

# Working DRAFT



**Welcome to the**  
**2020 USDA Forest Service Field Study**

- Outcomes:**
- Safety
  - Teamwork
  - Leadership
  - Communication
  - Resilience
  - Empowering Decision Makers

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**Introduction:** Welcome to the 2020 Field Study and Thank You for participating!

In this project, the Forest Service's Human Performance, Innovations and Organizational Learning (HPIOL) unit, Switchback and various Forest Service units are collaborating to test and refine new tools and training practices. The goal is to provide you and your unit with cutting edge concepts and techniques to enhance resilience, safety and teamwork while learning as we go. We want to determine whether and how to deliver this material most effectively and successfully.

Previously, we have partnered to assess the value of Switchback's concepts, and found them highly relevant and useful to a wide variety of USFS audiences, from seasonal wildland fire crews to Forest Leadership Teams. With the advent of COVID-19, although face-to-face trainings have become impossible, the need for training and support has increased. HPIOL was asked to assist Region 6 FAM in assessing the value of brand-new, on-line Switchback training, and Switchback asked if HPIOL would be interested and willing to provide feedback as the study progresses to help them refine their remote offerings. Simultaneously, other FS employees and management units have asked to join - either to replace planned in-person Switchback training or simply to provide additional training and support. So here we are.

In the short 2 months that we've been collaborating, on this project we've learned a lot. This Syllabus is one result. Expect us to continue to ask you and incorporate your feedback into project process, documents and reports as we learn together.

## Field Test Elements

- **Project Development** (*lead: Switchback*)
  - Initial Module creation and delivery
  - Switchback Platform
  - New module development (based on reports and feedback)
  
- **Project Administration** (*lead: HPIOL, Switchback*)
  - Refine and develop FS Curricula
  - Develop Pulse Survey questions
  - Generate/refine Bi-monthly Pulse Survey reports for participants (anonymous)
  - Design and conduct Feedback and assessment
  
- **Participation** (*lead: you!*)
  - On-line training (4 week curricula, plus 60 day project)
  - Pulse Surveys (weekly)
  - Feedback

Specific focus is on improving stress-management and decision-making under stress, building teamwork, and promoting individual and team resilience; essentially, building the social 'muscles' to best support yourself and others, particularly during stressful situations and times. In addition to on-line video modules, new features include a self-defined learning project and weekly 'Pulse Surveys' to help individuals and teams embed training concepts into practice.

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## Switchback Platform Introduction

### Setting up The Platform

Download the SwitchbackOS App with email invite. You will be asked by your unit lead to provide an email address for Switchback to use. Switchback will send an invitational link to this address, which will also be used as one means to notify you of Pulse Surveys. Once you've established your own password, you can download the Switchback App to any mobile device.

1. Receive the welcome email from Switchback with log-in instructions
2. Download App (App Store or Google Play)
3. Login using password provided
4. Select "Profile" in the dashboard and change your password



### The Switchback Dashboard (IOS or Android)

The PC Dashboard provides the same access , formatted slightly differently.

1. E-learning
2. Notifications
3. Profile
4. Community
5. Resources

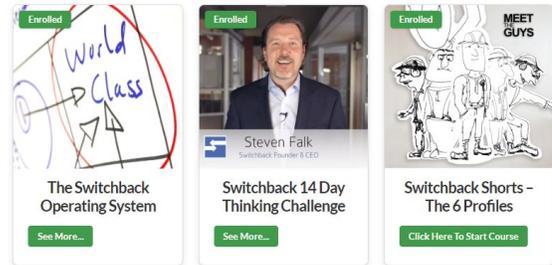


All features also available by logging in to [switchbackos.com](http://switchbackos.com)

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## E-learning Access

1. Go to “E-learning” in the dashboard
2. Select the course (ex. Switchback Foundations)
3. Select the module

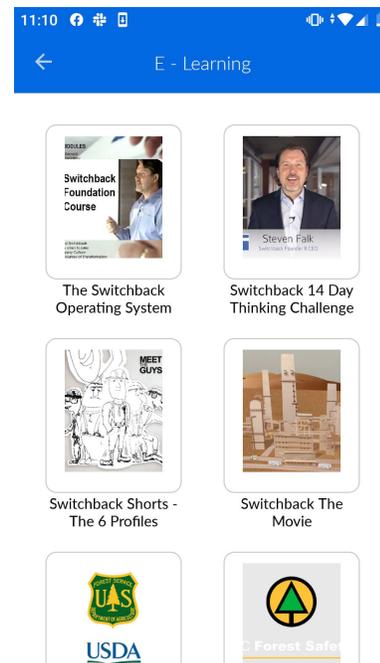


## E-Learning

## E-learning Content

Currently, there are 6 sets of training that all Forest Service participants are enrolled in. The main set of courses for this field test are found under the Switchback Foundations icon.

