



AlertFind

ZOMBIES 101

PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

Staying alive when fighting the undead



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INTRODUCTION

Your company is attending a conference in a major metro area which starts the morning following your arrival. The conference is being held in a prestigious hotel in the city center and your company's delegation will be staying in the hotel.

A couple of days before the conference, there had been media reports of isolated zombie sightings near the conference venue.

A number of news outlets with reputations for publicizing "news" bordering on the sensational seized upon every opportunity to exploit the story. Most mainstream news channels steered well clear of the account, dismissing the reports out of hand.

Even so, FEMA had previously acknowledged that pop culture had given credence to the idea that a zombie apocalypse could happen and the CDC had even published zombie preparedness guidelines. However, one reputable news source recommended that citizens should seriously consider leaving metro areas if the dead were beginning to walk.

Having heard the rumours and conscious of its duty of care toward its employees, your company's management decided to seek counsel from various federal agencies. They also raised their concerns with the hotel's General Manager.

The federal position was that the stories had not been substantiated and they saw no reason for your company's plans to change. Similarly, the GM offered reassurance that in the extremely unlikely event of trouble, the hotel's well-rehearsed emergency preparedness plan would be activated and the entire building would be locked down. Reassured, your management concluded that it was safe for the delegation to attend the conference as planned.

It is early evening. Some of your delegation has decided to remain in the hotel and visit the trade exhibition stands in the conference center. A second group has opted to attend a soccer match at a local stadium.

The remaining group is still in transit to the hotel in a shuttle having arrived on a later flight. They are now stuck in traffic following a major fire close to the city center. Local fire and rescue services have had to close off a number of roads, which has resulted in all routes in and out of the city becoming gridlocked.

SCENARIO A: **IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER**

Topic: Shelter-in-place

Training:

How to shelter-in-place and use items to block the doors of the conference rooms against zombies.

The conference center is located in a self-contained wing on the ground floor of the hotel that includes bathrooms plus a light refreshment area.

General access to the center is from the hotel reception area either through a four quadrant revolving door or through the disabled access door. It is also possible to access the center by elevator directly from the hotel rooms.

A conference registration desk is positioned immediately inside the center where delegates sign in and collect their conference packs.

The center has a main conference room that can hold up to 400 delegates plus four smaller rooms (numbered one through four) that will hold about 50 delegates each. Conference rooms two, three and four have sliding doors between them and can be converted to one larger room.

In addition to the egress routes through to reception, there are two external emergency exit push-bar operated doors which are positioned in opposite corners of the center.

