

Why Cop's Don't Train-A Study

Investigations On Why Police Officers Avoid

Jiu Jitsu and Use of Force Training

Version 1.2 January 5 2020



Disclaimer: This study was conducted over an 11-month period (2019) that included 3 surveys (1120 officers) and interaction/discussion (430 officers) that were “non-training” (total of 1550 police officers). For the purpose of this study, a **non-training** officer was one that was not participating in Jiu Jitsu or combatives outside their regularly mandated incremental training required by their department.

This study is by no means exhaustive and certainly open to interpretation. We are neither scientists nor professional statisticians, and therefore acknowledge the inherent flaws in this article. We also note that we may have left things out which are glaringly obvious. We conclude that this is just the second of many refined research papers we will tackle.

We also tried to keep this paper “short” and concede it’s not scholastic in nature and may contain errors. We wanted to give the bare bones in order to get the message across in normal everyday language and presentation.

Lastly, it’s very important that we state that we are pro police (obviously). The complexities of the job are vast and the struggles officers deal with in an ever-changing environment are real. We are NOT looking to cast a shadow over officers that aren’t training. We aren’t trying to guilt trip cops in to hitting the mats. We are trying to show the multitude of reasons police are not training. Our research has identified an interesting discovery that we call the “*primary-secondary phenomenon*.”

The Author and Collaborator are both active police officers, black belts in Jiu Jitsu and use of force teachers.

Goal: The goal of this study was to uncover the reasons police officers are not training and use that information to reverse this trend and get more law enforcement learning this valuable skill.

Why Train: If you are reading this you probably know the Invictus Leo Jiu Jitsu Collective’s main objective is to **get police officers to train in Jiu Jitsu**. The hashtag movement **#BJJMAKEITMANDATORY** has spread tremendously since our inception. **There are a thousand reasons to train but sadly it only takes one excuse not too.** This study and article **does not** focus on the benefits of Jiu Jitsu (which there are many).

The Discussion: Among trained officers, the discussion on why the majority of police are not training in Jiu Jitsu as their primary use of force art is common place. We wanted to see how these were reflected in an actual study from non-training officers.

Before we continue, we need to state that officers are trained at a variety of different levels. Every academy, agency and department will have their own standards. Some are better than others.

The Primary-Secondary Phenomenon:

We don't have a catchy name for this so we simply are calling it what it is. What we uncovered during our study was that officers that do not train jiu jitsu have their "main reason(s) for not training" (primary) but almost always acknowledge a secondary aspect that kept them off the mats. This secondary phenomenon is what we found most interesting during this study.

Demographics of Responding Officers

Years of Experience:

Less than 1 Year: 4%

1-5 years: 10%

6-10 years: 21%

11-15 years: 33%

16-20 years: 15%

21 + Years: 17%

Our statistics show that there seems to be a trend that officers who have been on the job longer than 6 years are less likely to train.

PRIMARY REASONS/EXCUSES FOR NOT TRAINING:

We will tackle the Primary Reasons first. We will add some statistics but have opted to refrain from throwing out numbers and percentages en mass in order to make for an easier read. Note that these were the TOP and most frequent reasons officers listed for not training jiu jitsu or combatives. Many officers also combined 2 or 3 other reasons for avoiding "extra curricular training". Percentage statistics do not equal 100% in many cases because officers selected multiple areas of reasons and excuses.

TIME AS A REASON/EXCUSE

Lack of time appeared to be the most common primary reason cited for officers not training (71%) Non Training Officers identified several sub reasons on why time was a factor in not training.

a) Family: 78% of officers identified that spending time with their family trumped all other considerations. Because of the hectic and long hours that policing requires, especially at the patrol level, officers did not prioritize training as something they wanted to do. Given the choice between training and their family, family almost always “won”.

b) Hobbies: 45% of officers identified secondly (after family), that their down time was important to them. This included and sometimes overlapped family time. These hobbies included but were not limited to: sports (gym, running, biking), media relaxation (movies, Netflix, video games), reading, and social outings with friends.

c) Schedule: 15% of officers cited that their work schedule prevented them from training (shift work, nights) but also admitted that they had not sought out other officers within their departments to conduct “mat training” on their own.

