

# LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Media Relations

### Expanded Course Outline

1850-33240

**Instructional Goal** – This course will provide Law Enforcement Executives with the historical background, tools and techniques, and current best practices to communicate effectively in a variety of settings including, small group meetings, large public gatherings, long form print and broadcast interviews, and commission hearings. Executives will understand the principles of effective and empathetic communication, learn tools to simplify complicated information, and develop techniques to maneuver through challenging lines of questioning. Through lecture, supporting videos, and scenario-based training, executives will be prepared to message critical information, while emphasizing core values and empathy in different executive settings.

**Performance Objectives** - Using lecture, videos, case studies, and role playing, the students will:

- Develop basic verbal executive communication skills to build trust and enhance understanding;
- Demonstrate a minimum standard of strategic communication skills with every technique and exercise presented;
- Understand the historical context of current media relations and public communication landscape;
- Identify and define issues of communicating in various settings;
- Demonstrate the ability to use various verbal techniques when answering questions from the media, the public, or legislative bodies;
- Understand various verbal and non-verbal actions that reduce the effectiveness of executive communication;
- Develop story-telling skills to enhance communication effectiveness;
- Learn effective tools and techniques to deliver impactful speeches & presentations;
- Improve overall public speaking foundations.

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**I. The Power of Quality Communication**

**(45 minutes)**

- A. Course Overview
  - 1. Facility description
    - a. Restrooms
    - b. Refreshments
- B. Welcome and Introductions
  - 1. Instructor Background
  - 2. Student Introductions
    - a. Current assignment
    - b. Communication experience
    - c. What you hope to get from the class
- C. Ice Breaker
  - 1. Activity
- D. Critical Communications
  - 1. Why do leaders need to know how to communicate?
  - 2. What do we get wrong?
  - 3. Unique Communication Settings
    - a. Media interviews (print vs. broadcast)
    - b. Small community group settings
    - c. Larger community presentations
    - d. 1:1
    - e. Commission and Board Presentations
  - 4. Group Discussion
  - 5. Video - Review and Discussion

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**II. Foundations**

**(30 minutes)**

- A. The Media Landscape
  - 1. Historical Context
  - 2. Compare and Contrast Old School Journalists vs. Modern Reporters
  - 3. Compare and Contrast Old School Officers vs. Modern Cops
- B. Impacts
  - 1. News Cycles
  - 2. Resources
  - 3. Ways we consume media
- C. The Power of Storytelling
  - 1. Video - Review
  - 2. Why do we tell stories?
  - 3. The arc of a story
  - 4. The ingredients for a great story
- D. What is news?
  - 1. What we think is a story vs. what the public thinks is a story
  - 2. Group Discussion
    - a. News vs. Not News

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**III. Social Media**

**(15 minutes)**

- A. Impact of Social Media on Law Enforcement Messaging
  - 1. We have to be correct not fast.
- B. Perception vs. Reality
  - 1. Get out in front
- C. Not every platform is created equal
  - 1. Instagram
  - 2. Twitter
  - 3. Facebook
  - 4. LinkedIn
  - 5. YouTube
  - 6. Tik-Tok
- D. Emerging platforms and technology
  - 1. Group discussion – list what the group considers as “media”

**IV. “Pre-Game” – Preparing for the presentation/interview**

**(30 minutes)**

- A. Understanding your audience
  - 1. Generation, Demographic, Regional
- B. Homework – Topics to consider
  - 1. Research, research, research
- C. Core Values
  - 1. Integrate into the message
- D. Key Messages
  - 1. What do you want the audience to learn
- E. “Pre-Game” – Group Exercise
  - 1. Three Scenarios
    - a. Items to consider
    - b. Example of prep work

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**V. Tools of the Trade**

**(30 minutes)**

A. Video Review

- 1.YouTube

B. Non-Verbal

- 1.To Zoom or Not to Zoom
- 2.Body Language
- 3.Physical environment
- 4.On the Record vs. Off the Record

C. Verbal Techniques (Scenario Preparation)

1.Bridging

- a. Bridge from a difficult question to one of your key points

- 1) "I can't speak to that, but what I can tell you is..."
- 2) "Actually, that speaks to a bigger point..."
- 3) "It's an important question but..."

2.Flagging

- a. Strong statement that makes your point

- 1) "the bottom line is..."
- 2) "The most important thing to remember is..."
- 3) "What it boils down to is..."
- 4) "At the end of the day..."

3.Pause and Reset

- a. Take a moment to collect thoughts and redirect

4.The Handoff

- a. This is not a test and you are not expected to know everything about everything

- 1) "That's not really my area, but I'd be happy to put you in touch with the right person."
- 2) "I don't have the exact numbers in front of me, let me pull them together and we'll follow up."

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**VI. Critical Communication Tactics (15 minutes)**

- A. The Ambush
  - 1. Handling surprise questioning
- B. Communicating during a large-scale critical incident
  - 1. EIC – Index
    - a. Empathy, Information, Context
- C. Tricks Reporters Use
  - 1. Speculate
  - 2. We are friends
  - 3. The Long Pause
  - 4. Repeating the Question
  - 5. Paraphrasing what you say
- D. Commission Meetings
  - 1. Public Comment period

**VII. Practical Exercise – Scenarios (75 minutes)**

- A. Long Form Media Interviews
  - 1. On camera – recorded “sit-down”
- B. Public Presentations
  - 1. Press conference format
- C. Group Discussion
  - 1. Dialogue format