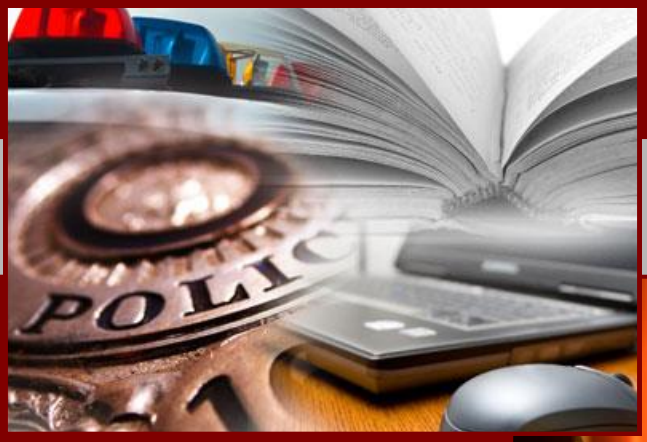

Winter Edition

Volume 10
Edition 4

2020

The ILEETA Journal

ILEETA

International Law Enforcement
Educators and Trainers Association

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ILEETA
International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association

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ILEETA Journal Editorial

Managing Editor:
Kerry Avery

Editorial

Reflections

We made it to the end of 2020! The changing of the calendar is usually a time to for a fresh start but this year I approach it still in shock over how much our world changed in 2020. January 1 is not going to magically solve the pandemic, the challenges faced by law enforcement, or the cultural changes spurred on by the information age.

Writing the editorial is the last thing I do when putting together the journal because it is a reflection of the articles and what is going on around us. What stands out the most in this edition is the number of articles focused on mental health and officer safety. The instructor development articles have taken a backseat while we address the higher levels of Mazlow's hierarchy of needs.

The first priority is to take care of yourself physically and mentally. As they say on planes, put on your own oxygen mask before helping others. Needless to say, law enforcement is a helping profession that, up to this point, has failed to adhere to this crucial advice.

Once you are healthy we continue the ILEETA legacy, started by Ed Nowicki, to improve and advance training. I dedicate my career as a training consultant to law enforcement because this task is monumental! Although I am a civilian I am attracted to the same things that attract all of you to the profession, challenging work that makes a difference in the world. Law enforcement is an extremely complex multi-faceted job. Trying to train someone to respond to situations with thousands of different variables is a challenge and I am eternally grateful we have ILEETA as a forum to bring us together to share information and make each other better trainers.

In addition to the type and design of training we also face constantly evolving technology. At one time the vast majority of education and training took place in the classroom. Now we have handheld computers, video conferencing, simulators, and virtual reality. Our work to deliver the best training possible with the available resources will never end. We are in the infinite game, a book and concept by Simon Sinek that is worth exploring.

As we embark on 2021 I commend each and every one of you for your dedication to the betterment of training and law enforcement.

Stay safe!

Kerry

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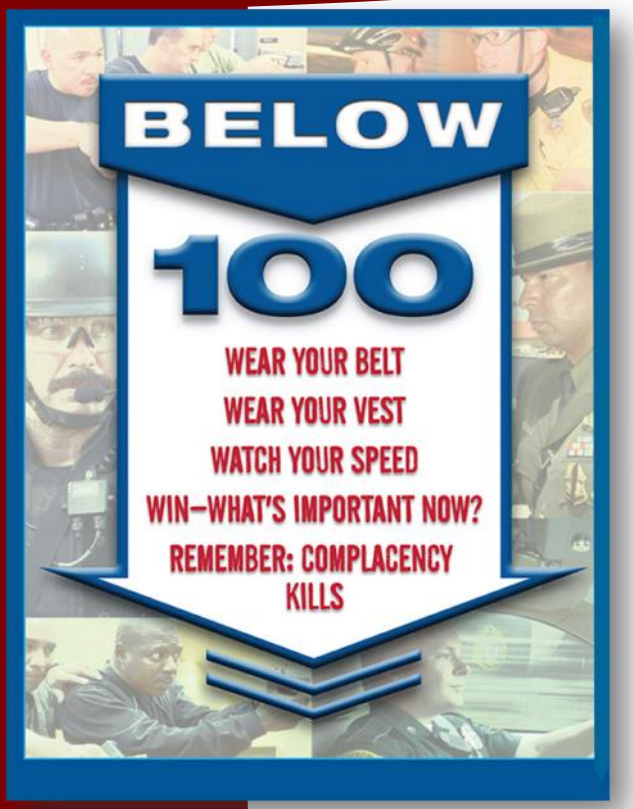
Officer Safety Use of Force

Editor:
Brian Hill



Presenting an OIS Captured on Video in Court

by Kevin R. Davis

Learn from your mistakes. Sound advice. Learn from someone else's mistakes. Better advice and a lot less painful.

When I came into the Body Worn Camera Unit of my agency, my chief said to me on my first day, "You know, you're not going to be analyzing use of force on video?" I responded, "No, I didn't know that." Funny, I've worked on every officer involved shooting since then, testified in a number of murder trials when shootings were captured on video, presented in Grand Jury on an OIS captured on three videos, been awarded my county prosecutor's Top Cop award for my video work and testimony, and just received a Chief's Commendation for my work on an OIS incident.

What I learned about and learned to do with digital video evidence was a product of training that I paid for and attended on my own time (funny how that worked after multiple schools were denied which I then attended…).

I also have told others thinking of a Body Worn Camera program that there are a multitude of unforeseen "ripples" in that pool they have not thought of. BWC companies are quick to sell systems but do not tell their customers that software, time and training will be required to handle this evidence properly.

But I digress…back to my lessons learned.

My first OIS captured on video since my assignment involved: new BWC video, antiquated dashcam video, and surveillance video. All captured certain elements of the shooting. Like most video captures, some better and to more extent than others, but all worthwhile evidence when analyzed properly.

First lesson:

Prosecutors must be educated on digital video evidence:

Its strengths, weaknesses, what it actually shows and what it does not. The "silent witness" or "the video tells the story" is wrong and has ended up getting innocent cops indicted on perfectly good use of force incidents.

In this case, the investigator wanted me to testify at trial on the shooting. He knew me, knew my strengths in the use of deadly force arena, and knew I could explain to the jury what they were seeing.

When I met with the prosecutor, he was 15 minutes late to the meeting, looked like a bag of rags, and turned his back to me while I explained what I could do for him. He simply stated, "Well, you're not going to testify as an expert in this case."

I sat outside the courtroom on the first day of the trial. On a break, the investigator stepped up to me and said, "KD, you gotta save this case." Unfortunately, the prosecutor (who unbeknownst to the PD was within his two weeks' notice to resign) never called me to the stand. The criminal trial for the suspect who shot at our officer led to an acquittal.

Second lesson:

How you present digital video evidence in court is important:

The prosecutor was/is an "Apple Computer guy." He refused to use the PC based courtroom computer system, which included courtroom TV's and monitors for each juror, and a monitor at the witness box. Rather, he insisted on his MacBook hooked up to a projector, shown on an antiquated screen. During my testimony, he would ask me a question, I would have to step down from the witness box, watch a segment of video or still images I had extracted from the video, and then step back to the box and answer. You could see the jury struggling with the process.

The strength of the video evidence was amazing. Based on a great surveillance system, I was able to track: multiple subjects/suspects arrival at the restaurant on a quiet Sunday; movement and placement in the restaurant; arrival of another suspect; arrival of two

victims to the parking lot; drawing motions of handguns; types of handguns used (short barreled revolver from a pocket/high capacity semi-auto from under a shirt); muzzle blast; movement of suspects and victims; on and on.

After conviction for murder, the jury was asked about the video work that I had done, and all commented that it led to the conviction. That said, it could/should have been better presented in court by using the systems in place.

Third lesson:

Ensure that the Grand Jury rooms and Courtrooms have adequate *computer* equipment:

I had worked on another homicide case. My determination was that the shooting was in self-defense. The video system, part of a metropolitan housing multi-unit apartment building, recorded the victim prior to the suspect's arrival, the suspect as he walked onto the property, the fight leading up to the shooting, and everything short of the actual firing of the subject's pistol at this antagonist who was also armed.

I was proud of my work which included a concatenated video segment which strung together the victim/suspect movement throughout the incident. This work was contained on an external 1 Terabyte drive.

I walked into the Grand Jury room handed the Assistant Special Prosecutor my drive, he inserted it into his laptop, and it would not play… Small tip here: few agency owned computers are up to date with software and hardware. This special prosecutor was from another county. When I played the video evidence to their team in my agency conference room, it worked without a hitch. His work laptop? No. Though we were able to play the raw video with my narration/testimony to the Grand Jury, my videos were unable to be played.

Fourth lesson:

Ensure that the Press Conference rooms, Grand Jury rooms and Courtrooms have adequate *AV* equipment:

This is a multi-incident lesson involving the same OIS video evidence. I had pushed for my agency releasing the video of the shooting of an unarmed black male subject. The video which I worked on was compelling. To my knowledge this was the only BWC video captured OIS incident which was captured by three different body worn cameras. Each had a different angle but when brought together in a "canvas" view which was in sync, was a compelling piece of evidence which clearly made the case that the suspect had turned towards the officers, brought his hands together in what appeared to be a classic "Weaver stance" and then turn away from the officers. Based on this perceived threat, three officers fired, and the suspect was wounded with two shots.

The agency had purchased AV equipment to upgrade the D.B. conference room with HD TV's and a sound bar. They installed the TV's in the room but did not use the sound bar thinking that the speakers in the room would be sufficient. Wrong. The audio, which included the statement from the suspect, "Where's my gun at?", which I had increased the audio levels so "…gun at?" could be heard clearly, was not loud enough. In the press conference held in the room with a lot of reporters and other folks, the audio was simply not loud enough.

When this same case was taken in front of the Grand Jury, a new process for my agency since our county prosecutor decided that ruling on police shootings was too political and decided to bail on the process instead referring all police shootings to the State Attorney General's office. Along with other investigators involved in two OIS incidents, I met with the Prosecutors from the AG's office who would be taking our two outstanding shootings to the Grand Jury.

I warned them both that they needed to make sure that the Grand Jury computer and AV equipment needed to be checked prior to our videocentric investigation presented to the jurors.

I then went in to testify and one of the prosecutor's said that the PC system was "freezing" often during the day. Fortunately, when they asked me if I wanted to stand up from behind my plexiglass Covid screen and present to the Grand Jury, the system worked. That said, when I came to important sequences of the suspect's actions, I

saw several jurors move and crowd around the small monitors in the room. When the audio portion, which captured the suspect saying, "…gun at?" was played, various jurors said they could not hear it. The audio set up in the room was a small sound bar under the large TV at the front of the room and was insufficient for the size of the Grand Jury room.

Our friend and video expert Grant Fredericks has written about issues with presenting video evidence with insufficient AV equipment in the February 2019 issue of Police Chief magazine available for download here. Recommendations for proper courtroom equipment are given by Fredericks.

I completely agree based on my own experiences. In my office I have a high-def curved 65" screen TV. Frequently when working on or analyzing OIS or shooting videos I will put the digital video on this TV to examine. It has made all the difference when I have educated politicians and agency high-law on the use of deadly force by an officer.

Wrap-Up

Lessons learned; we can only move forward if we are willing to examine mistakes made leading to lessons learned. The local county prosecutor's office and common pleas court judges are in control of Grand Jury rooms and courtrooms and the computer/AV equipment they use. Makes all the difference when a judge cannot see or hear what is on video. That quickly gets new equipment in place, *but* force investigators must understand that watching an OIS on a small computer monitor may not adequately reflect the true nature of the evidence.

I have pushed my agency to improve the AV capability in the PD conference rooms and the hardware of those who view and review officers' actions in OIS incidents.

Be smart, learn from our experiences. Improve your capability to present digital evidence. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Kevin R. Davis is a full-time law enforcement officer with over 35 years of police experience. Kevin has been inducted into the National Law Enforcement Hall of Fame as the 2019 Trainer of the Year. Kevin's assignments have included: corrections, patrol, street narcotics, SWAT, full-time training bureau instructor and video analyst. Kevin's website is KD-ForceTraining.com. Kevin actively works as an expert witness in use of force cases and instructs his two-day "Use of Force Investigations" course to interested agencies. He welcomes your comments at TrainerKevinDavis@Gmail.com

Own the Night

by Todd Fletcher

Officers know it's important to have a flashlight during low-light operations. Especially when working at night, flashlights are the tool used most often. But nighttime operations aren't the only time to have a flashlight. Dark buildings exist on dayshift too. As a result, safety and security on the streets require a better understanding of the use of light.

Fundamentally, light is used to navigate, locate, conceal, and identify. These are the foundational concepts behind the flashlight techniques used for building search tactics and firearms training.

Navigate

Being able to see while moving from place to place is critical in low light environments. Depending on the situation, there are a variety of techniques we can use. Knowing when to leave the flashlight on, and when to use momentary flashes of light, is something that requires training and experience.

A flashlight continuously on is useful to light a dark trail in a secured area to aid in walking safely without twisting an ankle. Likewise, using a spotlight during traffic stops is a good way to light up a vehicle while helping you avoid obstacles in your path during your approach.

Alternatively, momentary flashes of light allow officers to move discreetly while investigating an alarm or other suspicious activity. We need to see to establish a route of travel and avoid obstacles. By momentarily flashing the light to illuminate our path, we can commit the route to memory before turning the light off and moving under the cover of darkness.

Locate

Using artificial light to locate items is the most obvious use of a flashlight. In low light, a quality flashlight can help locate whatever it is we need to find and help us detect threats in our operational area. We need to know what is coming and going all around us. Light allows us to locate potential threats that need attention.

Once we locate what we're looking for, we need to decide whether to use the light in momentary flashes or to leave the light on. Context will dictate which tactic should be used. If a potential threat to you or someone else is located, leaving the light on can help with threat assessment. However, if we get in the habit of leaving the light on, we risk losing whatever night vision we have gained. After your eyes have adjusted to the dark, when you go into a well-lit room, your eyes adjust to the bright light quickly. But when you go back into a dark area again, it takes several minutes for your night vision to return. It gets worse as we age because it takes even longer for our eyes to adjust to sudden changes in light levels.

A "shield of light" can be used to conceal officers while allowing freedom of movement and the ability to locate and identify threats.

Conceal

We use light to illuminate the world around us. However, officers can effectively cast a "shield of light" to light up the area in front while successfully concealing the area behind the operator. Think about it this way: during a traffic stop at night, a "shield of light" is cast using takedown lights, headlights, and spotlights. This illuminates the interior of the offender's vehicle while giving officers a "shield of light" to conceal their movement to the vehicle. Moving in the shadows helps keep officers safe during low light traffic stops. This technique can keep officers safer in other scenarios too.

The shield of light is especially effective when the light is unexpected. A shot of intense light to the eyes of a bad guy can cause him to suddenly turn his head to the side giving an officer time to launch a counterattack or change

positions to gain a tactical advantage.

Identify

We have presented many classes on the use of light and taught tactics and techniques to show officers how light could help or hinder them. Many officers discover their vision becomes focused on where their light is pointed. Once this is pointed out, they understand how light can hinder by tricking them into looking through "the straw of light". Tunnel vision is developed by focusing on what is directly lit by their flashlight. It takes practice and discipline to use the light away from the "hot spot", but this is the light that allows officers to see more effectively.

No "Perfect" Light

This brings us to the topic of which light to choose. Unfortunately, there is no "perfect" flashlight for every situation. Some flashlights generate enough lumens to illuminate a small city. These flashlights are great for searching open areas but can be overwhelming during a search of a residence. Too many lumens can inhibit our ability to see as much as too little light. For example, getting blinded by bright light during a search of a small room is counterproductive. Conversely, small pocket lights may not produce enough light to illuminate a residential yard while searching for a hidden suspect.

As a result, we need to have different tools for different jobs. A hammer isn't useful when painting. We need a broad paintbrush. So, when working a uniform assignment, I carried a variety of flashlights to be ready for every occasion. I had a full-size flashlight in my cargo pocket whether working day or night. I had a weapon mounted light on my handgun and another on my patrol rifle. On my load bearing vest, I had a pen light for illumination while taking notes and looking for small items in tight spaces. I also had a backup light to use when my primary flashlight was dead, dropped, or forgotten. On day shifts, I had a minimum of four flashlights. Overkill? Maybe. But I always had a light on me when I needed.

In plain clothes assignments or while off-duty, I always have a small pocket flashlight on me. Truth be told, nowadays, I mostly use it to read menus in dark restaurants. In a pinch, a flash of this light in an assailant's eyes may change their plans for the evening. Fellow firearms instructor Mike Boyle once told me, "If you carry a gun for self-defense, you need to carry a light. Most bad things happen at night. I can't predict the weather with any degree of certainty, but I can tell you with a 100% degree of assurance it will get dark tonight. Carry a light!"

