

The Critical Decision-Making Model

ICAT: Integrating Communications,
Assessment, and Tactics



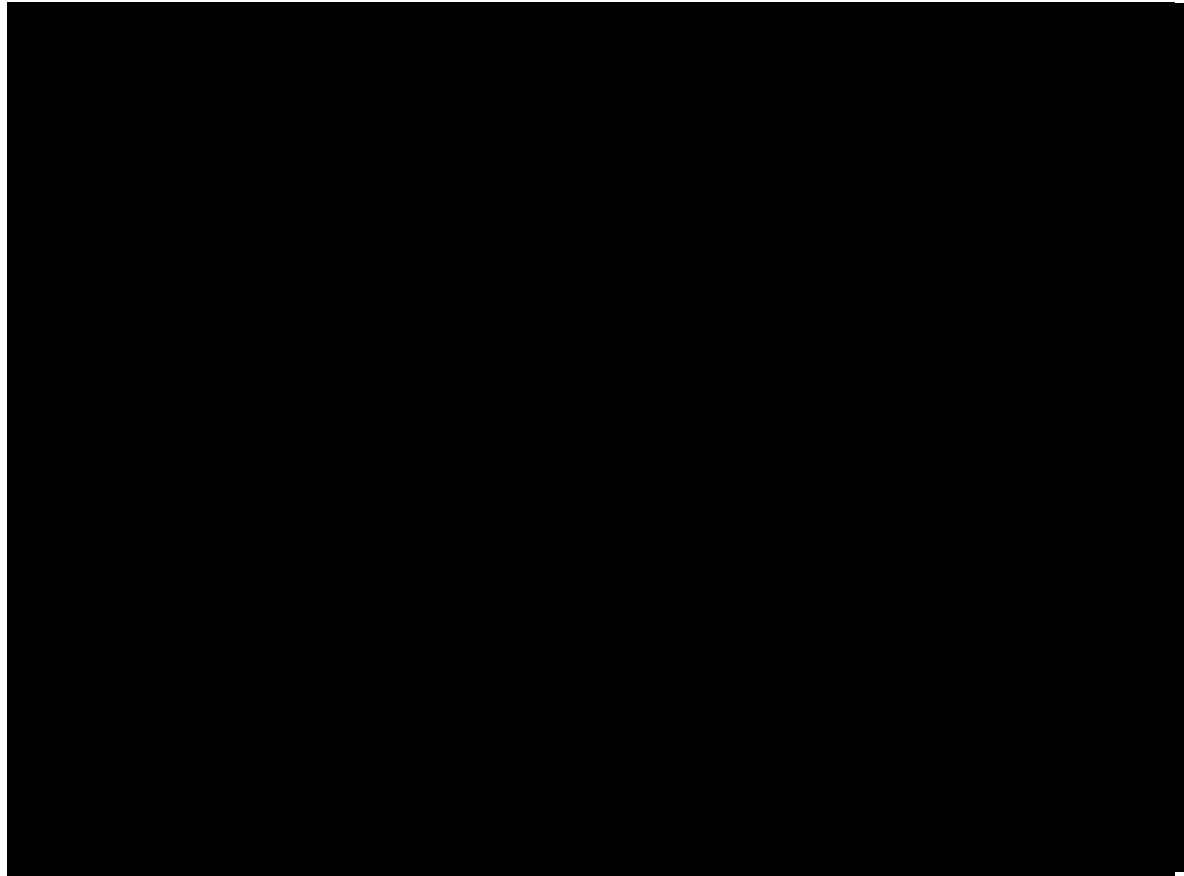
POLICE EXECUTIVE
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Decision Making in Action?



