

Standards & Training DIRECTOR Magazine



The Critical Role of Academy Directors: Ensuring Effective Training and Accountability for Front-Line Officers and Supervisors

3-Exposés on Investigative Communication

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- Excellence in Forensic Science Award Good Samaritan Award
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- Startups Innovation Award Excellence in Road and Safety Award



**STANDARDS & TRAINING
DIRECTOR MAGAZINE**

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Fifth Volume

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IADLEST, March 2025

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Message From The Executive Director



Mike Becar

Welcome to the March 2025 edition of IADLEST's *Standards & Training Director Magazine*. We're in a new year where we're hoping for new and exciting advances in the field of law enforcement standards and training. Many interesting events have already occurred, and law enforcement has been active in the physical and social demands placed upon our profession. This edition of IADLEST's magazine is just as busy presenting information to inform the POST agencies, academies, curriculum developers, and instructors about where they should be thinking to stay ahead of the curve on matters that affect them in their working environments.

So, let's begin by breaking down the important articles you will want to read.

As noted in our last edition of IADLEST's *Standards & Training Director Magazine*, the past few months have been exceptional for our association. On the following pages, we are sharing information from our 2024 annual report with you to let you become aware of what events, projects, and programs the association has been involved in.

Our cover story highlights an essential message for academy directors. Tom Loglisci Jr., M.Ed., a results-driven educator with a master's degree in Adult Education and Workforce Development and over 23 years of dedicated service in the Philadelphia Police Department — including six years in the Advanced Training Unit — has written his vision about *The Critical Role of Academy Directors: Ensuring Effective Training and Accountability for Front-Line Officers and Supervisors*. It's an article we're sure every academy director will find helpful in planning their day-to-day workload.

We have also included two dynamic articles for firearms instructors to improve their teaching skills and expertise: *Trigger Drills – The Foundation of Perfect Handgun Practice (this could be two different animals)* by Art Aplan, firearms instructor for the South Dakota Law Enforcement Academy; and *America's Problem with Law Enforcement*, by J. Todd

Nunley, a Decorated Federal Agent with over 30 years of experience in local and federal law enforcement,

and who is qualified as an expert at both the state and federal levels involving various specialized legal and government programs—he presents an in-depth article on what information makes firearms instructors exceptional instructors when lecturing students on use of force in the classroom.

Also, inside, we have three essential articles on investigative communications that every instructor and manager of investigative divisions should read. The first article is by nationally recognized trainer and author Joseph Buckley, with Reid & Associates, returning to our magazine to share his insight about *False Confessions: The Issues to be Considered*. The second article is *Beyond Words: Advanced Interview Skills for Law Enforcement* by Joe Auriemma, Jr., and the third article is *Re-Evaluating "Success" in an Investigative Interview*, from Chris Norris, CFI, with Wicklander-Zulawski & Associates.

We're rounding out our magazine with a contribution from our long-time associate, Dr. Jean Reynolds, Professor Emeritus at Polk State College, Florida, bringing report writing instructors her thoughts about *Why "Conditionals" Matter*. As well as The Epilepsy Foundation's information entitled, *Introducing the Law Enforcement Seizure Recognition and Response Course*; the *Texas School Marshal Program—From Sheep to Sheepdogs*; and a fascinating look at a London Metropolitan Police Program in an article entitled *Cross-Industry Innovation and Disruptive Solutions* written by Constable Atti Mahmoud.

These articles and more are just waiting for you to learn more about what is new and important for you to know as IADLEST members, POST and Academy Directors, curriculum specialists, and instructors responsible for training our law enforcement officers.

We hope you enjoy this edition. ~

**It's Conference
Time !**



**Registration Is
Open !**

International Association of Directors of
Law Enforcement Standards and Training
2025 Conference

June 1, 2025 – June 4, 2025

Le Meridien Sheraton Charlotte Hotel Complex
555 S. McDowell St. Tower
Charlotte, NC 28204

You are invited to the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards & Training (IADLEST) 2025 Conference, **June 1-4, 2025**, in Charlotte, North Carolina!

IADLEST is the catalyst for law enforcement improvement. The annual conference showcases this commitment by focusing on the most critical issues for law enforcement training executives, managers, and staff.

We have expanded the choices for training options for participants this year. **Take a look.**
Don't miss this opportunity!

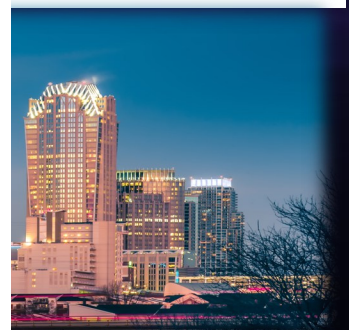
Register Here for this year's conference.

What's Included With Your Conference Registration?

- Lunch on Monday and Tuesday
- Main Dinner Event on Monday, June 3rd held at The Duce.

* We will have a live auction to help raise funds for the Special Olympics during the main dinner event on Monday, June 2. We encourage everyone to bring something to include in the auction.

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DATA on the IADLEST WEBSITE

December 2024 thru
February 2025

WEBSITE PAGE VIEWS

USERS	35,883
OVERALL PAGE VIEWS	205,074
NLEARN	4,717
CERTIFIED INSTRUCTORS	647*
* 1 MONTH ONLY (FEBRUARY)	
POST PORTAL	1,989

PROJECTS

ACCREDITATION	640
MODEL STANDARDS	390
AUDITS	253
CRI-TAC	140

www.IADLEST.org

TOP RESOURCE
National Decertification Index

Login Page **6,963**



TRAINING

BLUE COURAGE	17
INSTRUCTOR DEVELOPMT WEBINARS	2,745
TEXAS DOT TRAINING	1,294
NCP COURSE CATALOG	1,724

BLOG **752**

INFORMATION PORTAL **258**

You never know where IADLEST Conference attendees will show up.



Husband and wife law enforcement trainers Joseph Wolf and Christina Frank at the 2024 International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training Conference in Phoenix, AZ: Joe wears his Rolex Oyster Perpetual 39 and Chris, her Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra.

About the photos: above. The photo of Joseph and Christine appeared in WatchTime Magazine.

IADLEST has worked with Joe Wolf, (an ardent watch collector) for many years and Christine Frank was one of IADLEST's grant managers for many years. Christine is currently a Highway Safety Specialist with NHTSA. Both Joe and Christine will be presenting at the IADLEST 2025 Conference in Charlotte, NC this year. Their photo was taken at the 2024 IADLEST Conference in Phoenix, Arizona, and published in the February issue of WatchTime magazine.



POST Portal The [IADLEST POST PORTAL](#) is a resource that all state POST Directors should check out from time to time. The Portal allows instant access to POST websites and contains a plethora of ideas and information useful in our standards and training world. Among the websites, some of the states have revised the design of their websites and are really quite attractive and informative. A few we recommend that you take a look at are: **Idaho** (front page design), **Massachusetts** (Officer Status Counts), and **Kentucky**.

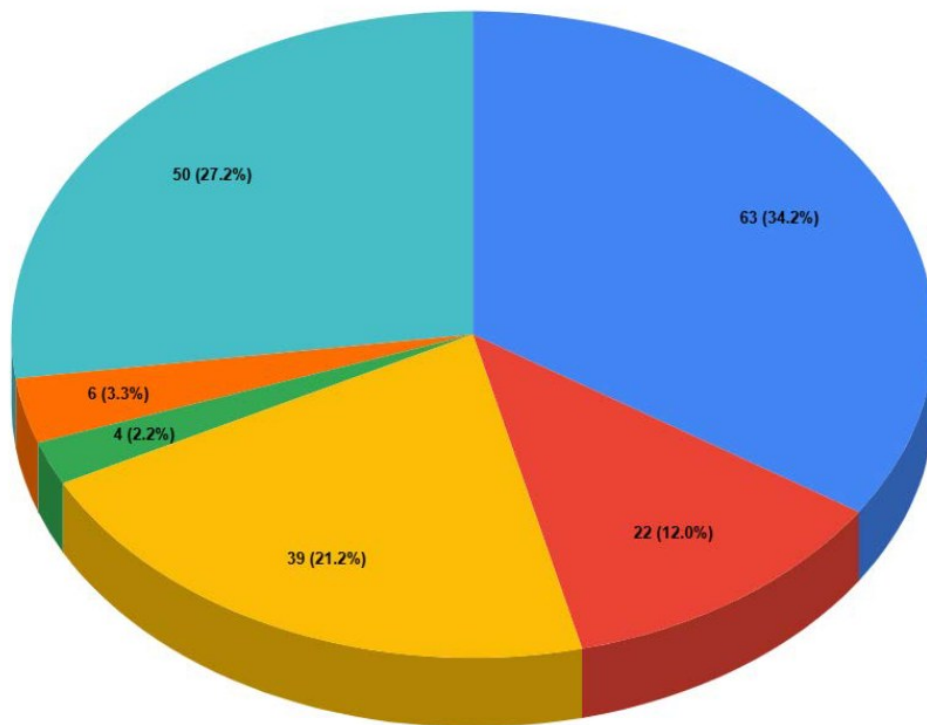


Member Agency Notes



Arizona POST's 2024 Annual Report revealed an easy-to-read, visually interesting layout for acknowledging their officer misconduct actions to the public. See their entire report at: https://post.az.gov/sites/default/files/2025-02/2024_annual_report_final.pdf

BOARD OUTCOMES



● Voluntary Relinquishments ● Denials ● Suspensions ● Revocations ● No Action ● Petitions

Appointments

(as of January 1, 2024)

14,930

- 5-Year High
 - 15,012
 - August 6, 2020
- 5-Year Low
 - 14,337
 - August 11, 2022

Attrition Rate

9.10% - 2024
9.30% - 2023
10.51% - 2022



AZPOST Board Meeting

Board Outcomes

- 63 Voluntary Relinquishments
- 22 Denials
- 39 Suspensions
- 4 Revocations
- 6 No Action
- 50 Petitions
(50 Granted, 0 Denied)

Continued on page 9



Member Agency Notes



Invictus Award: The State of Arkansas, Division of Law Enforcement Standards and Training sees firsthand the dedication of Arkansas Law Enforcement serving its great state each and every day.

Occasionally, a law enforcement officer's actions go above and beyond their job requirements. Sometimes, an officer becomes involved in a situation that tests their training, their resolve, and their spirit. It's in these times that others see what it means to have an unconquerable spirit. To recognize these officers, the Division has created the Invictus Award.

On December 9, 2024, the 2024 Award went to Deputy Fred Phillips of the Clark County Sheriff's Office .



Arkansas Division of Law Enforcement Standards and Training presented an Invictus Award to Clark County Sheriff's Office Deputy Fred Phillips for his selfless act of bravery by positioning his patrol car in the path of a semi-truck and trailer driving the wrong way on the interstate before causing injury or harm to other vehicles on the roadway.



The Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission held its meeting on February 2, 2025, and Bureau Chief Ashley Pennington Presented the following Basic Recruit Instructor Guides that other POST agencies might be interested in:

1. Instructor Guide — Law Enforcement Academy, Volume 1, Version 2025.07 (Update);
2. Instructor Guide — Florida Correctional Officers, Volume 1, Version 2025.07 (New)
3. Instructor Guide — Correctional Probation Officer Training Academy, Version 2025.07 (Update); and
4. Instructor Guide — High Liability, Version 2025.07 (Update)

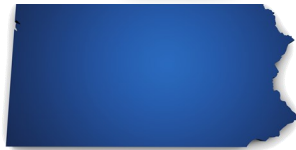
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Member Agency Notes



The State of Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES) and the Pennsylvania Municipal Police Officers' Education & Training Commission (MPO-ETC) have studied vision standards lately. In response to the December 2024 IADLEST *Standards & Training Director Magazine* article "Basic Information About Eyesight Acuity Standards and Law Enforcement," both states contacted IADLEST's author searching for information to support their studies. Joanne Catania, with Michigan, is involved in a substantial research project, and her work has provided her with an impressive span of knowledge gained through her work.



As stated by Michael Corricelli, Pennsylvania's interest is with color vision and what, specifically, should be a minimum standard. What do other states require as "normal" color vision, and how do they determine it? MPOETC has been asked about waivers for color-correcting devices like certain contact lenses but wonders if they should change their standards or the testing methodology.

Both of these states are interested in gathering any vision standard information that the other states may have available to help them better understand this area where employment standards might be appropriate.



The Minnesota Board of Peace Officer Standards and Training has adopted changes to Minnesota Rules, part 6700.1600, subpart 1, item F as posted in the State Register on March 18, 2024 (Volume 48, Number 38, pages 875-877). The adopted amendment will restore violating any order issued by the Board as a standards of conduct violation. An official adoption notice will be posted in the State Register on December 9, 2024. The rule will become effective 5 working days after the notice is published. You can view the official adoption notice on the State Register's website at <https://mn.gov/admin/bookstore/register.jsp>.



Posted in Nevada POST's February 2025 Newsletter was the following:

NATIONAL DECERTIFICATION INDEX (NDI)

"A recent change to POST statutes includes NRS 289.555(2) which states "a person Is not qualified to serve as a category I , II or III peace officer, regardless of whether the person has had his or her civil rights restored, if the person has been: (2) Reported to the National Decertification Index of the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training or an equivalent database maintained for the purpose of serving as a national registry of certificate or license revocation actions relating to peace officer misconduct." Therefore, as part of the background process,

BEFORE an individual is hired, the agency should be checking NDI to confirm their candidate has not been entered by Nevada, or any other state. If any individual has been reported to NDI by any state, for any reason, they are not eligible for hiring in Nevada.

NV POST is required, by statute, to enter all revoked peace officers into NDI, as are several other states in the country."

Continued on page 11

Member Agency Notes



(Information from the Kentucky DOCJT website.)

The Department of Criminal Justice Training is Kentucky's state-of-the-art facility providing basic and advanced training for law enforcement officers and telecommunicators across the commonwealth.

Recently, Gov. Andy Beshear appointed Mike Bosse as commissioner of the Department of Criminal Justice Training effective immediately. While serving as deputy commissioner, Bosse has been instrumental in reducing the wait time for officers to attend basic training, establishing a Madisonville training facility, increasing instructor pay and networking with Kentucky chiefs and sheriffs.

“For the past several years we have been changing the way we train Kentucky’s finest, and it is working, as we have seen recidivism and overdose deaths decline,” Justice and Public Safety Cabinet Secretary Keith Jackson said. “To continue with the state’s positive trajectory, we must instill confidence in our leaders and encourage them to think creatively. I am confident that Commissioner Bosse is the right person for the job at the right time and that he will champion for the needs of law enforcement across our state.”

Commissioner Bosse is an established member of the law enforcement community having served as Georgetown Police Chief and retired as assistant chief of the Lexington Police Department. He also served as Chair of the Professional Standards Committee of the Kentucky Law Enforcement Council, leading efforts alongside police chiefs and sheriffs to give the council more authority to decertify law enforcement officers found guilty of crimes or misconduct. ~

On the National Scene



Attorney General Bondi Dismisses Lawsuits Involving Standard Aptitude Tests

Announced by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Public Affairs

February 26, 2025

Attorney General Pam Bondi directed the Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division to dismiss lawsuits against various jurisdictions across the country involving the hiring of police officers and firefighters. These lawsuits, launched by the previous administration, unjustly targeted fire and police departments for using standard aptitude tests to screen firefighter and police officer candidates.

“American communities deserve firefighters and police officers to be chosen for their skill and dedication to public safety – not to meet DEI quotas,” said Attorney General Bondi.

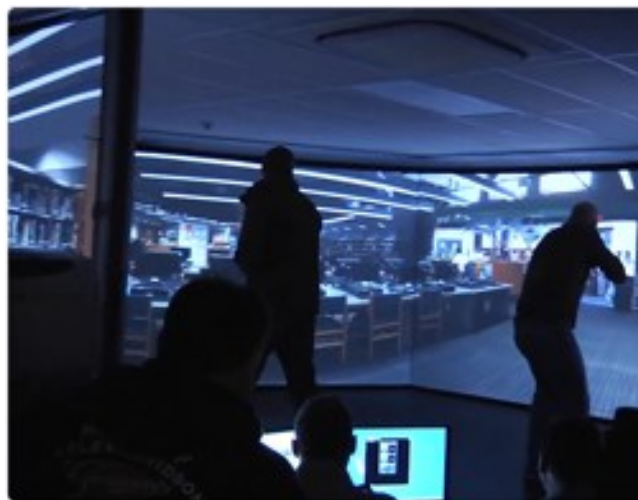
Despite no evidence of intentional discrimination — only statistical disparities — the prior administration branded the aptitude tests at issue in these cases as discriminatory in an effort to advance a DEI agenda. The Department of Justice action is dedicated to ending illegal discrimination and restoring merit-based opportunity nationwide, and in all sectors. But doing so is particularly important for front-line public-safety workers who protect our nation. Prioritizing DEI over merit when selecting firefighters and police officers jeopardizes public safety. ~



Umatilla County Sheriff's Office Wins the VirTra / IADLEST Taskforce Santa Contest: *VirTra's state-of-the-art training simulator*

It was a rural county sheriff's department in the State of Oregon that became the winner of the 2024 VirTra/IADLEST Taskforce Santa Contest. Out of nearly 100 contest entries, the review committee determined the letter submitted by Captain Sterrin Ward on behalf of the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office was the best entry submitted.

On December 18, 2024, representatives from VirTra and the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) met at the sheriff's office and awarded a free VirTra decision-making simulator to Sheriff Terry Rowan in front of a crowd of officers from several jurisdictions and news media in the Pendleton, Oregon vicinity; all who have an interest in having their officers train on the system to help them in their future contacts and calls. During the ceremony, Sheriff's deputies demonstrated the simulator for those in attendance.



The new VirTra V-100 Training Simulator and certified law enforcement training curriculum, are valued at approximately \$37,900.

VirTra Inc. located in Chandler, Arizona, makes virtual training simulators for law enforcement and for the past two years has partnered with IADLEST to award their training simulator to contest winning law enforcement agencies.



(Above) Sheriff Terry Rowan speaking before the audience during the Taskforce Santa Award Ceremony

VirTra and IADLEST selected Umatilla County Sheriff's Office from almost 100 nominees, all with unique, unfulfilled training needs due to resource limitations. Now equipped with a powerful new training resource, the department's leadership plans to routinely practice de-escalation, techniques, encounters with autistic civilians, red dot marksmanship drills, and more.

The Sheriff's Office won the award by submitting a letter that described the determination of effort to truly exemplify the purpose of the Taskforce Santa gift. Of the nearly 100 applications, Captain Ward's was one of the numerous applications that poured in from more than 36 states and some international nominations. They all had one factor in common—a lack of resources that prevents their agency from achieving the training they need.

At the award ceremony, Chris Gold, VirTra's VP of Customer Experience, William Flink with IADLEST, Captains Sterrin Ward and Paul Wolverton, County Commissioner Dan Doran, and Sheriff Terry Rowan all gave speeches expressing their excitement for the winning department.

Captain Ward told the audience, "Yesterday was the reward, and today is just the icing on the cake." She referred to testing out the V-100 simulator the day before; about how officers from the surrounding area came to the sheriff's office to engage the system; and she said, "seeing the people in uniform" ... "you watched them participate and their enthusiasm and excitement of the system and in what it will do, and the possibilities, and you see the spark in their eyes and you see the people from the different agencies chattering back and forth, and that is so gratifying." She ended by saying that as administrators, there's nothing more important than to give the officers everything they need to be successful in their jobs. Because it's a hard job.

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Sheriff Rowan thanked VirTra and IADLEST, and Captain Ward for her "phenomenal letter" that led to Umatilla County obtaining the VirTra simulator. Furthermore, he talked about how the simulator would allow his deputies to meet their training obligations without leaving the county to acquire their mandated training and without expending valuable financial resources that could be spent on other needed tools and resources. His remarks emphasized how this "great tool" will make the staff feel better about working for the Sheriff's Office and knowing that they are better prepared to do their jobs and protect themselves.

VirTra's Chris Gold shared Captain Ward's enthusiasm, expressing hope that the simulator will improve the county's safety: "Captain Ward's selfless submission spoke to the heart of what we do here at VirTra. You want more training? We hear you, and we're here to give you more. Welcome to the VirTra family."

Although VirTra and IADLEST received plenty of compelling nominations for this year's Taskforce Santa, the Umatilla County Sheriff's submission showcased an evident dedication to its community and to improving training.

The VirTra team is honored to provide an advanced training solution that will help the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office deputies enhance their skills and better protect their community. The unveiling of the VirTra V-100 training simulator for this year's Taskforce Santa at the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office instilled joy and a renewed sense of safety in everyone involved. ~

Developing New Leaders for Law Enforcement Standards and Training: Lessons from Past Experience

By William Flink



Every POST Director nationwide is interested in developing their staff for their agency's future. Staff development costs a lot of money and can take years of hard work. It takes time and commitment that, in some cases, falters with young staff leaving to find work that will give them more personal satisfaction. Over the years, many POST Directors have sought ways to keep their staff excited about working in a POST agency and serving lengthy employment terms. Offering training opportunities or promotions often helps motivate staff, but these are generally short-lived motivations. However, there are other ways to develop your POST staff and keep their interest in the work at a high level other than sending them to training or promoting staff.

Offering your staff opportunities to interact and collaborate with counterparts from other states on projects and programs is a great way to develop POST staff. Over the years, IADLEST has been a powerhouse for developing leaders for organizations responsible for law enforcement standards and training. Some of IADLEST's most significant programs were founded upon the energy and initiative of collaborating POST staff who came together under IADLEST's banner to develop programs that all states have used over the years. POST staff involvement in IADLEST projects and programs expands the credibility of participating POST agencies. It provides buy-in for ideas, strategic development, and implementation and improvement of POST programs nationwide and worldwide. Many of the opportunities that POST staff have had with IADLEST have been funded by grants, costing the POST agency nothing but time to be involved.

