Beyond Read & Repeat: Training staff to Understand and Analyze Risk Management Policies
Aaron Gorban, Jess Wilson, and Winslow Carroll
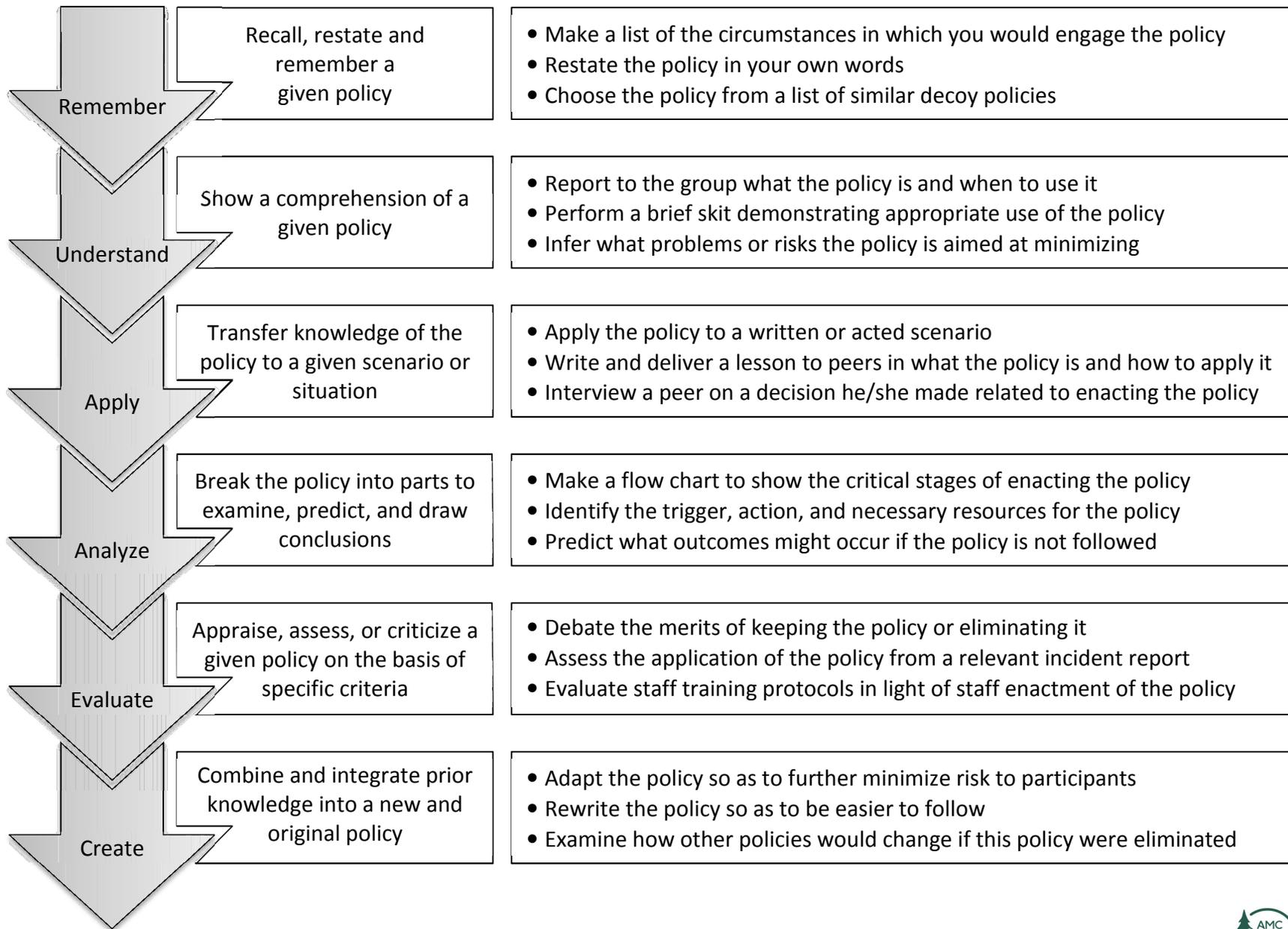## Appalachian Mountain Club

