
LESSON 6. COURSE SUMMARY

This page intentionally left blank.

Lesson 6. Course Summary

Lesson Objective

At the end of this lesson, the participants will be able to:

- Summarize the key points of the course.
-

Scope

- Introduction
 - Effective Decision Making
 - The Problem-Solving Model
 - Group/Team Decision Making
 - Crisis Decision Making
 - Using the Problem-Solving Model
 - Ethical Decision Making
 - Final Exam
-

Methodology

The instructors will conduct a brief review of the course content and will provide instructions for taking the final exam and completing the course evaluation.

Materials

- PowerPoint visuals 6.1 – 6.12 and a computer display system
 - Instructor Guide
 - Student Manual
-

Time Plan

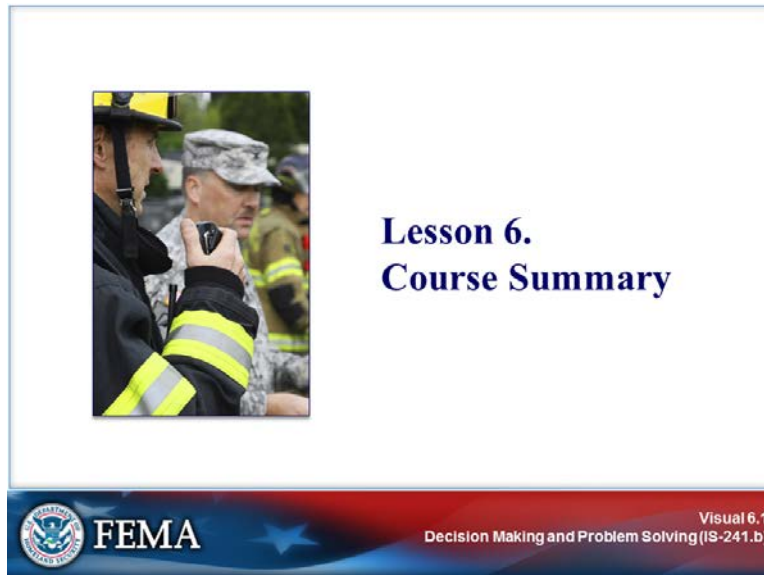
A suggested time plan for this lesson is shown below. More or less time may be required, based on the experience level of the group.

Topic	Time
Course Summary	15 minutes
Total Time	15 minutes

This page intentionally left blank.

INTRODUCTION

Visual 6.1



Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

This lesson will summarize the key points of the course.

INTRODUCTION

Visual 6.2

Lesson 6 Objective

- Summarize the key points of the course.



 **FEMA**

Visual 6.2
Decision Making and Problem Solving (IS-241.b)

Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

At the end of this lesson, the participants will be able to summarize the key points of the course.

EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

Visual 6.3

Effective Decision Making

- Should begin well before an emergency.
- Will affect the number and magnitude of decisions and problems.
- Can help the community recover more quickly.



 **FEMA**

Visual 6.3
Decision Making and Problem Solving (IS-241.b)

Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

The ability to make sound, timely decisions prior to and during an emergency is critical.

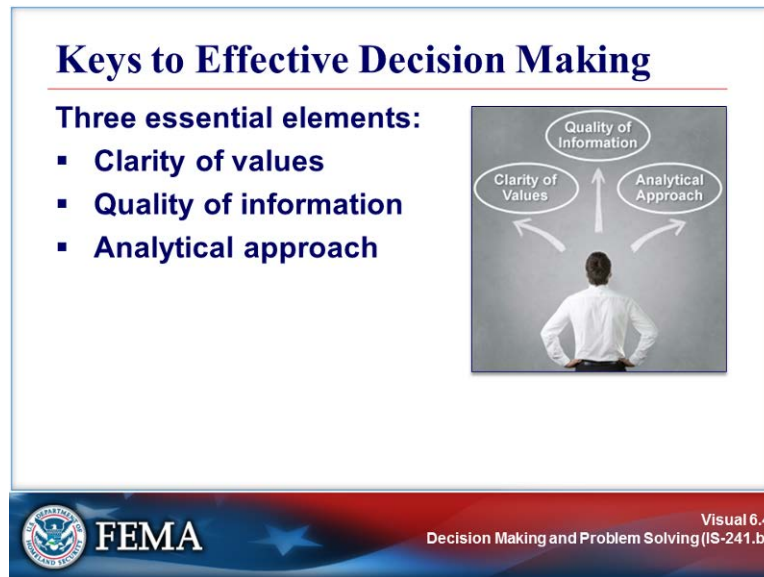
Effective decision making can:

- Avert tragedy.
- Help manage incidents.
- Build community trust and support.
- Help the community recover from an event more quickly.

