Case
Freezing before an emergency

PO21 Learning Resources

PO 21
Prison Officers
for the 21st Century

Credits

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Case – Freezing before an emergency

This case was developed within the PO21 project[1], based on the critical incidents approach and the experience of the Prison Officers involved in the project. It can be dynamised using several strategies[2], according to the training and trainers' objectives.

Case Script:

Summary

Main situation

An inmate was found breathless in his cell. The first Prison Officer arriving at the scene froze in panic when he realises the inmate was dying. Other Prison officer arrives and deals with the situation. Other POs come, as well as medical staff. At the end, the director's concerns on the situation are not appropriate.

Why is it complicated/difficult/challenging:

· Unexpected situation
· No time to prepare
· Inmate's life in danger
· A first time situation in PO Paul's career
· Trauma from a similar situation (PO Simon)
· Unexpected reaction of PO Paul
· Clarity of roll/clarity of command
· Time pressure
· Choosing the priorities

[1] For more information: http://www.prison-officers21.org/
[2] Detailed information on cases dynamisation and development can be found in the Guide for developing cases, produced under the PO21 project

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Main Characters

Character 1: Simon

Name - Simon
Professional description – Comes from a military family, 20 years' experience, after failing tree times he achieved the position of team leader.
Personal/psychological description – In psychologist treatment due to a traumatic experience six months ago.
Main function/hierarchy – Team Leader

Character 2: Paul

Name - Paul
Professional description – Comes from a prison officers family, still in training, high level of motivation.
Personal/psychological description – a man with lots of will and energy, mentally strong, good team player.
Main function/hierarchy – Prison officer recruit

Secondary characters or witnesses

Character 3: Jules

Name - Jules
Professional description – 15 years of experience, worked in three different prisons (female prison/juvenile prison, prison hospital).
Personal/psychological description – well trained (first aid, leadership, how to cope with stress) strong resilience.
Main function/hierarchy – Prison Officer

Character 4,5,6,7,8: Sarah, Fred, John, James

Name - Sarah, Fred, John, James
Professional description - Different years of experience.
Personal/psychological description - Bystanders, curious, unmotivated, no training after basic education, afraid to be involved.
Main function/hierarchy – Sarah (shift leader), Fred, John, James (Prison Officers)

Character 9: Raymond

Name - Raymond
Professional description – Former policeman, security officer with 20 years' experience, trainer of self-defense.
Personal/psychological description – Well trained, clear mind setting, focused, alert, uncompromising.
Main function/hierarchy – Security officer

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Secondary characters or witnesses

Character 10: William

Name - William
Professional description – Medical staff
Personal/psychological description – well trained, professional, focused, alert, stress management, ethic work, positive attitude, time management, confidence.
Main function/hierarchy – Doctor/nurse

Character 11: Daniel

Name - Daniel
Professional description – Crises management for one year in private sector, two years of management knowledge at prison.
Personal/psychological description – well trained, focused on his tasks, lack of emotion, reserved person.
Main function/hierarchy – Director

Description of the situation

Time
06h20 A.M.

Duration
40-50 minutes

Location
Inmate cell

Description of the situation

6 A.M. - the call of the inmates passed with no troubles. 06.20, a phone call describes that **Simon**, situated on the ground 0, found a breathless inmate in his cell.

The phone call was received from **Simon** by **Paul**, situated on the 1st floor.
Paul goes to the cell, finding the inmate dying on the floor and Simon in total shock..

He took the control and sent **Simon** out of the cell to ask **Jules** (unit officer) to call Sarah (shift leader), so she can call the ambulance and prison medical team.

Paul starts the heart massage to the inmate and keeps calm during the events.

Simon was freezing, in panic, with his face completely white and starring eyes. But he manages to inform **Jules** about the situation already generated and perform all tasks that were given to him.

Jules arrives and supports **Paul**, while **Sarah** sets the general alarm.

Fred, John, James came as result of the general alarm, and acted as bystanders since they couldn't help, only checking the situation.

Raymond (security officer/ highest rang) arrived quickly to be useful and giving orders to **Fred, John** and **James**.

The doctor **William** intervenes and, at 7 o'clock, the director called **Paul** to ask if the inmate wasn't already dead, at 6 A.M.

Reaction of each character

Simon
Froze in panic but informed Jules about the situation already generated and performed everything he was told to do.

Paul
Took the control and send Simon out of the cell to inform Jules (unit officer) and to call Sarah (shift leader), so she could call the ambulance and prison medical team.
Paul start the heart massage and kept calm.

Jules
Offers support to Paul.

Sarah
Gave a general alarm.

Fred, John and James
Came as result of the general alarm checking the situation since they couldn't help.

Raymond (security officer/highest rang)
Arrived quickly to be useful and gave orders to Fred, John and James.

William
Provided medical intervention.

Daniel (director)
At 7 o'clock he called Paul to ask if, at 6.00, the inmate wasn't already dead.

Result of each action

- *Simon* made *Paul* act/help.

- *Paul* took care of the inmate and of *Simon.*

- *Simon* transferred the information to *Jules and Sarah.*

- *Jules* supported *Paul.*

- *Sarah* contacted the medical staff, and set on the general alarm.

- Medical staff arrived and took over the situation/inmate.

- *Paul* was released from the incident.

- *Fred, John* and *James* were only bystanders and curious.

- *Raymond* starts to give tasks to the bystanders.

- *Daniel* came and starts an investigation by asking (when, where, what, who).

- *Paul* was perplexed with the attitude of the director, and his questions.

- Everyone involved in the incident was offered support from the crises team.

How to apply this case?

This case can be used in several ways, there is no prescriptive, specific strategy, and the trainer shall choose the specific themes to highlight by applying the case. However, making the best of this resource in terms of promoting debate and stimulating reflection among trainees, common strategies can be:

Brainstorming:

Create a question about the case and promote group discussion. Remember that in brainstorming is particularly important to register all contributions and to make a summary of all contributions. It is suited to initiate a new theme.

Role-play:

In the training room, arrange the scenario according to the case description. The trainees should perform the characters as close to the description possible to create a real-life situation. After the presentation, group discussion can be promoted. It is suited to deepen a situation or theme.

Problem-Solving:

Present the case without providing information on how it was handled and ask the trainees, individually or in groups, to describe how the situation should be handled. Then, dynamise a debate around each new ending for the situation. It is suited to applying theory to practice.

Dilemma:

Create a dilemma by designing a new development of the situation. Organise a debate around which was the best solution and why. It is suited to explore complex situations.

Pros and Cons:

A debate can be used in any strategy. If used as the main strategy, one idea may be to organise the group in two sectors: one, arguing in favour of the resolution and the other, arguing against it. This can be improved by providing other learning resources that support the arguments of each sector. It is suited to deepen a situation or theme.

To learn more about the creation and application of Critical Incidents, you can consult the Critical Incidents Technique Application Guide.