

Scenario

You are the solo leader on a late summer, 4 day hiking trip in the North Cascades, Washington. You are leading a group of six sixteen-year-olds from a summer camp. This your fifth summer leading hiking and light mountaineering trips for the camp. You are on the third day of your trip and somewhat behind schedule. This worries you somewhat, because you got in trouble for coming back to camp a half day late on the last trip.

You pause with the group for a water break before beginning the ascent up Knifeback Ridge, a steep and committing hike. Once on the ridge, there is no easy descent down the sides: it is forward or back. The ridge climbs 1,500' before descending again, and usually takes 2-3 hours to hike. The day is sunny and warm, with a light west wind. To the west are large cumulonimbus clouds with flat, dark bottoms. You take note of the clouds, but your instinct tells you that you will have plenty of time to complete the ridge before any serious weather moves in. As you drink your water, a part of 5 seasoned looking mountaineers passes you on the trail and begins the ascent. **You decide** it is time to go, and you tell everyone to put their packs back on.

Activity 1 Pre-Mortem

- List the objective hazards, observed or potential, in the environment (not the "people" hazards – that comes later)
- Walk through your plan for the next 3 hours. Probe it for weaknesses. If something is to go wrong with the plan that results in someone being hurt, what will it be?

Activity 2 FACET Test

- Conduct a FACET Test: discuss each of the FACETS in turn and see if it applies to the situation
- Other human factors?

Conclusion

Any changes to your original decision?

References

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