



Real-World De-Escalation: **Train the Trainer** 16 Hour In-Person Course Outline

Blue to Gold Law Enforcement Training
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GOAL

learners

In-service training for certified law enforcement, including patrol, investigations, specialty units, and administration

length of instruction

Two days, 16 hours total

Help officers remain in control, especially when dealing with high stress situations. Give officers common sense, practical tools that both help prevent situations from escalating and reduce use of force encounters

Course Introduction

60 minutes

1. Instructor introduction
2. Explain the course objective
3. Explain course expectations
4. Cover course disclaimers / consider instructor liability
5. Discuss public perception of police with regard to use of force
6. Identify statistics regarding police use of force
7. Identify de-escalation goals / importance of de-escalation training
8. Disarming the “Why do I need to know this?” Student – discuss financial cost to agencies per year in liability lawsuits and recognize the impact of officer separations annually
9. Identify types of compliance and cost of each. Discuss statistics supporting the value of de-escalation training

module 2

Non-escalation

190 minutes

1. Contagious Calmness – You will not bring calm to the storm if you arrive like a raging torrent
2. Public considers you a professional, they have higher expectations about your performance. Any student can have a bad day – but we are not permitted to allow it to affect the way we do business
3. Officers’ physical prowess is apparent when they utilize their tools effectively. Similarly, verbal de-escalation skills require intentional practice
4. Explain how professionals have an attribute of “contagious calmness”
5. Discuss the hierarchy of risk
6. Discuss the hierarchy of knowledge

7. Compare law enforcement to lawyers, with the point that both are professionals.
8. Projecting contagious calmness is a process that starts before you ever arrive on scene. Have students identify techniques by which officers can arrive calmly and mentally-prepared.
9. There are three benefits for contagious calmness:
 - Better decisions
 - Calms others around you
 - They also make better decisions
10. Explain sympathetic emotion, and the three techniques to prevent it:
 - Tactical breathing
 - Don't yell
 - Have the mindset of an actor
11. Explain why professionals can be prone to losing their cool when they do not take care of themselves. Identify the importance of recognizing your own triggers and those in the officers you supervise. Discuss real-world examples students have observed.
12. Show respect – even the most depraved criminals want to receive respect. Recognize this basic human desire and incorporate it into your interactions.
13. Explain the reason behind the orders you are issuing – everyone wants to feel like they have free will. Everyone wants to appear rationale. Alpha personalities, especially those who are under the influence will push back, often violently, against the concept of doing something “just because” the police are telling them to.
14. Limit Demands – discuss culture of entitlement and how it only adds more truth to the concept, “All people want to be asked rather than being told to do something.”
15. Identify the costs of the “Command and Demand” approach to law enforcement.

module 3

De-escalation Introduction

120 Minutes

1. Define de-escalation
2. Explain the Cycle of Violence, as it relates to PIC and responding officers
3. Define precursors and identify crisis catalysts: SADHATS
4. Recognize the impact of trauma on those in crisis
5. Discuss Flight, Fight, and Freeze, and the different responsibilities of the Evolved Brain versus the Primitive Brain
6. Define the concept of amygdala hijack and its impact on people in crisis, as well as how to reduce the likelihood of amygdala hijack in students through mental preparedness
7. Identify the concept of Lawful but Awful, and how that is not the optimal outcome for which we strive

De-Escalation Helps People Restore Self-Regulation

280 minutes

1. First, define self-regulation and the goal of de-escalation as it relates to restoring self-regulation.
2. Next, identify that verbal de-escalation techniques should not be the priority when engaging people displaying active aggression.
3. Identify the behaviors associated with active aggression, so officers know how to articulate what they are seeing.
4. Identify factors common in Suicide by Cop situations so officers can recognize the threat to determine if they are facing a situation in which verbal de-escalation techniques can be utilized safely.
5. **Identify the De-Escalation Tools:** Show Empathy, Slow Things Down, Effectively Engage, Reinforce Compliance, Confirm Non-Compliance
6. **Show Empathy:** the most powerful De-Escalation Tool at an officer's disposal. Officers should make a needs assessment. Basically, every person in crisis has a need.
7. **Slow Things Down:** When possible, decisions made after deliberate considerations will be better. Using the phrase "Slow it down" can break attentional narrowing / inattentional blindness and help officers restore good tactics.
8. **Don't Compromise Tactics:** Our desire to save lives and reduce the amount of force required by compelled compliance should not overrule our utilization of good tactics.
9. **Be Well-Rounded** – if you are confident in your physical abilities and those of your partners, if you are confident in your knowledge of the law, then this confidence will manifest itself and make you more effective at verbal de-escalation.

15 Minute Break

10. **Engage:** When engaging, there are several best practices that naturally help to calm a subject. Introduce yourself, stay calm, utilize active listening, utilize empty hands when safe to do so, remove sunglasses, minimize the offenses, and maintain appropriate distance.
11. **Reinforce Compliance:** If a person is complying with your requests or commands, even in part, acknowledge their compliance and that you appreciate them willing to work with you to find a resolution that is acceptable to everyone.

12. **Confirm Non-Compliance:** Recognize that at some point, verbal de-escalation may fail and compelled compliance must be put into action. If possible, before compelling compliance, confirm that they are not willing to work with you toward a peaceful resolution.

13. **Try to Communicate** – Recognize that not all situations can be resolved with verbal de-escalation. Regardless, recognize the value in trying. May have some impact on reducing the amount of force necessary. May reduce likelihood of civil or criminal liability for officers. May help to appease the public, the media, or the department. May bring a measure of peace to the family.

module 5

Use of Force Case Law

120 Minutes

1. Identify major Use of Force cases and the factors courts considered in determining whether a particular use of force was justified in a given situation.
2. Recognize the facts and circumstances to be articulated when a subject's actions dictate an officer's use of force.
3. Articulate steps and actions taken to minimize the use of force, and how the subject's actions or responses to those steps dictated the officers' course of action.

module 6

Scenarios

120 Minutes

1. Students will assemble in break-out groups after being provided material for six scenarios. Each of the scenarios will have a person in crisis, responding officers, and evaluators. The scenario materials will be dispersed so each student will have the opportunity to play multiple roles.

End of Class