Poor decisions in the early stages of an event can make the responders' job more difficult and more dangerous. In addition, making poor decisions early in an emergency situation can give rise to much more critical or complex decisions later on—to say nothing of the effect on community relations.

EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

Visual 6.4



Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

Three key elements are essential for effective decision making:

- Clarity of values
- Quality of information
- Analytical approach

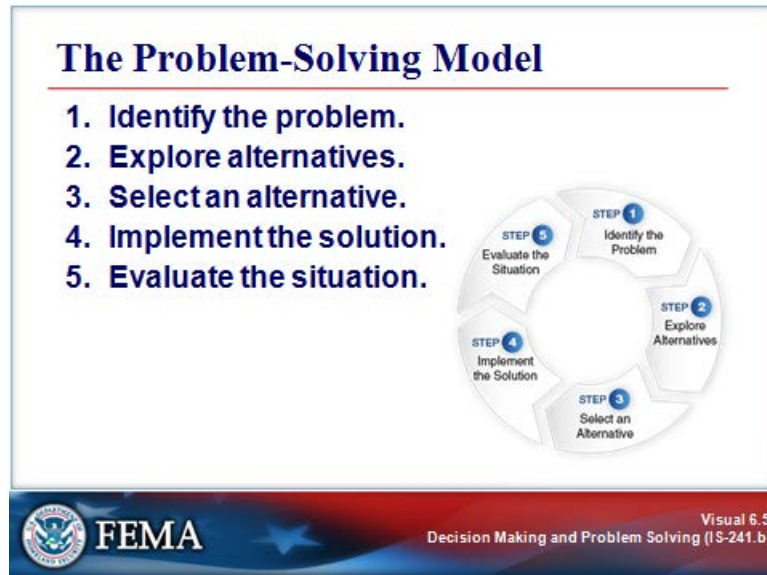
Clarity of Values: Unless you have a clear view of your values—what you want to achieve, preserve, and prevent—and keep them in mind at each step in the process, it can become difficult to balance the many factors that influence decision making in a meaningful way.

Quality of Information: Data used in decision making must be accurate and reliable. Failure to verify information can lead to poor decisions—sometimes with serious consequences.

Analytical Approach: It is helpful to have a defined process that leads to a solution or a decision. This course introduced a commonly used five-step model.

THE PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

Visual 6.5



Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

The problem-solving model presented in this course contains five steps.

1. **Identify the problem.** This step includes delineating the problem parameters such as:
 - What is happening (and not happening)?
 - Who is involved?
 - What are the stakes?
2. **Explore alternatives.** This step includes two parts:
 - Generating alternatives through techniques such as brainstorming, surveys, or discussion groups.
 - Evaluating alternatives using a consistent process.
3. **Select an alternative.** Select the alternative that comes closest to solving the problem with the most advantages and fewest disadvantages.
4. **Implement the solution.** This step includes five parts:
 - Developing an action plan.
 - Determining objectives or measurable targets.
 - Identifying needed resources.
 - Building a plan.
 - Implementing the plan.
5. **Evaluate the situation.** This step includes two parts:
 - Monitoring progress.
 - Evaluating the results.

GROUP/TEAM DECISION MAKING

Visual 6.6

Group/Team Decision Making

Often a good choice when:

- The situation is complex.
- Consequences are significant.
- Commitment and buy-in are important.
- There is time for deliberation and consensus building.



 **FEMA**

Visual 6.6
Decision Making and Problem Solving (IS-241.b)

Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

Group or team decision making is often a good choice when:

- The situation is complex.
- Consequences are significant.
- Commitment and buy-in are important.
- There is time for deliberation and consensus building.

