

A woman in a light blue lab coat is pointing at a large screen displaying a 3D model of a virus particle. The background is a dimly lit room with window blinds. The text is overlaid on the image.

COVID-19 ETOWAH COUNTY MID - ACTION REVIEW

A Learning Opportunity



GOALS OF THIS MEETING

Moving forward with confidence in our next mitigation, response and recovery effort related to an Infectious Disease

A Corrective Action Plan for our Weaknesses

Finding ways to build on our Strengths

SHORT SURVEY RELATED TO PREPAREDNESS



What was your most common issue in the beginning?



What was your most expensive purchase/cost?



Were you prepared for staffing issues?



What did your department/agency do well?



What does your department/agency need to work on?

Rate your agencies preparedness level

A LOOK AT OUR RESPONSE:

Gaither	CORE Capabilities Assessment
Tanner	Operational Strategy in a Pandemic World
Cole	Creating Countywide Self-Sufficiency
Golden	Logistics, Inventory of PPE, Other Supplies
Gaither	Emerging Stronger From COVID-19



OVERVIEW OF INCIDENT

The Corona Virus Public Health Emergency began for Etowah County, AL in February 2020.

In January 2020 the first Corona Virus infection was acknowledge in the United States. Going forward the infection spread to every state. Hospitals in many, especially urban areas, were overwhelmed with patients seeking care for this highly contagious respiratory disease. Shortages of acute care beds, ventilators, personal protective equipment, and testing to identify the disease prompted the largest local, state and federal response in the history of the United States.

We already know that none of us were prepared for what our county, state, country or world was about to face. It was and still is in many cases “the unknown”.

We want to take a look today at our preparedness, response and current recovery efforts. This will allow us to assess our current situation as it relates to Corona Virus (COVID-19).

- Elected Officials and First Responders reviewed and verified our plan of action
- A Declaration of Local Disaster was issued for all of Etowah County, AL
- State Public Health Department sent PPE to try to aid with the situation *(most had to be repaired or thrown away as during storage it had degraded to an unusable state)*
- We are still responding and preparing for any type of reappearance

DO YOU REMEMBER ...

Hoarding or Stockpiling



CORE CAPABILITIES OF YOUR RESPONSE

What applies to your agency or entity? Choose at least 4 of the below...

Critical Transportation

Economic Recovery

Environmental Response/Health and Safety

Fatality Management

Health and Social Services

Logistics and Supply Chain Management

Mass Care Services

On Scene Security, Protection and Law Enforcement

Operational Communications

Operational Coordination

Planning

Public Health, Healthcare and Emergency Medical Services

Public Information and Warning

Risk Management for Protection Programs and Activities

Screening, Search and Detection

Situational Assessment

Supply Chain Integrity and Security

GIS

Finance

ADD YOUR OWN

SHORT SURVEY RELATED TO RESPONSE



What was your most common issue in the beginning of response?



What was your most expensive purchase/cost?



Were you prepared for response issues?



What did your department/agency do well?



What does your department/agency need to work on?

