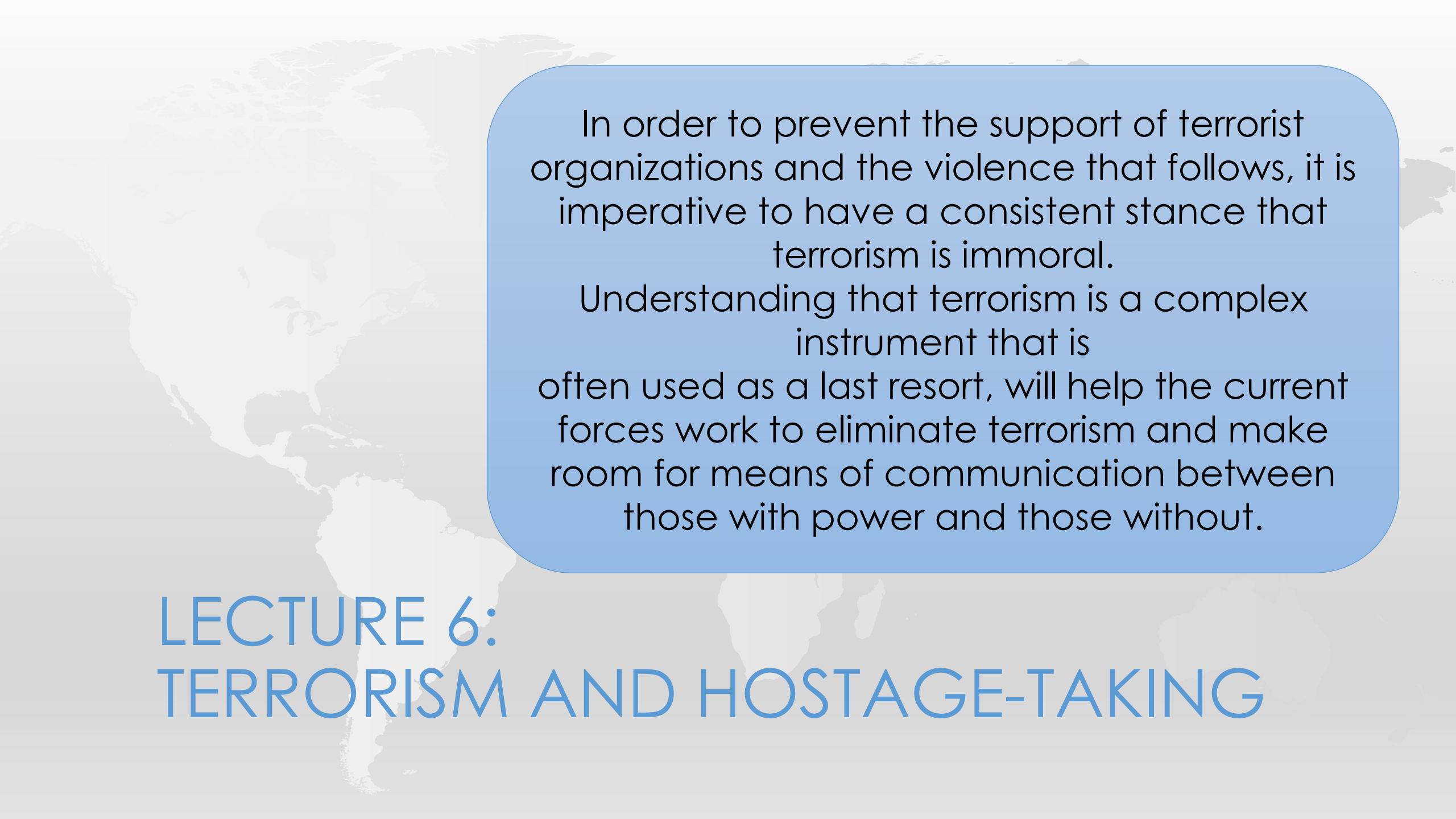




In order to prevent the support of terrorist organizations and the violence that follows, it is imperative to have a consistent stance that terrorism is immoral.