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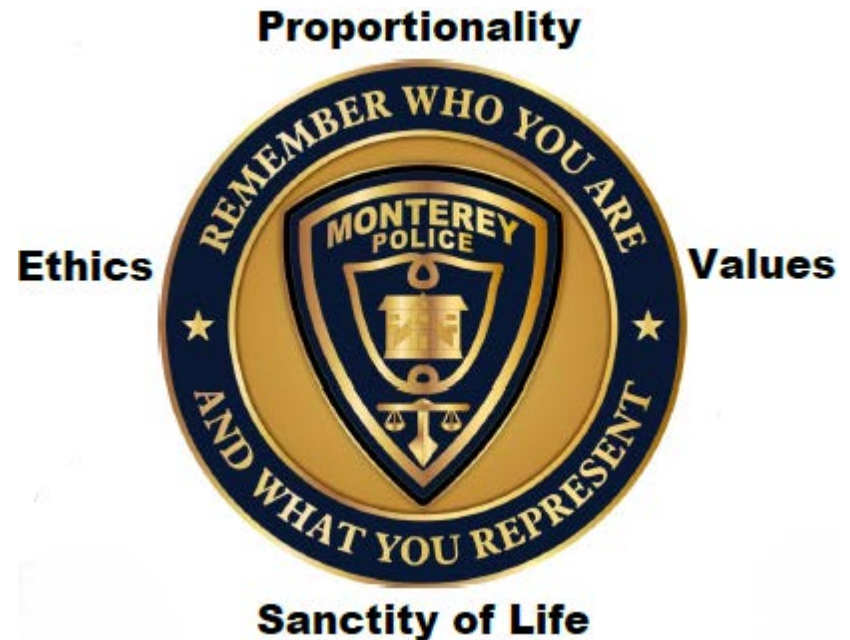
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CDM Core

Ideals that define the agency

- Ethics, values, mission statement, guiding principles and priorities
- Core informs/guides each step in the model



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Step 1: Collect Information

Ask yourself ...

- What do I know so far about this incident?
- What else do I need to know?
- What do my training and experience tell me about this type of incident?



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Step 1: Collect Information



Ask others (*esp. Dispatch*) ...

- What more can you tell me about *this incident*?
- What more can you tell me about *previous incidents* involving this location or subjects?

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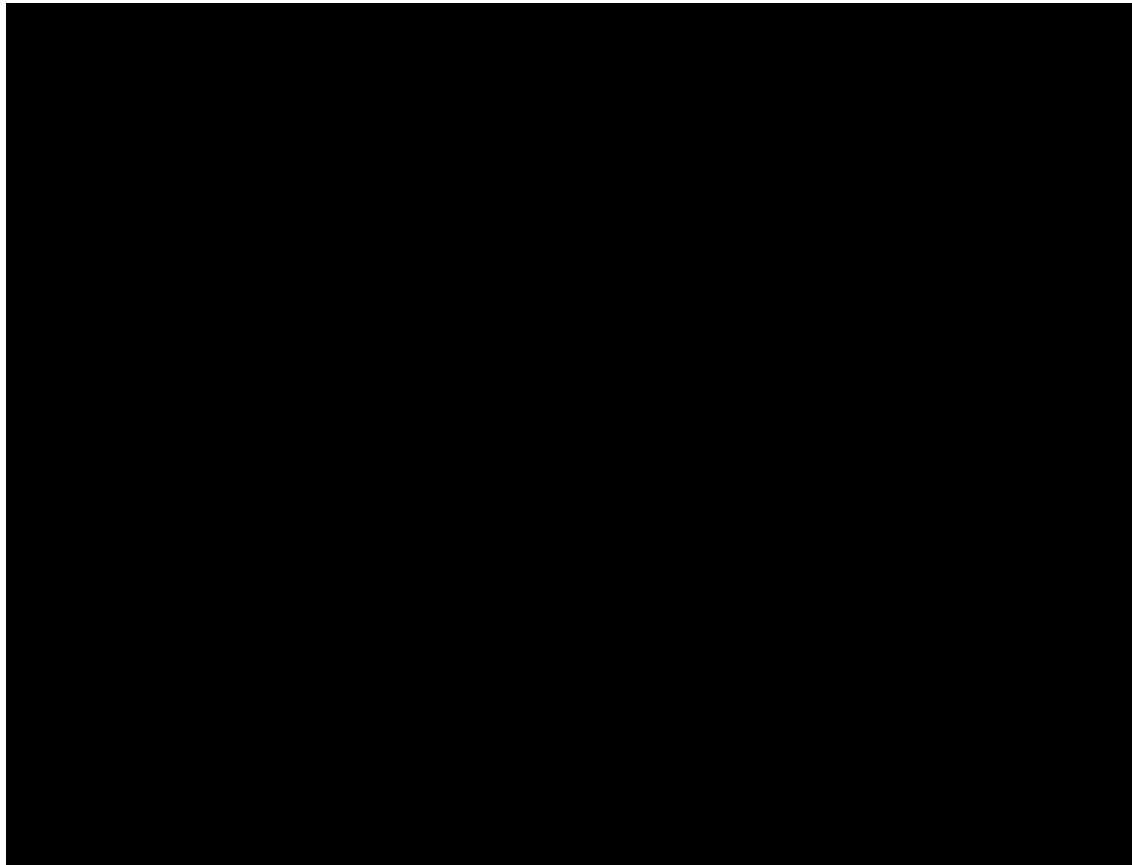