Rate your agencies response level



Operational Strategy in a Pandemic World



What to Do When the Familiar Becomes Unknown

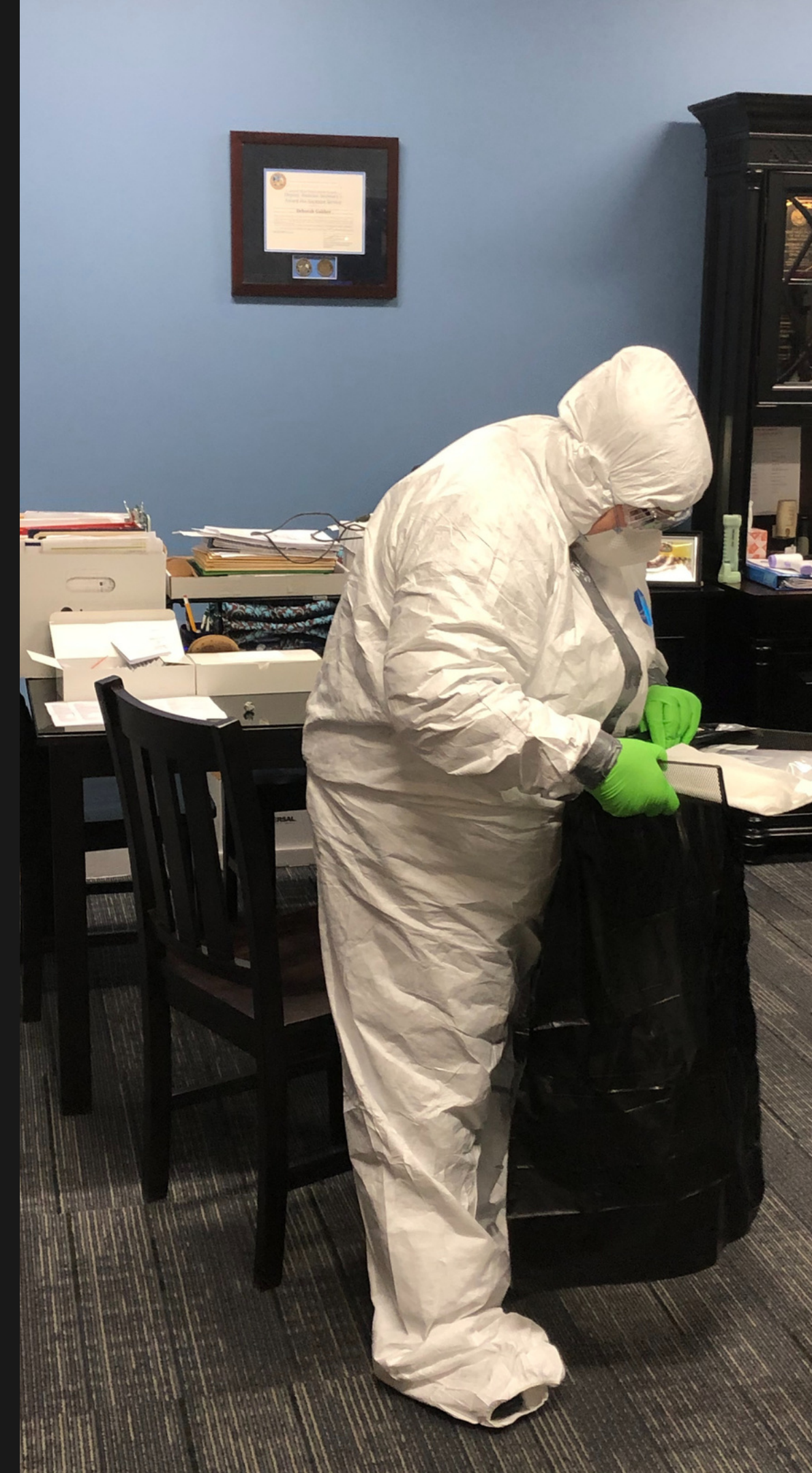




We All Can Agree

The Givens

- We aren't finished yet
- We've all been right
- We've all been wrong
- Mass Care is Tough
- Humankind is habitual

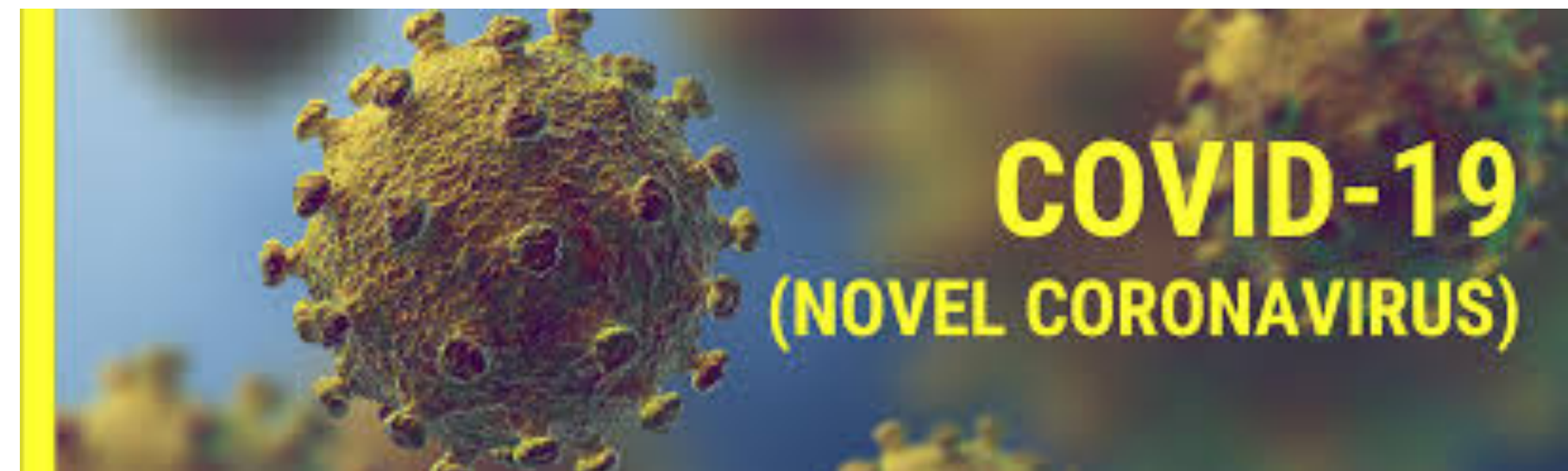




Operational Awareness

This was tough to gain early on.

