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The contents of Creating Shared Situational Awareness to Improve
Interagency Cooperation is the intellectual property of
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Creating Shared Situational Awareness to Improve Interagency Cooperation

**Dr. Richard B. Gasaway
Situational Awareness Matters!
Saint Paul, Minnesota USA**

Situational awareness

Your ability to **PERCEIVE**

AND UNDERSTAND

What is happening
around you...

while being mindful of how time is passing.

And then

Being able to accurately
PREDICT future events...

In time to avoid
bad outcomes.

Five situational awarenesses

1. Personal Awareness
2. Team Awareness
3. Resource Awareness
4. Incident Awareness
5. Shared Awareness

**Shared Awareness =
Common Operating Picture**

**Mutual Understanding
AND
Mutual Respect**

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Let's build a house.

Perception

**Use your five senses to capture information...
(clues and cues) about what is happening.**

- **I pay attention!**
- **I keep your head on a swivel.**
- **I look up, down, and all around.**
- **I actively listen.**
- **I size-up the situation.**

Understanding

Making sense out of what you:
See, hear, feel, taste & smell

Comprehension

Moment of clarity





Ask questions.

“What does this mean?”





“Is this what I expected?”





It seems so easy...

See... and understand.

Hear... and understand.

Barriers

Block or prevent:

Perception

Understanding

Prediction



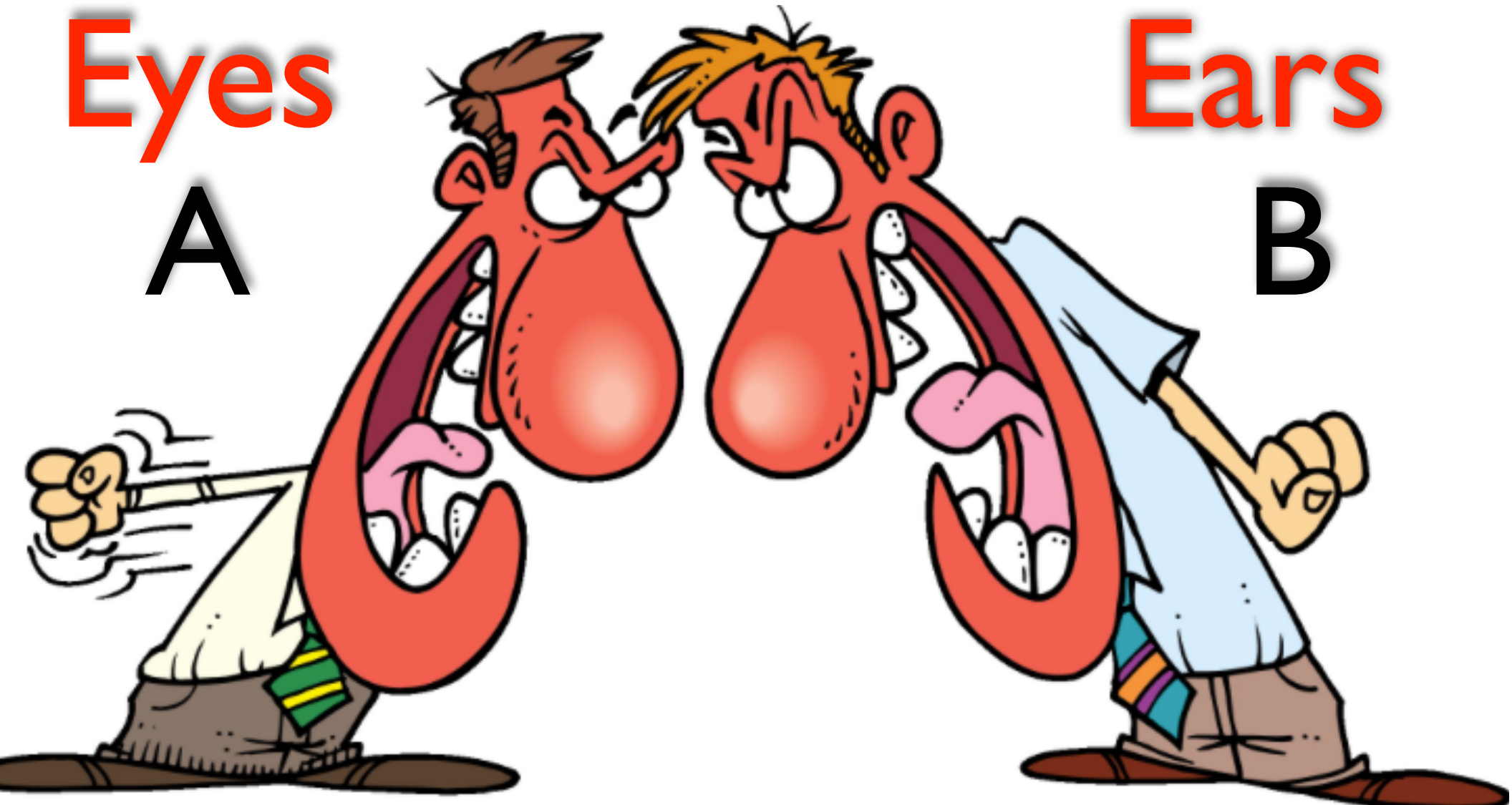
Sensory Conflict

Eyes

A

Ears

B



What happens when the puzzle pieces don't fit together?



It causes confusion in your brain.





Mind Drift



Robotic Action



Acting
without
thinking.

Prediction

**Being able to anticipate
future events
before they happen.**

Target Outcome

Begin...
with the end in mind.



Target

Goal

Objective

Benchmark

Prediction

Where is this event headed?

If...

We do nothing but watch.



**This question forces you to
think about the future.**

Visualization

Mentally visualize the task.



**Visualize the
Flowpath**

Anticipation

**What could happen if my
situational awareness
is impacted?**

Expectations

**What are the possible
undesired outcomes?**

Role

**What role do I play in
preventing an
undesired outcome?**

Conditions

**Are the conditions
right for me to take action?**

Conditions

**How can changing
conditions or stored energy
impact my safety?**

Resources

**Do I have the right
resources to get the task
completed safely?**

Time to Task Completion

**How much time should
this task take to complete?**

Situational Awareness Barriers

Anything that impacts your:

Perception

Understanding

Prediction



There are over 100 barriers that can impact your situational awareness.

Pre-arrival lens

A man in a dark suit is shown from the back, holding a white document in his left hand and pointing with his right index finger towards a massive, stylized ear on the left side of the frame. The background is a soft-focus landscape with blue hills and a light blue sky. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

The first shared awareness responders develop about an incident comes from the dispatcher's words.

A 9-1-1 caller uses words to paint a picture of what is happening on the mind of the dispatcher.

Urgency

What causes a sense of urgency?

The faster conditions are changing or the more unstable the conditions are...

The more likely a responder is to feel a sense of urgency to do something quickly.

Consequences of urgency:



- Stress
- Impatience
- Frustration
- Miscommunications
- Hyper focus
- Conflicting priorities.

Short-Term Memory Overload

Capacity:



The average person's
short-term memory capacity is:

5-7 pieces of
unrelated information.



CONSIDER

Focus on the 4-5 most
important pieces of
information.



CONSIDER

“Important” is relative
to YOUR goals.

Confabulation

In the absence
of facts...



You can assume.

Your brain is really good at
making up its own reality.



CONSIDER

Your perception of reality
can be flawed...

And you won't even know it.

Task Fixation



CONSIDER

Task fixation is
extremely common.



CONSIDER

Be mindful of
the big picture.

Mission (or goal) Myopia

Time Distortion

Time gets away from you.

Under stress...



Your mental clock
struggles to keep
track of time.

Auditory Exclusion

Auditory Exclusion

means...



You're going deaf.

Noise

Heart Rate

Tunneled Hearing

Too Much Radio Traffic



CONSIDER

Use standardized
terms & phrases.