Think outside the box. Develop your staff by allowing them to become involved in IADLEST's fascinating work for the future of law enforcement. Share your staff's knowledge, in collaboration with other state POST representatives and experienced IADLEST staff, to develop standards and training that will become available to all POST agencies and their academies.

IADLEST has nurtured some of the best-known names in law enforcement training and POST operations. They've been the crux of many of IADLEST's most successful programs over the decades, like the NDI, the Driver Training Instructor Manual, Decertification efforts around the nation, DDACTS, the initial ADA education of the POST agencies, our involvement in foreign law enforcement training programs, and establishing training programs for traffic management and safety used nationwide.

Some POST staff who took advantage of their work with IADLEST later became Directors and Assistant Directors of POST agencies in Arizona, California, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, and Virginia, to name just a few. The experience of getting involved in nationwide POST-related activities can energize POST staff in the work that POST agencies perform. The experience of working with IADLEST increases interest and competence, enhances knowledge about training and standards, and provides the skills and abilities to develop their state's future efforts in regulating or applying state law enforcement standards and training. It also develops life-long contacts and relationships, which benefits law enforcement and POST activities in many ways.

Make the most of your opportunities as an IADLEST POST Director Member while improving your standing as a leader and manager of your state's law enforcement personnel. Encourage your staff to become involved with IADLEST as volunteers or members and enhance their knowledge and experience in performing your work. ~



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- Your company creates the ad and can make editorial changes as needed for the duration of your package

NLEARN AD SIZE	1x Rate	Monthly Rate	12 Month Rate (52 Eblasts)
		5 % Savings	10% Savings
Box Size 0.617 Wide x 0.733 High	\$300	\$285/week	\$270/week



MAGAZINE

- Distributed to over 40,000 law enforcement officers nationwide and internationally
- Distributed quarterly, Standards and Training focused
- All magazine issues are continually available on the IADLEST website
- Advertisements must be submitted prior to publication deadline

MAGAZINE AD SIZE	1x Rate	2x Rate	3x Rate	4x Rate
Discount applies when four are purchased at the same time				5% Savings
Full Page 10" x 7.5"	\$ 2000	\$ 2000	\$ 2000	\$ 1900
Half Page 10" x 3.4" vertical 5" x 7.5" Horizontal	\$ 1100	\$ 1100	\$ 1100	\$ 1045
Quarter Page 10"x 1.9" Vertical 2.4" x 3.875" Horizontal	\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 650	\$ 617.50



NOTICE: IADLEST has just released a new Request for Proposals. The RFP is for the redesign of the IADLEST/NLEARN Website. Also included in the RFP is the development of an online version of the IADLEST Sourcebook. The RFP response is due April 4, 2025. If you are interested in this proposal, you can download the RFP by [Clicking Here](#).

Training Lexicon

The vocabulary of a particular language,

Cognitive Domain

Involves mental processes. From the Latin for 'I think'. The Taxonomy of categories arranged in ascending order of difficulty are:

- **Knowledge:** Recognition and recall of information.
- **Comprehension:** Interprets, translates or summarizes given information.
- **Application:** Uses information in a situation different from original learning context.
- **Analysis:** Separates the whole into parts until relationships are clear.
- **Synthesis:** Combines elements to form new entity from the original one.
- **Evaluation:** Involves acts of decision making based on criteria or rationale.

Behavior Analysis

A specific system introduced to enable overt or covert behaviors to be observed, recorded, and analyzed, such as observing individuals during group situations, group activities or one-to-one events.

Predictive Validity

The ability of a test or expert opinion or measurement to predict how well students will actually perform on the job.

Conditions of Learning

Robert Gagné's theory of nine instructional events that help ensure learning occurs. The nine events are:

1. Gain the learners' attention.
2. Share the objectives of the session.
3. Ask learners to recall prior learning.
4. Deliver content.
5. Use methods to enhance understanding (for example, case studies or graphs).
6. Provide an opportunity to practice.
7. Provide feedback.
8. Assess performance.
9. Provide job aids or references to ensure transfer to the job.

Faults Analysis

An analysis of a task or process in terms of the faults which may occur in carrying the task or process, and specifying the symptoms, causes and remedies.

The results of the analysis can provide a learner with details of how to avoid faults as well as what to do about them if they occur. Tools are often used to analyze an undesirable event and the factors that contributed to it. One such tool is the acronym "FACERAP," which provides an easy and useful reminder of the process that may be considered:

Fault, Appearance, Cause, Effect, Responsibility, Action, and Prevention.



**Uplevel Your Peace Officer Training:
From Academy to Active Duty**



Register Today 

Webinar: April 2 | 2 pm ET

Peace Officer Continuing Education & Training Compliance

Featured Speakers



Indiana Law Enforcement Academy
Bryant Orem, Deputy Director



Utah Peace Officers Standards & Training
John Jacobs, Training Manager



New Jersey Police Training Commission
John Cunningham | PTC Administrator
Tykeria Lockhart | Analyst

info.vectorsolutions.com/from-academy-to-active-duty

We're Almost There!

IADLEST continues to prioritize federal legislation to allow state law enforcement standards and training agencies access to criminal history records information (CHRI).

For years, IADLEST has been engaged in an effort to allow all fifty-state law enforcement standards and training agencies (POSTs) to access the national criminal history records. State POSTs without sworn officers or whose mission is not perceived as mostly investigative, have been unable to access CHRI even though they have their state's mandate to certify those who become sworn officers. This has left a massive void in the state's efforts to ensure that those law enforcement officers certified to enforce the law have good character and are free from criminal activities that would deny them employment and certification.

IADLEST has worked closely with Senators Moran (R-KS) and Whitehouse (D-RI) on legislative language that would allow POSTs access to criminal history information. They introduced a bill during the 118th Congress and have indicated an interest in prioritizing this bill for reintroduction in the coming weeks. We will keep you updated as more details are released. ~



IADLEST

PARTNER ADVISORY COMMITTEE (IPAC)

The IADLEST Partner Advisory Committee (IPAC) was established in 2019 to support resource development for IADLEST and the advancement of law enforcement training nationwide. Members of the IPAC help ensure that training and standards meet the needs of the public safety industry, help to promote the adoption of best practices, provide IADLEST with perspectives and recommendations regarding selected IADLEST projects, and initiatives and emerging topics in the field. The IPAC seeks to advance the public safety profession with a vision of outcomes-based police training and standards.

Learn more about the IPAC, including the IPAC publication *Why Law Enforcement Needs to Take a Science-Based Approach to Training and Education*, on our [webpage](#).

IPAC Serves as a:

- ◆ Technical Advisory Panel comprised of subject matter experts (SMEs);
- ◆ Platform to engage partners and create opportunities for collaboration;
- ◆ Sounding and advisory board for IADLEST's current and merging programs;
- ◆ Think tank to assist IADLEST with its mission and strategic plan;
- ◆ Resource for law enforcement; and
- ◆ Forum to discuss partner (vendor) issues of interest.





IADLEST In Review 2024

A look at some of the great progress of IADLEST during the past year in its programs and projects, and the events the association has participated in to emphasize the importance that the Directors of the law enforcement standards and training agencies have upon the nation and worldwide for the law enforcement profession.

Recently, Executive Director Mike Becar released the IADLEST's 2024 Annual Report to the membership. The 47-page report captures a summary of the IADLEST's programs, projects, certifications and accreditations and meetings during the year. In his address on the report the Executive Director stated:

“IADLEST is once again achieving excellence, impact, and grant receipts that serve our domestic and international members well.

The program and program manager updates ... provide exciting news for 2024, thus far. IADLEST's work demonstrates relevance, mission fulfillment, and ongoing service to the law enforcement profession.”

It's an exciting time for our association and its hundreds of members. There is a great deal going on to benefit the state, federal and international agencies we work with.

As members, you should reach out to offer your support, and become a part of some terrific opportunities to accomplish great things for the law enforcement profession.

In this article we will glance at just a few exciting achievements IADLEST has accomplished during 2024.

Continued on page 21



IADLEST 2024 Year in Review

IADLEST improves lives around the world by providing

law enforcement education, publications, trainings, certifications, law enforcement leadership and more. In 2024, more than 50,000 law enforcement officers were reached, with a resulting positive effect for more than 470 million community members worldwide. Here are IADLEST's 2024 highlights.

~ IADLEST Executive Director Mike Becar

30+ Countries Served



IADLEST Membership = 675



2024 Conference in Phoenix, AZ
Attendance = 448 people;
21 countries; 45 U.S. states



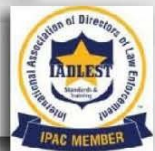
Magazine Distribution: 56,000
Newsletter Distribution: 17,000
NLEARN subscribers: 7,166
NLEARN Distribution: 16,500



Grants:
21 Funds Managed: \$10,353,397



IPAC Members 14



Certifications:
74 New Instructors, total of 277
New Courses = nearly 200 from 31 providers



Records: 555,800+
Searches: 113,900+
Agencies: 12,878



IADLEST Website Views in 2024: 781, 289
New Followers: 963 (on all platforms)
Facebook: Views: 6,733 | Engagement: 1,984
LinkedIn: Views: 123,414 | Engagement: 3,641
Twitter/X: Views: 6,733 | Engagement: 1,984
LinkedIn: Views: 123,414 | Engagement: 3,641
Twitter/X: Views: 11,785 | Engagement: 730



IADLEST 2024 Year in Review



The 2024 Annual Report is jam-packed with activities that IADLEST was involved with during the year.

If you would like to see the entire 2024 Annual Report and learn more about what IADLEST does,

[Click Here.](#)

Activities that Brought Directors Together to Discuss Issues Important to Law Enforcement Training and Standards

Executive Committee Meetings



Annual Conference



State Directors 2-Day Meeting with FLETC



Regional Meetings



Special Interest Meeting—Yale University



Congressional Meetings



Presentations Before Police Organizations



IPAC Partnership Meetings





IADLEST and State Directors Met at FLETC

Driving Evidence-Based Training Through Accreditation

- Self-Assessment materials were provided to:Indiana Law Enforcement Academy
- Tennessee Law Enforcement Academy
- Touchstone Global Training Center
- Idaho P.O.S.T Law Enforcement Academy
- Washtenaw Community College (Michigan) Public Safety Academy
- An overview of the accreditation process was provided to the Royal Morocco Police College in November.
- Self-Assessment materials to our international partners were provided to:Indiana Law Enforcement Academy
- Tennessee Law Enforcement Academy
- Touchstone Global Training Center
- Idaho P.O.S.T Law Enforcement Academy
- Washtenaw Community College (Michigan) Public Safety Academy
- South Dakota Law Enforcement Training Center
- Panama National Police Officers Academy.

Partnering to Provide Training December 2024



IADLEST continues to be a leader in the assessment of excellence for law enforcement academies. US government agencies with an interest in improving policing worldwide depend upon IADLEST for their expertise and commitment to improving the profession.

Continued on page 23

Our International Work Made A Significant Difference to Support Law Enforcement Worldwide

IADLEST had a seat on the Board of Trust for the Dubai World Police Summit (WPS). IADLEST has participated on the Board for two and a half years. In 2024, IADLEST's Deputy Director, Brian Grisham, met with the other Board members at the Summit and was also a member of the selection committee for the WPS Awards in Excellence.

Academy Accreditations: IADLEST completed five (5) initial law enforcement academy accreditations to date in 2024: The countries that earned accreditations include:

- Guyana Police Force Training Centre (3 academies: Georgetown, Berbice, Essiquebo).
- Jamaican Constabulary Force National Police Academy.
- Albania Security Academy (Award of Excellence).



Academy Reaccreditation: IADLEST completed three law enforcement academy reaccreditations in 2024:

- Ministry of Internal Affairs Police Academy and the Agency for Ministry of Security Training for Bosnia and Herzegovina.
- Kosovo Academy for Public Safety (Award of Excellence).
- North Macedonia Ministry of Interior Police Training Center..

Accreditations In Progress: at the end of 2024 year:

- Dominican Republic National Police, Institute for Police Education.
- Arkansas DPS Northwest Arkansas Law Enforcement Training Academy.
- Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission - Burien.
- Trinidad and Tobago National Security Training Academy.



An Overview of the Accreditation Process was provided to:

- The Royal Bahamas Police Force Academy.
- The Palestine College for Police Services, and
- The Royal Morocco Police College.

Self-Assessment Materials Provided to:

- The Panama National Police Officers Academy..

Pan American Development Foundation

IADLEST has been working with the the U.S. Department of State, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Section, to perform technical assistance with the Pan American Development Foundation. IADLEST's work included the reviously mentioned completed accreditations of three Guyana police academies, and:

- Trinidad & Tobago: Accreditation of the NSTA academy is in progress.
- Bahamas: An overview of the accreditation process presented to the Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) staff and leadership, and a review of their basic training curriculum.
- Barbados: A review of basic training curriculum was performed.
- Dominican Republic: Work was taken to develop the anticipated presentation in 2025 of Use-of-Force and Citizen Attention (Community Policing) train-the-trainer courses.

2024 was a banner year for IADLEST. With your help, 2025 can be just as successful. ~



IADLEST's 2024 Sourcebook is available to criminal justice researchers and educators.

Just Released !

The Sourcebook compiles 397 survey questions asked of the 50 state law enforcement and criminal justice standards and training (POST) agencies.

It covers officers within:

- law enforcement,
- state corrections,
- local and county jails,
- communication / dispatchers,
- court security,
- civil process service,

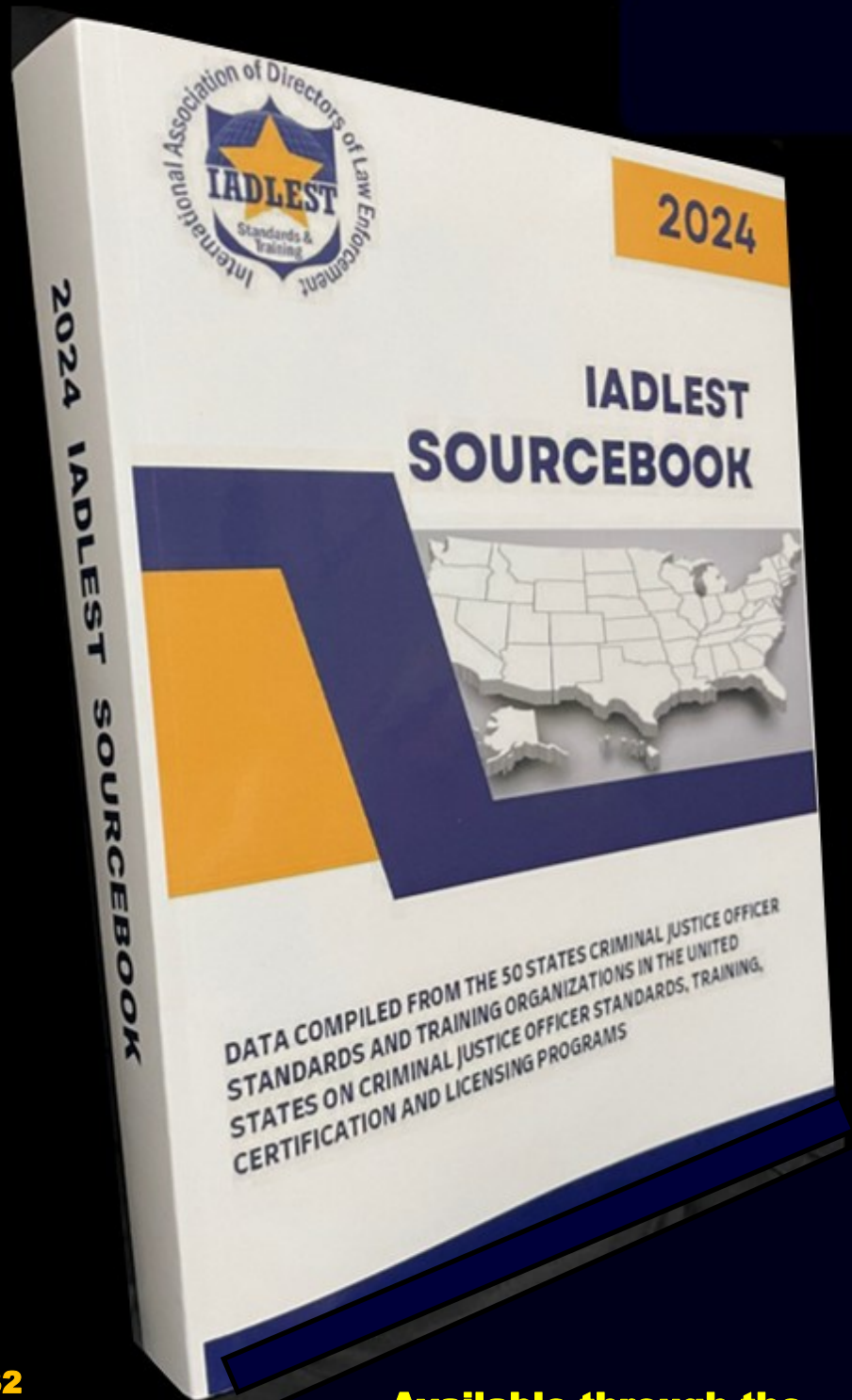
And standards for:

- instructors,
- inservice training,
- decertification,
- and more.

The entire book covers 432 pages of historical and current information.

Book Size: 8.5 x 11

ISBN 979-8-35099-145-1



**Available through the
IADLEST Website at:**

<https://www.iadleststore.org/> or

<https://store.bookbaby.com/>

INTERNATIONAL

Cross-Industry Innovation and Disruptive Solutions

By Atti Mahmoud

Cross-industry innovation (CII) is a collaboration between two or more different sectors or industries with different values and ethics. The aim is to utilize knowledge and expertise by leveraging innovation to benefit another industry and achieve comparatively progressive and diverse outcomes. It's a way of thinking beyond the standardized borders to identify inspirations to formulate new strategies.

Cross-industry innovation provides a platform to find answers to existing or potential problems. This is becoming an integral part for various sectors and industries seeking to identify disruptive solutions in order to improve on existing procedures ranging from simplistic to complex ones. For example, the agriculture industry innovations can range all the way from fields to food processing facilities. With the Police, this is no different as in recent years, most, if not all, Police forces utilized the knowledge of sectors such as technology, media, and psychology to identify solutions.

Therefore, it should come as no surprise that CII is on the rise and used more frequently than ever before. Often, conservatism within Policing delayed such approaches, but adopting CII within Police systems will provide a new lens able to analyse the diversification of methodologies. This, in turn, will further postulate notions and thoughts.

CII is an approach to collaboration that involves the reuse of existing solutions or knowledge from another industry by leveraging the innova-

tive power of partners' knowledge from another industry to create new solutions that can benefit multiple industries. CII will allow Police forces to confront global challenges by working together to develop joint solutions.

Case Study Lemon-AID Response Unit (LRU)

I have explored the opportunity to engage with the public through a social change program funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Battersea Arts Centre under the program Agents of Creative Change. The program was designed to bring unlikely groups together to address social problems in creative ways by creating pairings between artists and public or third-sector professionals in order to spark unique solutions to issues facing their professions.

For my case study, I developed the "Lemon-AID Response Unit" (LRU) which is a lemonade serving stall giving the public an opportunity to have informal interaction with the Police. I invented the name, replacing the usual spelling of Lemonade with "Lemon-AID," referencing AID and support, and the "Response Unit" name, derived from the standard Police response units with flashing blue lights seen every day by members of the public.

Continued on page 26



Continued on page 26

The project was recreated successfully on two more occasions in different parts of London, with crowds of more than 500 people engaging in a very short period of time. During the second round of the project, I engaged with a member of the public who enquired about the project, and after a brief verbal exchange, she admitted that she had never engaged with the Police before. She felt comfortable conversing while enjoying a glass of fresh lemonade, and then she asked for advice on domestic issues she was experiencing. On further engagement, it was discovered that she was a victim of domestic abuse but never had the courage to engage with the Police before and had suffered in silence for over 5 years. I was able to provide her with further information and support available for domestic abuse victims through the helpline and various other sources of information on how to report the matter accordingly.

The information collated from LRU demonstrated that cross-industry innovation can provide a stage for interprofessional collaboration efforts, and cross-

industry innovation will unquestionably improve Policing methods. When applied systematically, it can lead to a high degree of efficiency among professionals. This case study shows that interprofessional nature makes it easy for two different fields to collaborate to achieve a common goal. ~

About the Author

Atti Mahmoud is a Police Constable with the Metropolitan Police in London with 10 years of service. He holds a Master's Degree in International Relations with a thesis focused on Police International Relations. Constable Mahmoud is also a Final Master's Thesis Advisor at Universidad Católica San Anton-io de Murcia.



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The Texas School Marshal Program – From Sheep to Sheepdogs

Executive Summary

By James Molloy

One of the most innovative responses to school violence is the **Texas School Marshal Program**, a civilian-based security initiative designed to provide schools with armed personnel trained to protect against active shooters. While school districts have the option to hire full-time police officers or use off-duty law enforcement, school marshals offer a cost-effective alternative. The program has successfully trained hundreds of school personnel to act as the first line of defense in an active shooter situation.

Introduction

In response to growing concerns about school safety, Texas passed legislation in 2013 (H.B. 1009) allowing school districts to appoint **School Marshals** to enhance campus security. This program was designed to offer additional protection to schools, particularly in rural areas or districts with limited access to law enforcement response.

The School Marshal Program requires selected individuals to undergo comprehensive training administered by the **Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE)**. Upon completion, school marshals are licensed to carry firearms and respond to life-threatening situations. Their primary mission is clear: **Stop the Killing** and **Stop the Dying**—that is, neutralize the threat and provide medical assistance to victims.

According to legislation, school marshals are not law enforcement officers but are licensed to carry firearms and are trained to respond to active shooter situations. Unlike traditional school resource officers (law enforcement officers who in many instances are subject to restrictions and recall from an agency other than the school district) school marshals are existing school staff who undergo specialized training.

Training Curriculum and Design

The Texas School Marshal Program requires that participants complete a **rigorous 80-hour initial training pro-**

gram and undergo **16 hours of biannual recertification**. The training is designed to equip civilians—often with no law enforcement experience—with the skills necessary to respond to active shooter situations.

