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Best Practices for De-Escalation and Use-of-Force Training

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- Project funded by Ontario's Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services
- Project focused on identifying useful **training practices** that will increase the likelihood that trainees will **learn, retain,** and **transfer** the attitudes, knowledge, and skills they are being taught in de-escalation and use-of-force training
- The goal was to focus on **broad training practices** that could be applied in a range of settings (e.g., basic training, in-service training, specialized training)

- A large number of “best practices” were identified from existing literature, but **20 practices** were particularly well supported by research and seem likely to apply to de-escalation and use-of-force training in the police setting (confirmed by SMEs)
- We categorized these 20 practices into **9 domains**; in our view, **each domain is critical** to consider if one wishes to maximize the long-term impact of training
- One key practice relates to **competencies** that should be focused on in training; a separate literature review was conducted on this topic



- Many of the practices discussed in this presentation did not originate in the police setting (some haven't even been tested in this setting yet); **“best training practices” today may not be best practices tomorrow** (once policing research has been conducted)
- It is easier to generate a list of “best training practices” than it is to implement these practices; **it may simply be unrealistic to deliver training in an ideal way given training constraints**
- **Can't just focus on training** if goal is to minimize errors in the field

Organizational	Validation	Philosophy	Structure	Format	Content	Strategies	Material	Trainers
Training is supported by the organization (e.g., necessary resources, etc.)	Training is based on validation research	Training is based on adult learning principles	Training uses massed and spaced practice	Training formats are aligned with learning outcomes	Training focuses on relevant competencies	Worked examples are provided for novices	Teaching material is well designed (e.g., understandable, etc.)	Trainers possess relevant competencies
	Training is monitored and modified as necessary		Sufficient training time is provided to achieve a degree of mastery	Training is appropriately ordered	Training includes stressful, dynamic scenarios	Training is simplified for complex material		
	Monitoring is informed, objective, and multi-faceted				Diverse training scenarios are provided	Appropriate corrective feedback is provided and gradually reduced		
						Trainers actively engage trainees		
						Mental rehearsal is used for experienced trainees		
						Trainers create positive environment		

Role(s)	Competency
Officers and trainers	<p>Knowledge of policies and laws</p> <p>Understanding of mental health issues</p> <p>Ability to interact with diverse groups (e.g., racialized groups)</p> <p>Awareness and management of stress effects</p> <p>Strong communication skills</p> <p>Decision-making and problem-solving skills</p> <p>Perception (e.g., of threat cues or of training issues)</p> <p>Motor skills (e.g., to complete tasks or to demonstrate tasks)</p>
Officers only	<p>Emotion and behaviour regulation</p> <p>Professionalism (e.g., in police-public encounters)</p>
Trainers only	<p>Credibility (e.g., respect from trainees)</p> <p>Ability to effectively impart training material</p>