Understanding that terrorism is a complex instrument that is often used as a last resort, will help the current forces work to eliminate terrorism and make room for means of communication between those with power and those without.

LECTURE 6: TERRORISM AND HOSTAGE-TAKING

INTRODUCTION



- It is a common misconception that terrorism is a new approach to warfare; terrorism has existed as a form of war throughout history. The reason that terrorism may seem more prevalent is due to technology and factors that this development precipitated.
- Large scale weapons enable terrorism to transform from small localized attacks to large scale international attacks with high numbers of casualties and the spread of widespread fear.
- One primary goal is to make a statement and reach a particular audience. With the development of technology, long range communication and travel is easier. The idea of terrorism is more appealing to the potential terrorist because they are able to reach a worldwide audience at a relatively small cost.

- Modernization increases competition between people or groups in an attempt to gain access to vital resources. This competition leads to widening gaps between economic classes and groups.
- Disadvantaged groups find inequality intolerable and press for social change. Because of limited resources that are available they often feel that their only option is terrorism.

- Terrorism is defined as “Acts of violence intentionally perpetrated on civilian non combatants with furthering some ideological, religious and political objective”.
- Whilst we have this definition, we are far from universal agreement as to who are, and who are not terrorist groups.
- Research began around 30 years or so ago, but experts in the field still report a lack of scientific rigour and an inadequate psychological understanding.

- Friction between minority groups living in close vicinity can cause these groups to break from society and create smaller social organizations. Individuals with religious, ethnic, or linguistic affiliations find commonality that often becomes political.
- The development of these groups often causes political friction and social unrest, the two conditions that greatly increase the likelihood for individuals to engage in terrorism (Husain, 2006).
- Wilkinson (2006) identifies 4 groups of non-state movements: **ethno-nationalist groups** (motivated by ethnicity and politics), **ideological groups** (motivated by specific ideologies), **religio-political groups** (motivated by beliefs) **and single issue groups** (e.g. Animal Liberation Front).

- Modernization and urbanization cause rapid social change bringing diverse backgrounds and values together and creating instability in the government structure.
 - Norms are altered and central government structures weakened.
 - Weak government and a shifting political dynamic allow terrorists to gather support.
 - Whilst it is possible for an individual to carry out acts of terror alone, the power of the group can be much more influential (Husain, 2006, Milgram, 1974).
- Terrorist violence most often is deliberate (not impulsive), strategic, and instrumental; it is linked to and justified by ideological (e.g., political, religious) objectives and involves multiple actors/supporters .
 - It is necessary to support the idea that terrorism is immoral. No matter how valid the reasoning behind it is, violence is never justified.

Before attempting to explore terrorism, it is necessary to understand the act of violence



Violence

- To others:
- Behaviour involving physical force intended to hurt, damage, or kill someone or something.



Violence

- To self:
- This includes suicide and self-mutilation.



Terrorism

- A terroristic method of governing or of resisting a government.
- The unofficial or unauthorized use of violence and intimidation in the pursuit of political aims.

SOME QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

- In addition to the physical/violent effects, there is no doubt that terrorist acts have a substantial psychological impact on the victims and the surrounding communities.
- Are the police more resilient than the ordinary lay person?
- Are terrorists mad/bad/abnormal, or are they normal individuals?
- Are they psychopathic, given their extreme and immoral behaviours?
- Do suicide bombers have a similar psychological profile to a suicidal individual?

