

PROBLEM RESOLUTION EXERCISE GUIDE

SITUATION: As crew leaders, students must be prepared to deal with problems created by personnel conflicts. These may involve conflicts between a crew member and the crew leader, between crew members, or an internal distraction within a single individual. Quick, effective resolution of these problems will be necessary to optimize teamwork and production in the field.

MISSION: To provide students insight into the resolution of personnel caused crew problems, in order to better prepare them to deal with potential problems in actual crews.

EXECUTION:

1. In this session, the students will participate in or observe a personnel conflict problem-solving scenario. This will be followed by a group discussion of the demonstrated solution and other possible alternatives.
2. The instructor will:
 - a. Select a crew leader and two role players
 - b. Brief all students on the general situation
 - c. Give a Role Player card to each selected Role Player
 - d. Designate primary and “renegade” work sites
 - e. Start the scenario
 - f. Lead the group discussion on the exercise
3. Total available time for this exercise is 20 minutes

ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS:

1. Student equipment: Hard hats for Role Players
2. Instructor equipment: General situation briefing card
Role Player cards (3)

CONTROL:

1. If Crew Leader and Worker A are both professionals, adjust A’s experience level to “2 seasons as occasional Asst Crew Leader.”
2. In any case ensure students discuss control options for both professional and volunteer crews.
3. If Crew Leader goes off to deal with the “Problems” without instructions to the rest of the crew (or appointing someone to be in charge), point out that control may be lost.

ATTACHMENTS:

General Situation Briefing
Role Player Cards (3)

NOTE: This exercise is from the Tahoe Rim Trail Association’s Crew Leader Training

GENERAL SITUATION BRIEFING

“Your crew is working on a trail project, performing several sub tasks in close proximity. Without explanation, two crew members wander off and begin working by themselves on an undesignated site outside your work zone.”

ROLE PLAYER INFORMATION – Crew Leader

You notice that two of your crew have taken tools and are working on a site outside your assigned zone. As far as you know, there is no work scheduled there. One of these “renegades” is new to your crew, but has let it be known that he has “a lot of experience and know-how.” The other is in his first season of trail work, and strikes you as meek and mild mannered. When you get a look at what they are doing, you discover that they are digging out a good rolling grade dip and appear to be replacing it with a high rock water bar.

ROLE PLAYER INFORMATION – Worker “A”

You’ve been working on trails for 15 years, and were sometimes a crew leader back in the Blue Ridge (if both you and the Crew Leader are professional, you’ve already worked two previous seasons and were often an Assistant Crew Leader). You think you could do a better job organizing work than the Crew and Project Leaders. Since you also think the rolling grade dip is designed to allow bikes to maintain enough speed to screw up the trail further downhill, you’ve decided to fix the problem on your own (along with mild mannered “B”, whom you know will support you). You are digging out the grade dip and emplacing a high rock water bar.

ROLE PLAYER INFORMATION – Worker “B”

You are a mild mannered “rookie,” eager to help. You are in awe of Worker “A,” will agree with whatever opinion this “guru” expresses about trails, and do whatever he asks. Avoiding responsibility and blame figure strongly in your thoughts.