Key training areas include:

- 1. Legal Issues and Use of Force:** School Marshals are trained in constitutional use of force, focusing on **self-defense** and **defense of others**.
- 2. Active Shooter Response:** The training emphasizes rapid response to an active shooter, proper tactics, as well as the practical skills of engaging a threat.
- 3. Firearms Proficiency:** Marshals receive extensive firearms training, covering weapon handling, accuracy, safety, and shooting under stress.
- 4. Medical Response:** Basic first aid and trauma care are taught to ensure marshals can assist the injured as well as themselves after neutralizing a threat.

Training is capped at 80 hours by legislation, but the curriculum is constantly updated to include lessons learned from real-world events. For example, recently the Texas Legislature has mandated that all Texas law enforcement officers complete the **ALERRT Level I** active shooter response course and complete 16 hours of ALERRT training every two years. In response to this mandate, school marshals are now trained in **ALERRT Level I** active shooter response protocols, ensuring that they are prepared using the same terminology and tactics being trained to Texas law enforcement officers. Additionally, as part of their biannual renewal training, they receive scenario-based training in active shooter response.

In 2023, the passage of **HB 3**, mandated armed security at all school campuses, increasing the need for armed security in districts across Texas. As school districts face increasing pressure to provide cost-effective solutions for school safety, the school marshal program allows the

Continued on page 28

use of **school marshals**, either stand alone, or as a hybrid, integrated with **school district police agencies**. This hybrid model allows districts to leverage both peace officers and school marshals to enhance coverage and reduce costs.

Selection of Training Providers

To ensure that school marshals receive the highest quality of training, **TCOLE** certifies training providers across the state. These providers must currently be licensed law enforcement academies, and meet strict standards, ensuring they have the necessary facilities, instructors, and history of successful law enforcement training.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

While the program has been effective, there are challenges. **Compact handguns**, while popular, can present operational difficulties for some individuals, leading to stoppages and reloading issues when being operated under standard law enforcement training protocols. These compact handguns also have limited storage capacity for ammunition requiring the school marshal to maintain awareness of round count and availability.

Additionally, **frangible ammunition** is mandated by current Texas law—while this reduces the risk of over-penetration it can be problematic in reducing effectiveness of rounds through minimal cover.

Training has been adapted to address these unique challenges through emphasis on firearms handling skills as well as tactics and movement to overcome limitations.

One of the key lessons learned is the psychological preparation required for marshals. Unlike law enforcement officers, who are trained from the outset to manage high-stress situations, marshals must be coached through the **mindset shift** from civilian to **sheepdog**—a protector who is willing and prepared to face the reality of using deadly force.

In both the practical exercises and classroom, discussion school marshals are exposed to the reality of the decisions that must be made. School marshal candidates are given exposure not only to high stress scenarios that place them in immediate life or death simulations, but they are also given knowledge of the psychological responses that follow actions taken. Additionally, scenario training presented has been adjusted to focus on actual school-based realities.

During firearms and scenario training, instructors stress the need to evaluate

Texas Commission on Law Enforcement

TEXAS SCHOOL MARSHAL PROGRAM

THE STATE OF TEXAS HAS HAD A LICENSING PROGRAM TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN SCHOOL EMPLOYEES TO CARRY A FIREARM ON THE SCHOOL CAMPUS SINCE 2013. THE SCHOOL MARSHAL PROGRAM HAS NOW GROWN TO 256 LICENSED SCHOOL MARSHALS FROM 62 DISTRICTS.

TCOLE SCHOOL MARSHAL PROGRAM

The Texas Legislature allows public school districts, open enrollment charter schools, public two-year junior colleges, and private schools, to appoint School Marshals through the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement School Marshal Program.

The sole purpose of the School Marshal is to prevent the act of murder or serious bodily injury on school premises. A School Marshal may only act as defined by the written regulations adopted by the School Board or Governing Body.

GOVERNOR'S SCHOOL MARSHAL PROGRAM GRANT

The Governor's Office provides the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement a generous grant, created in 2018, which covers the initial training for the School Marshal Program as well as the renewal courses. This includes the cost of tuition, the 700 ammunition rounds required for the course, and a reimbursement for the required L3 psychological exam. This makes a huge impact for the district which would only need to use out-of-pocket funds for travel expenses.

POINT OF CONTACT

The ISD or Charter School shall email a completed copy of the necessary form/letters/regulations to schoolmarshal@tcole.texas.gov.

For questions about TCOLE's School Marshal Program, or to apply, please contact Chris Varady at Chris.Varady@tcole.texas.gov or (512) 936-7373.

REQUIREMENTS

- EMPLOYEE OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT
- APPROVED BY GOVERNING BODY
- HAVE A CURRENT LTC
- PASS A PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAM (L3)
- COMPLETE THE 80-HOUR SCHOOL MARSHAL COURSE
- SUBMIT SCHOOL MARSHAL APPOINTMENT FORM AND FEE
- COMPLETE 16-HOUR RENEWAL COURSE EVERY 2 YEARS

SCHOOL MARSHAL COURSE

Among the topics covered in the School Marshal course are:

- physical security,
- improving the security of the campus
- use of force
- active shooter response
- weapon proficiency

No other course can be substituted or exempt an individual from the specific school marshal training course.



Continued on page 29

threats and surroundings. School marshals must keep in mind not only the actions of an active shooter, but the response of elementary age children. Discussions and scenarios examine field of fire, how to address young children attempting to use the school marshal for safety while the marshal is moving to a threat, as well as the realities of the decisions made by the school marshal in those situations.

The physical demands of the program have also presented challenges. While the program does not mandate physical fitness screening, **performance-based evaluations** ensure that individuals who successfully complete the training are able to respond to active threats. This maintains the integrity of the program and ensures that those appointed to these critical roles are prepared for the stresses of the job.

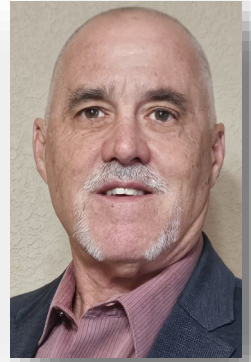
The growth of the School Marshal Program can be attributed, in part, to its cost-effectiveness. Training costs for marshals are reimbursed by the state, while districts bear the costs of salaries, benefits, and psychological evaluations. This has made the program an attractive option for many districts, particularly those unable to afford the overhead of a dedicated police force.

Conclusion

By training and certifying civilian personnel to act as armed defenders of students and staff, Texas is providing an additional layer of protection for its schools. As the program continues to evolve, its ability to adapt to new challenges, integrate with law enforcement agencies, and enhance training protocols will be crucial in ensuring its long-term success in safeguarding Texas schools. ~

About the Author

James Molloy currently serves as a Sergeant with the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement supervising the state-wide Texas school marshal program. Jim has multiple instructor certifications from the State of Texas and IADLEST. He holds an AAS in Business from Tarrant County College, a BAAS in Emergency Administration and Disaster Planning from the University of North Texas, and an MS in Criminal Justice Leadership and Management from Sam Houston State University.



Mr. Molloy is a recognized instructor and public speaker, presenting at the TCOLE annual training conference and at IADLEST. He has served as a Firefighter/EMT with the El Paso Fire Department, a Public Safety Lieutenant with the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport Department of Public Safety, a Traffic/Accident Investigation Officer and Tactical Team Operator with the Arlington Texas Police Department, and a Sergeant with the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.

Mr. Molloy has 10 years of experience as an Adjunct Professor at Austin Community College in the Criminal Justice Department. In addition, he served as the Police Skills Manager/Lieutenant at the Public Safety Training Center at Austin Community College managing all aspects of practical training at the facility.



Prospective Officers Should Be Checked !

The purpose of the National Decertification Index (NDI) is to serve as a national registry of certificate or license revocation actions relating to officer misconduct. The records contained in the NDI are provided by participating state government agencies and should be verified with the contributing authority. Inclusion in the database does not necessarily preclude any individual from appointment as an officer.

To Log In: [Click Here](#)

The Critical Role of Academy Directors: Ensuring Effective Training and Accountability for Front-Line Officers and Supervisors

By Tom Loglisci Jr. M.Ed.

Academy directors hold a pivotal position in shaping the future of policing. As leaders responsible for educating and training front-line officers and supervisors, academy directors play a key role in ensuring that law enforcement personnel are prepared, competent, and accountable. The decisions and strategies implemented by academy directors have far-reaching effects on the culture, effectiveness, and legitimacy of police departments. This article explores the responsibilities and duties of academy directors and emphasizes how their leadership directly impacts front-line officers, supervisors, and, ultimately, the communities they serve.

Setting the Standard for Excellence

Academy directors are tasked with establishing and maintaining the highest standards for law enforcement education. They are responsible for developing comprehensive training curricula that reflect best practices, current laws, and the ethical imperatives of modern policing. This responsibility extends beyond basic police training, including ongoing professional development for supervisors and specialized units.

To achieve these standards, academy directors must stay informed about the latest developments in adult learning, law enforcement practices, and societal expectations. They must also ensure that their programs are aligned with state and federal regulations, court rulings, and community concerns. By setting high standards for instruction, assessment, and performance, academy directors create a culture of excellence that permeates every level of the police department.

Moreover, academy directors must ensure that their training programs are **legally defensible**. This involves designing instructions that comply with constitutional rights, departmental policies, and legal statutes. In an era where police conduct is increasingly scrutinized, having a legally sound training foundation protects officers, supervisors, and departments from litigation and public criticism (Cordner & Shain, 2011).

Developing Comprehensive and Relevant Curricula

One of the primary duties of academy directors is to design and oversee the development of training curricula that are both comprehensive and relevant to the real-world challenges faced by front-line officers and supervisors. Effective training programs must cover a wide range of topics, including:

- **Use of Force:** Legal and ethical principles, de-escalation techniques, and the appropriate application of force.
- **Community Policing:** Strategies for building trust and cooperation with diverse communities.
- **Crisis Intervention:** Techniques for handling mental health crises and other complex situations.
- **Tactical Skills:** Practical, scenario-based training that prepares officers for high-stress situations.
- **Ethics and Professionalism:** Cultivating integrity, accountability, and ethical decision-making.
- **Supervisory Skills:** Training for sergeants and other supervisors on leadership, communication, and performance management.

Academy directors must ensure that these topics are not taught in isolation but are integrated into a cohesive program that reflects the realities of modern policing. **Scenario-based training** that simulates real-life encounters is particularly valuable, as it helps officers and supervisors develop practical skills and decision-making abilities in a controlled environment (Armstrong & Griffin, 2004).

Balancing Discipline with Critical Thinking

Academy directors must strike the right balance between maintaining discipline and encouraging critical thinking. Traditional police training often

Continued on page 31

relies on paramilitary structures emphasizing hierarchy, obedience, and physical conditioning. relies on paramilitary structures emphasizing hierarchy, and physical conditioning. While discipline is essential for maintaining order and safety, overemphasizing rigid hierarchy can stifle critical thinking, creativity, and ethical reflection (Conti & Nolan, 2005).

Academy directors must create a learning environment where officers and supervisors are encouraged to think critically, ask questions, and reflect on their actions. This approach helps develop disciplined officers capable of making sound, ethical decisions under pressure. Encouraging open dialogue and problem-solving in training fosters a culture of accountability and adaptability, which is crucial for effective policing.

Instructor Oversight and Development

The quality of police training depends mainly on the instructors delivering it. Academy directors are responsible for selecting, training, and supervising instructors to ensure they meet high standards of competency and professionalism. Instructors should be experts in their subject matter and skilled in adult education techniques.

Academy directors should implement rigorous criteria for selecting instructors, including:

- **Subject Matter Expertise:** Instructors should have substantial experience and knowledge in their teaching areas.
- **Teaching Ability:** Instructors must deliver engaging and effective instruction proficiently.
- **Ethical Standards:** Instructors should model the integrity, professionalism, and accountability expected of officers.

Continuous professional development for instructors is essential. Academy directors should provide ongoing training, workshops, and peer reviews to ensure instructors remain current with best practices, legal updates, and educational methods. Regular evaluations of instructor performance help maintain consistency and quality in training delivery.

Ensuring Accountability and Oversight

Academy directors must implement systems of accountability and oversight to ensure that training programs meet legal and professional standards. This involves:

- **Regular Audits:** Conducting internal and external audits to assess the effectiveness and compliance of training programs.

- **Documentation:** Maintaining detailed records of lesson plans, assessments, and instructor evaluations to provide transparency and legal protection.
- **Feedback Mechanisms:** Creating channels for officers, supervisors, and community members to provide feedback on training programs.

By fostering a culture of accountability, academy directors help ensure that training is consistent, fair, and legally defensible. This accountability extends to addressing any shortcomings in training and making continuous improvements based on feedback and evaluation results.

Supporting Front-Line Officers and Supervisors

Front-line officers and supervisors are the backbone of any police department. Academy directors are responsible for ensuring that these individuals are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and ethical foundations necessary to perform their duties effectively. This support includes:

- **Providing Practical Training:** Ensuring that training is relevant to the challenges officers face in the field.
- **Emphasizing Ethical Decision-Making:** Instilling a strong sense of integrity and accountability in officers and supervisors.
- **Preparing Supervisors for Leadership:** Offering specialized training for supervisors to develop leadership, communication, and management skills.

When academy directors prioritize the needs of front-line officers and supervisors, they contribute to a more effective, ethical, and resilient police force. Well-trained officers are better equipped to handle difficult situations, de-escalate conflicts, and build positive relationships with the community.

Community Engagement and Transparency

Academy directors also must engage with the community and ensure that police training reflects the values and concerns of the officers served. This engagement can take several forms:

- **Community Input:** Involving community members in developing training curricula and scenarios.
- **Public Workshops:** Hosting workshops and forums where community members can learn about police training and provide feedback.

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- **Advisory Boards:** Establishing community advisory boards to review training programs and offer recommendations.

Transparency in police training helps build public trust and legitimacy. When community members see that police training addresses issues like de-escalation, cultural competence, and ethical decision-making, they are more likely to trust that officers are prepared to serve them fairly and professionally.

Adapting to Modern Challenges

The role of academy directors is not static; it evolves with the changing demands of society, technology, and law enforcement. Academy directors must be proactive in addressing modern challenges such as:

- **Technology Integration:** Incorporating new tools, such as body cameras, virtual reality, and data analysis, into training programs.
- **Mental Health Awareness:** Training officers and their communities on mental health issues.
- **Cultural Competency:** Ensuring that officers understand and respect the diverse communities they serve.
- **Legal Updates:** Staying current with changes in laws, policies, and court decisions that affect policing.

By staying adaptable and forward-thinking, academy directors ensure that police training remains relevant and effective in addressing contemporary issues.

The Vital Role of Academy Directors

Academy directors are more than administrators; they are the architects of a police department's future. Their responsibilities extend beyond curriculum design and instructor oversight to encompass the ethical, legal, and practical dimensions of modern policing. By setting high standards, promoting accountability, and supporting front-line officers and supervisors, academy directors help create a police force that is competent, ethical, and trusted by the community.

Through leadership, Academy directors can shape a culture of continuous learning, critical thinking, and ethical reflection. In doing so, they protect their departments from legal challenges and contribute to a safer, more just, and more harmonious society. Their work is essential to the ongoing effort to build law enforcement agencies that reflect the highest ideals of public service and community trust. ~

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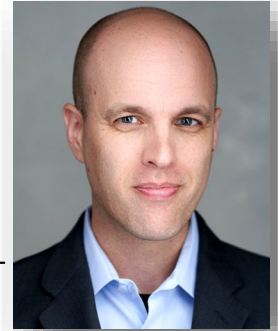
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Coming in the NEXT EDITION of
Standards & Training Director Magazine
Highlight
International Police Training

A large group of police officers in blue uniforms are lined up on a red carpet, facing a large crowd of people seated in bleachers. The scene is outdoors, likely at a stadium or arena, during a formal event.

Often law enforcement officers who have been trained and certified by one state desire to relocate to another state. These individuals question whether their training will be accepted by the new state's POST and want to know the new state's certification process.

Most, but not all, states do give credit for previous training.

IADLEST has developed a reciprocity handbook as a resource to law enforcement training managers and others interested in the different states' requirements.



International Association of
Directors of Law Enforcement
Standards and Training

Reciprocity Handbook

This handbook contains information gathered from the 50 state law enforcement officer standards and training organizations. The reciprocity requirements are listed for the certification and licensing of law enforcement officers for each agency.

IADLEST's 2024 Reciprocity Handbook is available on our website.

If you're a member of IADLEST, you can download the PDF version of the Handbook here:

[2024 Reciprocity Manual - Members PDF Version](#)

Non-Members may purchase a print version of the Handbook at the IADLEST online store here:

[2024 Reciprocity Manual - Non-Members Print Version](#)

AMERICA'S LAW ENFORCEMENT PROBLEM

One of the most distinguishable marks about law enforcement is the fact that the American citizenry expect their officers to be the best trained in the world. Oh, how that would be a perfect world but unfortunately, that is not the case. The United States of America is the leader and last remaining hope in a world that knows little about law and order or peace. Even our law enforcement or peace officers don't experience much peace on the job or during our careers.

As we all know, the United States is a country that is made up of 50 states. But what we may not know is that these same United States are made up of 3,143 counties and 19,495 incorporated cities, towns and villages. When looking at just these numbers, consider the number of law enforcement agencies and law enforcement officers. Nationally, there are roughly 18,000 different police agencies (city, county, state, and tribal) that vary in size and responsibility. This doesn't account for the 70+ federal law enforcement agencies which pushes the total number of law enforcement officers in the United States to over 900,000.

Taking all these law enforcement agencies at the local, county, state, tribal, and federal levels into consideration along with over 900,000 law enforcement officers, they all have one thing in common... use of force. Our duties or responsibilities may vary, but one thing that doesn't change is that each law enforcement officer is provided with some level of training involving the use of force where they all utilize the very same case law. However, here's the part where you will also see a vast difference with these same agencies...the extent and frequency of training.

Use of Force cases are highly scrutinized and the most frequently litigated type of case in American courts involving law enforcement. The question that should be posed is why. Why do American law

About the Author

J. Todd Nunley is a retired federal law enforcement agent from the U.S. Department of Justice, where he spent a total of 32 years as a commissioned law enforcement officer and in retirement, continues to instruct law enforcement officers around the country. He was the primary tactical advisor to the Special Agent in Charge in one of 25 field divisions and was also one of 30 subject matter experts in his agency in Use of Force. He is the CEO of Viking Consultant Group, LLC and continues to consult agencies while training law enforcement officers around the country in Use of Force as well as firearms, defensive tactics and tactical operations.



enforcement officers constantly find themselves in court? While there are many reasons that could be attributed to this, such as an increase of violence among the public, a lack of respect for human life, and lack of respect by the public toward law enforcement, which is fueled many times by certain political organizations and those seeking to defund law enforcement, I would like to focus on the issue at hand... why aren't our law enforcement officers the best trained in the world?

Before I dig deeper into this topic, I would like to lay the groundwork for my basis of knowledge on this topic. My career spanned a total of 32 years in law enforcement, where 6 ½ years were spent at the local level and the remaining 25 years 10 months were at the federal level. In those 32 years, I was qualified as an instructor and instructor trainer in many areas involving use of force. I was qualified as a federal firearms instructor and instructor trainer, a defensive tactics instructor and instructor trainer, as well as a tactics (tactical operations) instructor and instructor trainer. I have been qualified as an expert witness in federal court involving firearms and was one of about 30 subject matter experts in my agency regarding the use of force.

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After retiring from law enforcement, I continued to train law enforcement officers in these same fields, including firearms, defensive tactics, and tactics as the training coordinator for a local police academy and later in my own private company for almost 8 years. In total, I have been in this field for almost 40 years and continue to maintain my instruction skill in all of these high-risk programs.

Many people may not understand the purpose of the listing as a *tactic's instructor* as part of use of force, so I will explain. When looking at the role of law enforcement officer, there are certain aspects of the use of force that overlap with one another. Whether on a traffic stop or the execution of a unentering an individual, a vehicle or a building. In other words, a potential threat or where a potential threat may be located. Taking these factors into consideration, officers are oftentimes *forced to make split-second judgments – in circumstances that are tense, uncertain and rapidly evolving.*¹ Officers must be aware of their surroundings while identifying a potential threat and then utilize the proper level of force that he/she has been trained in. That force could be defensive tactics to subdue an uncooperative suspect or that force could be the use of lethal force to stop a threat. As if there wasn't already enough to consider, that same officer must now go through their "computer" or brain, to determine what is the proper and legal level of force that they can apply while utilizing their decision-making skills.

This is when we dive into the section that few law enforcement officers enjoy, because it's pretty difficult to "jazz up" or make case law enjoyable, even though it is the most important aspect of law enforcement's use of force. Case law is extremely important as this is one part that will determine whether a law enforcement officer used excessive force and will face a judge and jury, both civilly and/or criminally, or not. In short, case law is a precedent that has been established in the court and can either help or hurt law enforcement officers. It is their duty to identify what is the correct and proper level of force before applying it, as well as knowing how and when to apply it. This task and duty is unique only to American law enforcement.

Not even our military must go to this level of identifying so many factors before employing force. In other words, there are a lot of moving parts and those selected to employ these standards are required to know every aspect of it.

CASE LAW

All law within our legal system has a foundation. That foundation for the use of force can be found within the 4th Amendment of the Bill of Rights. It is the most important part of the law because it truly is the foundation when dealing with use of force. The 4th Amendment reads:

*"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."*²

The 4th Amendment to the United States Constitution protects individuals from unreasonable searches and seizures. Any level of force used on an American citizen, whether an arrest or utilization of lethal force is considered, by law, as a seizure. Without going into an extensive study on this amendment, there are key principles pertaining to this particular topic.