Step 1: Collect Information



- Information collection is an ongoing process throughout the CDM ... it doesn't stop at Step 1
- If you're not getting the information you need ... *keep asking!*

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Step 2: Assess Situation, Threats & Risks

Ask yourself ...

- *Do I need to take immediate action?*
- What more information do I need?
- Am I trained and equipped to handle this situation myself
- *What is the threat/risk?*



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Threat Assessment

- Accurately assess person, object or environmental factor that could put officer/public at risk
- Two risk categories at this stage:
 - High risk
 - Unknown risk
- Guard against officer complacency

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Threat Assessment

Assess the subject's:

- Means
- Ability
- Opportunity
- Intent

Watch out for “transfer of malice”
(or aggression)

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Begin developing a working strategy

- Minimize risk to victim and public
- Maximize officer safety
- Minimize risk to subject
- Allow for safe detention of subject
- Allow for recovery, preservation of evidence



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Step 3: Consider Police Powers & Agency Policy



Ask yourself ...

- What legal powers do I have to take action?
- What agency policies control my response?
- Are there other issues I should think about (jurisdictional matters, mutual aid, etc.)?

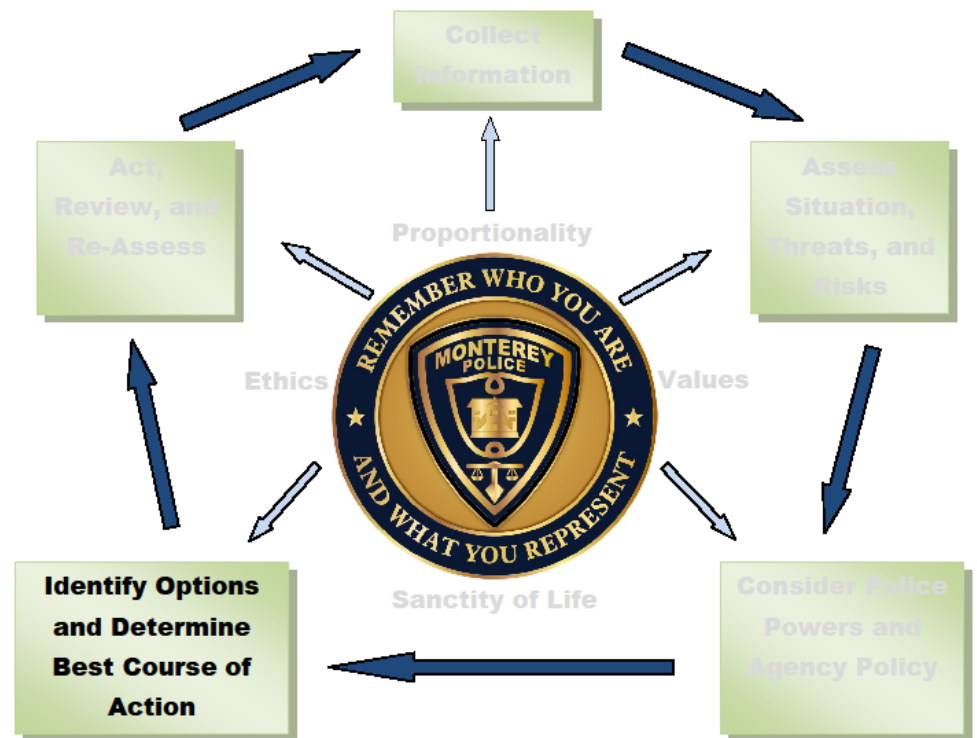
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Step 4: Identify Options, Determine Best Course of Action

Ask yourself ...

- What am I trying to achieve?
- What options do I have?
- What contingencies must I consider if I choose a particular option?
- Do I need to act now, or can I wait?



