COURSE TITLE: TACTICAL COMMUNICATIONS (TACCOM)

COURSE NUMBER:

COURSE HOURS: 4

COURSE GOAL: This course will provide officers with the minimum topics of Tactical Communications required in the POST Perishable Skills Training Program. The intent of the course is to improve the ability of officers to generate voluntary compliance through the art of persuasion and utilizing the tools of interpersonal communication. The student will receive an overview of Tactical Communication concepts such as: tactical communication within the use of force scale, communication elements, inappropriate language, questioning technique and other communication principles.

AUDIENCE: Sworn Peace Officers, including Reserve Officers Level I and Level II who are required per the POST Perishable Skills Program to complete every 2 years

NOTE: In accordance with Regulation 1052(e), the following content, testing, and instructional methodology requirements shall be met for the perishable skills/communications topics required by Regulation 1005.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Under the supervision of a qualified instructor(s) each student will:

I. Demonstrate knowledge of the basic components of communication skills and techniques.

II. Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of listening and persuasion skills as they relate to effective tactical communication.

III. Demonstrate knowledge of the skills needed to effectively deal with difficult people.

IV. Demonstrate a minimum standard of tactical communication skills with every technique and exercise, to include:
   A. Listening/Persuasion
   B. Judgment and Decision Making
   C. Officer Safety
   D. De-escalation, Verbal Commands
E. Effectiveness under Stress Conditions

Minimum standards of performance shall be tested by an instructor observing the students 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.

REQUIRED CONTENT

Commission Regulation 1052(e) and 1005

Tactical – Minimum Topics/Exercises: (2-hour minimum on topics with exercises)

a. Class Exercises/Student Evaluation/Testing
b. Tactical – officer to: officer/suspect/citizen
c. Tact Communication role within the use of force scale
d. Communication Elements (e.g. – approach, body language, posturing, observing, listening, asking, paraphrasing, redirecting, defusing, responding, interest, empathy, influence, resolution)
e. Officer safety (e.g. – positioning, environment, reading suspect(s), control/voluntary compliance)
f. Professional/Non-professional/Inappropriate language
g. Intentional/unintentional contact escalation verses de-escalation (the “415 officer”)
h. Questioning techniques (e.g. – fact finding, leading, opinion/feedback, general)

EXPANDED COURSE OUTLINE

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Registration
B. Course Overview
C. Course Goals
   1. Safety – yours and theirs
   2. Enhanced professionalism
   3. Decrease in complaints
   4. Decrease in liability
   5. Lessen personal stress
D. Course Objectives

II. INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES
A. 2007 POST DVD
B. George Thompson’s Verbal Judo, history and background (tactical communication)
C. Maine State Trooper Traffic Stop video and discussion

III. TACTICAL COMMUNICATION ROLE WITHIN THE USE OF FORCE SCALE

A. Professional Presence
B. Verbalization
   a. Gaining voluntary compliance by using words
   b. Appeals for persuasion-ethical, rational, personal, practical
C. Hands/control holds
D. Chemical agents
E. Impact Weapons
F. Electronic Weapons
G. Less Lethal Weapons
H. Lethal Force

IV. COMMUNICATION ELEMENTS

A. Content = 7-10% - has little power to persuade or convince
B. Voice = 33-40%
   1. Tone = Attitude – 90% of complaints in P.D. are tone related
   2. Pace = slow/fast vs. pitch
   3. Other Non-Verbal (AKA body language) = 50-60% (Approach, presence and posture)
   2. Tactical Empathy-seeing the problem through their eyes, showing interest
   3. Deflecting and redirecting verbal abuse, defusing, resolving conflict

V. PROFESSIONAL/NON-PROFESSIONAL/INAPPROPRIATE LANGUAGE

A. Separate attitude from behavior. Focus only on behavior
B. You are a PEACE OFFICER – Where you go, there should be PEACE!
C. Be respectful to everyone
D. Use touch, distance and words to gain voluntary compliance

VI. L.E.A.P.S/FIVE TYPES OF QUESTIONS TECHNIQUES L.E.A.P.S. (for Officer to Officer/Citizen and Staff)

A. Listen (listening vs. waiting to interrupt)
B. Empathize
C. Ask
D. Paraphrase
E. Summarize
FIVE TYPES OF QUESTIONS
G. General – Open-ended. What is the matter….?
H. Direct- Yes or No
I. Leading-putting words into others mouth
J. Opinion Seeking – Is there some way we can handle this?

VII. EIGHT STEP TRAFFIC STOP / SEVEN STEP PEDESTRIAN CHECK
A. Greeting
B. ID self/dept.
C. Reason for stop
D. Any justified reason?
E. Driver’s License
F. Registration and Insurance
G. Decision
H. Close

VIII. INTENTIONAL/UNINTENTIONAL CONTACT
ESCALATION VS. DE-ESCALATION (Citizens, Staff and Officer)
A. The Five Step
   1. Ask
   2. Set Context
   3. Present Options
   4. Confirmation
   5. Act
B. SOLER
   1. Square Off
   2. Open Posture
   3. Looking Interested
   4. Eye Contact
   5. Relaxed

IX. OFFICER SAFETY – S.A.F.E.R. CONCEPT
A. Officer Safety (e.g. – approach, body language-reading suspects, positioning, environment, reading suspects, maintaining control and gaining voluntary compliance)
B. Security = ACT
C. Attack = ACT
D. Flight = ACT
E. Excessive Repetition = ACT
F. Revised priorities = ACT!

X. CLASS EXERCISE/STUDENT EVALUATION/TESTING
A. Class will do practical scenarios/skills demonstration using the five and eight step techniques.
B. Review and discussion of key concepts.

Testing: Any student scoring below standard on any exercise, as established by the presenter, will be remediated, tested until standard is achieved.