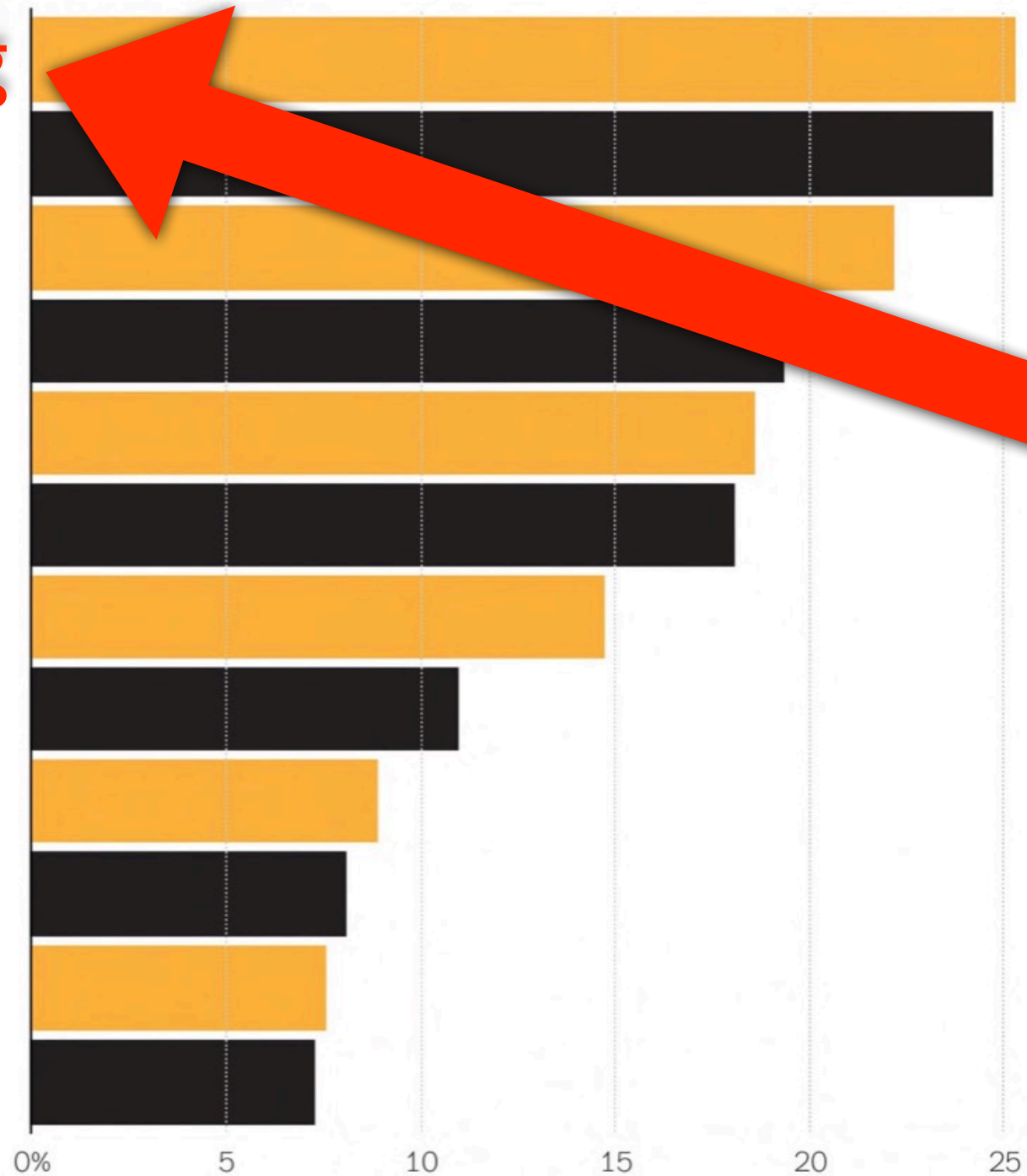
CONSIDER

Use full-loop
communications.

FEAR

The #1 thing people
fear doing the most?

Public speaking





CONSIDER

What do people fear about public speaking?

Being wrong

Consequence

Ridicule

Embarrassment

Judgment

Interagency responders
may fear speaking up...

even though they've
been told it's ok to do.



CONSIDER

Don't just say: "Speak up!"

Teach: What to say.

Teach: How to say it.

And practice speaking up!

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**Helping responders see bad things coming...
in time to prevent bad outcomes.**