RANDY MEANS & ASSOCIATES, LLC
— RMA —

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Project Director
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THE I.M.P.A.C.T. PROJECT

Interpersonal Communications Skills
Training and Assessment Tools
for Law Enforcement

Randy Means
Executive Director
*Career Law Enforcement
Advisor/Trainer*

Problem There is no consistently applied performance standard for the most important skill domain in law enforcement.

Human relations and interpersonal communications skills are the most important skills a law-enforcement officer could possibly have, but there is wide disagreement on what exactly those skills look like in field applications. Consequently, training, supervision and discipline are inconsistent, at best. Horror stories abound, as do claimed successes. Widely varying theories and applications receive anecdotal and experiential credit and blame, but there has been little concerted or systematic application of subject matter expertise to this important matter. Officer performance runs the gamut from sound to poor with little useful organizational feedback or intervention.

Solution Using true subject matter expertise to 1) Identify performance criteria and standards for officer-citizen communication, 2) Develop correlated evaluative tools, and 3) Create an associated training program.

This project recognizes the criticality of human relations and interpersonal communication skills and the need to assure the presence of those skills in new and incumbent law enforcement officers. To that end, the Project has identified appropriate performance criteria and created "real life" evaluation scenarios for assuring these skills in officer-citizen contacts. It has also created correlated remediation tools, including computer/video-based training for use as necessary and/or desirable.

Credibility A faculty of Subject Matter Experts whose qualifications include both extensive law enforcement experience and relevant, advanced academic credentials developed all project criteria.

The Subject Matter Experts average 30 years of full-time experience as extremely successful police officers. They include two veteran, licensed psychologists, as well as experts with Master's Degrees in Communication Studies, Doctorate Degrees in Human Development, and Ph.D.'s in psychology. All teach law enforcement communication skills. Most teach in upper division college and university settings. All teach nationally, some internationally. Also, the Project Executive Director has a relevant Doctorate Degree, 30 years' experience in evaluating the proper use of police authority, and has taught this subject nationally for many years. This is the strongest team ever assembled for the purpose of identifying performance criteria in officer-citizen communication.

Benefits Improvement in officer performance in this skill domain will strengthen community relations, increase investigative effectiveness, reduce complaints and lawsuits, minimize use of force, enhance officer and public safety, improve working relationships, and reduce work-related stress.

Interpersonal Management Program And Communication Training

The Faculty
Vast Law Enforcement Experience
Advanced, Relevant Academic Credentials
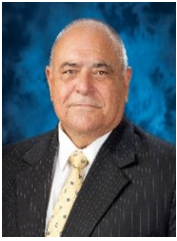
Paul Whitesell, Ph.D is a recently retired Superintendent of the Indiana State Police and a practicing psychotherapist specializing in police issues and police personnel. He has been a full-time police officer since 1974 with Indiana State Police, the Fort Wayne (IN) Police Department and several other municipal agencies. He holds Diplomat status in three areas within the American College of Forensic Examiners. He travels extensively presenting on issues of human behavior, police procedure and interpersonal communication and has been an adjunct faculty member at Indiana University. He teaches officer safety and survival nationally and has both academic and applied expertise in police combat communication and psychology. A Marine close-combat instructor and Vietnam veteran, he is a court certified expert in defensive tactics and has been inducted into two martial arts halls of fame.

Dennis Conroy, Ph.D is a licensed Psychologist and retired after over 30 years service as a police officer and supervisor with the Saint Paul (MN) Police Department. During that time his diverse assignments included Patrol Officer, Juvenile Officer, Patrol Supervisor, Vice/Narcotics Investigator, Director of the Professional Development Institute, Director of the Field Training Program, Communications Center Supervisor and Director of the Employee Assistance Program. During his more than 30 years of clinical experience in psychology, he has taught regularly in upper division collegiate settings, blending psychology and law enforcement in such courses as Human Behavior in Law Enforcement and The Psychology of Victims. His High Risk Communications seminars are taught nationally. He is the author of the book, *Officers At Risk* and a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran.

