

Motorcycle Mentorship Module 19

Urban Riding





Warning: Incorrect or inaccurate information could lead to tragic results on the road. If a question arises that is not covered in the guide and you don't know the answer from your own experience and training, simply state, "That is a great question, I'll get back to you with the answer."

Your Service Safety Center will help with these types of questions should they arise. Their numbers are as follows:

US Army Driving Directorate: **334.255.3039**

USMC Safety Division: **703.604.4459**

US Navy Shore Safety: **757.444.3520 x7165**

US Air Force Safety Center: **505.846.0728**

USCG Safety Division: **202.475.5206**



Preface

About: The Defense Safety Oversight Council (DSOC) Motorcycle Mentorship Modules are a set of thirty six (36) facilitation modules designed for the purpose of increasing rider knowledge on various aspects of riding and providing additional capability for self-policing within peer groups. The modules are intended as a mechanism to further decrease motorcycle related mishaps and fatalities within Department of Defense (DoD) by encouraging riders to talk, live, and think about the topic.

Using the Module: The module content enclosed is intended as a facilitation guide to assist you with discussing the topic. However, it is still critical to use your skills and talent to engage participants and develop “buy-in” on this subject from your group. To maximize this, motivate and moderate your participants, control the accuracy of participant feedback, and be mindful of their time.

Page	Section
2	Facilitation Guide – A brief overview on conducting a facilitated discussion of a topic
3	Module Overview – This section provides the facilitator a synopsis of the topic, learning objectives, and the suggested environment, props, and handouts for conducting the module
4	Module Discussion Introduction – This section provides guidance to the facilitator in opening up the discussion and getting participants talking about the topic and their relevant experiences
4	Discussion Areas – This section provides various discussion topics, sample facilitation questions, and factual information for the facilitator to lead the discussion
7	Wrap-Up – This section provides guidance to the facilitator on wrapping up the topic discussion
8	Feedback Form – A feedback form to be given to all participants for their feedback on the module discussion
9	Resources – Additional resources and definitions to assist the facilitator in preparing for and conducting the topic facilitation
10	Handouts – Figures, pictures, diagrams, etc. to assist the facilitator to better demonstrate a topic idea

Facilitation Guide for DSOC Mentorship Modules

It is recommended that this Mentorship Module be conducted in a facilitation style. Using the information provided in this Mentorship Module, you, as the facilitator, will lead a discussion on the subject. *You should not be conducting a lecture!* The facilitator's role is to help with how the discussion is proceeding. Participants will have much more "buy in" and connectivity with the information if they have input. One of your roles as the facilitator is to control the accuracy of the input and control the time. From the Mentorship Module, generate questions which will lead to group discussion. The more you let the group participate, the more success you will have.

Competencies of a Facilitator:

- Prepare prior to the event
- Make sure everyone gets a chance to participate and help members to express themselves
- Ask rather than tell
- Honor the group, display respect for the members, and acknowledge participant contributions
- Ask for others' opinions
- Listen without interrupting
- Demonstrate professionalism and integrity

The key characteristic distinguishing facilitation from other types of leadership, like scripted training, is that the outcomes are never predetermined in a facilitative setting. Although the background information provided with this Module remains the same, the result will depend on the participants, the knowledge and experience they bring, and the information that they feel they need to take away. The group uses the activities provided by the facilitator to unlock expertise, ensure thorough discussion, stay focused and reach decisions that are better than those any individual could come up with alone.

At the beginning of each Mentorship Event, discuss why the participants are there and what they will receive as a result of participating. Adults have limited time and they want to know "What's in it for me?" A facilitator should make training fun. Encourage humor and laughter in your Mentorship Event.

Principles of Adult Learning:

- Adult Learners want material that is relevant to them. "What's in it for me?" "What will I get out of this that will make a difference to me?"
- Adult Learners come to training events with varying amounts of experience. They like to share their experiences. If you have minimal or no motorcycle experience, you can still draw from your group.
- Even if you have motorcycle experience, you should draw from your group because people tend to remember what "they" said longer than what you said. Information that they "own" is more valuable to them.
- Facilitators are not always subject matter experts; nor do they need to be. Facilitators may draw on the existing knowledge of the participants and the information provided in these Modules.

Section I: Module Overview

Time Frame: One 30-60 minute facilitator-led discussion

Level of Prior Knowledge: Participants should be able to operate a motorcycle at a novice level or are familiar with motorcycle operations.

