

# Lesson Plan 3B: CAPRA Problem Solving Model

## Purpose of the lesson

This lesson reviews the CAPRA problem solving model. After a brief review of Problem-oriented Policing, the lesson focuses on the five steps of CAPRA as a system for guiding police officers as they work through problems, anticipate problems and facilitate an effective networking capability for problem solving, both internally and externally.

### Note to Presenter

The SARA problem solving model is known internationally in policing circles. The RCMP uses a problem solving model called CAPRA (Client, Acquire, Partnerships, Response, and Assessment). Both the SARA and CAPRA models (Lesson 3A and 3B respectively) are included as part of Lesson 3, and either model can be used depending on the protocol of the police agency.

## Overview

<b>Learning objectives</b>	By the end of the lesson, officers will be more familiar with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the Problem-oriented Policing (POP) concept</li><li>• the five steps of the CAPRA model</li><li>• the importance of using the steps as a guide</li></ul>
<b>Time</b>	15 minutes
<b>Instructional techniques</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation</li><li>• Q &amp; A with discussion</li></ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lesson plan</li><li>• PowerPoint CD (slides 1–14)</li><li>• Handout: CAPRA worksheet</li></ul>

## Procedure

### Slide 1: CAPRA Problem Solving Model

Introduce yourself (if necessary).

### Slide 2: Review of Lesson 2

Review Lesson 2.

Lesson 2 provided:

- a brief historical review of Problem-oriented policing (POP), including the rationale for a shift in policing services
- a definition of POP and an introduction to the underlying concepts, and
- a summary of the strengths and benefits of POP from the perspectives of the community, policy agency, and front-line officers.

### Slide 3: Overview of Lesson 3

Introduce the lesson.

Lesson 3 covers:

- the Problem-oriented Policing (POP) concept
- the five steps of the CAPRA model
- the importance of using the steps as a guide.

### Slide 4: What is problem-oriented policing?

#### Learning objective 1

Understand the Problem-oriented Policing (POP) concept.

Review the basic definition of and concepts involved in Problem-oriented Policing:

Problem-oriented Policing is a method for integrating daily police practice with criminal justice theory and research methods in order to develop the best possible means for reducing crime and disorder.

## Slide 5: Effective Problem-Solving

Describe effective problem solving.

Effective problem solving addresses community problems on the basis of:

- an understanding of the specific problem, and
- customized responses using strategies that effectively target specific problems.

Research suggests that effective problem solving is achieved through:

- focusing attention on problems, and
- creating response strategies from a diverse pool of approaches.

Emphasize that the CAPRA model has been identified as an effective strategy for problem-solving.

Ask: Does anyone know or recall what the acronym **CAPRA** refers to? Allow the group to offer answers; guide as required.

**Answer:** Client, Acquire, Analyze, Partnerships, Response, Assessment of Action.

Allow the group to offer answers; guide as required.

## Slide 6: CAPRA Problem Solving Model

### Learning objective 2

Be familiar with the five steps of the CAPRA problem solving model.

Briefly describe the five steps of CAPRA, and the application of CAPRA in a general sense:

- CAPRA is similar to other analytical processes.
- CAPRA is used as a guide, not as a rule. It keeps problem solving efforts on track.
- Effective problem solving depends on implementing all five steps: client, acquire, analyze, partnerships, response, assessment of action.
- Documentation of each step is essential for tracking progress.

Describe the benefits of CAPRA.

The benefits of CAPRA are that it:

- is a systematic, thorough and logic-driven model
- helps to anticipate problems, and prevent them from occurring or re-occurring

- encourages creativity
- provides a template for future referencing
- supports police by encouraging collaboration, consultation and sharing responsibility for community safety
- encourages officers to use their working knowledge and experience.

Distribute the handout (CAPRA WORKSHEET) for the next slide. The handout provides an outline and a more in-depth framework that will be referred to in slides 7 through 11. Address each section of the handout individually as it arises with the PowerPoint presentation.

### Slide 7: Clients

Define "clients."

Who are the clients?

Clients refer to anyone, any group, or any entity that may be directly or indirectly affected by an actual or potential problem related to crime and disorder.

Refer participants to the **clients** section of the handout (pg 1) as you read through Slide 7.

Ask: What are some specific examples of client groups in this community?

Examples of clients:

- Citizens – e.g., victims, offenders, witnesses, suspects, concerned citizens
- Citizen groups – e.g., neighborhood associations, ratepayers, service clubs
- Internal clients – e.g., another section of the police service
- Agencies and departments – e.g., schools, other police departments
- Business community – e.g., business associations, chamber of commerce
- Interest groups – PAC groups, environmental groups, rod and gun clubs
- Cultural groups – First Nations organizations, religious organizations, ethnic groups

Emphasize the following additional points:

- Direct and indirect clients are determined by their level of involvement in the problem.
- It is important to know where your client stands in relation to the problem (direct or indirect).
- Knowing your client supports effective collaboration because it helps to:
  - anticipate expectations

- address concerns
- allocate and advocate for resources, and
- develop plans and strategies.

