

# **TASSELS AND TUMULT: THE GRADUATION GAFFE**

## **LEAD PLANNER'S GUIDE**



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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the *Tassels and Tumult: The Graduation Gaffe Lead Planner's Guide*.

As the lead planner, you will be responsible for overseeing the planning, operations, logistics, and administration of the training event. This guide provides you with all the necessary information to plan, coordinate, and execute these events.

### Overview

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At any point during production or distribution, food can be contaminated. It is incumbent that relevant parties/partners understand the roles and responsibilities of all participating entities during investigations as communication is key to the efficiency and success of investigations.

This tabletop exercise has been designed by a group of subject matter and instructional design experts to provide participants with a real-life, plausible food emergency-related scenario in the retail food sector. While the scenario has been simplified to present the information effectively, the scenario and the discussion questions have been designed to encourage participant dialogue and surface topics that are critically important to reacting to such incidents. The exercises have also been developed to provide participants with an opportunity to explore important topics like interagency collaboration, jurisdictional issues, and risk communication. The information in the scenarios reflects the policies and procedures in the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards as of January 2022. If there has been an update to the procedures in your jurisdiction, please be sure to make the group aware of the change and work with the facilitator to ensure that all participants understand the update.

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### Structure and Objective of Exercises

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Tassels and Tumult: The Graduation Gaffe is designed as a six-hour (contact time) tabletop exercise. The scenario centers on the retail sector, highlighting the environmental health and safety procedures, epidemiological practices, inspectional approaches, laboratory testing strategies, and regulatory investigations that ensue following a consumer illness complaint. It is a highly interactive exercise with three learning modules, each with questions and discussions.

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| Module 1                             | Module 2   | Module 3   |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------|
| Identification of Potential Outbreak | Inspection and Sample Collection (Mock Investigation for Environmental Health Specialists) | Conclusion |

Participation in this exercise will allow learners to:

- Discuss the sources and routes of contamination leading to the presence of pathogens in retail and food service establishments.
- Assess the adequacy of control measures at retail and food service establishments.
- Describe how an environmental assessment supports a foodborne illness outbreak investigation.
- Explain the role of clinical and food laboratories, including the importance of sample collection and chain of custody.
- Apply local, state, tribal, and federal regulations related to outbreak investigations and pathogen control in retail establishments.
- Utilize established investigation, reporting, and response procedures to manage the outbreak.
- Use a collaborative approach to efficiently deploy the responsibilities of each agency/discipline to implement proactive solutions during outbreak investigations.

The following materials are included to aid in executing this tabletop exercise:

- **Situation Manual (SitMan)** – A handbook given to the participants that contains the scenario, the tabletop exercise schedule, objectives, a Personal Learning Inventory, and any supplemental documentation needed. This is divided into two files: The file containing Modules 1 and 2, and the appendices should be distributed at the start of the exercise. The file containing Module 3 should be distributed after Module 2 is completed.
- **Mock Inspection** – The facilitator (or other designee) will use this to answer questions while playing the role of the ‘store manager’ during the mock inspection. Copies should be shared with all participants *after* the mock inspection is completed.
- **Facilitator Guide (FG)** – A handbook that guides the facilitation of the session, including slide notes and questions/answers for the mock inspection.
- **PPT Presentation** – Facilitator should use this along with the SitMan to lead participants through the scenario.
- **Certificate** – Should be printed and presented to participants at the conclusion of the exercise.
- **Table Tents** – Printable document used to group participants.

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- **After Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) (optional)**– The primary document resulting from an evaluation of the tabletop exercise. The lead evaluator should be designated as the person responsible for creating the AAR/IP and identifying a team to assist with the development of this report. For further definitions and details, please see *Appendix E* and review the AAR/IP template.
- **EEG (optional)** – Exercise evaluation guide for evaluators.