Synopsis: The survivability and enjoyability of urban street riding requires special consideration and planning. When piloted correctly, motorcycles are a fantastic way to get through the city. However, research done on motorcycle crashes shows that an overwhelming majority of almost 60% of crashes were caused by cars turning left in front of motorcyclists. In urban riding, this type of scenario can be found around every corner. This module is intended to identify the unique hazards of urban riding and develop personal techniques to mitigate those hazards while keeping the ride enjoyable.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the unique characteristics and hazards of Urban Riding environment: city planning and the culture
- Identify a visual strategy for urban riding
- Recognize the impact attitude has on one's safety and level of risk taking
- Identify the personal hazards for their specific commute or routine ride and develop a strategy to mitigate those hazards
- Participants comprehend facts and knowledge. Participants may offer alternative perspectives, contribute or supplement accurate statements regarding terms, facts, sequential events, and are encouraged to share experiential knowledge.

Suggested Environment/Props/Handouts:

- Environment – Classroom or perhaps a local motorcycle stop (e.g. coffee house, burger joint or restaurant) to build the camaraderie outside the work place.
- Handout 1 – Urban Riding Survival Strategy Checklist
- Handout 2 – Individual Activity

Section II: Module Discussion

Introduction: Facilitate discussion on the particular situations and difficulties of urban riding.

Facilitation Questions – Has anyone ever been involved or known of someone who has had a crash or close call while riding in city traffic? Can you share with the group what happened? What did you learn from the situation? What accident avoidance techniques were employed? Do you ride differently because of it? Did it have lasting effects?

Get as many examples as time permits. Personal examples are best. Be aware of participant's inclination to make a joke of the situation or be "the tough guy." Humor is helpful as a defense mechanism but eventually real life strategies must be employed to avoid future incidents.

Suggested Discussion Areas:

Discussion Area 1: What Challenges Can You Expect?

Ultimately, we must all share the roadways. This becomes more challenging as the spaces get more confined as in heavily populated cities.

Facilitation Questions:

- What are some hazards that are more likely to be encountered in an urban environment?
- What do these varied hazards have in common?
- What constitutes an intersection?
- How do world events effect how drivers behave in the traffic mix?
- If lane sharing or lane filtering is legal in your area, when are some situations not to do so? What are the risks in lane sharing?

Take a moment as a group to identify the demographics of the city they are in or near by. How does it differ from other cities they have ridden in? Examples may include military bases, colleges, retirement communities, vacation hot spots, or other communities. What does this mean in terms of driving behaviors and hazards you might encounter?

Of the behaviors of city drivers and pedestrians, which ones are predictable? Which ones are unpredictable?

Small Group Exercise

Divide participants into small groups and have a participant read the instructions to Handout # 2 Individual Activity. Have participants complete the handout individually and then have participants, within the small groups, compare and discuss the recorded hazards and strategies. After each group reviews each handout, have the group share findings and comments with the other groups—in an open forum.

Facilitator Facts:

Hazards specific or unique to urban settings can include: Heavier/thicker traffic and more sudden, unexpected stops by others, particularly delivery vehicles and taxis. Bicyclists are much more common in urban areas and can be very unpredictable. Children and pets could remain concealed until they

suddenly dart from between parked cars or stationary objects. In an urban setting, emergency vehicles are encountered much more often and in some larger cities, sirens are a near constant background noise reducing the effectiveness of sirens in alerting traffic to the presence of an Emergency Response Vehicle. All of these hazards demand heightened situational awareness by motorcycle rider. All intersections, without exception, are dangerous to motorcyclists.

The American Automobile Association defines an intersection as a place where two or more user paths cross (i.e. alley ways, parking lot entrances, etc.) In urban areas there are significantly more intersections without stop signs or traffic lights to control crossing traffic. The urban environment in which a rider navigates could be viewed as a living, breathing organism that directly correlates to the culture of that particular city. Motorists and pedestrians in New York behave differently than motorists and pedestrians in California, and the actions and traffic flow patterns are different in San Francisco than in Los Angeles. Moreover, the dissimilarities are even greater in foreign cities when compared to US cities. As military members, most likely you will experience several unique urban riding environments.

Discussion Area 2: Senses and Perception

Vision and perception are a rider's most valuable assets. The most common statement a driver gives after hitting a motorcyclist is "I didn't even see him."

As a group make a list of examples. What can we do to be more visible to car drivers? Can we trust that they "see" us?

Facilitation Questions:

- What factors influence how our brains interpret information?
- What is the difference between looking and seeing?
- How can we compare what our eyes are doing to the strategy of a really skilled chess player?
- Where should we place our focus and for how long? Is there a pattern we can follow?
- What does the term *inattentive blindness* mean to you?

