

# Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model

eLearn Course Overview & Outline



## Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model

### Overview

*Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model* is an interactive online course designed to provide participants with a basic awareness and understanding of the fundamental principles of a common approach used by many community policing agencies to identify and solve repeat crime and community problems: the SARA model. The SARA model allows agencies to scan through multiple data sources, conduct a thorough analysis of a problem through the lens of the crime triangle, formulate a response, and continuously assess the impact of the response to the problem.

### Scope

*Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model* delivers a comprehensive, blended-learning training program designed to provide participants with an overview and broad familiarization with key concepts and principles of one approach to problem-oriented policing in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Target Audience

The *Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model* eLearn course is designed as a professional development program and is intended for public safety practitioners. It is ideal for public safety personnel of all assignments representing agencies of all sizes and demographics interested in better serving their communities through problem-oriented policing. It may also be a valuable tool for non-law enforcement community stakeholders to enhance their awareness of community policing efforts.

### Prerequisites and Requirements

Although there are no prerequisites, participants with a fundamental knowledge of community policing principles and practices are encouraged to participate.

Participants will need access to a computer with reliable internet access and speakers. The course utilizes technology-enhanced media that includes on-screen text, graphics, narration and video segments in an interactive and user-friendly eLearn environment.

### Course Length

*Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model* is a self-paced, online, eLearning course that is designed in a modular format consisting of five major content modules. Although the course has a minimum uninterrupted run-time of 60 minutes, participants should allow 2-4 hours to complete this course. The design of the course allows participants to stop and resume the training based on the demands of their schedule.

### Course Evaluation and Assessment Strategy

The *Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model* eLearn course utilizes standalone pre- and post-tests based on the program's curriculum content. VCPI does not have a pass/fail requirement for eLearn participation. Upon submission of the post-test, participants may print a transcript of the test that includes marked questions and the participant's score. The following questions are used for the pre- and post-tests.

1. What are the steps, in correct sequence, of the SARA model for problem solving?
  - a. Scanning, Assessment, Response, Analysis
  - b. Selecting, Analysis, Reacting, Approach
  - c. Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment
  - d. Solving, Analysis, Relationships, Assessment
2. The goal of Problem-Oriented Policing is best stated as:
  - a. To allow police to effectively deal with community crime problems, ideally by preventing them in the first place.
  - b. To allow police to implement new strategies for solving problems in order to test and report back.
  - c. To allow police to successfully continue using the traditional approaches to police work.
  - d. To allow police to work with community members so everyone has less work to do.
3. Which of the following are factors to consider when selecting a problem to tackle?
  - a. Impact on the community
  - b. Potential success of solving the problem
  - c. Presence of life-threatening conditions
  - d. Police interest
  - e. All of the above
4. In the context of police work, incidents and problems are synonymous. True / False.
5. The theory behind the crime triangle is that crime or disorder results when what three things happen/occur at the same time and in the same space?
  - a. Lack of police, lots of people, utter chaos
  - b. Motivated offender, suitable target, lack of guardian
  - c. Competent handlers, lack of managers, motivated crowds
  - d. Controlled offender, suitable target, presence of a guardian
6. Which of the following tools can assist problem-solvers with capturing data about community crime problems?
  - a. Crime environment surveys
  - b. Interviews with victims and offenders
  - c. Records management systems
  - d. All of the above
7. Responses to any community crime problem should always involve the police. True / False
8. The implementation of a response is a cyclical process, much like the greater problem-solving process. True / False
9. In the assessment phase, two questions that are answered to evaluate the problem-solving effort are:

- a. Did the problem decline, and was the response the reason?
  - b. What do I need to know, and where do I go to find out?
  - c. Is continued response necessary, and can the organization support it financially and politically?
  - d. None of the above
10. Nontraditional measures of the effectiveness of the problem-solving effort can take many forms, including:
- a. Those affected by the problem are better equipped to handle a similar problem in the future
  - b. Increased citizen satisfaction regarding the handling of the problem
  - c. Less serious or less harmful incidents
  - d. All of the above

### Course Reference List

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## Course Design Overview

### Course Introduction Module

#### Content Outline

1. Course Overview
  - 1.1. Course Welcome
  - 1.2. Course Providers Information
  - 1.3. Michael Scott and POP Center Introduction
  - 1.4. Course Overview & Module Launch Screen

### Module 1: Introduction

This module provides a brief history of Problem-Oriented Policing (POP), defines key concepts and terms, and introduces the SARA Model as a tool commonly used to identify and solve repeat crime problems.

