Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

A Complete 10-Chapter Technical Support Course

Topics covered:

Severity vs. priority · SEV levels & the Impact/Urgency matrix

Writing an actionable ticket · keeping a live incident timeline

Mitigating safely without losing evidence · effective escalation

Communication cadence · blameless, useful post-incident review

Capstone: one complete incident, every stage in sequence

Exercises: 30 hands-on scenarios with worked solutions

Format: A4 · Dark-theme code examples

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CHAPTER 1 OF 10

From Diagnosis to Process: What This Course Adds

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 1 · From Diagnosis to Process: What This Course Adds

A critical bug report comes in. Both engineers on call find the exact same root cause, using the exact same tools this subject's own technical courses already taught. One of them also classifies the ticket correctly, keeps a running timeline, escalates cleanly when it's needed, updates stakeholders as they go, and writes a review afterward that actually prevents a repeat. The other doesn't. Both diagnoses are equally correct — and the two incidents end up nowhere near equally well handled. This course is entirely about that second engineer's other half.

What the Other Four Courses Already Cover

COURSE	WHAT IT TEACHES
Logging & Log Analysis (`log1`)	Reading logs correctly to find what actually happened
Network Troubleshooting (`netdiag1`)	Diagnosing connectivity, DNS, firewall, and HTTP/TLS problems
System Monitoring & Performance Diagnosis (`perfdiag1`)	Diagnosing CPU, memory, disk, and resource-exhaustion problems
Web & Application Troubleshooting (`appdiag1`)	Diagnosing connection pools, caching, sessions, deployments, and rate limits

All four are about finding the right answer. This course assumes you either already have those skills or are actively building them, and covers something genuinely different: the process that decides whether finding the right answer actually translates into a well-handled incident — how a ticket gets classified, how it gets escalated, how the people affected by it are kept informed, and how the whole organization gets a little better at not repeating the same incident next month.

Why Process Matters Even When the Diagnosis Is Perfect

A flawless root-cause finding can still fail to actually help if it never reaches the person who can act on it, if the people affected are left guessing whether anyone is even working on it, or if nobody writes down what was learned and the same failure quietly recurs a month later. Technical skill and process discipline are genuinely separate competencies — this subject's other four courses build one; this course builds the other.

A Concrete Example: The Same Diagnosis, Two Different Outcomes

Take one identical technical incident — a connection pool exhaustion issue, exactly the kind `appdiag1` teaches how to diagnose — and run it through two different process outcomes:

WITH GOOD PROCESS	WITH POOR PROCESS (SAME DIAGNOSIS)
Classified correctly as high-severity within minutes	Sat in a general queue for hours before anyone realized how serious it was
A live timeline captured exactly what was checked and found, as it happened	Reconstructed from memory afterward, missing key details
Escalated with the exact evidence needed, straight to the right person	Escalated with "it's broken, please help" — the right person had to re-derive everything already known
Stakeholders received regular updates, even when there was nothing new to report	Total silence for hours, stakeholders assumed nobody was working on it
A blameless review produced two owned, dated action items	No review at all — the same root cause recurs six weeks later

Identical root cause, identical diagnostic skill, identical fix — and one of these incidents genuinely cost the organization far more than the other, in time, trust, and the near-certainty of a repeat.

> **PROCESS EXISTS TO HELP, NOT TO BECOME ITS OWN BUREAUCRACY**
>
> Every technique in this course has one job: making incidents resolve faster and more reliably, and making a repeat less likely. None of it is about filling out forms for their own sake. If a step in this course's own process ever seems to be slowing an incident down without adding real value, that's worth questioning directly — process that doesn't serve the incident isn't good process.

> **IF YOU ONLY ADOPT ONE HABIT FROM THIS COURSE, MAKE IT THIS ONE**
>
> Keeping a live timeline as you work (Chapter 5) is the single cheapest habit with the highest payoff — it feeds directly into a clean escalation (Chapter 7), clear stakeholder updates (Chapter 8), and an accurate post-incident review (Chapter 9), all from the same few minutes of note-taking done as you go rather than reconstructed from memory afterward.

What This Course Covers

Telling severity apart from priority, real prioritization frameworks, what makes a ticket actually actionable, keeping a live incident timeline, the honest tension between mitigating quickly and diagnosing fully, escalating effectively, communicating during an active incident, and running a blameless, genuinely useful post-incident review. The capstone runs one complete incident through every one of these stages in

sequence, rather than three separate tickets — a deliberate choice for a course about process, where one coherent story serves better than three disconnected ones.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why this chapter says an identical, correct technical diagnosis can still lead to two very different real-world outcomes, using its own connection-pool example.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain what this chapter means by warning that process shouldn't become "its own bureaucracy," and what test it offers for telling helpful process apart from process for its own sake.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why this chapter recommends the live-timeline habit specifically as the single highest-payoff one to adopt first, and name the other chapters it says depend on it.

View solution

CHAPTER 1 QUICK REFERENCE

- This course covers the **process** around a diagnosis — classification, escalation, communication, review — not the technical diagnosis itself
- The other four Technical Support courses (`log1` / `netdiag1` / `perfdiag1` / `appdiag1`) are assumed prerequisites or parallel skills, not re-taught here
- An **identical, correct diagnosis** can still produce a badly-handled incident without good process wrapped around it
- Process exists to serve the incident — question any step that slows things down without adding real value
- The single highest-payoff habit: **keep a live timeline as you go** — it feeds escalation, communication, and the post-incident review
- The capstone runs **one complete incident** through every stage, not three separate tickets
- **Next chapter:** Severity vs. Priority: Two Different Questions

CHAPTER 2 OF 10

Severity vs. Priority: Two Different Questions

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 2 · Severity vs. Priority: Two Different Questions

Two words that get used almost interchangeably, and shouldn't be: **severity** asks how bad an incident actually is, on its own technical and business merits. **Priority** asks how urgently it should be worked right now, relative to everything else competing for the same attention. They usually move together — but treating them as one question instead of two is a genuine, common mistake with real downstream cost.