1. Objective Reasonableness - Courts assess whether an officer's use of force was reasonable based on the totality of the circumstances. Courts also consider other factors such as the suspect's actions, the officer's training, and the dynamics of the situation. In short, officers are judged based on the facts reasonably known at the time.
2. Qualified Immunity - Officers are entitled to qualified immunity if their actions were objectively reasonable, which shields them from liability unless a plaintiff can demonstrate that the officer knew or should have known that their conduct was unlawful.

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¹ Graham v. Connor, 490 U.S. 386 (1989), www.supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/490/386/

² U.S. Constitution, 4th Amendment, www.constitution.congress.gov/constitution/amendment-4/

3. Contextual Considerations - Courts increasingly emphasize the importance of considering the entire context of an encounter, including the officer's training, the suspect's behavior, and any relevant policies or procedures. Contextual considerations are closely interrelated with the "totality of the circumstances."
4. Ongoing Training - Effective use of force requires consistent and regular training for law enforcement officers to ensure that they understand the legal standards. Not only do they need to understand the legal standards set by case law, but they must also know what level of force to apply as well as when and how to apply them in dynamic situations.

OBJECTIVE REASONABLENESS

With the 4th Amendment being the foundation for law enforcement use of force, there is case law that has been established which sets the precedence in how law enforcement officers are trained today. There are many cases that deal with each aspect of these four key principles. The two most important cases that have set precedence for law enforcement use of force training are *Graham v. Connor* and *Tennessee v. Garner*. Any use of force instructor worth their weight, should have an extremely good understanding of these two cases and how they apply to the role of law enforcement training. Those who do not are a liability to not only the individual officer but the entire agency.

It is the *Graham v. Connor* case where we find what is known as the "Graham Factors." The "Graham Factors" are reasons for using force. These factors are:

1. The severity of the crime at issue
2. Whether the suspect posed an immediate threat and
3. Whether the suspect was actively resisting or trying to evade arrest by flight.

Other subfactors may include:

- a. Reasonable force may be used to control the movements of passengers during a traffic stop
- b. When executing a warrant in a residence or structure, reasonable force may be used to detain the occupants

- c. Immediate threat to the officer such as, the number of suspects versus the number of officers may affect the degree of threat and level of force applied.

The operative word under the 4th Amendment is "reasonableness." Reasonableness depends on the facts known by the officer at that time. Another key principle of "objective reasonableness" is the totality of the circumstances. This is a common term used within law enforcement and refers to a method of analysis where decisions are based on all available information at that time.

When it comes to these two points of *Objective Reasonableness* and the *Totality of the Circumstances*, this is where reality-based training plays a major role in understanding how to deduce what actions should be taken by law enforcement officers. More will be covered on reality-based training later in this commentary.

Case law plays a crucial role in guiding law enforcement practices and decision-making. Some of those practices include:

Interprets Statutes and Regulations: Case law helps to clarify the meaning and application of laws and regulations. It also ensures that law enforcement officers understand their duties and responsibilities.

Establishes Standards of Conduct: Case law sets precedents for acceptable law enforcement behavior and defines what constitutes reasonable force, searches, and seizures, while providing guidance on interaction with the public.

Defines Rights and Protections: Case law ensures that law enforcement officers respect and uphold the rights of American citizens, including those protected by the Constitution and other laws, such as the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches and seizures.

Provides Guidance on Investigative Techniques: Case law provides insight on effective and lawful investigative methods, including the use of surveillance, interrogation, and evidence collection.

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Do you want to know more about what IADLEST is doing for law enforcement and the criminal justice community?

The IADLEST Newsletter is a primary source to get that information.

The IADLEST Newsletter is where association members get up-to-date information on the progress of current projects.

It's a publication of record for committee meeting minutes, and a source for the members to go when learning about IADLEST initiatives that need Director Member and other membership support.



Newsletter

Michael Becar, Executive Director, CEO
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The IADLEST newsletter is distributed digitally to approximately 12,000 POST and Academy Directors, law enforcement trainers and training providers worldwide.

The IADLEST Newsletter is published quarterly. It is focused on information involving the selection and training of law enforcement officers. We do not print or mail out any copies of the newsletter. Quarterly newsletters back to January 2007 are stored on our website: <https://www.iadlest.org/news/newsletters>.

All professional training managers and educators are welcome to become members of IADLEST and receive the Newsletter. Additionally, any individual, partnership, foundation, corporation, or other entities involved with the development or training of law enforcement or criminal justice personnel are eligible for IADLEST membership. Recognizing the obligations and opportunities of international cooperation, IADLEST membership includes law enforcement training professionals worldwide.

Information about IADLEST membership can be found at: <https://www.iadlest.org/members/membership-types>.

Newsletter Editor Dan Setzer can provide further information about the Newsletter and can be contacted at: dsetzer@iadlest.org or by mail to IADLEST at: 152 S. Kestrel Place, Suite 102; Eagle, ID 83616-5137.



Newsletter

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Supports Legal Defenses: Case law helps law enforcement officers prepare legal defenses in court, as they can rely on established precedents to justify their actions and decisions.

Promotes Accountability: Case law holds law enforcement officers accountable for their actions, ensuring that they are responsible for their decisions and actions, and that misconduct is addressed.

Enhances Training and Professional Development: Case law informs law enforcement training and professional development, enabling them to stay up to date with changing legal standards and best practices (within the law).

QUALIFIED IMMUNITY

Qualified immunity is and has been a “sticking point” for certain organizations in this country. Some have the opinion that law enforcement is immune to all legal ramifications while others have the opinion that law enforcement officers should not be granted immunity from anything while doing their job. The short answer is both no and yes. No, law enforcement officers are not immune to all legal ramifications but if one is going to bring a case against a law enforcement officer, they will be required to prove their case by showing that this officer was knowingly deliberate in his actions or willfully violating the rights of a citizen. While this does happen, it is an extremely small percentage of officers, less than 1%, who deliberately violate one’s rights...in other words, it’s not as frequent as the public believes.

While qualified immunity is a good thing for law enforcement officers, conversely, there are words that all law enforcement officers never want to hear: *civil rights violation*. Law enforcement officers can be held liable for civil rights violations under 42 U.S.C. § 1983, which is a violation under federal law. This section provides a civil cause of action for individuals whose constitutional rights have been violated by a state official, such as a law enforcement officer. For those who don’t know, every state has a sanctioning board or agency that oversees the certification process for every law enforcement officer in all 50 states. It is the responsibility of that organization to ensure that what is being taught, meets the training standard established

through case law. Once the officer completes all testing phases and successfully passes all tests, that state organization is now giving that individual law enforcement officer the authority to enforce the law. If that officer steps outside the “boundaries” established by case law, by violating an American citizen’s rights, that officer may be facing a charge under 42 U.S.C. 1983, if the officer has acted under the color of law, meaning they were exercising authority delegated to them by the state.

There are two notable cases involving 42 U.S.C. § 1983 such as *Bivens v. Six Unknown Named Agents of Federal Bureau of Narcotics*³, which is a 1971 case establishing a similar case for federal law enforcement, and *Monroe v. Pape*⁴, a 1961 case that recognizes § 1983 as a means for individuals to “police those who are charged with policing us all” and to protect the constitutional rights of American citizens from police brutality or excessive force. Under the *Pape* case, it was determined that municipalities could be held liable under § 1983 for the actions of their employees, as long as they were acting under the color of state law. There is much more to provide regarding this statute under training, which will be reserved for that section.

CONTEXTUAL CONSIDERATIONS

Contextual considerations and the totality of the circumstances are interconnected concepts used to analyze complex situations, specifically dealing with law enforcement and the use of force. While the totality of circumstances was mentioned previously, the context of the totality of the circumstances refers to the comprehensive evaluation of all relevant factors and placing them into their proper context, rather than focusing on a single aspect. This approach is applied in various legal contexts, including law enforcement’s use of force, especially where it informs decisions about reasonable suspicion, probable cause, or objective reasonableness.

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³ *Bivens v. Six Unknown Named Agents of Federal Bureau of Narcotics*, 403 U.S. 388 (1971), www.supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/403/388/

⁴ *Monroe v. Pape*, 365 U.S. 167 (1961), www.supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/365/167

While much more can be provided regarding each of the aforementioned topics (objective reasonableness, qualified immunity, and contextual considerations), there is another major topic that is the focus of this editorial which is training. Each and every aspect of those three areas mentioned can and are tied directly to training, which is the one area in law enforcement where we see the biggest level of inconsistency throughout the nation.

TRAINING

Training is the “lifeline” for law enforcement and is key to a successful and lengthy career. Those who are provided with proper and consistent training and are willing to learn will have a rewarding career. Those who have other motives, won’t. Training is the one foundational key that allows someone who volunteered to put their life on the line, to learn what it means to be in a service-related field. One point that I stress in all my courses is that law enforcement training is much like a house. If that house is built with a poor foundation, everything that follows will not be solid and is more times than not, going to fall...it’s just a matter of time. The unfortunate side to this is sometimes that “fall” can be life-altering for not only the officer but his/her family and peers within the agency. The importance of proper training for law enforcement can’t be overstated. This is also why there is a certain level of training that is to be provided before anyone dons that agency’s badge.

The importance of effective training is essential for law enforcement officers to perform their duties safely, efficiently, and in accordance with the law. It also prepares officers for how to deal with a wide range of situations, from routine interaction with those in the community to high-stress, high-threat, high-risk encounters.

Training for law enforcement officers, regardless of the agency, truly is the lifeline for that officer because there are constant changes within society as a whole. Whether those changes come in the way of people or situations, or case law, the changes occurring require law enforcement officers to maintain a certain skill set to ensure their safety, the public’s safety, and the public’s trust. Every one of these elements are tied directly to the effectiveness of that

individual officer as well as his/her agency. To add to this point, the level of training provided to each officer is also a direct reflection of the level of importance that the agency deems as a priority. In other words, what’s important to some agencies may not be considered important to others. But there are benefits to providing proper and effective training to every officer. So, what are they?

1. **Enhances Officer Safety:** Training helps to minimize or reduce the risk of injury or death by equipping them with specific skills and understanding of how to handle various situations, including the use of force.
2. **Improves Public Trust:** Well-trained officers are better equipped to build trust with the communities they serve, which leads to an effective method of community policing thereby reducing tensions.
3. **Increases Preparedness:** Effective training prepares officers for unexpected situations, which allows them to respond appropriately and make informed decisions.
4. **Reduces Liability:** Agencies that prioritize effective training, validate a commitment to officer safety and professionalism. When agencies and agency leaders place importance on effective training, it reduces the potential for liability claims.
5. **Better Decision-Making:** Effective training emphasizes the importance of critical thinking skills, situational awareness, de-escalation techniques, and ethical decision-making, which leads to a more effective and responsible method of policing.

Training, and specifically use of force training, is one area where we see the biggest disparity throughout law enforcement. Taking the thousands of law enforcement agencies at all levels into consideration, the vast majority go through different training programs. Whether it is a basic academy or basic training, each training program lays the foundation for every officer to acquire a skill that may save their life one day. Because every state has different requirements, the level of training will differ, the extent of training will differ, and the frequency and/or consistency of training will differ. There is no set standard for law enforcement agencies, as a whole, when it comes to use of force training at both the basic foundational level as well as the advanced or senior

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New

From the COPS Office

As automated driving systems (ADS) and advanced driver-assistance systems (ADAS) are integrated into the U.S. vehicle fleet, the role of the human driver is changing. Traditionally, the human driver is in full control of operating a vehicle through each driving task; however, ADS and ADAS are steadily advancing and moving the human driver's role to that of a fallback-ready user. As technology advances and the role of the human shifts away from that of a traditional driver, so will the interactions that first responders, such as law enforcement, fire and rescue, and emergency medical services (EMS), will have with civilian vehicles.

ADS technology has the potential to virtually eliminate the need for police resources for enforcing traffic safety laws, as these vehicles will be programmed only to follow the rules of the road. Traffic stops, at the very least, could be nearly eliminated because ADS vehicles will be programmed to obey the law. Sensory technology could reduce collisions with other vehicles or people; driver license requirements may be eliminated, leading to less need for enforcing of drivers' license laws; DUI law reforms could abolish the need for DUI stops; and ADS technologies could reduce hit-and-run and other traffic offenses and the need traffic investigations altogether.

Public Safety Considerations for Automated Driving System (ADS) Deployment

Tammy Trimble,
Stephanie Baker,
Travis Terry, Mike Fergus,
Michelle Benjamin,
and Gladys Dominguez



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Publication Date: 2025

Why “Conditionals” Matter

By Jean Reynolds, Ph.D.



Steven Pinker is a Harvard professor and a renowned authority on language. One of his favorite talking points might come as a surprise to you. According to Pinker, “The complexity of language...is part of our biological birthright; it is not something that parents teach

their children or something that must be elaborated in school.” Pinker believes that we all know much more about language than we think we do—and we learn it early, by the age of five or six.

That’s nice to hear, of course. But is it really true? To answer that question, I’m going to talk about a remarkable feature of language that officers use all the time—even though they may not be aware of it. It’s called a “conditional,” and it’s immensely useful to law enforcement.

There’s a reason we don’t talk much about it: we use conditionals so often that they seem easy. But they are one of the important reasons that you and I (and anyone who speaks *any* language, even if it’s a creole or pidgin) are language experts.

Conditionals allow us to talk about what isn’t there, doesn’t exist, and never did. It’s a highly sophisticated mental process—and yet even children can do it.

The relevant words are *if*, *could*, *would*, *might*, *may*, *unless*, and similar terms. “If you’d been here on time....” “Unless the weather report was wrong....” “We should have done it differently....” “You may discover that....”

All of those expressions are about possibilities—things that haven’t happened and may *not* happen. What does this have to do with law enforcement? A lot. It shows up when you’re writing a report about a hunch, guess, or intuition that turned out to be right.

Let’s say that you pull over a car because the license tag is partially hidden. Several adults are sitting in the car. Everyone is quiet and cooperative;

there’s no reason to do anything further. And yet something is bothering you.

Experienced officers have those hunches all the time, and often they’re proven right. But how does an officer act on—and document—something that doesn’t have any external evidence? You can’t write a report about something that didn’t happen.

Here’s a true story: In 2006 a Las Vegas state trooper felt uneasy during what seemed to be a routine traffic stop. But there was a problem—the lack of probable cause to search the car. The trooper decided to linger for a few minutes, talk to the passengers, and try to figure out what seemed off.

The only thing he noticed was that one of the passengers was so tense that he was sweating. Interesting! But that still wasn’t probable cause for a search.

The trooper kept talking—and then he realized that the face was familiar. Where had he seen it before? Aha! It was on a Ten Most Wanted List bulletin from the FBI. The trooper called the FBI, who eventually confirmed the hunch: the man who was sweating was Warren Jeffs, a polygamist suspected of marrying and raping underage girls. Jeffs is now in prison.

One of the most important duties of academy instructors and FTOs is teaching new officers how to deal with these hunches and intuitions—information that seems to have no basis in reality but might be very real nevertheless.

The answer is to slow down, look, and listen. There was something unusual about the clothing, vehicle, speech, body language—*something*. Hunches can’t be documented—but they sometimes lead to concrete evidence that can go into a police report.

You won’t always have probable cause to do a search or detain someone. But experienced officers have lots of success stories about patience and persistence that eventually did result in an arrest.

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Why Conditionals Matter

Now I want to go back to the list of “impossible” words I gave you earlier—if, could, would, might, may, unless, and others. I’m not going to give you a grammar lesson! But I want to make an important point.

We need to let go of the notion that “sophisticated” means “big, fancy, and hard to spell” when it comes to language. The word *if* is an example. It has only two letters! But if you’re thinking that *if* is a babyish word, you’re wrong. One of its jobs is to help construct *contrary-to-fact* sentences: “Mrs. Brown, if you hadn’t paid attention to that barking, you might never have noticed that prowler.”

Straightforward words that are just a syllable or two long may seem simple to you—but often they’re not. When you assess your language habits and look for ways to improve, don’t think about buying a vocabulary book. *Do* think about the mental processes you use when you’re talking and writing.

How observant are you? How well do you remember details? Do you make sure you have a pencil and paper in your pocket at all times—even when you stop by the 7-Eleven store for a cup of coffee? When something seems off, do you have strategies that might help you uncover something important?

Those basic practices don’t cost money, and you don’t have to sign up for an eight-hour class to learn them. Your brain is available to you during every waking moment, and it has capabilities you may have yet to explore. Start today! ~



Federal Training Opportunities for Law Enforcement Officers

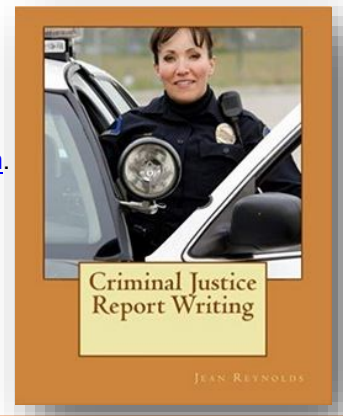
View [HERE](#)

Dr. Jean Reynolds is Professor Emeritus at Polk State College in Florida, where she taught English for over thirty years. She served as a consultant on communications and problem-solving skills to staff in Florida’s Department of Corrections. At Polk State College, she has taught report writing classes for recruits and advanced report writing and FTO classes for police and correctional officers. Dr. Reynolds has been a devoted author for IADLEST’s Standards & Training Director Magazine since its inception, in an effort to share her knowledge with law enforcement Report Writing instructors. She is the author of Criminal Justice Report Writing.

For more writing practice and updated information about report writing, visit www.YourPoliceWrite.com.

Instructors can download free instructional material by sending an email from an official account to:

jreynoldswrite@aol.com.



Dr. Jean Reynolds is also coauthor of the book

POLICE TALK: A Scenario-Based Communications Workbook for Police Recruits and Officers

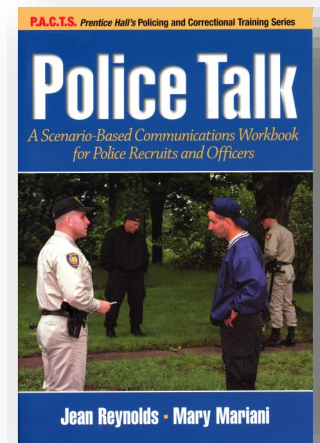
written with Major Mary Mariani, Ph.D.,

Winter Haven Police Department, Florida.

This book addresses an officer’s most important ability—the power of communication.

It contains instruction, scenarios, and discussion questions for officers and recruits that will hone their skill in meeting some of today’s greatest challenges.

You can buy the book [Here](#).



Navigating the Line Between Events and Incidents: Key Insights for Operational Security

Written By: Michael Breslin and Michael Hartenstein

Event operational security planning occurs daily across the country. Public gatherings and celebrations range in size and scope and include large-scale events such as the Super Bowl, to smaller venues such as local parades and 4th of July celebrations. The planning and resources required by federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies and governments varies and increases in volume as the threat and risk increase, as well as the size of venues and volume of individuals anticipated to attend the subject event.

An example of a large, complex, and intricate planning process to ensure the safety of the public and event participants can be found in National Special Security Events (NSSE) such as Presidential Inaugurations, Presidential Nominating Conventions, State of the Union Addresses, and other major events deemed of national significance that are overseen by the federal government, with state and local support. These federally planned and coordinated events are supported by Federal resources, non-organic to local agencies, based on specific identified needs and assist local law enforcement and public safety agencies in filling gaps in local resources with federal assets.

However, smaller events significant to local jurisdictions are held throughout the country and in every state without federally supported planning. Although events and public gatherings differ in many ways and vary by their nature, size, and scope, there exist commonalities in the operational and safety planning, command, communication, and control, which can be increased or reduced depending on a host of factors. Because events are planned gatherings with a defined purpose, they require a level of detailed planning to develop and implement an actionable operational plan to ensure public safety, prevent disruptions, and maintain a sense of order.

The primary goal of event planning is to develop and implement a seamless operational security plan that creates a safe and secure environment for event participants and the public. Public events are likely to encounter incidents in the pre-event, event, and post-event phases. These incidents are unplanned occurrences that require an immediate response, ranging from a minor medical emergency to a significant crisis such as an active shooter situation.

Incidents, as with events, will vary in size, significance, and impact as well as the action(s) required for resolution. Event planners should consistently evaluate and update unforeseen incidents, ranging from minor disruptions to emergencies, ensuring appropriate preparedness and response strategies are in place. Flexibility in thought and action is key to successful operational security and safety planning. A failure to imagine a potential threat to the event and its attendees can translate into a failure to properly plan and mitigate the threat should it becomes a reality.

Law enforcement agencies should conduct detailed threat assessments, identify vulnerabilities, and collaborate across federal, state, and local levels to anticipate challenges and collaboratively prepare as a best practice for all levels of events. Operational security event planning is a long and arduous process and encompasses a host of individuals and units with different capabilities and skill sets (i.e., Hazmat, Chem-Bio, Crowd Control, Investigative and Analytical). A security incident can likely be narrower in focus, and necessitate an immediate action and response, as in the event of an assault or deadly attack on event participants, or a virtual threat made to a public official requiring deployment of investigative and intelligence-gathering techniques.

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An understanding of the distinction between security events and incidents is critical for effective threat management and response. The primary difference lies within the nature and impact of events and incidents. Planning involves imagining worst-case scenarios and developing robust contingency measures. This "failure to imagine" mentality is necessary for proactive mitigation and preparedness. Understanding these distinctions can help organizations prioritize their efforts and resources effectively to safeguard their digital assets.

A sound safety and operational security plan for major events of any size and scope must account for and have a response plan and effective approach to identify, assess, and mitigate all threats, albeit man-made or natural, thus rendering the differences between events and incidents a moot point through proper planning. Event planners should always anticipate incidents which could occur in any public event and ensure appropriate planning and resourcing.

There are some key lessons and steps employed by the United States Secret Service (USSS) in preparing for any NSSE that can aid those charged with planning events at all levels of government. Organizations charged with securing major events, such as the Super Bowl or a multi-day convention, should have a complete resourcing strategy that is aligned with the mission and goals of each participating and partnering government agency. The operational components must consider the expertise of each law enforcement, public safety, and local agency.