This document contains the following additional information:

- **Appendix A** contains a **map** of the module, learning objectives, and discussion questions pertinent to the exercise.
- **Appendix B** contains a **sample agenda** for each module of the exercise. The agenda was developed based on the length of the modules, the number of participant groups, and the expected interaction. However, the agenda may be modified based on specific needs or time restrictions.
- **Appendix C** contains detailed descriptions of the **roles of the Facilitator and Evaluators**.
- **Appendix D** contains the link to the participant **evaluation** (Survey Monkey, QR code).
- **Appendix E** contains guiding questions as part of the **after-action report** (optional) for follow-up activity and is also included in the SitMan. The full AAR/IP template and EEG are included as separate files.
- **Appendix F** is an example of a **sign-in sheet**.
- **Appendix G** provides a **personal learning inventory**, a document used by participants to capture questions, improvement ideas, and action items. A copy is also included in the SitMan.

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## PLANNING AND OPERATIONS

### Exercise and Participant Identification

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By design, tabletop exercises involve key personnel discussing simulated scenarios in an informal setting. Tabletops can be used to assess plans, policies, and procedures.

Participants should represent a broad array of viewpoints and professional responsibilities so they can adequately address the tabletop exercise objectives and provide value to the group dialogue.

Participants are expected to have a working knowledge of their standard operating procedures, Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs), Memorandum of Agreement (MOAs), or other interdisciplinary mechanism(s) used for food contamination investigations. They should have relevant experience and share those experiences with less experienced participants during the breakout sessions.

Four groups are the focus of the scenario, with optional groups and expansion opportunities\* possible:

- Environmental health specialists (field and management, combined)
- Epidemiologists
- State, federal, and tribal regulatory agencies
- Laboratory (food and clinical, combined)
- Optional group: includes retail food industry representatives (restaurants and grocery stores)

\* The following modifications can be made to add additional groups. This may necessitate decreasing break/lunch times and/or expanding the exercise duration. The template meeting agenda, Appendix B, can be adjusted to accommodate the inclusion of additional groups.

- Divide the laboratory into clinical labs and food labs.
- Add representatives from another state and modify the scenario so that some illnesses are across state lines.

To help you identify the appropriate participants for the Tassels and Tumult: The Graduation Gaffe exercise, the following descriptions are provided for each of the roles and responsibilities: lead planner, participants, facilitator, evaluator group leader, and group recorder. Additional details on the roles of the facilitator and evaluators are included in Appendix C:

- **Lead Planner** – The person who has overall responsibility for the tabletop exercise, including convening the Planning Team and all pre- and post-exercise needs. It is important, but not required, that lead planners are trained in or familiar with the policies and procedures in the Voluntary National Retail Food Regulatory Program Standards as of January 2022.

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- **Participants** – Respond to the scenario based on their first-hand, experiential knowledge; current plans and procedures of their entity, agency, or jurisdiction; and insights from training and experience.
- **Facilitator** – Generally leads the exercise, provides situation updates, and moderates discussions. They play the role of the store manager in the mock inspection. They also provide additional information and resolve questions as needed. Key officials may also assist with the facilitation of subject matter experts during the exercise.
- **Evaluator(s) (optional)** – Representatives are chosen by the Planning Team to record the events at each breakout table or group. This person does not participate in the tabletop exercise but instead captures the essence of the dialog for use in the After-Action Report. They are chosen based on their expertise in the area (e.g., epidemiology, etc.) that they are to observe. There should be one evaluator assigned to each breakout table or group.
- **Group Leader** – A representative from each table (volunteered by the group) who will lead the group as it explores discussion questions and the breakout activities.
- **Group Recorder/Reporter** – A representative from each table (volunteered by the group) will ensure that the group discussions are kept on time, record the key themes discussed at the table, and be responsible for reporting out during the large group dialogue.

## Lead Planner's Roles and Responsibilities

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### 3 to 4 Months in Advance of Event:

- Identify and coordinate an Exercise Planning Team, if necessary. It is highly recommended that lead planners convene and serve as the leader of the exercise planning team. The planning team should be composed of key leaders from your jurisdiction and represent the jurisdiction's various agencies, stakeholders, and subject matter experts. For each tabletop exercise, suggested participant groups are recommended, and it may be beneficial to include representatives from these groups on the planning team.
- Determine the scope of the exercise, including which groups should be represented (e.g., options for multiple jurisdictions, inclusion of industry, etc.)
- Make modifications to the scenario, if necessary. For example, in this scenario, the implicated product is a beef roast that has been temperature abused. A cooling chart is included. Determine if adjustments are needed based on your state Food Code time/temperature requirements.

