**Mission Impossible? Planning and
Preparing for Crisis**

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Planning & Preparedness= vital elements of institutional and policy toolkits.

Explores difficulties of translating the ideal into practice.

Universal Maxim- Crisis preparedness should be high on institutional and policy agenda.

Consideration for Strong, Well resourced, and forward thinking.

Schwartz (2003) Technology, population change, medicine, terrorism, ethnic conflicts and others will produce **inevitable surprises.**

We can plan to reduce risk, but can't plan for everything.

Policy makers and Crisis Managers establish institutional procedures and create cultural climates which develop capacities to cope with whatever extraordinary threats come their way.

**There exist tensions between policy "ideals" and "realities"**


What exactly is a crisis?

Shifting criteria as to what a crisis or emergency is leads analyst to develop broad reaching "Good practice" type principles.

Therefore, plans put in place must be focused flexibility and adaptability.

"Ideal" preparedness does not reside in simply having a plan.


Organizations= Onions
Layers forming a greater whole.
Technology, structure, human actors, culture, and top management psychology.

Least, Mid range, high preparedness organizations.

Crises= Low probability events.

Planning= resource demands for events that may never happen.

Low probability= Organizations may suffer from maladaptive behaviors.
Such as poor intelligence gathering and "blind spots."

Organizations can begin to consider themselves impervious to threats.

Box 1 Tensions.

Questions for discussion:

Based on the readings which states that planning is about synergy despite different organizations having different needs and goals, how would you suggest that we can overcome institutional hurdles such as varying degrees of institutional priorities?

Ideal vs. reality, planning with contingencies in mind.