



LEAD Time

Five Communication Responsibilities

Leadership Category

Fire leaders work to instill the Five Communications Responsibilities in the culture of all crews, teams, and units. These responsibilities are not just tactical tools but apply to the staff and management environment.

In high risk environments, the best level of protection against errors and accidents is effective team communication. Therefore, everyone—regardless of position—has an obligation to communicate critical information.

Fire leaders redeem the Five Communications Responsibilities to enable everyone at all levels to develop good communications practices.

Five Communications Responsibilities:

- **Brief**—use briefings to ensure accurate situation awareness.
- **Debrief**—use After Action Reviews to build accountability and learn from experience.
- **Acknowledge and understand messages**—acknowledge and ensure clarity of received communications on conditions, assigned tasks, intent, and other important information.
- **Communicate hazards to others**—use hazard identification, a key component of risk management, to identify personal, tactical, situational, political, or organizational hazards. Good leaders ensure that team members are vigilant for hazards and communicate identified hazards effectively.
- **Ask if you don't know**—guard against making false assumptions when the picture is not clear.

Discussion Points

- What makes a good briefing?
- Describe a time where a hazard was not communicated to you?
- Why do or don't you ask if you don't know?

References:

[Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program](#)
[Leading In the Wildland Fire Service](#)
[Briefing and Intent link](#)

Have an idea? Have feedback? Share it.

[ONLINE](#) | MAIL: 6 Minutes For Safety Subcommittee • 3833 S. Development Ave • Boise, ID 83705 | FAX: 208-387-5250

[6 Minutes Home](#)