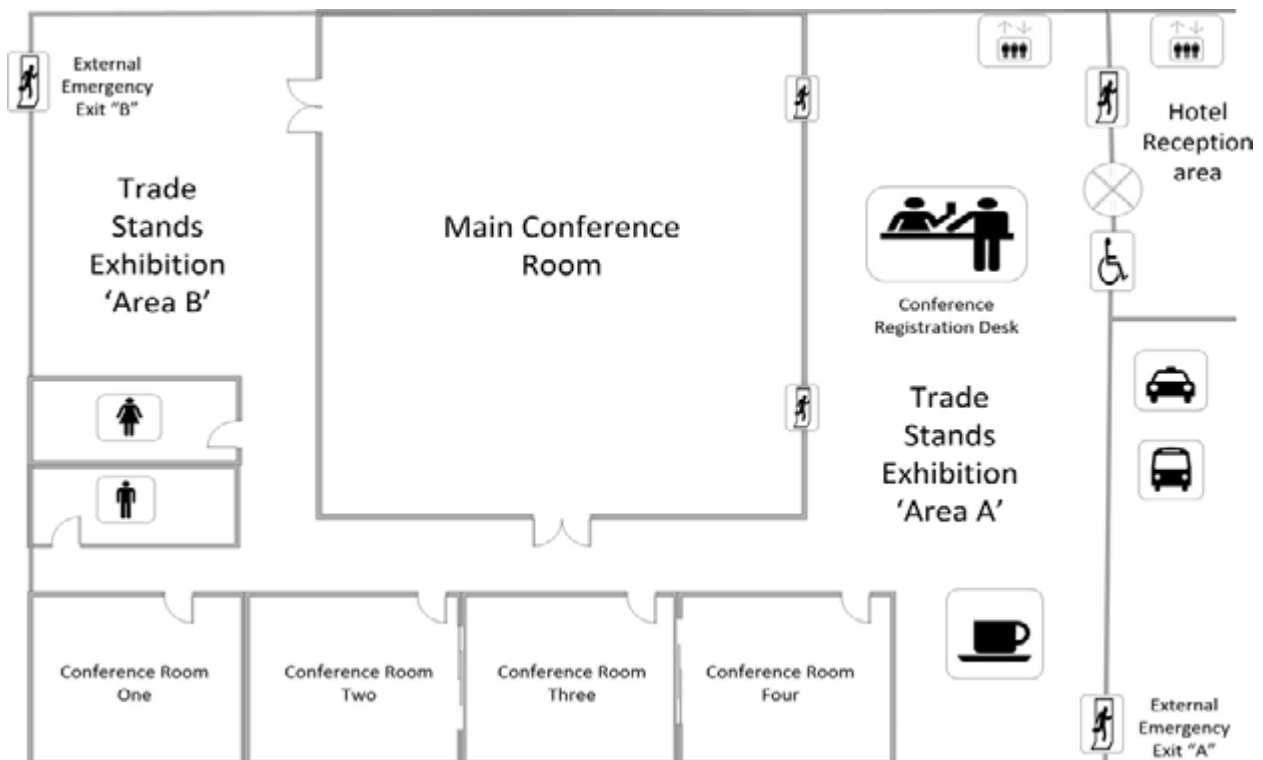
There are two areas allocated for the trade stand exhibition which are positioned one on each side of the main conference room. There are 40 stands with an average of three company representatives manning each stand. Each stand has been constructed using a flexible steel pole frame system that can be quickly set up or dismantled.

Although it is not being used this evening, the main conference room is being set up by hotel staff in a classroom style with places for eight delegates per table. Small dishes of sweets plus water bottles and glass tumblers are being laid out on the tables covered by white linen tablecloths. Each of the smaller conference rooms have already been prepared for use as breakout rooms and have been set up in an auditorium style of seating.

There is a steady flow of delegates entering the center - some to visit the trade stands while others are taking the opportunity to network.

External Emergency Exit 'A' is open while a security alarm engineer is investigating why the door alarm keeps being triggered while the door is closed. A handful of delegates have taken advantage of the open door to step outside for a cigarette.

You are sitting in the coffee area with some colleagues close to the open emergency exit door. As a waitress arrives at your table with the hot drinks for your party, you hear a commotion outside.



EXERCISE QUESTIONS:

#1

Zombies are trying to gain entry through External Emergency Exit 'A'. What initial action could you take? What resources are immediately at your disposal and how could you slow down the zombies to buy yourselves a few valuable seconds?

#2

The security alarm engineer and the smoking group all managed to get back into the conference center. All the hotel staff currently in the conference center are either junior employees or were supplied by a agency just for the conference. In the absence of hotel management,

you decide to take charge of the situation. However, it becomes clear that at least one of the smokers has been bitten by a zombie. What are your options to deal with this situation?

#3

You have managed to close External Emergency Exit 'A' and no zombies have gained entry. What action might you take to ensure that this door is better secured?

#4

You can see that zombies have already gained access to the reception area and panic has broken out among both staff and guests. The ingress into the conference center is a revolving door and a disabled entry door. There is also a push-bar emergency exit door which can be opened from the conference room side.

What do you see as your priorities?

What actions could you take to secure:

- a. The revolving door
- b. The disabled access door
- c. The emergency exit door

#5

You have secured the ingress from the reception area when you spot two of your company delegation attempting to escape from reception area into the conference suite. You cannot tell whether or not they have been bitten by a zombie. What are your options and what action would you take?

