

**OEC Module for the Senior Program**  
**From the NSP Ski Patroller's Manual**  
**Written Scenario Exercises**

To prepare adequately for the evaluation, each candidate must write essay answers to two scenario problems and write one new senior OEC scenario problem. Select from the following scenarios or from the OEC Test Bank booklet (degree of difficulty 5 to 6) to write essay answers. Given the general information available below, complete the scenario objectives for decision making, problem management, and leadership. As you do the written scenarios, consider the points that will serve as the evaluation criteria for your leadership attributes.

**Decision making, Problem Management, and Leadership Expectations**

One of the goals of the senior OEC component is to motivate, challenge, and facilitate a senior candidate's growth and/or experience level. Everyone involved in ski patrolling has been in a leadership position at one time or another. It may have been at the scene of an accident, while teaching one of NSP's many courses, or while serving as hill leader for the day. When you assume a leadership role, you are expected to fulfill certain responsibilities or duties, either by performing the task personally or by delegating it to another qualified individual.

Some patrollers are very comfortable in a leadership role while others tend to shy away from taking charge. Several factors may help determine whether someone is a better leader or follower, including personality, education, profession, age, and level of ski patrol experience. Each of these factors can affect a person's decision-making abilities in various situations. How do people make sound decisions and apply them to a leadership role? The following steps trace that process.

**Decision-making Process**

These steps enable a good leader to gain control of the situation.

1. Gather all the information about the problem or situation. Understand the information, and process it rapidly and efficiently.
2. Assess the seriousness of the situation. Set priorities based on the facts.

**Communication**

3. Instruct and delegate tasks to the people involved at the scene. Be calm, confident, and competent, and give concise orders or commands to anyone who is available to assist you,

including other patrollers, area personnel, and bystanders. Everyone involved must clearly understand the course of action and the tasks that are expected of them. (Other patrollers should be able to work under minimal supervision and attend to the details while you address the broader picture.)

### **Anticipation and Flexibility**

4. Anticipate the needs of the injured, the needs of the patrollers tending to the situation, and the problems that may arise. Be ready to initiate a change of plan. (You may decide to change the plan of action suddenly, depending on the time it takes to evacuate the injured, the role the weather may play, what equipment is needed, whether equipment fails or is unavailable, etc.)
5. Evaluate the on-the-scene plan of action. How effectively is the plan working? Remain Flexible.

### **Follow-up**

6. Review the events that occurred during the situation (both your actions and the actions of those you directed). In a non-judgmental, positive manner, give constructive feedback to all involved. (You might decide what was done well or what could have been handled better, more efficiently, etc. Alternatively, everyone involved in the situation could discuss these issues.)

### **Effective Team Characteristics**

- Mutually set goals
- Understanding and commitment to goals
- Clearly defined, non-overlapping roles
- Atmosphere that encourages development
- Decisions based on facts, not emotions or personalities
- Efficient, task-oriented meetings that focus on improvement
- Discussions that involve all members
- Members listening and showing respect for each other
- Problem solving versus blaming
- Frequent performance feedback
- Informed members
- Pride and spirit
- Free expression of feelings and ideas
- Cooperation and support of members

- Tolerance for conflict with emphasis on resolution

### Sample Exercise

The following section contains a sample essay response to a scenario. This exercise illustrates the knowledge components to be included in any OEC exercise designed by the OEC Test Bank Committee.

### General problem Description

A 60 year old male (Patient A) is sitting on the snow after climbing uphill to help his wife (Patient B), who fell on a more difficult slope and is complaining of severe lower leg pain. Patient A is short of breath and complaining of chest pain, and he has a history of angina.

### Patient Information

#### Signs and Symptoms

**Patient A** – Complains of severe chest pain, substernal radiating to the left arm. The patient has taken a nitroglycerin tablet but has not felt any relief. The patient also complains of shortness of breath, is anxious, is concerned for his wife, and is perspiring heavily.

**Patient B** – Complains of severe pain and tenderness at the top of her left boot. The patient’s circulation, motor function, and sensation are within normal limits. (She can wiggle her toes, is not bleeding, and has no open fracture.)

Vital Signs	Patient A	
	Pulse	Respirations
Initial	118	32
5 min.	110	30
10 min.	106	28
15 min.	110	30

Vital Signs	Patient B	
	Pulse	Respirations
Initial	118	20
5 min.	112	22
10 min.	100	22
15 min.	104	24

## Scenario Objectives

Describe your actions as the leader in this situation.

