

# DECISION-MAKING

**Time:** Minimum 30 minutes

**Goal or purpose of the exercise:** To prepare people to face crisis situations and to develop a frame of mind of thinking quickly under stress, focusing on key issues while learning to ignore minor ones, so as to reach action-decisions.

## **How it's done/facilitator's notes**

To a group no larger than eight people (this can be a small group, with others observing), give a scenario. For example: 'A woman faints inside the line of a march. You are a peacekeeper. What do you do'? Allow 15 seconds for discussion among the three or four people taking part. Afterwards, discuss with all participants. Ask: How did you come to a decision? What helped the process? What was the main difficulty?

Another step is to practice the exercise with a spokescouncil. Form several small groups that act as 'affinity groups'. Give them a new scenario, and ask each group to choose a spokesperson. Once each 'affinity group' has come to a decision, have the different spokespersons meet to come to a decision. After they reach a level of consensus, ask each spokesperson to consult with their 'affinity group' about the spokescouncil's decision. Each group can make recommendations for changes if necessary. Then have the spokescouncil meet again to come to a final decision that hopefully will be a decision that everyone in all of the 'affinity groups' can live with.

Please note that a major limitation is that doing too many quick decision exercises, especially right before an action takes place, can establish a mind-set of emergency, thus raising tension so that people panic. Quick decision exercises should be tempered with other training experiences to prevent this perspective of imminent danger.