Key Concepts of the First Response – Searching a Scene:

- Objectives of a Crime Scene Investigation:
  - The main objectives of a crime scene investigation are as follows:
    - Reconstruct the incident
    - Ascertain the sequence of events
    - Determine the mode of operation
    - Disclose the motive
    - Uncover what property was stolen
    - Find out all the criminal may have done
    - Recover physical evidence of the crime
  - A crime scene investigation is characterized by organization, thoroughness, and caution

- Tasks of a Crime Scene Investigator:
  - STEP 1: Obtain basic facts and thoroughly consider the scene; Make a complete and systematic survey to attempt to reconstruct the actions of the criminal; Formulate a plan for the search and documentation of the scene
    - Note: Investigators should not start the crime scene with a detailed examination of the body until the basic examination of the scene has been completed
  - STEP 2: Take clear and constant notes throughout the investigation
    - Note: The extent of notes and sketches are usually determined by the seriousness of the crime
  - STEP 3: Take photographs of the central crime scene and begin the crime scene search
    - Note: A designated trash pile area should be chosen as a certain amount of waste is generated from the investigation, such as empty film canisters and blood-testing materials

- Plan of Action:
  - The crime scene must be approached in a systematic, methodical way
  - Certain steps must be performed before others
  - Considerations about legal and scientific matters must be made when searching a crime scene
  - These details require a method of approach or plan of action
  - This documented procedure should be available to crime scene investigators so that responsibilities, tasks and order of tasks are clearly defined

- Note taking:
  - Note taking forces investigators to commit observations to writing and to keep a detailed record of everything observed and accomplished. The following is a list of general points about notes and note taking:
    - Keep notes as events occurred in chronological order
    - Notes should detail step by step all actions taken
    - Notes should be complete and thorough
• Notes should be clearly written and legible
• Negative or unexpected conditions should be noted
• Notes should be as specific as possible
• Never discard case notes, sketches, tape recordings, etc

• Crime Scene Search: Processing a crime scene involves the following:
  o Surveying the crime scene
  o Photographing and sketching the crime scene
  o Mapping and measuring the crime scene
  o Recording the location of the physical evidence
  o Searching for fingerprints and other physical evidence

• Collection of Evidence:
  o It is useful to set priorities of what evidence should be collected first (for example, fingerprints which are often fragile)
  o After all the “fragile” evidence is collected, the scene should be walked through again to look for things that were missed
  o When collecting evidence, steps should be taken to prevent breakage, spillage, or contamination that could destroy its value
  o The evidence containers should be sealed and clearly marked with unique identifiers

References
