

What makes a good responder?

1. Good Communicator: Once again we raise the issue of good communication. The ability to communicate well and express yourself in a clear manner, whether in writing or verbally is a crucial trait in a responder. Inaccurate, time consuming or confusing communication between responders can cause major problems to a team.

2. Self-Motivated: Most see being a responder and saving lives as a calling, if team members feel colleagues are poorly motivated this can create problems and ill feeling within the team. A good responder should never hesitates to take responsibility for a task and looks forward to the opportunity to help others.

3. Hard Worker: This goes hand in hand with the point made in the last paragraph. There is no substitute for hard work. Almost everyone that arrives for an interview will say that they work hard! The question is how hard do they work on a rainy Monday morning, it is hard find people who will keep their motivation and work rate up after being in the job for a while.

4. Adaptable/Decisive and Effective Learner: As a responder it's vitally important that you can learn from your mistakes, can recognize something isn't working and make a decision on the fly. Responders who know how to adjust themselves to a new environment, are willing to learn new things and are able perform to their best in difficult conditions, are likely to be the best responders.

5. Team Player: I love the comparison of response organizations to sports teams as often the relationships are quite similar. A new hire like a new player, who can adjust to being a fish in the organizations water, will become a useful resource far sooner than a person who sets themselves as an outsider.

6. Helping Others: It's obvious the roll of almost all responders is to help others, however this does not just apply to the public. This point is equally as poignant when looking at responders helping each other within a team. Everyone appreciates a helping hand! A new hire who does not hesitate in helping others, will establish friendly relationships within the team and keep everything running smoothly.

7. Polite: Responders often meet the public when they are at their most vulnerable, making a friendly and approachable demeanor very important. A good responder greets the public and their co workers with a 'good morning', says little courteous things like 'thank you' and 'you are welcome' this may seem insignificant but can go a long way.

8. Disciplined and Punctual: Every leader loves a punctual, disciplined and conscientious responder. We're all familiar with the phrase 'Time is money' in the response world time can also be a life. Responders who can manage their on and off call status and be on time is crucial to a well oiled response machine.