Nearly every program and training manager has the same problem: in a limited amount of time, how can we transmit all the organizational and policy information that staff need to know? Furthermore, how can we make sure that risk management policies are implemented correctly in the field? One solution may be to redesign our training lesson plans to align with Bloom's Taxonomy. Originally created in 1956 and modified in 2001, the taxonomy seeks to define our levels of thinking. As individuals process new information, we move through these levels and can only "master" a concept after reaching the pinnacle of the higher order thinking skills. Commonly used to develop school curriculum, the outdoor industry could benefit from implementing the taxonomy into staff training concepts to engage staff's higher order thinking skills.

This resource names and describe the higher order thinking skills included in Bloom's Taxonomy, provides suggestions on types of questions and activities that can be used to develop each level of thinking within your staff, and offers a lesson plan template for you to use in redesigning your risk management policy lessons to use these higher order thinking skills.

We welcome questions, success stories, and feedback!
leadership@outdoors.org

Beyond Read and Repeat: Higher Order Thinking Skills and their Application

Remember — Recall, restate and remember a given policy

- Make a list of the circumstances in which you would engage the policy
- Restate the policy in your own words
- Choose the policy from a list of similar decoy policies

Understand — Show a comprehension of a given policy

- Report to the group what the policy is and when to use it
- Perform a brief skit demonstrating appropriate use of the policy
- Infer what problems or risks the policy is aimed at minimizing

Apply — Transfer knowledge of the policy to a given scenario or situation

- Apply the policy to a written or acted scenario
- Write and deliver a lesson to peers in what the policy is and how to apply it
- Interview a peer on a decision he/she made related to enacting the policy

Analyze — Break the policy into parts to examine, predict, and draw conclusions

- Make a flow chart to show the critical stages of enacting the policy
- Identify the trigger, action, and necessary resources for the policy
- Predict what outcomes might occur if the policy is not followed

Evaluate — Appraise, assess, or criticize a given policy on the basis of specific criteria

- Debate the merits of keeping the policy or eliminating it
- Assess the application of the policy from a relevant incident report
- Evaluate staff training protocols in light of staff enactment of the policy

Create — Combine and integrate prior knowledge into a new and original policy

- Adapt the policy so as to further minimize risk to participants
- Rewrite the policy so as to be easier to follow
- Examine how other policies would change if this policy were eliminated

Beyond Read and Repeat: Creating a Policy Lesson using Higher Order Thinking Skills

What is the problem this lesson is addressing?

What is the relevant policy?

In addition to this lesson, what other changes will help students enact this policy with greater accuracy?

Introductory Notes:

Remember Element:

Understand Element:

Apply Element:

Analyze Element:

Evaluate Element:

Create Element:

Conclusion Notes:

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Beyond Read and Repeat: Creating a Policy Lesson using Higher Order Thinking Skills (example)

What is the problem this lesson is addressing?

Volunteers are not reporting incidents in accordance with our policy – mostly incidents that should be reported are not; occasionally, incidents that don't need to be reported are.

What is the relevant policy?

Volunteers must complete and submit an incident report given any of the following four circumstances:
- Outside assistance (911, search-and-rescue, etc.) is used
- A participant seeks medical care or should seek medical care
- A participant has a negative experience that they may complain about afterward

In addition to this lesson, what other changes will help students enact this policy with greater accuracy?

Consider adding to incident form checkboxes for the four reporting circumstances.

Introductory Notes:
Solicit adverse events on notecards; share the basic policy.

Remember Element:
"When do you fill out an incident report?"

Understand Element:
Pair & Share: what problem or risk is this policy aimed at minimizing?

Apply Element:
Continuum activity with notecards from intro: "Would you fill out an incident form for this?"

Analyze Element:
Consequences of submitting (or not) for gray area cards from continuum activity

Evaluate Element:
N/A

Create Element:
N/A

Conclusion Notes:
What are your take-aways? Why is this important? Remaining questions?

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