Here is a best practice outline to consider for agencies planning for an event, including a 360-degree view of threats, resource needs, strategy, and implementation of response efforts:

1. **Statutes and jurisdictions:** Determine all federal, executive order, state, city, local laws, and ordinances to understand your own authority.
2. **Determine scope and scale:**
 - Duration
 - Number of sites
 - Crowd size
 - Crowd management
 - Public health and medical concerns, issues, and mitigation attempts/plans
 - Special needs and considerations

3. **Funding:** Budget size, availability of block grants and in-kind services.
4. **Timeframe:** Plan backwards, set milestones, monitor progress, and adjust.
5. **Organizational Structure:** Establish an Executive Steering Committee (ESC), sub-committees staffed by subject matter experts, National Incident Management System (NIMS), and a Unified Command Center.
6. **Leadership Model:** Convey the mission – explain the purpose and objectives of the security plan – end state. Practice authentic leadership.
7. **Chain of Command and Expectations:** Establish clear command, control, and communication to enable better decision-making at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.
8. **Culture:** Create a climate of respect and trust among all team members and partners.
9. **Partnerships and collaboration:** Invest the time and effort in strengthening relationship values.
10. **Information sharing:** Establish processes and procedures, dashboards, and platforms that help to avoid overlap and duplication of effort and resources.
11. **Resource and procurement:** Create a timeline and budget to address what is needed, how to obtain it, and who pays for it.
12. **Address and Plan for inherent challenges to include:**
 - Security vs. Transparency
 - Communication
 - Vested Interests (i.e., Political, Law Enforcement, Public Safety, Advocacy Groups, Business, Public)
 - Security vs. Entertainment, Social events, Fan experience – Striking the right balance.
 - Prioritization of security, costs, and risks
13. **Communications plan:** Make decisions on secure/unsecure communication methods, computer, radio, information technology, and bandwidth requirements.
14. **Training:** Conduct Tabletop Exercises (TTXs) at the strategic, operational, and tactical level to ensure team members are cross trained with real-life scenarios.
15. **Public relations strategy:** Stakeholder outreach, engagement and buy-in; community involvement and relations.

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The cornerstone of any effective safety and security operational plan is flexibility, ensuring that processes and planning structures can adapt to evolving circumstances, new intelligence, and unexpected factors. These operational safety and security measures are resource-intensive and often require the use of sharing of municipal or agency resources across jurisdictions. The USSS employs a unified command model, which is an executive command platform, or Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from those agencies with primary jurisdiction for the event. Both NSSE planning and on-scene response activities are based on NIMS principles – unified command where the Incident Command (IC) is determined by the nature of the incident.

During the development of the overall operational security plan, each participating agency is tasked based on its jurisdiction and particular area of expertise. This planning is accomplished through the formation of subcommittees. These subcommittees are charged with the collective responsibilities to plan for every possible security, contingency, and public safety related matter. Examples of these subcommittees include Airspace Security, Credentialing, Crisis Management, Consequence Management, Interagency Communication, and Fire/Life Safety – HAZMAT. Each subcommittee is chaired or co-chaired by a U.S. Secret Service representative and staffed by the appropriate federal, military, or local law enforcement/public safety agency. This process ensures constant give and take, collaboration and timely dialogue to develop the most robust, relevant, and effective safety plans required in today's increasingly dynamic threat environment.

Planning for both events and incidents consists of thorough preparation, effective coordination, and dynamic adaptability. Whether addressing a spontaneous incident or safeguarding an intricate event, the aim remains consistent: ensuring the safety of participants and the public while fostering trust in law enforcement's ability to handle complex challenges. The preparation for any major event where there will be a large gathering of people is a cooperative effort. No single federal, state, or local agency can implement the measures necessary to secure an event and mitigate all risks. However, it is only through intense planning, communication, training, and the right technological tools that events can be secured successfully and remain safe sources of entertainment and celebration as intended. ~

About the Authors

Michael Breslin, Director, LexisNexis® Risk Solutions Government Team

Michael Breslin is a retired federal law enforcement senior executive with 24 years of law enforcement and homeland security experience. He served as the Deputy Assistant Director in the Office of Investigations focusing on the integrated mission of investigations and protection with oversight of 162 domestic and foreign field offices. He served as the Event Coordinator for the National Special Security Event Papal visit to Philadelphia in September 2015 and was appointed by the Secretary of Homeland Security to serve as the federal coordinator for the Papal Visit to the Mexico-U.S. Border in 2016. He is a member of the Senior Executive Service and is a published author of numerous articles on homeland security, defense, and threat mitigation methods. He serves on the Cyber Investigations Advisory Board of the U.S. Secret Service and is a Board Member for the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. He also serves on the Preparedness Leadership Council. He has a B.A. from Saint John's University, Queens, NY, an M.S. in National Security Strategy and a Graduate Certificate in Business Transformation and Decision Making from The Industrial College of the Armed Forces; and an MPA from John Jay College of Criminal Justice.



Michael Hartenstein, Director, LexisNexis® Risk Solutions Government Team

Michael Hartenstein is a retired federal law enforcement senior executive with 22 years of public service with the U.S. Secret Service in areas encompassing criminal investigations, protective operations, major event security planning, protective intelligence, and training and has held increasingly challenging assignments. He served as the Deputy Special Agent in Charge for the Vice-Presidential Protection Division and Assistant Special Agent in Charge on the Presidential Protective Division. He served as the Assistant to the Special Agent in Charge and as a training at the U.S. Secret Service's James J. Rowley Training Center. In his current role, he develops and counsels the federal, state, and local Public Safety Teams on strategic customer plans and assists in the creation of solutions designed to meet the ever-evolving needs of law enforcement and intelligence agencies. He earned a Master of Science Degree in Environmental Protection and Safety Management at Saint Joseph's University, and a Bachelor of Science Degree in the Administration of Justice from Pennsylvania State University. Throughout his tenure, he has obtained numerous certifications and awards to include the U.S. Secret Service Director's Meritorious Award.



STANDARDS

Enhancing Officer Selection: The Role of Psychological Evaluations in Public Safety Hiring

By Fred M. Rafilson, Ph.D.

For State Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training, ensuring the selection of highly qualified public safety personnel is paramount. Psychological evaluations play a critical role in identifying candidates best suited for the mental and emotional rigors of law enforcement. This article provides insights into the best practices, evolving methodologies, and recommendations for effective implementation of psychological evaluations.

Why Psychological Evaluations Are Crucial

Law enforcement officers operate under immense stress, requiring them to make rapid, high-stakes decisions with integrity and resilience. A lapse in judgment or ethical standards can result in significant legal, societal, and reputational damage to both the officer and their department. Psychological evaluations focus on job suitability, assessing traits such as emotional stability, stress tolerance, ethical judgment, and decision-making under pressure.

Best Practices in Psychological Evaluations

Psychological evaluations in law enforcement hiring should adhere to established guidelines, including those from the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology (SIOP). These best practices emphasize:

- **Scientific Validity:** Assessments must demonstrate reliability and validity in predicting job performance.
- **Customization:** Evaluations should align with the specific needs of the hiring agency and the community it serves.
- **Holistic Approach:** A combination of scientifically validated written tests and structured clinical interviews ensures a comprehensive evaluation of candidates.
- **Legal Compliance:** Adhering to the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures minimizes the risk of bias and enhances defensibility.



Structuring Comprehensive Evaluations

Effective evaluations blend clinical and industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology methodologies:

1. **Written Assessment Battery:** These tools evaluate traits such as interpersonal skills, stress management, ethical reasoning, and work ethic.
2. **Structured Clinical Interviews:** Conducted by licensed psychologists, these interviews provide deeper insights into a candidate's personality and professional history, contextualizing test results.
3. **Clear Reporting:** Actionable "Hire" or "No Hire" recommendations supported by detailed findings streamline decision-making.

Leveraging Technology for Enhanced Evaluations

The shift to online evaluations has revolutionized the process by offering greater accessibility, efficiency, and consistency. Digital platforms ensure standardized test administration, reducing variability and potential bias. Additionally, advanced analytics enable nuanced insights into candidate suitability, improving predictive accuracy.

State Variations and Key Considerations

While most states mandate psychological evaluations, the specific requirements vary widely. Key factors include:

- **Evaluator Qualifications:** Some states mandate evaluations by licensed psychologists, while others allow broader qualifications.
- **Written Test Requirements:** Many states require validated written assessments; however, specific tests vary.
- **Interviews:** While recommended by IACP, only about half of the states mandate clinical interviews.

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- **Traits Assessed:** Evaluations should screen for both inclusionary traits (e.g., stress resistance, decision-making) and exclusionary criteria (e.g., psychopathology).

Recommendations for State Directors

To enhance the psychological evaluation process, consider the following:

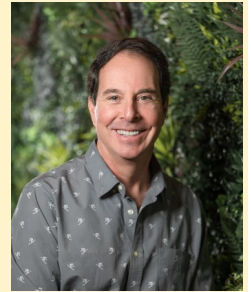
1. **Align Evaluations with Job Requirements:** Traits assessed should directly correlate with the demands of the role.
2. **Adopt Best Practices:** Use validated assessments and ensure evaluations are conducted by qualified professionals.
3. **Emphasize Inclusionary Traits:** Focus on characteristics that predict success in law enforcement roles.
4. **Monitor Impact:** Regularly evaluate the process for potential adverse impacts on protected groups.
5. **Leverage Technology:** Adopt online tools to improve efficiency and consistency.

Conclusion

Psychological evaluations are indispensable for identifying candidates who possess the emotional and ethical resilience required for public safety roles. By adhering to best practices and leveraging technological advancements, state directors can strengthen their selection processes, ensuring that their agencies are staffed with officers who embody the highest standards of public service. These efforts not only enhance agency effectiveness but also build trust and confidence within the communities they serve. ~

About The Author

Fred Rafilson is a highly experienced industrial-organizational psychologist specializing in public safety assessment and selection. With decades of expertise, he has developed and implemented assessment processes for hundreds of federal, state, and municipal agencies, including law enforcement, corrections, and fire/EMS organizations. Dr. Rafilson is a recognized authority in psychological evaluations for public safety officers, conducting thousands of pre-hire and fitness-for-duty assessments. As part of National Testing Network (NTN), he is leading the development of a nationwide service for these critical evaluations. Previously, he founded and sold I/O Solutions, a provider of public safety employment and promotional exams, authoring over 30 assessments focused on cognitive abilities and personality traits. He has been an IADLEST member for 25+ years.



Dr. Rafilson's work is grounded in legal and professional standards, with a proven track record of defending the validity of his assessments. Notably, he led the development of an examination upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court in the landmark Ricci v. DeStefano case. He has also served as an expert in major litigation, including Tatum v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, where a statewide police sergeant exam was found to be biased and invalid. Beyond public safety, Dr. Rafilson conducts program evaluations for philanthropic organizations and provides training to accreditation bodies, such as CALEA, on best practices in assessment and selection. Contact Dr. Rafilson at: fredr@nationaltestingnetwork.com.

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Introducing the Law Enforcement Seizure Recognition and Response Course



Forty percent of the calls received each year by the Epilepsy Foundation of America's Legal Defense Unit are related to interactions with the police. Unfortunately, limited knowledge of seizures and lack of awareness of how seizures may present or appear, especially in individuals from multi-cultural communities, has resulted in wrongful arrest and premature death.

There are 3.4 million Americans living with epilepsy, and many of them may encounter law enforcement and public safety officers. The Epilepsy Foundation is interested in training officers to ensure those encounters are positive.

The Foundation recently enhanced its *Law Enforcement Seizure Recognition and Response Course* with feedback from law enforcement officials. This course helps public safety professionals better understand epilepsy and increase their knowledge about seizures. Upon completion of the course, law enforcement professionals will be able to apply best practices when engaging those living with epilepsy and seizure disorders. The goal of the program is to protect the health and safety of those living with epilepsy, especially when they may not be able to respond to a law enforcement officer's request.

To date the total number of law enforcement trained is 139. This includes national trainings held at conferences, such as the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) and the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA). Early evaluation results suggest that the training **effectively increases both knowledge and self-efficacy to carry out seizure recognition and response.**

The Foundation recruited and certified 41 instructors covering 25 states that consist of our network office and staff, law enforcement and volunteers in the Epilepsy community. The following law enforcement agencies have completed the instructor process and can now teach this program:

- Lafourche Parish Sheriff's Office – Regional Training Academy in Louisiana
- Clayton State University Police Department in Georgia
- Illinois State Police – State Trooper, and
- Chicago Police Department – Field Training Officer.

The course was designed for, and with, law enforcement, public safety, correctional and school resource officers, as well as law enforcement agency staff members. To promote co-facilitation and integration of this course into existing law enforcement training opportunities, the Foundation is offering **one-time stipends** for law enforcement trainers who get certified and become course instructors to offer the course to their peers.

During the initial development and launch of the program, the Foundation consulted with law enforcement expert Sunny Slaughter, Founder and CEO of Sunny Slaughter Consulting, LLC. Sunny is a law enforcement instructor, field training specialist, and consultant. She has over 35 years of experience, education, and expertise as a federal law enforcement instructor, litigation consultant, and communications strategist. Additionally, Val Budischak, Executive Director, Epilepsy Foundation Delaware provided her expertise in implementing the Foundation's law enforcement trainings. Val is proud to teach seizure recognition and first aid to every incoming class of the Delaware State Police Academy, as well as the incoming correctional officers and probation and parole officers in Delaware. Both Sunny and Val are the Foundation's master trainers and they provide capacity building assistance to local office staff and law enforcement instructors.

The new Epilepsy Foundation Law Enforcement Course offers four modules, including seizure recognition, seizure diversity, response, and best practices for engagement.

At the end of this course, participants should be able to demonstrate and apply the following information:

- Explain the importance of seizure recognition and training for law enforcement professionals.
- Define seizures and epilepsy.
- Apply responsive first aid techniques for law enforcement when encountering someone having a seizure ensuring prompt and appropriate assistance while maintaining safety.

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- Implement best practices for responding to epilepsy and seizures by prioritizing the well-being of individuals with epilepsy during emergencies, medical assistance, or other public safety encounters.

The course highlights these values of epilepsy education for law enforcement officers:

Prevent

Adverse actions potentially have long-term physical, emotional, psychological, and medical implications for a person having a seizure.

Intervene

Increasing officer awareness and response to medical emergencies improves personal safety and/or public safety threats assessment.

Mitigate

Risk and liability for officers, departments, and the city.

Improve

Police-community relations overall and address historically marginalized populations and communities with compounded vulnerabilities.

Successful completion of the course assessment results in a certificate of completion from Epilepsy Foundation of America that can be included in training jackets and submitted as professional development credit. The course is offered quarterly online for free or can be offered in-person.

Please visit www.epilepsy.com/lawenforcement for more information and/or reach out to EFA Training Program Manager Cheryl Houston at programs@efa.org. ~

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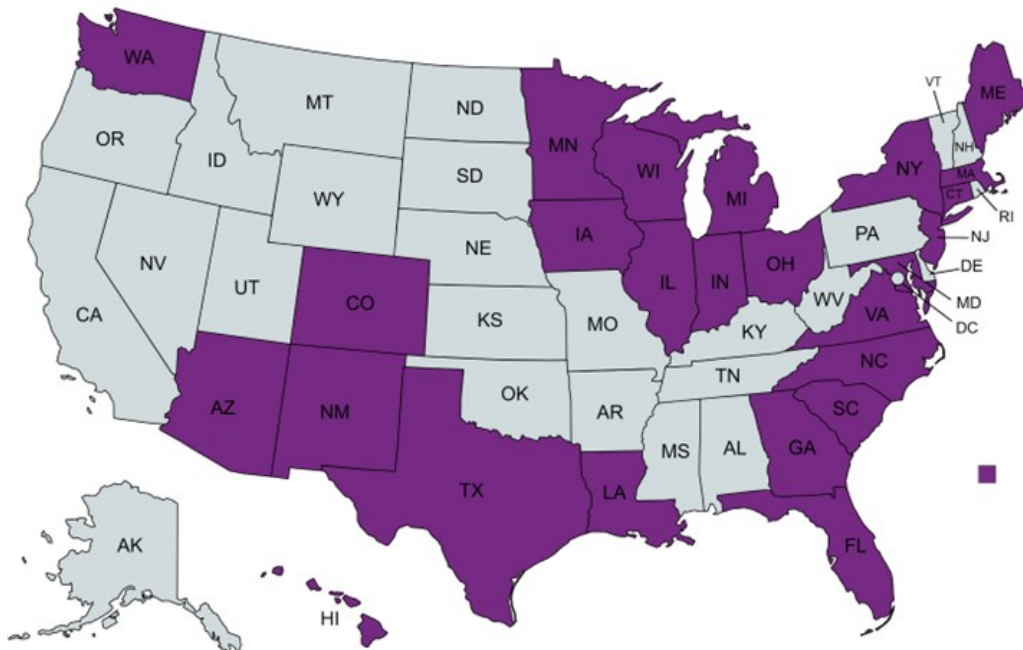
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CERTIFIED LAW ENFORCEMENT INSTRUCTORS BY STATE – As of October 2024



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Improving the Quality of Training through Targeted Instructor Development:
A Replicable Training Model from the Portland Police Bureau

By Ben Steiner, Officer Rehana Kerridge, and Dr. Rebecca Rodriguez



Introduction
 Training is an essential component of the continual evolution of policing. In 2023, the need for additional police training continues to be a contentious refrain both within agencies and the communities they serve. However, as Former NYPD Training Chief Kenneth Carey explains, "We hear so much about needing more training. Well, more training is better. But better training is better still." (PERF, 2022)

The question then becomes: How can an agency enhance the quality of its training?

This paper outlines the approach taken by the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) in Portland, Oregon, to improve the quality of training through an instructor development pilot program focusing on the bottom-up development of instructors' adult education acumen. While "adult learning" is often assumed to be relegated to classroom learning, the skills taught through formal instructor development are equally transferable to motor-learning and scenario-based training.

There are components of this program that are unique to Portland. However, the overall design is based on support from various other agencies, including the police departments in Baltimore, Los Angeles, and New Orleans. The hiring of an academic dean, for example, was inspired by comparable efforts in Los Angeles. Despite these previous efforts, comprehensive documentation of existing instructor development programming in policing is limited. Thus, this paper serves to provide a potentially replicable template for other medium-to-large agencies throughout the country.

Before outlining the program, the paper will discuss the current state of instructor qualification and development, as well as identify research underlying the importance of instructor adult education proficiency and Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) collaboration with non-sworn education professionals.

State of the Field
 A robust body of research underscores the need for professional training generally, and police officer development specifically, to utilize evidence-based adult education practices, including participatory learning, high-fidelity scenarios, interleaving, and an integrated learning program (Armstrong, 2020; O'Neill, et al., 2019; Lewinski & Albin, Professional Police Training, 2022; Pres-

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IADLEST offers an excellent opportunity for POST directors, staff, and trainers to share their insights toward making improving standards or training developments. Sharing your expertise or experiences with your counterparts, demonstrates leadership qualities and can add to your resume credentials. It also provides additional writing experience and can help you when tasked with vital reporting projects.

Having articles published in a professional publication such as IADLEST's *Standards & Training Director Magazine* can give your employer something to advertise about the quality of staff within the agency and add to the credibility of the workplace environment. Publishing can also encourage others within your workplace to seek opportunities to share their knowledge. It creates excitement among peers who want to emulate or know you, and you will find that people are interested in being in your presence. Having professional articles published builds upon your reputation and can provide long-lasting opportunities for advancement in the future.

If you're interested in publishing your professional article, consider the opportunity to reach your national and international counterparts through IADLEST. For more information about opportunities to publish an article with the IADLEST magazine, contact William Flink at STDM@iadlest.org.



Standards & Training Director Magazine



False Confessions: The Issues to be Considered

By: Joseph P. Buckley

Reprinted by the Author *

About the Author:

Joseph P. Buckley, CRT

Mr. Buckley is a graduate of Loyola University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English. He has a Master of Science degree in the detection of deception, and is certified in The Reid Technique®. He has been employed by John E. Reid and Associates since 1971 and has been president of the company since 1982.

Mr. Buckley has conducted in excess of 10,000 interviews and interrogations and has been a speaker in the seminars for over 40 years. He is a frequent guest on many radio talk shows and a much sought-after guest speaker for police and security organizations throughout the country, discussing the art of interrogation and interviewing. Mr. Buckley has authored numerous articles on the topic, and is also coauthor of four books, including, *Criminal Interrogation and Confessions* (5th 2013) and *Essentials of The Reid Technique* (2nd edition, 2013). His vast knowledge of interviewing and interrogation procedures has made him one of the foremost authorities on investigative tactics and techniques in the law enforcement and security field today.

Mr. Buckley conducts specialized in-house programs for a variety of organizations, including companies, associations and numerous government agencies.

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* This article was submitted for publication by the author and is reprinted from June 1, 2021, with the author's permission.

In this article, we discuss the primary causes of and contributing factors to false confessions, and the Best Practices to follow to minimize the possibility of obtaining a false confession.

Historical View

Over 50 years ago in the 1967 edition of their book, Criminal Interrogation and Confessions, John Reid and Fred Inbau expressed concern about the possibility of a false confession from individuals with a "mental illness" and suggested that there were two ways to test the veracity of their incriminating statements:

- 1) determine if they could offer details about the crime that had been concealed from the public, and/or
- 2) refer to some fictitious aspects of the crime and test whether the subject will accept them as actual facts relating to the occurrence.

They also detailed cases in which the courts ruled that confessions were inadmissible that were the result of

- physical abuse of the subject
- threats of harm
- threats that if the subject did not confess he would be sent to the penitentiary for more serious crimes
- threats that his family members would be arrested.

They also detailed cases in which the subject's incriminating statements were found to be inadmissible because of a promise of leniency

- specifically, that if he confessed he would be released from custody
- that he would not be prosecuted
- that he will be granted a pardon
- that he will receive a lighter sentence than the law prescribed.