**Equipment:** Call for two toboggans equipped with hill packs, as well as blankets, a quick splint, and oxygen.

**Decision-making:** Ensure the overall safety of the people at the accident site by identifying any immediate hazards, marking the site clearly, and protecting the patients from further possible harm. Assess the problem. Determine the priority for treatment by performing primary surveys on each patient followed by secondary surveys to determine appropriate medical care for each patient. With the possibility of a heart attack for Patient A, alert the base that this is a hurry case.

**Problem management:** Utilize the available people to assist with the patients and the equipment. Assign people according to their skill and experience. Direct bystanders to help secure the site, and assist with splinting and lifting if patrollers are not immediately available. Request the appropriate equipment. Have a plan of action based on the patients' conditions and the circumstances of the accident and the environment.

The main concern is the need to get Patient A to advanced life support as quickly as possible while still properly handling Patient B.

Patient A should be positioned so that he is comfortable. He should be transported while having oxygen administered to him. Transport Patient A in a sitting position unless the patient is more comfortable lying down, with his head downhill. Patroller assistance also will dictate the transportation decision. Patient B should be transported with the injury uphill.

It is essential that the necessary OEC skills are performed on both patients according to OEC performance guidelines. It is the leader's responsibility to ensure proper skill application by all helpers.

**Leadership:** Communication with both patients and available helpers is crucial. Patient A needs to be reassured about his wife's condition. Patient B needs to be reassured about her husband and treated quickly to avoid further complications with shock.

The leader must direct with confidence and a positive attitude.

Utilize all available helpers aggressively and effectively. Use a team approach and control the situation at all times. Give clear, simple directions.

## OEC Written Scenario 1

### General Scenario

A skier is out of control and goes off the slope at high speed. The skier strikes a tree, bounces off, and collides with a second tree with his lower body. He then lands on a rock. There is a witness to the accident and he has remained on the scene. The patient remains unresponsive throughout the scenario.

### Patient Information

#### Signs and Symptoms

The skier is unresponsive with slight bleeding from the nose. His skull is bruised on the side of the forehead, next to the temple. There is no response to pain. The left leg is at a 45 degree angle.

#### Vital Signs

	<b>Pulse</b>	<b>Respirations</b>
Initial	120	14
5 min.	126	18
10 min.	130	18 – secretions begin to affect breathing. Patient is gagging.
15 min.	128	14

#### Scenario Objectives

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.

## **OEC Written Scenario 2**

### **General Scenario**

A skier goes over a jump and crosses her skis when landing. This causes a hard, body-slam fall on a firm packed slope. The fall is on her right side.

### **Patient Information**

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

The patient is oriented to person, place, time, and event, but because of deepening shock she is not completely responsive. The patient's right rib case hurts a great deal, with more diffuse pain inside the chest cavity. She is coughing up pink sputum. Her breathing is difficult (rapid and shallow). Her right upper arm is also very painful.

#### **Vital Signs**

	<b>Pulse</b>	<b>Respirations</b>
Initial	96	26
5 min.	100	28
10 min.	106	30
15 min.	112	32

#### **Scenario Objectives**

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.

## **OEC Written Scenario 3**

### **General Scenario**

Three kids are goofing around and pushing each other while on the chair lift. One starts to fall, grabs hold of the other two, and all three fall from the chair (about 10 feet).

### **Patient Information**

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

**Patient A** – The patient may have broken ribs and is having some trouble breathing. He is sitting up and holding his arm to his chest (in a “V” position with his hand at the opposite shoulder). He is relatively comfortable in this position but feels a little nauseated. He blames the others for the accident.

**Patient B** – The patient has broken his glasses and complains of pain under his eyelid. Glass is in the eye. He blames the others for the accident.

**Patient C** – This patient is shaken and bruised but not injured. He blames the others for almost killing him. He is persistently distracting when not attended to.

### **Scenario Objectives**

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.

## **OEC Written Scenario 4**

### **General Scenario**

A 16 year old hits a “pop” fence, which causes a forward fall. When you arrive on the scene, the patient’s mental status is fuzzy. He doesn’t recall the accident but answers to his name. The patient is wearing a medical alert tag that says DIABETIC. he can move his jaw, and although it is painful, he is able to swallow with no airway obstruction.

### **Patient Information**

#### **Signs and Symptoms**

The patient is conscious of sharp, severe pain one inch anterior to the angle of the jaw. His teeth don’t mesh properly. The patient is insulin dependent. He took insulin that morning but skipped lunch.

#### **Vital Signs**

	<b>Pulse</b>	<b>Respirations</b>
Initial	68	18
5 min.	72	16
10 min.	72	14
15 min.	70	14

#### **Scenario Objectives**

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.