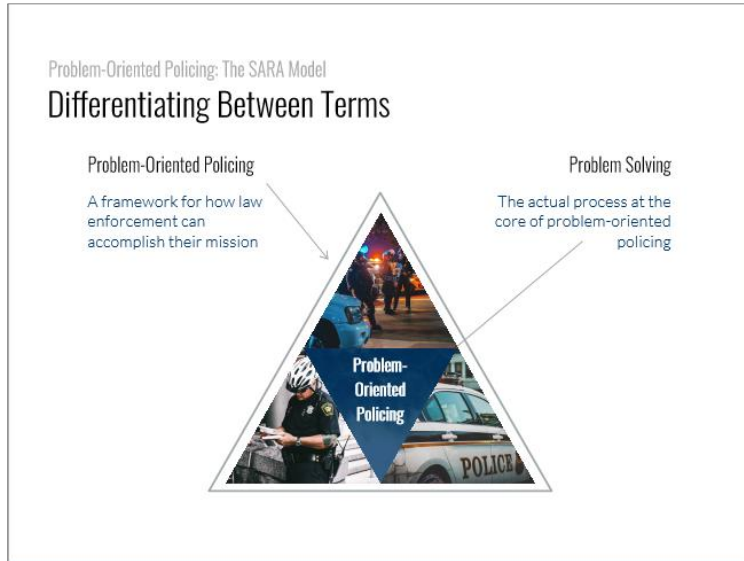


Figure 1 Module 1 differentiates between two important terms.

### Learning Objectives

1. Participants will differentiate between the terms Problem Solving and Problem-Oriented Policing.
2. Participants will identify the goal of Problem-Oriented Policing.
3. Participants will describe the four steps of the SARA model.

### Instructional Strategies

This module is delivered through eLearning components that include audio narration, visual vignettes, on-screen text, interactive activities, and a Test Your Knowledge quiz.

### Content Outline

1. Module 1
  - 1.1. What is Problem-Oriented Policing?
    - 1.1.1. Defining POP
    - 1.1.2. Differentiating between Problem-Oriented Policing and Problem-Solving
  - 1.2. Why Take a Problem-Solving Approach?
    - 1.2.1. Effectiveness versus efficiency
    - 1.2.2. Other factors
  - 1.3. SARA as a Problem-Solving Tool
    - 1.3.1. Scanning
    - 1.3.2. Analysis
    - 1.3.3. Response
    - 1.3.4. Assessment
  - 1.4. Test Your Knowledge

### Module 2: Identifying and Selecting a Problem

This module provides participants with an in-depth look at the first step of the SARA Model: scanning. Scanning is the process of identifying, prioritizing, and selecting problems. This is arguably the most

important step of SARA; correctly identifying the real problem in a community is a critical step in making a lasting impact on neighborhood crime and disorder. This module also details the importance of choosing community stakeholders to assist with analyzing and responding to the problem.

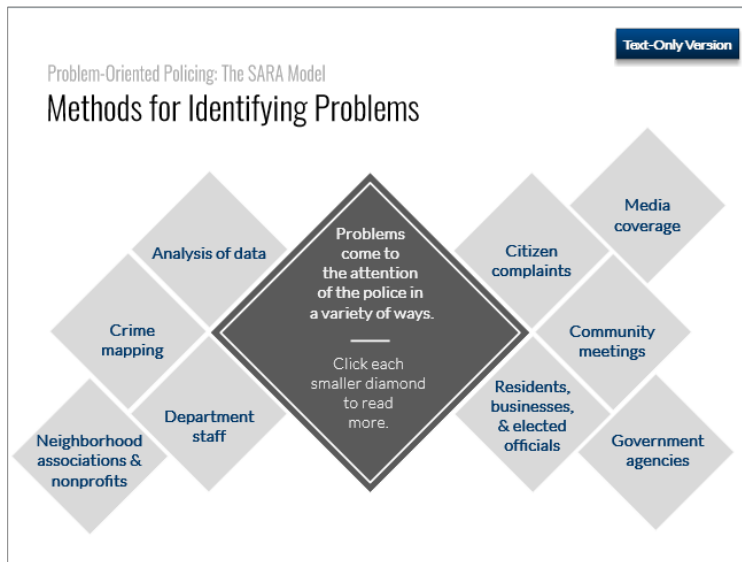


Figure 2 In Module 2, participants learn about identifying problems to solve.