Facilitator Facts: Perceptual blindness is when a person fails to notice some stimulus that is in plain sight. This stimulus is usually unexpected but fully visible. This typically happens because humans are overloaded with inputs – visual and aural. It is impossible to pay attention to every single input that is presented. A person's attention cannot be focused on everything, and therefore, everyone experiences inattentive blindness.

<http://www.savevid.com/video/dancing-bear-moonwalking-bear-cyclist-aware.html> or <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ahg6qcgoay4> are fantastic tools to make participants aware of just how much or how little of their visual world they are aware of.

Discussion Area 3: Riding “In the Zone”

Instructor Note: Riding “In the Zone” is that magic place where everything clicks. Physical and mental processes are working in coordination, everything happens just right and time seems to slow down. Performing “In the Zone” is a result of nothing less than consistent mental and physical practice and discipline. As a rider, extreme emotions like fear, rushes of adrenaline, peer pressure, and intense anger can take us out of the zone in an instant. That one split second, if not dealt with appropriately can be life altering.

The purpose of this discussion is to have participants understand the value incorporating a safety attitude in their riding, whether checking tire pressure more often, wearing better gear, improving their skills or simply choosing to leave 5 minutes earlier. This will lead to increased sense of control over what happens to them and self-confidence. Also, encourage riders to develop more visual and mental discipline by staying focused on the environment and discarding any mental grip on that slow driver, closely following vehicle, backed-up traffic or the urge to chase their buddies blaze off into a turn. With consistent practice a rider will experience a fluidity of thought and motion that is riding “In the Zone”.

Where is the balance between fun and self-discipline? “A rider’s physical skill means nothing if his judgment is flawed.” — *Nick Ienatsch*

In other words, it does not matter that you and your bike are capable of speeds in excess of 100 mph, you’ll find big trouble if you insist on riding at that speed in traffic. It’s not enough to be able to twist the throttle; you must have the judgment to know when and where to do it. More often than not the word SAFE comes across as just another four-letter word, taking fun right out of the picture. How can we change what this word means? Some riders prefer to ride “smarter” rather than ride safe. Because how much fun is it really to recover from painful injuries or spend thousands of dollars to repair our motorcycle? Can we get to the point where we truly recognize that having some self-discipline to make better decisions in each moment equates to many more years of riding fun?

Facilitation Questions:

- **What does self-discipline mean to you?**
- In what areas of your lifestyle as a motorcycle enthusiast can you be more self-disciplined?
- How does the quality of your work and home life effect how much risk you take?
- What causes complacency? How does it increase our risk?
- How can we stay proactive?

Agree or disagree: “It only takes one err in judgment to change your life forever?”

Wrap-Up:

Brief or Discuss the Following: Navigating through the city on two wheels rather than four definitely has its benefits. Learning to use that freedom of mobility to our advantage requires a plan, a committed focus on safety and control of your motorcycle at all times. In an urban maze of one-way streets and blind intersections, cars, pedestrians and bicyclists scrambling to find a gap, a rider must stay vigilant. With well-developed riding skills, aggressive mental scanning and finely tuned survival strategies you will be well armed to enjoy any concrete jungle with a smile on your face.

Suggested Wrap-Up Discussion:

Ask participants how they would apply the knowledge they gained from this discussion on their ride home, or their next ride with friends. What opinions or preconceptions about city riding have changed?

Distribute copies of the DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Module Evaluation form to all participants and request that they deliver or mail the completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing.

DSOC Motorcycle Mentorship Feedback Form

Presenter Name:

Date:

Topic/Title:

Unit Number:

Please review each statement below and check the response that closely matches your experience in the Mentorship Module today:

1. Please rate the presenter's performance:

Prepared Not Prepared Engaging Not Engaging Led Discussion Lectured

Comments:

2. I was given opportunities to participate in the module's discussion

Never Only Once 2-4 Times Many Times Throughout Discussion

Comments:

3. With regard to my personal riding experiences, this discussion was:

Relevant Not Relevant Interesting Not Interesting

Comments:

4. This discussion topic has provided me with specific learning points that I can use to be a safer, better informed rider

None One Idea or Fact 2-4 Learning Points 5 or More

Comments:

5. I would be interested in participating in other Motorcycle Mentorship Module discussion topics

Never Again Willing to Try Another Module Would Like to Do Modules Regularly

Comments:

Thank you for your participation. Please make note of any other suggestions or comments below (continue on the back if needed):

Deliver or mail this completed form to the Command or Command Safety Office for processing. Please do not return this form directly to the Module Presenter.

