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# How to Develop an Effective International Police Training Course:

*A Basic Model for Police Trainers*



By

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Gerald L. DeSalvo** is an international management and training consultant specializing in law enforcement and security issues.

He has more than 40 years of operational, managerial and senior executive experience in federal law enforcement and security, municipal policing, military intelligence and international police training and assistance in the U.S., Latin America, Asia and Europe. He has served as the Special Agent-in-Charge of criminal investigations and protective security operations for a five-state federal agency region, as Director of two federal law enforcement training academies in the U.S. (including one that trained foreign police officials in antiterrorism skills) and as the Program Manager of two different multi-million dollar foreign police assistance programs in Latin America.

Most recently, he has concentrated on the development of practical knowledge assets for police managers and international police development professionals.

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Additional international police development knowledge assets produced by the author can be found at the following internet link:

[http://contributor.yahoo.com/user/944980/gerald\\_l\\_desalvo.html](http://contributor.yahoo.com/user/944980/gerald_l_desalvo.html)

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## How to Develop an Effective International Police Training Course: A Basic Model for Police Trainers

Significant amounts of international police training assistance are provided each year by developed countries to police in developing client countries. In the current global economic climate it is important that this assistance be provided in the most efficient and effective manner. In many cases, however, these training programs are prepared in a haphazard and non-systematic manner that greatly diminishes both their efficiency and effectiveness. This article provides a primer on a systematic model to training called Instructional Systems Design (ISD). If used properly it can assist international police development professionals to prepare and deliver cost-effective training programs. The ISD process was developed by the U.S. military during World War-II, as a response to the need to rapidly, efficiently and effectively train millions of new recruits for wartime service. It reflects a systematic approach to training and is frequently identified with a five-phase process called the ADDIE/ISD Model. The five-phases of the ADDIE/ISD Model are:

1. The **A**nalysis Phase
2. The **D**esign Phase
3. The **D**evelopment Phase
4. The **I**mplementation Phase
5. The **E**valuation Phase

This article briefly discusses the key components of a basic ADDIE/ISD model that could be used for the development of a cost-effective international police training course. *It is **not intended** to be a detailed description of the ADDIE/ISD model as this would require a much more in-depth discussion of monograph or book length.*

### **PHASE 1** **The Analysis Phase**

The first phase of the ADDIE/ISD Model is the Analysis Phase. During the Analysis Phase the training development team seeks to determine or refine the specific training needs for the course.

Training is primarily intended to address a **knowledge** or **skill** deficiency in a police employee. Poor employee performance, however, is frequently attributed to a need for more training but this is frequently not the cause of the performance inadequacy. Poor police performance can be the result of a wide variety of **non-instructional** factors such as:

- ☑ Poor supervision, management and leadership
- ☑ A lack of needed equipment and technology [e.g., vehicles, fuel for vehicles, radios, weapons, ammunition and computer systems]
- ☑ A lack of written standardized policy and procedures
- ☑ Poor officer selection and screening procedures leading to police officers who don't possess the requisite cognitive or psychomotor abilities for adequate performance
- ☑ Widespread corruption within the force that negatively impacts effective performance
- ☑ Organizational disincentives to good performance [e.g., good workers always being assigned to difficult assignments]
- ☑ A lack of incentives [both financial and non-financial] for good performance
- ☑ Assignments and promotions based on favoritism and not employee performance
- ☑ A lack of an effective internal affairs and disciplinary system
- ☑ An ineffective organizational structure and design
- ☑ Poor salaries and benefits
- ☑ A lack of sufficient basic training course length (duration) to cover all the requirements adequately
- ☑ The organizational culture is dysfunctional and does not encourage or support a professional police or public service

*"Training is primarily intended to address a **knowledge** or **skill** deficiency in a police employee."*

*"Poor employee performance can be the result of a wide variety of **non-instructional** factors..."*

**NOTE:** *This article assumes that the training to be planned has been determined to be the solution to a **knowledge** or **skill** deficiency and not caused by one or more non-instructional performance factors.*

There are numerous methods for analyzing and determining the training needs in an international police development training project. In most cases the process will begin with a request from the recipient government police agency or a suggestion from the international police organization offering the training assistance.