On patrol, I carry a variety of flashlights for a variety of occasions. A weapon light, pen light, full size flashlight, and a backup light should provide options for any situation.

Once you understand why you're utilizing certain tactics and techniques, you can make better choices about the flashlights you choose to carry and how to best use those flashlights to your advantage. When the rest of civilized society is asleep in their beds, law enforcement officers are keeping watch and protecting society from those who prey on others. Using light effectively can help sheepdogs own the night. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Todd Fletcher recently retired with over 25 years of law enforcement experience. He has presented instructor development training at multiple ILEETA Conferences. Todd writes regularly for PoliceOne and Police & Security News magazine. As co-owner of Combative Firearms Training, LLC, Todd provides firearms training, instructor development classes, and consultation to law enforcement instructors and agencies. He can be contacted at Todd@CombativeFirearms.com.

Emotional Use of Force

by Tony Blauer

"Use of force should never look emotional. It should simply be "Use of Force."

I have studied violence, fear, and aggression for 40+ years.

During that period, I have studied actual footage and used that footage to design and conduct thousands of very realistic scenarios. Here are some important observations:

- During the training, when role players are attacked logically and sequentially, the defender (student) was generally able to access their trained complex motor skills.

  This is because of 'pattern recognition'. The brain could read the event and select the correct strategy to solve the problem.

  When I compared footage of training vs footage of real incidents, the results were very different.

- In real violent encounters, when attacks were sudden & unorthodox, when there was no consent, the results were completely different. Trained skills were often lost or forgotten.

  Why couldn't basic armbars be applied? Weapon transitions failed, coordination and access to fine motor skills dissipated as the aggression increased, and so on.

There is an explanation, but first…

To fully grasp the problem and solution, I am going to illuminate the connection between physiology and psychology during sudden violent encounters - because in this nano moment of sudden violence inside the reactionary gap a misunderstood but fascinating and predictable human reaction results when most people are struck in the head.

At that moment, if the violent stimulus is a true surprise, the reactive brain can hijack executive function (access to the cognitive brain controlling complex motor skills).

Neuroscience is now running the show.

This knowledge can make the officer safer inside the reactionary gap. Further, this knowledge can help us protect officers more effectively in court by educating those who evaluate and judge 'use of force' reactions.

Of course, of tantamount importance, it can also help organizations and professional trainers improve their defensive tactics programs and potential prompt 'emotional use of force.'

What happens when a stimulus is introduced too quickly?

- "Danger" is detected via the limbic system and triggers this survival response. At this level it bypasses cognition.

- The Prefrontal Cortex, where executive-function takes place, is hijacked by the reptilian brain.

- A survival reaction occurs, called the 'startle-flinch'. If the officer is holding onto something, they contract around it, unable to release for a moment (those explain officers getting dragged by cars, unable to let go a flashlight or ticket when a physical assault has started, and so on.

- The amygdala and limbic system are on high alert.

- For a short time, the defender is in survival mode.

The reptilian brain wants you to survive - its initial response is to protect the head and move you away from danger.

If the training experience and tactical movements taught are not congruent with how humans actually think and move during sudden violence, the reactive brain can override the system resulting in a freeze response where the very complex motor skills you practiced are hijacked by fear and a physiological override.

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Let's shift from the defensive tactics arena for a moment. Sometimes it's easier to relate to new ideas when we look at a completely different picture. It helps us override unconscious bias which we all suffer from to a degree.

Here is a visceral (emotional) example, please visualize this truthfully:

You walk into your shed or basement to reach for some tool and your hand and forearm travel through a spider web. Without seeing it, your finely honed instincts know exactly what it is. You react immediately. You recoil, without thinking, wipe your arm. Your physiology changes a little. You scan quickly for the culprit, but your reaction is somewhat measured.

All good. Now, let's change the scenario just a little, this time you walk face-first into a spider web. It's in your face and hair.

What did you visualize this time?

Think. I'm sure this has happened to you at least once in your life. What did you do? I don't know you and wasn't there but let me guess: you snapped your head back and recoiled violently. Your hands came up lightning-fast and groped at your face. You twisted your head, closed your eyes, your hands still groping at your face wiping away this invisible silk.

At that moment you were not thinking, you were reacting to a potential sudden threat.

What's fascinating is when you consider the extreme difference in reaction from spider web on arm vs face. Then consider how different you would react if you saw the web just before you stepped into it. Again, there would be a sudden fear spike and small flinch, but the crazy "*Spider Web Kung Fu*" dance wouldn't have happened.

This is important because I need you to understand that something happens to most humans when they anticipate a threat to the head - *their command center.*

Here is another important observation:

All this happened in a nanosecond, all because your survival system perceived immediate danger.

And in this small example lies a critical missing piece of the defensive tactics equation.

Our reaction is dramatically more emotional when the danger is to our face & head.

We may flinch when we see something near our foot, on

our leg or arm, but when it's to our face/head our reaction is dramatic, and the reaction seems to bypass cognition. We don't think about it and choose to flinch, we just do.

When the head is at risk, our body and mind will do whatever it needs to ensure safety and survival.

Now, let's go back to the subject of defensive tactics. Please do your best to retain the image of the spider web reaction and weigh and consider what I've shared about the *reactive response.*

Visualize this scenario and answer this question truthfully:

A stranger walks up to you and stops just within arm's reach. They look a little odd. You look at them and ask if you can help.

Without any provocation, they say they want to fight you. Then they just stand there, they don't move.

What happened next in your mind?

Don't romanticize this, don't turn it into a Kung Fu movie. What would you really do at that moment?

(Hold that thought.)

As you're trying to figure this out, they move closer and kick you in the shin and say, "c'mon let's fight".

It's not a fancy or technical martial art kick, it's just a bad kick, the kind a kid throwing a tantrum might throw.

Now, what would you do?

Again, don't be a character in a John Wick movie. You're probably processing this, wondering what the heck is going on and how should you handle this in this day & age of optics on law enforcement and while you're thinking about that, SMACK! you're sucker-punched!

Now, what happens? Picture it.

Let me help as I've studied this for over 3 decades. First, in a nanosecond, you flinch. You don't think to flinch, it just happens. No one thinks, "I should flinch now." Your hands come up blazingly fast. Your head turns away, your eyes close. This is a non-conscious coordinated body-mind movement managed by your survival system. As you begin to cognitively catch -up to what is happening you're either experiencing the emotion of fear or anger. Welcome to an 'emotional use of force' moment.

When We Get Hit in the Head, We See Red.

Something happens to humans, especially males when attacked to the head.

While some may write this off as 'ego', there's a lot of neuroscience behind our need to protect the head. It's our command center.

But there is also something incredibly emotional about being struck or even touched in the face and it can get to the best of us.

(IMO, This is an area of research and dissection that is needed to help make officers safer on the street and in court.)

When the head is at risk, our body and mind will do whatever it needs to ensure safety and survival - we have

been ambushed and have to make a decision under pressure. Time is compressed. We are thrust into an event where the brain has determined we are in a life or death situation. From a neuroscience perspective, a decision made by the amygdala cannot be manipulated until we weather the ambush.

Now hold that thought while I share another example outside defensive tactics

Consider this boxing scenario.

A pro boxer knows he can take a knee if he's hurt. This is his timeout, mulligan, a safety net. This would give him an eight-count to recover.

Every boxer knows about this rule, yet how many times in your life have you seen a *self-initiated 8-count?*

I've been a huge boxing fan since the 70s and I can only remember three times that I've seen a boxer take a knee strategically.

Now stay with me…

When a pro fighter is rocked by a shot, what do they most often do? They know they can call a timeout. But what do they do when they're hurt, scared, and in danger?

If you're not sure, let me help. They grope at the threat and try to clinch like a drowning victim trying to grab hold of the lifeguard. Think about how insane that is.

The injured fighter will move towards the danger and try to hold onto the very person who is trying to rip uppercuts and body shots into them!

Outrageous choices for the pro fighter who knows the rules of engagement.

If a pro fighter can't remember the simple option of "taking a knee", how can we expect an amateur fighter like a police officer to think with total clarity during a violent attack, especially when they've been struck in the head.

(i.e. No offense intended, but every police officer is an amateur fighter compared to a pro boxer).

The point being we expect every police officer to remain lucid and calmly transition between use of force options like a martial arts master.

Add this to the mix in contrast to the pro fighter:

- A police officer is fighting in the street, on concrete, not a padded floor.
- There is no referee to break up the fight.
- There is no mouthguard or groin protector.
- The police officer doesn't know what time the fight starts, who the opponent will be, or the weight class!
- And, unlike in the ring where there's only one opponent, in the street, there are multiple potential threats and always weapons present.

Psychological fear, on top of the head trauma, completely changes this human's capacity.

Seriously, think about this scenario. Because it's real.

This expectation puts an insane amount of pressure on the officer at an unconscious level as they know they are being judged to a standard that can't even be replicated in a training scenario, let alone a truly violent encounter.

Think back to the spider web.

Think back to imagining yourself getting slapped across the face.

Shots to the head create reactive responses, they cloud judgment, physiology, and state change (SNS and vertical breathing) and this all changes how the brain functions.

"When there is trauma to the head, the force throws the brain against the interior of your skull. This alters the chemical and electrical balance to cell communication and function, so it's no surprise that concussions produce physical, emotional, and/or behavioral responses." - From BrainCheck website.

Tracking?

Fighting in this state can lead to poor decision making that can result in the application of excessive or ineffective force.

Will reading and sharing this article make anyone safer?

In my opinion, it will. It can inspire a necessary change in police training to review then include brain-based training. This will greatly improve training.

The purpose of this article was to start a conversation and inspire two shifts in training:

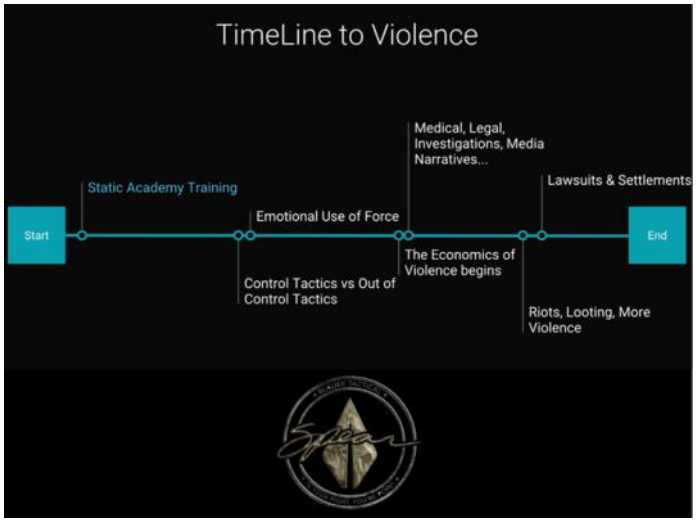
1. More research into brain-based training

2. More research into realistic and relevant training that will help prepare police to better handle violent individuals in a safer manner. This can reduce the risk to the officer, the suspect, and the community.

We can't stop all violence. It's too unpredictable. But there are many scenarios that could be stopped or minimized because they are very predictable, especially since head strikes (sucker punches) are the most common empty hand attacks against police officers.

- There is a link, a direct correlation between violent head trauma and an emotional vs technical response by the officer. This strongly suggests there is a direct link to head trauma and excessive force.

- Head strikes are the worst, they cause the most damage, they are the most psychologically devastating (before, during, and after a confrontation).



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- Head trauma, when received by some officers, makes it less likely they will fight back because it creates emotional, psychological, and physical inertia. In others, it can trigger a spike to the sympathetic nervous system response where they go into fight mode and possibly over-reaction. It's all connected. Including the legal, the medical, and the emotional (careers, politics, and PTSD).

- The principle and concepts I'm sharing have been evaluated by medical and scientific SMEs. The core DNA of this protective measure is as old humankind. But for this article, physiology is not as important as psychology.

- We need to train our officers to understand violence and how to manage their fear. This will increase their confidence and competence and help reduce emotional responses.

TIMELINE TO VIOLENCE

While no one can predict the exact cost associated with the economics of violence for a single incident, it is still easy to extrapolate that sudden violence, initiated by the perpetrator, often triggers a cascade of events that costs lives, careers, hearts, minds, and serious money. *[Think 'Ferguson'. Started with head strikes to the officer, cost reportedly 26M.]*

In a perfect world, 'Use of Force' should never be emotional, it should just be 'Use of Force'. Matter of fact. Not 'emotional'. And in most incidences, that's all it is for the well-trained professional. But we need to integrate behavioral truths into training as well as how we review and evaluate post-incidents.

- Officers, Trainers, Administrators, Politicians, the Media, all need to understand the neuroscience of violence.

- Administrators, trainers, legal teams, journalists, basically anyone who 'judges' an encounter without ever having really experienced fear and physical danger, needs to be exposed to this research so they can understand that when an officer is violently attacked, they are not the same person who graduated from the academy doing choreographed drills with a cooperative role-player.

- Their reptilian brain has hijacked their pre-frontal cortex. Executive function is not readily accessible. Asking them to make calm, calculated decisions during extreme danger isn't even an option for a few seconds. They are now a real human being, with real fears, and a 100,000-year-old DNA survival system trying to override the very complex motor skill training that they were taught!

There are no guarantees.

Clint Eastwood once said that if you want a guarantee, buy a toaster. There are no guarantees and while it would be nice to proclaim that all use of force will always be devoid of emotion, that's just not realistic. Not only is it not realistic, but it's also erroneous. The human survival spirit is fueled by fear and emotions are part of that. There will always be incidents where our emotions are the missing element needed to help us survive the danger.

Impact to the head generates an immediate physiological fear response. Fear makes us emotional if we have not studied it. Emotional use of force will always be less effective. *And ineffective force will always look like excessive force.*

Most training takes place in the safety of a classroom - *the real test takes place in the street.* And if you're out in the street, my hope is that this article inspires you to learn more practical ways to protect your head. And I hope your colleagues and administration decide to research the physiological effects of sudden violence and include those findings in their education and training policy, *as I believe that will help acquit officers who are wrongly judged when they are reactive during a violent encounter.*

The integration of neuroscience and physiology will make defensive tactics systems more court defensible. When trainers understand how the brain works, they can begin integrating brain-based scenario training. In conjunction with a deeper understanding of the startle-flinch response and how to convert that into a protective counter, officers will have safer ways to protect their heads inside the reactionary gap.

The inclusion of an effective mindset and fear management strategies will make the officers more resilient! A modern brain-based approach to scenario training will help stress inoculate officers to the physiological and psychological effects sudden danger can illicit. This would be a huge start in reducing personal and professional liability and this can help regulate 'emotional use of force'.

Additional recommended reading: VIOLENCE DOESN'T CARE WHAT MARTIAL ART WE STUDY

ILEETA

About the Author

Coach Tony Blauer has been in the defensive tactics, and combatives industry for over four decades.

He founded Blauer Tactical Systems (BTS) in 1985 and it has grown into one of the world's leading consulting companies specializing in the research and development of performance psychology, personal safety, and close quarter tactics & scenario-based training for law enforcement, military, and professional self-defense instructors. His programs have influenced over three decades of trainers and coaches as well as most contemporary reality-based martial artists.

- *His research on the neuroscience of fear and the startle-flinch lead to the development of the SPEAR System® a modern personal defense system based on physiology, physics, and psychology. It has been used by defensive tactics and combative trainers all over the world for over 30 years.*
- *He developed the world's first impact-reduction scenario-based training equipment, called High Gear which revolutionized force-on-force training for police, SWAT, and military organizations.*

He travels extensively working with individuals, corporations, and government organizations around the world providing solutions for training, performance assessment, and credentialing. His company is dedicated to enhancing the mental and physical safety of everyone they help train. Tony can be found online at www.blauertrainingsystems.com and reached at tony@blauertactical.com

Four Variables to Remember During a Melee Attack

by Amir Khillah

If you're like me and are just looking for the "punch line" (no pun intended), maintain proper distancing or a reactionary gap. Make sure your feet know how to move to avoid getting your head clobbered. If your feet fail you, make sure your head can bail itself out. If you are completely off guard, keep your hands up and close to your vital targets. Your ability to move your feet and get you out of the striking range of the suspect is vital. There are many drills you can do solo drills to improve your footwork. Just remember: leaving you out of a staggered stance and making it easier for a suspect to take you down.u to defend a larger perimeter or sphere. Keep your hands up (they are never as high as you think), and keep them close to your "off buttons," which are the temple and jaw areas of your face.

1. DISTANCE AND TIMING

The most important aspect of striking is controlling the distance. In fighting, it's called distance/timing; in law enforcement, we refer to it as the "reactionary gap".Maintaining a proper reactionary gap can be hard, especially when complacency sets in. Keeping people out of your "kill zone" may be at the forefront of your mind if you are a couple of years out of the police academy, but if you have a few miles on you, it's easy to get comfortable and allow citizens into this critical area. But preventing this is one of the most important elements of defending against a melee attack. So keep your eyes up (even when running file status checks!), and keep the subject at a distance where they will have to attempt to close the gap before delivering a punch, kick, elbow, knee, or head butt while you are writing down the proper spelling of the subject's name.

