

LOOK AT ME!
(A guide to self examination as NCS)

EMCOMM operators are frequently called upon to act as NCS with little or no advance warning. To prepare for these events or incidents, we regularly hold different types of Nets, that have the potential for being anything from poorly conducted to very efficient. By what standard do we measure how well we conduct these nets? Some of you are experienced NCS's and others are just getting started. Some of you have yet to volunteer to practice as an NCS, but understand you might want to volunteer in a real emergency, because you are a caring person who wants to help out if you can.

This evening, I want to share with you the idea of self evaluation. While it is good to have the review of your peers, some things we can only grasp by looking in the mirror. Self examination is based on talking to yourself, and yes believe it or not, you even need to answer yourself. If you have never served as an NCS, you can still benefit from many parts of the examination. Let's get right in front of the mirror now, and ask ourselves some questions. If you can get a paper and pencil I want you to have some fun with this. Number your paper 1-19. You will answer most questions with simply a Y for yes or an N for No. There won't be much writing required to have a little fun with this.

First the yes items - can you answer yes to all of these

1. If it was a scheduled net, did I start the net **on time**?
2. Was I **well enough** prepared?
3. Did I **go by** a script?
4. Did I handle Traffic **appropriately**? If you did not ask the receiving station to call the sending station to handle their traffic, you might think about whether a yes answer is appropriate or not.
5. Did I use my microphone **correctly**? Here are the qualifiers.
 - a. No huff and puff sounds, No breathing sounds, my audio output was at a consistent level. Did I talk across the mic or directly into it?
 - b. No (or at least minimal) background noise was present.
6. Did I allow **enough** time for net participants to reply? A consistent four to five second wait is necessary for a yes.
7. Did I **ask for relays** as appropriate? If you missed a weak station and didn't ask for a relay. The answer is not yes.
8. Did I handle the relay station appropriately. If you recognized someone who just blurted it out, instead of calling on the one who said, RELAY and politely waited to be recognized, you might just go ahead and put the big NO on this one.
9. Did I handle acknowledgments **correctly**?
 - a. Not **repeating phonetics**, unless needed to confirm a call you're unsure about.
 - b. Recognizing participants **by name** whenever possible.
10. Did I speak in **first person** during acknowledgments? ("Net would like to recognize" is not first person) Just a simple K5WTH, Tom.

11. Did I handle "**doubles**" properly? For instance, when there was a double, did I try to get **something unique** from one or more of the stations? Then call for clarification from those stations **ONLY**. If your doubles are doubling, you probably shouldn't put a yes on this one either.
12. Did I treat **each person** as an important and valuable member of the group?

No items - can you answer no to all of these

13. Did I over identify?
14. Was I overly talkative?
15. Did I seem in a hurry?
16. Did I make too many editorial comments on others comments?
17. Did I seem to be under stress?
18. Did I seem to "get lost" and have to think (or mumble) on the air (dead air time)?

Overall:

19. Were you comfortable with the net?
20. What specific things could I do to improve myself as a NCS?

Correct answers are YES for 1-12. No on 12-18, 19 should be a yes.

Correct answers on 1-19 are all worth 5 points, and if you thought of at least one thing, that you see you need to improve on, and documented it on number 20, it is worth 10 points. If you have reviewed yourself and can't list any needed improvements for question 20, then deduct 10 points.

NOTE: Just because you didn't see a need for improvement doesn't mean it doesn't exist. It simply means you need to look in the mirror a little closer. **NO_ONE** is perfect. You don't have to tell anyone how you scored. The important thing is that you will score better next time, because you have been willing, to take a look into the mirror. For what it is worth, it is highly unlikely for anyone to score 100% on this self examination. 80 points or 80% percent or better just means you are ready for a more difficult exam. In case you are wondering I used the fuzzy math on purpose.