COST AS A REASON/EXCUSE

Officers cited cost of Jiu Jitsu classes a barrier to training. Cost ended up linking to family commitments often (45% of the time) but interestingly; officers also cited that they believed their departments should flip the bill for their training (38% of the time). Officers however were aware of that their departments are under budgetary constraints are can't always provide for this.

FEAR OF INJURY AS A REASON/EXCUSE

This was cited as another reason officer did not pursue training. They acknowledged that their departments would consider injuries outside of work time not to be covered by workers compensation. Officer's noted that they did not want to engage in what they perceived as a high risk activity where they could get injured (48%)

65% of respondents said that they have pre existing injuries and did not want to risk re-injuring themselves in high risk martial arts training.

NOT UNDERSTANDING WHAT JIU JITSU IS AS A REASON/EXCUSE

Another high percentage response (usually coupled with one of the other primary reasons, on why cops weren't training). 86% of non training officers noted that they didn't know the benefits of jiu jitsu or combatives training. Of that number, 50% believed that it would take "too long to become proficient" to make training worth while. Also, 44% identified Jiu Jitsu as "Mixed Martial Arts or UFC fighting" and really did not know what the art could offer.

STRENGTH OVER SKILL/ TOOLS OVER TECHNIQUE AS A REASON/EXCUSE

These two categories came in almost identical at around 18% each. Many officers noted that they relied on their physical condition (strength, speed, endurance) to win their use of force encounters. Further to that, 50% cited that the gym and lifting weights were more important than 'technique training.' Officers tend to spend more time lifting weights and shooting that practicing arrest and combatives skills.

Almost identically (17%), officers listed that weapon usage (baton, taser, OC spray and firearm) equalized or prevented physical encounters. About 50% of all the officers polled in this study stated that they "worked out".

EGO AS A REASON/EXCUSE

We understood that simply asking if "ego" was a factor would prevent many from selecting "ego as the factor". Therefore, we masked how we asked this question which lead to our secondary reason below. Ego is a broadly defined (in our context) as: consciously believing that one does not need something based on experience, feeling or justification.

Secondary Reason for not Training: Normalcy Bias

During this study, we discovered a secondary reason that a staggering 86% of non training officers cited as a reason for not doing extra curricular jiu jitsu training. This secondary reason overlapped all the primary reasons. This, we believe, is actually one of the CORE reasons cops aren't hitting the mats.

Members in our study indicated that that during the course of their careers, they had not needed Jiu Jitsu training because they felt they had come out on top in most encounters. They pointed to the "haven't needed it so don't need it" in this section. This is called a Normalcy Bias.

The **normalcy bias**, is a belief people hold when there is a possibility of a disaster. It causes people to underestimate both the likelihood of a disaster and its possible effects, because people believe that things will always function the way things normally have functioned. The normalcy bias is often experienced when people have never had a situation happen to them before. They use the fact that an event has never happened to justify their belief that it will never happen. It is similar to confirmation bias (which we have written about previously).

Our respondents pointed to team tactics (more officers than suspects, tool deployment and strength/endurance) as the reasons for this. Although approximately 35% acknowledged that they don't know what they don't know. This meant that officers didn't understand the benefits of jiu jitsu because they didn't know what it was or how it could help them improve.

We noted that officer and suspect injury was higher in non trained officer's by nearly 300%. This alone should be the selling point to every department in the World. We know that we need to ask more questions to get a better understanding on this number. We only asked if officers were injured or suspects were injured in their encounters. There is much more to be investigated on this subject of course.

During our discussion with non-training officers (non polled), we tried to get more information on the "haven't needed it so don't need it" reasoning. Surprisingly, the majority of officers said that they **knew** that injury could occur on the job but felt their experience dealing with these situations was sufficient. Officers oddly noted that they felt their departments could give better use of force training and also understood that members of the public are more trained than ever before. They acknowledged that trained suspects offered a much higher risk of injury to themselves and others but many hadn't run into them yet.

