



STOP THINK ACT TECHNIQUE & WRISTBAND INITIATIVE

GOAL: Get to know the **STOP THINK ACT** technique and learn about the wristband initiative.

TOPICS:

1. Announcing **STOP THINK ACT**
2. The **STOP THINK ACT** Technique
3. **STOP THINK ACT** Example Scenarios
4. The **STOP THINK ACT** Wristband

1 – ANNOUNCING STOP THINK ACT



OBJECTIVES:

1. Know that safety, in all its forms, is the number one consideration of a Security Professional.
2. Know what the **STOP THINK ACT** technique is.
3. Know how to perform the **STOP THINK ACT** technique.
4. Understand how the **STOP THINK ACT** technique is applied to on-duty security situations.
5. Understand the importance of the **STOP THINK ACT** wristband, and how wearing it promotes personal safety and safety culture.

At the heart of Universal’s **STOP THINK ACT** Safety Program is the **STOP THINK ACT safety awareness technique**.

STOP THINK ACT is a simple yet powerful technique that is easy to learn, easy to perform and you can apply it throughout your workday in every situation and during any activity.

As a true Security Professional, **safety** – in all its forms – is your number one consideration always.

- **You want to stay safe.** You don’t want to suffer a personal injury.
- **You want to protect others.** You don’t want anyone to suffer an accident or any sort of harm.
- **You want to minimize liability exposure.** You don’t want claims or lawsuits based upon anything you did, or failed to do.

If you commit to learning and diligently applying **STOP THINK ACT**, you will immediately improve your personal safety, better protect others from hazards and reduce liability exposure for your security team and Universal Protection Service.

Security Professionals who make a safety habit of **STOP THINK ACT** will be much more effective in detecting hazards, identifying the appropriate safety practices to apply to a situation and avoiding actions that likely will result in negative consequences.



2 – THE STOP THINK ACT TECHNIQUE

It's a challenge to stay safe.

Situations on duty can unfold quickly and demand immediate action. Other times, activities seem routine and safe, which can make you let your guard down regarding hazards and safety. Keeping your mind alert, attentive to your surroundings and situations, and focused upon safety *is key*.

You probably have heard statements like these after someone has suffered a safety failure – an accident, an injury or a liability mistake.

- "I should have thought about it before I did that."
- "I guess I just wasn't thinking."
- "I should have seen that coming."
- "I was distracted, thinking about... and just didn't notice."
- "I don't know what I was thinking. I wish I could do it over."
- "If I had just stopped for a second and thought about it before I kept going."

Safety-oriented thinking is vital to avoiding safety failures. The **STOP THINK ACT** technique helps you make a habit of safety-oriented thinking.



Let's look at each of these steps.

STOP before performing a task...

Even if you fully commit to safety and know many safety practices, it's easy to get caught up in the immediate task at hand – focused on getting something done or on getting from point A to point B – and develop tunnel vision regarding potential safety hazards.

It can be hard to notice when you should **STOP** to assess your situation and surroundings for potential hazards. Make a habit of noticing when you are about to:

- **Start a new activity or assignment** – drive a vehicle, begin a new patrol round or respond to an incident.
- **Perform a new action** – lift a box, climb a ladder, walk down stairs.



- **Enter a new area** – walk into a corridor or stairwell, enter a leased space or drive onto a different surface condition.
- **Act in haste or under the influence of emotion** – interacting with unruly subjects, dealing with an unpleasant visitor or hurrying to the scene of an in-progress incident.
- **Enter a situation or surroundings featuring significant “unknowns”** – walking towards an occupied vehicle, opening a door found unsecured or arriving at the scene of a suspicious incident or person.
- **Engage in interactions featuring tactical disadvantages** – interacting with multiple subjects, approaching people alone and in an isolated area or interacting without backup readily available.
- **Perform an action while distracted** – driving a vehicle in auto-pilot, walking foot patrol while thinking about something else than your surroundings or focusing on just what’s in front of you and not paying attention to what’s around you.

When you notice you are in a situation like those described in the examples above, make this a trigger to STOP.

STOP can mean actually, physically stopping – stop walking, stop the vehicle, stop whatever action you are performing or about to perform – but can also mean to pause your current thoughts and engage in safety-oriented thinking. This brings us to the next step.

THINK about potential hazards...

Safety-oriented thinking consists of assessing your situation, surroundings and activities for hazards, likely consequences and for better, safer courses of action. In the moments during which you have stopped your physical actions and are focusing your thoughts, consider safety-oriented questions like these:

- Do I see anything hazardous in this situation?
- If I see a hazard, do I know how serious it is? Do I know the extent of it?
- Have I taken actions to avoid harm from this hazard?
- Are my actions the safest given this hazard? Is there a safer alternative?
- Should I just stop what I am doing because of this hazard? Is it pretty likely I could get hurt?
- Are my actions in accordance with policies and procedures intended to keep me and others safe and/or to minimize liability exposure?

Assess the situation, answer the appropriate safety questions and make a decision with safety as your foremost consideration. Your safety-oriented decision may consist of one of the following:

- **All Clear!** I don’t see hazards.
- **Wait!** I need to take some extra steps to better understand the hazard and how to avoid it.



- **Do not Proceed!** This is unsafe. Someone will likely get hurt or there will be a liability mistake. I need an entirely different course of action.

ACT with safety in mind...

Until you have determined that the course of action seems safe or have devised a new, safer course of action, you shouldn't act. To do so would be to perform a likely unsafe action. DO NOT perform an unsafe action.

