

Motorcops.com Training Article

Why Oh Why?

By Sgt. Andy Norrie

As stated in another training article featured here on Motorcops.com we must practice the six R's to successful training. They are: Relevant, Recent, Repetition, Realism, Review and Responsible. It is incumbent upon all of us to ensure our training is meeting the six R's test. Recently I was pondering the current state of police motorcycle training and was wondering if our training has continued to evolve and advance or are we still teaching the same stuff as 15 or 20 years ago? Are we being responsible? Is our training relevant and realistic? Are we asking ourselves "Why are we doing it this way, can we do it better?"

I applied a common management problem solving technique called "The 5 Whys". Credit for this system is given to Toyota Founder Kiichiro Toyoda's father Sakichi who first used it in the 1930s. Personally, I believe it was invented by a three year old and has been used by every three year old since time began to torment their parent's with a perpetual "Why" to every answer given to them.

The 5 Whys System applies a very simple philosophy to identify the root cause of a problem by peeling away layers of symptoms by simply repeating the question: "Why?" Five times is the rule of thumb but sometimes you may find the issue with fewer or more times of asking the question.

An example of The 5 Whys System applied to find a not so obvious root cause of a problem could go something like this:

My car stopped on the way home.

Q1) Why? (did it stop)

A) Because it ran out of gas.

Q2) Why? (did it run out of gas)

A) Because I didn't buy gas on the way home

Q3) Why? (didn't you buy gas)

A) I didn't have any money

Q4) Why? (didn't you have any money)

A) I lost it all the night before in a poker game

Q5) Why? (did you lose it all playing poker)

A) I tried to bluff when I should have folded

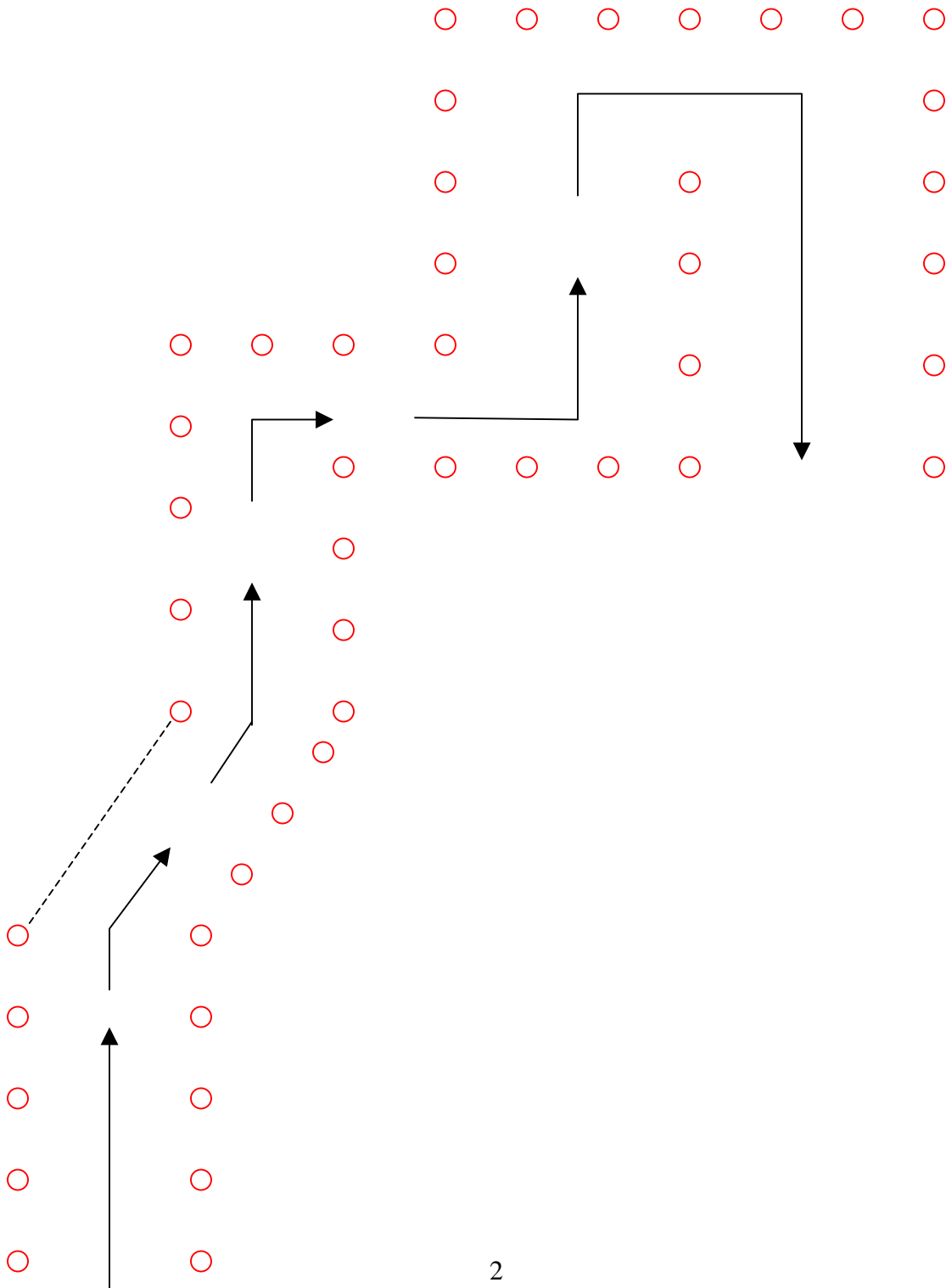
By using this system we are able to identify a cause that doesn't have a direct link to the problem. When my wife forbids me from ever playing poker again this will eliminate this particular cause of the car stopping on the way home.

