



Team Leaders and the OODA Loop

NATIONAL TACTICAL OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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Objectives

- Understand Law Enforcement Crises
- Boyd's Cycle – Analyzed in Detail
- Review the Tactical decision-making Process
- Understand how the “LOOP” relates to controlled entries, officer-down & creating tactical dilemmas.



“To Be or To Do.”

- Col. John Boyd

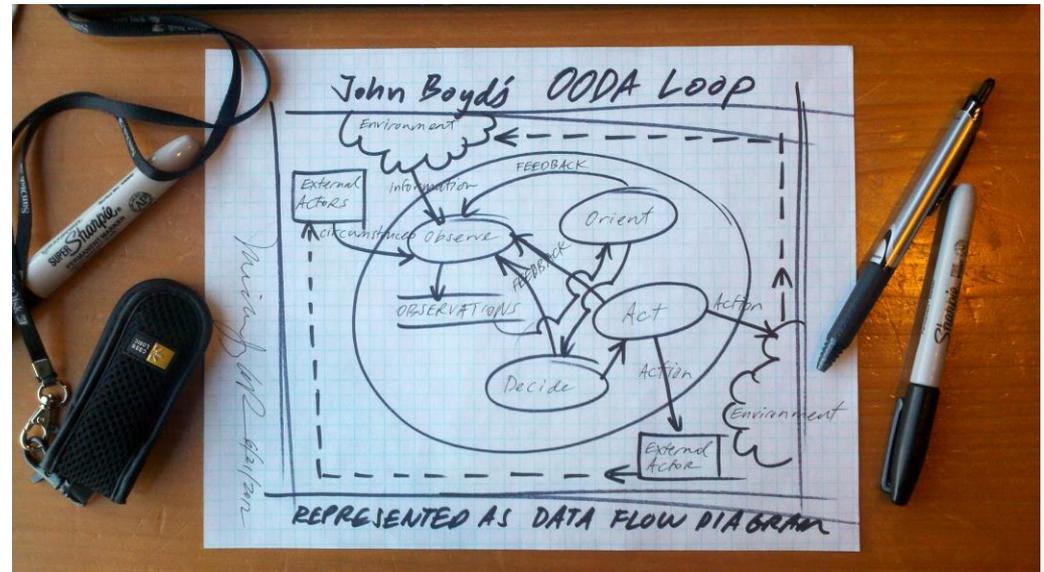


Simplified Model

Law Enforcement

- Colonel John Boyd (USAF) did research on the cycle that your mind must follow in order to make proper decisions, known as the O.O.D.A. Loop.

- Observe
- Orient
- Decide
- Act



Understanding the Reaction Time Cycle = Improved Operator / Team Survival Skills & Tactical Advantage



