

DO NOT

- Do NOT negotiate if you are the commander.
'Commander's command, negotiators negotiate'
- Do NOT allow yourself to be in a position where you are making the final decision. It is not your job. Defer and refer to the incident commander.
- Demands, Deadlines & Threats - listen carefully, do not accept or make promises. *"The things you have asked for, may be hard to get, 'I'll see what I can do for you"*. You don't say yes, and you don't say no.
- Do NOT put anyone at risk of being taken hostage or being injured.
- Do NOT ignore the stronghold, speak to them.
- Caution when introducing a Third-Party Intermediary e.g. a doctor, family member etc., they may be perceived to be party of it.
- Do NOT enter their delusions if there is a mental health element.
- Do NOT ask for demands (they may not have any).
- Do NOT assume that any conversations with the stronghold are private, the media and others are usually present.
- We do NOT exchange a hostage for another person i.e. a police officer, family member, or a medical professional.
- Do NOT set yourself deadlines e.g. *"I'll get back to you in five minutes"* or *"How long have I got to do that"*.



"Globally each year on average 720,000 people take their own lives. A worrying high percentage is from those 10-29 years of age".*



Material supplied by Neil Stapley OBE,
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all previous heads of crisis negotiator units.
* World Health Organisation

**An aide memoire
for initial response to
people in crisis,
suicide intervention,
siege or barricades**



Contain - the incident
Isolate - the stronghold
Evacuate - persons at risk
Negotiate - open dialogue

Crisis Negotiation Skills Course for Frontline Workers on Suicidal Behaviour

DO

- **Do** start to talk, if it can be done safely.
- Work with a partner who can assist with prompts, notes, and be a liaison route to the commander.
- Only have **one** person in a speaking role.
- **Do** take threats seriously. Ask them to reduce immediate danger.
- **Do** use open ended questions, use active listening skills.
- Encourage them to speak, even if shouting, allow them to vent.
- **Do** be prepared for hostility, anger, and confrontation by the subject.
- Take your time, gain intelligence, create operational space.
- **Do** use the singular and personalise yourself (even consider using your first name).
- Ask the subject how they would like to be addressed.

- Do ask to speak to others in the stronghold. *Note: Avoid the words “hostage” and “hostage taker”.* If allowed remember how scared/ nervous/ anxious, they may be, so lots of reassurance and support. *Caution asking too many questions, but they will be a useful intelligence source. They may also be listened to by the subject.*
- Be polite, remain calm, controlled and concise.
- Seek to personalise all people involved.
- Press for an early release if there are hostages.
- Do acknowledge and thank the subject for even the smallest concession.
- Try and be consistent with your message and seek to get them to confront reality.
- If it is unclear to you whether the person is suicidal or not, ask them. Do not be afraid to use the actual words “*suicide*” or “*death*”.



Your actions and initial response will set the tone for the incident

Remember:



- **Safety**
- **Take your time**
- **Never stop trying**

Do keep a record of your actions and precise points of the conversation.

Be honest, no tricks and think safety, do not grab!