#6

You learn that there is a second external emergency exit door which some delegates have already used to escape from the conference center. What action should you take? There doesn't appear to be any zombies outside this door. Should you give people the choice of staying or leaving?

#7

It occurs to you that there is nothing to prevent zombies gaining entry to the conference area by using the elevator from one of the upper hotel floors. What action should you take and how?

#8

You now feel satisfied that the conference center has been secured but you, the other delegates and the hotel staff working in the conference suite at the time of the attack are now for all intents and purposes trapped.

- a. What do you see as the potential threats to everyone trapped inside the conference center?
- b. Identify the actions you believe that should you take, prioritizing each action.

SCENARIO B: **AT THE SOCCER MATCH**

Topic: Evacuate/identify exits and alternate exits

Training: Why you need to always identify all the exits and alternate exits in any location; how to evacuate quickly and safely in a crowd to avoid being turned into a zombie.

The soccer stadium is located on the edge of the city approximately five miles to the southwest of the conference center on a small peninsula with the sea and a pebble beach on three sides. There is a large parking lot, although it can get very congested and take up to two hours after a game to reach the exit.

With a maximum capacity of less than 20,000 spectators, the stadium is considered quite small. Surrounded by a 6-foot perimeter wall, there are a series of entrance gates along the north, east and west sides of the ground. The number of your entrance gate is printed on your ticket.

There are also four main egress routes located behind the north section leading to the parking lot and are labelled Gates A, B, C and D. There are also two emergency exits labelled Gates E and F, although these only tend to be used when balls are accidentally kicked out of the stadium. The players' tunnel is positioned in the center of the south section.

The soccer match is a sell-out, although a block of 20 seats have been secured for your delegates in the center of the south section. Fortunately, the route to and from the hotel has not been significantly affected by the fire that has caused gridlock on the route to and from the airport and you arrived in good time.

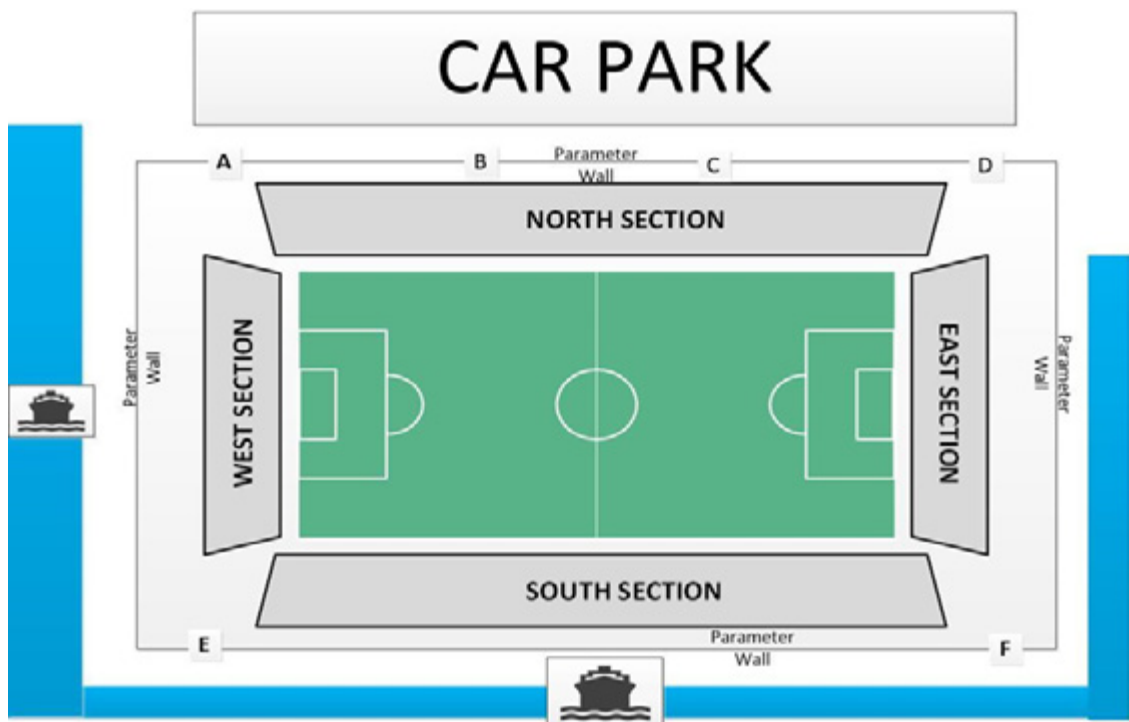
The match is underway when you suddenly become aware of a disturbance in the east section. The players quickly vacate that end of the pitch and, along with the officials, disappear into the tunnel.