2. FOOTWORK

The second most important variable is footwork. The subject, for example, takes the opportunity when you look down to change the channel on your radio and steps in with a wide, although highly visible, telegraphed and ineffective punch. The last thing you want to do is wake up missing your department-issued firearm and finding your partner staring down at you. Your ability to move your feet and get you out of the striking range of the suspect is vital. There are many drills you can do solo drills to improve your footwork. Just remember:Your ability to move your feet and get you out of the striking range of the suspect is vital. There are many drills you can do solo drills to improve your footwork. Just remember: leaving you out of a staggered stance and making it easier for a suspect to take you down.

3. HEAD MOVEMENT

Get off the "X" is a term we throw around a lot in law enforcement. Your ability to get your head out of the line of a punch is important. Although we could have avoided ending up here if we paid attention to distance, timing and footwork, we now need to resort to our third line of defense: moving our head out of the way of that incoming fist or beer bottle.There are a number of drills from basic Western boxing (you can find these online) that will teach you how to move your head. Better yet, wear a pair of safety glasses, grab a partner, and have her/him throw some tennis balls at your face. Try moving your head off the "X"; remember, "if you can dodge a wrench, you can dodge a ball." By the way, this drill also works great for footwork. For now, just focus on moving your head off the line.

4. BLOCKING

If a subject has got past our first three lines of defense (distance, footwork and head movement), now we move to our last level of defense, blocking, parrying and deflecting strikes.When it comes to blocking, parrying, or deflecting, you need to think of the bumper on your vehicle. If you're going to get rear-ended, the bumper doesn't shoot out and intercept the vehicle behind you, instead, it absorbs the impact of the crash and disperses it into foam or springs. Your block/deflections need to

mimic the same action. Don't reach out to block a strike. Reaching out will leave you open in other areas, plus force you to defend a larger perimeter or sphere. Keep your hands up (they are never as high as you think), and keep them close to your "off buttons," which are the temple and jaw areas of your face.

THE BOTTOM LINE

If you're like me and are just looking for the "punch line" (no pun intended), maintain proper distancing or a reactionary gap. Make sure your feet know how to move to avoid getting your head clobbered. If your feet fail you, make sure your head can bail itself out. If you are completely off guard, keep your hands up and close to your vital targets.Your ability to move your feet and get you out of the striking range of the suspect is vital. There are many drills you can do solo drills to improve your footwork. Just remember: leaving you out of a staggered stance and making it easier for a suspect to take you down. **ILEETA**

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The Falling Step
Jack Dempsey's Secret to Powerful Striking

by Sgt. Richard Nance Photos by Alfredo Rico

In his book, *Championship Fighting*, first published in 1950, iconic heavyweight boxing champion, Jack Dempsey provides a succinct and definitive framework for developing knockout power. Interestingly, the book is not specifically geared toward boxing. In fact, Dempsey emphasizes the importance of power punching to self-defense.

As a police officer who is suddenly assaulted, you may not have an opportunity to access a tool from your belt or vest carrier. In such case, your response will likely be heavily reliant on striking. If your strikes lack power, what will stop the suspect from continuing his assault?

The only way to reliably stop a committed attack is to *attack back*, thus putting the suspect in jeopardy. This isn't accomplished with verbal commands or control holds, but rather, through the pain he feels or the diminished level consciousness he experiences when you strike him. In other words, you need to be able to hit hard!

Although physical attributes such as size, strength, and athleticism are factors in your ability to deliver powerful blows, they are less important than proper striking technique and attitude. Striking with power is a *learned* skill, not an innate one.

"Punchers are made; not born" – Jack Dempsey

Striking powerfully involves setting your bodyweight in motion and relaying that weight explosively to the target, as opposed to merely striking with the weight of the arm. Dubbed the "Manassa Mauler", Dempsey was a master at getting his entire bodyweight behind every punch. In a heavyweight division laden with much larger opponents, the 6' 1" 190 lbs. phenom had little choice if he wished to survive, much less, win the title.

Take it from Dempsey

According to Dempsey, there are four ways to set the bodyweight in motion for punching; *(1) fall, (2) leg spring, (3) shoulder whirl, and (4) upward surge, which applies only to uppercuts and the like.* The "falling step" incorporates the first three methods, making it the perfect vehicle for delivering a power shot.

The Falling Step (setting bodyweight in motion)

The falling step enables you to incorporate your entire bodyweight into your strikes, whether delivered with the lead or rear hand. It's much more than merely stepping toward the target when striking – it's *exploding* your weight into the target, capitalizing on gravity and momentum. Here is how the falling step is performed.

From an athletic stance, you can launch your bodyweight into your strike. Note the knees are slightly bent and the rear heel is off the ground, with most of the weight on the lead leg.

Start from a naturally athletic stance, with your feet about shoulder width apart, your knees slightly bent, your gun side back, and your rear heel off the ground. With the vast majority of your weight on the lead leg, lift it and take a long, quick step toward the target. You will feel as though you're falling forward. That's because you are, but don't worry. After your rear foot springs your body forward, it will automatically advance to maintain your body's balance. Your lead foot should land flat at the end of the step.

Resist the temptation to shift weight to your rear foot prior to stepping. Doing so would telegraph your intent and more importantly, rob your forthcoming strike of its

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power. You need to be "off-balanced" in order to plunge your strike into the target with the weight of your entire body.

In addition to the lower body mechanics described above, your upper body has a job to do as well. Dempsey referred to the twisting of the upper body prior to a punch connecting as shoulder whirl. Essentially, if you're delivering a right-handed strike, your left shoulder is pulled rearward, sending your right shoulder forward and hurling your right fist or palm toward the target.

Impact (exploding bodyweight into the target)

Setting your bodyweight in motion is a critically important start to delivering a powerful strike but you also need to transfer that bodyweight through the striking limb and into the target. This involves momentarily stiffening the striking limb just prior to impact. Dempsey described this stiffening as the fist, arm, and shoulder being "frozen". Failure to tense your anatomical weapon just prior to impact will allow the bodyweight you set into motion to "leak" from the crumpling of the striking arm or supporting muscles upon impact.

With no preparatory movement, take a quick, lunging step toward the target with your lead leg. This allows you to "fall" into your strike for maximum weight transference.

In order to move quickly and to avoid gassing out prematurely, you need to be as loose and relaxed as possible prior to striking. If you are tense, your movements will be slow, telegraphed, and will lack the explosivity so critical to powerful striking. So, stay relaxed until just prior to impact. Think of your strike like the crack of a whip; loose, fast, and powerful, impacting at the precise moment your lead foot hits the ground.

Shoulder whirl adds to the effectiveness of your strike. Just before impact, tense the striking arm so there is no flex (energy leak) upon impact. Be sure to time the impact of your strike with the fall of your lead foot.

In Sum

We carry tools to avoid having to fight a combative suspect empty-handed. However, when an assault manifests before you have an opportunity to arm yourself with the appropriate tool, your life may depend on your ability to deliver effective strikes. One of the best ways to add power to your strikes is to master the falling step. It certainly worked for Dempsey. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Sgt. Richard Nance is 24-year law enforcement veteran and owner of WARTAC Combatives. He is the author of GunFight! – An Integrated Approach to Shooting and Fighting in Close Quarters. and the upcoming book, with the working title – Overcoming a Sudden Assault. For more information, visit www.looseleaflaw.com

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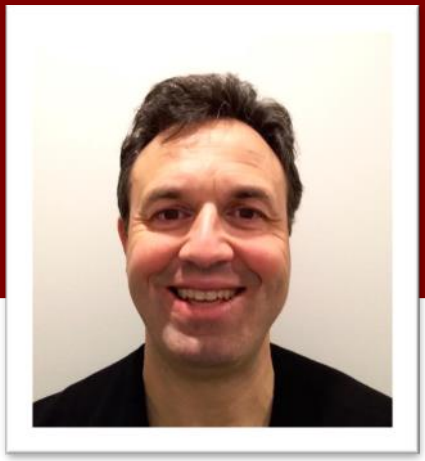
Marksmanship Fundamentals for the Remedial Shooter: An Instructor's Guide

by Rom Ranallo



As a firearms instructor, you are often judged by your peers on your ability to deal with "remedial shooters". They exist in virtually every police department in the world. The purpose of this article is to define what a remedial shooter is; why they exist; review the fundamentals of marksmanship; & provide solutions that will decrease the number of remedial shooters in your department.

WHAT IS A REMEDIAL SHOOTER?

A "remedial shooter" can be defined in several different ways, but for the purpose of this discussion it's a police officer who is not able to achieve the legislated standard (course of fire) for re-certification on a departmental authorized / approved firearm. The COF is essentially a "test" that legally entitles a police officer to possess and carry a firearm in the execution of his/her sworn duties. The COF test assess your baseline marksmanship proficiency skills and basic gun-handling. Any COF that is used to authorize police officers to carry a firearm in the course of their duties must be "task oriented" on a photorealistic (humanoid) target, requiring 100% hit accountability. An aggregate COF where a pass can be defined as 70%, 80%, etc. no longer has a place in our profession.

When it comes to "remedial shooters" we need to expedite their learning curve so that they don't become a perennial problem. The less time we spend on remedial training equals more time doing the real training.

WHY DO REMEDIAL SHOOTERS EXIST?

I can assure you that every generation has had their fair share of remedial shooters. My first question is: **"How were they taught?"** My second question is **"What are you as firearm instructors doing about it?"**

Remedial shooters exist for three primary reasons: high anxiety, negative attitude, and lack of understanding or poor execution of the fundamentals of marksmanship.

Every police recruit who is hired attends basic training. Some attend a police academy "outside" of their respective departments while others receive the training "in-house". Regardless, the recruit training program will obviously consist of a firearms component. Granted, hours dedicated to firearms training has decreased in some regions over the years and most of us are being asked to do more with less. However, every police recruit MUST achieve the designated standard of firearms training and qualification.

There is a tremendous amount of anxiety some police officers experience when being "tested" i.e. having to pass the COF.

According to psychologist Dr. David Cox, the outcome to any event is based on the following equation:

$$M \times T^{(t)} \times P = O$$

85% 15% = 100%

M = Mental

T = Technical

t = Tactical

P = Performance

O = Outcome

A small percentage of remedial shooters simply do not have the right mind-set (mental focus), which is 85% of the process. They approach the firearm re-cert as an experience (unfortunately, in their mind a negative one) instead of a performance. In my opinion they lack the proper mental mindset.

Sadly, there is also a tiny percentage of police officers,

who were raised on a belief that firearms are bad and therefore have a mental aversion to shooting that impedes their ability to perform. The sound of the firearm discharging terrifies them. Regardless, they did "just enough" to pass while completing their recruit training but are not vested or committed. Others like the idea of being a police officer, but do not like the idea of having to carry a firearm or being tested on it for that matter. They are by far the most challenging remedial shooters to deal with because they simply do not want to be at the range and completely dread it.

Considering that shooting accurately is largely mental in nature as highlighted in the outcome equation above, it's a topic that needs significant more exploration. I believe there is a lot to gain by linking up and involving sport psychologists in our firearm programs to develop innovative strategies that we can use to help motivate those officers who do not have the required mental focus. The few who persistently display a negative attitude need to be dealt with accordingly. Either through informal action or formal process with your HR section. There needs to be accountability. Period!

When I started policing just prior to the turn of the 21st century, some of the firearm instructors I came across where mentally abusive. This behavior led to officers experiencing high anxiety & in some instances, uncontrollable hand shaking when being tested.

There is a large percentage of remedial shooters that exist because they never established a solid baseline skill set or **understanding** as to how the fundamentals of marksmanship relate when they completed their initial firearms training. However, they performed well enough or on a level where little to no coaching was provided to them because instructors were too busy (and sometimes literally overwhelmed) dealing with the extreme problem shooters. They performed good enough in the recruit training environment, but after graduation were not able to transition and perform (pass the COF) in their new environment. Basically, they did not have a solid foundational skill set or true understanding which leads to increased levels of anxiety. This anxiety coupled with weaker or novice skill sets is often enough to impede performance resulting in not being able to pass the COF.

WHAT ARE THE FUNDAMENTALS OF MARKSMANSHIP?

When I started my career, I believed there were four fundamentals of marksmanship: STANCE, GRIP, SIGHT ALIGNMENT, and TRIGGER CONTROL. Over the years I came to realize that there were four more: DRAW, POSITION, **HOLD**, and **FOLLOW-THROUGH.**

STANCE

When it comes to learning how to shoot a firearm, it's best to begin with a "fighting" stance (Default stance). Every police officer will have a slightly different stance. Don't try to impart your stance on someone else. A solid standing stance is when the feet are shoulder width apart; dominate side leg is back, arms extended with wrists, elbows, and shoulders locked; head is upright; upper body leaning forward; and the firearm is brought in line with the eyes.

GRIP

Maintain physical contact of the firearm with your hand (s). Shooting hand placement must be established when drawing from the holster and is achieved when the web is placed so that there is contact with the tang (no gap). The trigger finger is isolated (doesn't play a role in the grip). The heel of support hand should be in full contact with heel of the shooting hand (close the gap-no leakage). The support hand should form a mitten shape and curls into a clamp. Both thumbs placed on same side of the pistol with the support thumb "lightly" touching the frame. The thumbs must point forward with the support thumb in-line with the trigger finger. The support hand fingers must wrap around the shooting hand fingers with both hands applying equal grip force. The wrists, elbows and shoulders must be locked. A proper grip is established when there are no adjustments between shots.

SIGHT ALIGNMENT

Is the relationship of the front sight to the rear sight. The

front sight must be in the middle of the rear sight. With open iron sights the top of the front sight post must be level with top of the rear sight posts. There must be equal amount of space (light) on either side of the front sight when looking through the rear sight. The eye must focus on the top of the front sight. With closed iron sights i.e. aperture, the top of the front sight post must be centred in the middle of the rear aperture.

Sight picture is defined as the relationship of sight alignment to the target. Just to be clear, if you refer to sight alignment it has nothing to do with the target. Many instructors use these two terms interchangeably: They aren't. A shooter can have excellent sight alignment, but the gun is not aligned (positioned) with the intended placement on the target resulting in errors (misses) because of an incorrect sight picture. At the end of the day it all comes down to **position**. In other words, where is the muzzle pointing? The muzzle always has a direction and it's incredibly important. There is a reason why it's the second universal firearm safety rule: CONTROL MUZZLE DIRECTION AT ALL TIMES! If I want to put a hole between the eyes of a photorealistic target, I must point the muzzle of my firearm in that exact direction. The only way to accomplish this task with a high degree of certainty is to ensure that I have proper sight alignment, sight picture, hold and follow through.

TRIGGER CONTROL

Is the ability to press the trigger without moving the pistol (muzzle). The placement of your trigger (index) finger is typically on the "power crease" of the distal joint or the fat pad and towards the lower end of the trigger. The pressure applied to the trigger must be evenly, smoothly, and continually like a pendulum. The trigger is to be pulled straight back until you experience a "surprise break". Allow the firearm to fire, and don't force (anticipate) the firearm to fire. Lastly, the trigger finger must maintain constant contact with the trigger during the entire shooting process.

DRAW

Is the presentation of a firearm from a holster and involves four steps: grip; rotate and present; meet and greet; and extend and prep. Before I explain each of the four steps, I must mention something that is often overlooked by firearms instructors and that's the holster. The holster must be situated on a belt so that a "natural" grip can be achieved. The holster must be snug / tight on the belt and the belt must be snug / tight around the waist. Furthermore, the holster shank slits, loops, paddle, etc. must match the width of the belt. There can be no space. I have seen way too many members wearing loose belts or holster shanks that do not match the belt causing the holster to "swim" resulting in holster hiccups when drawing the firearm. For a remedial shooter this can be extremely problematic because their whole focus becomes fixated on whether their firearm is going to come out smoothly. They put so much effort in drawing the gun that they literally resort to the three Ps: point, press, and pray. The issue with this approach is their "point" is more like a wild punch and they have no idea as to the direction of the muzzle. Ninety-nine percent of the time, the muzzle is not pointing anywhere near centre of mass on the silhouette. A 1-2° angular error in the muzzle is inches down range. Clearly, the difference between a hit and a miss. Please check the holsters and duty belts of your remedial shooters before you have them fire a single round.

The first step of the draw is "grip", which is basically placing your dominate hand so the web is touching the tang while retention mechanisms are released with thumb and / or fingers depending on holster type. The fingers wrap around the grip of the firearm with no gap between them. The firing grip of the dominate hand must be established from the holster. The support hand should be positioned at the centre of your body with the thumb pointing up, fingers together, and slightly curled.

The second step is "rotate and present". The firearm is presented as it clears the holster and is rotated so that the muzzle is facing forward (towards a target in a decision to shoot situation).