BRIEF HISTORY OF TERRORISM

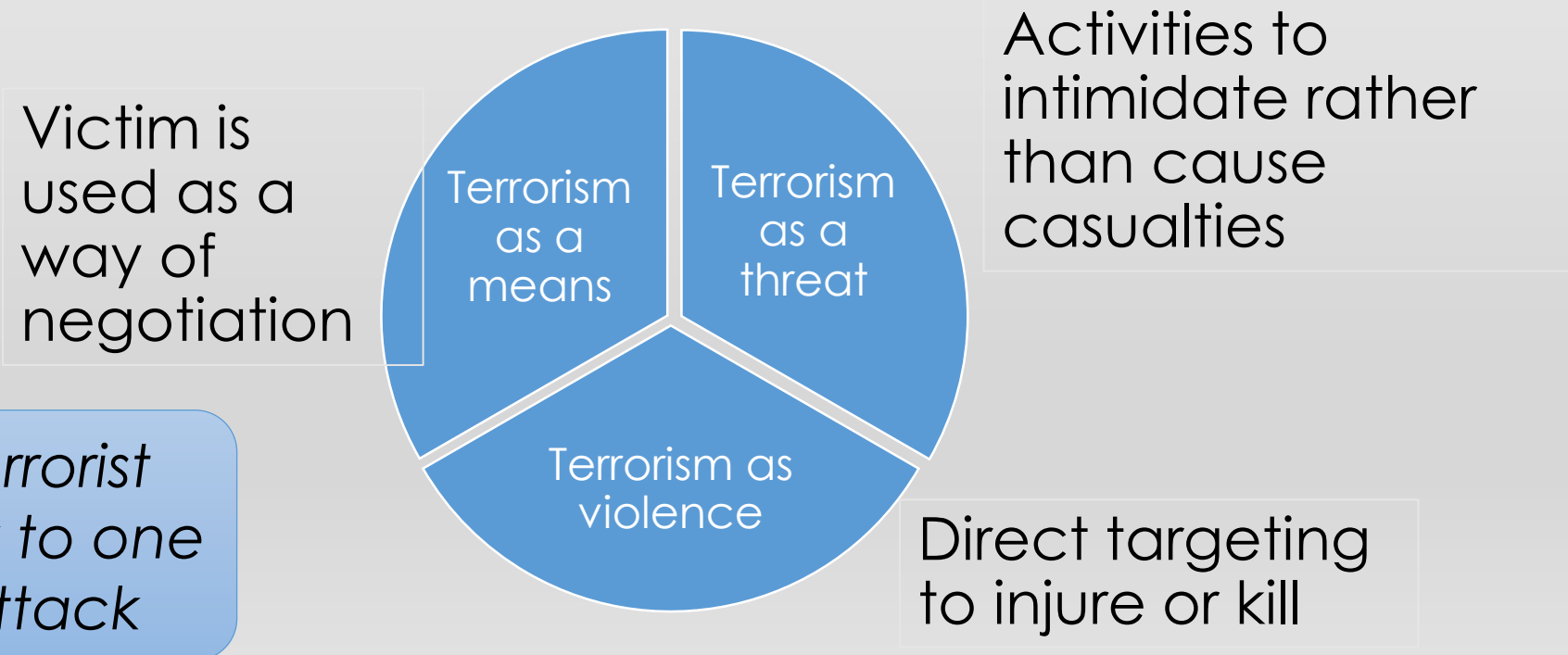
- 1969 – Northern Ireland Troubles (between republican groups: the provisional IRA, the real IRA and the continuity IRA, and loyalist paramilitary organisations).
- Bombing of Conservative Party Conference in Brighton (1984).
- 1986-7 – Kidnapping of Terry Waite and others in Beirut.
- 1990`s – Combat 18, rising militancy within the BNP.
- 1994 – Israeli Embassy, London.
- 2001 – 9/11 New York.
- 2005 – London Bombings.
- 2008 – Failed suicide bomb attack in Exeter.
- 2013 – Birmingham bombings of mosques.
- 2015 - Tunisia.
- 2017 – Westminster Bridge, Manchester Arena.

EXPLAINING TERRORISM

- Whilst we know that terrorism is aimed at changing government policy, community values and religious ideologies, the boundaries between differing groups are not clear cut. For some nations, what is viewed as terrorism, may be perceived as freedom fighting or martyrdom.
- It is also reported that the nature of terrorism has changed in the last 50 years. Previously, terrorist attacks were generally not designed to alienate the public, take for example the IRA; they would usually provide a warning in advance of their attack.
- Modern terrorism focuses on indiscriminate mass destruction and there has been a significant increase in suicide bombing since the first modern suicide bomber outside the Israeli Embassy in 1981.