Zombies have found a way to breach the perimeter wall and entered between the north and east sections and started attacking the crowd in the latter section. Quickly realizing what is happening, stadium officials urge the crowd to leave the stadium as quickly and orderly as possible by way of the north-west corner.

But panic has broken out and many spectators simply did not hear the stadium announcer's warning. Even so many of them stream across the pitch toward the northwest corner which takes them toward an exit and away from the marauding zombies. Unfortunately there is nothing orderly about the spectators' exit and a bottleneck quickly forms in the gap between the north and west sections.

There are casualties as people find themselves being crushed while more and more are pushing behind them.

You are temporarily prevented from leaving your section of the ground as other people are trying to push and shove their way onto the pitch. This gives you a moment to consider your options while trying to keep your group together and focused. It seems you have at least four options although at least two of them are problematic.



EXERCISE QUESTIONS:

#1

You can take your chances by joining the growing mass trying to escape in the northwest corner and risk either being crushed or caught by a zombie while you wait in the line that has formed.

#2

You can stay where you are and hope the zombies won't notice you. However, with the East Stand now empty, the zombies may well look for alternative prey.

#3

You can make your way down to the players' tunnel and see if it is possible to take refuge under the south section but as the number of spectators has thinned out on this side of the pitch, this could attract the attention of the zombies in the east section.

#4

With the vast majority of spectators attempting to use the northwest corner exit, you could take your chances by making your way to the emergency exit at Gate E and get out of the ground that way.

Having got out of the stadium, you have the sea on the one side and the stadium perimeter wall on the other. It occurs to you that your route to the parking lot and potential escape may be blocked ahead by more zombies. What are your alternatives?

Well done, you've made it to the car park and you can see the shuttle you hired just 50 yards ahead of you but there is no sign of your driver who has the keys. Moreover, in their anxiety to get away, several cars have collided and have blocked the exit and zombies are now swarming around the cars.

What do you and your group do?

SCENARIO C: **IN THE CAR**

Topic: Defending yourself and your group

Training: How to attack in a group if you can't get away from the zombies.

You are in a party of 12 delegates travelling from the airport to the hotel in a shuttle, although you have been stationary in traffic now for more than 20 minutes. You are passing a mall, but it is now closed. The driver turns on the radio and discovers that it's gridlocked because a fire has closed the surrounding roads. The driver also informs you that the hotel is only a 10-minute walk and if anyone wanted to take that option he could deliver their baggage as soon as traffic started moving again.

Approximately four of your party decided to walk. You are outside the shuttle stretching your legs when you suddenly hear screaming from the direction of the hotel and people start running past you. Then one of your party runs by, gasping that there are zombies just down the street and coming this way. He says they got at least one of the walkers and possibly another but he never saw what happened to the fourth person.

Being relatively fit, you could run except one of your delegates is disabled and wouldn't stand a chance if she was left to fend for herself. You tell your fellow delegates that you are staying to help your disabled companion and ask them if they will too. Their response is a unanimous "yes."