## Slide 8: Acquire/Analyze

Explain the purpose of the acquire/analyze stage of CAPRA:

The purpose of the acquire/analyze step is to facilitate a richer understanding of the overall problem. This critical stage sets the framework for the identification of response strategies, including resources and partnerships for dealing with the specific problem.

Refer participants to the **acquire/analyze** section of the handout (pg 2) as you read through Slide 8.

- **Collect data from both public and private sources:**
  - The more information the better.
  - Use various methods for problem identification.  
If time permits, ask: How can police become creative in gaining additional information to shed light on the specific problem? (Possible answers: networking with local agencies; consulting the research about similar issues; talking to other police agencies, citizens, volunteers, interest groups, cultural groups, etc.)
  - Consult internal and external agencies (e.g., CPIC/PIRS data, officer knowledge, citizens, human service agencies, schools, hospitals, city/municipal services, experts, libraries, community complaints, calls for service, etc.).
- **Study the history of that type of problem:**
  - Identify any previous work that has been done by police or the community.
  - Review any literature documenting successes by other agencies, departments or communities (including academic research).
- **Use acquired knowledge to develop a working hypothesis:**
  - Determine whether you have identified the specific problem.
  - Group similar incidents into clusters.
  - Remember to focus on underlying issues rather than symptoms.
  - Ensure that your data is linked to your understanding of the problem.
- **Identify helpful resources:**
  - Have a third party review your acquired information to support your analysis.

- Decide whether your problem will require additional input to prepare for response strategy (e.g., committees, consultation, finances, etc.).

Explain that historically, this stage has been the most over-looked, because:

- it involves up-front work
- we tend to make assumptions that we understand the problem before confirming with the data
- we tend to be in a rush (in reactive response mode) to solve problems.

## Slide 9: Partnerships

Explain the partnership stage of CAPRA:

Partnerships refers to the individuals or groups who can work together to enhance problem solving efforts. In the best-case scenario, these partnerships will already exist.

Refer participants to the **partnership** section of the handout (pg 3) as you read through Slide 9.

- **Partnerships may be internal or external:**  
If time permits, ask: Who might be an internal or external partner? Possible answers:
  - Internal – other police officer colleagues, specialized units, DSRRs, etc.
  - External – community groups, the business community, cultural groups, etc.
- **They have a vested interest in the problem:**
  - Partners share a common interest in resolving the problem through their respective roles in community.
  - Partnerships foster encouragement and mutual accountability.
- **Partners may be able to provide assistance based on capacity:**
  - They may have additional resources or contacts.
  - In some cases, they may take the lead, with police taking a secondary role.
- **Develop a working relationship:**
  - It may be easier to develop a response plan based on previous trust.
  - Identify the partnership's mandate and individual roles.
  - Apply mediation and negotiation skills.

## Slide 10: Response

Explain the purpose of the response stage of CAPRA.

The purpose of the **response** stage is to develop an overall strategy that is specifically designed to address the community problem. The three main tasks are developing the response options, selecting the response, and implementing the response.

Refer participants to the **response** section of the handout (pg 4) as you read through Slide 10.

- **Choose the best strategy based on a thorough analysis:**
  - Ensure that the specific problem has been identified.
  - Ensure that the first three steps – Clients, Acquire/Analyze and Partnership – have been undertaken.
  - Aim for the ideal response to reduce or eliminate the problem.
  - Incorporate a focus on long-term sustainability, prevention, constitutional rights, community values, financial cost, available resources, and ease in which response can be implemented.

### **Choose the best strategy from available options:**

- Mobilize the community – to develop ownership and awareness.
- Work with existing forms of informal social control (e.g., parents, teachers, employers, clergy, community cohesion) – to regulate behaviour.
- Regulate the environment (e.g., CPTED, BlockWatch, volunteer patrols) – to remove opportunities.
- Include services, such as Victim Services and crime prevention units
- Engage civil law – to control public nuisances.
- Develop new forms of limited authority (e.g., bylaw implementation).

**Note:** For more complex cases, multi-pronged strategies may be necessary.

- **Focus on the small percentage of individuals who contribute to the larger percentage of the problems:**
  - This promotes efficiency, and
  - Is the most effective use of resources.
- **Implement the response, including the design for a future evaluation:**
  - Prioritize concerns.
  - List the tasks.
  - Designate someone to manage the project.
  - Establish timelines.

- Establish a communication plan.
- Consider engaging a local college or university to assist with the evaluation.

## Slide 11: Assessment

Explain the purpose of the assessment stage of CAPRA.

The purpose of **assessment** is to evaluate both the process and the impact of the response strategy. A rule of thumb is to evaluate whether the response strategy was sufficiently linked to the identified problem.

Refer participants to the **assessment** section of the handout (pg 5) as you read through Slide 11.