Two Independent Axes

SEVERITY	PRIORITY
How bad is the actual impact — users affected, data-loss risk, whether a core function is fully unavailable or just degraded, whether a workaround exists	How urgently this specific item should be worked right now, given everything else in the queue and the current business context
Determined by the facts of the incident itself	Determined by context and resourcing — what else is happening, who's affected and how visibly, whether waiting makes things worse
Doesn't change based on who's asking	Can shift hour to hour as circumstances change, even with the underlying severity unchanged

Why They Usually Move Together, But Legitimately Diverge

High severity usually does mean high priority — a full outage genuinely should jump the queue. But real, legitimate divergence happens in both directions:

- **High severity, temporarily lower priority:** a rarely-used legacy reporting feature goes completely down — genuinely high severity, since it's fully non-functional. But if it happens during an all-hands-on-deck product launch window, deliberately deferring it a day is a legitimate call, not a mistake — as long as that decision is made and documented consciously, not by accident.
- **Low severity, temporarily higher priority:** a cosmetic typo in the site footer, spotted the morning of a scheduled press announcement featuring screenshots of the homepage. The bug itself hasn't gotten any worse — it's exactly as minor as it was yesterday — but the timing makes it worth fixing in the next hour rather than the next sprint.

Neither example is a classification error. The mistake would be conflating the two axes — reading a temporarily-deferred high-severity ticket as "not that serious," or reading a temporarily-elevated low-severity ticket as "the bug itself got worse."

A First Look at the 2x2

Severity and priority as two independent axes give four broad combinations — worth naming here briefly; Chapter 3 builds a full framework around them:

COMBINATION	WHAT IT USUALLY MEANS
High severity, high priority	Drop other work, address immediately
High severity, lower priority (temporarily)	Genuinely serious, deliberately deferred for a documented reason
Low severity, high priority (temporarily)	Minor on its own, urgent due to timing or visibility
Low severity, low priority	Routine backlog work

INFLATING SEVERITY TO FORCE PRIORITY QUIETLY BREAKS THE WHOLE SCALE

A genuinely common, damaging habit: marking something "critical" or "SEV1" not because it meets that bar, but because the person reporting it personally wants it worked on immediately. This is a real "cry wolf" problem — once a top severity label stops reliably meaning "genuinely catastrophic," everyone downstream starts discounting it, including the next time something actually is that severe. If a ticket is urgent for reasons unrelated to its actual technical impact, that's a priority conversation, not a reason to inflate the severity label.

Worked Example: Two Tickets, Side by Side

TICKET 1: PASSWORD RESET EMAILS FAILING FOR ~5% OF REQUESTS	TICKET 2: FOOTER COPYRIGHT TYPO, FOUND MORNING OF A PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT
Severity: Medium — partial function loss, no data loss, a manual workaround exists (support can reset accounts directly)	**Severity:** Trivial — zero functional impact
Priority: Normal — work it soon, no reason to jump the queue right now	**Priority:** Elevated — fix within the hour, purely because of today's timing and visibility

Ticket 1 is more technically serious than Ticket 2 by every real measure, and yet Ticket 2 is the one that needs to be worked first today — a completely legitimate outcome once severity and priority are recognized as two separate questions.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why a high-severity ticket can legitimately have a temporarily lower priority, using this chapter's own legacy-reporting-feature example.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why inflating a ticket's severity to force it to be worked sooner is described as a damaging habit, not just an inaccurate label.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Using this chapter's two worked-example tickets, explain why Ticket 1 is more severe but Ticket 2 needs to be worked first.

View solution

CHAPTER 2 QUICK REFERENCE

- **Severity** = objective impact, determined by the facts; **priority** = how urgently to work it now, determined by context
- They usually move together, but **legitimately diverge** in both directions — high-sev/lower-pri and low-sev/higher-pri are both real, valid states
- The mistake isn't divergence — it's **conflating the two axes** when reading or writing a classification
- **Never inflate severity to force priority** — it breaks the whole scale's meaning for every future incident
- **Next chapter:** Prioritization Frameworks: SEV Levels and the Impact/Urgency Matrix

CHAPTER 3 OF 10

Prioritization Frameworks: SEV Levels and the Impact/Urgency Matrix

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 3 · Prioritization Frameworks: SEV Levels and the Impact/Urgency Matrix

Chapter 2 established severity and priority as two separate questions. This chapter gives each one a real, concrete tool: a SEV-level ladder for severity, and an Impact/Urgency matrix for priority — used together, not as substitutes for each other.

A Concrete SEV-Level Ladder

LEVEL	DEFINITION
SEV1	Complete outage or critical data-loss risk, affecting most or all users — drop other work, all hands
SEV2	A major feature or function broken for a significant subset of users, without a full outage — urgent, but not an all-hands event
SEV3	A minor issue with a workaround available, limited impact
SEV4	Cosmetic or trivial, no meaningful functional impact

The exact thresholds genuinely vary by organization — a payment processor's own definition of SEV1 is stricter than a marketing blog's. The framework's real value isn't the specific numbers; it's having agreed-upon, written criteria that different people apply consistently, rather than each person's own individual gut feeling about how bad something seems.

Concrete Criteria, Not Vibes

A usable SEV definition needs checkable criteria — "affects more than 50% of users," "no workaround exists," "active data loss is occurring" — not vague language like "very bad" or "urgent." Vague criteria don't resolve ambiguity, they just relocate it: two people will still disagree about whether something counts as "very bad," exactly as they would have without a framework at all.

The Impact/Urgency Matrix: A Tool for Priority

Where SEV levels primarily encode severity, this matrix is explicitly a priority tool — crossing **impact** (how many people, or how much business value, is affected) against **urgency** (how quickly this needs resolving before it gets worse, or before a window closes). Using both frameworks together is what actually captures both of Chapter 2's own axes properly, rather than collapsing everything back into a single number.

	HIGH URGENCY	LOW URGENCY
High impact	Act now	Schedule deliberately — don't let it drift indefinitely
Low impact	Quick fix — don't let it block bigger work	Backlog

Applying Both Frameworks Together

Revisiting Chapter 2's own two tickets with both tools:

TICKET	SEV LEVEL	IMPACT/URGENCY CELL
Password reset emails failing (~5%)	SEV3	Low impact, low urgency — no reason it can't wait its turn
Footer typo before a press announcement	SEV4	Low impact, high urgency — a quick fix, not a reason to reprioritize anything else

Both tools agree on the trivial one being genuinely trivial in impact — but the matrix is what actually captures why it still needs handling within the hour, something the SEV level alone was never designed to express.