TYPES OF TERRORIST ACT

- Because of the various forms of terrorist activities, it can be difficult to establish patterns of behaviour. However using one database – ITERATE Yokota and colleagues (2007) identified three types of terrorist act:



Usually, terrorist groups stick to one type of attack

CONSEQUENCES OF TERRORISM

- Di Maggio & Galea (2006) conducted a meta-analysis of the aftermath of 9/11. The rate of PTSD was between 12 & 16% in affected population.
- Similarly Gabriel et al. (2007) looked at the aftermath of the Madrid train bombings in 2004. In the three months after the event where nearly 200 people died, they looked at three groups:
 - Those injured in the blasts
 - The residents of the local area
 - The police involved in the rescue
- They found mental health problems in 58%, 26% and 4% of the individual groups respectively.

CONSEQUENCES CONTINUED

- Jhangiani (2010) reviewed 118 studies of the psychological consequences of 9/11 and found that in general there was poorer mental health overall in New York and Washington for up to six months after the events.
- Moreover, the effects were worse if:
 - There was a history of mental health conditions
 - They lived in close proximity to the areas
 - If they knew someone who was involved in the tragedy
- However, a positive outcome also emerged; there was a long term increase in helping behaviour, an increase in peoples belief in religion and a rise in general life satisfaction.

TERRORIST PERSONALITY- SUICIDE BOMBERS

- Are suicide bombers all religious zealots?
- The Tamil Tigers of Sri Lanka are not, they are a political movement, but they are responsible for a significant amount of suicide bombings worldwide.
- Furthermore, we often associate violent acts with males, however a significant proportion of suicide bombers are female. In particular, the Tamil Tigers and the Kurdistan Workers Party often utilise females in their suicide bombings.



PSYCHOPATHOLOGY & TERRORISM

- Research has shown that there is no tendency for terrorists to be different (Ruby, 2002; Borum, 2004).
- Merari (2007) studies 32 suicide bombers and found no evidence for social dysfunction or suicidal tendencies.
- In addition, academics have commented that it is too simplistic to view them as extreme religious fanatics.
- We do we associate their deviance with madness?
- We like to think that such atrocities must mean they have some form of abnormality or personality defect.
- However, think back to Milgram (1974) and how easily ordinary individuals will obey commands to create harm.

PSYCHOPATHY & TERRORISM

- Due to the extreme atrocities, humiliation and slow videoed decapitations, we ask the question in terms of psychopathy.
- Borum (2004) argues that terrorists and suicide bombers are very different to psychopaths;
- Psychopaths are generally not good at working within organisations and furthermore, terrorists and suicide bombers do not share any of the defining characteristics of a psychopath.



SUICIDAL TENDENCIES

- Although suicide bombers are responsible for a high number of deaths, the acts themselves are still relatively rare.
- Suicide bombers are generally stable, ordinary and viewed as heroic and in a positive light by family members.
- Townends (2007) assessed the similarities and differences between what we know on general suicide victims and what psychological characteristics we know of in potential suicide bombers.
- There were absolutely no correlations between the two groups and their motivations behind their actions were very different.
- Furthermore, in the general population religion is a protective factor from suicide, whereas in SB`s religion is the driving factor, along with revenge.

TERRORIST PROFILE

- What are the potential problems in creating a terrorist profile?
- For suicide bombers, there is clearly very little point.
- In addition, creating a profile may be counter-productive...
- Organisations would just recruit the opposite to the profile and those individuals would be less likely to come to the attention of the security forces.
- Can we then describe a `typical SB or terrorist`?
- Early attempts by Russell & Miller (1977) identified young, urban,, middle-upper class, university educated single male that subscribes to extreme ideologies... BUT?

RISK & REHABILITATION

- Measuring risk factors is very problematic because they are essentially `normal`.
- And, how would you assess risk in a convicted terrorist?
- Dernevik et al. (2009) argue that psychologists and psychiatrists do not have sufficient knowledge to produce an accurate risk assessment because:
 - Different terrorists come to terrorism via different pathways
 - Recidivism is difficult to calculate because there is often no prior criminal activity
 - Psychometric measures do not apply
 - They do not have personal criminal histories

WHAT MAKES A TERRORIST?