- **Has the problem been reduced or eliminated? To what degree?**
  - Revisit established markers that will indicate whether change has occurred.
  - Consider the nature, intensity and frequency of occurrences.
- **Collect comparison data:**
  - Use multiple types of measurements, both qualitative and quantitative. For example:
    - ⇒ file data review – reduced number and type of calls for service
    - ⇒ Client surveys (satisfaction, level of fear, trust, process issues)
    - ⇒ Focus groups and interviews
    - ⇒ Observational – improved appearance or condition of the area,
  - For larger projects, consider involving research specialists (e.g., universities or colleges).
  - For interventions that require longer timeframes (e.g., those involving social development aspects), consider whether the evaluation has been sensitive to longer timeframes.
- **Assess unintended outcomes:**
  - Were there positive or negative aspects involved with the intervention?
  - What changed that you did not anticipate changing?
- **Determine whether additional resources are still needed:**
  - Does the strategy need to be altered?
  - Can the results be sustained?

Make the following additional points:

1. For effective evaluations:
  - Develop a formal evaluation framework, using pre- and post-intervention measurements.
  - Use indicators from a variety of vantage points (e.g., calls for service, citizen and community satisfaction, levels of fear).
  - Measure the success of stated objectives.
2. Additional outcome measurements may include:
  - assessing the development and quality of community partnerships
  - assessing overall community satisfaction with police
  - assessing the improvements of individual officer competencies
  - evaluating the police agency's ability to adopt problem-oriented policing principles.

## Slide 12: CAPRA Problem Solving Model

### Learning objective 3

Understand the importance of utilizing the SARA steps as a guide.

Explain:

The CAPRA problem-solving model is a guide that is intended to facilitate a fluid action-based process. Therefore, the steps may result in occasional feedback loops, as indicated by the arrows in the diagram.

Make the following additional points:

1. Some projects are complex. The need to monitor progress and adopt a flexible approach may need to occur due to:
  - having missed critical information in the early stages of the analysis
  - changes – resulting from the passage of time
  - shifting hotspots – because of existing interventions, etc.
2. Given social mobility today, criminal justice officials can assume the social conditions continually change. For these reasons, it remains important to monitor projects through “mini-cycles” within the stages of the problem-solving initiative. Problem solving is an evolving process.

If time permits, do the following exercise and application:

Discuss a local project that resulted in revisiting certain steps of the problem solving process.

### **Slide 13: Problem solving is effective when...**

Summarize effective problem solving:

Problem solving is effective when:

- a focused approach is used
- response strategies are customized
- all steps of the SARA problem solving model are implemented.

### **Slide 14: Next Lesson**

Introduce the next lesson.

Lesson 6: Crime Prevention through Social Development

- The concepts of Crime Prevention Through Social Development (CPSD)
- The relationship between crime and the social environment
- How to apply this concept within a policing scenario
- The police role in Crime Prevention Through Social Development

# HANDOUT

## CAPRA Worksheet

This worksheet can be used as a guide for officers throughout each of the CAPRA problem-solving steps. It will assist in drawing attention to the various components of the problem, as well as keeping track of all aspects involved.

### CLIENTS

(Could be individuals, formalized groups, non-formalized groups, agencies, government, business, police, etc.)

#### Client 1 (those most affected by the problem)

Client affected:

How affected:

Client affected:

How affected:

Client affected:

How affected:

#### Client 2 (those indirectly affected by the problem)

Client affected:

How affected:

Client affected:

How affected:

Client affected:

How affected:



- Are there environmental concerns?
- What is being done or has been done to solve the problem?
- Is this a police issue? In what way?
- What are your short- and long-term goals?
- Other personal observations:

## **PARTNERSHIPS**

- Formalized agencies (tenant associations, rate-payers, strata groups, community groups, non-profit groups, business associations, etc.):
- Non-formalized agencies (groups of neighbours, businesses, interested volunteers, etc.):
- Business partners:
- Government partners:

- Municipal partners (city hall – planning, by-law, engineering, councilors, etc.):
- Provincial (MLA office, local authorities):
- Federal (funding partner, M.P. office):
- Others (each community will be different; include all partners who can help):

**RESPONSE**

- What level of problem-solving are you hoping to achieve?

<input type="radio"/> Eliminate the problem	
<input type="radio"/> Reduce the occurrences of the problem	
<input type="radio"/> Reduce the amount of harm done	
<input type="radio"/> Remove the problem from police consideration	

- List as many ways as you can think of to reduce the problem to the level you desire(don't worry about any obstacles at this point):

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- Choose the best response and provide more in-depth description

- What will each partner's role be?
- How long will this response take?
- How will you test to find out whether your response was effective?

### **ASSESSMENT OF ACTION**

- Maintain rapport with the original complainant (if there was one) in order to remain informed about any changes in the problem
- Maintain contact with the agencies that are assisting in the problem solving efforts.
- Compare crime and calls-for-service statistics for before, during and after the intervention.
- Compare residents'/neighbours' attitudes towards the problem before, during and after the intervention.
- Did you reach the level you were hoping for?
- What are some of the positive outcomes/side-effects of your response?
- What are some of the negative outcomes/side-effects of your response?
- Are additional resources still needed?
- What can be done to make the project more successful/effective?