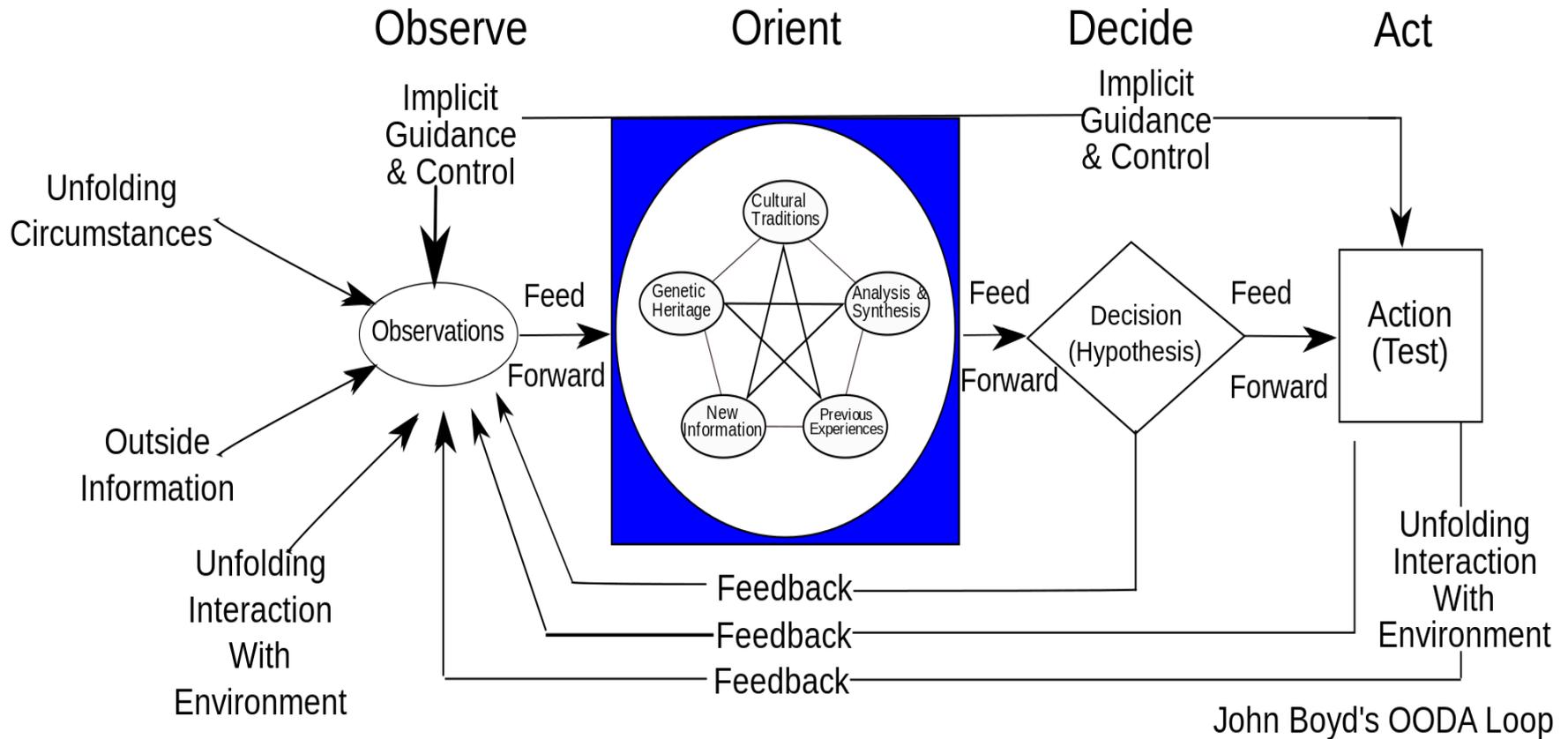
OODA Loop

- Orientation shapes observation, decision, action, and in turn is shaped by the feedback and other phenomena coming into our sensing or observing window.
- The entire loop (not just orientation) is an on-going many sided implicit cross-referencing process of projection, empathy, correlation, and rejection. Competitive advantage comes from quickness over the entire loop, not just or even primarily from the O-O-D-A sequence.