Distinguishing between fact, opinion,
and politics was tough!



Lesson 1

The way we always do it does not always work - especially in a pandemic.



Validation



"Analysis Paralysis" →

Initially, each detail was so scrutinized over and over again – nobody wanted to make a decision. Leadership at many levels was in a constant state of flux of not knowing best practices – because there were none this early.

Second Guessing in the Field →

Lack of information available to leaders compounded with analysis paralysis led to responders uncertain about actions in the field.

System Inundation →

In the field and the hospital – the system was inundated. Plans were truly tested. Systems and services were pushed beyond capacity. But, the system continued to work...because people did not give up.

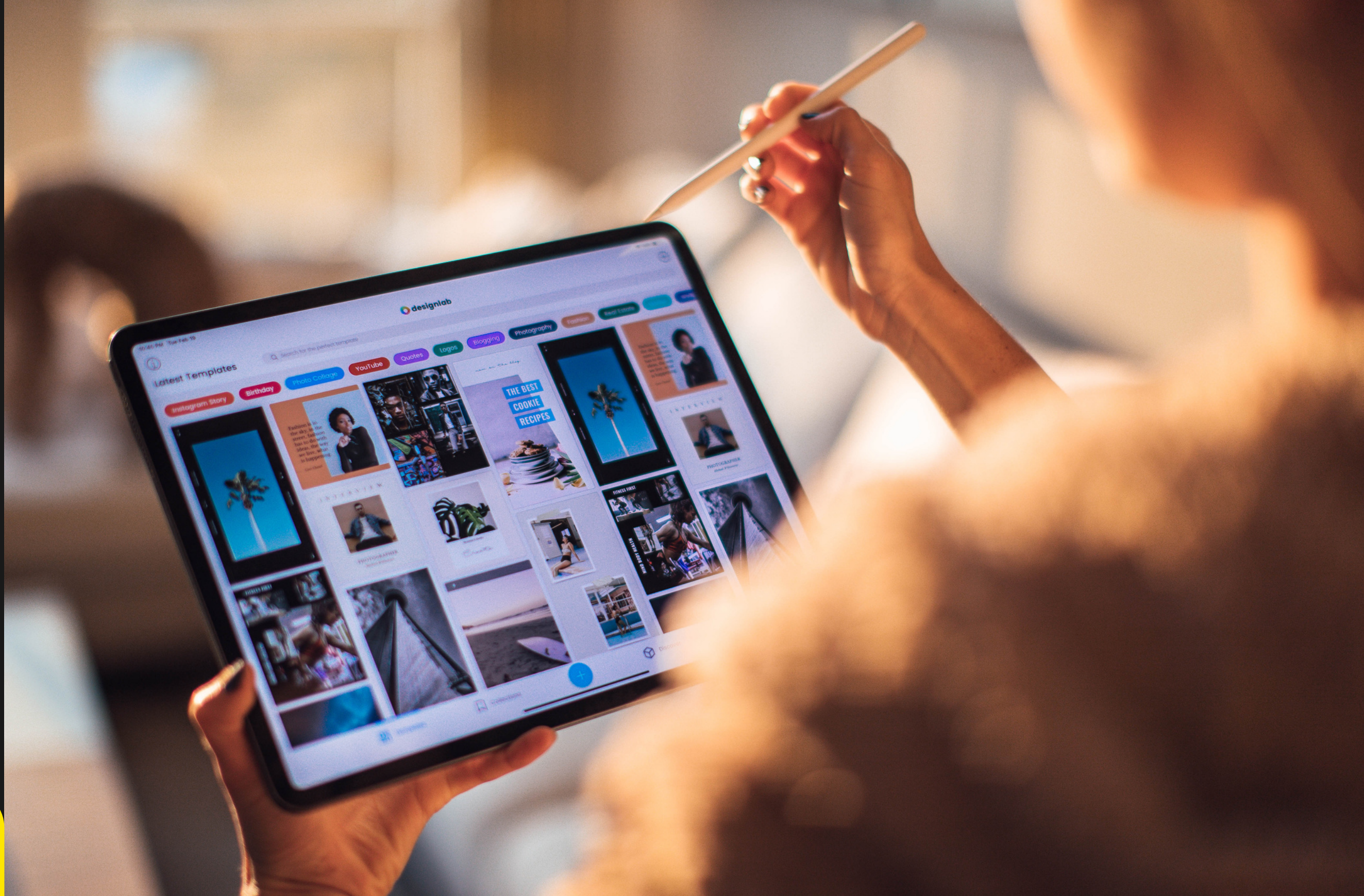
Lesson 2

In large scale events, you have to get in front of the narrative. If you don't get in front of it, the public's perception is reality.



