

My History with Paul Howe and Combat Shooting and Tactics

I have been a Colorado POST certified firearms instructor since 2010, instructed reality-based training since about 2006 and an LEO since 1997. During that time, I became concerned that the current doctrine in training was missing something for the officer on the ground.

My experiences led me to understand that firearms training focused heavily on marksmanship, clearing malfunctions and reloads. I do understand how necessary these technical skills are, but they alone are not what will win the day in a critical incident. Outside the realm of SWAT, many of our officers are missing some essential technical and tactical skills. Few patrol officers get significant training on tactical skills where critical decision making is a part of the exercise.

Some military veterans returning from overseas conflicts have gotten into the firearms training industry and seemed to be providing something new. I began researching various instructors and their methodologies, delving into their teachings and materials looking for something. I didn't know what I hoped to find. I did notice that there is a wide array of instructors. Most of the ones that I researched seemed to be teaching nearly the same thing with a somewhat unique delivery. Some of them seem to specialize in high round counts.

Other than being a little more "flashy" than what I would get at my home agency, I didn't see enough value added by these instructors such that I was willing to spend money to attend their classes. There just seemed to be too little substance provided to the student, leaving little that could be used on the street or taken back to their department.

After nearly five years of searching and evaluating various instructors, I found Paul. Paul Howe owns and operates Combat Shooting and Tactics (CSAT) in Nacogdoches, TX. He is an Army veteran and is well known for his role as a special operations team leader in the Black Hawk Down incident. Paul was later a special operations instructor before retiring from the military and is now well known throughout the US as a premier firearms and tactics instructor as a civilian. There are plenty of sources to learn more about Mr. Howe. I must say that my research on Paul and CSAT allowed me to find something different and exciting for one who thirsts for knowledge and wants to make a difference for officers on the street.

I was excited to learn that Paul's training methodology focuses on combining technical skills enhancement and tactical skills development in a way that is simple to learn, remember and execute under stress. His system is designed to go from dry fire, to live fire, to the shoot house, to force on force, and the street with no changes. Along with teaching a tactical thought process, he has devised simple tactical solutions for everything up to and including hostage rescue. His concept of advanced shooting is nothing more than being able to execute the basics on demand at any time, every time. As impressive as his military accomplishments are, he has spent the last 20 plus years

since then learning about LE training needs and tailoring the courses that he teaches for patrol and tactical officers. The course design is organized, structured, and stair-stepped to build the capabilities of the individual and the team at a reasonable pace.

In Mr. Howe's teachings, I have found what I had been missing. I was pleasantly surprised to see that his methods didn't require that I re-learn what the academy and in-service training had already taught me. It merely allowed me to enhance and polish those skills while preparing me to learn the additional skill sets that I needed to operate in the real world. His instructor courses have taught me how to pass along what I've learned efficiently.

I have employed the CSAT methodology in my home agency and have seen a significant improvement in the capability of our officers, especially our instructor's ability to teach, evaluate and coach our armed personnel. I am fortunate to join Paul's team to bring CSAT to Colorado. I look forward to sharing the CSAT method across the state.