Once a training development team has been assigned the responsibility to develop a course it should complete the following tasks:

- a. Conduct a detailed review of the recipient's request or the potential offer from the international police agency providing the training assistance looking for such things as: identified goals and objectives, performance requirements, constraints, and available resources (e.g., time, funding, facilities and personnel) for the project.
- b. Prepare a data collection plan. This includes the following steps:
  - Develop a list of potential stakeholders who would be involved or impacted by the training project. These stakeholders will make up the list of individuals to be individually interviewed, participate in possible focus groups, or receive a survey or questionnaire, during the needs analysis phase.
  - Develop a list of the possible data sources for the analysis (e.g., job or positions descriptions, job task analyses, training catalogues, reports on past recipient country training projects, relevant Programs of Instruction for similar courses, etc.).
  - Develop interview protocol(s) (e.g., list of standardized questions for the interviews of the stakeholders and format to systematically record responses) and other data collection instruments for needs analysis surveys, questionnaires or focus groups.
- c. Conduct and collect the data from the various sources (e.g., written materials obtained, interview reports, focus group reports). One popular data collection method is to use a focus group of subject-matter-experts (SME) to develop a list of the major duties and tasks for a job and related training course being analyzed (e.g., basic investigator course). Another version of the same process determines the suggested content and training methods for a possible training course based on the extensive experience of the SMEs'. This latter content-focused method is frequently utilized in circumstances where there are severe time constraints for the development of a course but it is usually not the most effective method.
- d. Analyze the collected data and prepare and circulate the "draft" training needs analysis report for review and comment by the key stakeholders.
- e. Prepare the final training needs analysis report incorporating pertinent suggestions from stakeholder reviews of the "draft" versions. This final step is an iterative process and can have several rounds of stakeholder and approval authority reviews before the report is finalized.

## **PHASE 2** **The Design Phase**

The second phase of the ADDIE/ISD Model is the Design Phase. During the Design Phase the training team develops the overall framework and structure for the training. Typical steps in the design process are:

- a. Establish the training program administrative elements. Examples of typical elements are:
  - The officially approved course or training program name and identifying course number [if applicable]

- ☑ The course description
- ☑ The description of the target audience and attendance prerequisites for the training program [e.g., newly appointed investigators]
- ☑ The locations/facilities where training will be delivered
- ☑ The course duration
- ☑ The anticipated class size [number of participants]

b. Determine the training program constraints

This is a very important step that requires the training development team to realistically address potential problems and issues. A failure to adequately consider constraints and address them early on in training program design process can lead to serious development and implementation problems and is the frequent cause of unsuccessful training programs. Some typical constraints are:

- ☑ A lack of sufficient time to professionally develop the training program and materials
- ☑ A lack of funding to procure needed equipment and training supplies (e.g., weapons, ammunition, radios, vehicles, course materials)
- ☑ Overly large class sizes that will negatively impact a reasonable instructor-student ratio
- ☑ A lack of sufficient certified and experienced instructors
- ☑ A lack of professional training facilities (either non-existent, not-available due to scheduling or not in sufficient quantity. This would include properly equipped classrooms.)
- ☑ A lack of training equipment (e.g., student equipment, instructor equipment, classroom or training facility equipment)
- ☑ A lack of sufficient training support (e.g., logistical, administrative and training management support)
- ☑ Basic knowledge and skill deficiencies in students (e.g., poor basic education skills such as reading, writing and math)
- ☑ Language and cultural differences among potential student groups (e.g., situations where different dialects are spoken and where there are different tribal or cultural groups in the course)

*“A failure to adequately consider constraints and address them early on in the training program design process can lead to serious development and implementation problems and is the frequent cause of unsuccessful training programs.”*

- A poorly developed training curriculum
- A lack of adequate funding to support required student and staff transportation, travel, lodging and meals during training

c. Determine how the training will be delivered.