> **A FRAMEWORK IS A DEFAULT, NOT AN UNBREAKABLE RULE**
>
> A genuine edge case can legitimately warrant deviating from what a framework's strict criteria would suggest — but only when that deviation, and the specific reason for it, is written down explicitly, the same "documented consciously" discipline Chapter 2 required for severity/priority divergence. Two failure modes to avoid: rigidly following a framework into an obviously wrong outcome, or abandoning frameworks entirely and reverting to pure gut feeling.

A Legitimate Deviation, Documented

A bug affecting only screen-reader accessibility, with a functional visual workaround for sighted users, would classify as SEV3 by the numbers alone — a small percentage of the user base, a workaround exists. A team can legitimately choose to treat it with higher priority anyway, given a real accessibility/compliance obligation that the raw percentage-affected metric was never designed to capture — as long as that choice is written into the ticket explicitly ("prioritized above its raw SEV3 classification due to our accessibility commitment"), so anyone reading it later understands it as a deliberate decision, not confusion about how the framework works.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why this chapter says the specific numeric thresholds in a SEV-level ladder matter less than having concrete, checkable criteria at all.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why this chapter says SEV levels and the Impact/Urgency matrix need to be used together, rather than either one alone being sufficient.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why prioritizing the accessibility bug above its raw SEV3 classification is a legitimate framework deviation rather than a framework failure, and what condition this chapter says makes it legitimate.

View solution

CHAPTER 3 QUICK REFERENCE

- **SEV1-SEV4**: complete outage → major-but-partial → minor with workaround → cosmetic — exact thresholds vary by org, but must be concrete and checkable
- Vague criteria ("very bad") don't resolve ambiguity — they relocate it
- The **Impact/Urgency matrix** is explicitly a priority tool, complementing SEV levels' own severity focus
- Use **both together** — neither alone captures both of Chapter 2's own axes
- A framework is a default, not a rule — **documented deviation** is legitimate; silent, undocumented deviation isn't
- **Next chapter:** The Anatomy of a Good Ticket

CHAPTER 4 OF 10

The Anatomy of a Good Ticket

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 4 · The Anatomy of a Good Ticket

A well-written ticket essentially pre-loads the evidence this whole subject's technical courses spend entire chapters teaching you how to gather. A poorly-written one means the first thing whoever picks it up has to do is go re-derive information the reporter already had in front of them — real time spent before diagnosis has even started.

The Core Elements of an Actionable Ticket

ELEMENT	WHY IT MATTERS
Steps to reproduce	Exact and specific ("click X, then Y") — not "it doesn't work"
Expected vs. actual behavior	Stated separately and explicitly — a common gap, since people often describe what went wrong but never say what should have happened instead
Scope	One user or many, one environment or all — the same scoping instinct `netdiag1` and `perfdiag1` both open with
Exact timestamp, with timezone	"This morning" is nearly useless days later; an exact timestamp lets anyone jump straight to the right log window — the direct payoff of `log1`'s own correlation discipline
Correlation ID or exact error text	The direct payoff of `appdiag1`'s own correlation-ID material — turns a log search into a single exact lookup
Environment	Browser/OS/app version/region — whatever's actually relevant to the specific issue

A Real Before/After Example

BAD TICKET

"The app is broken, please fix ASAP."

GOOD TICKET, SAME UNDERLYING ISSUE

"Clicking 'Save' on the profile page shows a spinner that never resolves. Expected: the page saves and shows a confirmation toast. Actual: spinner runs indefinitely; after 60+ seconds I gave up. Started around 2026-08-09 09:14 UTC. Affects my

account specifically so far — a colleague on the same team confirms the same behavior, but a different colleague on a different team says it works fine for them. Browser console shows a 500 with `request_id: a1b2c3d4`."

Identical underlying bug — one version tells whoever picks it up almost nothing; the other hands them a correlation ID and a specific timestamp ready to grep directly.

REPORT WHAT YOU SAW, NOT WHAT YOU THINK IT MEANS

A genuinely common mistake: reporting a guessed cause ("the database is down") instead of the actual observed symptom ("I get a spinner that never resolves when I click Save"). If the guess is wrong — and it very often is — the real, raw information about what was actually observed is lost entirely, replaced by a theory that sends the investigation in the wrong direction from the start. Let whoever diagnoses it form their own conclusion from the raw symptom; report the symptom, not the diagnosis.

The Same Discipline Applies When You're the One Escalating

This isn't only about the tickets support engineers receive from end users — support engineers constantly file their own tickets upward or sideways, to engineering, to a vendor, to another team. The exact same elements apply in reverse: an engineer escalating with "it's broken, please help" is making the identical mistake they'd be frustrated to receive from someone else. Chapter 7's own "effective escalation" material is, in large part, this same anatomy applied to the outgoing direction.

Templates as Scaffolding, Not a Cage

A ticket template with required fields genuinely helps make sure these core elements aren't forgotten — but a template isn't satisfied just because every field has *something* typed into it. A field filled with "N/A" or a copy-pasted non-answer defeats the entire point. The goal is genuinely useful information in each field, not merely a non-empty one.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why "the app is broken, please fix ASAP" fails to help whoever picks up the ticket, even if the underlying bug is exactly the same as this chapter's own good-ticket example.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why this chapter recommends reporting "I get a spinner that never resolves" rather than "the database is down," even if the reporter is fairly confident about their own theory.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why this chapter says a ticket template with every field filled in isn't automatically a good ticket, and what actually determines whether it's genuinely useful.

View solution

CHAPTER 4 QUICK REFERENCE

- Six core elements: **steps to reproduce, expected vs. actual, scope, exact timestamp, correlation ID/error text, environment**
- A good ticket pre-loads the evidence this subject's other courses teach you to gather — a bad one forces re-deriving it
- **Report what you saw, not what you think it means** — a wrong guessed cause loses real information a raw symptom preserves
- The same discipline applies when **you're the one escalating** upward or sideways, not just when receiving a ticket
- A filled-in template field isn't automatically a useful one — **non-empty ≠ genuinely informative**
- **Next chapter:** Working an Incident: Keeping a Live Timeline

CHAPTER 5 OF 10

Working an Incident: Keeping a Live Timeline

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 5 · Working an Incident: Keeping a Live Timeline

Chapter 1 promised this would be the single highest-payoff habit in the whole course. Here's why, and exactly how to actually do it: a timeline is a running, timestamped log of what was checked and what was found, written down *as it happens* — not reconstructed afterward from memory.