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Possible Options and Contingencies

- Wait and collect more information
- Keep subject under observation
- Continue communicating with subject
- Tactically reposition and contain the area
- Take decisive action



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Select Best Course of Action

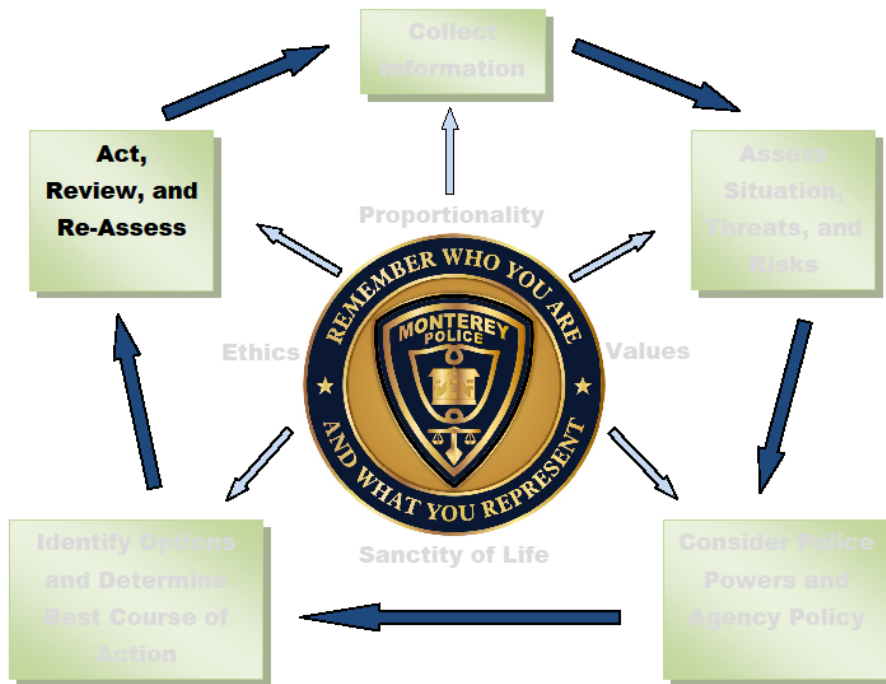
Keeping in mind ...

- Greatest likelihood of success against least harm
- How proportional the response will be (given threat/risks)
- Safety of the public, your own safety and the sanctity of all life
- Agency mission and values (CDM core)

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Step 5: Act, Review and Re-assess



Execute the plan, then ask yourself ...

- Did I achieve the desired outcome?
- Is there anything more I need to consider?
- What lessons did I learn?

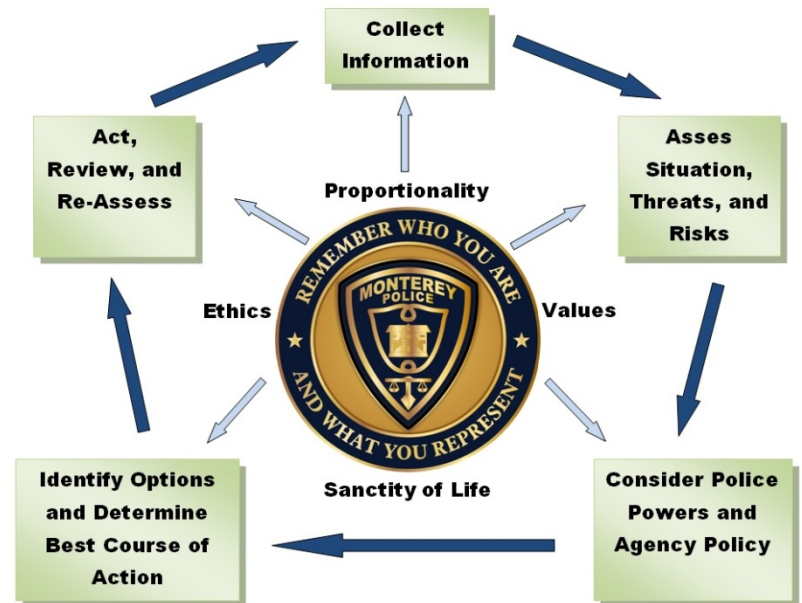
If the incident is not resolved, then “spin the model”

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“Spinning the Model”

