


- Greetings and thanks
- Overview of Rad and CVE

This presentation provides a framework for assessing and understanding the radicalization process and CVE programs & policies that could mitigate radicalization to violent extremism. It also highlights why community awareness is critical and what law enforcement should understand regarding the radicalization and mobilization of violent extremists.

T: Turning to some key definitions of the topics we will be discussing...



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## Key Definitions

**Radicalization**

- The process by which individuals come to believe that their engagement in or facilitation of nonstate violence to achieve social and political change is necessary and justified.

**Mobilization**

- The process by which radicalized individuals take action to prepare for or engage in violence or material support for non-state violence to achieve social or political change.

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- Explain the importance of understanding the definitions.
- These are two separate processes. Individuals can be radicalized but never mobilize to violence or it may take years to actually decide to engage in or provide support to a violent act.
- Radicalization
  - Deals with the thoughts of an individual = not subject to investigation
  - Influenced by several factors at different levels (will discuss in detail in the next slide)
- Mobilization
  - Deals with the actions of an individual = can be illegal acts
  - Preoperational behavior with different roles (will discuss further in presentation)

T: Now that we have the definitional base, lets talk about the radicalization process in depth...

Source:

These definitions are from *Radicalization Dynamics Primer* (2015)



Tee-up: Key to our understanding of the process of radicalization to violence is our rad model aka the upside down snowman.

A review of academia and cases studies illustrates that the complexity in the radicalization process cannot be captured by a simple, linear framework explanation. We view radicalization and mobilization as two distinct processes that should be examined separately, as most individuals who radicalize never act on their beliefs or do not act violently until years later, and these processes are driven by separate factors.

Key takeaways from this model are:

- 1) Radicalization and mobilization are separate processes,
- 2) Fluid process, not linear or static
- 3) Most people who radicalize never mobilize
- 4) in some instances people can mobilize without radicalizing
- 5) this model is applicable to all forms of extremism
- 6) the factors that influence one person's radicalization are unique to that individual, therefore there is no one profile of a terrorist

Turning to a more in-depth look at the factors ...



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## Drivers of Radicalization

Ideological      Personal      Sociopolitical

Group      Community

Thoughts are protected, no matter how extreme.  
Someone could have some or all of these factors and  
not radicalize to violence.

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### **T: ASK: How does someone radicalize to violence, how does it begin?**

Again, we assess that *no single factor* fully explains the radicalization process of any particular individual. Some factors are common among the radicalization paths of most individuals, but by themselves do not explain why one individual turns to violence and another does not. This process is often the result of an interplay of many factors.

Radicalization factors can be both positive and negative and include:

- Ideological: appeal of a justifying narrative, charismatic ideologues
  - Example: watching a terrorist propaganda video and being persuaded (often provides the language through which grievances are expressed and violence is justified)
- Personal factors: psychology, demographic background, personal history
  - Example: revenge, ie the response to being bullied or perceived marginalization or the desire for purpose
- Sociopolitical: Collective grievances, foreign policy, external events
  - Example: US foreign policy, Conflict zones overseas
- Group factors: social networks, and group dynamics

- Example: Group think, peer pressure, feeling of belonging
- Community: feelings of broader alienation or marginalization
  - Example: hearing that members of your community are being profiled and discriminated against

The interplay of these factors can provide the perfect storm of grievances and justification for violence

**Source:** NCTC Product, Radicalization Dynamics: A Primer, June 2012  
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**Tee-up: It is important to note that radicalization and mobilization are fueled by grievances be they real or perceived. A few key points about grievances include:**

**1) Events are increasingly Local:**

A factor or even the catalyst in an individual's radicalization process may not be local. Perceptions are powerful and many extremists cite similar grievances as powerful factors in their radicalization process and mobilization. Events have become increasingly local and issues affecting a community in one country/city are exposed to crises affecting that community anywhere.

- For example: Crises affecting Muslims in one context or by events perceived to be anti-Islamic—for example the cartoon issue in Europe, anti-Islam film made in the US, etc.—can become widespread and quickly increase in intensity among those affected worldwide.

**2) Personal Experience Not Necessary:**

An individual does not need to personally experience an event to identify/empathize/or feel threatened by it if they feel belonging or allegiance to the group perceived to be under attack, especially if the group under perceived threat holds an identity that transcends national borders.

- This explains, in part, why we see extremists with a variety of personal, financial, educational, and ethnic backgrounds becoming involved in terrorism.

3) Extremists leverage real grievances to gain interest/attention but provide violence as the only solution.