Late Brian Fitch, Ph.D is a just-retired 34 year veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He has worked a variety of assignments in field operations, the detective division, training and has worked as a supervisor in both patrol and confinement. A lieutenant and communication skill trainer for the Sheriff's Department, Dr. Fitch held a state university faculty position in psychology for ten years and has developed and instituted a variety of acclaimed communication courses throughout the country. He was featured on an *A&E* television special on interrogation techniques and has taught interview and interrogation courses nationally and internationally, including for foreign governments. A conflict management expert, his Master's Degree is from the University of California system; his Doctorate Degree is from the Fielding Graduate Institute.

Sandra Terhune-Bickler, Ph.D has degrees from UCLA, California State University-Northridge, and the Fielding Graduate Institute and is a retired 25 year officer with the Santa Monica Police Department in the west L.A. area. She spent years in Patrol and in the Motorcycle Unit, and was then assigned to Personnel and Training. She was a Crisis Negotiator for 11 years and coordinated the department's Peer Support Program. She is a California POST Master Instructor and designed the 24-hr course on *Crisis Negotiations Skills for First Responders* used by California POST. Dr. Terhune-Bickler has taught a variety of acclaimed crisis negotiations and tactical communication courses for law enforcement groups throughout California and nationally. Her noteworthy article on negotiations was published in the *FBI Law Enforcement Journal*.

Training & Assessment System

Ask your officer where he trains or drills to improve his weapon proficiency, emergency driving skill, or defensive tactics and he will name a space with safeguards designed to learn, practice, and demonstrate necessary skills. Ask the same officer where he practices officer-citizen communication skills and he will likely say, "at work" or "in the field." Our thirty years of training and consulting with hundreds of agencies and over seven hundred thousand officers has taught us the field is a dangerous place to practice the most important skill in law-enforcement.
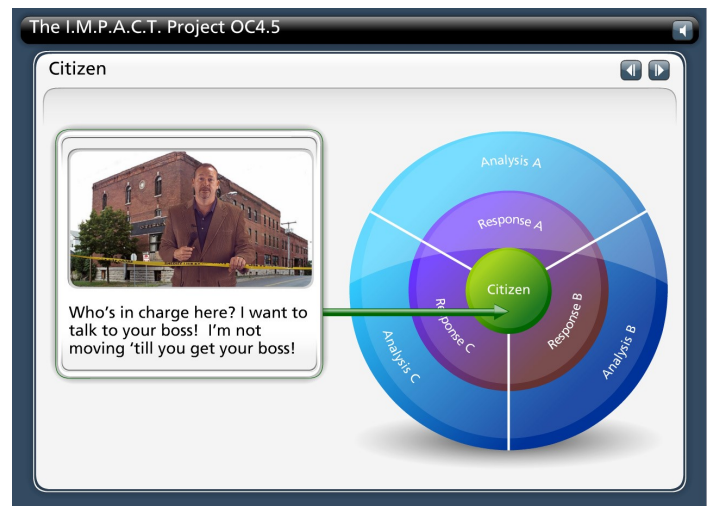
Searching for years to find a well-designed training and assessment system we could recommend to our client agencies we discovered it did not exist: so we brought the best people in the country together and created the first validated communication training, practice, and assessment space for public contact professionals.

Unlike any other training, IMPACT communications training is designed for law-enforcement officers and the unique communication challenges faced they face. Our subject matter experts are nationally recognized hands-on instructors with decades of real world experience training officers. They have created a media based training system that: 1) Explains the principles of tactical communication excellence; 2) Demonstrates the application of these principles in everyday officer encounters with the victims, witnesses and suspects; and 3) Provides officers with a valid assessment of their communication proficiency.

Self-Guided Tutorial Programs

The colorful bull's-eye user dashboard makes navigating through the computer-based trainer simple and reduces any program learning curve or frustration. There are 30 video scenarios, total, in the program. In every scenario the citizen speaks five or six times. For each citizen response there are three different prerecorded officer responses. The responses are categorized as "A" for Awful, "B" for Better, and for "C" for Correct. So each scenario contains 15 or 18 recorded officer responses and 15 or 18 matching segments of expert analysis describing the positive and negative verbal behavior used. The self-guided tutorial program can be used whenever an officer has a computer or MDT available and the opportunity to work on tactical communication excellence.

