

HEADWOR



Fourteen Real-Life Chances to Use
Your Head for Something Other
Than a Hat Rack

No matter what you're doing, **headwork** is a factor

What is headwork?

- making choices based on sound reasoning
- good judgment
- choosing workable courses of action
- making good decisions about common-sense risks under pressure or when in a hurry



What exactly does poor **headwork** look like?

This training gives you a chance to study situations before you see the photo. How would you manage the challenges? The scenarios fall into these categories:

- Judgment compromised by haste (“Get’r done!”)
- Right tools aren’t available
- Ingenious? Or un-genius?
- PPE doesn’t make you invincible
- Worst case isn’t impossible
- Just because it worked once doesn’t make it a good idea



Discussion: Before you see the photo

- What are the risks?
- What are the best ways to manage them?



Discussion: After you see the photo

- What are they doing wrong?
- Are they doing anything right?
- What should they have done?
- Why do you think the people involved made the decisions they did?
- Would you be prone to similar lapses in judgment?



#1: The **worst-case** isn't impossible

- The 4th of July is approaching.
- You want to sell fireworks from a roadside stand.
- What dangers are associated with fireworks?
- List some things to avoid having around fireworks to reduce risk.





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Discussion

- Are gas-storage tanks foolproof?
- Has there ever been a fire at a fireworks stand?
- Does anyone know the term “explosive arc” in relation to weapons handling? Has anyone been part of a weapons-handling working party? Do you remember the precautions?
- Why do we extinguish “the smoking lamp” for ammo handling or fueling?



#2: The **worst-case** isn't impossible, part 2

- You're on vacation at a glacier.
- You want a piece of ice as a souvenir (assuming it would look different or better than a regular piece of ice available at your motel)
- A warning sign says, "Do not enter" and some other stuff that you may or may not bother to read.
- What are the risks of walking up to a glacier?





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Discussion

- Is there a reason why warning signs don't apply to you?
- Do they not apply if you want to ignore them for “just a minute”?
- Why would you want a piece of ice? What would you do with it?



#3: The **right tools** aren't available

- You have to clean some windows that are accessible only from the entrance ramp to a parking garage.
- You have a ladder that is long enough.
- What are the risks of putting up a ladder at the entrance to the garage?
- Is it your experience that drivers always pay attention and drive slowly enough to keep control of their cars?





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Discussion

- Would you stake your life on this by climbing up that ladder?
- Have you ever noticed all the black marks and paint scratched off the concrete poles that protect the pumps at gas stations?
- Could the workers involved have made better decisions?
- Why did they choose not to do so?
- How hard is it to find some of those little orange cones or, better yet, station someone to guide traffic?



#4: The **right tools** aren't available, part 2

- You need to do some mechanical work underneath a car.
- You don't have a garage with an automatic lift.
- You do have a pair of forklifts.
- You have never seen a forklift tip over, so they must have some kind of counter weight in back.





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Discussion

- Are forklifts (especially antiques, like that one on the left) foolproof?
- Would you stand under this car?



#5: The **right tools** aren't available, part 3

- You're digging in a trench.
- The walls are dirt with large rocks embedded in them.
- A rock might fall on your head.
- Your supervisor has a hardhat, but you don't.





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Discussion

- Why didn't the other guy give you his hard hat and get out of there?
- If buckets are such a great idea, why don't they do away with hard hats and just use buckets instead?



#7: The **right tools** aren't available, part 4

- You need to do some work in the overhead at an airport.
- You need to reach something that is 16 feet high.
- Your stepladder is 10 feet high.
- Your arms are six feet above your shoes.





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Discussion

- If you were supervising people doing this work, what could you have told them to reduce the risk of “clever” solutions?
- What does the “Not” in “Not-a-Step” mean?
- Did this person think that the warning label didn’t apply to him or was only for “stupid” or uncoordinated people?
- How good is your sense of balance?



#8: The **right tools** aren't available, part 5

- You have to drill holes at the 8' level in a compartment.
- You don't have a stepladder, or you are too lazy to move it around with you while you climb up and down.
- You have some plastic, 5-gallon buckets and some tape.