The third step is "meet & greet". This is where the

support hand is rotated so that the thumb is now pointing forward while the fingers wrap around the dominate hand. The bottom area on the palms of both hands should be touching. The wrist of the dominate hand must be locked and in a straight line. A true grip is established when the grip of the firearm is not visible.

The fourth step is "extend & prep". This is where the firearm is driven forwards and elbows are locked. If a decision to shoot was made and thus the firearm was draw for that purpose, the trigger finger can be placed on the trigger during the "meet & greet" stage. Otherwise, the trigger finger is indexed along the frame or better yet the slide. I have always preferred a high index.

POSITION

It is the spatial orientation (direction) of the firearm (muzzle) in relation to the intended point of aim on a target. Basically, it's the relationship of sight alignment AND sight picture.

HOLD

It is the position of a firearm at a designated point of aim during the entire shooting process and for 1-2 seconds post-firing.

FOLLOW THROUGH

It is holding a firearm on target with index finger on the trigger (tactile feel) as it's being released to the re-set point while re-establishing sight alignment and sight picture.

WHAT ARE SOME SOLUTIONS FOR DEALING WITH REMEDIAL SHOOTERS?

One of the best things you can do as a firearm instructor is to pose the following question to your remedial shooter (s): **Do you control when a bullet leaves the muzzle?**

Many remedial shooters believe they do because they don't understand "internal ballistics". Knowing that the only time they have control of where the bullet will go is when it exits the muzzle. In other words, the muzzle MUST be pointing in the direction of where they intended it to be when they made the decision to shoot and pressed the trigger.

When the trigger is pressed there are a series of events that takes place within the firearm that the shooter has absolutely no control over. I will begin at the event when the firing pin strikes the primer on the cartridge to avoid any confusion between hammer and striker fire pistols. The propellant ignites a flame; the flame burns the gun powder; gases expand inside the cartridge; increased gas pressure drives the projectile forward down the barrel; projectile exits the muzzle (path of least resistance).

Remedial shooters have the impression that when they have sight alignment and sight picture and the trigger is pressed that the bullet exits the muzzle at that exact moment in time. They remove their index finger by "flying off" the trigger and "move" the firearm off the target so quickly by bringing it to a combat tuck or low ready position immediately after the shooting sequence. Shortly after that they are completely puzzled as to why they missed. They have no concept of hold, which I believe is one of the most important fundamentals of marksmanship and is often over-looked or not discussed at all by firearm instructors. Even with minor sight alignment errors and a poor sight picture if the muzzle is pointing at the silhouette during the entire shooting process and 1-2 sec after combat hits will be achieved. Period!

A) *Trigger Exemplar Drill #1 (Ranallo's Version):*

- Place a blank paper target @ 5m
- Select one of the remedial shooters
- Advise the class to pay close attention to your index finger (maintains contact with the trigger during the entire shooting process) and the pistol (held in position).
- Instruct the shooter to align the sights on the paper

while indexing their trigger finger on the frame.

- Place your index finger on the trigger and face backwards (up range)
- Remind the shooter to keep the firearm pointed towards the target and not move it while maintaining sight alignment.
- While the shooter points the pistol at the target press the trigger
- Ask the shooter the following question: **Are you aligned on the original hole?**
- Only press the trigger when the shooter answers: "Yes"
- Repeat the last two steps three times

As this drill is being conducted you will typically hear the non-shooters laugh with joy as they observe the 'magic'. They are in total amazement trying to figure out why an instructor with his index finger on the trigger facing away from the target is able to produce a 1-2" group (often times even smaller) with their fellow officer holding the firearm.

At this point, you ask the following question to the class? **Does that look like a remedial shooter to you?** The answer is always, "No". Most times someone will shout "You have a good trigger press…that's why the shooting was so good…" This is where you drive home the following message: The firearm MUST not move during the shooting process and the finger MUST maintain contact with the trigger all the way to the end of follow-through.

Remedial shooters believe the key to shooting well is having a "good trigger press". I will probably shock a lot of you here and say that's BS. A shooter can slap, jerk, snap, crush the trigger all they want. The real key to shooting well is HOLDING the firearm in place and NOT moving it during the shooting process. If the firearm moves (change in direction) the muzzle moves. The bullet can only go where the muzzle is pointing at the time it exits. If you were to put a firearm in a vice so that the frame is clamped down and you slammed the trigger as hard as you can or a slow as you wish the bullets will go in the exact same place (one hole) because the firearm (muzzle) DOES NOT MOVE!

To further demonstrate this, I take possession of the remedial shooter's pistol selected to do the exemplar demo and unload a full magazine by pressing the trigger as fast as I can at the same target. The grouping is 3-4" (sometimes tighter). Once again, the class is in awe. I then reload another full magazine and do the exact same thing except that I move the gun and the result is the 'discount house of worship'. Half my fired rounds or more are not even on paper. Just to be clear, tell your remedial shooters, ***"Don't move the gun…hold it in position".*** Both you and your remedial shooters will be amazed by the results once they accept the fact that the firearm cannot move and must be held in position during the entire shooting process.

B) The 9/10^{ths} Drill:

- Place a blank target for each shooter @ 5m
- Shooter to fire one round anywhere on the target
- Shooter establishes sight alignment on the original hole
- Instructor advises shooters to pull the trigger 8/10^{ths} and then back to the re-set without losing tactile feel with trigger
- Instructor to have the shooters do the same for 8½, 8¾, and finally 9/10^{ths}

NOTE: For striker fire pistols, instructor to advise shooters to press with 3 lbs of pressure followed by 4 lbs, 5 lbs, 6 lbs, and 7 lbs.

- This drill continues until each shooter has fired five rounds into the original hole (or close to it).

The purpose of this drill is to further demonstrate that the firearm must not move and there must be tactile feel with the trigger during the entire shooting process. This drill is also excellent to correct those remedial shooters who have significant anticipation problems. It is virtually impossible to gauge 9/10^{ths} and therefore the shooters will experience what a "surprise break" feels like. The key here is that shooters need to understand that they cannot force or anticipate the shot. They must concentrate on pressing the trigger until the "surprise break" and then controlling the release of the trigger by maintaining contact to the re-set point.

C) *The Eyes Closed Drill:*

- Place a blank target for each shooter @ 5m
- Have the shooters point the pistol at the target
- With the pistol pointed at the target and finger on the trigger have the shooters hold the position, close both eyes and fire one round.
- Instruct the shooters to maintain contact with the trigger to the re-set point.
- The shooter can only open their eyes when they complete follow-through for each shot.
- This drill repeats until 10 rounds are fired

CONCLUSION

As a firearm instructor dealing with remedial shooters will be one of your most challenging, frustrating, and yet rewarding experiences. It's only a matter of time before the next remedial shooter will require your undivided attention. Gaining new information as to the reasons why some police officers struggle with their shooting: high anxiety; negative attitude; or a lack of understanding on the fundamentals of marksmanship will help you in your relentless pursuit to find the most appropriate solutions. Considering how difficult some remedial shooters can be; it's your passion, commitment, patience, knowledge, and coaching skills that can make all the difference the next time they are required to pass the course of fire (COF). A police officer having a positive experience on a remedial session could be the link to future and lasting success. Imagine a remedial shooter who year after year fails the COF and suddenly with your renewed guidance never fails another one again.

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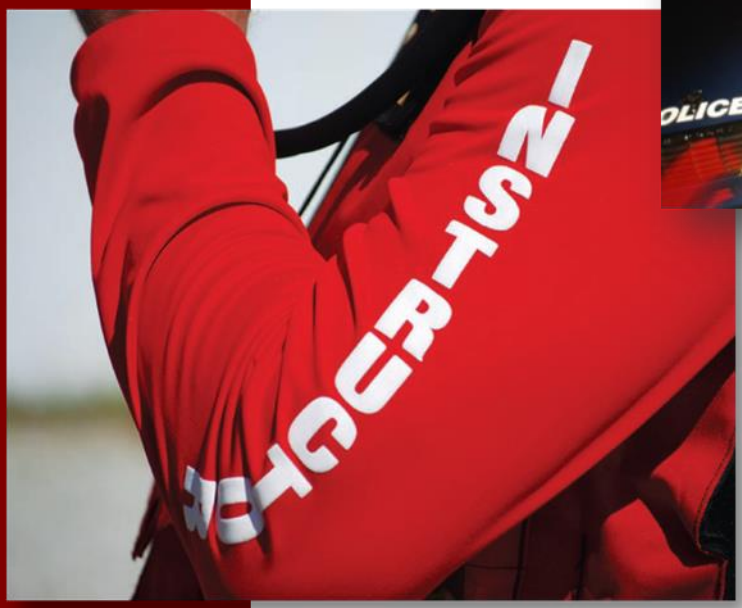
Rom Ranallo is the current Range Master for the Vancouver Tactical Training Centre (TTC) and has 16 years of experience as a law enforcement firearms instructor in multiple disciplines (pistol, shotgun, and carbine). He was part of the Provincial Firearms Working Group where he was instrumental in establishing pistol training and qualification standards. He has trained peace officers at the provincial, national, and international level. Rom holds a Master of Science degree from the University of British Columbia and most recently presented at the 2019 IACP Conference & Expo in Chicago and the 2019 IALEFI-ATC in West Palm Beach. He can be reached at romolo.ranallo@vpd.ca

Instructor Development

Editor:
Thom Dworak



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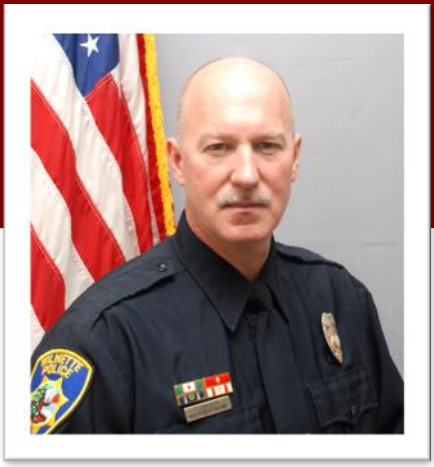
FTO Training: It Should Not Be This Complicated

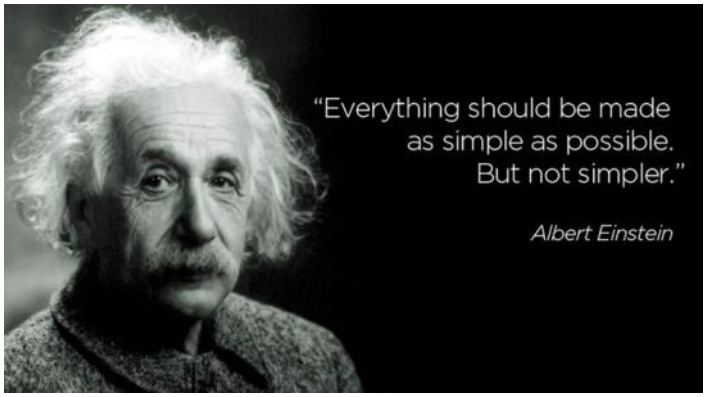
by Thomas Dworak



On-boarding new police or corrections officers is one of the most important tasks for an organization do correctly. In an effort to do so, agency's over-complicate the process, by creating numerous course objectives or requiring the Field Trainer to complete enough lesson plans to choke a horse.

A mantra in my basic and advanced Field Training courses is "Smarter not harder". With this in mind, I look for inspiration from Richard Feynman. If you follow me on twitter @dworak or @TheAdaptiveFTO, you have read posts or retweets from @ProfFeynman.

Feynman was a Theoretical Physicist and really, really smart. How smart? As a 24-year-old Ph D. student he worked with Einstein, Oppenheimer and others on the Manhattan Project. So, what does that have to do with training Probationary Police Officers (PPO)?



Feynman knew:

1. We really don't know as much as we think we do
2. Because we don't, we over complicate what we do know
3. If you can't explain it in simple terms, you don't really know it

Feynman writes there is two types of knowledge:

1. Things we know
2. Thinks we know the name of

And the majority fall into the "Things we know the name of" category. We don't have deep knowledge, but possess superficial knowledge over a broad spectrum. How does this relate to a Field Training Program?

Here are two quick examples.

A department in a Facebook post announced that a trainee had completed their Field Training and Evaluation program. The trainee had completed 12 weeks of training with one Field Training Officer (FTO) and successfully completed 597 training standards. That is impressive but let's do the math. 1 FTO, 3 months of training, average of 5 days a week for 12 weeks is 60 days. Now with a little Jethro ciphering that's almost 10 objectives a day. Not too bad, working 8-hour days, minus two 15min breaks and 1/2-hour lunch again ciphering is about 1.2 objectives per hour.

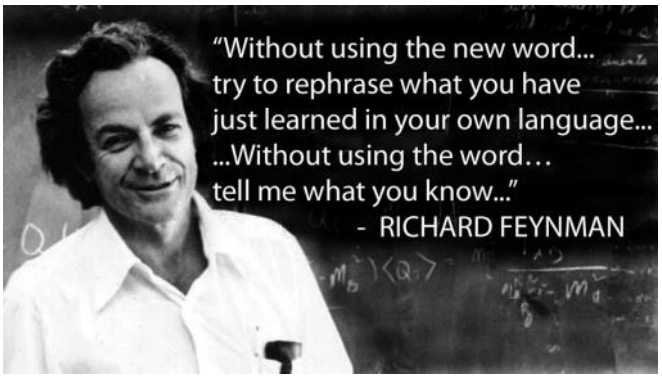
In another post I wrote about an organization that had over 200 lesson plans in their FTO manual. Again another impressive document. I understand the need for standardization but does it add up. A 14-week program is about 70 total contact days which equates to about 2.85 lesson plans per day. Since not all of the contact days will be training days, it's easily more the 3 per day.

Back to the new Probationary Police Officer. How many of those 597 training standards is the officer going to remember and what happens if he forgets one, a really, really, really important one? My question was then and continues to be now, why? Liability, rules, check-lists to name a few, come to mind. And, while we're at it, did anyone explain the why behind the 597 standards to the trainee?

But what does the PPO really know. It seems agencies are more concerned with "covering" 597 training

standards or 200 lesson plans than the how and why behind them. In Feynman's terms we are feeding the "know the name of" versus "really knowing" something.

There is a need for task lists and check boxes, but who are they really for? From a pure training focus, simplification is key. Plain language, no jargon or acronyms. For the FTO, if you can't explain what your teaching to your 8-year-old nephew, you don't know it well enough.



And before you send hate mail, I am not equating the PPO to an 8-year-old. For the FTO do you "really" know what your teaching and if, not what are "YOU" doing to become a more complete trainer and police officer.

Your agency's FTO program is time dependent. That time should be spent on preparing the PPO to really know his/her job rather than just know the name of something. Simplify your training, teach how "things" inter-connect and learn the answers to why questions. FTO's should be training smarter not harder. Why, because a really smart guys, say so. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Thomas Dworak is a retired Sergeant (31 years) from a suburban Chicago police department where he was the Field Training and Evaluation Program Coordinator and the Lead Defensive Tactics/Use of Force Instructor. As the Founder & Lead Instructor for The Adaptive Way, he develops and facilitates courses on Field Training, Leadership, Emotional Intelligence and Decision-making across the United States. Thom's knowledge of experiential learning, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, creative problem solving and decision-making shapes training from The Adaptive Way into programs for the changing environment officers find themselves in daily. Thom can be reached by email at thom@theadaptiveway.com.

Spoiler Alert: It is the Design

by Kerry Avery, M. Ed.

What is the best tool, a hammer, a screwdriver, or a wrench?

Researchers have conducted numerous studies and meta-analysis on training delivery methods. The problem with these studies is they are attempting to measure the efficacy of a tool. I will spare you the time researching delivery methods, classroom, online, and virtual training deliveries can ALL be effective. "As our systematic meta-analytic review (SMAR) has shown, several studies have concluded that both online learning and F2F have their merits and demerits, but on the whole they both achieve the same objectives" (Woldeab, Yawson & Osafo, 2020). There is no silver bullet "best tool" for all training. What makes training effective is the design, not the tools.

Every delivery method has advantages and disadvantages. Classroom allows for interaction but there are still lots of lecture-based classes that fail to take advantage of the primary reason for bringing everyone to the same physical space, at the same time. Virtual classrooms remove the travel and geography barriers while still allowing interaction. Online asynchronous modules provide the most flexibility because they can be completed anytime and almost anywhere. While online environments are more accessible, they do not allow for physical skills, scenarios, and networking.

To capitalize on the benefits and manage the challenges training needs to be designed for the delivery format. In my instructional design process the delivery method is decided at the beginning while writing the course goal and the learning objectives because the objectives reflect what will be achieved in the course. There cannot be objectives on demonstrating tactics in an asynchronous online module because it is not possible to assess achievement of the objective.

Uploading content online is an information session, not training. If you watch a TED talk or read a book you do not say you attended training because you only received information. Engaging with the content is what makes it training. There is nothing wrong with releasing a video or lecturing on a topic but be realistic about what it is, providing information.