The I.M.P.A.C.T. Project OC4.5

Citizen

Who's in charge here? I want to talk to your boss! I'm not moving 'till you get your boss!

Analysis A / Response A / Citizen / Response B / Analysis B / Response C / Analysis C

Role-Play & Assessment Videos

It is difficult to get officers to role-play effectively with one another for the purpose of improving interpersonal communication skills. The Role-Play materials provide officers and agencies a safe and effective training space to practice using the IMPACT communication principles. It also provides a revolutionary means to assess and individual officer skill attainment and provide prescriptive coaching in areas that need improvement. The validated *IMPACT Assessment Instrument* provides officers with useable feedback to improve their people skills.
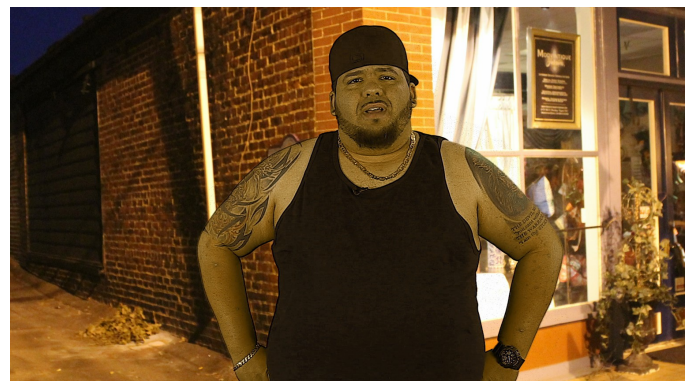
IMPACT Municipal Edition Scenes

1. Alleged Racial Discrimination
2. Angry Parent at a Ballgame
3. Armed Robbery Victim
4. Attempted Arrest Warrant Service
5. Child Custody Dispute
6. Citizen Complaint
7. Civil Matter Dispute
8. Confused Senior Citizen
9. Contact with Gang Members
10. Distraught Family Member
11. Domestic Disturbance
12. Drunk at a Public Event
13. Evacuation
14. Hesitant Witness
15. Homeless/Emotionally Disturbed Person

16. Irate Crowd
17. Irate Motorist
18. Irate Parent
19. Landlord-Tenant Dispute
20. Loud Music/Party
21. Media at Fire Scene
22. Missing Child
23. Natural Death
24. Rape Victim
25. Refusal to Leave Premises
26. Suicidal Subject
27. Suicide Investigation
28. Suspected Drunk Driver
29. Suspicious Person
30. Traffic Collision

"Analogous to video-based firearms simulation training, this project allows for accurate assessment and training of interpersonal communication competencies."

Video and Computer-Based Training Materials Included

Five Self-Guided Tutorial Programs depict 6 frequent and/or critical officer-citizen contact scenarios. Each scenario is designed with five or six communication junctures. All of these 163 tactical communication junctures have three prerecorded video model officer responses. That's nearly 500 officer examples plus 500 analyses by subject matter experts of the important verbal and nonverbal response behavior.

Five Role-Play & Assessment Programs are designed for role-play sessions lasting under an hour. Each session gives the role play officer over 30 opportunities to respond to the citizen's questions, statements, refusals, insults and taunts in a tactical way to deescalate emotions, keep focus on the contact purpose, gain cooperation, and conclude the professional contact. The officer's verbal and nonverbal behavior is evaluated using the *IMPACT Assessment Instrument*.

IMPACT Coaches Clinic and Assessors Training It is emphatically recommended (but not absolutely necessary) that purchasers attend corresponding instruction in the tactical communication principles and the interpersonal skills crucial for effective implementation, consistency of performance, and reliability of evaluation. This seminar is a highly interactive seminar for (Supervisors, Managers, FTO's and Assessors) and Line Officer Training. A copy of Lt. Fitch's book, *Law Enforcement Interpersonal Communication and Conflict Resolution: The IMPACT Model* is included along with a model policy on Human Relations and Interpersonal Communications from the Thomas & Means Policy Center.

For More Information Contact: Dean C Goodwin 703.944.5681,   Email: dean.goodwin@randymeans.com or VISIT randymeans.com