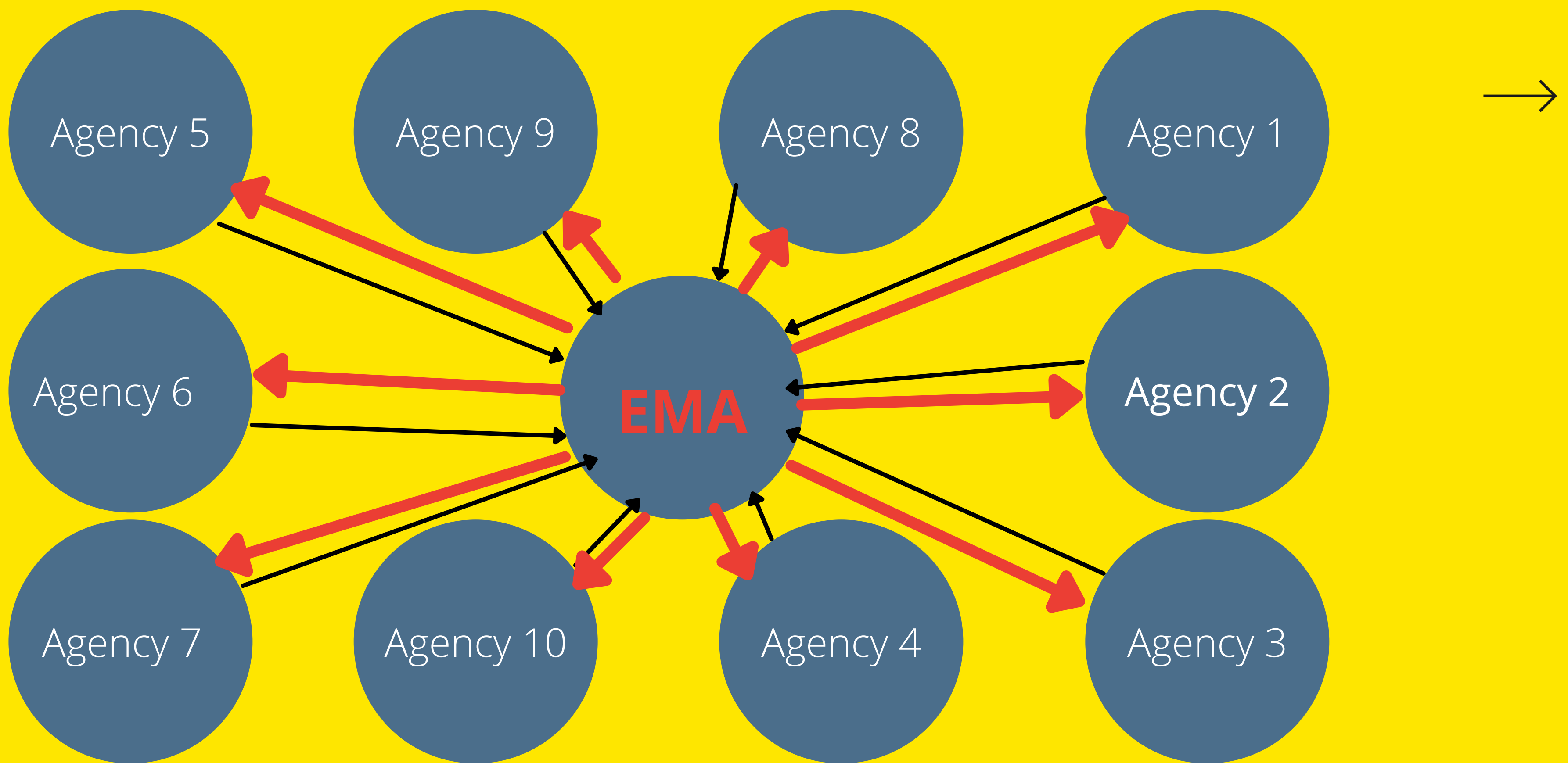
Actual Comments

- "Well, I know XYZ hospital is full to the brim with COVID folks. They just aren't letting us know."
- "I saw on Facebook that the government is taking away our rights by mandating masks."