Whether the training is going to be delivered by an instructor in a physical or virtual classroom, or participants are going to complete modules on their own, it is important to build interactive engagement associated to meeting the learning objectives into the design. As John Wooden the basketball coach titled his book, "You have not taught until they have learned."

Learning is not a passive activity, it requires engagement. When designing training it is imperative to incorporate exercises, regardless of the delivery method. Classroom and virtual instructor-led training can have questions, group discussions, demonstrations, presentations, reflection, and tabletop scenarios. Online asynchronous modules utilize questions that can be multiple choice, identifying hot spots, putting items in order, sorting into

identifying hot spots, putting items in order, sorting into categories, and scenarios.

Another important component of good design is review exercises. Recalling and applying information is where learning happens! Research shows retrieving information is initially a slower way to learn but the desirable difficulty presented by having to recall content results in longer term learning. The more times a person must work to answer a question, the better they remember it in the future. In addition to building review exercises into the course design, every instructor should have a bank of activities they can draw on and facilitate when there is extra time, a presenter is late or does not show up, or during down time between scenarios. Review exercises are a good time to utilize games. For example, have participants write review questions or scenarios and challenge each other.

When it comes to delivering training, there is no panacea. There is no one method that fits every training need. Advances in technology have opened up new options for online delivery which is proven by a wide body of research to be effective. Choose the delivery method that can do the job with the available resources, then utilize a pedagogical design that will make the time and resources spent on training a worthy investment.

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About the Author

Kerry Avery is the owner of Odin Training Solutions Inc. Kerry has a Master's degree in Education and over 15 years' experience designing training programs, with the last 10 years spent working with law enforcement to develop classroom, online and blended learning courses. In addition to course development, Kerry coaches and teaches law enforcement instructors on course design and facilitation. Kerry is the editor for the ILEETA Journal, and has presented at the ILEETA, IADLEST, and IACP conferences. She can be reached at ***Kerry.Avery@shaw.ca****.*

Know Your Audience

by Scott Kirschner, M.Ed.

A common mantra for trainers and public speakers is to know your audience. This allows you to convey a message that is both effectively transmitted and received by the attendees. For many law enforcement trainers it is easy to know your audience. Most of the time everyone in the room is forged in a similar manner, receives the same training, and often graduates from the same law enforcement academy. Yet, the umbrella of "law enforcement" can vary depending on the group of law enforcement officers you are instructing. The audience may have commonalities such as a job title but their job duties and mission may significantly vary based on their jurisdiction and department. For example, if you are a police officer the reality is that no matter where you work in the United States another police officer will have a good idea of your job duties and training. Yes, there will be variations to one degree or another but overall it is understood what a police officer's job entails, equipment carried, training received, and the authority they possess. That analogy works good for police officers but other "officers" under the law enforcement umbrella are not so clear cut.

Facilitating officer survival training classes to probation and parole officers is an excellent example. These officers come from a variety of backgrounds relating to training, authority, and department mission statement. Unlike police officers who have similar training and authority, probation and parole officers are very different in this respect. It is important to stress to an audience of probation and parole officers that while you may have the same job title your day-to-day tasks may look very different in how you carry out your departments mission statement.

The profession of probation and parole is a dualistic push and pull between law enforcement vs counselor. When facilitating classes on officer survival there has to be a common thread that allows officers with the same job title but very different capabilities to receive the message in a manner that is meaningful and relevant. I have found that reducing the message to a single basic element is crucial. The message is: VIOLENCE DOES NOT CARE ABOUT YOUR JOB TITLE. This one sentence brings all probation and parole officers to the same baseline. It is an equalizer regardless of other factors relating to how

Same Job Title But Very Different	
• Peace Officer Status, or • Limited Peace Officer Status	• No Peace Officer Status • No Law Enforcement Powers
• Powers of Arrest	• No Powers of Arrest
• Armed Officers	• Not Armed
• Comprehensive Officer Survival Training • i.e. Defensive Tactics Academy • Firearms Academy	• Limited Officer Survival Training • i.e. Verbal de-escalation • OC spray training
• Focus is on Compliance (Law Enforcement)	• Focus is on Treatment (Counseling)
• Authorized to conduct Probation/Parole Searches	• Not authorized to conduct Probation/Parole Searches
• Focus on Community Safety	• Focus on Reducing Recidivism

officers perform their job duties. The tone of the training is now set and the knowledge can flow. It is about developing a mindset that is focused on officer survival regardless of the individual factors relating to the job. I stress to officers that an offender who wants to seriously injure or kill you doesn't care about your job title, level of training, authority, or any other factors. Failure to get everyone to the same baseline up front leads to "yeah but…" line of thinking for officers. They lose sight of the big picture and focus on why they can't survive a violent encounter because the department doesn't [fill in the blank]. The simple grounding technique of setting the stage that violence does not care about your job title places all probation and parole officers at the same starting line.

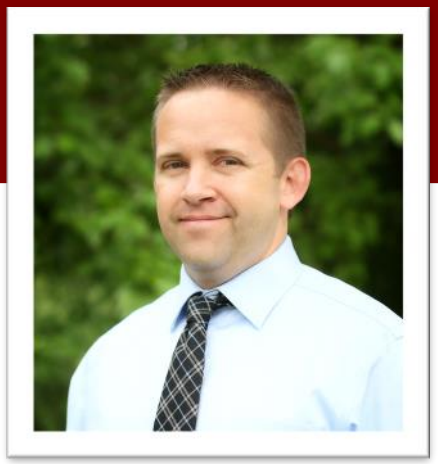
The ability to "know your audience" can take a little research. Never assume that a job title is applied equally for all law enforcement officers. Facilitating a "closed class" tends to be easier because most attendees are from the same department. If you facilitate an "open class" it is important to spend some time getting to know who is signing up for the training so you can provide information that is relevant, timely, and applicable to the whole group. Failure to positively impact all attendees means that officers will walk away from your training feeling as if the information did not apply. As a trainer it is our responsibility to ensure that we set the stage for effective learning. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Scott Kirshner, M.Ed. has been a Parole Administrator, Supervisory Probation Officer, and Corrections Officer. He has extensive experience as an officer survival trainer and has been a lead defensive tactics instructor, firearms instructor, and use of force instructor. He is the author of multiple officer survival books which are available on Amazon.com. Mr. Kirshner is the owner and Lead Instructor of Dedicated Threat Solutions, LLC. The author can be reached at: info@dedicatedthreatsolutions.com or to learn more visit: www.dedicatedthreatsolutions.com

Suspect Interviews and the New Detective

by Detective Corporal Jim Twardesky



Despite the many advances in forensic science, suspect interviews remain a vital element of a criminal investigation and for good reason. Good interviews can help to identify additional suspects, identify potential witnesses, locate additional evidence and should the case go to court, the suspects statements to investigators will be one of the key pieces of evidence being evaluated by the jury as they make their determination as to innocence or guilt.

Learning to effectively interview suspects should be the goal of any new investigator. With that in mind, the best place for new detectives to start is by focusing on the three basic but key elements of effective interviewing.

1. First and foremost is showing respect for the other person. No one, not even the worst of the worst criminals enjoys being disrespected or treated like garbage. Treating someone poorly is the quickest way to shut them down, ruining your chances of gaining valuable information. On the other hand, treating the person with a basic level of respect demonstrates that you see them as a fellow human being, one who may have made a horrible mistake, but still a fellow human being. This increases your chances of them cooperating. Remember that the respect needs to be genuine. The offender knows that you have a job to do, pretending to be his friend or promising that everything is going to be okay is going to come off as manipulation, which isn't going to help get them talking. Showing respect to people who have committed heinous crimes can be difficult but its necessary if you want to have a successful interview. If nothing else, fake it until you make it.

2. Secondly, is empathy for the person you're interviewing. If someone is being untruthful or not forthcoming for you, they have a reason for not doing so. Try looking at the problem from their perspective, it may help to identify what is stopping them from telling you everything. In a recent interview I did with a suspected child rapist, he repeatedly called himself a monster as he started to break down. I told him that it was clear he had committed a monstrous act but that a monster would never show remorse or take responsibility for their actions. He demeanor changed slightly at which time he said thank you and proceeded to confess to the crime. That simple statement of empathy towards him was the key to getting him to talk to me about what he had done.

3. Finally, remember to be patient. With suspect interviews, you suspect that the person in front of you has committed a crime. They have agreed to speak with you, so you are off to a good start, but suspects are unlikely to volunteer to be interviewed so that they can confess what they have done. More then likely they are looking to see how strong the case is and/or convince you of their innocence. The guilty suspect will often sit down for the interview

with a concocted story that they plan on selling you in hopes of avoiding any consequences for their actions. Be patient and let them tell you the story. Encourage them to give lots of details without interjecting your own commentary. The more details they give, the more details you can follow up on later to verify their story. Furthermore, if they are being completely untruthful, the more details they provide, the higher their house of cards becomes. Once you have patiently let them tell you their entire story, now is the time to start asking questions. Once the realize that their story is not holding up under some simple scrutiny, you will be in a stronger position to persuade them to be truthful with you.

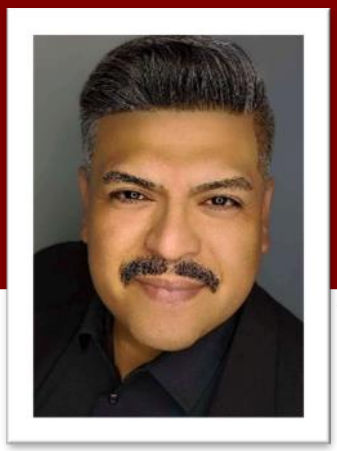
To end with, suspect interviews are a skill like any other skill. You get better with practice, training and research. All investigators whether new or seasoned should constantly be looking to improve their interview skills by regularly attending training, reading as much as you can and gaining experience by conducting interviews as often as possible. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Detective Corporal Jim Twardesky has been in law enforcement since 1999, currently serving as a detective for the City of Warren police department in Michigan. He has a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's in public administration, both from Wayne State University. Additionally, he teaches as an adjunct instructor for the Macomb Public Service Institute and regularly lectures on the subjects of child homicide, sex crimes and interviewing child molesters through his company Twardesky Consulting.

The Changing Ecosystem of Policing in America: Evolving Threats

By Antonio Zarzoza, "Instructor Z".



The quote "If you knew you would be fighting for your life tomorrow, would you change the way you train today?" has been used over and over by many progressive trainers in an attempt to instill some thought on their students, and while the words "tomorrow" and "today" are mere euphemisms for "future" and "present." It always yields for some very interesting conversations. Most of those conversations center on an introspective approach where officers re-evaluate what they are doing today in preparation for tomorrow.

In 1968, acclaimed science fiction writer Phillip K. Dick wrote a novel about a law enforcement officer in a dystopian future that sets in the year 2019. The gritty cityscape featured such futuristic elements as artificial intelligence, video calls, voice-activated personal assistants, and flying cars. It seems unlikely that even the great science fiction author could have predicted that nearly all of those technologies would be part of our daily lives in the real 2019. Today's law enforcement officers must navigate in real-life difficulties that literally could only be imagined 51 years ago. But what about the darker side of this dystopian future where criminals have also evolved, modified their tactics improved their strategies and shut whatever remnants of human conscience they once had?

While it is undeniable that crime in America is on the rise, it is also a fact that the media has made it difficult to clearly distinguish who the "bad guys" are, in some instances glorifying evil attacks on police and indiscriminatingly vilifying the functions of law enforcement as an occupation, as well as casting the curse of hate on the human behind the badge just for "being blue."

This grim landscape of hate against what once was venerated and respected for the nobility of what it represents, has in some instances generated an exodus of law enforcement officers looking for a way out of this madness. But what about the ones that stay behind holding the fort? What measures, changes or adjustments are being made by their leadership? Are those changes being made to support and protect the overall well being of their officers, or just to appease the reproach and hate of the masses against the police?

The changing ecosystem of policing in America includes the evolution of a new type of criminals which only driving force is hate on police. This hate often materializes in the form of premeditated, unprovoked, carefully planned, ultra-violent attacks and ambushes where the only objective is to "kill them bastards", in allusion to the new "ACAB" movement (All Cops Are Bastards).

Reframing what we think we know about officer safety

Speaking of those that decide to stay behind and hold the fort while they see the worst of humanity, one cannot stop but think about this question. What are they doing in preparation to this new ever-evolving threat? What are you doing my brothers and sisters?

In the midst of this prevalent war on police lays one more reason to heighten our officer safety called COVID19. As if it is not enough, COVID19 comes in as the "icing on the cake" as one more good reason to modify everything we do BEFORE interacting with others. Not just "suspects."

Risk management & threat mitigation: Post Floyd & COVID19 pandemic times:

George Floyd's incident catapulted hate towards police officers to a level never before experienced. Which is evident not only among protests, rioting and civil unrest, but an increase on premeditated police ambush attacks. To make things worse, all this is happening while the US and the rest of the world is suffering the effects of a global pandemic. So, what can officers do to manage the potential risks of a premeditated attack while at the same time guarding themselves from an invisible threat such as COVID19?

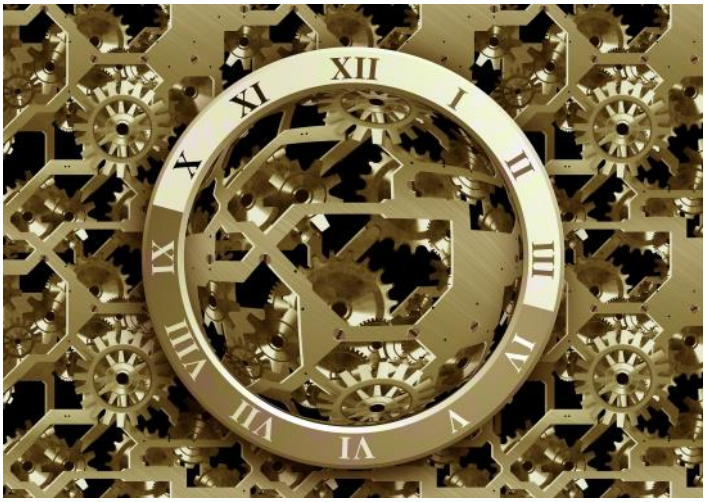
First and foremost, we must acknowledge the fact that we are facing "unconventional attacks during unconventional circumstances." Therefore, relying on "conventional officer safety practices" alone will not suffice anymore. We must reframe what we think we know about officer safety, be creative, proactive and think outside the box, all while managing distance, opportunity, time, and space. Which are some of the components needed to avoid the spread of this virus, as well as the components needed to defeat an ambush attack.

Stay safe by keeping control of your DOTS (Distance-Opportunity-Time-Space):

Distance has been greatly overlooked when responding to any calls for service, not just emergency calls, distance is the first component we ignore when we feel we are facing a non-compliant subject and feel compelled to jump in, close the reactionary gap and take action, even while at a tactical disadvantage. It is only when we are clocked in with a flying fist that we reconsider extending our distance from the attacker, at which point results almost impossible when officers are facing a committed attacker.

Not managing our distance during any field contact in the middle of a pandemic even while wearing personal protective equipment is a for sure way for unnecessary exposure. The rule of thumb is to assume that everyone we are interacting with, carries the virus. Officers must be more conscious than ever of their distance management and be as equally cautious about guarding their personal reactionary gap as to not prematurely intrude anyone's reactionary gap unless they have the tactical advantage and OPPORTUNITY IS ON THEIR SIDE.

Opportunity is defined as "a set of circumstances that makes it possible to do something." You are arriving at the scene of a 9-1-1 hung up, upon arrival you do not see any evidence of foul play and everything appears to be oddly calm. Before approaching, ask yourself, "if I just approach casually and without caution, will I be providing opportunity for an ambush attack to be successfully deployed against me? Will I have the **opportunity** to respond effectively and efficiently under stress? If not, be creative, implement a tactical pause and do not move faster than your ability to think. The same way with Coronavirus, for COVID to spread, it requires you to provide it with the opportunity. Be wise, remove that opportunity by keeping your distance and take your **time** when responding to a potential threat to minimize the risk.



Time is often regarded as a "commodity" in law enforcement, there are some officers that believe that as cops, they have no time to deal with BS, there are others that think there is no time to lose when responding to an emergency and there are others that succumb to the prevalent culture of speed and are always rushing in on every decision they make and every action they take, up until they are reminded they are just human and only fools rush in. **Time,** when used intelligently in law enforcement, can and will save your life. Distance and

Opportunity will always give more value to your time and provide the **SPACE** you need to be operationally efficient against ambush attacks and to minimize the spread of Coronavirus.