#### NOTE:

**If modifications are made, ensure that they are made in the SitMan, Slides, and Facilitator's Guide.**

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- Identify a facilitator. The ideal facilitator would have subject matter expertise but would not have intimate knowledge of this jurisdiction. A local or state Extension agent, or someone from a nearby jurisdiction, could be a good facilitator. See Appendix C for more information on the role of the facilitator.
- Select a site/date for the tabletop exercise. Secure a meeting location that can accommodate round tables or pods, set for 5 to 8 people per table, and has adequate AV and audio.
- The exercise works best with 25 to 30 people.
- The suggested maximum size is about 100 participants (e.g., 3 tables for each participant category)
- Determine if meals and snacks will be provided. If possible, it is recommended to have lunch onsite or nearby, as opposed to releasing people for lunch. *Consider if you'd like a working lunch as outlined in the template agenda, Appendix B.*
- Identify a team of evaluators and ensure that the lead evaluator has the tools needed to coordinate the development of the AAR/IP. Additional details on the role of evaluators are included in *Appendix C*.

## **2 to 3 Months in Advance of the Event:**

- Facility Space: Perform a site visit to ensure the location is appropriate including a spacious enough room; a minimum of four tables for tabletop groups; an area for lunch, snacks, day of check-in, and restrooms; and IT support and/or clear instructions for adjusting temperature, power, and lights. Make sure the room is accessible to all participants, including those with disabilities. Ensure that all participants can see the facilitator and PPT displayed on the projector.
- Review SitMan and consider updating the SitMan with any acronyms commonly used in your jurisdiction. (For example, consider adding "RRT" to the acronym list in the SitMan if your state has a Rapid Response Team.)
- Decide, in collaboration with the Exercise Planning team and facilitator, which questions to prioritize and use at the end of each module. The template agenda includes sufficient time for participants to address all questions. If the exercise is expanded to include additional groups, use the map in *Appendix A* to select specific questions that align with the learning objectives. NOTE: To ensure that all stated learning objectives are addressed during the discussion, please select at least one question from each objective to present during the exercise. The tables in *Appendix A* map each question to one or more objectives. These tables should be referenced in the question selection process. The planning team should also add questions that are jurisdiction-specific and will enhance the participants' experiences.



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## 2 Months in Advance of the Event:

- ☐ Introductory meeting with the facilitator to discuss training and the learning objectives.
- ☐ Identify and invite a balance of exercise participants, ideally 6 to 8 weeks in advance, so that each group has roughly equal numbers of attendees, and participants can block off time on schedules. Consider capabilities, objectives, and desired outcomes for your jurisdiction.
- ☐ Develop and send a participant registration/RSVP (e.g., SurveyMonkey, Google Doc) to collect information on participants and assign groups.
  - First and last name
  - Email address
  - Phone number
  - Organization/Department
  - Role (select 1):
    - Epidemiologist
    - Laboratory
    - State, federal, or tribal regulatory
    - Environmental health, or retail/food service inspector
    - Retail food industry
  - Dietary restrictions
  - Special accommodations (e.g., hearing, mobility)
  - Emergency contact
- ☐ Determine a backup plan or cancellation of training plan due to emergency or weather

## 2 Weeks to 1 Month in Advance of the Event:

- ☐ Help the facilitator understand expectations and go through the Facilitator Guide together before the event.
- ☐ AV/Audio: Make sure to include a microphone if the room is large, or to aid in the hearing of the facilitator by participants. Secure a power strip and extension cord, if needed.
- ☐ Secure a laptop computer with Microsoft PowerPoint or PowerPoint viewer and projection equipment (LCD, DLP) for the facilitator's use. Consider a backup computer.