The training constraints listed above will frequently drive the selection of one or more training delivery methods. Some of the typical delivery options are:

- Classroom based
- Field exercise based (e.g., a surveillance exercise on the street)
- Special facility based (e.g., the firearms range, explosives range, driving track, Hogan's Alley, shoot house, gymnasium, crime laboratory, computer-forensics laboratory)
- Technology based (e.g., firearms and emergency driving simulators; computer-based-training)
- Distance learning based
- Field training officer based (training supervised by a certified police Field Training Officer)
- On-the-job training by a supervisor
- Video or audio conference
- Some combination of the options listed above (sometimes called blended training delivery).

d. Determine how the training modules will be sequenced.

In this phase the training modules are tentatively placed in a logical order that would facilitate participant learning. The sequence might change during later phases of development, implementation and evaluation of the training course.

e. Determine the terminal and enabling objectives.

Course **terminal objective(s)** identify what knowledge and skills the student is expected to be able to correctly demonstrate at the end of the training effort. An example of a terminal objective might be, "Given an armed robbery training scenario (mock crime scene, mock victim, witnesses and perpetrator), the participant should be able to plan, conduct and document his/her investigative activities while meeting all legal and department guidelines".

**Enabling objectives** are those activities, steps or tasks that support the successful completion of the terminal objective(s). An example of an enabling objective might be, "Given an armed robbery training scenario (mock crime scene and victim [role player]), the participant should be able to conduct and document a victim interview following all legal and department guidelines".

**NOTE:** *The discussion of training objectives in this paragraph is very basic and intended solely as an overview of the topic. There are numerous detailed discussions on the preparation of training objectives of monograph and book length.*

### **PHASE 3**

#### **The Development Phase**

The third phase of the ADDIE/ISD Model is the Development Phase. During the Development Phase the training team prepares the Instructor Guide (also called an Instructor Lesson Plan), the Participant Guide, associated presentation media (e.g., MS PowerPoint Presentations, training videos) and written plans and instructions for all practical exercises. Some development considerations for each of these documents follow:

#### **a. The Instructor Guide**

The preparation of a comprehensive Instructor Guide is a key component in a successful training project. A comprehensive Instructor Guide should contain instruction that reflects all current agency policy and procedures and authorized knowledge and performance skills. It should be the standardized written instructional resource that has been reviewed and approved by the agency for the transfer of job-related knowledge and skills to agency police personnel while in training. It ensures that training is standardized, that only authorized procedures and tactics are being taught, and that all training participants receive the same instruction. This helps to ensure that there is a common knowledge and skills base for all police personnel and should contribute to standardized effort and operations.

*“The preparation of a comprehensive Instructor Guide is a key component in a successful training project.”*

A comprehensive Instructor Guide also serves as an instructional resource for instructors as it should contain sufficient detail to allow a new instructor to satisfactorily teach a course using it as their primary resource. This is especially important in training situations that require multiple iterations of a course and large numbers of different instructors or rotating instructor teams. The Instructor Guide should reflect the liberal use of instructor notes (brief notes of additional explanation, guidance, or teaching points for use by instructors).

The content of a typical Instructor Guide follows:

#### **COVER PAGE**

- Course Title & Number:
- General Course Description:
- Duration of Course: (Number of Hours)
- Equipment/Facilities Needed: (List required items such as: PowerPoint projector, flip charts, 9mm demo handguns, pistol range, explosive range, driving track, etc.)



- ☑ Method(s) of Instruction: (Training delivery methods such as: Lecture, range demonstration, small group exercises)
- ☑ Number of Participants: (Number of participants the course is designed for and listed in the master Participant Guide. Actual number of participants may vary based on a number of situational factors.)
- ☑ Participant Equipment List: (e.g., Individual Participant Guide, individual assigned 9mm pistol, equipment belt with holster, individually issued field uniform and boots, etc.)
- ☑ Safety Considerations: (List all safety considerations for course or module, especially range and firearms safety)
- ☑ Administrative Considerations: (List the administrative considerations such as: course schedule, daily agenda [breaks, lunch], location of restrooms, cafeteria, gym, etc.)
- ☑ Reference Materials: (List all reference materials needed/utilized for course)
- ☑ Terminal Objective(s): (List the terminal objective[s])
- ☑ Enabling Objectives: (List the enabling objectives for each terminal objective)
- ☑ Evaluation Methods: (List the participant evaluation methods to be used in the course such as: multiple-choice written exam, firearms qualification, participant field exercise and demonstration, etc.)