### Learning Objectives

1. Participants will differentiate between incidents and problems.
2. Participants will describe the variety of sources from which a problem could be identified.
3. Participants will identify factors that assist with prioritizing and selecting crime problems to solve.
4. Participants will explain the importance of stakeholders in the problem-solving process.

### Instructional Strategies

This module is delivered through eLearning components that include audio narration, visual vignettes, on-screen text, interactive activities, and a Test Your Knowledge quiz.

### Content Outline

2. Module 2
  - 2.1. What is Scanning?
    - 2.1.1. Defining scanning
    - 2.1.2. Steps of scanning
  - 2.2. Defining Problems
    - 2.2.1. Incidents versus problems
    - 2.2.2. Defining problems by various factors
    - 2.2.3. CHEERS
    - 2.2.4. Problem statements
  - 2.3. Methods for Identifying Problems
  - 2.4. Selecting a Problem
    - 2.4.1. Determining scope of efforts

- 2.4.2. Factors to Consider
- 2.5. Identifying Stakeholders
  - 2.5.1. Who / what are stakeholders?
  - 2.5.2. Why include stakeholders?
- 2.6. Test Your Knowledge

### Module 3: Analyzing the Problem

This module provides participants with an in-depth look at the second step of the SARA Model: analysis. This step is comprised of researching what is known about the problem and sheds light on everything about the problem: the players, incidents, and previous attempts to deal with the problem. Analysis should be thorough, creative, and innovative because the characteristics of each problem vary. A quality analysis will lead to a custom response that will be more likely to succeed. This module also covers the use of the crime triangle to inform analysis and resources that will help with analyzing crime and disorder problems.



Figure 3 Module 3 introduces the Crime Triangle, a tool that can be used for analyzing problems.

#### Learning Objectives

1. Participants will explain the importance of the analysis step of the SARA model.
2. Participants will explain the importance of third parties in relation to the crime triangle.
3. Participants will identify resources to assist with solving problems.
4. Participants will explain the factors that indicate the need to move from the analysis phase to the response phase of SARA model.

#### Instructional Strategies

This module is delivered through eLearning components that include audio narration, visual vignettes, on-screen text, interactive activities, and a Test Your Knowledge quiz.

#### Content Outline

3. Module 3



- 3.1. What is Analysis?
  - 3.1.1. Defining analysis
  - 3.1.2. Steps in analysis
- 3.2. Why is Analysis Important?
- 3.3. Using the Crime Triangle to Inform Analysis
  - 3.3.1. What is the Crime Triangle?
  - 3.3.2. How can the Crime Triangle be used to analyze problems?
- 3.4. Resources to Assist with Solving Problems
- 3.5. Moving from Analysis to Response
- 3.6. Test Your Knowledge

## Module 4: Responding to the Problem

This module provides participants with an in-depth look at the third step of the SARA Model: response. Responding to the problem entails developing solutions to bring about lasting reductions in the number and extent of the problem. In this module, participants will explore the steps of the Response phase, in addition to how solutions can be designed and typical types of responses.



Figure 4 Module 4 explains the Response phase of the SARA model in simple layered interactions like the one shown here.

### Learning Objectives

1. Participants will identify the four different parts, in sequence, of the response phase of the SARA model.
2. Participants will describe the variety of factors that are considered prior to planning or implementing a response.
3. Participants will describe the importance of timetables and action plans in the response phase.
4. Participants will identify ways of debriefing during and after the implementation of a response.

### Instructional Strategies

This module is delivered through eLearning components that include audio narration, visual vignettes, on-screen text, interactive activities, and a Test Your Knowledge quiz.

