



DIFFERENT ROLES FOR TWO CERT TRAINING CLASSES

AN EDITORIAL BY SAMANTHA HENLEY

I recently learned a new term: Team Teaching, which is defined as, “All arrangements that include two or more faculty in some level of collaboration in the planning and delivery of a course” Davis, J. R., 1995. Interdisciplinary Courses and Team Teaching: New Arrangements for Learning.

This term perfectly describes the method used in Community Emergency Response Team training courses. Having attended both the Benton County, MO CERT and Camden County, MO CERT training classes, I noticed similarities of printed material, information dissemination, team teaching, practices, and class sizes. However, the difference was startling from the role of student (for the Camden CO MO CERT class) to teacher (for the BC MO CERT class) during two and a half weeks of overlap.

I met numerous members of Fire, Sheriff, and EMS from several cities during CERT training. The CERT program coordinators strive to have professionals in these areas teach the parts they work in so trainees receive the first-hand information on sections such as fire safety, medical triage, disaster psychology, search and rescue, and terrorism.

As a student, I worked to learn all of the specific operating procedures, such as the 9-step sizeup process. I also focused on learning how to keep myself and my "buddy" safe in situations we may find ourselves. Our instructors were tough on us and continued our practices until we were confident in our abilities.

As a teacher, I saw the importance of making sure new CERT members learned that these procedures are put in place to keep members safe. I strove to assist in illustrating this when I helped Marie and Martha teach their most recent class.

If a CERT trainee struggled with a part of the course, we all worked together to help them learn. If a CERT trainee didn't understand the reason for completing a task a certain way, we worked with them until we were all confident with the correct answer. We encouraged them to ask questions, promoted group discussions, and created a pleasant atmosphere for learning.

One of my favorite practices within both counties' programs is to have past trainees return to help teach the next class. Not only does this reinforce what a trainee learns, it also gives them the same unique opportunity I had: To serve as both student and teacher!

Thank you to CERT Coordinators Marie Payne-Bowman (Benton) and Eric Hoover (Camden) for the experiences!