Space is defined as a continuous area which is free, available, or unoccupied. In the context of officer safety, amidst this pandemic and landscape of hate against police, **Space** is that continuous area, which is free, available, unoccupied, and **EXCLUSIVE** to you. **Only you**, so you maintain safety, tactical advantage and remain operationally efficient. While being careful to not allow any space for others to control. This concept of space is fully dependent upon your ability to keep the preceding components of your **DOTS** under control. **Distance, Opportunity, Time, and Space.**

In summary, to answer this question "If you knew you would be fighting for your life tomorrow, would you change the way you train today?" Taking the terms "Tomorrow" & "Today" at face value, my answer would be, "If I was fighting for my life tomorrow, it would be way too late to start training differently today. I am going with what I have got and let the chips fall where they may. But I would definitely be creative and keep my **D.O.T.S** . under control."

Stay safe, stay healthy and make it home at the end of your shift. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Antonio Zarzoza known by students and colleagues as "Instructor Z" is a Below 100 Core Trainer and a Certified Force Science Analyst. He is a Texas Master Peace Officer serving as the Training Officer/Lead Instructor and Field Training Coordinator for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Police Department's Advanced Law Enforcement Training Center located in Edinburg, Texas where he trains Local, State & Federal Law Enforcement Personnel. He has a combined law enforcement experience of 20 years and specializes in the fields of Use of Force, Crisis Intervention Tactics and Instructor Development Training.

LE Environment & Health and Wellness

Editor:
Kim Schlau

ILEETA

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Law Enforcement and Mental Health Response: How Did We Get Here? Part 1

By Nicholas Greco, M.S.

Many people often ask me why police officers are responding to so many mental illness calls for service. Why are those with mental illness first encountered by police officers? Why are so many persons put back on the street? The short answer is lack of funding. Historically, no one ever seems to have money for those suffering from mental illness, at least any money left over without cutting something else. Defunding police and reallocating money sound familiar? We'll discuss that later but back to the how we got here. Prior to 1954, psychiatric medicine had a limited number of options to treat mental illness. It wasn't until 1954, with the introduction of the first antipsychotic, Thorazine, that psychiatry had a reliable medication. This was the beginning of psychopharmacology and a host of medications soon followed. Unfortunately, starting in 1955, these breakthrough medications also helped usher in deinstitutionalization. On paper, deinstitutionalization sounded wonderful. The idea was for these medications to allow for patients to be released from state hospitals and institutions and treated in the community. Patients would receive medications upon discharge and follow up with outpatient community mental health centers. States would save huge amounts of money by reducing the number of inpatients while giving patients back their autonomy in a least restrictive setting. While this sounded great in theory, the reality was an influx of persons who, lacking supervision to take their medications, either forgot to do so or did not want to take their medications due to the nature of their illness. In addition, the various community resources for those with mental illness were woefully underfunded or not funded at all. By 1980, the U.S. had less than half of the community mental health centers we needed and has only continued to get worse over the years. In fact, the Mental Health Systems Act of 1980, which would have provided grants to community outpatient centers, was repealed in 1981. Cities and towns across this country "balance" their bloated budgets at the expense of the mentally ill. With not enough community resources, patients and their families turned to the ER and inpatient hospitalization for assistance. In the last 40 years, this pattern has consistently repeated itself over and over again.

Psychiatry is poorly reimbursed by Medicare, Medicaid, as well as by insurance providers. With reduced reimbursement, psychiatric hospitals began to close and have continued to close or significantly reduce their inpatient beds over the years. Case in point, a local hospital in Illinois closed their psychiatric unit, demolished it, and replaced it with a much more profitable cancer unit. So, what happens to the people who would go there for mental health care? They get absorbed by another facility in another county or city which reduces resources even further. Without reliable safety nets for the mentally ill, people have turned to the police to assist with mental illness. The introduction of Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) in 1988, the Memphis Model, was the beginning of training for officers on how to safely and appropriately interact with those with mental illness. And while CIT is a tremendous training and resource for officers and the community, it deals with the crisis at that moment, not the needed resources once brought to the hospital and the necessary aftercare. In order to understand the complexity of the situation, let's look at what occurs when someone needs mental health care.

So oftentimes, while a person may be admitted to a psychiatric hospital for 3-5 days, once discharged, they need to follow up as an outpatient with a psychiatrist or with someone at a community mental health center. Some patients follow-up, many do not. This brings me to a scenario that plays out every day in cities and towns across this country with police departments and individuals in need of mental health assistance. Police are called by a family member to the home of a person with mental illness who is not taking medication, may be using illicit substances, and has the potential to harm them. Officers arrive on scene, begin to talk with the individual and in a best-case scenario, the person agrees to go to the hospital for evaluation. Other times, officers may need to fill out, what we call in Illinois, a Certificate and Petition Form for involuntary commitment if the person is a threat to themselves or others. The petition is filled out

by the officer, and the certificate is completed by the physician at the hospital. So, the person is then transported by the officer or by ambulance depending on the department guidelines. Upon arriving at the nearest hospital, the ER physician usually provides some medication to the person. If the hospital has a psychiatric unit, the psychiatrist or psychiatric resident is called and will come down to evaluate. If the hospital has no psych unit, they may have to call a mobile assessment team or call a psychiatrist at the nearest psychiatric hospital, which may be the only one depending in the county you are in. Hopefully, this psychiatric unit will have enough open beds as well as staff that evening, otherwise, the person may need to go to the nearest state facility. In any case, by the time the person gets evaluated, the medication has taken effect, the person is much calmer, and recants any suicidal or homicidal thought which takes involuntary commitment off the table. While the person would benefit from being admitted, he or she refuses voluntary admission, and there is nothing for the physician to admit them on. They receive referrals and are discharged back home. Thus, the cycle repeats again a day or two later when the police are called once again. Many officers can relate to what I just described because it happens all too often. Other times, the person is still deemed a threat to themselves or others and is involuntarily admitted to the psychiatric unit. Staff will work with the patient to ask them to sign themselves in voluntarily. Most psychiatric hospital stays can be anywhere from 3-7 days, depending on insurance of course. Herein, lies the next cycle. Once discharged with 30 days of medication, the person needs to follow up with a psychiatrist or a community or county mental health center that may have a 3-6 month waiting list – and this is before the challenges of Covid-19 reduced staffing and facilities able to do outpatient care. What do you think happens between the time from discharge and the next appointment? Who will refill the prescription when it runs out in 30 days when the next appointment is not for 2-3 months? Will the person even take the medication between discharge and the next appointment? By now you see the vicious cycle that law enforcement finds themselves in.

This latest soup du jour of defunding the police to reallocate money back to the social service programs is another idea that sounds great on paper and for a media sound bite, but it is merely a reactionary measure to poor decision making and lack of funding for the mentally ill for years as pointed out earlier. Defunding police at the expense of community safety and necessary officer training is merely robbing Peter to pay Paul with no real plan in place when the money runs out, and it will. What happens then? Where will more money come from, and at what cost to services? What politicians and activists do not seem to get, is that mental health programs need to have structure and a plan in place. It is not so simple to take money from one entity and give it to another, especially when underfunding has been the norm. Reactionary measures such as these often fail.

Part 2 of Law Enforcement and Mental Health Response will look at where do we go from here and examine some realistic solutions. **ILEETA**

About the Author

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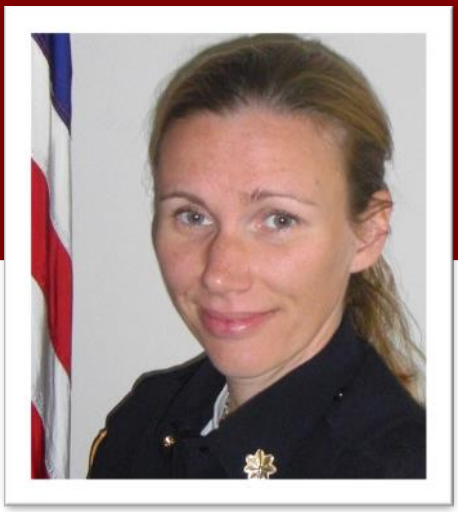
The Importance of Officer Safety

by Dr. Laura L. V. King



For my entire career, when someone has spoken about officer safety the conversation has largely revolved around situational awareness, defensive tactics and self-preservation in the face of an armed assailant. While all of these are very important areas that are crucial to our safety on the job, there is a piece of this conversation that has been missing for far too long. Officer safety is about more than the external threats we face on the street. It also includes the internal threats to our health, happiness and YES, our safety.

The fact of the matter is somewhere along the line, law enforcement has unintentionally created an unhealthy culture for those of us dedicating our life to public service. The men and women choosing a career in law enforcement have many threats to our safety that are rarely discussed. These risks include a higher likelihood of developing serious health issues such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Police also have a higher rate of depression, addiction and divorce than other segments of society. Even more concerning, each year, law enforcement loses more officers to suicide than to all line-of-duty causes of death combined. It is time we explore the reasons for these concerning realities and offers solutions to bring about change; one officer at a time.

Police work does not have to be the unhealthy profession it has become. To stop the unacceptable rates of disease and destruction from continuing, the concept of Officer Safety needs to be redefined. The new narrative needs to address both the physical and psychological threats that are the realities of our profession, and empower officers to take action to improve their quality of life. We need to find a way to give officers the knowledge and tools they need to meet both the physical and psychological threats they will encounter when they choose a career in law enforcement. Proactively training for the threats associated with the elevated stress levels in our profession will result in better mental and physical health for all police.

Over time, the stress, negativity and traumatic events an officer sees repeatedly during the course of a law enforcement career can compromise the officer's psychological resiliency. Unaddressed, this can create problems in both the officer's personal and professional life. Research helps us understand how this stress is contributing to the compromised wellness seen in the police profession and what can be done to ensure all officers have a safe and healthy career as an option. Daily habits can be adopted to increase our psychological resiliency. Combined with our already established officer safety training, we can work toward creating a comprehensive program designed to protect officers from both the external and internal threats of the profession.

Proactive stress management is something that can be developed and mastered. We no longer have to lose officers to burnout and disillusionment. With a responsible training and education program, we can teach officers to identify the threats of unmanaged stress with the same proficiency they are able to identify safety threats on the street. Creating a training program designed to meet both the physical and psychological threats of the profession can empower officers to take the necessary steps to keep themselves healthy. If we begin to teach officers stress management, we can better prepare them to protect themselves from these other areas compromising officer safety.

Better health, improved family relationships and a healthy state of work-life balance are all possible for police to achieve. The first step in moving in that direction is for agencies to start taking the threats of unmanaged stress seriously. We need to start recognizing how many officers are losing their lives to health issues directly related to high stress levels and unhealthy coping. If we are able to make this happen, our police professionals will realize how much control they have of their health and quality of life.

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Over the years, we have created a culture that finds it acceptable to blame workplace stress for our poor choices and unhealthy habits. When we do this, we take on a victim role and find excuses for our bad behavior. It is time we come together and create individual ownership for our personal health and safety. If you have officers on your agency who have become overweight and unhealthy over time because of the stress of the job, the officer safety issue they present is real. Not only in their increased risk for a cardiac incident, but also in their ability to respond and provide back up to other officers in critical situations. We can address the safety threat presented by unhealthy officers with a commitment to wellness.

Officer wellness programs come in many shapes and sizes. There is no one way to approach improving the health and fitness level of an organization. We need to remember the pride we have in our profession is not possible to maintain if we do not have pride in ourselves. Self-care, functional fitness standards and proactive stress management are necessary components to officer safety. We need to recommit to personal wellness to improve not only our own personal officer safety, but for the betterment of our profession as a whole. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Dr. Laura L. V. King currently serves as the Chief of Police for the McHenry County Conservation District. Prior her current assignment she served as Chief Investigator for the McHenry County State's Attorney's Office (2016-2018) and retired as the rank of Commander with the McHenry, Illinois, Police Department (1996-2016). She is committed to working to improve police operations through continual efforts focused on understanding officer wellness and psychological resiliency.

Dr. King received her Doctor of Philosophy and her master's degree in psychology at Capella University in Minneapolis, Minnesota; she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice management from Judson University in Elgin, Illinois. She is a graduate of both Northwestern University's School of Police Staff and Command and of Session 265 of the FBI's National Academy.

Just a Casualty of Ferguson Part III: The Final Chapter

by Traci Ciepiela

September 29th, 2020 started off as any other day. I went to work, I decided to go to dinner with a friend that night and then, the text arrived. "Check the messages on your friend's Facebook Page," and I knew. Over the last two issues of the ILEETA Journal, I have documented what I knew and what I discovered about one of my best friends and a former partner. A former Trooper who had worked for 22 years ending his career after Ferguson's riots due to the accumulated stress. Of all that he had done and seen, that riot in Ferguson was a tipping point for him. He never put on his uniform again. He never worked another day as an officer. Now, I won't ever see him again.

He had gotten out of jail after having to plead guilty to a felony. If it weren't for his aunt he would have had no place to go. I offered to allow him to stay with me but I don't live in that state anymore and approval to be out of state would take some time.

The words he spoke in the 48 hours I got to spend with him still ring in my head, "we both know how this is going to end." I knew what he meant and although I hoped and prayed that day wouldn't come, it did, and it came too soon. He had obtained a job because he was going to have a lot of fines and fees to pay through probation, counseling and other treatments he was going to be required to participate in. This job had construction contracts out of the state. My friend received approval to travel for the work and he wound up in Michigan. That was the last time I got to talk to him. He called me late one night, and although I was already in my bed for the night, I couldn't pass up the chance to talk to him.

When I saw how he looked, when I saw how he felt, I knew deep down in my soul he had nothing left to fight on with. We talked about our friendship, we talked about life, and when he started to cry the sobs broke my heart. He hung up the phone shortly after he started to cry, and how I wish today he hadn't gotten off the phone so fast. Maybe it would have given me one more chance to show him that there was a way to move forward, that one day, this period of time might just be a memory, as horrible as it is, maybe one day it could just be a distant memory.

I discovered he was heading to Niagara Falls, NY the next day for that same job. I asked him to send me a selfie of himself in front of the falls. Having grown up there, and knowing he had never been there I had hoped that it might lift his spirit. I was wrong. I knew he was working nights and I tried not to wake him by texting or calling during the day. I wish I had now. The last text I sent him was just a short "I love you," and he responded with the same. That was September 27th.

Tuesday morning, September 29th at 11am he texted someone, at 11:08 he posted a picture of himself again in front of the falls, similar to the picture I had gotten 6 days before. At 11:20 he made a phone call to his boss who was in Niagara Falls with him, the call wasn't answered as his boss was asleep after working all night. That is when my friend took off his boots, took off his jacket, laid them on the banks of the river. Put his wallet on his jacket next to the cell phone and he walked into the water.

He died somewhere near 1130 in the morning, in my hometown, going over the falls which he had never seen before. His body was recovered 10 days later.

The aftermath is still a blur, I spent a couple of weeks in a complete fog and I am still deeply grieving. I did see a lot of postings on social media about how much he would be missed, and how much people wished they had stayed in touch. So, to end this trilogy I implore each and every one of you, don't lose touch of your law enforcement friends even if they have made mistakes in their lives, no one is perfect. Don't lose touch with those who had your back in your time of need. Don't turn your back on someone if you hear a rumor about in regards to something they might have done, because we need one another. As much as I am sure everyone would like to think that they are strong enough to stand on their own, strong enough to survive the slideshow of death that plays every time you sleep, and strong enough to lose everything and be faced with having to start over, it might surprise you just how much you need others.

So, my friend is now a fatal casualty of Ferguson, and now I become an emotional casualty as well. I did get to tell

him how much I loved him, how much I cherished the fact we were friends, and just how much I would miss him. Don't miss that chance if it comes your way. Be there for others, we aren't okay. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Traci Ciepiela worked as an officer for 14 years in Missouri while obtaining a Masters Degree in Criminal Justice and additional Post Graduate Education. She lives currently in Iowa teaching in the Police Science/Criminal Justice Program at Hawkeye Community College, in Waterloo.

Bizzarro World 2020

by Tom Cline

This is the most difficult column I have written. Normally, I am an upbeat person, but this year has drained me. I feel as though I am living in Bizzaro World. (Superman Comic fans know what this means.) For the first time in my fifty-three years in law enforcement, I fear for officers as never before. There have always been attacks on the profession, some deserved, but never have I witnessed the betrayal by leadership and fear of speaking the truth in the face of lies that officers have endured in the last year. Several leaders who dared to speak up have either resigned their positions or have been demoted for challenging the crimes of Antifa and BLM, and their political supporters.

I do not know what is occurring elsewhere but in Chicago looters, carjackers and murderers are not prosecuted according to the law and are released on low bails to continue victimizing people. Demonized by leadership, CPD officers were not given appropriate PPE yet are subject to discipline for not wearing masks while defending themselves, businesses and public property against maskless rioters, looters, and haters tacitly supported by politicians. Leadership imposes social distancing rules and order businesses shut, and what citizens can and cannot do in their homes, while they break the rules at their spas, salons and out-of-state soirees. The Chicago media ignores the hypocrisy of, "It's okay for me, but not for thee," practiced by the ruling elite as well as the out-of-control homicide pandemic in the Windy City.

You may think I am ranting, however, Chicago is not the only place first responders are suffering similar degradation. How will these men and women be affected? Here is a glimpse, and I hope I am wrong.