- Information collection is ongoing
- As new information comes in ... threats, risks and options can change
- “Spinning the model” means re-assessing, fine-tuning your decision-making

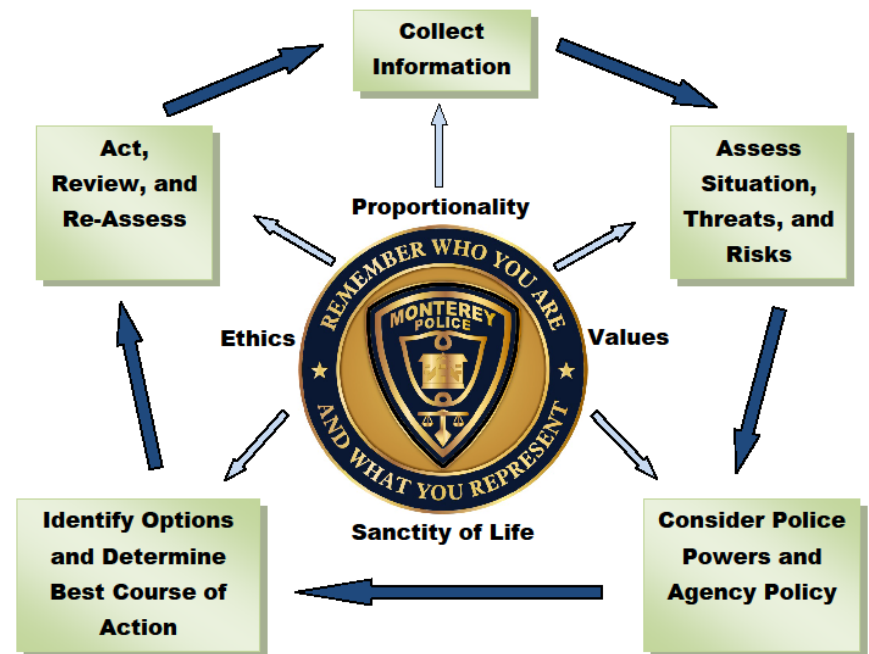


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You expect me to do this?
And in tense and dynamic situations?

- Nothing prevents officers from taking immediate action
- When there is time, CDM provides a useful structure for weighing options, making decisions
- Very similar to what SWAT teams already do
- Over time, it becomes second nature ... like driving a car



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Benefits of the CDM

Better decisions up front

- “I didn’t have time to think” – very few situations where that is really the case
- CDM helps you gather information, assess threats, weigh options