- Even with the most vulnerable individual, creating a terrorist takes time.
- The psychological motivations used by recruiters are
 - Belonging
 - Personal identification
- Factors such as social alienation, boredom and dissidence can eventually lead to terrorism.
- Merari (2007) notes that some individuals may be vulnerable to indoctrination, particularly SB`s as they were often young and unattached. In addition there are histories of abuse, trauma, humiliation and perceived injustice.

RECRUITMENT TACTICS

- Terrorist organisations recruit via interpersonal connections, supporting individuals up to the point of becoming a SB.
- Group members will spend hours and hours promoting martyrdom and the will of God, enmeshing individuals with one another and increasing their allegiance to the organisation, each other and the final contract.



Indoctrination

Group
commitment

Personal
commitment

RECRUITMENT TACTICS

- Deciding to become a SB is not a conscious decision, but rather a gradual involvement and the process of socialisation.
- Borum (2004) used `life story studies` to help identify those individuals susceptible to influence.
- It appears to be attributed to group processes rather than individual psychology.
- Soibelman (2004) interviewed 5 failed SB`s. They all shared certain characteristics:
 - Bad experiences with the military
 - Political beliefs
 - Previous involvement with demonstrations etc.
 - As situations escalated, so did the extreme beliefs

SARANGI & ALISON (2005) STUDY

- Studies the left wing Maoist terrorists in Nepal and India.
- Twelve terrorists including six members who had left.
- The average was 26, with no formal education
- Key themes emerging were; images of self, significant others & visions of the future.



IDEOLOGIES AND COGNITIONS

- How do ideologies and cognitions change?
- Ideologies and cognitions shift towards favouring and justifying specific behaviours.
- Normal cognitions erode and inhibitions to violence are removed due to changes in perceptions from influence.
- Atram (2003) found that the Gaza teens during the first Palestinian Intifada demonstrated pride and social cohesion as a result of exposure to violence. Their outlook for the future was positive.



IDEOLOGY WORKS IF IT:

- 1. guides and justifies the action
- 2. is characterised by rigid orthodoxies which do not allow questioning and challenge
- 3. the acts themselves have clear and meaningful goals
- This akin to Bandura`s techniques of moral disengagement (1990), where the consequences of the action bring about:
 - The perception of being morally good; fighting evil
 - A displacement of responsibility
 - The minimisation of suffering
 - Dehumanising the victim

BECK (2002)

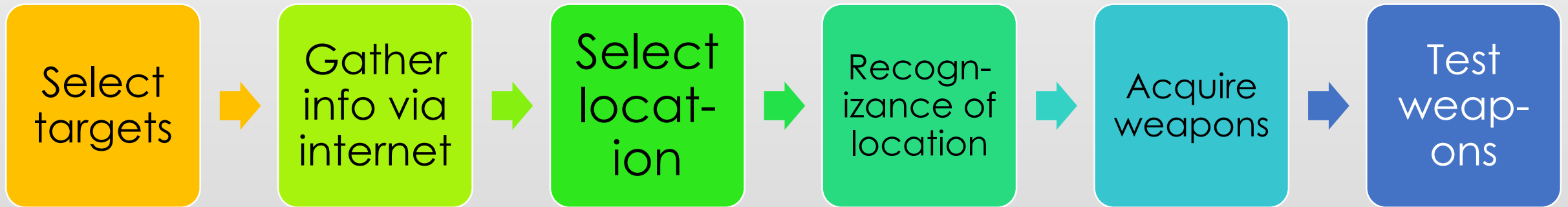
- Terrorist thinking is similar to other individuals who commit violent acts.
 - Overgeneralising the perceived failings of the enemy
 - A dichotomy of good versus bad
 - A tunnel vision of destruction



PLANNING TERRORIST ATTACKS

- We desperately need information; Romyn & Kebbell (2013) simulated the planning process.
- Two teams, the red team consisted of individuals asked to plan an attack, with people trained in anti terrorism and people without the training.
- The blue team were tasked with anticipating a potential terrorist attack and consisted of police officers and people with anti-terrorism training.
- The processes involved in planning and anticipating the acts were all in agreement with one another as shown on the next slide.

