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Force Science® **Training: Two-Day Program**

The program

This eye-opening two-day program is designed to clearly present, in a practical and understandable fashion, the results of the most cutting edge research into the dynamics of human behavior during life-threatening encounters. The class is relevant for a wide range of law enforcement professionals including, but not limited to, line officers, administrators, investigators, IA personnel, critical incident teams, police psychologists and administrators.

The class will explore *Force Science*®, the application of unbiased scientific principles and processes in repetitive physical experiments designed to determine the true nature of suspect provocation and officer response (action-reaction dynamics). The goal of the program is to encourage law enforcement professionals to apply the important concepts revealed in this research when investigating, reconstructing, recalling or otherwise analyzing a use of force. The integration of this information has been proven to enhance the accuracy and thoroughness of decisions made relative to behavior and performance during the incident.

The *Force Science*® Institute uses sophisticated time-and-motion measurements to document—for the first time—critical hidden truths about the physical and mental dynamics of life-threatening events, particularly officer-involved shootings. Its startling findings profoundly impact officer training and safety, and the public’s naive perceptions. In fact, the Institute’s findings have been directly credited with saving officer lives on the street and with preventing some officers from going to prison after being wrongly accused of criminally using deadly force.

***Force Science*® researchers have destroyed myths and discovered cold facts about some of the most controversial force issues, including:**

- How threatening suspects end up shot in the back by well-trained officers making valid, lawful shooting decisions.
- Why officers continue to fire “extra” rounds in high-adrenalin confrontations after the threat has ended.

- What popular tactics used by some officers trying to reduce lag time actually put the officers at greater risk.
- How perceptual distortions and stress-induced memory gaps can impact an officer's ability to accurately recall incident details.
- How quickly suspects can launch an attack and why officers and trainers must take *Force Science*® speed studies into account when preparing for a confrontation.
- What “ready” position is *really* best for reducing lag time in an armed encounter.
- Why unsnapping a holster in an attempt to decrease lag time may *not* be sound tactical idea.
- How investigators can best “mine” officers’ memories and avoid interviewing mistakes that can put the officer, the investigator and the entire department in jeopardy.

The Agenda

Purpose: This program is designed to clearly present, in a practical and understandable fashion, the results of today's most cutting edge research into the dynamics of human behavior during life threatening encounters. The goal of the class is to encourage and assist investigators, attorneys, active police personnel and others involved in the analysis of officer-involved shootings to apply the most recent, scientifically based understandings of these dynamics in a manner that will enhance the accuracy and thoroughness of their decisions.

Applied analysis: Throughout the program, elements of several high profile use-of-force cases in which Force Science findings were cited and subsequently influenced the investigation and/or impacted a decision will be explored.

******NOTE: Information on new *Force Science* research projects and findings will be integrated into these two-day classes as it comes available. This may include information on the recent *Force Science* “Armed Prone Suspect” Study, the “Exhaustion” Study and the “Traffic Stop” Study.**

Agenda

Day 1

Schedule: Start time for this day will be 8:30am. There will be up to four short breaks throughout the day and a one-hour lunch. Class will conclude at 4:30pm.

I. Introduction

A. The Problem With Misunderstood Police Shootings

B. An overview of the *Force Science*[®] Institute

- 1) Explanation of the Institute's mission
- 2) Description of the research and how it is conducted
- 3) How the Center's findings impact investigations

Learning Objectives:

- To introduce participants to the type of new research being conducted
- To make clear the importance of the findings
- To explain how applying the findings will enhance the accuracy and thoroughness of investigations.

II. Enhancing Investigations Through An Understanding of Officer Survival Challenges

Action and Reaction

1. Definition of and critical differences between the two terms
2. Findings on time differences between action and reaction
3. Understanding the profound impact an understanding of officer and offender actions and reactions have on investigations: accurate investigations and reconstructions are not possible without a full understanding of the dynamics of action and reaction

Research Findings on Officer and Offender Behaviors During Shooting Incidents

1. Speed and accuracy with a firearm in pressurized, dynamic and fluid encounters
 - a) Results of studies on officers involved in shooting situations and explanation of the 20 different officer behaviors identified as common during deadly force encounters
 - b) Results of studies on offenders who have shot officers and the 15 different behaviors observed in these shooters
 - c) Shot placement: Where officers are most likely hit and why
 - d) Behavioral differences between experienced and inexperienced shooters

Reactionary Shortcuts

1. Identification of the behaviors officers exhibit when trying to gain a time advantage against a threatening subject.
 - a) Pros and cons of shortcuts

Interaction and comparison

1. Detail and interpret scenario outcomes based on the variety of officer and offender behaviors identified as possible/probable during deadly force encounters.