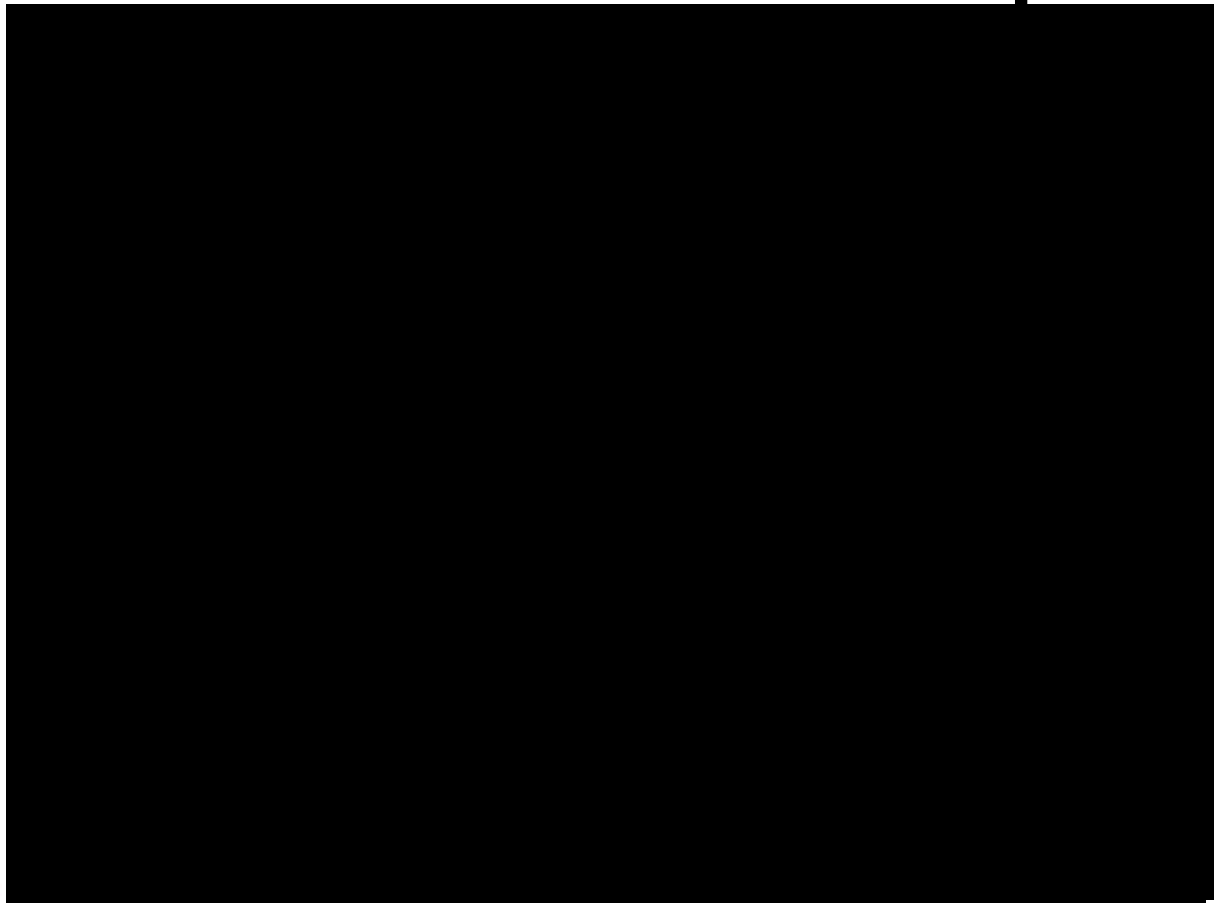
Helps to explain your actions after the fact

- Enhances officer credibility
- Protects officers in court

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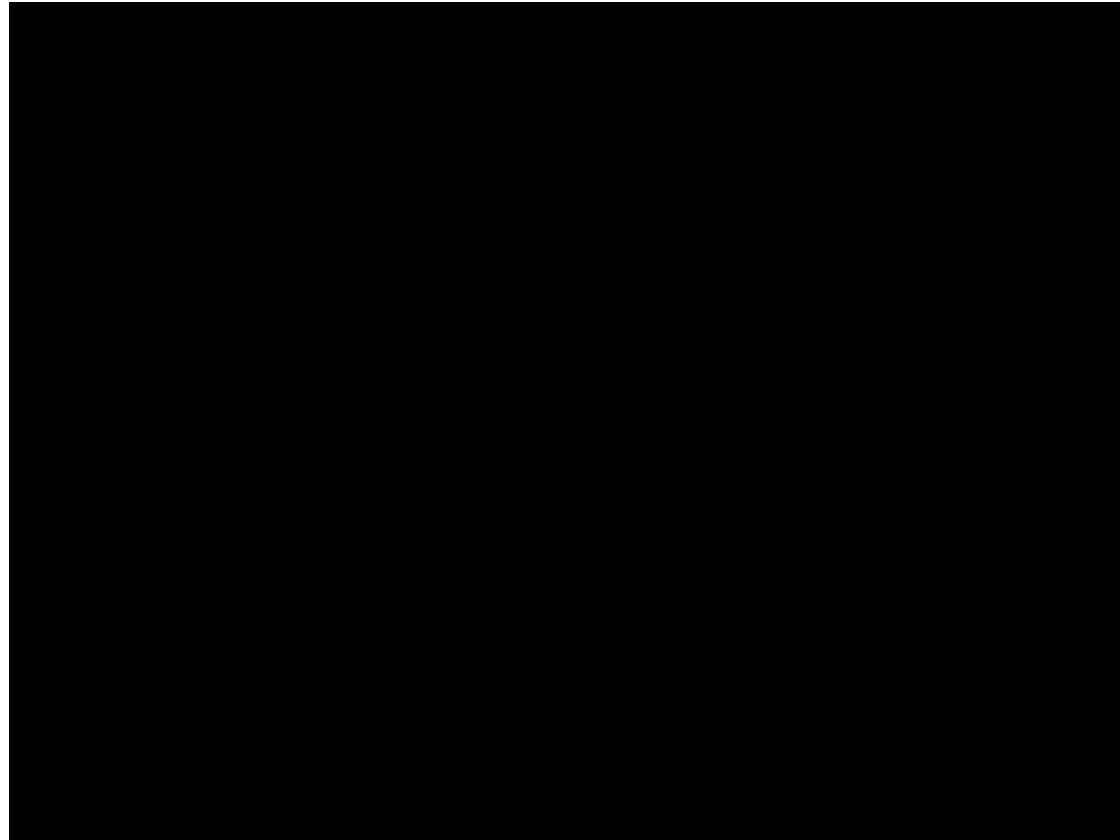
Do we have a realistic plan?