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## <1 Week in Advance of the Event:

- ☐ Send a reminder email 1 week before the event to remind participants of the event, and location details (e.g., parking, location details, arrival time, agenda).
- ☐ Check in with the facilitator and ensure they are comfortable with the exercise.
- ☐ Arrange lunch (see template agenda which includes a working lunch; bringing lunch into the training location is recommended).
- ☐ Obtain snacks and drinks.
- ☐ Load the PPT presentation slide deck in advance. (Consider a backup copy on USB.)
- ☐ Gather supplies including markers, pens, highlighters, paper, sticky notes, and flip charts for exercise groups/participants, registration, and “parking lot.”
- ☐ Name badges: All participants should be provided with a name badge during the sign-in process. The name badge should indicate the participant’s name, agency/organization, and the name of the participant group to which they are assigned. This will make it easy to call the participants by name and identify participants from a particular agency/organization. Sticker and marker recommended.
- ☐ Table tents: Table tents should be placed on the tables before the beginning of the tabletop exercise (see TableTent file). The table tents will guide participants to the appropriate location. At sign-in, participants should be directed to the table listed on their name badge.
- ☐ Make copies of the situation manual (SitMan for each participant, as well as copies of the mock inspection Q&A. Plan to distribute ONLY the introduction and first two modules of the SitMan. (Module 3 and the mock inspection Q&A will be distributed separately, later in the training.)
- ☐ Make copies of the agenda for each participant.
- ☐ Develop and bring copies of an evaluation (optional) if you want to ask questions beyond the required AFDO electronic evaluation.
- ☐ Bring copies of certificates for participants unless you opt to email them post-event.
- ☐ Sign-in sheet for participants (Appendix F) to record attendance. You may want to provide each participant with a finalized, typed version of the attendance roster of attendees so that they have the names and contact information of the other attendees.
- ☐ Bring a copy of the Facilitator’s Guide (paper copy for Facilitator use).

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- ☐ Send the facilitator a list of participants and their affiliations (information from the registration survey).

## **1 Day in Advance of the Event:**

- ☐ Send a reminder email 1 day before the event to remind participants of the event, and location details (parking, location details, arrival time, agenda, and pertinent details).
- ☐ Confirm lunch order (if a working lunch).

## **Day of the Event:**

- ☐ Arrive early to set up room: The facilitator and the lead planner should arrive at least 30 and ideally 60 minutes before the scheduled start time to make sure the room is set up properly and that the necessary documents and supplies are available. If possible, set up the room one day early and test all audio/visual equipment and the multimedia presentation.
- ☐ Direct the participants to their table group as indicated by their personalized table tents.
- ☐ Distribute Modules 1 and 2 of the SitMan. (Reserve the mock inspection Q&A and Module 3 until after the exercises.)
- ☐ Ensure the AFDO evaluation is completed.

## **After the Event:**

- ☐ Work with Evaluators to finalize the AAR/IP.
- ☐ Within 30 days, distribute the draft AAR/IP to participants as a “For Official Use Only” document (optional).
- ☐ Within 60 days, distribute the final AAR/IP to participants (optional).

## **After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) (optional)**

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An After-Action Report/Improvement Plan (AAR/IP) (Appendix H) is the primary document resulting from an evaluation of your tabletop exercise and consists of two interdependent parts. The AAR portion consists of observations about the tabletop exercise and makes recommendations for post-tabletop exercise improvements. These observations should be documented in the Exercise Evaluation Guide. The Improvement Plan portion identifies specific corrective actions to be taken, assigns those actions to specific individuals or organizations, and establishes a time frame for the completion of the assigned actions.

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An AAR/IP is an important tool used to evaluate the tabletop exercise; it addresses outcomes, strengths, weaknesses, and lessons learned, and it helps share that information with the participants. Participants should be informed by the facilitator at the end of the tabletop exercise when they should expect to receive this document. They should also be advised that the AAR/IP should be considered a “For Official Use Only” document that should only be shared with those with a need to know. It is recommended that the draft AAR/IP be distributed to tabletop exercise participants for review no more than 30 days after the exercise and that the final AAR/IP be disseminated no more than 60 days after the exercise is completed.