The knowledge that potentially false confessions may occur as the result of coercive behavior, such as threats and promises, has been known to investigators for many decades, but undoubtedly the awareness heightened with the development of DNA exonerations.

According to the Innocence Project, between 1989 and 2020 there have been 367 DNA exonerations. Approximately 100 cases (28 %) involved false confessions. In almost half of these cases the subjects were under 18 years old or mentally impaired at the time of their arrest.

Continued on page 52

According to The National Registry of Exonerations, of the exonerees with reported mental illness or intellectual disability, 72 percent had confessed. Forty percent of the exonerees who were under 18 years old at the time of the crime falsely confessed

Clearly, individuals who are mentally impaired and juveniles should be considered more susceptible to false confessions than the population at large.

While the overwhelming majority of confessions are true and accurate, certainly false confessions do occur.

With very few exceptions, false confessions are caused by the investigator engaging in coercive or inappropriate behavior, as illustrated in a careful examination of the first 250 DNA exoneration cases. As pointed out by Davis and Leo, "Many, and perhaps most, of the interrogations in the (DNA exoneration) cases...crossed the line of proper interrogation techniques through the use of explicit threats and promises, feeding suspects crime facts, and/or other coercive practices."

This assessment was confirmed, by J.P. Blair, who reviewed over 100 false confession cases and reported that

- "This study failed to find a single false confession of a cognitively normal individual that did not also include the use of coercive tactics by the interrogator....such as
- the use of physical force; denial of food, sleep or the bathroom; explicit threats of punishment; explicit promises of leniency; and extremely lengthy interrogations."

False confessions

The following are the primary causes of and contributing factors to false confessions:

Physical abuse and the threat of physical harm

The courts have long recognized that physically abusing the suspect or threatening them with physical harm can cause an innocent person to confess. In our book, *Criminal Interrogation and Confessions*, as well on our website, we document numerous cases in which the courts have ruled confessions to be inadmissible because the subject was physically beaten or abused, or he was threatened with physical harm if he did not confess.

In one case, an 18-year-old father was being interrogated about the suspicious death of his 6-month-old child, he was told by the investigator, "You don't get punished in this justice system for telling the

truth. You get punished by.... doing something intentional and showing no remorse. Those people are called killers. And what do you think happens to baby killers in prison? What do you think is going to happen? You're eighteen." A second investigator stated, "It's mandatory life."

The subject was also told, "And your life won't be long as a baby killer in prison. Check the history papers. Stay online when you get a chance in the county jail. See what happens to baby killers in jail.", and, "When you get convicted of this and you go over for sentencing in front of that judge, every judge wants to send a baby killer to prison forever."

The court found that these "baby killer" statements were threats of physical violence that case law has reasonably found to be indicative of improper coercion.

Threats of inevitable consequences

An example of a threat of inevitable consequences would be telling a suspect that if he did not confess his children will be taken away from him, or, telling a suspect that "if you don't cooperate and tell us that you did this, I'm going to make sure that you never see your wife or kids again."

In one case the investigators threatened to have federal authorities charge the suspect with a crime for having his mother's gun in his room. They implied that he would not see his infant son grow up. They also threatened him by saying his mother would lose her Section 8 housing and end up in the street with all of his younger siblings if he did not admit to committing the armed robbery.

Promises of leniency

The courts have consistently found that advising a suspect of the potential penalties he may face based on the type of crime that he committed is not coercive, but that promising the suspect a benefit for confessing, such as receiving a shorter sentence, getting counseling instead of going to jail, or being able to go home and not getting arrested, can nullify a confession.

For example, in the interrogation of a man who allegedly abused a 7-year-old child he was told by the investigator that the case would go away and would not proceed if he met the victim halfway and apologized to her... He further told the subject that he could put the case "in a drawer" if he admitted to some "inappropriate sexual stuff."

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Denial of rights

In reviewing false confession cases, in a number of instances the subject was denied their rights – they were in custody, but when they asked for an attorney that request was ignored, or they advised the investigator that they did not want to talk anymore, but the interrogation continued. In some juvenile interrogations, they were denied the opportunity to see a parent or guardian in violation of the law.

In a recent custodial interrogation, the subject made what the court viewed as an unambiguous invocation of his right to an attorney (and the court found that the interrogation should have been terminated) when he stated, “If I’m going to answer questions, I’m going to need a lawyer here.” Seconds later, he restated his request: “I want to talk to you, but I just need my lawyer.” And after an investigator asks, “here’s what you’re telling us—you do want your lawyer?” Defendant once more affirms his request: “I want to talk, yeah. But I need my lawyer present.” The interrogation continued without a lawyer present.

Denial of physical needs

In a number of false confession cases that lasted an excessively long period of time (in some cases 16 hours or more), the subject never had the opportunity to get something to eat or drink, sleep or use the washroom.

Excessively long interrogations

In many false confessions cases, the interrogation process lasted an excessively long period of time. One study of 44 false confession cases noted that the average length of interrogation was 16.3 hours. Several individuals who gave false confessions subsequently stated that they confessed just to end the process, just to be able to go home. They felt confident that the subsequent investigation would prove that they had nothing to do with the crime.

Over the course of almost two days the police detained the suspect, a man of limited intelligence and little education, who was unaccompanied by a friend or an attorney, for about 30 hours and questioned him almost continuously for about 17 of those hours. The investigators persisted in telling the suspect that he was guilty, “hollering and screaming” at him...despite being aware of his mental limitations and despite his repeated denials. At one point the suspect feared for his life and signed an incriminating statement.

Disclosure of crime details

Many false confession cases include details about the crime that only the guilty person should know. However, a careful analysis in many of these cases found that these details were revealed to the subject by the investigator (oftentimes inadvertently) during the questioning, or were revealed in photographs that the investigators showed the subject. The disclosure of crime details to the subject contaminates the confession in that it is difficult, if not impossible, to determine if the subject had independent knowledge of these details or was just repeating what he was told.

Failure to properly take into account the subject’s mental limitations and/or psychological disabilities

In numerous false confession cases the subjects had severe mental limitations, a very low IQ, or in several cases were found to be extremely psychologically susceptible to suggestions of their guilt. In those instances where it is readily apparent that the subject has a significant mental limitation, the investigator should not engage in active persuasion but rather engage in a logical sequence of questions. The key factor in these instances where there is a concern about the subject’s mental or psychological capacity, is to establish in the confession that the subject offered corroborating information that the police did not know, such as the location of the murder weapon, the bloody clothes or the stolen jewelry.

For example, in one case the defendant was being questioned about committing a robbery – he was 19 -years-old with an IQ of 55 and the intellectual functioning of a nine-year-old. According to the court “It was clear from the beginning of the interview that [the suspect] had mental handicaps.” When the investigators asked him to read a sign out loud, he began sounding out the words, but could not read the word “monitored.” He told the officers, “I am slow in the head,” “I lose memory real fast,” and “Can you bring me to memory?” The court found that the investigators “took advantage of his intellectual deficiencies to intimidate, coerce or trick him into signing a waiver of his Miranda rights and falsely confessing to the robbery.”

Failure to properly modify approaches with socially immature juveniles

Socially immature juveniles, as well as very young subjects, can be more susceptible to suggestion

(active persuasion) and are motivated to please persons in authority, so caution must be exercised in the questioning of these individuals. We detail the cautions the investigator must exercise when dealing with this group later in this document.

Failure to properly corroborate confession details

A review of false confessions will reveal that a number of these confessions contain details that were significantly different than the actual crime, such as the subject stating that he stabbed the victim when the victim had actually been shot. The best form of corroboration is for the subject to reveal accurate details about the crime that were not disclosed by the investigators, or to disclose details that the investigators did not know.

A classic example of a case in which the details offered by the subject, in what turned out to be a verified false confession, should have been seen as significant red flags, included the fact that the subject did not know what happened to the gun used in the murder he had allegedly committed; did not know how many times the victim was shot; did not know when the murder occurred; and, drew a picture of the crime scene but placed the body in the wrong location from where it was actually found.

To summarize our discussion up to this point, the primary causes and contributing factors for false confessions are the following:

- Physical abuse of the subject
- Threats of physical harm
- Threats of inevitable consequences
- Promises of leniency
- Denial of rights
- Denial of physical needs
- Excessively long interrogations
- Disclosure of crime details
- Failure to properly take in to account the subject's mental limitations and/or psychological disabilities
- Failure to properly modify approaches with socially immature juveniles
- Failure to properly corroborate confession details.

What Social Psychologists, Academicians and Defense Attorneys Say About False Confession Issues and Law Enforcement Interrogation Techniques

In anticipation of testifying on a case in which the defense claims that the defendant gave a false or coerced confession, it is important to know the type of arguments that the Defense may make in order to try to establish this point. These arguments may be supplemented by the testimony of social psychologists. (The following statements in bold represent claims that may be the defense/social psychologists.)

The purpose of an interrogation is to get a confession

The purpose of an interrogation is to learn the truth. There can be several successful outcomes to an interrogation:

- the suspect admits their guilt in a corroborated confession
- the suspect may reveal the fact that he did not commit the crime but that he knows (and has been concealing) who did
- the suspect may reveal that while he did not commit the crime he was lying about some important element of the investigation (such as his alibi – not wanting to acknowledge where he really was at the time of the crime), or
- the investigator determines the suspect was not involved in the commission of the crime.

Interrogation is a guilt presumptive process

Social psychologists oftentimes describe the interrogation as a guilt presumptive process in that investigators interrogate individuals who they believe are guilty (oftentimes erroneously) “and will stop at nothing to get a confession.” It is accurate to say that investigators interrogate individuals that they believe, based on the available investigative evidence, committed the crime, but the alternative, to interrogate people you do not believe committed the crime, would be absurd.

Investigators offer the suspect inducements to confess, referred to as minimization/maximization

Social psychologists describe the minimization/maximization process as one in which the investigator suggests inducements that motivate the suspect to confess by minimizing the consequences or the

punishment they will receive by offering a suggestion or promise of either leniency or reduced punishment in exchange for cooperation – specifically a confession. They then contrast this “minimization” with what they call “maximization” in which the investigator threatens or implies more severe treatment or punishment if the suspect refuses to confess.

The problem with this description of the interrogation process offered by social psychologists is that the behaviors they refer to **we teach investigators not to do**...we teach never to engage in making threats of harm or inevitable consequences or promises of leniency.

There are two types of acceptable minimization that can occur during an interrogation:

- minimizing the moral seriousness of the behavior
- minimizing the psychological consequences of the behavior.

The third type of minimization is to minimize the legal consequences of the subject’s behavior, which we teach never to do.

There are three errors that lead to false confessions: Misclassification, Coercion and Contamination

Social psychologists define these terms as follows:

- Misclassifications – erroneously labeling an innocent person as guilty based on their demeanor and the behavior they displayed during the investigative interview
- Coercion – using tactics that offer reduced punishment if the suspect confesses, harsher punishment if they do not
- Contamination – revealing to the suspect details about the crime that only the police or the guilty person should know.

Regarding *misclassification*: while evaluating a subject’s verbal and nonverbal behaviors during the interview can certainly be helpful in assessing their credibility, in the majority of cases the decision to interrogate a suspect is the result of information developed during the investigation.

For example, during the interview a suspect may relate an alibi, and then subsequent investigation proves the alibi to be false; or the subject claims he never saw the victim at or near the time of the murder, and yet the subsequent discovery of video shows the suspect going into the victim’s home mo-

ments before the murder.

As for *coercion*, we teach never to engage in coercive behaviors such as threats of harm, promises of leniency or denial of rights, and as for the issue of *contamination*, we have taught for over 50 years to keep some details of the crime secret so the investigator can use the disclosure of those details by the subject as corroboration for his statement

It cannot be overstated the importance of developing corroboration to establish the authenticity of a confession. There are two primary types of corroboration – dependent and independent

Dependent Corroboration

At the outset of any investigation, the lead investigator should decide what evidence or information will be withheld from the public and all suspects for the purpose of verifying any subsequent confession. This is called *dependent corroboration* because the information is dependent upon the crime scene or other investigative source. In theory, only the person guilty of committing the crime should be able to provide this dependent corroboration.

Independent Corroboration

Clearly the most convincing evidence of a truthful confession is one which contains verifiable information not known until the confession - this is called *independent corroboration* because the investigator does not know about the evidence until the suspect reveals it, and the evidence is obtained independent from the initial investigation. In a murder case, independent evidence would include such things as the tool used to gain entry to the victim's bedroom window (tool marks), a witness who could place the suspect near the crime scene (gas station attendant), the location of the murder weapon, the location of the bloody clothing or a souvenir kept from the victim (bracelet).

Lying to a suspect about evidence causes false confessions

In 1969, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Frazier v. Cupp* that misrepresenting evidence to a suspect (in this case falsely telling the suspect that his accomplice had confessed) “is, while relevant, insufficient in our view to make this otherwise voluntary confession inadmissible. These cases must be decided by viewing the “totality of circumstances....”

Numerous court decisions have upheld the investigator’s capacity to verbally misrepresent evidence during an interrogation. However, we do urge cau-

tion. From our book *Criminal Interrogation and Confessions*, we suggest the following:

- Introducing fictitious evidence during an interrogation presents a risk that the guilty suspect may detect the investigator's bluff, resulting in a significant loss of credibility and sincerity. For this reason, we recommend that this tactic be used as a last resort effort.
- Introducing fictitious evidence should not be used for the suspect who acknowledges that he may have committed the crime even though he has no specific recollections of doing so
- Introducing fictitious evidence should be avoided when interrogating a youthful suspect with low social maturity or a suspect with diminished mental capacity. These suspects may not have the fortitude or confidence to challenge such evidence and, depending on the nature of the crime, may become confused as to their own possible involvement if the police tell them evidence clearly indicates they committed the crime.

It should also be noted that misrepresenting evidence in an otherwise proper interrogation does not cause innocent people to confess, but the "aggravating circumstances" within the interrogation can create an environment conducive to a false statement. Consider the court's opinion in *US v. Graham* in which the court pointed out that there are a number of cases in which statements elicited from a defendant in response to police deception were found involuntary... but that, "these cases all involve significant aggravating circumstances... such as, subjecting the accused to an exhaustively long interrogation, the application of physical force or the threat to do so, or the making of a promise that induces a confession."

In other words, it is not the misrepresentation of evidence that is the genesis of a coerced or even false confession, but the "aggravating circumstances" present during the interrogation.

Investigators interrogate children the same way they interrogate adults

It is important to note that when questioning juveniles and individuals with significant mental or psychological disabilities the investigator has to make a number of modifications in their approach. Here are a few of these modifications that we discuss in our courses and our book, *Criminal Interrogation and Confessions*:

- ...caution must be exercised in evaluating a youthful person's behavioral responses. Due to immaturity and the corresponding lack of values and sense of responsibility, the behavior symptoms displayed by a youthful suspect may be unreliable.
- It is our general recommendation that a person under the age of 10 should not be subjected to active persuasion techniques such as themes and alternative questions. At this age the child is susceptible to suggestion and is motivated to please a person in authority. The interaction between the investigator and child should be limited to a question and answer session which is centered on factual information and simple logic.
- When a child is taken into custody and advised of his or her *Miranda* rights, the question of whether the child is capable of making a knowing and voluntary waiver of those rights may arise. Certainly, a child under the age of 10 is incapable of fully understanding the implications of waiving *Miranda* rights. Younger adolescents also may fall into this category.
- When a juvenile younger than 15, who has not had any prior experience with the police, is advised of his *Miranda* rights, the investigator should carefully discuss and talk about those rights with the subject (not just recite them) to make sure that he understands them. If attempts to explain the rights are unsuccessful, no questioning should be conducted at that time. The same is true for a person who is mentally or psychologically impaired.

Best Practices that investigators should follow so as to minimize the possibility of obtaining a false confession

The best way to avoid false confessions is to conduct interrogations in accordance with the guidelines established by the courts, and to adhere to the following Core Principles and Best Practices:

- Do not make any promises of leniency.
- Do not threaten the subject with any physical harm or inevitable consequences.
- Do not deny the subject any of their rights.
- Do not deny the subject the opportunity to satisfy their physical needs.

- Withhold information about the details of the crime from the subject so that if the subject confesses the disclosure of that information can be used to confirm the authenticity of the statement.
- Exercise special cautions when questioning juveniles or individuals with mental or psychological impairments.
- Always treat the subject with dignity and respect.
- Conduct an interview before any interrogation. Absent a life-saving circumstance, the investigator should conduct a non-accusatory interview before engaging in any interrogation.
- Conduct an interrogation only when there is a reasonable belief that the suspect committed the issue under investigation or is withholding relevant information.
- Attempt to verify the suspect's alibi before conducting an interrogation.
- When interrogating a non-custodial suspect, do not deprive the suspect from his freedom to leave the room.
- Do not conduct excessively long interrogations.
- When a suspect claims to have little or no memory for the time period when the crime was committed the investigator should not lie to the suspect concerning incriminating evidence.
- Electronically record the interview and interrogation.
- The confession is not the end of the investigation.

Following the confession, the investigator should investigate the confession details in an effort to establish the authenticity of the subject's statement, as well as attempt to establish the suspect's activities before and after the commission of the crime. ~

For additional information on the issue of false confessions, visit our YouTube channel - [The Reid Technique Tips](#), and our book, [Criminal Interrogation and Confessions](#).

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level. Even though every law enforcement agency relies on the same case law, or cases where there has been a legal precedence established in use of force, every agency's level of training differs and is reflected in the differing agency policies and standards. In short, there is a great inconsistency of use of force training for law enforcement agencies at every level. As a use of force instructor, I have used the term, "kingdom builders." Consider every law enforcement agency as its own "kingdom." Every kingdom has its "king", and each "king" will prioritize what they deem as important. If that "king" doesn't think training is important, that area of the budget is cut, and those monies are reallocated for other programs.

Since we're on this topic, law enforcement training is lacking significantly because of this very issue. Law enforcement agencies, as a whole, typically find themselves in times where budgets are tight...or even nonexistent. As someone who oversaw two different budgets in two different programs tied directly to training, there were many years when I was contacted by someone in headquarters telling me that my budget was going to be cut. In the law enforcement world, budget cuts were something of the norm. Unfortunately, the first area typically targeted for cuts is training. Not only have I seen it on a firsthand basis, but I know of MANY law enforcement agencies that have cut their training budget so much it has resulted in these same agencies scaling back their use of force training, specifically firearms training, to one time a year. Not only has the frequency been scaled back, but the number of rounds (of ammunition) has been scaled back because that certain agency or state could not meet the cost required to maintain effective training.

Imagine being that passionate person (which I am) who wants to ensure that every possible skill is provided to your people, and then you're told that your budget is going to be slashed...let's just say there were many heated discussions.

My responsibility as a use of force instructor is to provide the best possible training, which is never easy; and meant I had to push them to make them better. There is nothing more satisfying to me as an instructor ...or, as I say, "coach"...than to see the "Ah-ha moment" or when the proverbial "light bulb"

turns on in an officer's head...when it finally "clicks" that what you're teaching them, sinks in. As an instructor (coach), this is the epitome of training other people. I would add that too many "instructors" think it's all about them...it's not. It's all about your student and putting their needs in front of your own while making them better, so they go home safely.

Going back to that proverbial "kingdom," those same "kings" should not expect their people to go out and face the same danger with scaled-back training that could save their life, the lives of other officers, or the public. It's both counterproductive and counterintuitive and can have devastating effects on not only the officer but the agency as a whole. Effective use of force training should be priority number one for all those "kings" or senior staff members.

Many people do not understand how case law intertwines with law enforcement training. I've had many discussions with those in other service-related fields, such as the military, and asked them what they know about the 4th Amendment or what they know about *Tennessee v. Garner*. The answer is both telling and disturbing. This is where the term "effective" training comes into play. This is not meant as anything derogatory towards those in the military however, it is imperative that law enforcement agencies and those "kings" (those in executive level positions) understand the impact that improper or ineffective training can have on not only the individual officer but their agency and them as a supervisor.

As a use of force instructor, I have trained law enforcement officers at all levels around the country. I have reviewed entire use of force programs, specifically firearms training programs, as a consultant, and have provided guidance to these agencies in an effort to enhance their overall training programs. The guidance provided to these agencies refined and optimized their policies and training curriculums to ensure that the best practices were passed on to agency officers. I have also been involved in training law enforcement personnel in other countries, but one thing those countries don't have that we do is the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights. All of our training in law enforcement encompasses these two foundational documents. I must add that this is what makes American law enforcement unique...not

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even our military has such a foundation to support its overall function.

The purpose of this article is to make you aware of the challenges that law enforcement faces regarding training and the wide disparity between agencies, even though we all took an oath to protect and defend the U.S. Constitution from all enemies, foreign and domestic. As a law enforcement officer, we should all have a very good understanding of the meaning of this document, specifically the 4th Amendment, since we are bringing to light the issues with 4th Amendment or use of force training.

Some officers may not have a good understanding of what I've written, but, whether it is firearms, defensive tactics/control and arrest techniques or tactics, those who are tasked with instructing officers in the use of force, should know not only the 4th Amendment, itself, but the case laws that are built on this foundational amendment..

One of the things that I have observed as an instructor and instructor trainer is that officers either love training or hate it ... there are not many who ride the fence. Regardless, training is necessary to keep our skill level up and to maintain proficiency with the "tools" that we've been lawfully allowed to carry. As previously mentioned, many cases are tied directly to law enforcement training. The lack of effective training should be viewed as detrimental to officers, the agency, as well as the public when carrying out our duties. Below are cases brought before the courts, at both the appellate level as well as the Supreme Court, that has had a massive impact on law enforcement.

