

**POST PERISHABLE SKILLS PROGRAM (PSP)**  
**IV – STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS**  
SANTA ANA POLICE DEPARTMENT (2490)  
**CCN: 29540 | POST Certification II | Reimbursement Plan IV | 2 hours**

**COURSE GOAL:**

The course will provide the student with the minimum topics of Strategic Communications required in the POST Perishable Skills Training Program. The intent of the course is to improve the student's ability to generate voluntary compliance through the art of persuasion and utilizing the tools of interpersonal and tactical communication. The course consists of a hands-on/practical strategic communications training for in-service personnel.

**The training may also be presented in a 4, 6, or 8-hour format allowing for flexibility based upon specific agency or student needs, and as long as the minimum topics are contained within each format independently.**

**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATIONS**

**Minimum Topics/Exercises:**

- a. Officer safety
- b. Escalation versus de-escalation
- c. Communication Elements
- d. Listening Skills
- e. Questioning Techniques
- f. Persuasion
- g. People with disabilities
- h. Team Communication during a critical incident
- i. Class Exercises/Student Evaluation/Testing

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The student will:

1. Demonstrate the basic components of communication skills and techniques.
2. Demonstrate the importance of listening and persuasion skills as they relate to effective strategic communication.
3. Demonstrate the skills needed to communicate effectively.
4. Demonstrate a minimum standard of strategic communication skills with every technique and exercise, to include:
  - A. Officer Safety
  - B. Listening/Persuasion
  - C. Judgment and Decision Making
  - D. De-escalation, Verbal Commands
  - E. Effectiveness under Stress Conditions

**Revised: 6/9/21**

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**Minimum standards of performance shall be tested by an instructor observing the student during their performance of each technique and exercise. If the student does not meet minimum standards, as established by the presenter, remediation will be provided until the standard is met.**

**EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

- A. Course Overview
  - 1. Instructor Introductions
  - 2. Student Introductions
- B. Course Goals and Objectives
  - 1. Safety
  - 2. Enhanced professionalism
  - 3. Decrease in complaints
  - 4. Decrease in liability
  - 5. Lessen personal stress

**II. OFFICER SAFETY**

**IV (a)**

- A. Control the Environment
  - 1. Tactical Pause
  - 2. Slow down
  - 3. Gather Information
  - 4. Develop a plan
  - 5. Time + Distance = Options
- B. Make Sound Decisions
  - 1. What's important right now?
  - 2. Set priorities
  - 3. Think through your choices
  - 4. Make sound decisions

**III. UNDERSTANDING ESCALATION VERSUS DE-ESCALATION IS AFFECTED BY COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES**

**IV (b)**

**A. Professionalism**

- 1. Stay in control of your emotions and keep your ego in check
  - a. The more the ego is involved, the more difficult the situation
  - b. The less ego, the more influence

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2. Appropriate Language

- a. What you say
- b. How you say it
- c. How communications

B. How you treat others

1. Golden Rule – Treat others how you want to be treated
2. Platinum Rule – Treat others the way they want to be treated

C. Four Tenets of Procedural Justice

1. Voice
2. Neutrality
3. Respectful treatment
4. Trustworthiness

IV. COMMUNICATION ELEMENTS

**IV (c, d, e)**

A. Phases of Communication

1. Approach – Impact of physicality
2. Greeting – Initiating the conversation
3. Engagement – Strategies to promote communication
4. Adaptation – Being flexible
5. Repair – Re-establishing rapport
6. Incident closure - How we end a contact today could influence a future contact

B. Message Delivery

1. Content
2. Tone/Voice
3. Non-Verbal

C. Active Listening

1. Affirmations
2. Open ended questions
3. Mirroring
4. Paraphrasing
5. Avoiding “You” messages
6. Effective pauses
7. Listen to understand not to respond

D. Empathy

1. Empathy vs. Sympathy
  - a. Empathy – The ability to understand and share the feelings of another
  - b. Sympathy – Feelings of sorrow and pity for someone else’s misfortune

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2. Establish Rapport

E. Questioning techniques

1. Intentional closed questions
2. Open ended questions
3. Question Types
  - a. Fact Finding
  - b. Leading
  - c. Opinion Seeking

F. Persuasion

1. Rational appeal
2. Personal appeal
3. Ethical appeal

**IV (f)**

V. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

**IV (g)**

A. Individuals with physical, mental health, developmental, or intellectual disabilities may have difficulty communicating, understanding, or complying with commands from peace officers.

1. State Law
2. Agency Policy

B. Recognize appropriate methods of communication with people experiencing:

1. Mental Illness
2. Substance Use Disorders
3. Intellectual Disabilities
4. Physical Disabilities
5. Emotional Distress

C. Potential Strategies

1. Pace
2. Tone/Voice
3. Reduce distractions
4. Content
5. Non-Verbal

D. Special Relationships/Community Caretaking

1. State Law
2. Agency Policy

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VI. TEAM COMMUNICATION DURING A CRITICAL INCIDENT IV (h)

- A. Coordinated effort
  - 1. Planned Response (when feasible)
  - 2. One voice
    - a. Single point of contact with subject(s)
    - b. Single point of contact with dispatch
  - 3. Force options
  - 4. Continuous Assessment
- B. Potential Resources
  - 1. Mental Health Resources
  - 2. Community Resources
- C. Debrief
  - 1. Effective
  - 2. Ineffective

VII. CLASS EXERCISES/STUDENT EVALUATION **IV (i)**

- A. Practice of communication skills via active process
  - 1. Participation in role play scenarios
  - 2. Observation of role play scenarios
  - 3. Debrief of role play scenarios
- B. Evaluation of communication skill via demonstration
  - 1. Evaluated role play scenarios
  - 2. Feedback and debrief from instructors

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