The lead evaluator is responsible for drafting the AAR/IP and sending it to the lead planner for distribution to the attendees.

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## APPENDIX A: MODULE MAP

The tables below map the exercise learning objectives to the question numbers in the SitMan for each group for each module. Select the questions that are most appropriate for the training. Note: The template agenda is designed with the expectation that all questions will be answered.

### Learning Objectives (LO)

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At the conclusion of this tabletop exercise, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the sources and routes of contamination leading to the presence of pathogens in retail food service establishments.
2. Assess the adequacy of control measures at retail food service establishments.
3. Describe how an environmental assessment supports a foodborne illness outbreak investigation.
4. Explain the role of clinical and food laboratories, including the importance of sample collection and chain of custody.
5. Apply local, state, tribal, and federal regulations related to outbreak investigations and pathogen control in retail establishments.
6. Utilize established investigation, reporting, and response procedures to manage the outbreak.
7. Use a collaborative approach to efficiently deploy the responsibilities of each agency/discipline to implement proactive solutions during outbreak investigations.

### Module 1

|     | LL<br>Clin/Food Lab | LPH<br>Epi                             | EHS<br>Field/Mgr                       | SRA<br>State Reg | Industry<br>Retail |
|-----|---------------------|--|--|------------------|--------------------|
| LO1 | 2, 6                | 7, 8                                   | 1, 7, 8                                | 6, 7, 8          |                    |
| LO2 | 2                   |  | 1, 7, 8, 9                             | 4                | 2, 3               |
| LO3 |                     | 8                                      | 10, 11, 12                             |                  |                    |
| LO4 | 4, 5, 6             | 5, 6                                   | 10, 13                                 | 5                |                    |
| LO5 |                     |  | 1, 2, 3, 4, 9                          | 2                | 3                  |
| LO6 | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6       | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9,<br>10, 11, 12, 13 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9,<br>10, 11, 12, 13 | 1, 2, 3, 9, 10   | 1, 2, 3, 4         |
| LO7 | 3, 4, 5, 6          | 4, 5, 10                               | 3, 4, 9, 10                            | 3, 4             |                    |

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## Module 2

|     | LL<br>Clin/Food Lab                   | LPH<br>Epi                | EHS<br>Field/Mgr                                 | SRA<br>State Reg          | Industry<br>Retail |
|-----|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|--------------------|
| LO1 | 1                                     |                           | 6, 8, 9  |                           | 4                  |
| LO2 |                                       |                           | 5  |                           | 4, 5               |
| LO3 |                                       |                           | 2, 4, 5, Mock<br>Inspection                      |                           | 1, 5               |
| LO4 | 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8,<br>9, 10, 11, 12 | 4, 5, 6, 7, 8             | 6, 7, 8  |                           |                    |
| LO5 |                                       | 1                         | Mock Inspection                                  | 1, 2, 3                   | 4                  |
| LO6 | 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9,<br>10, 11, 13       | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,<br>8 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8,<br>9, 10, 11, 12, 13,<br>14 | 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7,<br>8 | 1, 2, 3, 5, 6      |
| LO7 | 3, 4, 6, 12                           | 4, 5, 6, 7                | 1, 7, 8, 10, 14                                  | 2, 3, 4, 5                |                    |

## Module 3

|     | All  |
|-----|--|
| LO1 | 9, 10  |
| LO2 | 12, 16   |
| LO3 | 17   |
| LO4 | 9, 10, 11, 17, 18                                      |
| LO5 | 11, 19   |
| LO6 | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 |
| LO7 | 3, 4, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 19                            |

**Duration** — 6 hours

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## APPENDIX B: SAMPLE AGENDA