*Popow v. City of Margate*⁵, 476 F. Supp. 1237. In the *Popow* case, police officers were involved in a foot pursuit of a kidnapping suspect, during the night, in a residential area. While officers gave chase, the resident of another home, who was uninvolved, went outside to investigate after hearing a commotion. The officers involved shot and killed the innocent party (*Popow*). During the impending lawsuit, discovery showed that the department qualified only twice per year, did not incorporate any low light or nighttime firearms training, did not train their officers on engaging moving targets, did not train their officers on the issues related to firing rounds in a resi-

dential neighborhood and the potential for over-penetration. Discovery also showed that officers were not trained in any type of reality-based training involving scenarios related specifically to law enforcement.

In this case alone, I would venture to say that the vast majority of law enforcement agencies in this country are still failing to provide this type of effective training. There are departments today, that have cut their firearms training and/or number of qualifications back to one time per year...and some of these in the biggest metropolitan areas within the country.

As a use-of-force instructor and one qualified as a subject matter expert in this field, reality-based training is the one system of training that is not utilized enough today. Of all the training programs available to law enforcement officers, the one program that has the biggest impact on law enforcement is reality-based training. Many years ago, when I began to instruct use of force programs such as tactics, I learned that there was a specific method in which instruction should be delivered. That method is to allow your students to provide the answer to you, as an instructor, instead of the instructor "spoon feeding" the answer to the student. This method of the "Socratic Method" or Student-Centered Method is the most effective manner of instruction as it allows for critical thinking skills, active learning, and a deeper understanding of the program or course being "coached", specifically reality-based training. In my own consulting company, I continue to use this format as part of my curriculum in training as well as consulting agencies. Those who do not utilize this method of instruction do themselves, as well as the agency they are working with, a disservice.

Regarding the *Popow* case and the lack of specific training, many agencies fail or fall short as they may not have their cadre of instructors trained in a manner that they can provide this type of training. Low light or nighttime firearms training, as well as engaging moving targets, are fundamental skills that

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⁵ *Popow v. City of Margate*, 476 F. Supp. 1237 (D.N.J. 1979), <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/FSupp/476/1237/1379073/>.

moving from one point to another while placing effective rounds on your target. This does not refer to a qualification course of fire but training...big difference. Furthermore, a qualification course of fire does not necessarily mean that person is good under stress. I have trained some who barely qualified yet outshot everyone in a “tactical” scenario on the range. “Tactical” shooting is far more realistic than standing flat footed on a static range and looking for that perfect “10-ring” score...this is unrealistic. Moving and shooting or shooting and moving, both, make tactics essential and require officers to be critical thinkers.

Another case is “*Zuchel v. City & County of Denver*,”⁶ 997 F.2d 720. In *Zuchel*, the 10th Circuit upheld a conviction that showed the City of Denver failed to adequately train its officers which constituted “deliberate indifference” to the Constitutional Rights of its citizens and was the direct cause of the lethal force action. For all those instructors in law enforcement agencies, this is one term you better know inside and out. “Deliberate indifference” is more than just negligence, it is the conscious or reckless disregard of the consequences of one's acts or omissions. It involves acts or omissions for the very purpose of causing harm or with the knowledge that harm will result from the lack of proper training. The *Zuchel* case is another case that supports the Popow case's requirement that officers are to be trained in reality-based training and scenarios that are consistent with police actions in the public, such as judgmental shooting or “shoot, don't shoot” scenarios.

Then we have the “*City of Canton, Ohio v. Harris*”⁷, 489 U.S. 378 (1989) In short, the jury ruled against the City of Canton, Ohio because it failed to train its officers properly and showed that the lack of training was so reckless or grossly negligent that it deprived Harris of her constitutional rights.

In February 1989 the Supreme Court ruled in this case that local governments can be liable for monetary damages when “deliberate indifference” to the need for training and failure to train officers results in constitutional violations.

“*Oklahoma City v. Tuttle*”⁸, 471 U.S. 808 (1985) is a United States Supreme Court ruling on whether or not a single shooting was evidence of the city being

grossly negligent or “deliberately indifferent” in training or supervising its police department on shooting.

However, this case law did shed light on the importance of creating a valid firearms training program and further elaborated that one “bad apple” will not show deliberate indifference on behalf of the entire agency. The court strongly suggested that the agency needed to incorporate a realistic firearms training program, bringing in things such as low light training, shotgun training, moving targets, mindset, shoot / don't shoot scenarios, and several others.

And just in case those administrators from various law enforcement agencies think that they are immune from being sued, here is another to consider... “*Monell v. Department of Social Services of the City of New York City*”⁹ 436 U.S. 658 (1978). This case is included in the event that your administrators don't believe that they are at risk of being sued. This case law allows individuals to file suit against local governments and their officials in their official capacity in the event of a Violation of Civil Rights under 42 USC § 1983.

One of the main culprits of a failure to train for law enforcement is and always has been funding. As mentioned previously, the budget is almost always one of the first areas that executive staff typically look to scale back on and many times they do so by cutting training budgets. With this being said, the question should be posed, can your agency delay training because of budgetary issues or a fiscal shortfall? According to the U.S. Supreme Court, that would be a resounding no.

⁶ Leo and Arlene Zuchel, Individually, and on Behalf of The deceased, Leonard Zuchel, plaintiffs- appellees/ cross-appellants, v. the City and County of Denver, Colorado, defendant-appellant/cross-appellee, 997 F.2d 730 (10th Cir. 1993), www.law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/F2/997/730/382176/

⁷ *City of Canton, Ohio v. Harris*, 489 U.S. 378 (1989), www.supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/489/378/

⁸ *Oklahoma City v. Tuttle*, 471 U.S. 808 (1985), www.supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/471/808/

⁹ *Monell v. Department of Social Services of the City of New York*, 436 U.S. 658 (1978), www.supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/436/658/

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The National Law Enforcement Academy Resource Network (NLEARN) is a free resource for America's police and sheriffs, academy directors, managers, coordinators and trainers.

The screenshot shows the IADLEST website interface. At the top left is the IADLEST logo (International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards & Training). To its right is the text "International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training". A search bar and a "Login" button are also present. Below this is a navigation menu with links: Home, Our Services, Training, Members, News, POST Portal, About Us, and Conference. The main banner features a photograph of two police officers and the NLEARN logo. Below the banner are three buttons: "Join IADLEST", "MEMBERS ONLY", and "CONFERENCE 2024". The main content area is divided into four columns, each with a logo and a brief description of a service or program.

Logo	Service/Program	Description	Learn More
	National Decertification Index	The National Decertification Index (NDI) is a national registry of certificate or license revocation actions related to officer misconduct as reported by participating state government agencies.	Learn More
	National Certification Program	IADLEST launched the National Certification Program (NCP) to establish law enforcement training standards and "best practices" relating to improved professionalism and skill sets for our nation's first responders. NCP courses are recognized nationally and designed to count towards officers' mandatory in-service training requirements. Access our standards here. Access National Training Catalog here	Learn More
	NLEARN	The National Law Enforcement Academy Resource Network (NLEARN) links all United States law enforcement training academies with a variety of vital resources and services. Join in with over 3,500 of your colleagues: police instructors, academy personnel and patrol officers to get the most out of your training.	Learn More
	IADLEST Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academy Accreditation POST Accreditation Audit Services Instructor Certifications Curriculum Development & Job Task Analysis (JTA) Services Technical Assistance and Training IADLEST Partner Advisory Committee 	Learn More

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Case in point, “*McClelland v. Facticeau*”¹⁰, 610 F 2d 693 (1980). In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that insufficient funding for law enforcement agencies does not excuse poor or inadequate training.

Budget shortfalls are a constant issue within law enforcement but with this example, there are many agencies that try to work around this by sending one or two officers to a particular training to “learn what is being delivered.” Those who go are oftentimes tasked with bringing what they “learned” back to their respective agencies and providing this, through instruction, to their officers. But here’s the issue, and I’ll pose it in the form of a question, how much of what they “learned” was retained (in their memory) that can be provided to their peers? Do they have a lesson plan? Do they have instructor credentials to deliver that training? Do they know that material well enough to instruct it? All of these are important questions that need to be asked. The next question is, can this same officer who provided this training to their peers testify or provide insight as to how it correlates to the law, in a court of law?

The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled that for law enforcement training to be valid, it must incorporate aspects of reality-based training, which include:

- Stress
- Decision making
- Knowledge
- Skill
- Scenario Based Training i.e., “Shoot-Don’t Shoot”
- Moving Targets
- Officers required to Move (“Tactical Shooting”)
- Low Light or Adverse Light Firearms Training
- Consistent or Regular In-Service Training, and
- Shotgun/Long Gun (Rifle/Carbine) Training.

One point still yet to be addressed is dealing with who your instructors are...who is providing the training to your officers. Obviously, what is provided is key, but who is just as important. Those who train law enforcement officers should either currently be in law enforcement or be former law enforcement officers with an extensive instructional career in training law enforcement officers. The proper instructor or trainer for law enforcement is extremely important.

Law enforcement training must incorporate reality-based scenarios that mirror law enforcement conditions. Furthermore, those instructors who provide reality-based training must be properly certified to provide this type of training. For those who do not know, reality-based training is a method of training that focuses on preparing officers to react in real-world scenarios in a realistic and effective manner. Conducting this type of training requires a strict safety protocol that must be followed, which ensures the safety of those participating in this type of training. As a certified reality-based instructor, it sends chills up my spine when I hear of incidents where those safety protocols were not followed, ending in the senseless loss of life. This is why it is imperative that those who instruct law enforcement in reality-based training scenarios are held to a high standard and should be properly trained and certified. Those who are not and an injury (or death) follows are to be held legally responsible, as is their agency, for not ensuring their training staff were properly trained. I would also include private companies and their instructor cadre. Is their instructor cadre certified? This is why those I select to be part of my cadre of instructors, must have certain certifications as well as meeting a specific level of experience and instructional experience.

Just because someone has done the job does not necessarily mean they would make the best instructor. The best instructor is someone who is able to teach or “coach” others in a manner that isn’t demeaning but focuses on making their student better and truly has a desire to see their student excel. It is someone who must be able to explain the “how.” How does one take this piece of plastic (polymer) and metal that they are holding, press the trigger, and make that projectile impact where they need it to go? How does one use the best technique to control an unruly person? How does one move from point A to point B while addressing all possible threats and not put yourself or teammates in harm’s way? Or how is case law applicable to the training being provided? A good instructor not only knows these things, but they also know how to build rap-

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¹⁰ *McClelland v. Facticeau*, 610 F.2d 693 (10th Cir. 1980), www.law.justia.com/cases/federal/appellate-courts/F2/610/693/77957/

port with their students while communicating the essential techniques to save their lives.

When looking at the entire scope of law enforcement training, there are a lot of moving parts or things to take into consideration. Those providing training to law enforcement officers are mandated to understand the detrimental effects of acting under “color of law.” This brings me to a point where we consider certain individuals and/or companies that provide training to law enforcement agencies. Again, those who provide training to law enforcement need to know the law in order to teach or instruct enforcing the law in any capacity. One of the biggest issues today is private training companies. Do they have the credentials to support what they instruct or teach? Do they understand the law, according to the issues today is private training companies. Do they have the credentials to support what they instruct or teach? Do they understand the law, according to the U.S. Constitution as well as case law and how it is applicable to law enforcement training?

To provide a basis for these questions, I must say that I have many family members and friends who were in the military and, specifically, within the special operations community. Many people tout their military background as a part of their law enforcement experience, however, the two are very different. As an example, I recently spoke with an individual who was in charge of training certain personnel within the military special operations community. I asked why they didn’t train those in the military police or security forces. His reply was that they don’t because they are two different functions. I asked, if it’s two different functions in the military, then why or how does it all of a sudden become the same function with civilian law enforcement? He couldn’t answer that question.

There is a very important difference between those in the military and those in law enforcement...each has its own important and independent function. Since 09/11 and after the end of the “Global War on Terrorism” (GWOT), many of those in the military have separated (from the military) and created training companies with their focus on domestic law enforcement operations. The market is full of these types of companies. I have attended some of their courses, and the one point that continues to surface is the

one issue brought to light in this editorial...the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and case law that is directly tied to law enforcement training. One of the most important details that is not widely known in law enforcement executive-level circles, is that the military is immune from much of what law enforcement must face, specifically, 42 U.S.C. § 1983 or violation of civil rights. If one is immune, then there is no understanding. If there is no understanding of this very important law, then how can the use of force be instructed, especially when dealing with the use of force involving firearms training and specifically in a tactical environment?

One question that law enforcement command staff should ask is in regard to lesson plans of the material provided by these companies...and here’s why. When a law enforcement officer is involved in a use of force situation, one of the first things (typically) done regarding that level of force used, is to pull training records of that officer. What was their level of training? Who trained them?

What are the credentials of the instructor providing the training? Are there lesson plans available for court? If there is a private training company involved, what is their certification to instruct law enforcement? Is the training applicable to domestic law enforcement operations (as has been provided previously per the U.S. Supreme Court)? Can they testify to the fact of how their training correlates with domestic law enforcement operations and case law? There are dozens of other questions that come to mind, and it is my hope that we have a better understanding of how these functions differ.

There may be some who have the opinion that I am attacking the military or those with a military background or difficult training. The short answer is absolutely not. HOWEVER, I and many other subject matter expert instructors, in use of force training, have encountered this issue countless times. Yes, there are aspects of military training that “bleeds over” into law enforcement; however, there is a vast difference as well. Frankly put, the only ones who know what law enforcement training requires are those who have been in law enforcement and have an extensive amount of experience as well as an understanding of the law to support it.

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American citizens are afforded rights by the founding documents of this country. Whereas the military operates under the Geneva Convention where they deal with enemy combatants, not citizens. However, there is a caveat, since 09/11 and the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), the Geneva Convention does not apply to terrorists because they do not operate under the principles of international humanitarian law. International humanitarian law governs the conduct of armed forces during armed conflict. Another key factor to consider is that those who aid terrorists or terrorist activity are also (typically) targeted by the military, whether it is the entire organization, their financial infrastructure, and/or individuals who support them.

In the United States, and specifically dealing with criminal organizations, there are times when those who are identified as co-conspirators are involved in the furtherance of or supporting criminal activities. Yet, before any action can be taken against that co-conspirator, by law enforcement, steps must be taken prior to “targeting” him/her to identify their specific role...if there is any action to be taken at all.

Note: the term “targeting” is a term identifying that person as a co-conspirator. Just because I see someone speaking with a known target of a criminal organization, does not necessarily mean that they are involved in that criminal organization. This is where steps to protect that person’s rights, through an investigation, must be taken. Whereas in a terrorist organization, they don’t.

Companies that promote a cadre consisting of all prior military personnel, do not take into consideration the importance of the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights or civil rights violations, or acting under the “color of law.” There are many issues that come to light when these private companies with a cadre entirely of former military trains law enforcement. Many people do not see the difference, but as provided previously there is a substantial difference.

In a recent private conversation with an unnamed Assistant U.S. Attorney, I posed the question of potential issues with the military or prior military service personnel training law enforcement officers. He provided the following, “*I absolutely believe it could be an issue from a civil liability perspective. The military is historically more violent in its efforts to sup-*

press suspects [while law enforcement uses the force necessary]. Non-lethal force and military training seem to be on opposite ends of their spectrum. However, there are some exceptions in crowd control, such as with military police training but if that is what is happening, I see more calls of police overreach or abuse of power and excessive force.”

The issue of “non-lethal force” brings up an entirely foreign aspect to military operations compared to domestic law enforcement operations. Law enforcement is mandated to use that force necessary to control a subject. This is also why law enforcement has access to and is trained in less-than-lethal levels of force where the military is not. Law enforcement has other “tools” at their disposal, such as the Asp/Baton, OC spray, and Taser...not to mention defensive tactics when dealing with an unruly suspect. All of which require additional training.

In a conversation with a current unnamed state district judge, who made this point, which as a use-of-force instructor and subject matter expert, I must concur, “*Critical thinking is an integral part of law enforcement decision-making. ‘Combat’ training programs do not adequately address ‘decisional’ training needs.*” The comment regarding “decisional training needs” refers directly back to critical thinking and how it is an extremely important part of training, specifically reality-based training for law enforcement.

One other conversation with James Alsup, Attorney and Director of Legal and Liability Risk Management Institute, showed much the same concern ... “while law enforcement is not immune to civil liability, the military is (immune) and is not subject to 42 USC § 1983 federal lawsuits violating constitutional rights.” So, if there is one from the DOD who violates an American citizen’s Constitutional right, they are according to him, exempt. The question should be posed, if a person doesn’t understand the importance of case law or statutes that protect the rights of American citizens, should they be instructing those who are responsible for protecting those rights?

When a supervisor or those in management-level positions within law enforcement agencies allow

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their personnel to attend any type of training that encompasses the use of force from someone who doesn't understand the 4th Amendment or case laws and how they are applicable to law enforcement training, they have a potential problem. When one who is instructing the use of force doesn't understand the laws pertaining to the use of force, they are setting those officers and their supervisors up for failure. Supervisors who knowingly allow their personnel to attend this type of training may be looking at something as serious as "deliberate indifference" or the reckless disregard of the consequences for allowing that subordinate to attend training that goes against law enforcement training standards. Only a judge can rule on this and I'm certain it's only a matter of time before we see this type of case before the courts.

When an agency head or those in executive level positions prioritize effective training, it validates their commitment to officer safety and professionalism. Anybody who has worked for a leader who considers effective training a priority, will also have the support of the vast majority of their personnel. Those who don't see training as a priority will also see the effects of that in the actions of their personnel. Everyone in law enforcement should take every bit of their training seriously...it may be the difference between life and death, or it may be the difference between being free and fighting for your freedom while sitting in front of a judge and jury.

The question still remains, is there an answer to the overall issue with law enforcement training? Yes, however, it would require reallocating budgets and making specific domestic law enforcement training a priority. Yes, there is an answer, and I've had many conversations with others who agree with me, but I will save that for another time. Too many people fail to remember that the effort to protect this nation is a two-prong front, foreign and domestic. Neither is more important than the other...both are equally important. We've placed a great effort on the foreign with the military, now is the time to focus domestically and support law enforcement as it should...American citizens deserve this as well.

As a federal agent, now retired, the oath of office that I took is much the same as every other law enforcement officer. This oath can be found at 5 USC § 3331...

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter. So help me God."¹¹

Supporting and defending the Constitution of the United States should have meaning and as an instructor who has trained thousands of people to do just that, I can find no better satisfaction than passing this on to my peers who hopefully have the same conviction in their heart. We should be good stewards of what we've been given, and I find no expiration date on that duty to support and defend what this country was founded on. ~

¹¹ Oath of Office, 5 U.S.C. § 3331, (2022), www.law.justia.com/codes/us/title-5/part-iii/subpart-b/chapter-33/subchapter-ii/sec-3331/

As a sworn officer, ... I will uphold the Constitution and honor the rights of all to life, liberty, equality, and justice. I will never employ unnecessary force. I will respect the privacy of people and communities that I serve, and I will fully obey the laws that I am sworn to enforce. I will live by example, remembering that my character and conduct, on-duty and off, directly influence the legitimacy of the policing profession. I will exercise self-restraint and maintain courageous calm in the face of danger,...

From the IACP Policing Code of Ethics

Curriculum Development and Job Task Analysis

IADLEST has brought together a group of experienced subject matter experts and we now offer Curriculum Development with a Job Task Analysis. We offer an entire entry-level academy curriculum, multiple in-service topics, or a single lesson. The process can be tailored to your agency, but below is the general process.

Phase I: Needs Assessment / JTA Data Collection:

IADLEST gathers respondent data from the individual agency, region, or an entire state. Surveys are distributed electronically to identify specific job tasks by assignment, frequency, and criticality.

Phase II: Curriculum Development: IADLEST will use data collected during Phase I to develop learning objectives and uniform lessons using adult learning best practices and NCP standards. All lesson deliverables will include a separate instructor and student manuscript for each topic, static visual aids, and testing instruments (written or skill-based). Phase II will be a collaborative process with as many stakeholders as possible.

Phase III: Piloting: IADLEST will provide train-the-trainer sessions and on-site technical support to pilot the new curriculum. Piloting is used to evaluate curriculum efficacy, logistics, and make any needed revisions before full implantation. Piloting also includes test instrument validation through data analysis.

IADLEST also offers a continued “maintenance” service for all topics developed. This would include annual literature reviews, updating materials, version control, archiving and making enhancements.

For more information email [Mike Becar](mailto:Mike.Becar@iadlest.org)

View our

[Curriculum Development and JTA Flyer](#)



IADLEST International and National Instructors

In 2018, in an attempt to bring attention to quality instructors within our law enforcement profession, IADLEST established its Instructor Certification Program.

Since then, hundreds of officers, and those in training academies, criminal justice agencies, academics and private training organizations have applied for and received certification as IADLEST Certified Instructors.

IADLEST offers two types of instructor certifications—the National Certified Instructor and the International Certified Instructor. The National certification is mainly for instructors who teach within the United States. The International certification is focused on all instructors who teach law enforcement officers in countries outside the United States. It is also useful for those instructors from the United States that teach in foreign countries as part of U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. Department of State, U.N. missions, or other assignments where the credibility of instructor qualifications are paramount to securing appointments or recognition of international partner countries. For more information about these certifications, see our webpage. [CLICK HERE](#)

Beyond Words:

Advanced Interview Skills for Law Enforcement

By Joe Auriemma

Communication is more than a necessary skill in law enforcement; it is a survival tool. Whether conducting a traffic stop, interviewing a victim, witness, or suspect, or managing a volatile confrontation, an officer's ability to connect, interpret, and respond effectively is critical for achieving safe and successful outcomes. Yet, traditional police training often overlooks the basic and nuanced art of communication, leaving officers ill-prepared for their roles' unpredictable and high-stakes demands.

The Communication Training Gap

Despite its importance, communication training remains alarmingly underemphasized in police education. Data from the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics reveals that basic training academies allocate far more hours to tactical and technical skills than communication-focused instruction. For example:

- Firearms training averages **60 hours**,
- Defensive tactics training averages **50-60 hours**,
- Emergency vehicle operations training averages **40 hours**.

