

Suicide by Cop

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

## Suicide by Cop

### **1. Negotiating with Thomas**

In dealing with Thomas, who is determined to provoke a "suicide by cop," it is essential to adopt a strategy that focuses on understanding his psychological state and building a rapport. Thomas's recent job loss, academic failure, and a history of conflicts with authority figures have likely contributed to his current desperation. Recognizing these factors is crucial. Engaging in active listening and showing genuine empathy can help build trust. Addressing Thomas's grievances and fears calmly, using non-confrontational language, is vital. Phrases like "I understand this is a tough time for you" can help validate his feelings and reduce his agitation.

Considering tactical issues is also paramount. Ensuring the safety of everyone involved, including Thomas, the police, and bystanders, should be the primary focus. Implementing safety measures and strategically positioning negotiators and tactical units can help manage the situation effectively (Schweinsberg et al., 2022). De-escalation techniques, such as discussing potential positive outcomes and addressing his immediate concerns, can be instrumental in calming Thomas. Offering professional help, like the involvement of mental health professionals, can provide additional support and counseling, showing Thomas that there are people who care about his well-being and are willing to help.

The goal is to prevent harm by de-escalating the situation through empathy, strategic communication, and professional support. By employing these strategies, it is possible to guide Thomas toward a peaceful resolution, preventing the tragic outcome of "suicide by cop."

### **2. Decision-Making as a Field Commander**

As the field commander in a situation where an individual has barricaded himself and occasionally fired shots at the police, making an informed decision about whether to continue

negotiations or go tactical is crucial; the first step is thoroughly evaluating the situation, including the individual's behavior, threat level, and ongoing risks. Gathering comprehensive information from officers on the scene and other relevant sources is essential for an accurate assessment.

Consulting with the tactical and negotiation supervisors is vital to the decision-making process. Asking the negotiation supervisor about progress and potential de-escalation strategies can provide valuable insights. Similarly, discussing the tactical supervisor's readiness, possible risks, and options can help gauge the feasibility of a tactical approach. Weighing the risks and benefits of each approach is necessary, considering factors such as the individual's behavior, threat level, and the potential for a peaceful resolution.

If the decision is to go tactical, it is essential to integrate the negotiation team into the strategy. Negotiators can continue dialogue with the individual, providing real-time information to the tactical team to ensure a coordinated effort (Andreassen & Borch, 2020). Conversely, if the decision is to continue negotiating, the tactical team can secure the perimeter and ensure the safety of everyone involved, allowing negotiators to work without external pressure. The integrated approach ensures that both teams support each other, maximizing the chances of a successful and safe resolution.

## References

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- Schweinsberg, M., Thau, S., & Pillutla, M. M. (2022). Negotiation impasses: Types, causes, and resolutions. *Journal of Management*, 48(1), 49–76.