Why "Live" Specifically Matters

Human memory doesn't reconstruct events in true chronological order after the fact — it fills gaps with plausible-sounding assumptions shaped by how the story eventually made sense, not by what was actually observed at each moment. A timeline captured live avoids this failure mode entirely, because it records the real sequence and the real findings at the moment they occurred, before anyone knows how the incident will end.

What Belongs in an Entry

Timestamp, what was checked or done, what was found — and who, if more than one person is involved. Terse and factual; a timeline is an evidence log, not prose.

```
14:02 UTC — Ticket filed: checkout API intermittently returning 500s since ~13:45 UTC.
14:05 UTC — [J. Lee] Checked CPU/memory on checkout-api-3: both normal. Not a resource issue.
14:11 UTC — [J. Lee] Checked network path to payment gateway: clean, no packet loss.
14:14 UTC — [J. Lee] Theory: 13:40 deploy introduced the bug. Checking version skew across instances.
14:19 UTC — [J. Lee] All 8 instances report the same version — ruling out version skew.
14:23 UTC — [J. Lee] Checked connection pool metrics: active=20/20, waiting=9. Pool exhaustion confirmed.
14:27 UTC — [J. Lee] pg_stat_activity shows one query stuck 8+ min on order_items table scan.
14:31 UTC — [J. Lee] Confirmed missing index on order_items.customer_id, added in a post-13:40 schema change.
14:34 UTC — Index added; pool recovering; error rate back to baseline by 14:38 UTC.
```

A Timeline Is Not the Same as a Narrative

Notice the entries at 14:14 and 14:19 above: a genuinely reasonable theory (version skew) was checked and ruled out before the real cause was found. That's not a mistake to edit out afterward — it's exactly what the

timeline is supposed to preserve.

A MESSY TIMELINE IS NORMAL, NOT EMBARRASSING

An incident that looks clean and linear in hindsight almost never was, in the moment. Wrong theories checked and ruled out are a completely normal part of real diagnosis — they belong in the record exactly as they happened, not smoothed away to make the investigation look more efficient than it actually was. This "mess" is precisely what Chapter 9's post-incident review needs: it's what actually made the incident hard to diagnose, not a footnote to be tidied up.

Where to Keep It: Low Friction Beats "Correct" Tooling

The best timeline tool is whichever one is fast enough that people actually use it while the incident is happening — a shared document, a dedicated incident chat thread with timestamped messages, or a purpose-built incident-management tool are all genuinely fine. The worst timeline tool is a more "proper" one nobody actually updates in the moment because it's too much friction to reach for mid-incident.

A Live Coordination Tool, Not Just a Historical Record

During a multi-person incident, a shared live timeline does real-time work too: it prevents two people independently checking the exact same thing because neither knew the other already had, and it lets someone joining partway through catch up by reading the timeline instead of interrupting people who are actively working to ask "what's been checked so far?"

DON'T WAIT UNTIL YOU'RE SURE SOMETHING IS SIGNIFICANT

A real, common trap: holding off on writing something down until you're confident it'll matter. This quietly loses most of the timeline's own value, since you genuinely can't reliably predict in the moment which detail will turn out to be important later — the exact same lesson `log1` teaches about not knowing in advance which log line matters. Write it down as you check it, ruled-out theories included, before you know how the story ends.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why this chapter says human memory is a genuinely poor substitute for a timeline captured live, even for someone with an excellent memory.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Using this chapter's own worked timeline, explain why the version-skew theory entries at 14:14 and 14:19 should stay in the record rather than being removed once the real cause was found.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain the two separate benefits a shared live timeline provides during a multi-person incident, beyond serving as a historical record afterward.

View solution

CHAPTER 5 QUICK REFERENCE

- A timeline = timestamp + what was checked + what was found, captured **live**, not reconstructed afterward
- Memory reconstructs events non-chronologically after the fact — a live timeline avoids that specific failure mode
- **Keep ruled-out theories in the record** — a messy timeline is normal, not something to clean up
- Pick whichever tool is **low-friction enough to actually use during the incident** — that beats a "more correct" tool nobody updates
- During a multi-person incident, a shared timeline also **prevents duplicated effort** and lets latecomers catch up without interrupting
- **Write it down as you check it** — you can't predict in the moment which detail will matter later
- **Next chapter:** Mitigate vs. Fix: Buying Time Safely Without Losing the Evidence

CHAPTER 6 OF 10

Mitigate vs. Fix: Buying Time Safely Without Losing the Evidence

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 6 · Mitigate vs. Fix: Buying Time Safely Without Losing the Evidence

Two of this subject's own technical courses opened with a warning: restarting a struggling process destroys the exact evidence needed to diagnose it. This chapter gives that warning its honest other half — sometimes stopping user pain immediately genuinely is the right call, and it doesn't have to come at the full cost that warning implies.

Two Different Goals, Often Conflated

Mitigating means restoring service quickly — a rollback, a restart, disabling a feature flag, failing over to a backup — without necessarily understanding the actual root cause yet. **Fixing** means actually understanding and resolving that root cause, so it doesn't recur. These aren't competing goals; they're often correctly sequenced one after the other, mitigate first, fix later — and for a genuinely severe, ongoing incident, that order is usually the right one, not a shortcut.

When Mitigating First Is the Right Call

For a genuinely severe (recall Chapter 3's SEV1/SEV2) ongoing incident, every additional minute has a real cost, and a full root-cause diagnosis can legitimately take longer than users should reasonably have to wait. Stopping the bleeding immediately is usually more valuable than a slower, fully-understood fix delivered at the same speed the incident is still actively hurting people.

The Deliberate Middle Path: Capture Before You Mitigate

The apparent tension between "mitigate fast" and "don't destroy evidence" isn't actually a contradiction — it's a sequencing problem with a small, critical step in between. When even a little time exists before mitigating — seconds to a couple of minutes, often available even during a genuine emergency — capturing a quick snapshot of the current state first preserves the key evidence a full diagnosis will need later, even though the mitigation itself is about to change or wipe out the live state.

WHAT A QUICK CAPTURE ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE

A `pg_stat_activity` dump, a heap or thread dump, copying the exact error message and correlation ID, or simply a screenshot of the current metrics — the same techniques `log1`, `perfdiag1`, and `appdiag1` each teach in depth, applied here as a fast, deliberate snapshot rather than a full investigation. It doesn't need to be complete; it needs to preserve enough to let tomorrow's investigation start from real evidence instead of nothing.