## **OEC Written Scenario 5**

### **General Scenario**

When you arrive on the scene, the skier tells you he lost control trying to jump a mogul, became airborne, and hit the tree with his right side. He is lying on a significant grade at the tree-lined edge of the slope.

### **Patient Information**

The patient is lying on his right side with the left ski off. The right hip is slightly flexed. He guards the right leg and will not allow the right hip to be extended. The skier complains persistently of groin/hip pain and keeps repeating that he has to go to the bathroom. He has severe pain upon pelvic compression and pain in the lower quadrants. A low pulse rise and increased general abdominal guarding occur. The patient becomes diaphoretic and increasingly insistent about having to void.

### **Vital Signs**

	<b>Pulse</b>	<b>Respirations</b>
Initial	100	22 and shallow.

Vitals rise gradually throughout the problem.

### **Scenario Objectives**

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.

## **OEC Written Scenario 6**

### **General Scenario**

You have just arrived on the scene of an accident involving a guest and an employee who was driving a snowmobile. A bystander states that a member of the snowmaking crew was driving his machinery very recklessly and that he forced the skier off the trail. The skier struck a snowmaking hydrant, then caught her left ski under a snowmaking pipe as she left the trail. The snowmobile operator has driven away.

### **Patient Information**

The skier is lying on her back with her head downhill. She complains of severe pain in the right upper leg and the left knee. She will not allow the left knee to be straightened.

### **Vital Signs**

	<b>Pulse</b>	<b>Respirations</b>
Initial	100	24

Vitals remain stable if patient is treated for shock or become 140 and 35 if not treated for shock.

### **Scenario Objectives**

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.

## OEC Written Scenario 7

### General Scenario

A novice skier was skiing out of control down an advanced slope. Another skier collided with the novice as he was finishing a turn. The novice (Patient A) is not moving. The other skier (Patient B) is sitting on the ground.

### Patient Information

Patient A is unresponsive and lying face down on the snow. He has blood running from his mouth and is having trouble breathing. The bleeding appears to be where he bit his tongue. Patient B is sitting on the ground complaining of pain in his shoulder. He is very rude and is yelling at the unresponsive skier.

### Vital Signs

#### Patient A

	Pulse	Respirations
Initial	+12	+4 They remain stable at that level.

### Vital Signs

#### Patient B

	Pulse	Respirations
Initial	Normal	Normal when calm
	Elevated	Elevated when not calm

### Scenario Objectives

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.

## OEC Written Scenario 8

### General Scenario

A skier who was jumping off a mogul struck two skiers who crossed his path. All three slid down the kill. One skier slid into the path of a snow grooming machine. The lift operator tells you about the accident as you come off the chair, including the fact that the accident happened 10 minutes earlier and that there are no other patrollers available to help. You grab a toboggan and take it to the accident.

### Patient Information

Patient A, the skier who jumped off the mogul, has pain in both lower legs; one is bleeding. He is very upset. and apologetic. He repeatedly says that he never saw the other skiers until it was too late. He is also the skier who hit the grooming machine.

Patient B is unresponsive when you arrive but comes around as you start to do the assessment. He is unclear about what caused the accident and gets upset when he sees that his friend has been further injured by hitting the grooming machine.

patient C has a large gash on the side of his neck; there is a pool of blood under him. His pupils are fixed and dilated.

### Vital Signs

#### Patient A and Patient B

##### Pulse

+16

##### Respirations

+6 above normal.

Vitals remain elevated throughout

### Vital Signs

#### Patient C

##### Pulse

None

##### Respirations

None

### Scenario Objectives

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.

## **OEC Written Scenario 9**

### **General Scenario**

You and another patroller are standing at the top of a chairlift where you observe two skiers trying to get off the lift. As they rise from the chair, the first skier begins to fall. He grabs for the second skier for support and they both fall. The second skier is hit on the back of the head by the chair as it swings around.

### **Patient Information**

Patient A is nervous and anxious about his friend's reaction to the accident. He complains of pain and tenderness in his right wrist and of pain when trying to move his fingers or wrist.

Patient B has a laceration on the back of his head from the chair, surrounded by some local tenderness, but he reports no generalized head or neck pain or problems with movement. He also complains of a knee that is sore from being twisted during the fall and says he heard it "pop" when falling. At some point during the interview, after the patient realizes he is bleeding, he tells you that he is HIV-positive. This is a cause for concern as you had contact with the blood before putting on your gloves.

### **Vital Signs**

Vitals are as found. (Use the vitals of the person acting as the patient in this scenario.)

### **Scenario Objectives**

Describe your actions as leader. What injuries do you suspect? What are your treatment and transport priorities? What other aspects of the scenario need your attention? Be sure to show how you would handle decision making, problem management, and leadership items.