1. Switchback Foundation  
*24 Modules*  
*8 Hours of Training*
2. Switchback Shorts  
*The Six Profiles*  
*6 Modules*  
*Accompanying Field Guide*
3. USFS Saw Program  
*2 Modules*
4. The Switchback Movie
5. 14 Day Thinking Challenge  
*Short daily videos*
6. BC Forest Safety Conference 2  
*Switchback Keynotes*



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## On-Line Training

We suggest that to gain maximal benefit (and for our project purposes as well) participants:

- Complete all modules within one month. (Training Phase)
- Establish a specific learning goal (after Session 2,
- Implement the learning goal and use the Pulse Surveys for a period of time 30-60 days (Practice Phase)
- Periodically meet in small groups to support mutual learning

This plan seeks to embed the training into a contemporary adult remote-learning paradigm in which participants select an arena of work or home life in which to put the new tools into practice (setting a learning intention and plan), then spend 30 - 90 days working on that issue. During that time, participants meet periodically in small groups with others for support and mutual learning. All are encouraged to utilize this broader structure, but this is not a 'requirement' of the project.

The following syllabus is based on watching 45-90 minutes of on-line presentation and discussion two times per week. Initial discussion questions are proposed, after which we suspect you and your leaders will be better able to determine most applicable discussion topics for you.

## TRAINING PHASE

### Week 1

(Optional) Session 1: Introduction to Switchback system - Overview of tools and process

(Live TEAMS call\* or recorded session)

Agency Leader – process and expectations

Small group breakout: Reactions, aspirations

(\* This requires additional planning and set up. A live session also is an added expense the participating unit will have to cover.)

Session 2: Introductory Modules and Setting Intentions

Watch: Modules 1, 2 (~45 min)

Watch: Modules 13, 19 (~45 mins)

Group discussion: setting learning intention (what do you want to work on?, why?)

### Week 2

Session 3: The 3-Lane Highway

Watch: Modules 3, 4, 5 (~52 mins)

Group discussion: personal stories using 3-lane to understand; identify one relationship or situation in which you'd like to try to use some aspect of the 3-Lane highway over this next week.

Session 4: The Four-Quadrants

Watch: Module 7 (~ 45 mins)

Group discussion: use 4 quadrants to describe a project or a team – where it is now, what you can do to help it move towards Q2

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## **Week 3 - (Pulse Surveys Begin following completion of Module 7)**

### Session 5: The Switchback Brain

Watch: Modules 9, 10, 18 (~ 66 mins)

Group discussion:

### Session 6: Memory X's

Watch: Modules 11, 12 (~64 mins)

Group discussion:

## **Week 4**

### Session 7: The Six Profiles

Watch: Modules 14, 15 (~ 98 mins)

Group discussion:

### Session 8: Pulling it all Together

Watch: Modules 23, 24 (~25 min)

Group discussion: revisit personal learning plan

Optional: Watch other Modules, in sequence or as interested

## **PRACTICE PHASE**

Pre-determine some length of time (30-90 days) over which each individual/group will work to implement their learning plan with periodic sub-group calls to check-in and provide support for each other. (For large units, groups will be organized by the Unit Leader)

## **CELEBRATE / REPEAT**

Too often, we fail to pause to honor our learning and progress. This phase is intended to help people tie a bow on a process or progress and call it 'complete' ...although we know few things are ever truly complete.

Those interested can set a new intention, a new goal and use the process to begin on another adventure.