Local and Global Grievances Commonly Cited:

- US Foreign Policy
- US Presence in Iraq and Afghanistan or issues related other conflict zones (Bosnia, Chechnya, Kashmir)
- Drones
- Treatment of Muslim Prisoners, Especially female
- Real or perceived Persecution

**T: The variety of factors and grievances is in part why we see no one profile of a terrorist.**













**Tee-up: Turning to mobilization, we have identified four factors that are critical to a person’s mobilization.**

- 1) Opportunity: ability to undertake training and gather resources
    - Example: Target practice or traveling abroad to a training camp
  - 2) Capability: ability to carry out intentions and gives the confidence to do so
    - Example: previous military training, access to weapons or other materials
  - 3) Targets: locations of familiarity or interest to the individual
    - Example: Attacking a Planned Parenthood Center because it represents the political issue of abortion
  - 4) Readiness to Act: how motivated is the individual? What is going on in their life that may spur them to action?
- Note: In most cases there are multiple factors that simultaneously affect a individual’s mobilization

**Discuss Mobilization Steps:**


What are some examples of targets, opportunity, and capability?

**Discuss indicator pitfalls:**

- 1) *No single indicator is confirmation of mobilization. Instead we see these behaviors as a pattern when observed together. Mobilization like radicalization is highly individualized and a checklist approach will lead to error*
- 2) Focusing exclusively on a single indicator may alienate individuals and contribute to grievances that could speed mobilization rather than stopping it.

**T: Let's talk more about the process from radicalization to violent action ...**

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## Mobilization to Violent Action

- How does a radicalized individual transition to engaging in violence?
  - Catalysts & Inhibitors
- Mobilized individual develops: Perception of threat, identification of target, belief in ability to change status quo
- Engaging in violent extremism entails:
  - Planning or carrying out violence
  - Supporting violence
  - Inciting violence

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**Tee-up: Mobilization to violence is often impacted by catalysts (or promoters) and inhibitors:**

**Catalysts: pushing towards mobilization**

**Inhibitors: slowing or reversing the move toward mobilization**

1) Examples of catalysts include: social media, other internet applications, familial and social networks

Examples of inhibitors can include: Law enforcement, community outreach, credible voices, family

2) Individuals can be pushed to act through a perceived threat:

- An event that makes someone think his or her core values or interests are threatened
  - Example: Crisis or apocalyptic narratives
- A perceived identification of the source of the personal threat – creates the target
- Typically a belief that there is a chance of altering the status quo that contributed to the threat
- NOTE: Individuals from marginalized communities are less resilient to radicalization but there is no profile or single defining characteristic

3) Planning or carrying out violence

- Requires training and capability

Supporting violence:

- Assisting attackers through financial or logistical means – think “Material Support”

Inciting violence

- Encouraging others to commit violence – Example: social media usage

**T: What is one of the largest tools that furthers this process? The Internet...**



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## The Internet as a Tool of Mobilization

- Tailored messaging to Americans in English
- Sophisticated use of several social media websites and apps
- Recruitment has transitioned from one-way to multi-way interaction
- Online mobilization and operational instructions online are publically accessible
- ISIL is extremely adept online

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**Tee-up: The use of the internet and social media is a common tool terrorists use to spread propaganda, recruit, and facilitate mobilization.**

- Mobilization and operational instructions online include:
  - Communications security
  - Tradecraft
  - Explosives and weapons
  - Travel advice – how to get across the border
- Most violent extremist groups have some sort of internet presence but ISIL is exceptionally adept spreading its message via social media
  - It is also extremely skilled at recruiting online.
  - It harnesses multiple online tools.
  - Uses messaging to point out divisive issues - ISIL monitors issues in the countries from which it tries to recruit.

**T: :Let's turn to a case study of the process we have outlined...**







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## Pop Quiz

- **What are the factors of Radicalization?**
  - Personal
  - Group
  - Community
  - Sociopolitical
  - Ideological

**What are some examples?**


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- Personal factors: psychology, demographic background, personal history
  - Example: response to being bullied or perceived marginalization
- Group factors: social networks, and group dynamics
  - Example: Getting in with a bad group of kids at school
- Community: feelings of broader alienation or marginalization
  - Example: hearing that members of your community are being profiled and discriminated against by TSA
- Sociopolitical: Collective grievances, foreign policy, external events
  - Example: reactions after the Paris attacks, US foreign policy
- Ideological: appeal of a justifying narrative, charismatic ideologues
  - Example: watching a terrorist propagand video and being persuaded

**T: We covered radicalization so let's move to the second stage – mobilization...**

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## Pop Quiz

- **What are the dynamics of Mobilization?**
  - Targeting, Opportunity, Capability, and Readiness to Act
- **Is there a single indicator or trait that indicates radicalization?**
  - No, there is NOT one single indicator.

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# Questions?

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The image shows a slide from a presentation. At the top left is the National Counterterrorism Center logo, which features an eagle with wings spread, holding an olive branch and arrows, with a shield on its chest. The text 'NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER' is written around the eagle. To the right of the logo, the text 'UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOUO~~' is displayed. Below this, a dark blue horizontal bar contains the text 'NATIONAL COUNTERTERRORISM CENTER' in white. The main body of the slide is white and contains the word 'Questions?' in a large, bold, blue font. At the bottom right of the slide, the number '13' is visible. At the bottom center, the text 'UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOUO~~' is repeated.