Resources

Continued Reading:

American Automobile Association (2009). *How To Drive*

Chabris C., Simons D. (2010). *The Invisible Gorilla*. New York, NY: Crown Publishing Group

The Hurt Report, National Highway Traffic Safety Publication number NHTSA-DOT-HS-5-01160

Ienatsch, N. (2003). *Sport Riding Techniques*. Phoenix AZ: David Bull Publishing

Motorcycle Safety Foundation, (2005). *The Motorcycle Safety Foundation's Guide to Motorcycling Excellence*, 2nd Edition. Irvine CA: Whitehorse Press

Parks, L., (2003). *Total Control*. St. Paul MN: MBI Publishing Co.

Pridmore, R. (2004). *Smooth riding, the Pridmore way*. Center Conway, New Hampshire: Whitehorse Press

<http://www.mylifegym.co.uk/sport-psychology-confidence>

Definitions: (As defined for purposes of this module.)

Urban: An inhabited place of greater size, population, or importance than a town or village.

Inattentive blindness/Perceptual blindness: When a person fails to notice some stimulus that is in plain sight. This stimulus is usually unexpected but fully visible.

In the Zone: A high degree of mental and physical skill and focus that filters out all other distractions with a sense of effortlessness and absence of time.

Intersection: A place where two or more user paths cross.

Handout 1 – Urban Riding Survival Checklist

Refer to this list throughout the discussions. As the students mention them, record them on a dry-erase board, flip chart or tablet to later email to the group. Acknowledge their existing knowledge and experience and bring up the habits they do not mention. This list is not in order of priority and is meant to be expanded upon.

- Look 20-30 seconds (two city blocks) into your intended path of travel to prepare for anything that might develop into a hazard or limited mobility.
- Maintain no less than 2 seconds following distance between you and the vehicle in front of you.
- Increase the 2 second following distance whenever possible.
- Increase your following distance for any less than ideal conditions such as lack of sleep or bad weather.
- Make your visibility and you're ability to see top priority.
- Maintain a safe speed that maximizes control, maneuverability and time to react.
- Maintain your hazard avoidance skills at a high degree of proficiency.
- Make sleep and stress management a higher priority to reduce poor judgment and impatience on the roadways.
- Always assume the “other guy” is going to make the worst possible be move imaginable—be prepared for anything.
- Make it a habit to always look behind you when you slow down or change lanes.
- Add 5-10 more feet between you and the vehicle you stop behind in case you need to maneuver.
- Always downshift to first and remain in gear when waiting at a stop light.
- Ride in higher rpms so your bike will be ready to get you out of dangerous situation quickly.
- Slow down for intersections and cover your controls—4 seconds from the intersection, you are as good as in the intersection.
- Keep your eyes scanning and your head on a swivel.
- Always assume that the other driver does NOT see you.
- Communicate your intentions—use turn indicators early and flash your brake light when slowing or while stopped in traffic. Pulsating brake light modules are available for many motorcycles and create diminishing “wink” cycles while applying the brakes.
- Play “what if” scenarios during your ride.
- Ride to create escape route options; Search for open spaces.
- Turn reading traffic and cars into a game.
- If you cannot see in front of the vehicle in front of you, change lanes or drop back to you can.
- Stay clear of drivers that suddenly reduce their speed. Most likely they are confused and their next move will be unexpected.
- Watch for out of state plates to make wrong moves at interstate changes.
- Any lane a tailgater is in is the wrong lane. Their next move may be a desperate one.
- Awareness like any skill needs to be developed. Look for what is different.
- Do not travel at the same speed to vehicles next to you.

Handout 2 – Individual Activity

Visually divide up your commute to work, back home or a frequented route through a busy city into potential hazards. These hazards can be road hazards, driver and pedestrian hazards, or rider hazards. Some areas might include particular busy times of day, pedestrian dense intersections, entrances /exits to expressways or construction areas. Rider factors might include always running late to work, feeling angry or impatient at a tailgating driver, at someone who cuts you off or driver moving too slowly. Write down five specific areas of potential conflict and an action plan or new habit to deal with those conflicts. The goal is to create a larger margin of safety--more time and space to respond and maneuver. Sometimes it is helpful to imagine you are helping another rider who has never taken this route before navigate through it safely.

Potential Hazard No. 1:

Strategy or new habit:

I will: _____

Potential Hazard No. 2:

Strategy or new habit:

I will: _____

Potential Hazard No. 3:

Strategy or new habit:

I will: _____

Potential Hazard No. 4:

Strategy or new habit:

I will: _____

Potential Hazard No. 5:

Strategy or new habit:

I will: _____



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Some of the principal contributors to this effort include the following:

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