Thomas Coghlan, retired NYPD detective now psychologist, notes that symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder did not manifest itself in September 11th or Hurricane Katrina first-responders for nine months to a year later, and those first responders were supported and promoted in the media as heroes. Leadership supported and lionized them, yet the horror of the interpersonal violence and death deeply affected first responders.

Dr. Jonathan Shay, a psychiatrist who specializes in treating the psychic wounds of war, says in his book, *Achilles in Vietnam,* that the three main causes of PTSD are:

1. Exposure to high stress, interpersonal violence is the most intense;
2. Feeling of betrayal by leaders; and
3. Dehumanizing the "enemy."

In the last year, first responders have experienced interpersonal violence daily, the feeling of betrayal by leadership, the media, the public, and even neighbors in some cases. They're left with support only from family, from whom they have been separated due to day-off cancellations and overtime. They are left with support from peers and view leadership, the media, and the public as enemies who, in their frustration and anger, they routinely demonize. Reflecting on Dr. Shay's causes, this seems a recipe for depression, despair, PTSD, and suicide. In Chicago with almost 3,800 people shot by the end of November compared to about 2,400 shot in the same period in 2019, the increase is 58%. Each crime scene is processed by police officers, another factor that wears away at officers' resilience. How will this affect officers new to the profession who, due to the "Snowflake" phenomenon, have experienced little difficulty in growing up?

In Chicago, most of the last dozen or so CPD suicides were committed by officers with less than seven years on the job. In the past, suicides were more characteristic of officers with fifteen plus years of service. Opinions vary as to the reason for this shift. Some believe snowflakes, facing evil for the first time, are melting with the heat of the job; some blame lower standards and poor training; others place suicides at the feet of leadership and politics. Further, the high rate of student loan debt and, a stagnant economy, pushed people into law enforcement because they needed a job to pay down their debts and have little heart for the job. Still, this is speculation and few are preparing for the avalanche of problems looming in this cornice of hate, frustration, horror, betrayal, and despair.

BE AWARE

Families and friends of law enforcers involved in today's

hell, please start preparing for the possibility of behavioral changes in those for whom you care. They'll need support and understanding as their psyches engage in the sorting out of the evil they are experiencing today.

Here are ten signs of PTSD taken *from https://facty.com/conditions/ptsd/10-symptoms-of-ptsd/1/*:

1. Detachment from Others
2. Flashbacks
3. Nightmares
4. Avoiding reminders
5. Insomnia
6. Lack of Motivation
7. Anger
8. Memory Loss
9. Feeling Jumpy
10. Turning to Drugs and Alcohol

Both loved ones and first responders must be courageous and seek help from chaplains, EAPs, Peer Support Groups and others who will be available if these speculations are true.

Here are suggestions to help you bear this suffering and be stronger. There is little cops can do about the exposure to high stress. Neither can they do much about betrayal by leadership, the media and the public. Dehumanizing the enemy is the one thing they can control, though not easily. The "Us vs Them" attitude is dehumanization and hurts cops more than those perceived as enemies. Prayer and forgiveness can help in processing the anger and frustration in this living hell. Cops must realize that they alone control their response to the stressors they bear and must choose to live by a set of ethical standards they impose on themselves. Further, they must check their behavior daily against their standards. Cops I know who do this due to their religious beliefs seem to handle evil much better, though that method is rare in today's anti-religious cultural climate. They must act as they ought, not as they want; if not for self, then for loved ones who need you. That will make this cross bearable and carried with dignity. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Thomas Cline, Spouse, Father, MBA, MAP, 53-years in law enforcement is past president of the International Association of Ethics Trainers, Law Enforcement Training Trust board member, a writer/trainer at the Chicago PD, and a consultant. He's authored Cop Tales! (Never Spit in a Man's Face…Unless His Mustache is on Fire) and Psych Firefight – L E Job Satisfaction in a hostile environment. For information on training and workshops Email: Coptales@gmail.com

It's Not Rocket Science! Yes! We Should Have Routine Mental Health Care

By Darrell Burton

I've been saying this for years and years and years. Most likely due to my clinical/law enforcement background, but yes! Law enforcement Officers should be required to undergo psychological evaluations on a semi annual basis. I recommend every two years but to be fair lets say three. This evaluation will not be a "may" but a "shall". How often do you perform maintenance to your vehicle? How often do you visit the dentist? How often do you see your physician? I pray regularly because it would speak volumes of your character, your concern for self and the safety of those you care for. In a book that was recommended to me many years ago by a teacher of mine, The Monk Who Sold his Ferrari, author Robin S. Sharma stated that "saying that you don't have time to improve your thoughts and your life is like saying that you don't have time to stop for gas because you are to busy driving. Eventually it will catch up to you." Has anyone looked at our statistical data regarding suicide over the past 5 years? As he said, it will catch up to you. Not checking-in with a mental health professional on a semi-annual basis while performing this job is killing us and I could make the argument that our society as a whole is suffering as well from the bombardment of trash we mentally consume everyday. I need for us to be honest and understand, it's not rocket science to see that we need help in our profession and acknowledge it.

I began to look into this matter, once I started to delve into the realities of the Law Enforcement life style. I've worked with and for law enforcement from a multitude of angles, ranging from enforcement, to mental health, instructing and currently leading. Unless you have worked in this field or lived with and or loved someone dearly from this profession, it's going to be hard for you to understand the toll that trauma takes on a person physically and mentally in this job over time. I've often likened the abundance of trauma that many officers endure over a career to soldiers in battle. Yes! Think of Faluja, Bhagdad, Iraq, these are war zones that wreak havoc on the psychological stability of a persons mind. Watching a friend torn apart by enemy fire, constantly wandering if today would be your day, not knowing if you will return home, missing a loved one, constant unpredictability, non-supportive communities, witnessing the very worst in people more often than you would ever know. This should sound familiar to many of you that have decided to live a life of selflessness.

During the career of many officers in the field, the experiences listed above they to witness, but here is the difficult part. The communities that they serve require you to come to work the very next day and everyday thereafter, expecting a clean mental slate, no animosity, feelings or attitude whatsoever. Never mind that you worked a case last night of a mother who just drowned her toddler child in the bathtub. Never mind that in the same week you responded to a child's death due to his father slamming him into a wall, instantly killing him because he was crying. Never mind that you responded to several Domestic Service calls that involve spousal abuse, rape, molestation of children, a lost child, an Emotional Disturbed Person spitting and throwing excrement in the street, or a parent who shot themselves in the head in front of the door so when his toddler child walks into the house, that would be the first thing that he sees. Imagine this and more over a 20-year period; this is also trauma to the brain much like that experienced in war. Depending upon your location in the country this could be experienced several times a shift, a week or month, but know that you will at some point experience these or some similar trauma during the course of your career.

And if there is one thing that all mental health professionals will tell you, and that is Trauma is Trauma not matter the arena. The brain knows no difference; all that it knows is trauma.

So I ponder over the amazement that many officers give me when I yell to them "This Is Not A Normal Job!" We are and we were cut from a different cloth, not better, not worse, but a different cloth. We operate differently but that doesn't mean that we are immune to the frailties and psychological experiences of the world. We bleed and feel like everyone else, however we are

designed to process and see particular situations differently. We run towards the fight, the gun shots, the victims, because we are wired that way, one of my sayings that I'm known for with my recruits is "somebodies gotta save the world, so it might as well be us" but we have to understand that comes at a price. We are no more special than anyone else but we do require care that is unique to this profession and the life that we have chosen to live.

Our communities and our families deserve better, we should be better and you should want better. I believe departments owe it to their officers to take care of them and their mental stability is apart of that. Officers you owe it to your self to stay mentally pristine, so that your actions can be performed justly and rooted in a foundation of clarity. There is no way that can happen consistently, if you are still holding on to the years of unresolved trauma experienced over the course of your career. For many officers that have successfully retired, they may say I did my 25/30 years and I'm okay? This may be true but that's not my position, and that's not true for the number of officers who continue to die by suicide each year than in the line of duty. We currently do not have statistics on attempts and or thoughts of suicide but I can guarantee that number is far beyond those that were completed.

It's not rocket science, however we continue to ignore the very large pink elephant in the room. This is not a normal job! We that have done this job and do the job, operate with a different schema. It's okay, love it, I love it, but we need to nurture and recalibrate our minds much like a mechanic does an engine. Things can only get better when we do this. I'm reminded of a man by the name of Diogenes, the Greek philosopher who was said to have walked the streets Athens with a lantern, in the daytime looking for the honest man. I'm looking for departments and officers to be honest to themselves. Lets start the real work. Stay safe out there. **ILEETA**

About the Author

Darrell Burton is an Advanced Level Instructor under California POST, with several specialties to include Subject Matter Expert with California POST on Use of Force, Arrest and Control Tactics to Crisis Negotiations. He is currently a Police Academy Coordinator in San Mateo California holding a Masters Degree in Social Work and over 15 years experience in Law Enforcement/Public Service.

Effectiveness of Law Enforcement Officer Training Pertaining to Youths and Behavioral Challenges in School-Based Settings

by Alicia Lutman

Law enforcement officers have become all too familiar with responding to behavioral health disturbances as they have multiple roles in the community including acting as first responders to mental health situations in school settings when a student goes into crisis. Over the past decade there has been a significant increase in school-based arrests and referrals of individuals with disabilities (Merkwae, 2015). Many of the disabilities that are referred to in the research fall under the category of mental health, or behavioral health disparities such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other developmental disabilities. "Students with disabilities represent a quarter of the students who are referred to law enforcement or subjected to school related arrests, while representing just 12% of the student population" (Merkwae, 2015, p.149). This may seem like a high rate, but these numbers are represented as a result of a change in policies over the past two decades with a high jump around the time that the "No Child Left Behind" act in 2001 was enacted which allotted grant money to SRO programs (Shaver and Decker, 2017). As the budget for mental health resources is decreased, the role of law enforcement as gatekeepers for the mental health population and the criminal justice system has tremendously increased (Watson & Fulambarker, 2012). This increase in funding and necessity for law enforcement officers to be present during mental health crises poses a number of challenges. As a result, the need to prepare our law enforcers for these types of interactions is clear.

There is limited data on current trainings for law enforcement interactions with individuals with mental health challenges. During the 2002 Criminal Justice/ Mental Health Consensus Project that was coordinated by the Council of State Governments it was suggested that, "police officers at the basic recruit level receive a minimum of 8-15 hours of training on mental health related topics" (Laan, Ingram, & Glidden, 2013, p. 54). Though these discussions have been happening on a national scale, the suggestions made are not necessarily followed by all individual state governments. Subsequently, there is limited data on how effective the mental health trainings that are available in some states have been as they are put to use in interactions with individuals with mental health disparities. This study was created to help take a closer look at current trainings for officers and their effectiveness.

Study Design

This study used a survey to identify both quantitative (numbers based) data and qualitative (participant thoughts and ideas grouped into themes) through open ended questions to look at the effectiveness of law enforcement officer training pertaining to youths with behavioral challenges in school-based settings. Data was obtained through a survey sent out via Google Forms through social media outlets associated with police departments.

Participants

Participants were current law enforcement officers or active SROs that responds to calls within school-based settings. Participants that were excluded from the study were law enforcement officers that had no previous experience responding to calls involving behavioral challenges within a school setting, as well as officers that are inactive but still remain as part of the department. Each police department was encouraged to pass along information on how to join the study to their peers in the field. The sample size consisted of 99 officers. Consent for participation in the study was obtained through an initial question asking for the participants' consent before they could proceed to complete the survey on the Google Form. The sample size for this study consisted of 100

officers. The data that was collected from participants included gender distribution, mean age, years of employment in law enforcement, the state and location of the individuals, and level of education.

Data Collection

This research study utilized a 25 question survey that took approximately 20 minutes for participants to complete.. The survey was developed by research group members based on what information they wanted to discover on the opinions and experience of police officers' training in working with individuals who have behavioral health challenges. The survey was divided into four sections. The first section focused on the person taking the survey, including 10 questions on their position and experience in the field of law enforcement. The second section inquired about the types of training they were or were not exposed to in relation to working with individuals with behavioral health challenges. The third section included questions to retrieve information regarding the perceived effectiveness of the trainings and experiences they have encountered. Finally, the fourth section focused on the participants' understanding of the necessity of these types of trainings in their field. The survey as a whole was meant to pull as specific information as possible to better understand the effectiveness of current training programs for officers working with children who have behavioral health challenges. The survey was emailed to officers in different departments and also posted on social media websites such as Facebook in order to open it up to a larger number of potential participants.

Results

Quantitative Data Analysis

103 participants completed the survey. Four participants were excluded from the results because they reported no experience responding to a call within the school setting involving individuals with a behavioral health challenge. A total of 99 participants' responses were analyzed using SPSS software. Analyses done within SPSS consist of statistics such as mean, frequency, and correlations. The following sections share this information:

Participant Demographic Information:

The average years of participants working in Law Enforcement was 17.258 and ranged from 1 – 41 years of experience. Participants reported working in Arkansas (1), Colorado (2), Connecticut (1), Idaho (4), Indiana (1), Kansas (19), Kentucky (4), Maryland (1), Missouri (1), Montana (2), New Hampshire (1), New Jersey (2), New Mexico (1), New York (5), North Carolina (1), Ohio (1), Oklahoma (5), Pennsylvania (21), South Dakota (6), Virginia (17), Wisconsin (1), Wyoming (3), Other (1).

Jurisdiction, Work Setting, Rank, Work Hours:

Participants reported working in a county setting (30), a city/town setting (54), regional setting (3), school based setting (8), and other (4). Work settings were reported as being suburban (41), urban (13) and rural (45). Offers reported titles/role/rank as being School Resource Officer (43), Officer (16), Sergeant (10), Corporal (3), Detective (3), Lieutenant (3), Chief (11), Investigator (3), Captain (1), and Deputy (6). Work hours also ranged for participants from part-time (5), full time (82), and as needed (12).

Responding to Calls:

Participants reported a range of calls they responded to over the past year involving a child with a behavior challenge ranging from 1-10 calls (48), 11-20 calls (17), 21 or more calls (25). Nine officers also reported not responding to calls in the past year involving a child with a behavior challenge. When officers were asked about how many calls they responded to over their career involving a child with a behavior challenge the numbers ranged from 1-10 calls (6), 11-30 calls (15), 31-50 calls (13), and 51 or more calls (65). Officers also reported a range of times they are currently in a school setting ranging from daily (49), weekly (16), monthly (14), yearly (10), and not

applicable as (10). Officers also reported the educational setting they spent the majority of their time with individuals under the age of 22 with behavioral issues as being Elementary School (17), Middle School (22), High School (38), Multiple School Settings (9) and not applicable (13).

Participant Training and Training Effectiveness:

Participants who experienced training for working with behavioral health challenges reported a range of populations covered in the education as: adolescent (14), young adult (10), pediatric, adolescent & young adult (36), adolescent & young adult (18), and no training received (14). In relation to required participation in training regarding behavioral health challenges officers reported state required training (10), department required training (20), No training required (43), and both state and department training required (26).

Independent components of the training programs officers reported experiencing included: internet based (5), hand on training (1), lecture (11), roleplay/live scenarios (1). Some officers also reported taking part in combination training programs which included: lecture & roleplay/live scenarios (13), internet-based & lecture (10), internet-based, hands on & lecture (8), internet-based, hands on, lecture & roleplay/live scenarios (20), hands on, roleplay/live scenarios & lecture (12), internet-based, hands on & lecture (2), internet-based, hands on & roleplay/live scenarios (1), internet-based & hands-on (1), hands on & lecture (5), not applicable (8).

Participants also reported a range of feelings in relation to the effectiveness of each of their training programs including: not at all effective (2), somewhat effective (31), effective (40), extremely effective (10), and not participating in any relevant trainings (16). Another factor considered was officer confidence level in handling a situation concerning youth with behavioral challenges in the school setting. Officers reported confidence at different levels including: not being confident at all (2), somewhat confident (5), moderately confident (25), very confident (44) and extremely confident (23).

Significance of data:

Significant relationships were discovered between a few variables. In particular, the amount of hours received in training correlated with effectiveness and necessity/ relevance of training variables indicated relationship strengths from low to fair negative relationship to a moderate to good positive relationship. A low to fair positive relationship was seen between hours of training concerning youth in school settings and confidence level in handling a situation concerning youth with behavioral challenges in the school setting. A fair to moderate positive relationship was seen between hours of training concerning youth in a school setting and how necessary you feel behavioral health education training is for you as an officer. A low to fair negative relationship was identified between hours of training concerning youth in school settings and rating of ability before the training to interact with a person with a behavioral challenge. A low to fair positive relationship was found between perceived effectiveness of training and rating of ability before the training to interact with a person with a behavioral challenge. A low to fair positive relationship between confidence level in handling a situation and rating of ability before the training to interact with a person with a behavioral challenge was also seen. Finally, there is a low to fair negative relationship between perceived necessity of behavioral health education training as an officer and rating of ability before the training to interact with a person with a behavioral challenge.

