

Police Reform: Training is what reform should be if society wants better police.

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Police Reform: Training is what reform *should* be if society wants *better* police.

By Eddie Molina

Police reform. It's coming and there's nothing that is going to stop it. With all the government leaders cowering to unrealistic public opinion and letting mainstream media control their actions, we must all begin to prepare for police policy reform.

But how it will things change?

There's plenty of talk that change is needed but very little talk of how things will and should change- aside from defunding police (which by the way is irresponsible).

AARON HOWARD GOES THROUGH RIGOROUS BUD/S TRAINING, THE BEGINNING OF A LONG MILITARY TRAINING CULTURE.

Below are some ideas of what training *should be* incorporated to police officers routine to better equip them with the changes of today's troubling times. Mind you, however, these are not ground breaking ideas and some departments already incorporate these concepts into their training.

But these training suggestions should be included into regularly scheduled training sessions- not just the academy or the bi-annual training periods.

In the military, a recruit goes to basic training, graduates and reports to their unit where they continue training. In law enforcement, recruits go to the academy, graduate and go live. They'll go back to the range next year, and if they're lucky, a day or two of classroom instruction- that's it!

“It's not like riding a bike. Police need repetition. There's no excuse for police officers to not have training available to them year-round.” Navy Seal Team 6 Petty Officer 1st Class Aaron Howard tells Blue Magazine. “Police are the ones risking their lives day in and day out so we can be safe.”

If police departments need reform, it should come in the form of additional and constant training in these following areas...

Leadership for everyone in management. From Sergeant to the Chief, every supervisor should get continuous and thorough training in leadership. Effective leaders know how to communicate and connect with people. When you can connect with people, everything you do and say will resonate far better with your audience. Subordinates challenge and resist ineffective leaders' directives, which is not conducive to policy change.

The psychology of mob mentality. What is it about the mob mentality that encourages a normally law-abiding citizen into a raging lunatic? This type of person loses their personal identity and takes on the identity of a group.



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This subject gets much deeper from a social psychology perspective. Training in this subject would give the law enforcement officer, both seasoned veterans and recruits, a better understanding of how mob mentality can shape the landscape of a developing incident. It could also prove useful in determining appropriate social and tactical decisions to prevent a growing peaceful crowd from becoming destructive rioters.

Maintaining personal control over civilians antagonizing police.

Countless videos are emerging showing civilians taunting police, yelling profanities and invading personal space in an effort to antagonize police. Police officers are expected to remain calm and be professional at all times despite that. That's easier said than done. It is normal human behavior to challenge anyone that's in your face. Although police academies teach professionalism and poise, regular training on how to use effective techniques on controlling your emotions is a great start.

Understanding how social media affects civilian decision-making.

Everyone wants to post the next *viral video*. The first action most people take when something is about to go down is to pull out the phone and record what's happening. This new-age reality should be incorporated into training scenarios as part of the decision-making process when responding to incidents.

Effective communication techniques. Words are a small part of the communication process. In fact, body language tells the whole story far better than the words people use. This communication also works both ways; the person in distress and the officer that is trying to control the situation. What the officer says and the body language they display is a significant factor in how someone in distress responds.

Understanding criminal mentality. Most criminals are irrational, impulsive and will act aggressively when they believe they've been 'wronged' in some way. The most common mistake I see in new recruits is they assume

criminals act and think rationally and logically. Recruits make this assumption because they've been around rational people their entire lives. Having a better understanding of the common criminal mindset would help an officer better understand and predict a situation as its developing.

Understanding mental health issues. Many people with mental health issues don't have an intent to break the law- they just have a skewed reality of right and wrong. Having a better understanding of how mental health problems manifests themselves in everyday public interaction would better equip officers with communication response techniques.

Use of force de-escalation. One of the most difficult elements of law enforcement is to de-escalate a situation when you are directly involved. When an officer is struggling with a dangerous person, adrenalin pumps through veins as a survival technique. To just simply come down from that and de-escalate is not simple, or even realistic. Responding officers need to understand this dynamic to help the officer de-escalate.

These areas should be the focal point of training scenarios because the police academy is just not enough training. Couple that with spineless politicians that want to sacrifice a well-intended officer to appease extremist groups and to stay in office is not the solution.

This country was founded on law and order and remains stable because of it. If the public wants police reform, it needs to come in the form of continuous training. That's the key to *better* police.

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