In contrast, despite recent emphasis, de-escalation training still averages fewer than **20 hours**, and courses explicitly dedicated to communication skills, such as active listening, rapport-building, and nonverbal cue interpretation, often total fewer than **10 hours** if offered.

This disparity highlights the urgent need to prioritize advanced communication training, aligning it on equal footing with core tactical skills to better prepare officers for real-world scenarios.

The Power of Nonverbal Communication

Research shows that nonverbal communication, including body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, posture, and other unspoken cues, accounts for **60-90% of human communication**. In high-pressure environments, an officer's ability to interpret subtle nonverbal signals, such as hesitation, stress indicators, or physical shifts, provides invaluable insight into a subject's mindset and intentions. Mastering this skill can enhance situational awareness, ensure safer interactions, and improve investigative outcomes.

Law enforcement agencies should embrace advanced

communication training that integrates nonverbal communication analysis with evidence-based techniques like personality assessment to address this gap. This powerful combination equips officers to gather reliable information, defuse tense encounters, and navigate complex situations more effectively.

Communication Challenges in Modern Policing

The demands of contemporary policing require officers to excel in communication across various high-stakes situations. Historically, however, the field has relied on an outdated "learn it in the field" approach, where communication skills are assumed to develop passively through observation of senior officers.

With 24 years of law enforcement experience, including over a decade as an Academy instructor and five years as a supervisor, I have witnessed firsthand the significant shortcomings of this unstructured approach. It often leaves officers ill-prepared, forcing them to rely on trial and error in critical moments. Integrating structured, consistent communication training yields measurable improvements across three critical areas.

1. Enhancing Interviews with Victims, Witnesses, and Suspects

Advanced communication techniques allow officers to gather accurate and reliable information, even from individuals struggling with stress, fear, or fragmented memories. Key strategies include:

- **Open-ended prompts** to encourage free, uninterrupted narratives,
- **Active listening** and summarizing key points to clarify or expand on details.

These approaches can help build trust, demonstrate empathy, and prevent misunderstandings while preserving the integrity of investigations. Officers who employ these techniques often uncover critical details ethically and effectively.

2. De-escalating Volatile Situations

Integrating advanced communication skills with de-escalation techniques can also enhance an officer's ability to manage tense encounters safely and professionally.

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Integrating advanced communication skills with de-escalation techniques can also enhance an officer's ability to manage tense encounters safely and professionally. Recognizing nonverbal cues, such as defensive posture or agitation, and adapting communication styles allows officers to connect with individuals more effectively.

Understanding a subject's communication preferences, whether they respond better to a calm, measured tone or a firm, directive approach, empowers officers to tailor their interactions. This flexible and empathetic strategy leads to better outcomes, whether engaging with uncooperative suspects, hesitant witnesses, or emotionally charged individuals.

3. Detecting Deception and Assessing Credibility

Structured training in nonverbal analysis and evidence-based questioning techniques enables officers to identify inconsistencies and assess credibility confidently. Subtle indicators, such as changes in tone, body language, or baseline behavior, can signal stress or emotions, prompting officers to explore topics more deeply.

Effective strategies, such as strategically introducing evidence during interviews, allow the truthful subject to provide more fine-grained details while prompting deceptive subjects to reveal contradictions. This non-accusatory, professional approach fosters cooperation and minimizes defensiveness.

Replacing the "trial and error" mindset with structured, research-backed training ensures officers can handle these critical interactions with skill, confidence, and professionalism.

The Role of Scenario-Based Training

While classroom instruction provides foundational knowledge, mastering advanced communication skills requires **realistic, scenario-based training**. By simulating high-pressure environments, officers learn to:

- Build and maintain rapport under varied conditions,
- Rapidly adapt to subjects' communication styles,
- Interpret nonverbal cues to assess emotional states and credibility,
- Apply tailored questioning strategies to gather actionable information.

Role-playing exercises with expert feedback bridge the gap between theory and practice, enhancing knowledge retention and performance under stress. Research consistently supports scenario-based training as a cornerstone of effective law enforcement education.

A Lifelong Approach to Communication Training

Communication training must evolve from being treated as supplementary to becoming a core component of law enforcement education. From the academy to retirement, officers should receive ongoing, progressive training tailored to their roles:

- **Recruits** must develop foundational skills in nonverbal communication and adaptive strategies,
- **Detectives, supervisors, and command staff** should focus on advanced interrogation techniques, crisis management, and leadership communication.

By embedding communication training throughout an officer's career, agencies equip their personnel to manage the complexities of modern policing with confidence, ethical rigor, and professionalism.

Beyond Words: A Practical Training Solution

Advanced Strategic Communications has developed the **Beyond Words** course to address this critical need. This one-day training program equips law enforcement professionals with:

- Tools to interpret nonverbal cues,
- Techniques for personality assessment,
- Adaptive communication strategies for any situation.

Through group exercises and scenario-based learning, participants leave with practical, field-ready skills that improve officer safety, enhance investigative outcomes, and build community trust.

Conclusion

Effective communication is the foundation of successful policing. Advanced communication techniques go **beyond words**, empowering officers to connect, adapt, and respond with precision. By prioritizing structured, evidence-based training, agencies can transform their officers' ability to manage high-stakes interactions safely and effectively.

These skills are not optional; they are essential. They are the tools that define modern policing, ensuring officers serve their communities with professionalism, empathy, and confidence. ~

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About the Author

Joseph Auriemma, Jr., CFI, INCI, has over twenty-four years of experience with the New York State Police, retiring as a Senior Investigator. In this role, he supervised all criminal investigations conducted by the five Investigators and twenty-five uniform Troopers at his station.



Throughout his tenure with the New York State Police, Joseph worked as a uniform Trooper and a “backroom” investigator; he spent two years assigned to a Child Advocacy Center conducting investigations into crimes against children and worked six years in the Major Crimes Unit investigating homicides, suspicious deaths, and other serious crimes. Joseph spent seventeen years within the Bureau of Criminal Investigations, conducting thousands of interviews and interrogations, making substantial contributions to the investigations and their successful prosecutions.

Joseph has been a certified polygraph examiner since 2015 and was one of two Regional Coordinators overseeing the New York State Police Polygraph Unit. Joseph was the lead instructor at the New York State Police Academy for Investigative Interviewing, Crisis Negotiation, and the Basic and Advanced Search Warrant courses. In May 2019, Joseph received the George M. Searle Memorial Award, an award presented to individuals who have distinguished themselves in training and education within the State Police.

In addition to his standing as a Certified Forensic Interviewer (CFI), Joseph achieved the distinction of becoming an International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) Nationally Certified Instructor (INCI). He is also certified as a New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services Instructor for Police Topics. Joseph is the owner of Advanced Strategic Communications, LLC and can be reached at: info@ascjoe.com

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IADLEST Standards & Training Director Magazine

<https://www.iadlest.org/news/magazine>

IADLEST Model Standards for POST Administration

Revised February 2022

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It is in the spirit of growth and responsiveness that the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards & Training have resolved to establish a set of Model Standards to which all states may aspire.

“No one is compelled to choose the profession of a police officer, but having chosen it, everyone is obligated to live up to the standard of its requirements.”

INSTRUCTIONAL TIPS:

Trigger Drills – The foundation of perfect handgun practice

By Art Aplan

POLICE LINE DO NOT CROSS

Live fire with a handgun has the potential of masking improper trigger control. Trigger control should be taught in a manner conducive to learning, practiced in a way that provides proper repetition, and monitored so that immediate remediation is possible. This is the foundation of our basic law enforcement academy firearms program.

How can an instructor teach trigger control to others? How can that instructor check for learning? How can a skill be isolated to check for errors in performance?

From Larry Mudgett, former Chief Firearms Instructor for the LAPD, “Perfect practice makes perfect, and live fire is often flawed practice. Improper trigger control is not noticed by the shooter or instructor because it is masked by the recoil of the pistol, which occurs at almost the same time.”¹ In 1985, Mudgett created a series of trigger drills that were subsequently used at the LAPD academy with unparalleled success. These drills confirm understanding, kinesthetically demonstrate fundamentals and provide instant feedback as to the quality of the trainee’s trigger operation. I have been using them with similar positive results.

I have examined a wide variety of techniques and technology-based methods of teaching marksmanship. All have been found to provide a limited amount of learning and lack realism. When ammunition is completely absent in training, students know it, and their shooting performance accommodates the lack of live fire. There are three types of handgun training that can and should be considered perfect practice.

These are the techniques that will improve a shooter’s trigger control:

- Trigger drills conducted by a qualified instructor who is trained in their use and their application to trainees.
- Dry practice conducted in a safe, structured, and disciplined manner.
- Skip loading, also known as “ball and dummy drill,” is, when correctly done, the most valuable practice a shooter can conduct.²

The four primary trigger drills, the focus of this article, are used to check for 1) sighting and aiming ability, 2) to physically demonstrate correct trigger operation, 3) provide an effective demonstration of aiming and shooting, and 4) to let the student demonstrate that learning has occurred. Physically, engagement by the instructor with the shooter makes learning possible.

The requirement for the instructor to be a competent shooter is critical. Prior to engaging in these drills, student handguns must be checked for zero. The instructor must be able to pick up any handgun and shoot a consistent group. This will help to establish where the pistol shoots in relation to the sights. Failing to do this step may result in a lot of time and effort wasted on the range. Once the instructor has determined that the student’s handgun shoots to the point of aim, shooters move on to the drills.

Trigger drills are initially done with dummy or inert training rounds. This provides the trainee with the foundation on how to do the skills without the concerns related to live fire.

Trigger drill one is used to verify that a shooter is utilizing proper sight alignment and sight picture by isolating these skills from his ability to properly press the trigger. Trigger drills two, three, and four are used to teach proper trigger control.²

As with any training methodology, doing something incorrectly can result in failure to learn something with life-altering consequences—the firing of a firearm. Improper training creates a habit that may be difficult to change. A faulty introduction, such as “familiarization fire” of a pistol magazine’s worth of ammunition, can introduce a persistent training scar. In a worst-case scenario, the training scar may be impossible to repair.

I also use trigger drills to conduct remediation verify in-service performance. Trigger drill four, with the instructor monitoring actual operation of the trigger, will immediately indicate what is taking place when

¹ Lawrence & Stacey Mudgett, “Handgun Instructor Training Manual” (January 2016), 34.

² Ibid.

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the trigger is pressed. The drills can also remind a shooter of what they are supposed to be doing with their fundamentals. Unfortunately it is not always a solution as previous training may have deeply ingrained bad habits. Avoiding counter-productive training methods is the best approach. Strict application of Mudgett's methods and principles are a pathway to success.

Trigger drills have proven to be a *best practice* in our handgun training. In our academy program, ammunition use has dropped by a third. Our failure rate is a fraction of a percent over the last seven years. All of this leads to increased confidence and competence which should be the goal of every firearms training program. ~

About the Author

Art Aplan is a state academy training coordinator in the State of South Dakota and is responsible for firearms training and project facilitation. Mr. Aplan has developed a variety of firearms-related programs, including basic academy firearms, armed school staff, and pistol permit instructor training. More than 99% of his students pass academy firearms testing.



If you have an *Instructor Tip* you would like to pass along to other law enforcement instructors, send it to Standards & Training Director Magazine and we will be happy to share it in one of our future publications. Submissions can be sent to:

STDM@iadlest.com.



Project Related Resources

Academy Innovations Curriculum

The files below are curricula and integrated curriculum used during our study. The study was not designed to test and validate the curriculum, rather the instructional methodology. These files are provided as a resource for the field and serve as an example of how a topic can be integrated throughout an academy curriculum.

Each of the zipped files below contain Instructor's Guide, Student's Guide, PowerPoint Presentation, Handouts, and Practical Exercises Directions:

- [Communications Skills Documents](#) (37MB)
- [Persons in Crisis Communications Documents](#) (4MB)
- [Motor Vehicle Stops Communications Documents](#) (7MB)

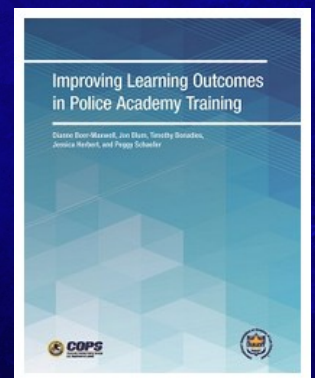
References and Resources:

- [Additional Reading - Literature List](#) (PDF)
- [Academy Innovations Project IRB Protocol](#)

- Raw data files: Contact Dianne Beer-Maxwell at: dianne@iadlest.org

Practitioner's Guidebook from the COPS Office:

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Re-Evaluating “Success” in an Investigative Interview

Chris Norris, CFI

If you are reading this article, it's safe to say that you are likely to be very much like myself – driven, focused and goal oriented. To a certain extent the measurements of your goals and objectives often help to outline and determine your level of success. Whether the goal is to organize the garage or achieve your matrixed measurements outlined by your job title, ultimately each one of you strives towards accomplishing your goals and achieving some degree of success. The same will hold true for your investigations and your investigative interviews.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines success as, “the accomplishment of an aim or purpose.” As I’m writing this the English Rugby team just pulled out a late win over France in the Six Nations tournament. Certainly, that was likely to be the aim and purpose of today’s match, success! However, a first-round loss to Ireland denies any chance at a Triple Crown or Grand Slam Trophy this year. Both were likely an aim and purpose of their overall tournament, therefore no success. So is success simply binary, or can it be measured at various points along your path. In the first part of this two-part series, I am going to reframe your goals, aims and purposes, and ultimately how you measure the success of an investigative interview.

What is a successful interview?

When I ask training classes I’m working with about goals related to an investigative interview, typically the early comments fall in line with, ‘*getting them to admit to what they’ve done. Obtaining all the details about the allegation. Finding out how they were able to do it.*’ and of course, ‘*get a confession!*’. All lofty goals and perhaps reasonable, however if you look objectively at the potential goals outlined above, they are all focused on one thing related to the interview itself. They are all focused on the outcome of the interview.

If we define our interview success solely on the outcome and information obtained, it is possible, through our own myopic perspective, we are creating a binary view of success and proceeding with biased guidance. Instead of solely focusing on the outcome of the interview, we need to redefine our success so we can measure our outlined aims and purposes with various points along the way. This outlook can help you achieve success at various points of the interview, and even without the Triple Crown Trophy.

Redefining Success

Although it may be a challenging task, you must resist defining success with outcome bias and refocus your goals around the process. Conventional wisdom holds that the success of an investigative interview is typically judged by its outcome alone. For instance, in witness interviews, a statement that conforms to the facts in evidence is considered a ‘*good*’ interview. Similarly, in an interview of an accused or suspected person, a confession has traditionally been considered a ‘*good*’ result.

The idea of judging the success of an interview, and therefore the performance of the interviewer, based on the desired outcome represents flawed thinking and leads to unsupportable conclusions. Outcome bias is present when performance is judged based on the *results* of an interview alone. This allows for the assessment of the quality of the interview to be good, if a desired result is achieved. Conversely, the performance of the interviewer is seen as worse if the desired outcome is not achieved.

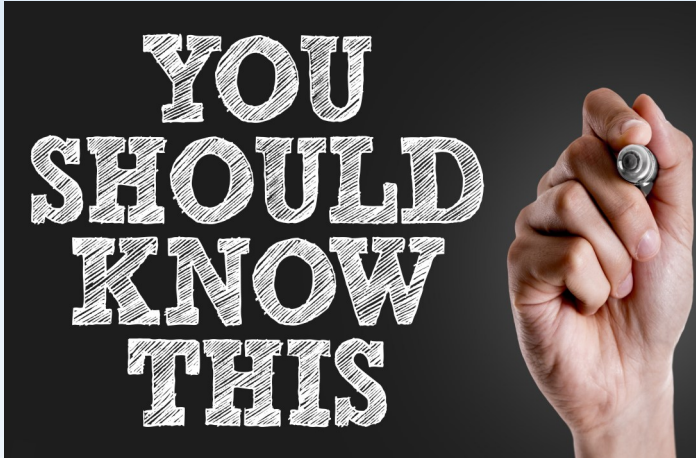
Outcome bias can become a problem in evaluating the success of the interviewer’s performance and quality of interview. This is especially true when it is used as a measurement to the exclusion of other factual information, applied processes or interviewer behaviors. Outcome bias holds that knowledge of an outcome can influence the judgement of the quality of actions, processes, or behaviors. Evaluating the performance of an interviewer should depend on the *process* of the interview and not the outcome.

If an interviewer’s performance is judged only on the results, the interviewer will focus on obtaining infor-

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mation that fits the previously held investigative theory or simply focus on getting a confession – the confirmation bias. But what happens when information obtained is seen as a good outcome, and that information is inaccurate? It simply does not address the quality of the interview or the interviewer’s performance in a meaningful way. Let’s look at the process that helps to redefine the success of your interviews.



Defining success through performance objectives

The drive to continuously improve is an important trait for your goals as a professional interviewer. The true professional never stops working diligently to improve their knowledge, skills, and abilities. As you begin to focus on the process rather than the outcome of the interview, it is important to be sure to set actionable goals throughout the course of the conversation. Three areas of focused competency and measurable goals should include the substance, the process, and the compliance of your interview.

- **Substance** – simply defined as the information obtained during the investigative interview. As you examine the substance of the information obtained you must consider various aims and purposes to this element. Was your interviewee thoroughly questioned in each topic? Were you able to obtain verifiable and relevant information during the voluntary process of the interview? What is the quality of the resulting statement obtained; audio, video, written or otherwise?
- **Process** – the way in which you, the interviewer, obtained the information. Measure your success by identifying an effective rapport between yourself and the interviewee. Evaluate the questions utilized and determine if question structure was appropriate and invited their narrative. Did you probe, identify gaps and challenge strategically while maintaining rapport? Were you fluid and flexible in your approach and apply adaptive communication skills while managing resistance and moments of limited cooperation?

Ultimately, did you proceed in a fair and objective manner?

- **Compliance** – the adherence to policy, procedures, evidence-based practices, and foundational principles of effective investigative interviewing. Conducting an interview while avoiding contamination, eliminating any use of coercive tactics, and considering all legal requirements are all measurable components to the interview. Components that redefine success. Did you follow agency policies, SOPs, and cultural advisements during the interview?

While utilizing these three areas of measurable goals you can easily transition your definition of achieving success well beyond the outcome itself. The importance of self-evaluation, peer-review and subordinate feedback of the interview cannot be understated. During those moments of self-evaluation or even feedback, the first question you ask yourself, or your peers, should *NOT* be, “did you get a confession?”

Plan and prepare for investigative success!

It is important to take time to set actionable and achievable goals for the interview process. When doing so, redefine and refocus your aims and purpose on the interview and ensure that you plan and prepare your goals on process rather than outcome, while always avoiding any counterproductive techniques to the interview. If you consider the three areas of measurable goals then you too can achieve success, even without a confession.

I often measured my success based upon my interviewee thanking me at the conclusion of the interview, “*I appreciate how you handled this sir.*” As you can see, success can be defined in many terms, even though you are not raising the Triple Crown Trophy. In part two of this series, I will discuss the proper evaluation process and how to deliver feedback for continued improvement. You continue to strive to become more successful at achieving your goals, but that is only possible if you are focusing on the correct areas of improvement. ~

About the Author

Chris Norris is a Certified Forensic Interviewer and the Director of International and Webinar Training at Wicklander-Zulawski & Associates.



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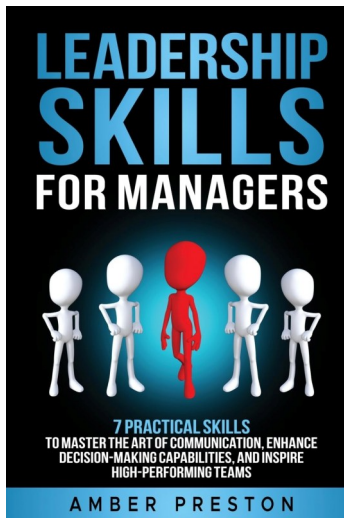
Leadership Skills for Managers: 7 Practical Skills to Master the Art of Communication, Enhance Decision-Making Capabilities, and Inspire High-Performing Teams – (2024).

Every leader experiences doubts about their abilities, but what sets great leaders apart is their dedication to keep improving and serving, no matter their insecurities. Whether you're leading a small team or a large organization, this guide provides valuable insights and practical advice for driving performance and achieving results.

This book teaches practical communication strategies:

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An interesting, easy-read, but effective text for shaping a better work environment. (152 pages) ~



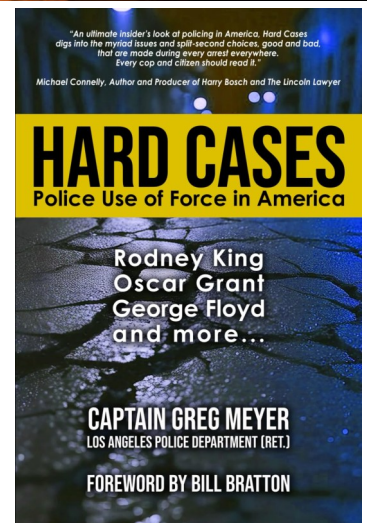
HARD CASES: Police Use of Force in America –

(February 2025)

This book is for readers inside and outside law enforcement who are interested in a close examination of police uses of force. Its purpose is to (1) to provide factual information that contrasts with media-driven myths and misinformation for three famous cases; (2) to examine several controversial but common police tools and tactics with an eye toward improving outcomes; and (3) to enhance public understanding of the role of police officers when they confront resisting suspects.

As a police officer, the author has been involved as an expert witness or consultant in hundreds of police use-of-force cases across America. The majority involved police shootings, TASER uses, other uses of force, and arrest-related deaths. Among the cases, were those involving Rodney King, Oscar Grant, and George Floyd. The insights offered in this book are drawn from his experience.

Topics include when is a police use of force reasonable according to commonly accepted police procedures and the law? When is it not? How do myths and misinformation about incidents influence public perception and reaction? How should we go about improving policy, training, equipment, and tactics for this unavoidable aspect of policing? (415 pages) ~





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