This isn't always possible — a truly critical SEV1 might genuinely have zero seconds to spare. But when there is a little time, this single step is what turns "mitigate fast" and "preserve the evidence" from opposing goals into a correctly-ordered sequence.

A MITIGATION APPLIED BLIND CAN MAKE THINGS WORSE, NOT BETTER

"Mitigate first" isn't a blanket rule that overrides all judgment. Restarting a service mid-way through a critical data write can cause real data corruption — a genuinely worse outcome than simply losing some diagnostic evidence. A few seconds spent asking "could this specific mitigating action itself cause additional harm?" is worth it even under real time pressure.

Don't Forget the Fix Once the Mitigation Works

A real, common failure mode: once the immediate pain stops, there's a strong pull to treat the incident as closed and move on, leaving the actual root cause never properly diagnosed. **System Monitoring & Performance Diagnosis**'s own capstone shows exactly this pattern taken to its natural extreme — weeks of nightly restarts masking a genuine memory leak, never actually fixed because the mitigation kept working well enough that nobody circled back. A mitigation buys time; it doesn't substitute for the fix. A ticket shouldn't close until the root cause is genuinely understood, or a deliberate, documented decision is made not to pursue it further — which is a different thing entirely from simply forgetting.

Working Example: A 30-Second Capture Before a Rollback

A checkout service throws errors for every user — a genuine SEV1. The fastest mitigation is rolling back to the previous deploy. Before doing it, the on-call engineer spends 30 seconds: copying the exact error message and its correlation ID, and confirming via a quick check that no in-flight payment transaction is mid-write, so the rollback won't risk a partial or duplicate charge. Then the rollback happens. Service recovers in under two minutes. The captured error and correlation ID are exactly what let the team properly diagnose and fix the actual bug in the new deploy the next day — the mitigation bought time without becoming a permanent, undiagnosed workaround.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why this chapter says mitigating first and preserving evidence aren't actually opposing goals, despite the tension with `log1`'s and `perfdiag1`'s own "don't destroy evidence" warnings.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why this chapter says "mitigate first" isn't a blanket rule, using the data-write restart example.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain what this chapter says the `perfdiag1` capstone's own nightly-restart scenario demonstrates about the risk of stopping at "mitigated" instead of continuing to the fix.

View solution

CHAPTER 6 QUICK REFERENCE

- **Mitigate** = restore service fast; **fix** = understand and resolve the root cause — legitimately sequenced, not competing goals
- For a genuinely severe, ongoing incident, mitigating first is usually the right call
- The tension with "don't destroy evidence" resolves via a **quick capture step before mitigating**, when even a little time exists
- A mitigation applied without a moment's thought can cause real additional harm — not a blanket rule to follow blindly
- **A ticket shouldn't close at "mitigated"** — see `perfdiag1`'s own capstone for what happens when it does, for weeks
- **Next chapter:** Effective Escalation: What to Say, and to Whom

CHAPTER 7 OF 10

Effective Escalation: What to Say, and to Whom

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 7 · Effective Escalation: What to Say, and to Whom

Chapter 4 previewed this: an escalation is, in large part, the same anatomy of a good ticket, aimed outward. This chapter finishes that thought — what changes when you're the one sending it, the two genuinely different audiences an escalation can have, and why a well-kept timeline (Chapter 5) makes writing a good one almost trivial.

Escalation Is a Ticket, Sent Outward

All of Chapter 4's core elements still apply — what was observed, steps to reproduce, scope, exact timestamps, correlation IDs. An escalation adds two more: what's already been checked and ruled out (so the person receiving it doesn't waste time repeating work already done), and a clear, specific ask — a decision, an investigation, an authorization, a concrete action. Without that ask, even a perfectly evidenced escalation leaves the recipient guessing what's actually being requested of them.

Two Genuinely Different Audiences

TECHNICAL ESCALATION	MANAGEMENT ESCALATION
To another engineer or team with deeper expertise in a specific area	To get authority, resourcing, or a business decision
Needs the actual technical evidence — logs, queries, correlation IDs	Needs business impact and a clear decision to make — not a stack trace

Conflating the two wastes the escalation either way — a deeply technical stack trace doesn't help a manager who needs a business-impact summary and a decision to make; a vague "this is bad" doesn't help an engineer who needs the actual evidence to act on.

Escalation Paths and On-Call Rotations

Most real organizations have a defined path — a primary on-call, a secondary if the primary doesn't respond within some window, then a lead or manager. Knowing this path before an incident happens, not scrambling

to figure it out during one, is itself part of good incident response.

A Good Escalation, Built Directly From a Timeline

BAD ESCALATION

"Hey, can someone look at the database? Something's wrong."

GOOD ESCALATION, TECHNICAL AUDIENCE — BUILT FROM CHAPTER 5'S OWN TIMELINE

"Escalating to DBA team — SEV2, checkout-api pool exhaustion since 14:02 UTC (ticket #4821). Confirmed via `pg_stat_activity`: one query on `order_items` in 'active' state for 8+ minutes (pid 18832, started 14:23 UTC). Ruled out: version skew (all instances on 2.15.0), network path to DB (clean). Query text attached. **Need:** confirmation it's safe to terminate pid 18832 directly, or a DBA-side fix for the underlying table scan. Full timeline: [link]."

A well-kept live timeline makes this almost trivial to write — it's a summary of what's already been recorded, not a fresh writing exercise.

GOOD ESCALATION, MANAGEMENT AUDIENCE — SAME INCIDENT, DIFFERENT ASK

"Escalating to Eng Director — SEV1 payment outage, active since 13:45 UTC, estimated revenue impact ~$X/minute. Root cause not yet confirmed. **Need:** approval to fail over to the backup region — this will resolve the outage, but data will be roughly 2 minutes stale after failover."

Same underlying incident, a completely different message — no query text, no pid numbers, because none of that helps a management decision-maker. What they need is business impact and a clear, specific decision to authorize.

Escalating Too Early vs. Too Late

Escalating before doing any basic first-pass diagnosis wastes the recipient's time and can look like skipped due diligence. Sitting on something well past the point where help would clearly be faster prolongs the incident unnecessarily. A rough heuristic: time-box against the ticket's own severity — a SEV1 gets minutes, not hours, before escalating; a SEV3 can reasonably take longer before that becomes the right call.