We offered the analogy in our discussion that "its too late to learn how to swim once you've been thrown into the deep end." Officers acknowledged that being proactive rather than reactive was important and that the risk of injury did exist after better reflection. They also stated that they were aware more and more suspects are training today than ever before.

CONCLUSION and FINDINGS:

After looking at our results, we have concluded that the normalcy bias is a real and present reason for most officers not to train jiu jitsu. Our discussions also lead us to the conclusion that there is an understanding among officers that there is benefit to jiu jitsu but they could not find the "time or justification" in training. There are several inherent contradictions we uncovered.

We also noted that of the 1550 officers polled, 50% said they hit the gym or exercised on a regular basis (2 times a week+). However, these same officers noted that they didn't have time for combatives training even though they made time for other exercise. There is a priority of importance here that defies logic.

Not enough time was cited as the primary reason for not training with the belief that the skills officers had were sufficient in hand to hand and arrest encounters. This secondary belief was re-enforced based on the officers experience of not being injured on the job or discounting injury as a low percentage occurrence. Again, officers were aware that they were not invincible and that they may be more likely to seek out training if they found their skills not working on a higher percentage.

The majority of officers noted the last time they received combatives training was in the police academy and that the skills they learned were "bare bones". Some officers stated that their use of force instruction at their academies were jiu jitsu based and that they found that they retained and used some of those skills on the job. This appeared to be the response of officers who had 10 years or less on the job.

Although not polled, we have evidence to suggest officers who are in the later part of their careers, close to retirement or not 'on the street' are much less likely to train in jiu jitsu and use of force combatives. Furthermore, as a side note to this, officers who we know that fall into this category (later in their careers) but are training, are training because of the health, exercise, and benefits in dealing with PTSD.

Lastly, we anticipate that this study may raise more questions than we initially studied. Discussion is good. This needs to be talked about. If you found yourself to be one of these statistics, that's ok. The great thing is that you can change this at anytime, if you are willing to. We'd like to thank all the officers that took the time in providing input into this study.

AFTERWARD:

We have noted that the culture of policing is changing slowly in regards to Jiu Jitsu training. More officers than ever are taking up Jiu Jitsu as their primary use of force study because of its practicality and usability on the job. They understand that it's real and scalable for the line of work that they do. Approximately 3% of police officers are training in Jiu Jitsu. This number is too low. It must be changed. And it is changing.

The culture is changing based on the efforts of officers in departments pushing the #BJJMAKEITMANDATORY movement. More use of force instructors are trained in Jiu Jitsu and are becoming leaders within their organization and thus changing the culture. There is of course resistance by both departments and current use of force cadres that don't understand the benefit of jiu jitsu or are not willing to acknowledge that there are better ways to control another human being that does not want to be controlled.

We encourage you to join our movement and start training. We can direct you to certified and police friendly academies around the world. The Invictus movement is not in competition with other Jiu Jitsu police companies-we are an add on to help push the narrative that Jiu Jitsu saves lives. Let's help you.

Please visit our website for a list of our super seminar schedules. All instruction is volunteered and proceeds go to a foundation that supports families of fallen officers.

Keep training. Start training. Be Safe. Be Smart.

Ari Knazan and Jason Rebsch

Founders, Invictus Leo Jiu Jitsu Collective

www.invictusleo.com

Follow Us on Facebook and Instagram @invictusleo_official

Contact us at info@invictusleo.org

ADDITIONAL NOTE:

We are adding this section to note that we had struck a chord within the policing circles. Our article had been read over 10 000 times in a one week span with numerous officers and agencies reaching out for this PDF article. This is pretty impressive considering the niche market we cater too (cops who train jiu jitsu and those who support this cause). We have also received dozens of emails with great feedback. And best of all, we have literally had officers let us know that they are returning to Jiu Jitsu, which is the biggest win of all. Yes, you should train and shelve the excuses. As you can imagine, there are officers with all the same time, family, and money constraints you have-but the difference is that **THEY ARE TRAINING**. So what is the disconnect? I am sure you've seen what our research has shown and can figure it out.

We will continue to research and help police agencies and individuals understand the science behind all of this. More to come.