

Crew Resource Management Course Syllabus

ASCENT Fire Department Assessment Centers & Training LLC

16 instructional hours | Two days | Eight hours per day

Course Description

This course prepares fire and emergency services personnel to apply Crew Resource Management (CRM) to daily operations and emergency incidents. Participants examine how organizational culture, human error, communication, decision making, and team behavior affect safety. Classroom instruction, case discussions, and practical exercises help participants use CRM skills and develop improvements for their own crews and departments.

Audience and Course Materials

Audience: Firefighters, company officers, chief officers, EMS personnel, and other emergency services team members. No prior CRM training is necessary.

Primary reference: Crew Resource Management: Principles and Practice, First Edition, by Paul LeSage, Jeff T. Dyar, and Bruce Evans. ISBN 9780763771782. Instruction uses the accompanying Chapter 1 through Chapter 9 presentations, instructor case studies, and participant worksheets.

Learning Objectives

1. Explain the purpose of CRM and how organizational stories influence communication and safety.
2. Identify practices that support a just culture, learning, and appropriate accountability.
3. Apply a structured decision process while considering risk, time pressure, and differing perspectives.
4. Demonstrate assertive communication, inquiry, advocacy, and respectful conflict resolution.
5. Recognize threats to situational awareness and use shared information to reduce error.
6. Demonstrate effective leadership and followership during a team exercise.
7. Conduct a postincident analysis that identifies lessons and improvement actions.
8. Develop a plan to sustain CRM practices and high reliability within the organization.

Instruction and Completion

Instruction combines short lectures with facilitated discussion, small-group case analysis, communication role-play, and tabletop exercises. Successful completion requires attendance for all instructional hours, active participation, completion of the practical exercises, and a final knowledge check with instructor review. Instructors provide feedback on communication, decision making, teamwork, and the proposed improvement plan.

Course dates, host location, and assigned instructors: To be scheduled.

Course Schedule

Hours include instruction, discussion, exercises, and debriefing. Lunch and breaks are additional to the 16 instructional hours. Exercise names below identify course activities to be facilitated by the instructor.

Day	Approx. Hours	Subject	Chapter	Learning Outcome
One	0.5	Introduction to CRM Purpose, human factors, and relevance to emergency services	1	Explain CRM
One	1.0	Organizational Story and Culture Traditions, trust, cognitive dissonance, and barriers to speaking up	2	Recognize cultural influences
One	1.0	Creating a Culture for Learning Just culture, blame, complacency, self-reporting, and learning from error	3	Support learning and accountability
One	1.0	The Critical Decision Process Conflict, risk, time pressure, and team decision making	4	Apply a decision process
One	2.0	The Concepts of Crew Resource Management Shared understanding, assertiveness, situational awareness, and distraction	5	Maintain shared awareness
One	2.5	Practical application and debrief Culture case review, assertive communication role-play, and team decision exercise	1–5	Identify barriers, speak up, and justify a team decision
Two	1.5	Understanding and Implementing Crew Resource Management Inquiry, advocacy, conflict resolution, and the Circle of Success	6	Use open communication
Two	1.5	Leaders, Followers, and Teamwork Goals, delegation, limitations, listening, mentoring, and team cohesion	7	Demonstrate leadership and followership
Two	1.0	Postincident Analysis Purpose, incident selection, debriefing techniques, and improvement actions	8	Conduct a learning-focused review
Two	1.0	Maintaining High Reliability Mindfulness, reluctance to simplify, resilience, and deference to expertise	9	Identify practices that sustain reliability
Two	2.0	Integrated team exercise and postincident analysis Apply CRM to an evolving incident and review team performance	4–9	Integrate communication, awareness, and decisions
Two	0.5	Department CRM improvement plan Select a local action, assign responsibility, and define a measure of progress	2–3, 6–9	Plan implementation and follow-up
Two	0.5	Course review, final knowledge check, feedback, and evaluation	1–9	Verify understanding and identify next steps

Daily totals: Day One 8 hours; Day Two 8 hours. Course total: 16 instructional hours.