EXERCISE QUESTIONS:

#1

How are you going to organize yourselves for the greatest likelihood that everyone will survive? Discuss in detail what each person will do to increase the odds of survival for the group.



**SUGGESTED
RESPONSES**

SCENARIO A: **IN THE CONFERENCE CENTER**

First, remember that successful management is dependent upon one's ability to delegate responsibility. So do not try and do everything yourself but direct others to each take a task. The second point to remember is that there is a difference between delegation and abdication of responsibilities and a good manager will always monitor the progress of everyone's tasks.

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTED RESPONSES TO SCENARIO A:

#1

The obvious resources that you have immediately at your disposal are the chairs you are sitting on and a number of hot drinks. The chairs could be used as improvised weapons and would enable you to attempt to drive the zombies back. Throwing the hot coffee in the zombies' faces could also momentarily slow them down and buy you a few valuable seconds.

#2

So you have taken charge of the situation and your first challenge is that at least one of the smokers has been bitten. With the conference center yet to be secured, you cannot afford to allow this to distract you for too long.

However, while you are aware of a number of viruses associated with zombies, you have no idea about:

- a. Which zombie virus are you dealing with?
- b. What is the probability that someone bitten by a zombie will turn into a zombie?
- c. Is the incubation period measured in hours, days or even weeks?

You may be fortunate that there is someone in the conference center with a medical background who has the answers to these questions but statistically this is unlikely.

So while you delegate someone to search the Internet for information, do you:

- I. Find some way of confining the victim within the conference center which minimizes the risk to everyone else? In this instance confining them in conference room one may be the best option but allowing them access to the men's bathroom which will also give them access to water. Build a barricade across the passageway leading to the entrances to conference room one and the men's bathroom. Identify at least two people to keep watch on this barricade at all times.
- II. Think about the safety of everyone else in the conference center and open an external emergency exit door and throw the victim outside to take their chances.
- III. If they are staying in the hotel, allow them to go to their room.

#3

Emergency Exit Door 'A' has been closed but remember that it opens outward and a barricade would not stop the door being opened. Moreover, if the door was forced open, it might be possible to dismantle the barricade from the outside. However, the tables in the main conference rooms can accommodate eight people sitting down one side which would be more than big enough to span the emergency exit door frame. By tying the door's push-bar to the table using tablecloths, you should be able to prevent it from being pulled open.

#4

If you can't disable the revolving door's opening mechanism, then wedge a table into one of its quadrants to stop the door from turning. Further support this table by building a barricade using other tables and chairs as appropriate. The disabled access door has a different set of challenges because it swings inward or outward and can be activated by a button on either side. However, it will always swing away from the button that is pressed, so for someone pressing the button in reception, the door will swing into the conference suite. Consequently, assuming the door mechanism cannot be neutralized, it will be necessary to build a substantial barrier using chairs, tables and display stand components. As for the emergency exit door between conference suite and reception, this is of a similar design to the external emergency exit A, so use the same approach as described in point 3 above.

#5

This is a tough call especially if you are close to the colleagues. Allowing them to come into the conference suite could compromise the safety of everyone already in there. First, you do not know whether they have been bitten by zombies and even if they haven't, by dismantling a barricade to allow them entrance, you may also allow zombies to enter.

SCENARIO B:

AT THE SOCCER MATCH

With the stadium built on a small peninsula and no boats conveniently moored on the seaward side of the stadium, the only way of escaping seems to be through the parking lot to the north. But how do you get out of the stadium?

Option 1 meant you followed the masses through the northwest corner of the stadium and risk either being crushed or if you hung back until the size of the crowd diminished, you increased your risk of being caught by a zombie.

Option 2 was remaining there and hoping the zombies don't notice you. However, once they had run out of prey in the east section you would not have been difficult to spot.

Option 3 was taking a chance of being able to go down the players' tunnel but risk being cornered by zombies if it was locked. However, it is highly likely that the route into the changing room would have been secured, thereby creating a cul-de-sac in which you could be trapped.