- "This is all fake – a government conspiracy."
- "Nobody has even died from it here yet, so what's the big deal?"
- "Why aren't they dismissing schools?"
- "Why are they dismissing schools?"

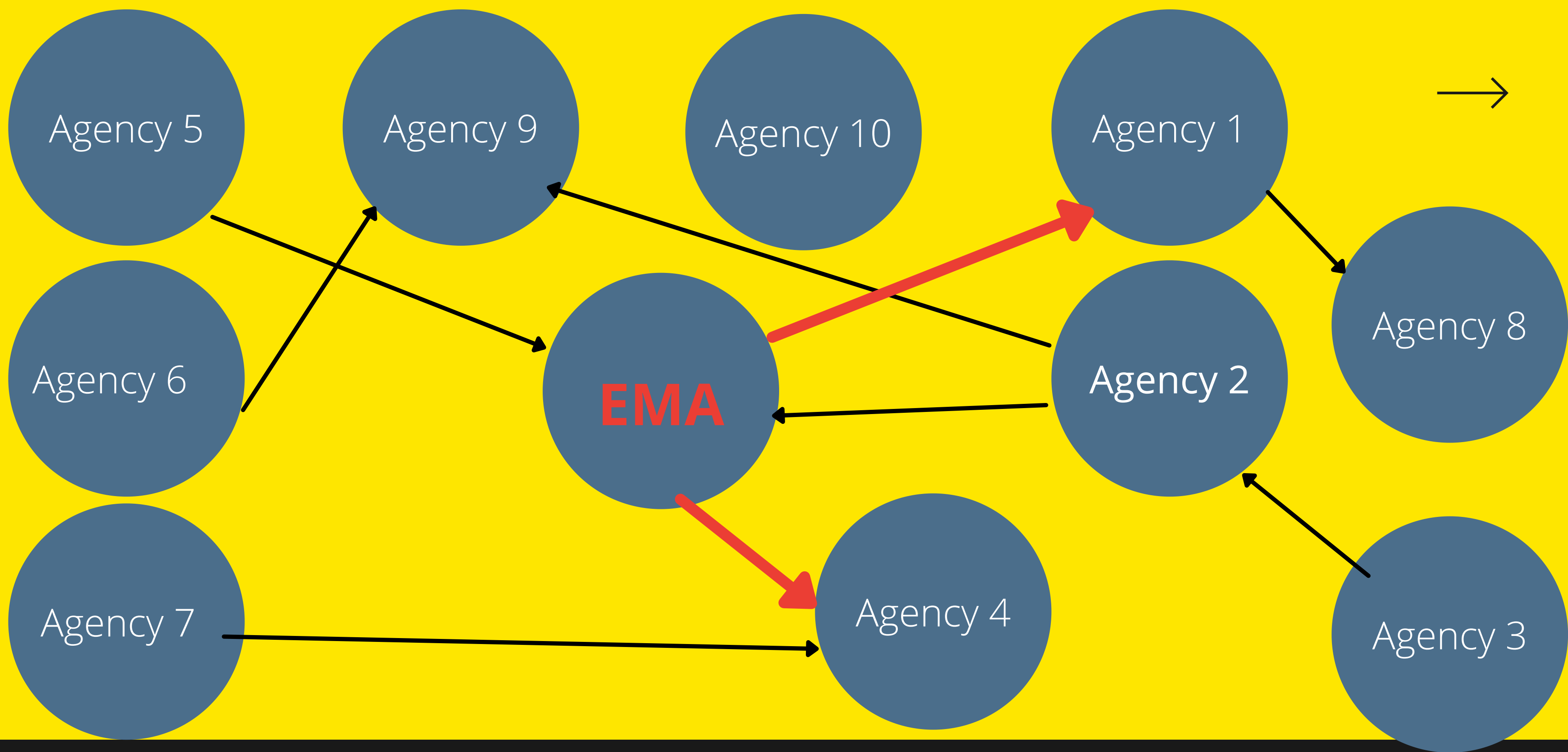


Lesson 3

Communication is vital.