Among its advantages, group decision making:

- Generates more favorable outcomes through synergy and shared information.
- Provides a broader perspective and taps a wider range of expertise by representing multiple viewpoints and areas of specialization.
- Taps the creative potential of team members who may come up with alternatives not envisioned by a single individual.
- Allows for discussion to help answer questions and reduce uncertainties for the decision makers.
- Makes use of a wider range of resources in applying the process and implementing the solution.
- Helps build ownership and buy-in by stakeholders.

GROUP/TEAM DECISION MAKING

Visual 6.7



Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

The following practices will make a group's decision-making process more effective:

- Adding diversity.
- Forming smaller groups and working groups.
- Fostering consensus.
- Clarifying member roles.
- Establishing ground rules.

CRISIS DECISION MAKING

Visual 6.8

Crisis Decision Making: Impediments

- Time pressure
- Problems with information
- Losing the “big picture”
- Conflicting priorities
- Fatigue
- Stress



**FEMA**

Visual 6.8
Decision Making and Problem Solving (IS-241.b)

Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

Decision making in a crisis situation must take place quickly and efficiently and be based on a comprehensive view of the situation.

Several factors can impede decision making in an incident, including:

- Time pressure.
- Problems with information.
- Losing the “big picture.”
- Fatigue.
- Conflicting priorities.
- Stress.

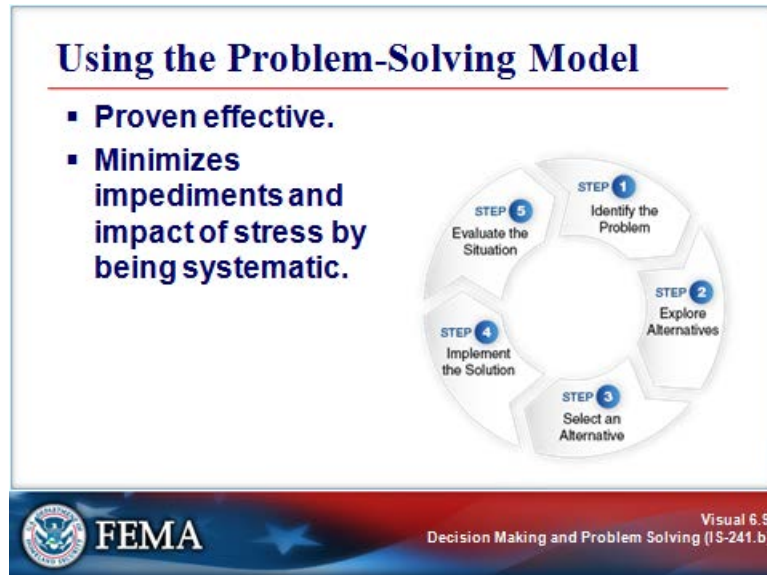
Decisions made at all levels must be based on a common operating picture that is achieved through full and up-to-date situational awareness.

A common operating picture supports crisis decision making and provides all appropriate parties the same critical information about the incident, including:

- Current status and evolving situation.
- Availability and location of resources.
- Needed resources.

USING THE PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL

Visual 6.9



Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

One of the best ways to minimize the impediments to decision making and the impact of stress is to be systematic.

Using a problem-solving model has proven effective in emergency situations.

ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

Visual 6.10



Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

Ethical dilemmas often arise when:

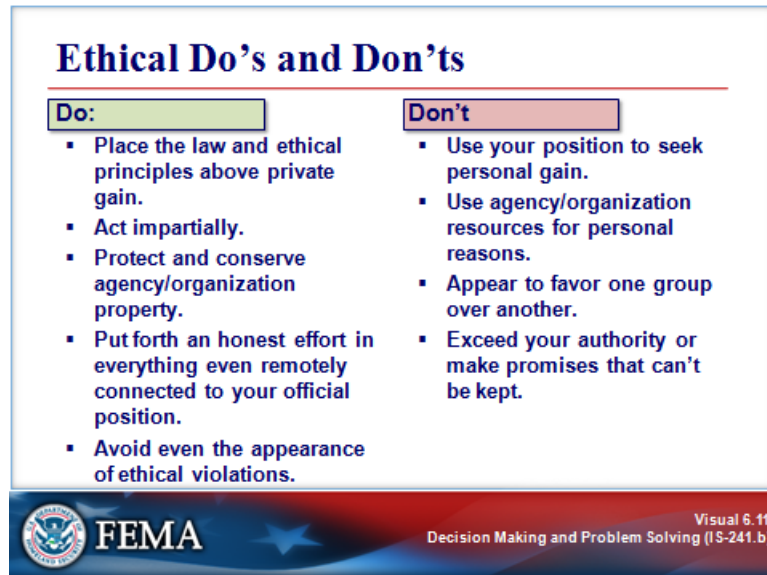
- There is uncertainty about the circumstances.
- The rule book does not apply.
- There are no good options.
- Disagreement about the best course of action exists, with no time for consensus building.

Ethical decision making has three components:

- Commitment or motivation.
- Consciousness or awareness.
- Competency or skill.

ETHICAL DECISION MAKING

Visual 6.11



Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

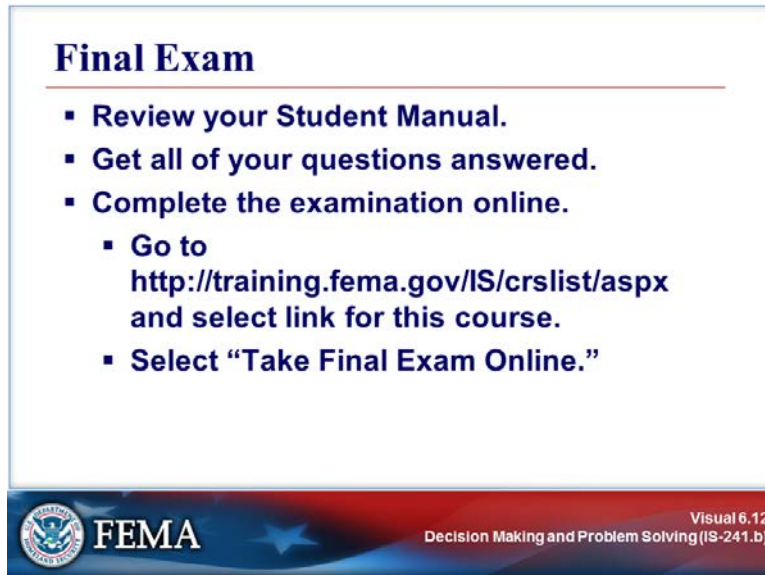
Ethics consist of a set of standards that guide our behavior, both as individuals and as members of organizations.

The visual lists common ethical do's and don'ts.

The application of ethics to the problem-solving model takes place primarily in Step 3, selecting alternatives, by eliminating any alternatives that are unethical or give the appearance of being so.

FINAL EXAM

Visual 6.12

A presentation slide titled "Final Exam" with a blue border. The slide contains a bulleted list of instructions for taking the final exam online. At the bottom of the slide is the FEMA logo on the left and the text "Visual 6.12 Decision Making and Problem Solving (IS-241.b)" on the right.

Final Exam

- Review your Student Manual.
- Get all of your questions answered.
- Complete the examination online.
 - Go to <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.aspx> and select link for this course.
 - Select "Take Final Exam Online."

 **FEMA** Visual 6.12
Decision Making and Problem Solving (IS-241.b)

Instructor Notes: Present the following key points.

Instructor Notes:

- Provide participants instructions for completing the final exam online.
- If provided by the course sponsor, distribute the course evaluation forms and collect them when completed.

Complete the final exam and course evaluation forms.

Exam Instructions:

1. Take a few moments to review your Student Manual and identify any questions.
2. Make sure that you get all of your questions answered prior to beginning the exam.
3. Go to <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.aspx> and select the link for this course (IS-241.b).
4. Select "Take Final Exam Online."
5. You must submit the exam online to receive a certificate of completion.

When taking the online examination:

- Read each item carefully.
- Select your answer.
- Check your work and complete the course registration form on the last page of the online examination.

You may refer to the Student Manual while completing the exam.

After taking the exam, you will receive an email message with a link to your electronic certificate.