ESCALATING IS GOOD INCIDENT HANDLING, NOT A PERSONAL FAILURE

Treating escalation as an admission of inadequate skill — personally, or as a team culture — directly causes the "escalating too late" problem above, since people avoid it out of fear of looking incapable, which makes incidents last longer than they need to. A timely, well-evidenced escalation is exactly what good incident handling looks like, not a shortcoming to be embarrassed about.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain the two elements this chapter says an escalation adds on top of Chapter 4's own core ticket elements, and why both matter.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Using this chapter's own two good-escalation examples for the same incident, explain why the technical and management versions contain such different information.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why this chapter says treating escalation as a personal failure directly makes incidents last longer, rather than just being an unfair attitude toward the person escalating.

View solution

CHAPTER 7 QUICK REFERENCE

- An escalation reuses Chapter 4's core elements, plus **what's already been ruled out** and a **clear, specific ask**
- **Technical escalation** (evidence-heavy, another engineer) vs. **management escalation** (impact + decision, no stack trace) — genuinely different audiences
- Know your team's **escalation path/on-call rotation** before an incident, not during one
- A well-kept **timeline (Chapter 5) makes writing a good escalation nearly trivial** — it's a summary, not a fresh effort
- Time-box against severity: a SEV1 escalates in minutes; a SEV3 can reasonably wait longer
- **Escalating is good incident handling**, not a personal shortcoming — treating it as failure causes incidents to drag on
- **Next chapter:** Communication During an Incident: Cadence and Audience

CHAPTER 8 OF 10

Communication During an Incident: Cadence and Audience

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 8 · Communication During an Incident: Cadence and Audience

Chapter 1's own bad-process example ended in "total silence for hours." This chapter is about the specific discipline that avoids it — not because silence looks bad, but because silence is itself read as information, almost always the wrong information.

Silence Reads as "Nobody Is Working on This"

The absence of an update during an active incident isn't neutral — anyone waiting interprets it, usually as neglect rather than "actively investigating something genuinely hard." "Still investigating, no new findings yet" is itself real, valuable information worth sending, even when there's nothing new to report.

Setting a Cadence, Not Just Reacting

Deciding on a regular update interval up front — every 30 minutes for a SEV1, every few hours for a SEV3, scaling with severity the same way Chapter 7's escalation timing did — avoids the awkward gap where 45 minutes pass with nothing sent purely because "there's nothing new to say yet," when that absence itself needed communicating.

Audience-Appropriate Updates

The same "know your audience" principle from Chapter 7's escalation split, now applied to ongoing updates: a technical status update for the team actively working differs from a stakeholder-facing one for people who need impact and rough timing, not technical detail.

A STAKEHOLDER-FACING UPDATE SHOULD STATE
What's affected
What's *not* affected — a real reassurance, not filler
What's currently being done

A STAKEHOLDER-FACING UPDATE SHOULD STATE
A rough timeframe, only if it can be given honestly

A CONFIDENT WRONG ETA DAMAGES TRUST WORSE THAN HONEST UNCERTAINTY

Committing to a specific fix time you're not actually confident in, then missing it, costs more trust than a plain "we don't have a confident timeline yet, next update in 30 minutes." The second one is less satisfying in the moment, but it's honest — and it doesn't compound the original problem with a broken promise on top of it.

Updating Even When the News Isn't Good

"We tried X, it didn't work, we're now trying Y" is still a genuinely useful update, despite not being good news — it demonstrates active, real progress, which maintains trust. Silence erodes trust regardless of how hard the team is actually working behind the scenes; a visible, honest update — even a discouraging one — doesn't.

The "All Clear" Message

Once resolved, an explicit "this is now resolved" message matters just as much as the original "we're investigating" one. People who were told about a problem need to be explicitly told it's over — otherwise, a real fraction of them continue operating under the assumption it might still be happening (avoiding a feature, expecting delays) longer than necessary, a real and often-overlooked gap.

DON'T LET WRITING UPDATES DISTRACT FROM ACTUALLY WORKING THE INCIDENT

If drafting the update itself takes meaningful time away from a small team actively fixing a SEV1, consider having someone not doing hands-on technical work own communication — an incident-commander or communications role, for a team large enough to split it. The same "process shouldn't become its own burden" theme Chapter 1 opened with applies here directly.

Working Example: A Full Update Sequence

```
14:05 — Investigating reports of checkout failures. Impact: some users
        unable to complete checkout. Not affected: browsing, account login.
        Next update in 30 min or sooner if we learn more.

14:35 — Still investigating. Ruled out a network issue; now looking at
        database performance. No confident ETA yet. Next update in 30 min.

15:05 — Root cause identified — a database query issue. Fix in progress.
        Expect resolution within 15-20 minutes.

15:22 — Resolved. Checkout is fully functional as of 15:20 UTC. We'll
        share a summary of what happened once our internal review is complete.
```

Notice the 14:35 update carries no good news at all — a ruled-out theory, no ETA — and it's still exactly the kind of update this chapter recommends sending, matching Chapter 5's own timeline for this same running incident. The 15:22 message is the explicit all-clear, not left implied.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why "still investigating, no update yet" is described as genuinely valuable information, even though it contains no new findings.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why this chapter says committing to a specific ETA you're not confident in is worse for trust than admitting you don't have one yet.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why the explicit 15:22 "resolved" message matters, and what could go wrong if the team simply stopped sending updates once the fix was deployed without sending it.

View solution

CHAPTER 8 QUICK REFERENCE

- **Silence is read as neglect**, not as "hard at work" — an update saying nothing new is still worth sending
- Set a **proactive cadence up front**, scaled to severity, rather than only reacting when something changes
- **Technical vs. stakeholder-facing updates** need different content, mirroring Chapter 7's own escalation-audience split
- An **honest "no confident ETA yet" beats a confident wrong one** — a broken promise compounds the original problem
- Bad-news updates ("tried X, moving to Y") still maintain trust — silence erodes it regardless of actual effort
- Always send an explicit **"all clear"** — don't leave resolution implied
- **Next chapter:** Post-Incident Review: Blameless and Useful

CHAPTER 9 OF 10

Post-Incident Review: Blameless and Useful

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 9 · Post-Incident Review: Blameless and Useful

Chapter 5 called this the timeline's own eventual destination. This chapter closes the loop: how to turn a good timeline and a resolved incident into a review that actually prevents the next one — and why "blameless" is a practical mechanism for getting a review worth trusting, not a soft or performative gesture.