Option 4 was to go in the opposite direction of the majority of the other spectators. By heading for the emergency exit Gate E, it appears you are moving away from the zombies while not risking being crushed in the bottleneck. Seems a no brainer but it is not without risks. Some stadiums have locked their emergency exit gates to prevent people sneaking in for free. However, all that said this is probably the best option.

Whichever option you choose, make sure that all of your team takes bottled water or drinks with them.

By taking option 4, you can work your way toward the parking lot along the western side of the stadium. Recognizing that there could be more zombies ahead, you could find some rocks or large pebbles on the beach that could be used as weapons. Alternatively, as zombies are poor swimmers, you could decide to take to the water and bypass any possible conflict, as long as everyone in your group can swim.

Finally, being confronted by the total chaos in the parking lot, zombies will be attracted to the noise. If you pass the opportunity for a swim, your only option is to get clear of the stadium by walking down the side of the parking lot. At this point, you may be away from the immediate danger but you will be isolated and with few, if any, resources that will be needed to survive. However, you will have achieved your primary objective of evacuating quickly and safely in a crowd to avoid being turned into a zombie.

Well done !!

SCENARIO C: **IN THE CAR**

So your situation is not good but it is not hopeless. While in the back of your mind you may want to make your way to the hotel, the bad news is, that if it is also under threat, then its management should have activated a lockdown.

Even if you can prove you have a reservation, they are still extremely unlikely to let you in. What you don't know, of course, is that the hotel perimeter has already been breached as zombies gained access before a lockdown was initiated.

As the traffic is gridlocked, it will not be possible to use the shuttle as a battering ram to carve out a channel through the zombies. Moreover, out of the original 12 that left the airport with you, there are now nine delegates, one of whom is disabled plus the shuttle driver. In your immediate vicinity, you can see several large department stores plus the shopping mall that earlier in the day may have been a shelter. However, they have now closed and you need to accept that you may have to fight your way out.

First, remember that time is of the essence. Get one of your delegates to climb onto the roof of the shuttle and act as a look-out for zombies. Your next priority needs to be to find some improvised weapons.

The shuttle will probably have a set of tools such as:

- Tire iron
- Wheel brace
- Car jack
- Car jack handle
- Screw drivers

Does anyone have any sharp objects or glass bottles that could be used as improvised weapons? In addition to her wheelchair, does your disabled colleague have any other walking aids with her such as crutches or walking sticks?

Does anyone have knives, pen knives or guns in their luggage? If they have the later, how many rounds of ammunition do they have? Make sure that every member of your group knows how to deal with a zombie. If any of them are squeamish, just remind them of two things. First, they cannot hurt a zombie as they are already dead. Second, if they don't disable the zombie, the zombie will probably kill them.

While you should try and avoid contact with zombies, decide how you are going to act as a group, keeping in mind that if confrontation is unavoidable, one of your number will be in a wheelchair. It is also worth remembering the lesson from the early American pioneers – when surrounded by the enemy, circle the wagons.

Assuming that none of your party is familiar with the metro area you are in, bring up a local map on a smartphone to plan an escape route. If there is any water or food in the shuttle, take it with you. If any of the group have backpacks, take them with you to carry any supplies you come across. Otherwise leave your luggage in the shuttle.

Once you have assembled whatever weapons you can and planned your way out of the metro area, you don't need to wait for the zombies to arrive – just get out of there. As you proceed, if you see people running, they are probably running away from zombies. Also, keep listening for sounds as much as watching out for zombies as this may give you an indication of trouble ahead. Likewise, try and keep the noise generated by your group to a minimum to avoid attracting attention.

One final thought: as you attempt to retreat from harm's way, keep a lookout for any opportunities to pick up supplies or weapons.

Good luck !!





AlertFind

Now that you've prepared your organization for the zombie apocalypse, see how mature the rest of your emergency preparedness planning is.

Take our 10-question online assessment and assess your planning and receive tactical advice to improve any weaknesses.

Take the Assessment