## Content Outline

4. Module 4
  - 4.1. What is the Response Phase?
    - 4.1.1. Defining response
    - 4.1.2. Stages of implementation
  - 4.2. Pre-Implementation
    - 4.2.1. Factors to consider
  - 4.3. The Planning Process
    - 4.3.1. Considering alternatives
    - 4.3.2. Setting a timetable
    - 4.3.3. Analyzing risks
    - 4.3.4. Producing an action plan
  - 4.4. The Implementation Process
    - 4.4.1. Monitoring responses
    - 4.4.2. Exit strategies
  - 4.5. Post-Implementation / The Learning Process
  - 4.6. Test Your Knowledge

## Module 5: Assessing Impact

This module provides participants with an in-depth look at the final step of the SARA Model: assessment. The final phase of the process entails determining the effectiveness of the response by evaluating its impact. In this module, participants will explore the importance of assessment, types of evaluations, and nontraditional measures for determining effectiveness.

Problem-Oriented Policing: The SARA Model

### What is Assessment?

<p><b>Assessment involves...</b> Evaluating the success of the implemented solution</p> <p><b>Assessment consists of...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collecting data about response outcomes</li> <li>• determining whether initial goals were met</li> <li>• making an effort to ensure continued success</li> </ul>	<p><b>Assessment answers...</b></p> <p>Two questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the problem decline enough that the problem-solving effort can be scaled back and police resources deployed elsewhere?</li> <li>• If the problem did decline, did the response cause the decline?</li> </ul> <p><b>Assessment uses...</b></p> <p>Process and impact evaluations to evaluate the effectiveness of the response</p>
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Figure 5 Module 5 gives an in-depth look at the final stage of the SARA model.

## Learning Objectives

1. Participants will describe the role of assessment in the context of the SARA model and the problem-solving process.

2. Participants will differentiate between process and impact evaluations.
3. Participants will describe the many nontraditional measures that may be used to assess the effectiveness of the response effort.
4. Participants will recognize the importance of evaluation in the entire problem-solving process.

### Instructional Strategies

This module is delivered through eLearning components that include audio narration, visual vignettes, on-screen text, interactive activities, and a Test Your Knowledge quiz.

### Content Outline

5. Module 5
  - 5.1. What is Assessment?
    - 5.1.1. Defining assessment
    - 5.1.2. Importance of Assessment
  - 5.2. Role of Evaluation in Problem Solving
  - 5.3. Types of Evaluations
    - 5.3.1. Process evaluations
    - 5.3.2. Impact evaluations
  - 5.4. Nontraditional Measures for Determining Effectiveness
  - 5.5. Test Your Knowledge

### Module 6: Concluding Remarks

This module wraps up the course with insights on implementing Problem-Oriented Policing in agencies in the form of a video from a noted subject matter expert.

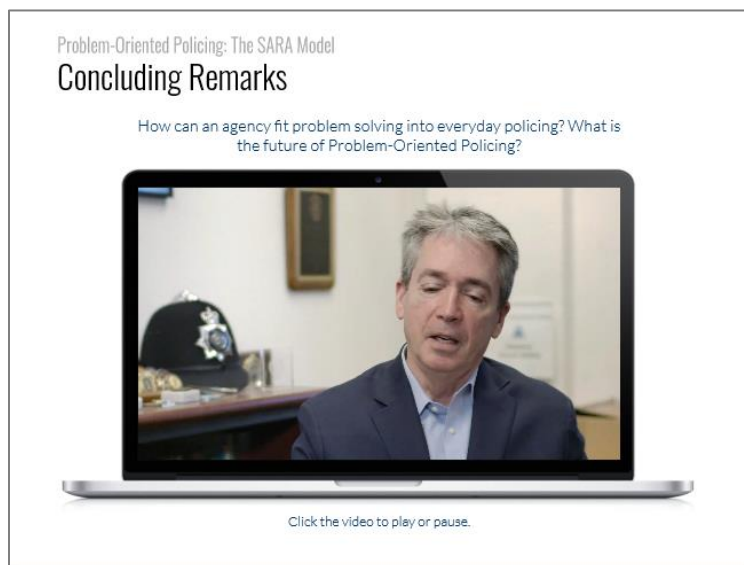


Figure 6 A noted subject matter expert wraps up the course in module 6.

### Learning Objectives

1. Participants will consider the implementation of Problem-Oriented Policing in their own agency.

### Instructional Strategies

This module is delivered through a video vignette that includes closed captioning.

### Content Outline

- 6. Module 6
  - 6.1. Concluding Remarks Video