From "The Essence of Winning and Losing," John R. Boyd, January 1996

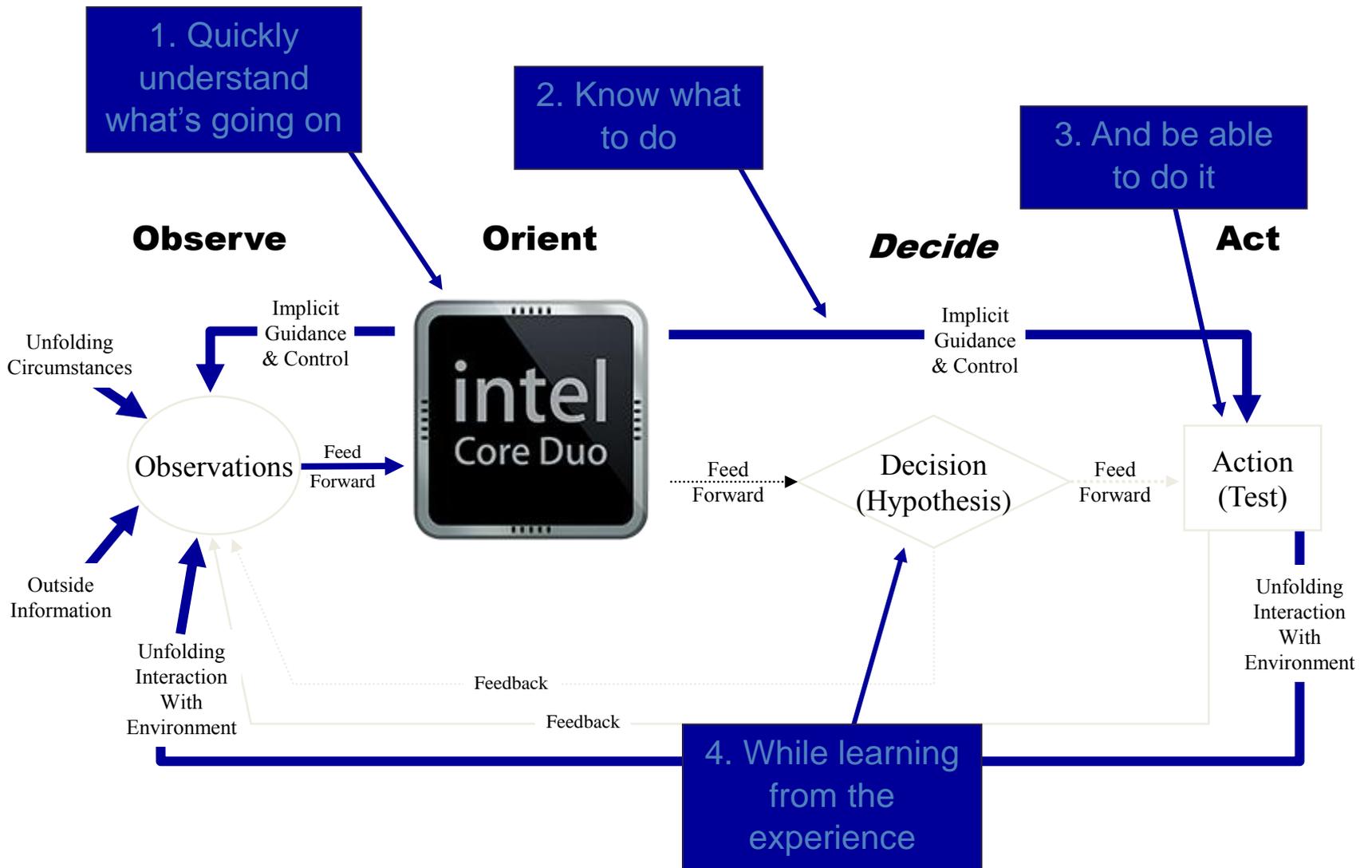


Boyd's OODA Loop



What OODA “Loop” speed really means?





Operating Inside their OODA Loop!

- **Definition**

Changing the situation more rapidly than the other side can comprehend.



Operating Inside their OODA Loop!

- **Typical Effects**

- “It’s like they’re moving in slow motion.” Boyd describing “operating inside opponents’ OODA loops.”
- “It’s like you’re commanding both sides.” Common impression of a successful cheng / ch’i operation. [cheng - “orthodox, expected,” while ch’i - “unorthodox, unexpected, shocking.” By operating inside an opponent’s OODA loop, you will find it much easier to set up and exploit cheng / ch’i situations.]



Is it Art or Science?

It is more science than art!

- The military has recognized this for a long time. There are tactics and concepts that work and some that don't!
- We can apply science and “OODA Loop” to the officer down response, SWAT entry work & our tactics!



Warrior Science

- Sympathetic Nervous System – Triggers
 - Objective Threat/Fear - Our perceptions
 - Most of our perceptual processing, or how we analyze and evaluate information and clues is through our *vision*.
 - Better processing with ***TIME, DISTANCE, and COVER!***
- Sharpening the Warrior's Edge" by Bruce K. Siddle*



Tactical Problems

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Officer Down Responses
- Basic Room Entries
- Creation & Use of Tactical Dilemmas

Training and experience help us speed through loops!



Officer Down Response

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Return fire (target specific) + diversions
- Step over
- Extract officer – safe area – “cover”
- Assess urgency of care
- Evacuate
- Control team/operators
- Conduct a roll call (advise CP)

**Immediate Action
Drill. Trained by
everyone!**

Recognize that we
are already behind
the suspect's OODA
Loop, because an
officer is down!



Why Change?

**Loop considerations will
improve our tactics!**



New Officer Down Response

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- **Flank (officer movement on suspect)**
- Return/**suppressive** fire (target specific)
- **Diversions**
- **Drag** – step over – blocking
- Extract officer – safe area – “cover!” (**continue diversions**)
- Assess urgency of care
- Evacuate
- Control team/operators
- Conduct a roll call (advise CP)

Immediate Action Drill. Trained by everyone!

Recognize that we are already behind the suspect's OODA Loop, because an officer is down!



Tactical Room Entries

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Should Be Mission Based.
- The Loop Should Be Used.
- To increase officer safety,
improve decision-making process
and assessment time!



Controlled Entries

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Dynamic entries have a large OODA loop due to a large and ever changing amount of information that must be processed.
- The suspect's loop is substantially smaller.
- **THE SUSPECT ALWAYS HAS THE ADVANTAGE.**



Controlled Entries

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Distance and cover are our friends. Dynamic Entries negate distance, cover, and compress our OODA Loop.
- “The suspects loop is smaller and more focused.” Chief Randy Watt (NTOA Conference, 2008)



Controlled Entries

Suspect Contact

- Improve Loop Skills
- Suspect Evaluation Process (during contact)
- Whole Person
- Hands
- Scan Waist Band
- Suspect's Demeanor
- Surroundings
- Use your Officer Instincts