Why "Blameless" Isn't About Being Soft

Blameless doesn't mean nobody is ever accountable, or that mistakes don't matter. It means the review focuses on systemic and process causes — what made this mistake possible or easy to make — rather than individual blame. This is a practical, outcome-driven choice, not a purely feel-good one.

The Real Mechanism: Psychological Safety Produces Better Data

If an engineer who made a mistake fears personal blame for it, they're incentivized to omit or soften that detail in the review — which means the review's own account of what happened is now wrong, and any fix aimed at a wrong account of events is aimed at the wrong thing. Blamelessness isn't charity toward the individual; it's what makes the review's own data trustworthy enough to actually act on.

Proximate Trigger vs. Root Cause

The proximate trigger is the immediate, final action that set the incident off. The root cause is the systemic condition that made that trigger possible, or its consequences severe. A genuinely good review keeps asking "why" past the first, obvious answer — a lightweight version of the "5 whys" technique:

QUESTION	ANSWER
Why did checkout fail?	A query ran forever
Why did the query run forever?	It scanned the whole table
Why did it scan the whole table?	No index existed on the filtered column
Why wasn't there an index?	The schema-review process for new queries doesn't currently check for this

That last answer — a missing schema-review check — is the actual root cause worth fixing. "Add the missing index" fixes today's incident; it does nothing for the next query that reaches production the exact same way.

A Real Review Structure

SECTION	SOURCE
Timeline	Built directly from Chapter 5's own live timeline — the review's primary source material
Root cause	Found via the 5-whys style questioning above — not just the proximate trigger
Impact	Concretely quantified — duration, users affected, tied to the severity classification from Chapter 3
What went well	Genuinely worth naming, not just filler — what actually worked should be reinforced, not only what failed
What went poorly	Honest, specific, systemic — not individual blame
Action items	Specific, owned, dated — covered in full below

Action Items With Owners and Dates, Not Aspirations

A review ending in "we should improve our monitoring" produces nothing — nobody is specifically responsible, and there's no deadline creating any urgency. Every real action item needs a specific owner (one named person, not "the team") and a specific due date. If neither can genuinely be assigned, it's more honest to leave the item out than to include it performatively.

> **ACTION ITEMS CAN BECOME THEIR OWN IGNORED BACKLOG**
> A review that produces action items nobody ever follows up on is barely better than no review at all. Some mechanism — even a lightweight one, like a monthly check-in on open items — needs to actually confirm whether they got done, or the review's own real work quietly evaporates.

Working Example: The Full Mini-Postmortem

Built directly from Chapters 5 and 8's own running checkout incident:

```
TIMELINE — condensed from the live incident log (14:02–15:22 UTC); full log linked.

ROOT CAUSE — A schema change added an unindexed query path to order_items.
Proximate trigger: the query ran a full table scan under peak load, exhausting
the connection pool. Root cause: no schema-review step currently checks new
queries for missing indexes before they reach production.

IMPACT — SEV1, checkout unavailable for ~35% of attempts, 13:45–15:20 UTC (95 min).

WHAT WENT WELL — pg_stat_activity identified the stuck query within 25 minutes;
stakeholder updates sent on a consistent 30-minute cadence throughout.

WHAT WENT POORLY — the missing index reached production with no review
step designed to catch it.

ACTION ITEMS
  1. Add a missing-index check to the schema-review checklist — Owner: J. Lee — Due: 2026-08-16
  2. Add an automated alert when connection pool utilization exceeds 80% — Owner: M. Patel — Due: 2026-08-23
```

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why this chapter argues blamelessness is a practical mechanism for better data, not just a kinder way to run a review.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Using this chapter's own 5-whys example, explain why "add the missing index" is the wrong action item to stop at, and what the real root cause turned out to be.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why "we should improve our monitoring" fails as an action item, and what this chapter says a real one needs instead.

View solution

CHAPTER 9 QUICK REFERENCE

- **Blameless** = focused on systemic causes, not individuals — a practical way to get honest, trustworthy data, not a soft gesture
- Fear of blame causes people to hide details — which makes the review's own account of events wrong
- **Proximate trigger vs. root cause** — keep asking "why" past the first obvious answer (a lightweight 5-whys)
- A review's structure: **timeline (from Ch5), root cause, impact, what went well, what went poorly, action items**
- Action items need a **specific owner and a specific date** — vague aspirations produce nothing
- Action items need a **follow-up mechanism** too, or they quietly become an ignored backlog
- **Next chapter:** Capstone: Running One Incident Start to Finish

CHAPTER 10 OF 10

Capstone: Running One Incident Start to Finish

Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows

Chapter 10 · Capstone — Running One Incident Start to Finish

Nine chapters built the pieces — classification, a good ticket, a live timeline, mitigating safely, escalating well, communicating honestly, and reviewing blamelessly. Unlike this subject's other four courses, this capstone doesn't split into three separate tickets — it runs one complete, fresh incident through every one of those stages in sequence, since a process course benefits more from one coherent story than three disconnected ones.

The Incident: Search Returning Zero Results

Starting around 10:00 UTC, search begins returning no results for a growing number of previously-working queries. Browsing and checkout are unaffected.

STAGE 1 — INTAKE (CHAPTER 4)

Ticket filed at 10:14 UTC: "Search returning no results for common terms since around 10am." **Steps to reproduce:** search for 'wireless headphones' on the site. **Expected:** results shown. **Actual:** empty results, no error visible to the user. **Scope:** appears to affect only some search terms, not all. **Timestamp:** onset ~10:00 UTC. No correlation ID yet — no visible error to capture one from, a genuine limit worth noting rather than inventing one that doesn't exist.

STAGE 2 — CLASSIFICATION (CHAPTERS 2 AND 3)

Scoping: many users (a dozen similar reports within 15 minutes), one specific feature (search only), sudden onset, correlating with a deploy at 09:55 UTC. **Severity: SEV2** — a major feature broken for a significant subset, not a full outage. **Impact/Urgency:** high impact (search drives significant traffic) and rising urgency (actively worsening as more terms are affected) — act now, per Chapter 3's own matrix.