I applied the 5 Whys test to a training exercise we have all been taught, or at least should be aware of. This pattern has been one of the corner stones of police motorcycle training for decades. So, I questioned the "180° decel cone pattern". Not, Why do we do ride the 180° decel? I know why we do it. We do it because it incorporates all of the braking, steering, slow-speed maneuvering, and friction zone clutch manipulation that we teach professional police motorcycle operators. The 180° decel requires riders to brake from 35 MPH in less than 50 feet, make two full-lean, full-lock 90-degree turns, followed by a 180-degree turn within a space that leaves just inches between the motorcycle and the cones. This loads up the rider's multi-tasking skills to the limit requiring them to apply different motorcycle riding techniques and transition from one application to another properly. This prepares the riders for some of the most difficult riding situations they will probably face on the street.

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No, my question is: **Why do we ride the 180° decel with a right side bias?** The offset is to the right and the 180° turn is to the right or clock-wise. Ask yourself, your partner, your in-service trainer, or your instructor why we do it that way? Eventually you will probably hear "Cause" or "That's the way we've always done it".

Current 180° Decel



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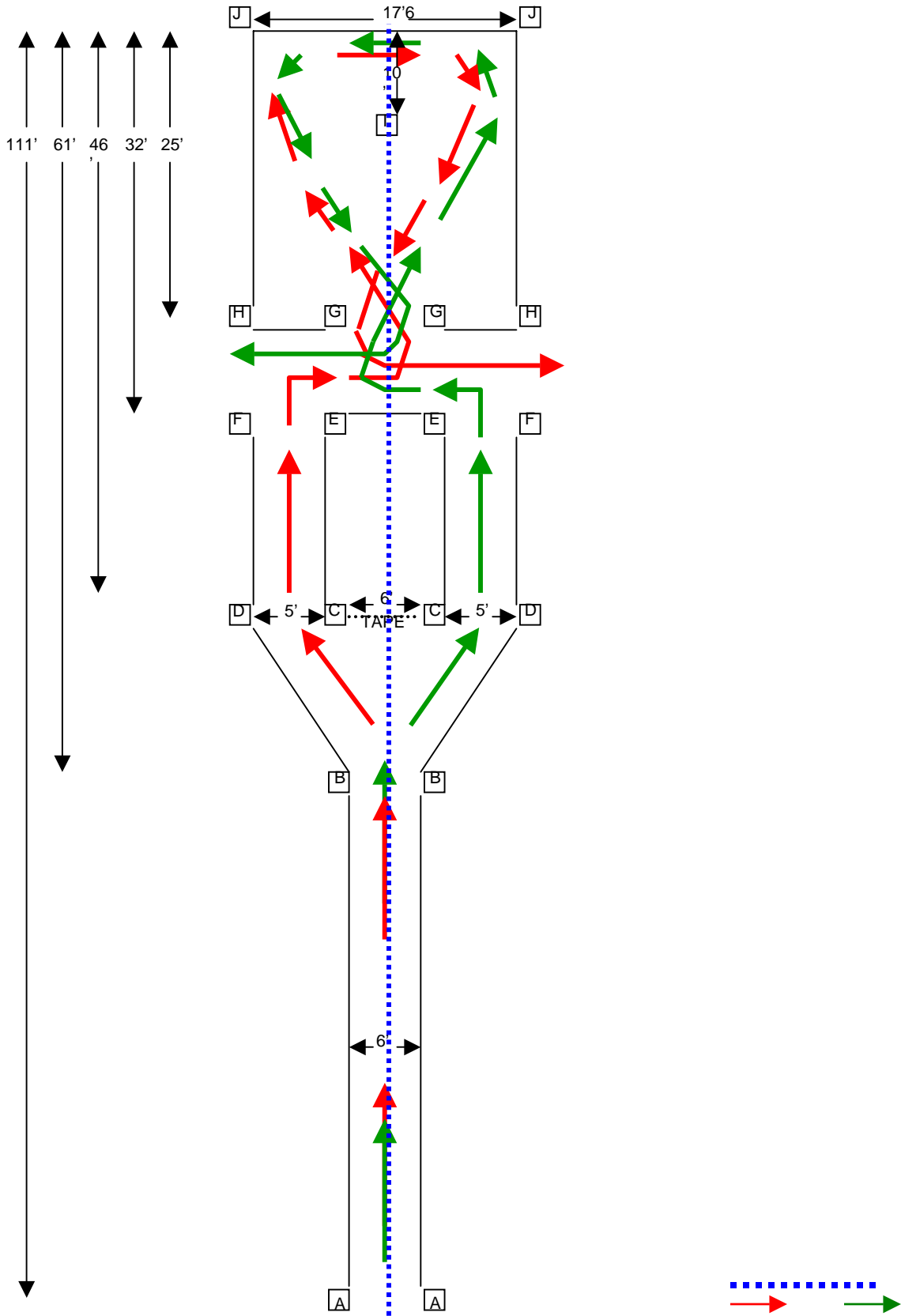
If we are being responsible, shouldn't we be training on a cone pattern that simulates realistic situations, (We don't just expect our riders to avoid hazards by counter-steering and turning to the right, do we?). We should make the training patterns relevant by having them universal (both left and right). We should ride them repetitively so they are ingrained in our psyche and our muscle memory and review them with the riders so they can identify their weaknesses and work to improve their skills. We can do this by continually asking ourselves "why" and applying the most recent training techniques.