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## Switchback Foundations Course

The Field Study syllabus uses the following flow for the course. Duration of modules is shown to help you fit the courses into your schedule.

| <b>Introduction and Background</b>                     |                                       | Time (Mins) |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| Module 1   | The Moment                            | 17:59       |
| Module 2   | Backstory                             | 25:43       |
| <b>Setting Intention</b>                               |                                       |             |
| Module 13  | Targets                               | 21:21       |
| Module 19  | Aim High                              | 13:15       |
| <b>Tools and Concepts</b>                              |                                       |             |
| A Model of Conversation – 3 Lane highway               |                                       |             |
| Module 3   | The 3 Lane Highway Intro              | 23:50       |
| Module 4   | The 3 Lane Highway – Merging In & Out | 25:13       |
| Module 5   | The 3 Lane Highway – Tickets          | 4:19        |
| Gauging and Improving Performance – The Four Quadrants |                                       |             |
| Module 7   | The 4 Quadrants – Intro               | 43:54       |
| The Switchback Brain                                   |                                       |             |
| Module 9   | Switchback Brain – Intro              | 25:36       |
| Module 10  | The Switchback Brain – Front Brain    | 10:27       |
| Module 18  | The Gap                               | 30:15       |
| Module 11  | Memory X's                            | 43:07       |
| Module 12  | Moving Memory X's                     | 20:46       |
| Module 14  | The 6 Profiles – part 1               | 60:03       |
| Module 15  | The 6 Profiles – Part 2               | 38:26       |
| <b>Pulling it all Together</b>                         |                                       |             |
| Module 23  | Company Culture                       | 14:22       |
| Module 24  | The Journey of Transformation         | 10:50       |
| <b>Deeper Dives and Specific Application</b>           |                                       |             |
| Module 6   | Difficult Conversations               | 10:26       |
| Module 16  | Addictions – part 1                   | 25:12       |
| Module 17  | Addictions – part 2                   | 19:33       |
| Module 22  | Know When to Refer                    | 14:08       |
| Module 20  | Retirement Seminar                    | 17:05       |
| Overviews  |                                       |             |
| Module 21  | Speed Switchback                      | 8:43        |
| Module 8   | The 4 Quadrants - Learn More          | 2:04        |

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## Pulse Surveys

Users will receive an app push-notification and an email when a survey has arrived

Access surveys through email link, App notification or Switchback Dashboard

1. Via App (recommended)

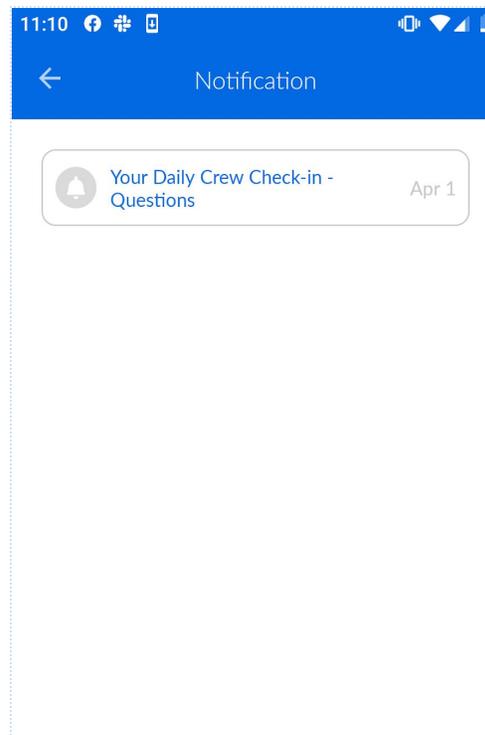
*Click the push notification and the survey will be opened directly in the app*

2. Via Email

*Click the link which will open the survey (login if they have logged out)*

3. Via Dashboard

*Go to “Notifications” from the Dashboard.*

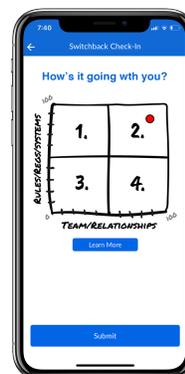


## Answering Surveys

Open the survey

(see “User - Opening Surveys”)

1. Read the question
2. Answer the question by touching within the 4 Quadrants
3. Select “Next” and answer the next question
4. Select “Submit”



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## Answering Surveys (continued)

Surveys are answered using the **4 Quadrant System** with Rules/Regulations/Systems on the Y axis and Team/Relationships on the X Axis

Quadrant 1  
*Scores higher for Rules/Regs/Systems but lower for Team/Relationships*