Information Sharing Paradigm by the Book

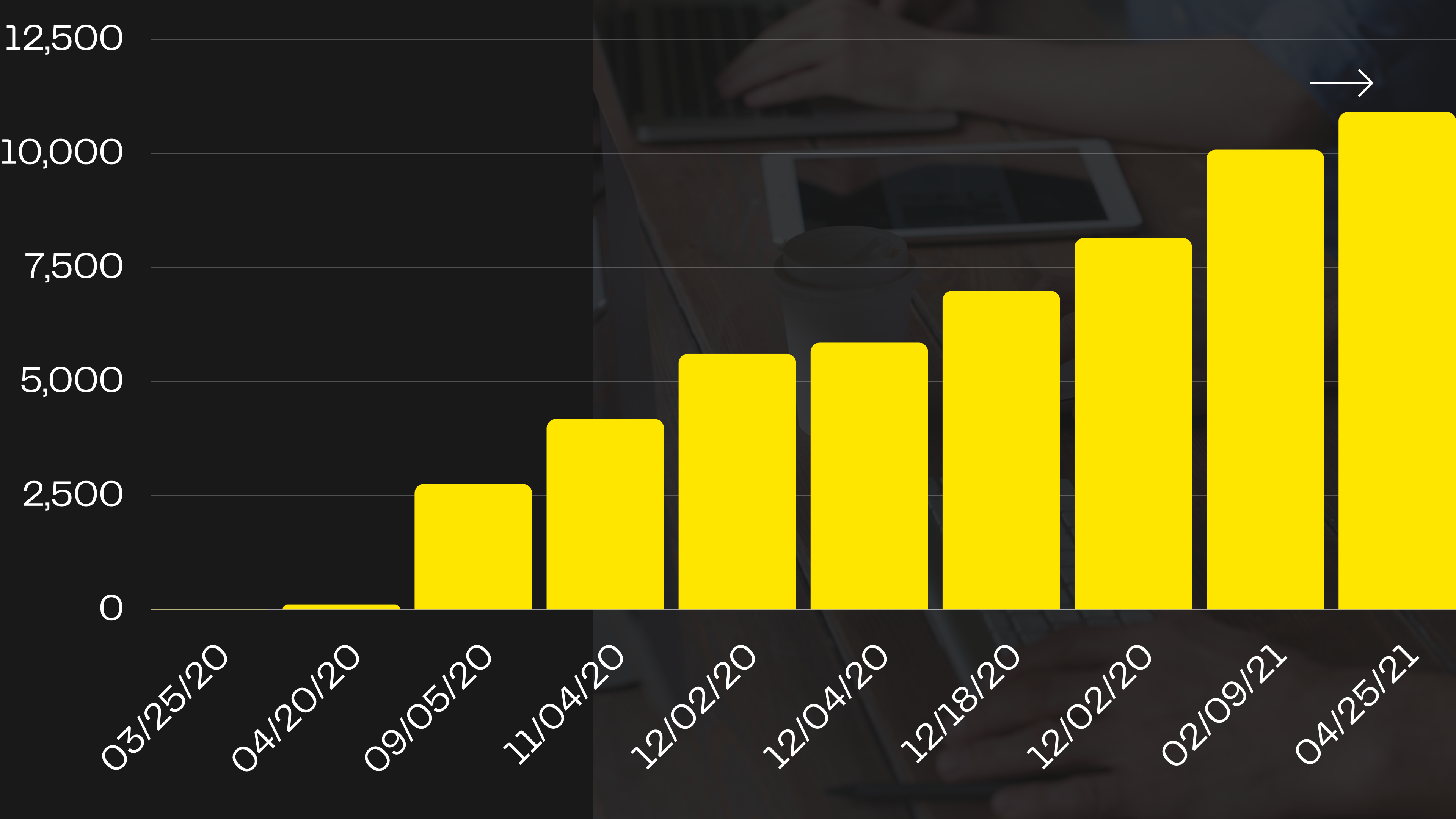


Information Sharing Paradigm in Reality



Lesson 4

Constant increases require constant adaptations to response.



Questions to Ponder

- What improvements to SOP's do we need to make to ensure they are easily adaptable for various threats?
- Do we, as an agency/municipality, have "stock" news releases we can adapt to get information out quickly?
- How do we, as an agency/municipality, stay prepared for adaptive situations?
- How did the pandemic affect how your agency/municipality handled a particular situation? What changes would you make knowing now what you know?