

EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE

Principles of De-Escalation "Defusing Critical Incidents" - 6 Hours

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: The purpose of this course is to provide law enforcement personnel with the de-escalation and tactical communication tools and skills needed to respond to a particular set of circumstances, namely: persons behaving erratically and perhaps dangerously; behavior that is often the result of mental illness, drugs/alcohol, PTSD, intellectual / developmental disability, or other conditions that may limit a person's ability to understand or respond rationally; and the person is either ***unarmed*** or has a ***weapon other than a firearm***.

Learning Need: Law enforcement officers routinely respond to incidents involving persons who are *not* armed with a firearm, and who come to the attention of the police because of their mental illness or other condition, not because they have committed a crime. In these types of incidents officers should be trained in a wider array of options, including opportunities to "slow the situation down" in order to avoid the need for use of force.

Learning Objectives: Students will receive training for dynamic and potentially dangerous encounters. Specifically, in the key areas of decision-making, crisis recognition and response, tactical communications and negotiations, and operational safety tactics. Students will be provided the opportunity to practice these skills through video case studies and scenario-based training exercises.

Evaluation of Learning: Students will demonstrate understanding of the concepts through application of skills through scenario based training exercises.

Pre-requisite: POST certified 40 hour basic CIT course.

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- I. Introduction
 - A. Instructor introductions and roster distribution
 - B. Show a current video case study
 - C. What this training is not:
 - 1. The training does not instruct officers to walk away from danger.
 - 2. The training does not tell officers that they cannot use their firearms when necessary.
 - 3. The training is not about limiting options for officers. Rather, it is about increasing officers' options in the types of situations covered in the training.
 - D. Four focus areas:
 - 1. Patrol Officer Response
 - 2. Non-Firearm events
 - 3. Integration of CIT, Communications and Tactics
 - 4. Officer Safety and Wellness
- II. Critical Incident Decision Making (CIDM)
 - A. Ethical Core of Critical Incident Decision Making
 - 1. Police ethics
 - 2. The values of the police agency
 - 3. Proportionality
 - 4. The sanctity of human life
 - B. The Process
 - 1. Collect information
 - 2. Assess the situation, threats, risks
 - 3. Consider legal authority and policy
 - 4. Identify options and course of action
 - 5. Act, review, re-assess
 - C. Benefits
 - 1. The CIDM helps officers to organize their decision-making process and reach better decisions.
 - 2. It helps officers to explain their actions after the fact. An officer who is accustomed to using the CIDM will be able to recall and explain their thought processes.

III. Crisis Recognition and Response

A. Recognizing a person in crisis

1. Definition of a Crisis: an episode of mental and/ or emotional upheaval or distress that creates instability or danger, and causes that is considered disruptive by the community, by friends or family members of the person, and/or by the person himself
 - a) It's episodic
 - b) It creates instability or danger
 - c) Other people consider it disruptive or in some cases, dangerous

B. How does a Crisis occur: Often there is a precipitating event

1. Mental Illness
2. Substance abuse
3. Medical conditions
4. Situational distress
5. Developmental disabilities
6. Physical disabilities

C. How does the Reporting Party describe the subject's activity

1. Is there a crime
2. What is the seriousness of the crime
3. Is the crime potentially a result of a person in crisis
4. What is the threat
5. If no crime does the nature of the subject's activity present a risk to them or the public

D. Officer Response

1. It is not the responding Officer's job to diagnose the factors that may be causing a person's behavior
2. Focus on the behavior
 - a) Is the person responding to your questions or directions?
 - b) Is the person coherent?
 - c) Is the person able to make eye contact?
 - d) Agitated?
 - e) Talking to himself?
3. The mission is to assess the situation and make it safe, de-escalate if possible

E. Tips for responding effectively and safely in the first minutes, before additional personnel arrive:

1. Recognize that an arrest may not be the only objective.
2. Recognize that a quick apprehension may not be necessary, don't rush.
3. Create distance and cover

4. The first interaction is key to setting a proper tone.
5. Verbally de-escalate the situation as much as possible, aiming to get the person to a state where he or she can function and reason more clearly.
6. Communicate
7. Be careful of body language
8. Avoid "triggers"
9. Look for "hooks"
10. Don't automatically view non-compliance as threat
11. Manage your reactions

IV. Tactical Communication

A. Active listening

1. 80-20 Rule
 - a) 80% listening & 20% talking
2. Listen to understand not to respond
 - a) [REDACTED]
 - [REDACTED]
 - c) [REDACTED] make a connection, build rapport or modify behavior
3. Avoid distractions
[REDACTED]
4. Show them you are listening
 - a) "Yes, I See"
 - b) "So you are upset with..."
 - c) Acknowledge what they are experiencing
 - d) Do not dismiss
5. Use silence to your advantage
 - a) Don't feel the need to respond immediately
 - b) If there is no immediate threat don't be in a hurry to speed up the conversation.

B. Non-Verbal Communication Skills

1. General concepts:
 - a) Project the right body language
 - b) Make eye contact
 - c) Modulate your tone of voice

C. Verbal Communication Skills

1. Use team concept
2. Establish rapport
3. Ask questions and make requests one at a time

4. Ask open ended questions
 - a) Especially "What" and "How" questions
5. Encourage conversation
 - a) Gain clarification, "I hear you saying___. Is that correct?"
6. Provide Options
 - a) [REDACTED]
 - b) [REDACTED]
 - c) [REDACTED]
7. Emotional contagion
 - a) Subjects may not understand all of your words
 - b) But they will probably sense your tone and attitude

V. Operational Safety Tactics

A. Successful resolution of critical incidents require:

1. Recognizing the nature of the incident
2. Communicating well with subject, officers and involved persons
3. Sound tactics.

B. Pre-Response Considerations

1. [REDACTED]
2. [REDACTED]
3. Preparing yourself
 - a) Understand bodies reaction to stress
 - b) Control individual reactions

C. Effective Response

1. Continue gathering information
 - a) Ongoing process that helps refine treat assessment.
 - b) Assessing threat
 - a) [REDACTED]
 - b) [REDACTED]
2. Respond as a team
 - a) Utilize defined roles
 - b) [REDACTED]
 - c) Assign other roles as additional officers arrive
 - d) Supervisor or senior officer should manage the overall response
3. [REDACTED]

4. [REDACTED]
5. [REDACTED]
 - b) Call out for additional resources
 - c) Use tactical communications
 - d) Identify options and develop a plan
 - e) Intervene only if there is an immediate threat to others life/safety
 - f) There may be multiple routes to success, use multiple different attempts
 - g) [REDACTED]
6. Post-Response Considerations
 - a) After Action Review
 - a. Actions taken
 - b. Agency policy and procedures
 - c. Decision-making
 - b) AAR – Process
 - a. Basics of After-Action Review
 - i. Conducted immediately after critical incident
 - ii. Goal to improve future performance
 - c) AAR ground rules
 - a. Facilitators role
 - d) Critical Decision-Making Model
 - a. Information requested and received
 - b. Review of assessment of situation
 - c. What impact did incoming information have
 - d. Review of Policy in decision making process
 - e. How were options identified
 - f. Were possible outcomes reviewed and re-assessed
 - e) Discuss role of De-escalation relative to department policy and AB392/SB230
 - a. 835a – Ability, Opportunity and Apparent Intent
 - b. 835a(a)(2) – “Shall use other available resources and techniques if reasonably safe and feasible...”

VI. Integration and Practice

- A. Scenario based training: Students will participate in several scenarios designed to test the following key skill areas:
 1. Decision-making
 2. Crisis recognition and response,

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3. Tactical communications and negotiations
4. Operation safety tactics