Acting with safety in mind means to follow your newly devised course of action – a sort of on-the-spot safety plan – while maintaining caution! Situations can change rapidly and hazards can feature unexpected surprises

3 – STOP THINK ACT EXAMPLE SCENARIOS

Here are a couple example situations. You might encounter situations like these in the course of your duties. These examples feature hazards to be addressed through **STOP THINK ACT**.

STOP THINK ACT Scenario 1 – *Suspicious Persons on Midnight Patrol*

You are on patrol in a security vehicle on the midnight shift. You notice several people standing near a building, talking with a car parked nearby. It's after hours so you want to know what they are up to. You pull your vehicle over and get ready to exit and approach them.

STOP! Before performing this task, realize:

- There are unknowns involved. What is the nature and degree of conflict with the subjects?
- You may be at a tactical disadvantage. The subjects outnumber you.
- You sense hazards. You need to think about safety: actions to avoid these hazards.

THINK. Engage safety-oriented thinking:

- Have you called out your activity to anyone?
- Does anyone know where you are and what you are doing?
- What if they attack you? Can you effectively disengage or defend yourself in this situation?
- Should you call for security backup before interacting? Should you call for police to come by? Should you stay far enough back, within your vehicle, and make additional observations? Should you turn on overhead lights and a spotlight to clear the subjects from the area while avoiding an interaction?

ACT. According to the safer course of action you have devised:

- You don't act until you are satisfied you can do so safely. In this case, you have remained in your vehicle at a safe distance and called for police to stop by to assist you with looking into a suspicious incident.



- Additionally, you have decided that if the subjects suddenly approach your vehicle, you will move your vehicle to avoid interaction until the police arrive.

STOP THINK ACT Scenario 2 – Supplies out of Reach and No Ladder

Your Security Director asked you to get some supplies that are needed urgently during a training session. You find the supplies are in a storeroom on the very top of a shelf unit. You can't reach them. There is no ladder. You start to climb up the shelf unit but it seems like it might tip over onto you. You are starting to feel panicky because your Security Director is waiting. Luckily, you see an old office chair. It swivels and is a bit lopsided but you can stand on it slowly and reach the supplies.

STOP! Before performing this task, realize:

- You are acting in haste. The very fact that you are a bit panicked should trigger you to stop and assess for hazards.
- You are performing a new action with some significant unknowns. You don't know if you can balance on a broken swivel chair without falling. You do know you have been advised against trying just this sort of thing through various safety practices.
- By the way, what were you doing CLIMBING THE SHELF UNIT? Already having done something unsafe should be a warning about your current, hasty frame of mind.

THINK. Engage safety-oriented thinking:

- Even a moment of safety-oriented thinking should tell you there is a likelihood you'll get hurt and that there are alternatives. You *do not know* that you can balance on the rickety swivel chair. You *do* know that trying to do so would be considered unsafe and a safety practice violation.
- You decide to abandon your current course of action and perform a safer alternative with the right equipment for the job.
- Your plan is to find a stepladder.

ACT. According to the safer course of action you have devised:

- You go back to the Security Director and advise him or her of the problem. It will take a moment longer to retrieve the supplies because you need to borrow a stepladder to reach them.
- You also address this as an ongoing hazard that will affect others: a ladder should be in the storeroom, or the supplies should all be stored on lower shelves.



3 – THE STOP THINK ACT WRISTBAND

You are being issued a **STOP THINK ACT** wristband. **Please wear the wristband whenever you are on duty.**

Consider the **STOP THINK ACT** wristband to be a useful security tool, another item of equipment or gear. Wear it like you carry your pen, notepad, handcuffs, flashlight, keys, badge and all the other equipment used to perform security duties. If you don't have these pieces of equipment, you are not fully ready for duty. The **STOP THINK ACT** wristband signifies that you are coming on duty with a safety-oriented mindset, ready to engage in safety-oriented thinking to avoid hazards and keep yourself and everyone else safe. If you don't show up with that mindset, you are not fully ready for duty. The wristband is a sign that you are ready.



If you happen to glance at your **STOP THINK ACT** wristband while on duty, let it remind you to stay safe. When you see it, ask yourself how well you have been maintaining a safety-oriented mindset that day. Commit to maintaining a focus on safety for the remainder of your duty.

When all Security Professionals at a site operation wear the **STOP THINK ACT** wristband, it serves as a statement of a shared professional value – the value of safety. That shared value helps promote a culture of safety. Everyone – you, your fellow Security Professionals, visitors, the client, Universal – benefits from this.

So make it a matter of personal pride and professionalism to wear the **STOP THINK ACT** wristband whenever on duty.

Remember...

STOP *before performing a task.*

THINK *about potential hazards.*

ACT *with safety in mind.*



STOP THINK ACT TECHNIQUE – REVIEW QUESTIONS

Can you correctly answer the following questions? Check your answers by looking back at the information in this unit.

1. STOP THINK ACT is a security initiative and technique that pertains to what?
2. Committing to learn and diligently apply the STOP THINK ACT technique will immediately improve *what* for you, your security team and Universal Protection Service?
3. The words STOP, THINK and ACT mean what relative to the STOP THINK ACT technique?
4. What are examples of situations or circumstances that should be triggers to make you STOP and assess for hazards?
5. When you have STOPPED to assess the situation for hazards, what are examples of safety-oriented questions to consider while performing the THINK step of STOP THINK ACT?
6. After having STOPPED and THOUGHT about the potential hazards of a situation, what should you determine prior to ACTING?
7. What should you do with the STOP THINK ACT wristband?
8. What is the relationship between a safety-oriented mindset and being fully ready for security duty?
9. What should the STOP THINK ACT wristband remind you of when you glance down at your wrist and see it while on duty?
10. When all Security Professionals at a site operation wear the STOP THINK ACT wristband, what beneficial effects does this have?