ROMYN & KEBBELL (2013)



ENDING TERRORIST ORGANISATIONS

- Until 2011, this had not been explored. Reinares explored the disengagement of Basque territory EA over a 30 year span.
- He held 35 long interviews with ex-members. He found:
 - The death of Franco in 1975, the Spanish Dictator saw a move to democracy, political and social changes and many people found this to be sufficient to disengage.
 - Leadership tactics and internal functions of groups were another factor, when disagreements were present.
 - Others left when either in hiding or when in prison.
 - Some left due to forming relationships and having children.
- What was of importance however, is that their ideologies did not change!

HOSTAGE BARRICADES

- The term refers to when police officers and security besiege a property/plane/location where an individual/s is/are being held hostage.
- Hostage release is extremely risky and largely at the mercy of the terrorists.
- The problem lies in the police and security involved knowing the risk factors for each incident.



PERCEPTION OF RISK FACTORS

- Yokota et al. (2004) found that police officers held the following beliefs regarding risk factors:
 - Highly excitable individuals were more risky
 - The longer the siege the more the risk
 - If interpersonal problems are present it is more risky
 - If communication is poor...
- In a second part to the study, 22 hypothetical situations were given to police officer for evaluation:
- There was only a very weak correlation between the officers evaluation of risk and the findings from real-life similar scenarios.

HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION

- Most likely to occur in domestic violence situations and robberies, however Wilson & Smith (2000) reported that even in extremely violent circumstances, there is a degree of normality, where behaviour is bound by two rules:
 - 1. the rules for normal behaviours in hostage situations
 - 2. the rules for everyday behaviour as a fall-back of other rules cannot be applied.
- In addition, these factors are also important:
 - Motivation – political, personal, ideological
 - Planning & resources – insight for level of planning, detail and predictability
- In addition, both sides must be willing to negotiate otherwise the breaking of these `rules` may lead to direct authority intervention.

BOLZ & SCHLOSSBERG (1970`S)