Controlled Entries

Suspect Contact & Movement

- Use contact & cover S.O.P.'s
- Two officers to a room and one to post: built into S.O.P.'s
- Only move as fast as you can think, process information, and shoot accurately



Controlled Entries

Suspect Contact & Movement

- Cover off on the angles with your partner
- Make good decisions
- Maintain situational awareness
- **Think, communicate & listen!**



Controlled Entries

Fatal Funnel or Assessment Tool

- Friend or Foe? Last piece or cover concealment?
- Where do we want to get into the gun fight?
- **Use of the threshold! Threshold assessment!**



Controlled Entries

Fatal Funnel or Assessment Tool

- Why leave...last piece of cover or concealment?
- When ready or mission dictates!
- Assess and move into the room with your partner.



Controlled Entries

Threshold Assessment = Officer Safety

- Recognize how our mind/body works as it relates to processing information, then assess & move.
- We have a built in response time and we should plan our tactics around it.
- At a threshold, improve your ability to respond to threats and move through your LOOP.



Controlled Entries

Interior Movement – Final Thoughts!

- The deeper into the floor plan we go, the greater the chance of resistance – “***Last Room!***”
- What is our response to worst case scenarios?
Officer Down; Shots-Fired; Cross-Fire
- **Hostage Rescue and Active Shooter = Different Mind Set!**



Team Leaders and SWAT Teams need to understand how to use and create Tactical Dilemmas!



Tactical Dilemmas

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Creating dilemmas has proven to be very effective over time – *The Art of War*.
- We confront the suspect with a choice between disagreeable alternatives.
- Tactics that force the suspect into the position where surrender is likely and resistance is futile.



Tactical Dilemmas

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Exploitation of **Space** and **Time**.
 - Space - Suspect can't stay & can't move.
 - Time – Suspect is deprived of the ability to react effectively.



Tactical Dilemmas

SPACE

1. SWAT has positions of advantage (Containment/
Crossfire)
2. Chemical Agents
3. Deceptive Diversions – FSDD (rear), SWAT “Rock”
4. Combined Arms – Joining multiple weapons systems
(Lethal/Less Lethal)
5. Value of Space – High intensity lights, smoke



Tactical Dilemmas

TIME

1. Surprise – Unexpected time or place.
2. Physiological Diversion – FSDD's near the suspect.
3. Use of Tactics – Porting, Breach & Hold, etc.



Tactical Dilemmas

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- **The suspect always has a say!**
- Assume the suspect has taken a position of tactical advantage!
- Be effective in your choices of dilemmas, don't create fog and/or confusion within the team.
- Use dilemmas that combine space/time.
- Think and plan head (Action, Reaction, Counter-action).



Tactical Dilemmas

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- Creating **tactical dilemmas** that impact the suspect's OODA Loop(s) is an important part of solving tactical problems such as arresting a barricaded suspect, serving a high-risk warrant and rescuing hostages.
- However, we can have too many working parts and overload our own loops causing our own fog and creating **tactical confusion**.



Tactical Dilemmas

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- The **red flags** of **tactical confusion**, while trying to plan tactical dilemmas are more than four working parts during an operation.
- **Example:** Plan calls for (1) a call inside, (2) explosive breach on the front door, (3 & 4) window porting on two sides and (5 & 6) dynamic entry back & front all at the same time.



Tactical Dilemmas

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- **Tactical confusion** is the negative result of too many working parts, while properly planned and executed tactical dilemmas assist us in meeting our operational goals.
- During hostage rescue operations we may increase the risk we take to create diversions or separation between the suspect & hostage.



Tactical Dilemmas

Applying Boyd's OODA Loop

- **Communication** between the working parts of entry/containment and command is very important. Tactics should be evaluated based on the worst case scenario & suspect's possible actions (hostage separation or shots fired & officer down).



“To subdue the enemy
without fighting is the
supreme excellence.”

- Sun Tzu



Time Tested Tactics

- SWAT “Rocks”
- Chemical Agents
- Porting
- FSDD’s, Stingball
- Ladders
- Less Lethal
- Sniper Over-Watch
- Phone
- Negotiations Team
- Stealth Probe
- Covert Entry
- Breach & Hold
- K-9
- High Intensity Lights
- Pole Camera
- Tactical Cameras
- Ballistic Blankets
- Bear Cat



Tactical Advice

Sun Tzu & Col. John Boyd

- “The best commander or team leader is one who wins while avoiding battle” – Col. John Boyd
- “Unravel the enemy before the battle” – Sun Tzu
- “A commander should use two thrusts, either of which could attain the objective” – Sun Tzu
- **Finally, Boyd says – “*Think about operating at a quicker tempo – not just operating faster*”**



Questions?



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