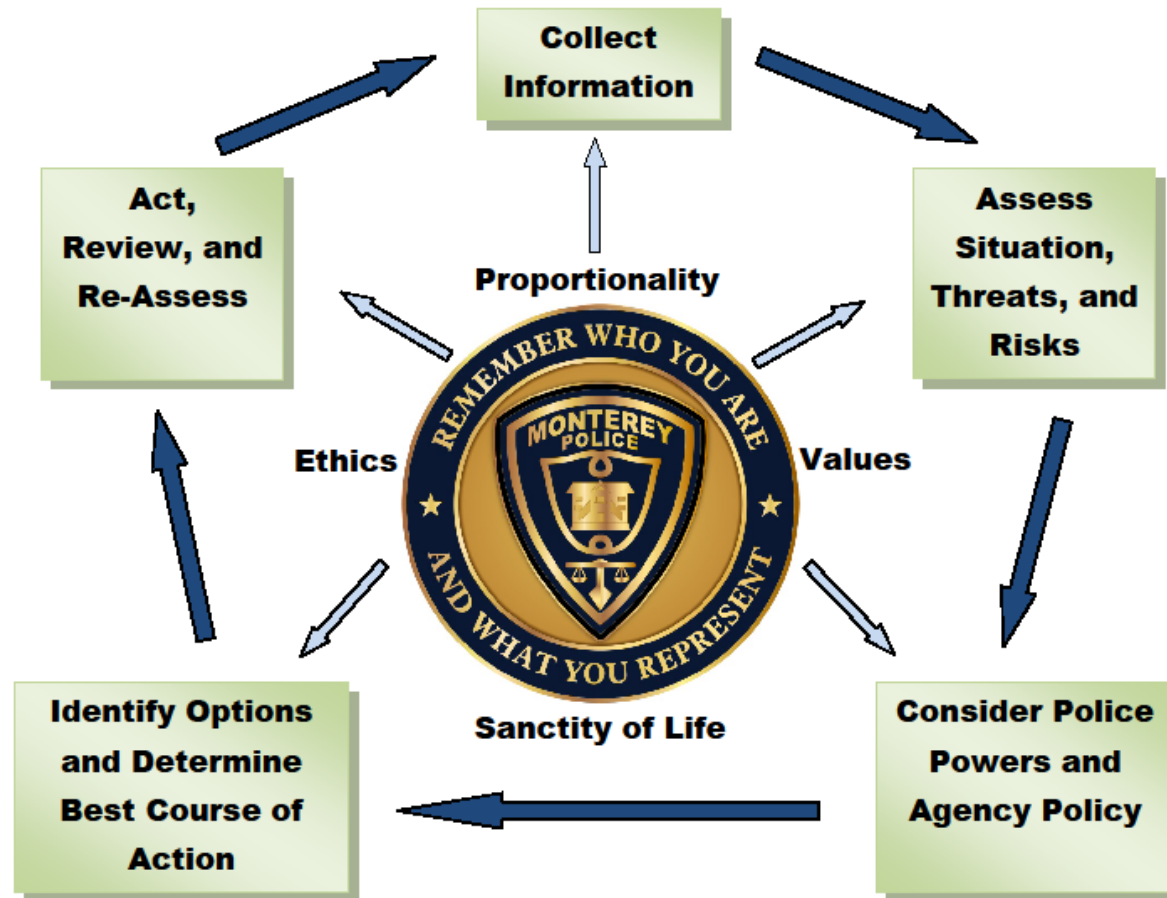
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Looking at the CDM in Action



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Thoughts?
Questions?
Observations?