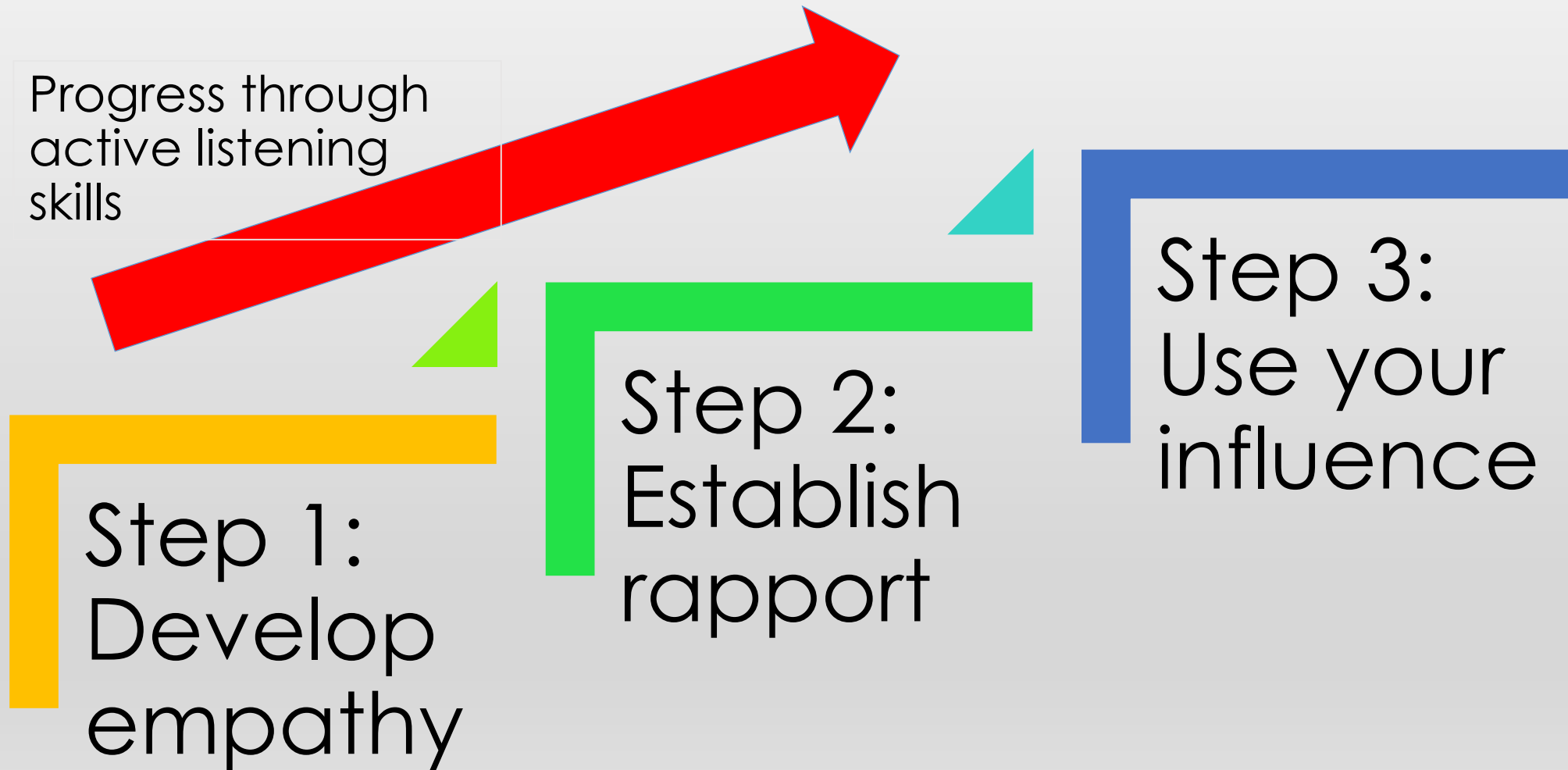
- Developed crisis negotiation techniques involving three elements:
 - 1. negotiate with hostage taker whilst keeping him contained in the environment.
 - 2. use any method to establish their motives and personality.
 - 3. go at a slow pace to allow them to express their feelings and encourage them to realise rationality.
- These skills involve active listening, a series of techniques to encourage communication:

Minimal encouragement, emotional labelling,
Paraphrasing, mirroring, `I` messages,
Open ended questions.

MODELS OF HOSTAGE NEGOTIATION

- Mainly theoretical rather than empirical...
- One example – FBI Behavioural Influence Stairway Model (Vecchi et al., 2005).
- This has influenced other models, such as the stairway model in UK (Van Hasselt, Romano & Vecchi, 2008).
- The main elements of the model are that you can move up and down between each level, there is no timescale specified for negotiation and the aim of the model is to bring about a peaceful halt to the situation based upon building co-operating relationships.

THE BEHAVIOURAL INFLUENCE STAIRWAY MODEL



EXAMPLE OF TERRORISM:



- Beslan School, (2004).
- 1,200 hostages, 300 deaths, 21 killed on first day and thrown out of a window.
- 130 explosives detonated by 4 of the hostage takers. A total of 50 hostage takers in the building.
- As a result, Dolnik & Fitzgerald (2011) summarised the `new terrorist` as being someone who is;
 - Difficult to trick due to extensive research
 - Adheres to extreme religious rhetoric
 - More willing to harm than previously
 - Communication with colleagues at other locations
 - Willing to die

FINALLY, THEIR SUGGESTIONS:

- An effective hostage negotiator should:
 - 1. be able to influence thinking and decision making processes.
 - 2. continually question their own assumptions regarding the terrorists; do not make judgemental decisions.
 - 3. remember that part of the dialogue could be potentially rational.
 - 4. use active listening skills to understand the motivations and grievances.
 - 5. respond in an empathetic manner.

