses. Most of all, emphasize a weakness and the possible side

effects if not addressed. In this case, you become like a doctor explaining why your executive needs to eat healthier.

This is another great time to bring in outside support. Student, faculty, and staff MAY not be as helpful in this case as a Subject Matter Expert such as the Police Chief. Have them speak to the importance of dealing with issue you identified and be sure to ask them to make it relate to their department. This personal touch can really help people understand the gravity of the situation. Finally, as one respondent put it, “Don’t be shy.” Go ahead, ask, tactfully, for funding, and present a proposed budget. When doing this make sure to include them in the exercise. Have them in the Emergency Operations Center or in the field talking to the “media.” It may also be effective to, “Hold more training and exercise opportunities immediately after some significant negative event at another institution” (Survey Respondent).

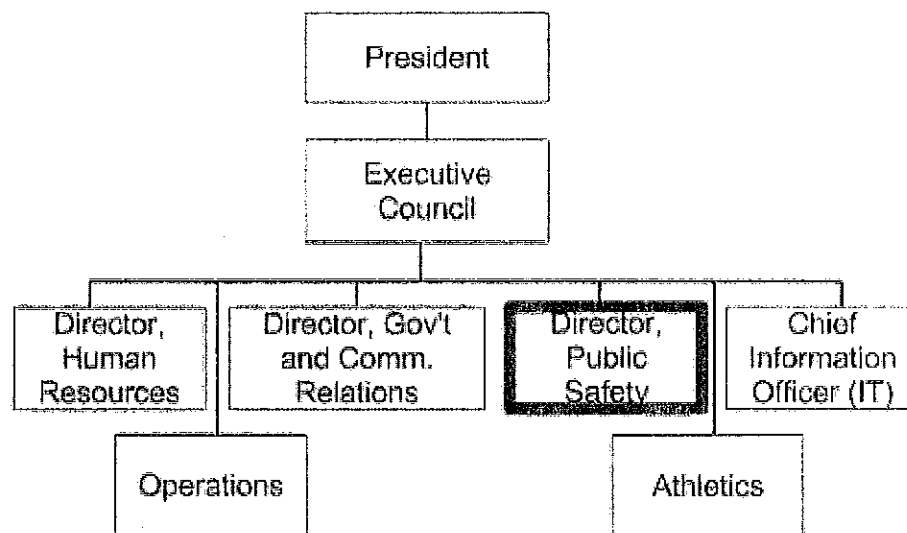
Remember that this is cyclical process. If you can get regular funding and support for a training every year, pounce on it. Moreover, if you do not get it, keep asking for it and identifying more vulnerabilities. In all cases, make sure it is a positive learning experience that stimulates their thinking and inspires them to do more. Make it real and, with continued work, they will understand.

Placement in the Organizational Chart

The fourth challenge identified by current Emergency Managers was their office’s placement in the organizational chart. Through researching over forty large and small schools’ organizational charts, not one provided a direct line from the President of the school to Public Safety. Public Safety was placed under facilities, operations, and many other vice presidents. In my research, I was not able to find any school that officially

allows the Chief of Police to directly contact the President. This creates a myriad of issues.

In 2006, Eastern Michigan University student Laura Dickinson was raped and murdered on campus. After ten weeks of investigating, the University finally released that they were treating the case as a murder after telling the campus community “there was no foul play.” The University was fined \$350,000 under the Cleary Act and most top administrators either stepped down or were encouraged to leave.



In 2008, the University announced the hiring of a new President. This President immediately reorganized the University with transparency in mind. One of the biggest moves made was the placement of the Department of Public Safety (DPS). Public safety was moved into the President’s Executive Council giving the Chief of Police a direct reporting line to the President. Along these lines, she also ordered the Chief to call her when something happens, no matter the time of day.

From my research, this is rare. However, EMU is credited as receiving the largest Cleary Act fine ever handed out (Pittsburgh Post Gazette 2011). Therefore, school administrators should learn from these schools mistakes and look for solutions from this

school. EMU, after streamlining its reporting system to provide for quicker notification of emergencies, has seen a steady decline in every type of crime since 2009 (Eastern Michigan University 2011).

We can use the triangle of success to help us make a case for more effective placement in the organizational chart. Clearly, executive support is what we are aiming to gain in order to support this change. They are the only ones with the authority to implement a change in the organizational structure. Thus, by using documentation and community support, we develop executive support. Since the goal is to build executive support, I will not talk about building that support specifically; rather, I will do it through using the other practices.

Using documentation you can look to historical data, such as Eastern Michigan, Virginia Tech., Penn State and other schools which have had large Cleary Act violations to see the changes they have made post “disaster”. As part of your mitigation work, present these findings as case studies. Especially in EMU’s case, use the gravity of the situation as reason to make a change. Remind your executives that these types of events could happen anywhere at any time. It is better to be prepared than to scramble when it is too late. Direct access to the President can be justified by looking at the history of the issue and arguing for preemptive action to increase communication of crime and emergencies to executive groups.

Community support also provides you with a valuable resource for arguing your case. You can reach out to local public safety agencies and have them argue the importance of direct communication with leadership during an emergency. Your county Emergency Manager may be able to enlighten them on how it can help him if the campus Emergency Management program can directly access the President. Emergency

Managers know how crucial that is but campus executives may not. Make it clear and make it real using real life scenarios or relating to a recent event on campus.

Additionally, make sure the administration knows how it will help them.

Emphasize that they will be able to call you directly and get first hand information, emergencies will be handled better, they will be more informed, questions and concerns will be handled faster, lives could be saved. Make this change in the placement of Emergency Management in the organizational chart personal for everyone involved, it is more than just communication; it is the lives of the people who rely on the University to keep them safe. Learn from the mistakes of other Universities and heed their warning.

Bringing It All Together

The four challenges discussed above are what current Emergency Managers report is holding them back. What is interesting is that the four challenges relate and build on each other. Inappropriate and stifling placement in the organizational chart limits the Emergency Management program's access to campus executives. This position reduces the amount of executive support they get. This in turn limits their ability to petition for funding that creates and stabilizes the program. Without this funding, Emergency Management programs cannot run training and exercises that are HSEEP compliant. Without these exercise they struggle to make Emergency Management real and garner executive support.

It is a cyclical process. Without change, the cycle continues. However, using the Triangle of Success, Emergency Managers have a framework for stopping this cycle.

Each IHE is different and each Emergency Manager must determine on their own what is holding their program back. This theory may operate differently for every school but the premise remains the same.

Accurately and consistently, document the work of Emergency Management, develop positive community links, and intentionally build executive support, and you can stop the cycle and overcome the challenges your program faces. It will take time but persistence pays off.

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