STAGE 3 — LIVE TIMELINE (CHAPTER 5)

```
10:16 — Confirmed several search terms return zero results; others still work.
10:19 — Checked search-index service: process healthy, resource usage normal.
10:24 — Theory: results cache serving stale/empty entries. Checked directly — cache is passing through corre
10:31 — Checked recent deploys: search-service v3.2 shipped 09:55 UTC, changed
        the query-parameter format sent to the index backend.
10:36 — Confirmed: v3.2 sends a terms[] array; the index backend (unchanged,
        still on the prior contract) silently returns empty for that format
        instead of erroring — matches symptom onset exactly.
10:40 — Root issue confirmed: v3.2's query-format change is incompatible
        with the current index backend.
```

Notice the 10:24 entry stays in the record — a reasonable theory, checked and ruled out, exactly as Chapter 5 requires.

STAGE 4 — MITIGATE VS. FIX (CHAPTER 6)

Decision: roll back v3.2 immediately — SEV2, actively worsening. Before rolling back, a 90-second capture: the exact query-format diff between v3.1 and v3.2, three example failing search terms with timestamps, and the index backend's own version number. A quick harm check: search is read-only, no in-flight writes at risk — the rollback itself is safe. Rolled back at 10:44 UTC.

STAGE 5 — ESCALATION (CHAPTER 7)

Technical escalation, sent alongside the rollback decision: "Escalating to Search Infra — SEV2, v3.2's query-format change is incompatible with the current index backend contract (diff attached). Rolling back v3.2 as immediate mitigation, effective ~10:44 UTC. Need: a target timeline for updating the index backend to support the new format, so a compatible v3.2 re-deploy can be planned properly." No management escalation was needed this time — resolved within the hour, no business decision required. Not every incident needs both kinds, exactly as Chapter 7 notes.

STAGE 6 — COMMUNICATION (CHAPTER 8)

```
10:20 — Investigating reports of search returning no results for some
        queries. Impact: some search terms affected; browsing and checkout
        unaffected. Next update in 20 min.

10:40 — Identified likely cause — a recent deployment change. Preparing a
        rollback now. Next update within 15 min.

10:46 — Rolled back the recent deployment. Search functionality restored
        as of 10:44 UTC. Monitoring to confirm full resolution.

11:05 — Resolved. Search fully functional, no further reports in the last
        20 minutes.
```

STAGE 7 — POST-INCIDENT REVIEW (CHAPTER 9)

```
ROOT CAUSE (via 5-whys)
Why did search fail? New query format returned empty results.
Why? The index backend didn't support the new format.
Why was it deployed anyway? No compatibility test existed between
  search-service and index-backend versions in the deploy pipeline.
Why not? Cross-service compatibility testing was never set up for
  this specific pair of services.
Root cause: a missing cross-service compatibility check in the deploy
  pipeline — not just "coordinate this one deploy better."

IMPACT — SEV2, ~44 minutes (10:00–10:44 UTC), an estimated 15-20% of
search queries affected during the window.

WHAT WENT WELL — root cause identified in 24 minutes from ticket to
confirmed cause; a clean, single-action mitigation with no side effects;
a consistent communication cadence throughout.

WHAT WENT POORLY — the incompatible deploy shipped with no automated
check that would have caught it beforehand.

ACTION ITEMS
  1. Add a cross-service compatibility test between search-service and
     index-backend to the CI pipeline — Owner: A. Rossi — Due: 2026-08-20
  2. Document the query-format contract between the two services
     explicitly — Owner: K. Nguyen (search-infra lead) — Due: 2026-08-18
```

Chapter Attribution

STAGE	SOURCE CHAPTER
Ticket intake with the core actionable elements	Chapter 4
Severity classification (SEV2)	Chapters 2–3
Priority via the Impact/Urgency matrix	Chapter 3
Live timeline, including a ruled-out theory kept in the record	Chapter 5
Capture-before-mitigate, plus a harm check before rolling back	Chapter 6
A technical escalation with evidence and a clear ask; recognizing no management escalation was needed	Chapter 7
A consistent, honest update cadence and an explicit all-clear	Chapter 8
A blameless review with a real root cause and dated, owned action items	Chapter 9
The framing distinguishing this course's own scope from the other four Technical Support courses	Chapter 1

Honest Scope Note

WHAT THIS COURSE DELIBERATELY DOESN'T COVER

- No specific ticketing-tool tutorials (Jira, PagerDuty, and similar) — the concepts transfer directly, but tool interfaces vary too much to cover here
- No formal ITIL-certification-level process depth — this course teaches the practical core, not a certification curriculum
- No legal/compliance-specific incident reporting requirements (e.g. breach-notification timelines) — a genuinely separate, specialized topic
- No crisis PR or media handling for major public-facing incidents — a distinct discipline of its own
- No on-call rotation design or staffing methodology — this course assumes a rotation exists, not how to build one

Each is a legitimate, separate topic — not silently assumed solved by what this course actually covers.

Hands-On Exercises

EXERCISE 1

Explain why the 10:24 timeline entry (the cache theory, ruled out) stayed in the capstone's record instead of being removed once the real cause was found.

View solution

EXERCISE 2

Explain why no management escalation was needed for this incident, even though it was a genuine SEV2, and what this shows about Chapter 7's own two-audience distinction.

View solution

EXERCISE 3

Explain why the capstone's root cause is "a missing cross-service compatibility check," not "the deploy broke search," and why that distinction changed what the action items actually addressed.

View solution

CHAPTER 10 QUICK REFERENCE — COURSE COMPLETE

- One incident, every stage: classification → ticket → timeline → mitigate-vs-fix → escalation → communication → review
- A ruled-out cache theory stayed in the timeline; the real cause (an incompatible deploy) was found 24 minutes after the ticket landed
- A safe, evidence-preserving rollback resolved the incident in 44 minutes; no management escalation was actually needed
- The review's root cause was a missing CI check, not "a bad deploy" — producing action items that prevent a recurrence, not just today's incident
- This closes *Incident Response & Ticketing Workflows*, 10/10 chapters — the fifth complete course under the Technical Support subject, alongside *Logging & Log Analysis*, *Network Troubleshooting*, *System Monitoring & Performance Diagnosis*, and *Web & Application Troubleshooting*