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Discussion

- Is not having to use a ladder worth being four times as clumsy?
- Should the manufacturers of plastic buckets add a warning label that says, “Caution: Do Not Use as a Ladder”?



#9: **Judgment** compromised by haste

- You're commuting home on a toll road and are approaching the toll booth.
- So is another guy.
- You are neck-and-neck.
- You are in a hurry.
- You figure he will probably yield the right-of-way to you.





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Discussion

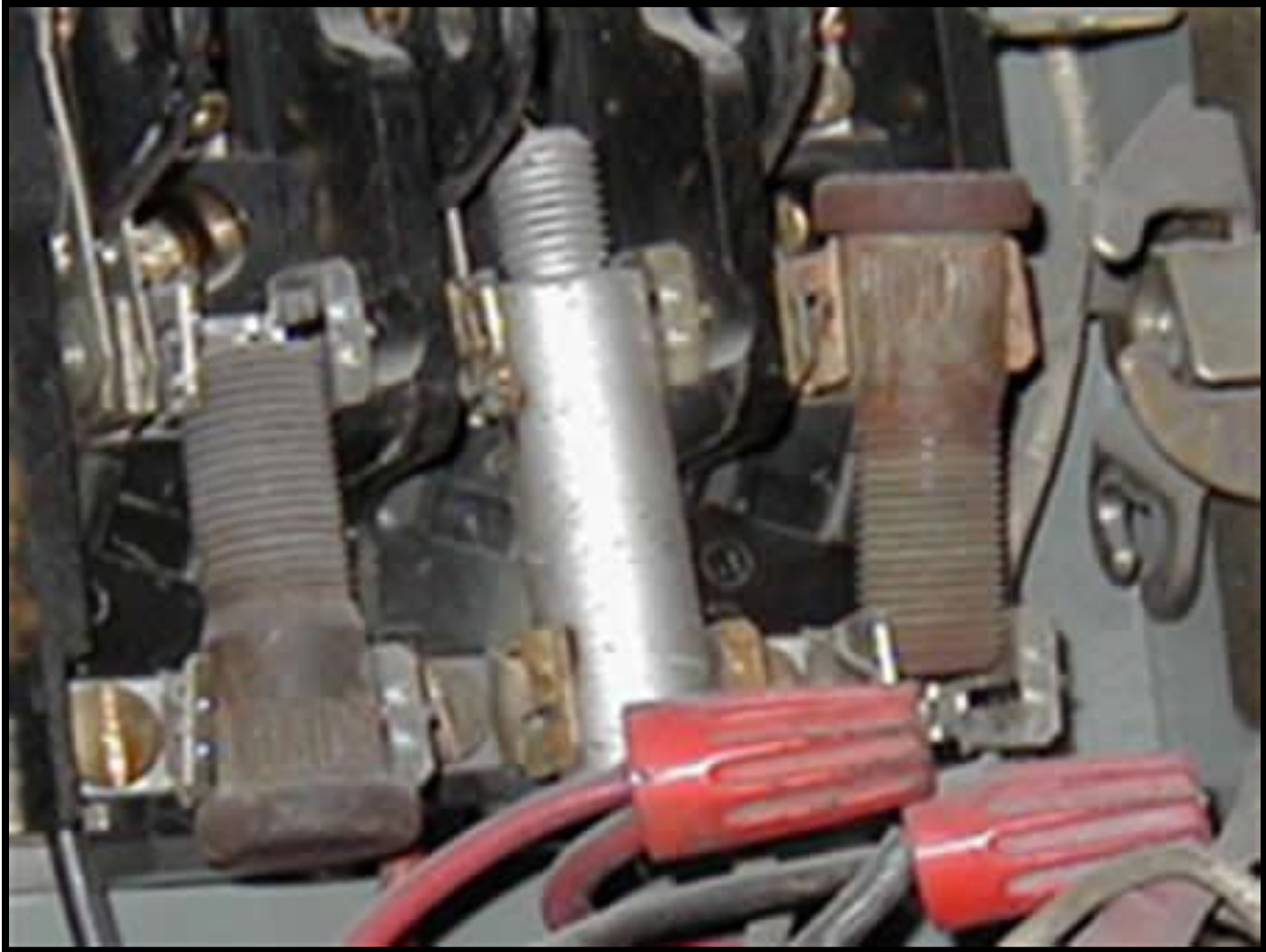
- Which driver was in a greater hurry?
- Who paid the toll?
- Calculate the ratio of the total cost of the car repairs to the value of the time that would have been saved by being first to the toll booth.
- How would you explain this to a state trooper?



