

Dynamics of Officer/ Citizen Encounters

Dates: July 6th-7th 2017

Location: Henderson, Kentucky

Cost: Free

Register: POC Sgt Jeff Welch jlwelch@cityofhendersonky.org

In an era of intense public scrutiny of law enforcement, organizations are re-examining how officers interact with the public. This course provides evidence-based methods of simultaneously enhancing public relations while increasing officer safety. This course is founded upon the principle of transforming good officers into great ones.

Through case study, interactive discussion, and video, officers will learn to:

- “Unleash the Power of Unconditional Respect” to increase officer safety and effectiveness
- Examine current legal principles affecting all officer/citizen contacts
- Detect anomalies from baseline behaviors that indicate potential threats
- Identify characteristics of armed individuals utilizing enhanced visual assessment
- Identify solutions to common stop challenges such as “open-carry” advocates, sovereign citizens, refusal to identify, videotaping of enforcement actions, and more
- Define the Guardian Mindset and understand what it is and what it isn’t

OVERVIEW

Police interactions with citizens are in the national spotlight. What previously wouldn't have made the local paper, now makes national news and the presence of video during these interactions has become the norm, not the exception. Officers need the tools to effectively engage citizens in a professional manner without compromising their own safety in the process. That's what Dynamics of Police/ Citizen Encounters is all about. Built upon the concept of transforming good officers into great ones, this course provides officers a new cache of principles designed to enhance their safety while simultaneously improving the quality of contacts with citizens. It addresses the most challenging aspects of police interactions and provides practical tools to improve performance. This course does more than talk about situational awareness and threat assessment. It explores observation of human behavior from an evidence based perspective. It provides officers with the knowledge to recognize pre-incident contextual cues that indicate that a citizen may not comply with lawful orders or worse, may assault the officer. Participants in the course will learn more than the standard “pre-assault indicators” taught in so many training programs nationwide. They will learn to identify norms and deviations from those norms that can predict future behavior. The current climate of our society in terms of police interactions with the citizens has created a new set of issues which many officers are not prepared to deal with, such as dealing with and enforcement of free speech issues, citizens refusing to identify themselves, citizens baiting officers into confrontations over “open carry” laws, and a general refusal to submit to an officer's lawful authority. This has caused confusion and hesitation on the part of many officers.

In today's law enforcement climate, many agencies are focused on concepts of community policing, establishing community trust and eliminating the "warrior" mindset. However, there are still violent criminals who will not cooperate with lawful authority and have no problem violently attacking the police. Officers must be able to walk that line between being "Guardians of the Community" and still be able to immediately recognize when their lives are in danger and employ techniques to protect themselves and the public.

In order to do this, officers need to have a clear understanding of the legal aspects which govern how they interact with citizens, as well as an understanding of how to accomplish their mission on each call while treating everyone with unconditional respect. This must be combined with the constant realization that they can never let their guard down.

Identify what is meant by “Unleashing The Power of Unconditional Respect™” and its importance in every encounter citizens have with the police.

- Understanding what “Respect” is, and what it is not
- Understanding “Respect” is an officer safety tactic
- The importance of communication, specifically - listening
- Understanding different social norms and customs
- Understanding and operating with discretion
- The importance of empathy and compassion

Identify the legal concepts which affect every encounter police have with citizens.

Consensual encounters with citizens

- Encounters based on reasonable suspicion
- Encounters based on probable cause
- Duties, responsibilities and obligations when dispatched to situations
- “Free Speech” enforcement
- Citizens who refuse to identify themselves
- Dealing with “Sovereign Citizens”
- Confronting “Open Carry” individuals
- Dealing with citizens who videotape the police

Identify characteristics of armed individuals and visual screening techniques to detect individuals carrying concealed weapons.

- Review the research related to Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA)
- Identify specific behavioral cues of those carrying firearms
- Legal aspects of stop and frisk

Identify the concept of Threat Assessment and Situational Awareness as it relates to tactical approaches with citizens and to proactively manage situations through behavioral clues, establishing baselines and identifying anomalies.

- Identifying what Threat Assessment is and is not
- Identify pre-contact cues that contribute to situational awareness
- Determining what is normal (baseline) for a given situation and identify anomalies
- Understand the “Left of Bang”™ model for decision making
- Proper utilization of Cover, Concealment and Barriers
- Identifying area of complacency and strategies to overcome it
- Vigilance during prisoner transport.
- Proper mindset and tactics during handcuff removal.

Identify the importance of constantly utilizing sound, officer safety principles while operating in the “Guardian” mindset.

- Many officers have been trained to operate only under the “Warrior Mindset”. The pendulum has swung the other way to a “Guardian Mindset”, which leaves many officers believing they can’t defend themselves when appropriate.
- Understanding that a Guardian Mindset does not mean to abandon sound tactical principles
- Believing in the virtue of “Guardians of the Community”
- Understanding that officers are often thrust into the role of warrior to fulfill their obligation as guardians.
- A clear understanding that it is not “either / or”, but that both are constantly in play.

This course is supplemented with video review of actual incidents which reinforce the concepts being delivered, as well as individual and group exercises.