## **CONTENT PAGES**

This section begins the presentation of the actual lesson content. It generally begins with an attention getting exercise or discussion, followed by a discussion of each enabling objective, followed by a discussion, presentation or demonstration of the associated materials. Each discussion should also contain detailed instructor notes and the associated PowerPoint slide references (notes to show corresponding PowerPoint slide by number).

It is important that the training team attempt, whenever possible, to develop course materials that address the three primary participant learning styles of: (a) visual learners [those that learn best by reading and seeing]; (b) auditory learners [those that learn best by hearing]; and (c) kinesthetic learners [those that learn best by doing]. In addition to lectures, practical exercises, large and small group exercises, demonstrations, role-plays, group discussions, case studies, and periodic quizzes - other guided practice and checks of learning should be used, whenever possible.

### **b. The Participant Guide**

Participant Guides are generally a duplicate of the Instructor Guide but without the instructor notes and in the participants' language. Another popular format is a partial duplicate of the Instructor Guide with key content partially listed, followed by blank space for the participant to write down the missing information. The choice of the format of the Participant Guide depends on the training entity. In any case, the format should be standardized across courses and correspond to the Instructor Guide.

### **c. Presentation Media**

It is standard practice in many law enforcement training programs to include a media slide presentation with each module. The slide presentation generally mirrors, in greatly abbreviated format, the contents of the Participant Guide for the course and, in many cases, is included as a handout for the participants. In all cases when used, the training team should ensure that the contents of the slide presentation correspond to those contained in the Participant Guide and other official materials provided to the students - as failure to do so can cause confusion about the instruction.

It is understood that all training materials provided to the participants will be in the language of the participants. In many international training development situations, however, the instructors may not speak the participants' language and simultaneous or consecutive translation will be necessary. In such cases, it is recommended that a small box, white in color, be included in the lower left hand corner of each slide. This box should duplicate the text of each slide but in the instructor's language. The main slide contents would then be in the participants' language. This allows the instructors to refer to the slide presentation during their class even though the main portion of each slide is in the students' language.

Some general guidelines for the preparation of effective media slides are as follows:

- The first slide should be a title slide and include the course and module names.
- A presentation organization (agenda) slide should follow the title slide.
- The presentation should follow the contents and order of the Participant Guide.
- Only key bullet points should be included on each slide. Do not use long blocks of text.
- Use no more than 4-5 bullet points on each slide.
- Don't overuse animation as it can be distracting. Use animation only when absolutely necessary.
- Use a font size of 24 points or larger, whenever possible. Use a larger size font for main points.
- Generally, do not use all capital letters as it can be more difficult to read.
- The color of the font used should contrast greatly with the color of the slide background.
- A light color slide background should have dark letter fonts.
- A light color font should have a dark color slide background.
- Do not overuse the number of font colors in a presentation as they can be distracting.
- Use simple backgrounds in each slide and standardize them throughout the presentation, when possible.

- ☑ Include charts, diagrams, drawings, photos and other graphics in your slides, when possible.
- ☑ All graphics should be relevant to the content of the slide. Non-relevant graphics can be distracting.
- ☑ Graphics should not be overly complicated and easily readable from a distance.
- ☑ Include a summary slide at the end of each presentation that briefly reviews the key learning points of the presentation.
- ☑ **Review and edit** the final version. Spelling and grammar mistakes detract from a presentation.