#10: Judgment compromised by **haste**, part 2

- The fuses keep blowing, killing power to some equipment you're using.
- You are tired of replacing them, only to have them blow again.
- Why do we have fuses and circuit breakers in electrical equipment?
- What is the riskiest or worst thing you can do now?





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Discussion

- Just because something appears to work in the short-term, does that mean it is safe for the long-term?
- Why were the fuses blowing in the first place?
- Are electricians extinct in that part of the country?



#11: Judgment compromised by **haste**, part 3

- It has been raining heavily for several days.
- News reports indicate that some roads are under water.
- You need to cross one such road and aren't sure exactly how deep it is.
- What would go through your mind about what to do next?
- Are there any circumstances under which it makes sense to "risk it?"





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Discussion

- Because you can say, “So far, so good,” does that mean it will last forever?
- Which takes longer, going around or calling a tow truck and waiting for your vehicle to dry out?



#12: **Ingenious?** Or Un-Genius?

- You have to do some work on the front of a grocery store.
- You have about half as much scaffold as you need.
- You have a workstand.
- You have a large front-end loader.
- You have always admired high-wire acts.





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Discussion

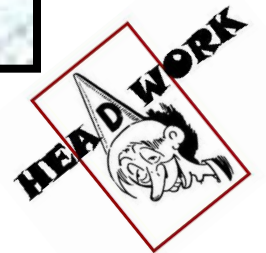
- Just because a machine is designed to lift something, does that mean it can (or should) lift anything?
- Would you have put a stepladder on the very top if you needed to get even higher?



#13: **Ingenious?** Or Un-Genius?, part 2

- It is spring break.
- You desperately want to impress your peers and the ladies, not necessarily in that order.
- Or perhaps you have been drinking so much you aren't sure what you are thinking.
- You have a tiny little scooter.
- Another guy has a jacked-up truck with giant wheels.





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Discussion

- Is there some reason the driver will never have to slam on the brakes?
- What kind of chick would be attracted to a guy like this?



#14: Just because it worked once doesn't make it a **good idea**

- You have a motorcycle.
- You have a t-shirt with an excellent slogan printed on it.
- You ride to a store.
- What is the quickest way to show people that safety is not on your mind as you ride your motorcycle?





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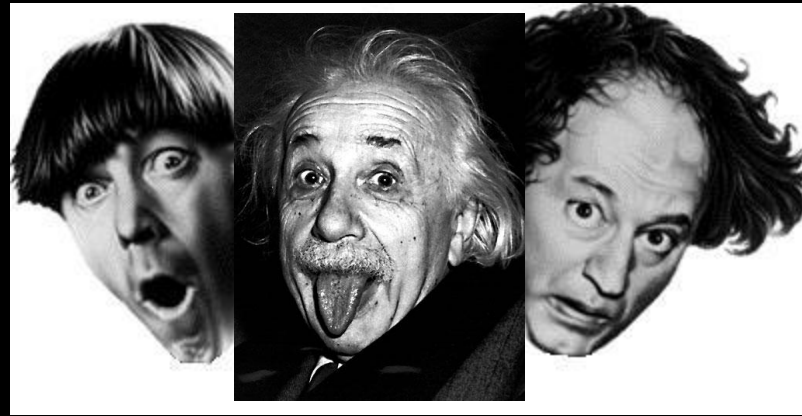


Discussion

- If you “think safety,” wouldn’t you want to protect the part of your body that does the thinking?
- Is he wearing this t-shirt to be ironic, or does he think “safety” is just for other people who are not as skilled as he is?
- Even if he knows what “ironic” means, does it make any sense to illustrate it this way?



The End



Your mission: Make common sense a lot more common than it seems to be