Learning Objectives:

- Help participants gain a deeper, more thorough understanding of the human dynamics and behavioral characteristics of both officers and offenders during deadly force encounters.
- Explain the critical impact this behavioral understanding has on investigations.
- Explain why accurate reconstructions of officer-involved shootings are not possible without an understanding of the dynamics of action and reaction.

III. Understanding the Limits of Human Perception Under Stress

A. Vision

1. Exploration of the visual anomalies experienced during high stress, life-threatening encounters and their impact on officers' performance and ability to accurately recall incident details
2. Benefits and liabilities of visual changes under stress

B. Attention

1. "Selective Attention"
2. Inattentional Blindness"
3. The "Attentional Grid"
3. Impact of attentional phenomenon on situational awareness and recall

C. "The London Study"

1. Study One: Results of the latest research on perception and memory under stress.
2. Study Two: The impact of high level training on perception, decision-making, performance and memory.

D. Training and Investigations

1. Explanation of how training can be used to prepare officers to better navigate the perceptual challenges of high stress encounters and position them to better recall event details.

Learning Objectives:

- Help participants understand what kind of human behavior and performance is and is not possible during high stress encounters.
- Explain the physiological realities of the human senses in life threatening encounters and prepare investigators to approach officer-involved shootings with these in mind.
- Help participants to understand what are considered “normal” gaps in memory and to better identify attempts at deception through that understanding.

IV. Question & Answer With Class Participants

Day 2

Schedule: Start time for this day will be 8:30am. There will be up to four short breaks throughout the day and a one-hour lunch. Class will conclude at 4:30pm.

I. “Execution” Shots

A. Introduction of research findings resulting from studies of highly controversial cases involving situations where officers are often wrongly accused of criminal behavior

- 1) Offender shot in the back
- 2) Offender shot while falling down
- 3) Offender shot after threatening behavior has ceased

II. “Extra” Shots

A. Exploration of research into the time it takes an officer to recognize that the dynamics of a threatening situation have changed and subsequently alter his or her behavior.

B. Discussion of current research on human reaction times.

C. “The Tempe Study”

- 1) Presentation of sophisticated research into the speed of mental processing and decision-making and the time it takes an officer to start and stop firing in deadly force encounters

III. Unintentional Discharges

A. Presentation of the latest research on officers who have experienced unintentional discharges

- 1) Why they occur
- 2) When they’re most likely to occur
- 3) Cues investigators should watch for that could indicate a need to challenge an officer’s claim that a discharge was unintentional

IV. Synchronous Shootings

A. Presentation of research findings that debunk the commonly held myth of “contagious gunfire”

Learning Objectives:

- Help participants understand the scientific realities behind some commonly held myths
- Help participants apply these findings to enhance the accuracy and thoroughness of their investigations
- Prevent participants from perpetuating the problem of inaccurate and misdirected investigatory practices.

V. The Devaluation of Spent Shell Casing Placement in Investigations

A. Presentation of ground-breaking research that reverses the belief that the location of spent shell casings at a shooting scene is indicative of the position and action of officers who fired the rounds

VI. Investigating Cases Involving “Unarmed Victims”

A. Explanation of the role of “contextual cues” in officer decision-making and why officers may perceive an immediate threat even though the person they are facing is unarmed

B. Discussion of how investigators can most effectively work with and interview officers involved in the shooting of unarmed individuals to most accurately determine the facts of the incident.

VII. Recommendations for Investigative Enhancement

A. Establishing contact and developing rapport with officers involved in shooting incidents.

A. Understanding best practices for most effectively and accurately “mining” officers’ memories after high-stress shooting incidents.

B. Tips for recognizing cues of deception and suspicious claims of lack of recall

C. Suggestions for best practices for working with an officer following a shooting.

D. Direction on how investigators can help facilitate an officer’s emotional recovery following a shooting

VIII. Question and Answer With Class Participant