#### **PHASE 4** **The Implementation Phase**

The fourth phase of the ADDIE/ISD Model is the Implementation Phase. During the Implementation Phase the training program is delivered by the instructors. Some recommendations for the Implementation Phase are:

##### a. The Pilot Course

Whenever possible, use a Pilot Course for the first or second deliveries of each new course. The instructors should be aware that it is a Pilot Course and that continuous input between the training development team and instructor team, on what is working and not-working, is encouraged. During the Pilot Courses, one or more members of the training team that designed and developed the course should be present as observers. Their observations then serve as recommendations to the training team for any needed modifications to the course. Once the Pilot Course modifications are approved the course can be finalized.

*“Whenever possible, use a Pilot Course for the first or second deliveries of each new course.”*

##### b. The Instructors

- ☑ Careful attention should be given to the instructor selection process to ensure that only the highest caliber, experienced, and professional police officers are selected as they become important role models for course participants. Whenever possible, appropriate incentives (either financial or non-financial) should be provided to encourage high quality police officers to volunteer for instructor duties.
- ☑ Whenever possible, all instructors should complete an instructor training workshop and brief period of guided practice teaching before being evaluated and certified to teach as a primary instructor.
- ☑ Course training materials should be made available to potential instructors, a minimum of three weeks prior to each course, so that they may thoroughly review the course materials and prepare for their assigned classes.

- ☑ The number of instructors assigned to each class should include one or more backup instructors in the situation that some instructors might not be available for operational or administrative reasons.

## **PHASE 5**

### **The Evaluation Phase**

The fifth phase of the ADDIE/ISD Model is the Evaluation Phase. During the Evaluation Phase the training team conducts a variety of evaluations of the training program, students and instructors. Several of the most popular evaluation methods are discussed below.

#### a. Training Program Formative and Summative Evaluations

- ☑ **Formative Evaluations.** Formative evaluations are evaluations that take place during the analysis, design, development and initial implementation (delivery) phases of the ADDIE/ISD process. They are periodic evaluations that are usually scheduled at the completion of each of the first four phases to ensure that the best result is achieved before proceeding to the next phase of the process. Typical formative evaluations would also include: (1) the previously discussed Pilot Course; (2) pre-publication curriculum reviews by subject-matter-experts to verify that all training materials, techniques taught, and practical exercises, are correct and conform to police agency policy and procedures; and (3) a pre-publication review and edit of all course materials for proper writing mechanics (e.g., spelling, grammar, formatting, readability, printing clarity, etc.).
- ☑ **Summative Evaluations.** Summative evaluations are evaluations that take place periodically after a training program has been formally approved and delivered for a period of time. In many organizations, typical summative evaluations take place on two-three year cycles and are sometimes called Course Reviews or Curriculum Reviews. Summative evaluations are usually undertaken by an Evaluation Team made up of subject-matter-experts, curriculum design and development personnel and training management representatives. During the typical summative evaluation the team evaluates the entire training program to identify its strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for future improvement and then decides on what changes and improvements will be made to an existing course.

#### b. Course Implementation Evaluations

- ☑ **Participant Evaluation of Course.** This is the typical evaluation completed by participants at the end of a training class or module. Frequently referred to as a “smile sheet”, it collects the participants’ opinions on the relevance and quality of the materials presented and the performance of the instructor.
- ☑ **Participant Performance.** This is the typical evaluation and analysis of participant performance on the topics delivered in the course or training module to determine what instruction is working and what is not working. The evaluation normally includes a review of objective type examination results by overall scores, an evaluation of each test question, and a review of student performance scores on practical exercises and required performance qualifications.

- ☑ **Participant Field Performance.** This form of evaluation involves communication with recent graduates (usually within 6-12 months after graduation) of the training program, their co-workers in the field and their field supervisors. It involves collecting their opinions on the participants' performance in the field (as a group – not as individuals) and the relevance and quality of the training they received prior to their initial field assignment. The goal of this type of evaluation is to determine, from a 360-degree perspective, whether the existing training program should be modified for future students. This type of evaluation is frequently done informally using anecdotal information from individual participants, their co-workers and their supervisors.

### **CONCLUSION**

This article briefly discussed a basic model that can be used for the development of an international police training course. *It was **not intended** to be a detailed description of the instructional design process - as this would have required a much more in-depth discussion of monograph or book length.*