

TTX Design Checklist

A Guide to Tabletop Exercise Design

Begin

- The exercise design team is small, manageable, experienced, and includes trusted agents from relevant participating organizations.
- The exercise design team has the necessary resources and support from senior leadership.
- The policy, plan, or procedure to be evaluated has sufficient details to be tested or exercised.
- Specific “big picture” goals have been identified (e.g., whether the policies, plans, and procedures have any gaps, and establishing relationships among responding organizations).
- “SMART” – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound – objectives have been identified.
- The exercise scenario is tied to the goals and objectives, as well as identified learning outcomes.
- The exercise scenario is realistic and includes appropriate script and data injects.
- The exercise scenario is designed to maximize the involvement of all participants.
- The exercise has been designed and includes facilitation techniques that draw upon the way that adults learn best (e.g., the appropriate use of multi-media).
- Sufficient time will be allocated for the exercise given the nature of the topics to be discussed, the number of participants, and how the facilitator intends to engage the participants.
- Exercise participants will be from all the appropriate agencies or organizations based on the exercise scenario and its goals, objectives, and learning outcomes.
- Exercise participants will be provided with short summaries of key exercise-related information (“one-pagers”) that they can use during the exercise.
- The exercise has an experienced and skilled facilitator with extensive knowledge about the organization, its mission, the subject matter, and the exercise objectives.
- Exercise planners have a detailed logistical checklist for the delivery of the exercise (e.g., space and seating requirements, audio and video equipment, microphones to enable all participants to be heard).
- Technology has been tested in the location of the exercise and is functioning as intended.
- There are enough skilled and knowledgeable exercise evaluators who can identify key takeaways for use during any immediate “hot wash” and who can record useful data for an after-action report.