Qualitative Data Analysis

Officers were provided the opportunity to answer open ended questions about their experiences with training and working with children with behavioral health issues. Data analysis of their responses resulted in the following seventeen themes:

Theme 1: Methods of Delivery Training – This theme reviewed the training method or techniques officers participated in that they found to be most helpful for

them in their work roles.

Role play: Officers expressed that role-play was the most beneficial part of the training they received (This code appeared in nine out of 99 responses).

Presentations: Officers reported how presentations were the most helpful part of their training experience.

Hands on: Officers iterated how actual hands on training was the most beneficial part of the training they received (9% of responses included hands-on experience as a helpful aspect of their training).

Scenarios: Officers described how police officers thought that learning through scenarios was helpful in their learning process.

Additional resources: Officers portrayed all the other types of resources that officers were provided with that they believed were most helpful. (Examples: observation of professionals, knowing the resources available to them).

Crisis intervention: Officers mentioned how helpful it was to have crisis intervention training incorporated into the training sessions provided.

Meeting mental health clients: Officers pinpointed how helpful it was to be educated on these issues through persons who have mental health challenges.

Theme 2: Training outcome: awareness and recognition of individuals with behavioral health challenges - This theme referred to training that led officers to a better understanding of individuals with behavioral health challenges.

Understanding behavioral health concerns: 12% of officers found it most helpful to know more about behavioral health concerns when managing these situations.

Recognizing/identifying persons with behavioral health challenges: Officers reported it was beneficial to have information to be able to identify these individuals and what they would benefit from when managing a situation.

Awareness of behavioral health population issues: Officers thought it was helpful to know more about the issues that this population faces on a day to day basis.

Theme 3: Training outcome: interaction and how to proceed during a crisis this theme pinpointed that the outcome of the training they underwent was learning how to interact and proceed with these situations.

Communication: 15% of officers indicated that having open communication with the individual in crisis was key when managing a situation.

De-escalation: Officers reported learning about de-escalation techniques was beneficial to them in the field.

Theme 4: Role of the police officer/officer point of view – this theme the theme signified how the police officers viewed these types of situations as a whole.

Not a police matter: Some officers were called into situations that they believed should have been handled by other professionals before them.

Review & public scrutiny: Officers were concerned about how the public would feel about their actions in these situations.

Officer safety & liability: Officers reported being concerned for their safety when they went into these situations and were hesitant on how to handle situations where their safety was threatened due to liability.

Doing the right thing: Officers report feeling hesitant on whether or not they were doing the right thing when they were in these situations.

Force/getting physical: Officers reported feeling hesitant about how to use force if a situation does not get better using other techniques.

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Theme 5: Not having concerns: police perspective - This theme displayed that there were a lot of officers that reported they did not have any hesitations when responding to a call involving a behavioral health challenge Out of the 103 responses, 43 officers responded saying that they did not have any hesitations about these scenarios.

Theme 6: Barriers - This theme overall signified the barriers officers face when trying to manage these situations.

Lack of resources: Officers did not believe that they had the resources to manage these situations

Additional training: Officers expressed they believed that they needed more training in order to handle a behavioral health situation

Different parties involved: Officers highlighted all the other persons who were involved in the process of trying to manage a behavioral health situation and how they all did not usually agree on the best method to address the situation

Making a connection/trust: Officers expressed they were hesitant about how to make a connection with this population and eventually gain their trust

Theme 7: Unpredictability of the situation/outcome - This theme referred to how there were many different scenarios that could have happened when responding to these calls and how they could not plan for anything because they were all different.

Difference in situations, diagnosis, and the unknown: 10% of officers expressed hesitation due to how each situation was or could be different and each individual will be different regardless of their diagnosis.

Situation environment: Officers expressed having to take into consideration the environment that the situation was taking place in when they were managing a behavioral health challenge.

Safety of others: Officers were concerned about keeping others safe when they were responding to these calls.

Theme 8: Satisfaction with training -This theme referred to the law enforcement officers being satisfied with the training they were provided and not believing anything could have made the training more effective.

Satisfied with training: Ten officers stated that they thought the training they received was effective and covered the appropriate topics.

Not applicable: 21% of officers answered "what would have made the training you had more effective" with either N/A or not able to suggest changes.

Officer personal experience: Officers reported they felt personal experience played the best role for behavioral health training

Theme 9: Wanting more training: increasing knowledge for general understanding - This theme referred to how the participants wanted more training to increase their general knowledge on mental health topics.

Health professional expertise: Officers expressed wanting to learn from trainings by health professionals.

Longer trainings: Officers said adding additional training would have made the training they received more effective.

Training on youth populations: Some officers reported looking for training on youth behavioral challenges and others wanted more training on situations in the school setting, all were looking for more training on the youth population.

More resources for learning: Officers also wanted

resources on behavioral and mental health challenges in general.

Theme 10: Want more training: increasing knowledge for application - This theme focused on officers that wanted more training, but about topics that applied the knowledge that was learned in the training.

Hands on training: Some officers reported from participants who wanted more training focused on hands-on learning

Scenarios and role-play: 20% of responses indicated that scenarios and role-play situations would make training more effective

Physical restraints: Officers asked for more training on responses to physical restraints.

Communication training: Officers wanted more training on how to apply communication skills to a situation.

Personal interactions with individuals with actual concerns/issues: Officers thought training would be more effective if they could have talked with individuals who have been in crisis due to their mental health.

Theme 11: Follow up - The theme reflected upon the officers who wanted follow up training and updates to the training they had already received. Officers thought that follow up training would have been beneficial to making training more effective in addition to any legal changes or updates.

Theme 12: Barriers to training - This theme focused on what officers viewed as a gap in the training on how to address barriers and be able to provide resources for the people they served.

Barriers: Officers reported restrictions seen in training and barriers they have seen in the real world that training hasn't helped.

More resources for affected persons: Officers reported wanting more outside resources to provide to individuals and families.

Theme 13: Successful experiences/outcomes. This theme focused on participants who had successful outcomes and experiences when they responded to a call involving a person with a behavioral health challenge.

Better outcomes when training is involved: 11% of participants stated they were more confident in those situations due to the training they have had which led them to having more positive experiences.

Communication & De-escalation: Officers focused on the communication skills used by the participants in de-escalating the situations described.

Training used in situations: Participants talked about CIT training, the number of training sessions they attended, and training about general mental health knowledge.

F*amiliarity:* Officers said that the familiarity of their presence with individuals helped de-escalate the situation and had more positive outcomes.

Police advise family to seek care: Officers focused on the experiences when gave advice to families to seek medical care to help the child

Theme 14: Unsuccessful experiences/outcomes. - This theme highlighted the responses from participants that made situations that they described unsuccessful.

Missing connection between training and real life: Officers reported they did not know how to utilize the training they received in real life situations.

Non-Compliant or defiant: Officers stated the individuals from their call were non-compliant and how that affected the outcome of the situation.

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Restraints: Officers discussed restraints used on the children in the situations.

Pressing/filing charges: Officers reported filing charges against the individual described in the situations that did not have positive outcomes.

Theme 15: Police perspective - This theme focuses on the perspective of the participants when engaging in situations with individuals with behavioral health challenges.

Special training not necessary: Four officers reported that they did not think special training was necessary for responding to situations with youths who have behavioral health challenges.

Officer interpretation lacking empathy: Some officers showed a lack of empathy in describing the situations they have encountered with behavioral issues.

Not a police matter: Some officers stated that they did not think responding to youths with behavioral challenges was a police matter.

Patience/Time required: Some officers discussed the amount of time required in situations with individuals with behavioral challenges.

Theme 16: View of child - This theme looked at the perspective the participants had of the children involved in the situations described.

Assaultive/combative: Officers provided descriptions of children in situations who engaged in assaultive or combative behaviors.

Eloping/running away: Officers described the child in the situation they wrote about eloping.

Specific mental health diagnosis: Officers stated specific mental health diagnoses in their. description of a call they responded to involving a child with behavioral health challenges.

Self-harm: Officers provided responses that involved the description of a child who engaged in or threatened self-harm.

Theme 17: Outside help needed - This theme focused on the responses from participants who discussed the need for assistance from outside sources such as teachers/ staff, hospitals and resources.

Follow up care protocol: Officers discussed follow ups to situations described in their responses including taking the individuals to the hospital for medical care, protocols at the school, and meeting with families.

Before training/training is needed/lack of training: Officer responses included discussion situations occurring before the participant had training or situations occurring a specific way due to lack of training.

Others needed to support de-escalation: Officers reported they needed support from others in situations to assist the child in de-escalating

Implications

Since our findings show that training helps officers in situations that involve behavioral health challenges, it would be valuable to look further into what about the training is most helpful. In the future, it would be beneficial if research focused on what aspect of training is the most effective by holding training sessions for law enforcement officers to partake in. If future research were to dig deeper into the training process, it could help to improve training programs countrywide and help to showcase the importance of mandatory training in every department.

Conclusion

This study aimed to identify the effectiveness of law enforcement training pertaining to youths with behavioral challenges in school-based settings by analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data. Findings within this study showed that training that include various

methods of learning materials are indeed helpful in learning about behavioral health concerns, however it would be beneficial to further examine what exactly is the most helpful within law enforcement training. Due to the amount of limitations within this study, further research on this topic is needed in order to dissect the effectiveness of law enforcement training pertaining to youths in school systems.

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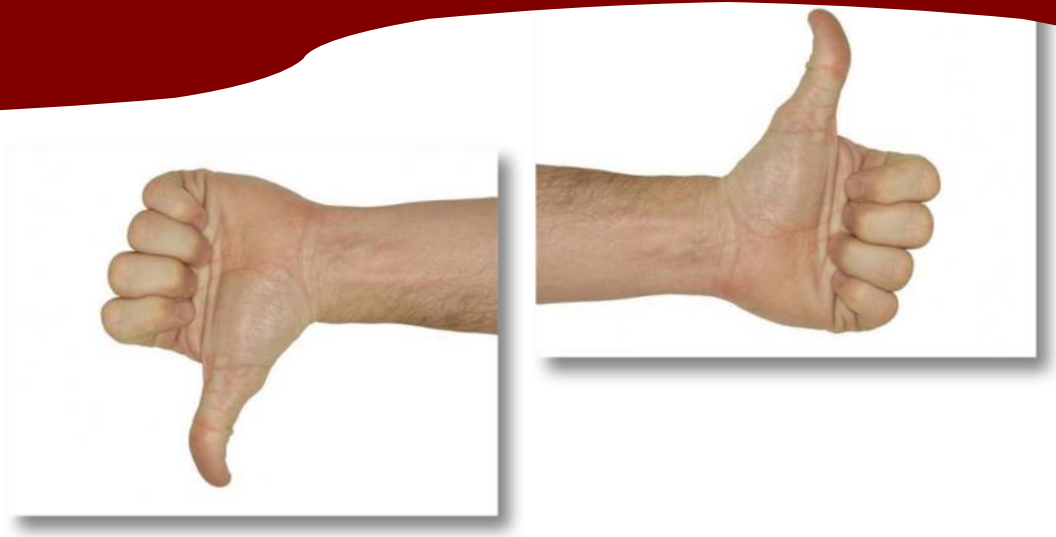
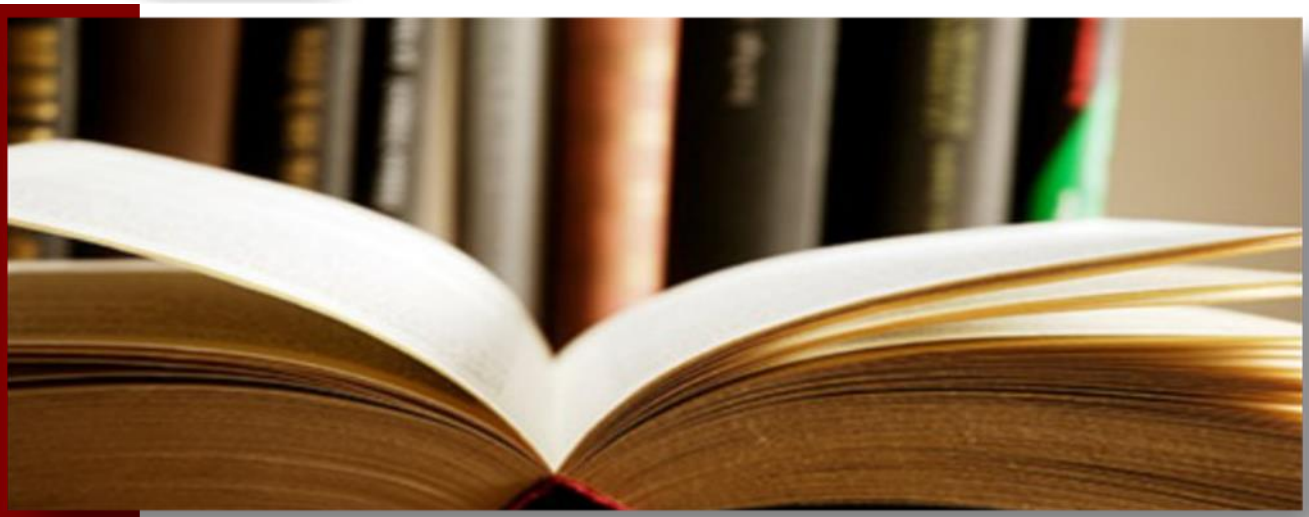
Reviews & Resources

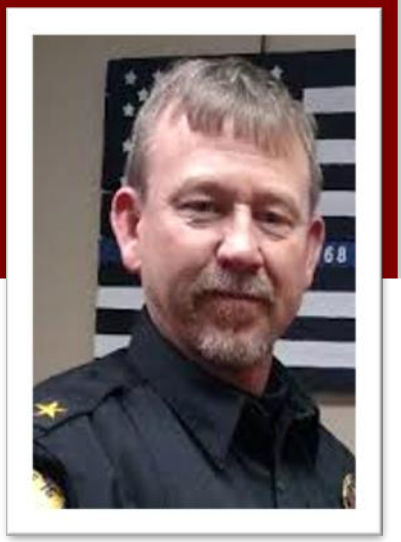


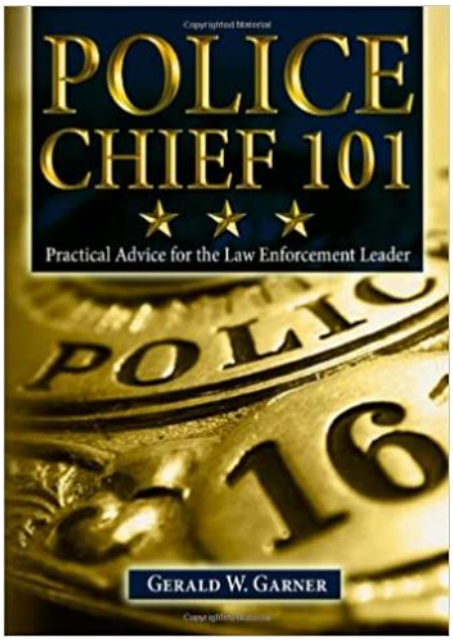


Book Review

Police Chief 101: Practical Advice for the Law Enforcement Leader

By Chief Tim Barfield





I was asked by ILEETA Journal staff to review this book first printed in 2010 with an updated second edition printed in 2020. The author, Gerald W. Garner, has a seasoned career in law enforcement spanning 50 years. The advice given in this guide is professionally written and certainly a good read for someone considering a position or new to one as a police chief.

The book is a relatively easy read, broken down into sixteen chapters which highlight various topics of relevant and sage advice. The book is really a book about leadership and although aimed at police chiefs and certainly advantageous to that audience, the book would be an appropriate read for anyone in law enforcement. The guidance would assist those who like to serve with distinction and honor while avoiding the pitfalls that can easily snare those in this profession. The recent updates consider current topics that have become important in the last ten years.

Each section is relatively short but offers not only a summary but "Points to Remember" before moving onto the next chapter. These points to remember can be used as constant reminders or reviewed without the need to re-read a chapter. The topics included being a new chief, leading your team, how to handle the media, the importance of role modeling, employee relations, community relations, appropriate relationships with subordinates and superiors, ethics, how to survive, when to leave and so many others.

Sixteen chapters sometimes offered some redundancy which made me think I had marked the wrong page between reads. As I considered the importance of the subject and how quickly people forget leadership principles, I realized the importance of the power of repetition. One of the secrets of successful leadership is repetition. This is one of the main reasons you will find good leaders reading or listening to anything to do with the topic. This helped me to appreciate the author's re-emphasis of important points.

There is some sage advice in this book. If I were to think of improvements for a Police Chief 101 book, I do not think I could find any to include. I do recommend this book to those seeking to attain a police chief position in addition to those who just wish to improve their leadership skills in law enforcement. **ILEETA**

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