Incident Leadership Decision Tabletop

College & University Faculty | Lesson Plan | 90 minutes

Before class: Prepare a fictional incident packet, roles, and timed injects. Do not use an active incident or real organization data unless explicitly authorized for instruction.

Outcome: Students will make and defend incident leadership decisions under uncertainty while balancing technical risk, mission needs, communications, privacy, and recovery.

Materials

- Fictional incident packet
- Role cards
- Decision log
- Timed inject cards
- Briefing template

Learning Objectives

- Prioritize actions under uncertainty.
- Explain tradeoffs among containment, continuity, evidence preservation, communication, and recovery.
- Document decisions, assumptions, dissent, and owners.
- Deliver a concise executive briefing.

Opening (10 minutes)

- Assign roles and establish the fictional mission, critical services, and decision authority.

Round One (20 minutes)

- Provide the initial technical indicators and user impact.
- Teams record immediate actions, what they will not do yet, and why.

Round Two (20 minutes)

- Inject a service outage, privacy concern, executive question, or vendor dependency.
- Teams revise priorities and document any dissent.

Round Three (20 minutes)

- Introduce recovery pressure and a communications deadline.
- Teams choose recovery criteria and prepare a three-minute executive update.

Brief and Debrief (20 minutes)

- Each team briefs its decisions and uncertainty.
- Compare defensible alternatives rather than scoring one predetermined response as the only correct answer.

Evidence and Assessment

- Assess prioritization, evidence use, coordination, protection of people and mission, recovery thinking, and the clarity of the executive briefing.

Optional Companion

- Pair with “Incident Decision Tabletop” from Labs & Activities or use Decision Point CISO when the simulator is available.

Source and use

The Complete Cybersecurity Educator, Dr. Jason Edwards. College & University lesson-plan extension derived from the companion course-design, lab, and assessment resources.

Sharing and reuse: Please do not resell this resource. You may repost or share it with other educators. Please leave the Bare Metal Cyber Educators Hub URL and source attribution below intact. Use fictional or appropriately authorized data where applicable.

Read online: https://educate.baremetalcyber.com/resources/incident-leadership-decision-tabletop/