

The investigative questions below are designed to assist a Threat Assessment Team with understanding the specific concerns regarding the person/situation of concern, any motive and potential target(s), and ultimate likelihood of the ability to carry out an act of violence. The responses obtained here will then be considered and used to answer the assessment questions in the next section.

### 1. **MOTIVE: What is the person's motive(s) and goal(s)?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- What first brought the person to the attention of the team?
- What motivated their behavior? What was their goal?
- Do those conditions still exist and are the conditions being addressed?
- Does the person have a major grievance or grudge? Against whom?

### 2. **COMMUNICATIONS: Have there been any communication suggesting ideas or intent to engage in violence?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- What, if anything, has the person communicated to someone else or written somewhere concerning his or her ideas/intentions?
- Have friends been alerted or "warned away?"

Yes       No       Don't Know

### 3. **INAPPROPRIATE INTERESTS: Has the person shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?**

Please make notes on all that apply:

- Previous attacks or attackers (e.g., historical events, copy-cattling, current events)
- Weapons (including a recent acquisition of any relevant weapon)



- Incidents of mass violence (terrorism, workplace violence, mass murderers)
- Obsessive pursuit, stalking or monitoring others
- Murder-suicide
- Other

Yes       No       Don't Know

**4. PLANNING: Has the person engaged in attack-related behaviors or other preparatory behaviors?**

These behaviors might include:

- Developing an attack idea or plan
- Making efforts to acquire or practice with weapons
- Surveillance, or checking out possible sites or areas for attack
- Rehearsing attacks or ambushes
- Any behavior that moves an idea of harm forward toward actual harm

Yes       No       Don't Know

**5. CAPACITY: Does the person have the capacity to carry out an act of targeted violence?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- Is the person organized enough to plan and execute an attack?
- Does the person have the resources?

Yes       No       Don't Know

**6. DESPERATION/DESPAIR: Is the person experiencing hopelessness, desperation and/or despair?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- Does the person feel out of options?
- Is there information that the person is experiencing desperation or despair?
- Has the person experienced a recent failure, loss, or humiliation?
- Is the person having difficulty coping with a stressful event?
- Does the person have a history of suicidal gestures, final acts, behaviors, or suicide attempts?

If you believe the person may be suicidal, initiate your district suicide protocols and continue with the threat assessment process.

Yes     No     Don't Know

**7. PROTECTIVE FACTORS: Does the person have a trusting relationship with at least one meaningful person?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- Is there anyone that the person can feel they can confide in, e.g., a teacher, family member, coach, counselor, advisor, etc.?
- Is the person emotionally connected to - or disconnected - from others?
- Is there anyone in the school or district who feels they have a good relationship with the person of concern?
- Does the person have other protective factors or relationships?

Yes     No     Don't Know

**8. VIOLENCE: Does the person view violence as an acceptable, desirable, or the only way to solve problems?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- Does the environment around the person (family, friends, others) support or endorse violence as a way of solving problems or disputes?
- Has the person been dared by others to engage in an act of violence?

- Do they feel death is an answer?
- Have they in the past?

Yes     No     Don't Know

**9. CONSISTENCY: Is the person's conversation and "story" consistent with his or her actions?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- Does what the person is telling you match the information you've gathered?
- Does the person say they are "fine", but other information contradicts them?

Yes     No     Don't Know

**10. CONCERNED OTHERS: Are other people concerned about the person's potential for violence?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- Has anyone witnessed troubling changes in the person's behaviors, mood, attitude, artwork or writings?
- Has anyone taken protective actions because of the person's behavior?
- Is there anyone in fear that they are a target?
- Is anyone concerned that the person could be otherwise harmful or destructive?

Yes     No     Don't Know

**11. STRESSORS: What circumstances might affect the likelihood the person may decide to engage in violence or resort to violence?**

Some questions to help you think through:

- What factors could increase the likelihood that the person would resort to violence or engage in violence?
- Are there any upcoming or expected setbacks, losses, or challenges?
- What factors could decrease the likelihood that the person would resort to violence or engage in violence?
- Are there any upcoming positive developments or things the person is looking forward to?
- Are there any available resources that could be used to reduce risk?

 No Available Information Answer in Process Answer Complete

*Source: Fein, R., Vossekuil, B., Pollack, W., Borum, R., Modzeleski, W., & Reddy, M. (2002). Threat assessment in schools: A guide to managing threatening situations and creating safe school climates. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Department of Education.*