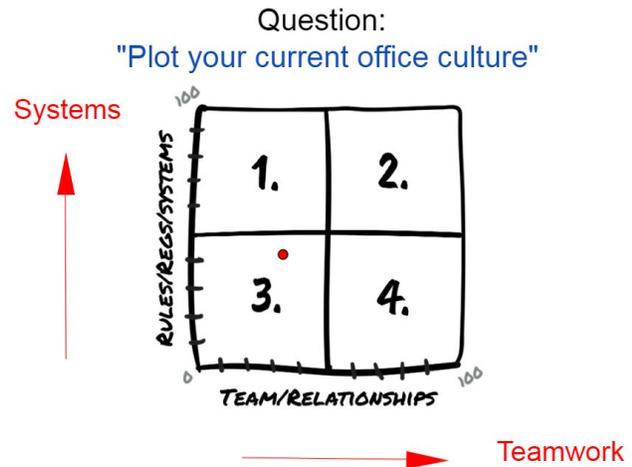
Quadrant 2  
*Scores high for both*

Quadrant 3  
*Scores low for both*

Quadrant 4  
*Scores higher for Team/Relationships but lower for Rules/Regs/Systems*

A survey of 3 questions involves only 7 screen touches and can take between 20-60 seconds

[Pulse Survey Response \(Web\)](#)



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## Switchback Guiding Principles

1. **Support individuals:**
2. **Build team resilience:**
3. **Support all employees:**
4. **Provide expandable on-demand knowledge portal.**

## OUTCOMES:

### Safety

“Safety: in every way: physical, psychological, and social”

#### Outcomes:

- Decrease in mental health claims, physical injuries, fatalities and suicides
- Increase in daily safety mindfulness through pulse surveys and crew conversations
- Greater consistency planning, executing and debriefing difficult and high risk work
- Increase in threat and error management
- Reinforced safety awareness following the: **Stop, Think, Talk, Act** protocol
- Increased safety monitoring and proactive responding through data analysis
- Improved safety culture year over year with year round engagement of the workforce

### Teamwork

“Service: to each other. To the American people, To the planet.”

#### Outcomes:

- “Teamwork” is embedded into the core beliefs of participants
- Increase in interpersonal connection
- Increased commitment to protect each other
- A new sense of team through shared language and tools
- Increased awareness and analysis of self and team.
- Improved reporting of close calls/ near misses

### Leadership

“Stewards the whole place, sees opportunity, shares leadership, builds community”

#### Outcomes:

- New shared common targets
- Alignment to common leadership standards reducing bias and negative leadership habits
- Increased monitoring and proactive decision making through SBOS app data and reporting
- Increase in peer support and feedback

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## Communication

“Our Code / Core Values: Treating everyone with respect, Empowering one another, Investing in relationships, Modeling integrity, Protecting one another, Learning from mistakes.”

### Outcomes:

- Embedded language and tools to execute difficult conversations
- Sustained healthy and functional communication throughout the highs and lows of fire
- Sustained healthy and functional offseason communication patterns
- Positive personal and relational results at work and at home.

## Resilience

“Value Based, Purpose Driven, Relationship Focused”

### Outcomes:

- Increased stress management capacity
- Improved daily self and team awareness
- Increased team engagement and adherence to the rules, regulations, and systems
- New openness to ask for help, receive support and feedback
- Greater support team at work and at home
- Reduction in mental health claims, physical injuries, fatalities and suicides
- The creation of a 12 month health commitment that flattens the hypervigilance / crash cycles.

## Empowering Decision Makers

“Grounded in world-class science and technology-and rooted in communities the Forest Service connects people to nature and each other.”

### Outcomes:

- Rich data: segregated participants info: location, crew, role (leader, full time, seasonal)
- Early identification of trends in: Safety, Leadership, Teamwork, Communication, Resilience
- Early identification of individual, crew and culture trends
- Identification of buy in of values
- Off season trending reporting into individual resilience
- If tracking birth year trending differences between age groupings
- Weekly trending and final reporting based on the focused outcomes
- Joint SwitchbackOS / Forest Service annual report with recommendations
- Year over year strategic planning and analysis

All green highlighted statements are quoted from: [THIS IS WHO WE ARE](#) USDA Forest Service, 2019