### AFDO Workshop Pilot Agenda

| Time   | Agenda   |
|--|--|
| 8:30 a.m.  | Sign-In/Registration   |
| 9:00 a.m.  | Welcome to the Day/Introductions   |
| 9:30 – 9:40 a.m.<br>9:40 – 10:30 a.m.<br>10:30 – 11:30 a.m.    | <b>Module 1 (120 minutes)</b><br>Set up of scenario Module 1<br>Questions<br>Discussions                       |
| 11:30 – 11:45 a.m.   | Break  |
| 11:45 – 11:50 a.m.<br>11:50 – 12:10 p.m.<br>12:10 – 12:20 p.m. | <b>Module 2 (35 minutes)</b><br>Set up scenario Module 2<br>Mock investigation by EHS<br>Continue Presentation |
| 12:20 – 1:20 p.m.  | <b>Module 2 (60 minutes)</b><br>Lunch (20-minute break; 40-minute working lunch/questions)                     |
| 1:20 – 2:20 p.m.   | Discussions  |
| 2:20 – 2:30 p.m.<br>2:30 – 3:00 p.m.<br>3:00 – 3:30 p.m.       | <b>Module 3 (110 minutes)</b><br>Set up of scenario Module 3<br>Questions<br>Discussions                       |
| 3:30 – 4:00 p.m.   | After-Action Report and Evaluation   |
| 4:00 – 4:15 p.m.   | Next Steps and Adjourn   |

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## APPENDIX C: FACILITATOR AND EVALUATOR ROLES

### Facilitator's Roles and Responsibilities

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The facilitator guides the participants through the entire training exercise. It is preferred, but not required, that the facilitator be knowledgeable in food-related emergency response situations. The facilitator must be familiar with the following expectations before conducting a tabletop exercise contained within *Tassels and Tumult: The Graduation Gaffe*:

#### 2 Months in Advance of the Event:

- ☐ Meet with the lead planner/ planning team to review learning objectives.

#### 2 Weeks to 1 Month in Advance of the Event:

- ☐ Meet with lead planner/ planning team to go through the Facilitators Guide.

#### >1 Week in Advance of the Event:

- ☐ Read and understand the Facilitator's Guide before conducting the tabletop exercise.
- ☐ Be familiar with the objectives of the exercise.
- ☐ Work with the lead planner to ensure that participants are familiar with the objectives of the tabletop exercise, and the goal.
- ☐ Thoroughly review the SitMan, accompanying PowerPoint presentation, and Mock Inspection (conducted as part of Module 2).

#### Day of the Event:

- ☐ Show up early (30-60 minutes) to help lead planner and prepare for your day.
- ☐ Confirm with everyone that they have signed in if training records are needed.
- ☐ Establish and monitor a basic set of ground rules for participants to follow during discussion (covered in slide deck). Identify parking lot and other ways participants can provide feedback.
- ☐ Alert participants of restroom location, emergency exit procedures, and day's agenda.
- ☐ Keep the tabletop exercise on schedule (time master).



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- ☐ Facilitate discussions by asking pertinent questions rather than offering opinions.
- ☐ Keep all discussions focused by bringing the group back on track if the conversation strays from the topic.
- ☐ Encourage interaction among the different groups as they would in the real world.
- ☐ Encourage the participants to share their experiences and ideas so they can learn from one another.
- ☐ Help the small groups during the breakout sessions if they have questions or need clarification on the discussion questions.
- ☐ Identify participants who have relevant and recent experience with scenarios such as this and encourage them to share with less experienced participants.
- ☐ Serve as the store manager during the Mock Inspection in Module 2.
- ☐ Lead the group in a wrap-up discussion based on the questions identified by the lead planner. Be flexible with the content of the questions – if there were key issues raised, be sure to revisit them during the wrap-up segment.
- ☐ Confirm with everyone the evaluation is completed.

## Evaluator's Role and Responsibilities (Optional)

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Evaluators are typically non-participant representatives from the various organizations involved in this tabletop exercise (e.g., public health officials, food inspectors, epidemiologists). They should understand the learning objectives, know how to observe the discussion, what to look for, what to record, and how to analyze the collected data.

They assist in the completion of the AAR/IP. A template is provided in the SitMan, and the full AAR/IP is included as a separate file.

