HOSTAGE TAKER PROFILES – REVISED

Federal Correctional Complex - Beaumont, Texas

Crisis Negotiations Team/Hostage Negotiations Team

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Antisocial Personality

**Characteristics**
Tend to lack empathy
Are cold, cynical, and arrogant
Charming, well groomed, and articulate
Impulsive
Irresponsible and exploitative in personal relationships
May have spent many years in prison

**Common Behaviors**
In jail or prison often
Cons others for profit
Impulsive, irritable and aggressive
Displays reckless behavior
Engages in high-risk sex and drug abuse
Indifferent to having hurt, abused, or mistreating someone else

**Communications Goals**
Keep the subject’s egocentricity in mind
Keep the subject busy to prevent harassment of his victims/hostages
Convince that the safe release the hostages is to his advantage
Do not try to “con” this con man
Girlfriends, wives, or family members will be of little value
Use a business-like approach
Emotionally Unstable

**Characteristics**
Undermine themselves as they near a goal
Completion rate of suicide is higher than general population
History of self-inflicted injuries
Experience psychotic-like behavior during times of stress
Recurrent job losses, interrupted education, and broken marriage are common
Childhood histories may include physical and sexual abuse, neglect, early parental loss

**Common Behaviors**
Exhibit violent or agitated behaviors to avoid real or imagined abandonment
A pattern of unstable relationships
Undergo identity disturbances
Impulsive in areas that can be self-damaging
Mood is unstable and unpleasant
Difficulty controlling their anger resulting in outbursts and physical fights
Stress related feelings and beliefs that they are being harassed or treated unfairly

**Communication Goals**
Use active listening skills
Stay in contact as much as possible
Be alert for clues to suicide or homicide
Reassure the subject that help is available
Prepare for shifts of emotions
Seriously Mentally Ill

Schizophrenia

**Characteristics & Common Behaviors**
- Presence of hallucinations and delusions
- Social isolation or withdrawal
- Peculiar behavior
- Decrease in personal hygiene and grooming
- Unusual speech patterns
- May exhibit paranoia
- May have poor treatment (medication) compliance

**Communication Goals**
- Subject’s need to explain might offer an opportunity to establish rapport
- Do not try to argue the subject out of his delusions
- Should not get into a schizophrenic’s delusional system
- Avoid use of family members
- Focus on “here and now”
Seriously Mentally Ill

Depression

**Characteristics & Common Behaviors**
Moods are depressed, sad, hopeless, or down in the dumps
Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities
Reduction in sexual interest
Mood may be irritable rather than sad in children or adolescents
Weight loss and sleep problems
Feels exhausted or lack of energy
Diminished ability to think, concentrate, or make decisions
Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide are common
More often barricade situation than hostage taking

**Communication Goals**
Beware of sudden improvements
Keep your time perspective in the here and now
A depressed subject will generally be honest and straightforward with the negotiator
Beware of “suicide by cop”
Active listening skills should be used to build empathy and establish a rapport
Attempt to postpone a suicidal action
Gently challenge irrational beliefs
Substance Intoxication

Characteristics & Common Behaviors
Slurred speech
Rapidly changing emotions
May exhibit psychotic symptoms
Impulsive
Superman complex

Communication Goals
Keep calm
Slow negotiation process down
Stay in contact as much as possible
Be alert for clues to suicide or homicide