I present my solution to this question. Sure you could lay out a mirrored version of the existing pattern but I have designed a universal option. This course is by no means the be all and end all but a starting point. This pattern presents both a left and right counter-steering offset option and 180° turn option going clock-wise and counter clock-wise making this exercise truly an equitable test of a rider's abilities. This pattern could even include a "decision maker" component where an instructor identifies which direction the rider will travel much like "The Evasive".

180° Alternative Pattern

<u>LEGEND</u>	
CENTRE LINE	
PATH OF TRAVEL	OR
<u>CONE SET-DISTANCE FROM CENTRE LINE</u>	
A	3'
B	3'
C	3'
D	8'9
E	3'
F	8'9
G	3'
H	8'9
I	0
J	8'9
ALL MEASUREMENTS REPRESENT INSIDE BASE TO INSIDE BASE OR CENTRE LINE TO INSIDE BASE	

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I invite you try this pattern and to ensure your motorcycle training is meeting the 6 R's and to employ the 5 Whys test. If you come up with a way to improve our profession and perhaps save a life or an injury why not share it through "Motorcops.com".

Andy Norrie is a Staff Sergeant with the Toronto Police Service in Toronto, Canada. He has been a member of the Department for the past 25 years and has over 23 years of experience on police motorcycle duty. Andy is an instructor for Harley Davidson Canada Police Motorcycle Program. He has attended and participated in various police motorcycle training and competition events since 1991 and is one of the founders of the [Great Lakes Police Motorcycle Training Seminar](#) based in and around the province of Ontario, Canada. He can be reached at: [mailto:andy.norrie@torontopolice.on.ca?subject=Response to Training Article - Why Oh Why?](mailto:andy.norrie@torontopolice.on.ca?subject=Response%20to%20Training%20Article%20-%20Why%20Oh%20Why?)