Evaluators should record:

- ☐ Identified issues
- ☐ How decisions are made
- ☐ Roles and responsibilities
- ☐ Coordination and cooperation issues
- ☐ Recommendations from the group

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## APPENDIX D: EVALUATION

The prepared evaluation survey can be found at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RQSJPMM>

(QR code is in the slide deck)

The results of the survey go direct to AFDO to develop future tabletop exercises. Please use the paper form provided below to collect data for your use.

### Participant Feedback Form

|                    |  |           |  |
|--------------------|--|-----------|--|
| Exercise Location  |  | Date      |  |
| Participant Name   |  | Job Title |  |
| Agency/Affiliation |  |           |  |

#### Part I – Recommendations and Action Steps

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1. List the top three best practices identified during this exercise.

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2. Based on discussions today, list the top three issues and/or areas that need improvement.

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#### Part II – Exercise Design and Conduct

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1. What is your assessment of the exercise design and conduct?

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*Please rate, on a scale of 1 to 5, your overall assessment of the exercise relative to the statements provided below, with 1 indicating strong disagreement with the statement and 5 indicating strong agreement.*

| Assessment Factor   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. The exercise was well-structured and organized.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. The exercise scenario was plausible and realistic.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| a. The multimedia presentation helped the participants understand and become engaged in the scenario.                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b. The facilitator(s) was knowledgeable about the material, kept the exercise on target, and was sensitive to group dynamics. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c. The Situation Manual used during the exercise was a valuable tool throughout the exercise.                                 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d. Participation in the exercise was appropriate for someone in my position.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e. The participants included the right people in terms of level and mix of disciplines.                                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

## 2. What changes would you make to improve this exercise?

*Please provide any recommendations on how this exercise or future exercises could be improved or enhanced.*

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# LEAD PLANNER'S GUIDE

## APPENDIX E: AFTER-ACTION REPORT/IMPROVEMENT PLAN (AAR/IP)

Information and data collection for the evaluation of discussion-based exercises come from the information that evaluators record as the exercise takes place. Typically, the evaluator (not to be confused with the group spokesperson or the group recorder) records for each breakout group certain specific information as the discussion is taking place. The kinds of information that evaluators should record include issues identified, how decisions are made, roles and responsibilities (of participating entities), coordination/cooperation issues, and recommendations made by the breakout group.

For the analysis phase of the exercise, evaluators should, as a group, try to address the following facets of the exercise:

- How well would personnel from the exercising jurisdiction and other participating entities have been able to perform the necessary or critical tasks?
- What decisions were required, and who should have made them?
- Were additional resources required? If so, how should they have been sourced?
- Would existing plans/protocols/policies enable the full performance of critical or necessary tasks? Were participants familiar with those documents?
- How well did personnel from various entities and jurisdictions coordinate and cooperate to accomplish necessary tasks? Are there agreements in place (among entities, agencies, and/or jurisdictions) to support the cooperative accomplishment of necessary tasks?
- What lessons were learned from the exercise?
- What changes/improvements are recommended?

# LEAD PLANNER'S GUIDE

## APPENDIX F: SIGN-IN SHEET

| Name | Agency / Affiliation | Phone | Email |
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# LEAD PLANNER'S GUIDE

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# LEAD PLANNER'S GUIDE

## APPENDIX G: PERSONAL LEARNING INVENTORY (INCLUDED IN SITMAN)

This is your Personal Learning Inventory (PLI). Use it throughout the day to record your notes, questions, and discoveries. Not only is the PLI a convenient place to capture the significant events of today's tabletop exercise, but it can also be highly useful later for documenting your experience and reviewing the key points. The PLI is your personal document and will not be collected by the facilitator or evaluators. This is your personal journal.

|                  |  |                   |  |
|------------------|--|-------------------|--|
| Participant Name |  | Tabletop Exercise |  |
| Date             |  | Facilitator       |  |

1. What are the most important things you learned today?

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2. What are some key follow-up items that you will undertake based on your participation in today's tabletop exercise?

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3. What are some new resources that you learned about that will help you in your daily activities?

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General Notes

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9/1/2024