

LEO EXCUSES FOR NOT TRAINING

Article from Invictus Leo Jiu Jitsu Collective: www.invictusleo.com
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*“The battle is not for the strong alone: it is for the vigilant, the active, the brave.”
-Patrick Henry: US Founding Father.*

Before we start, we want to point out that this article isn't to shame any one person or group that they aren't training. Yes, we believe all cops should train as our profession is a demanding and dangerous one. You owe it to yourself, your family, your community and everyone else to do so. We won't dive into the benefits of training (we have other articles that do that), but we **will highlight** the reasons cops don't train. If this article **'stings a bit'** -GOOD. It should be a wake-up call.

Only YOU can change your mindset and training.

What are the benefits of listing excuses? To show that your unique excuse isn't really that unique. There are people *right now* that share the same 'difficulties' as you but still find time to hone their skills and train.

What is "Training"? Training includes many aspects including:

- 1) Arrest, control and defensive tactics (Jiu Jitsu);
- 2) Firearms and;
- 3) Continuing education on legal and professional development.

This article will focus just on the first item on this list.

Disclaimer: The debate on whether or not excuses are valid in our profession is likely a topic of another article. The short answer however is that all law enforcement officers should be training throughout their career despite the plethora of excuses that exist. If you need to ask yourself "why", then this should be a tremendous red flag for you and others. This is also not an exhaustive list but rather some of the most common excuses DT instructors and other practitioners hear on a common basis.

Invictus Excuse Validity: You will see a rating scale under the 19 listed excuses we have identified. These are simply how valid we think each excuse is. It is based on a 10 point scale. 1 = the worst excuse 10 = a very valid excuse for not training. As you can imagine, we don't believe in 10s here. Or 9s....or 8s or.....

*“You must seek out hard days with hard people and do hard things. That's how you get better.”
-Chad Lyman-Founder of C4C PJJ, Black Belt and 20 + LEO*

There are a thousand reasons to train but it only takes one reason not to. Excuses are Easy. Dedication is Hard.” -Ari Knazan-Invictus Co Founder

Excuse 1: MONEY

“It’s too expensive and I don’t have enough money.”

One of the most common excuses for not training is that Jiu Jitsu is too expensive and cops can’t afford or justify it’s cost. This excuse got obliterated several years ago because there are several programs now available that allow police officers to train for FREE until Blue Belt (Adopt a Cop for example). And there are literally hundreds of schools around the world that offer LEO discounts or FREE training. With some slight adjustments to your spending habits per month, you could easily afford training if you wanted to.

PERSPECITVE: One Starbucks coffee per shift X one month = \$ 80.00 average. This could be applied to Jiu Jitsu training easily.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 2.5/10

Excuse 2: TIME

“I don’t have enough time is the adult version of the dog ate my homework.”

This excuse is usually coupled with other excuses on this list. Time (or lack thereof) is a frequent excuse we hear. It is also one of the weakest excuses because, on its own, it means nothing. If it’s important to you, you will make the time to train.

PERSPECITVE: One Hour a day equals 4% out of a 24 hour period. We aren’t even suggesting training every day in Jiu Jitsu. If you do it 2-3 times a week, that will get enough reps to understanding the basics needed to progress. Consistency over time will equal results.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 1/10

Excuse 3: FAMILY:

“My family is the most important thing to me-nothing will get in the way of that.”

No argument from us. Family (if you have one) is the most important thing. Be it your parents, husband, wife or children, spending time with them should be a priority. However, the ability to protect yourself and return home is likely just as important. No one wants to leave their children without a parent or a spouse widowed. You must sacrifice some other things in your life to get some training in. You will need to figure out what that balance is but if you find yourself wasting hours (we ALL do it), you should look on better allocation of time.

PERSPECITVE: They grow up fast and you certainly don’t want to miss those birthdays or anniversaries. However, since this job is hands on and potentially dangerous, you should be doing EVERYTHING in your power to remain safe and return home after each shift.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 5/10

"You don't choose the day. The Day Chooses you." LEO Maxim

Excuse 4: MY PARTNER DOESN'T WANT ME TO TRAIN

"I can't train because my partner will leave me if I do."

This could be an excuse or likely a 'blockade'. If your partner is not on board with you, you will likely find it impossible to train as they will blatantly say "me or training. Pick one!" We are not giving relationship advice here BUT if your relationship lacks either communication and/or compromises, your time on the mat will likely not happen.

PERSPECTIVE: If your partner doesn't want you to train, do they know what the job entails? Do they know by training, you are increasing your odds of not getting injured or killed on the job? Do they know a better skilled officer is **5 times less likely** to end up having bad use of force complaint?

Invictus Excuse Validity: .001/10

Excuse 5: CONFIRMATION BIAS

"Never needed it before...won't need it in the future."

This is a really big one. We've touched upon this on our last two articles. A confirmation bias basically states that "nothing bad has happened to me on the job so nothing bad will happen to me in the future." Cops who follow this bullshit excuse are delusional and a danger to themselves and others. We utterly reject this in every way. Yes, you can go your entire career without a use of force encounter but the stats show this is very, very rare. The worst part of this excuse is that it leads to COMPLACENCY.

PERSPECTIVE: I don't need training or hands on training because I can talk my way through everything (or that I'm huge and no one messes with me). We aren't sure where you work but we have yet to see a 100% compliance rate for all people in law enforcement. We also know that there is ALWAYS someone bigger, stronger, younger and faster than you out there.

Invictus Excuse Validity: -50/10

Excuse 6: I'M CLOSE TO RETIREMENT

"I'm getting too old for this shit." Roger Murtaugh Lethal Weapon

We know, you are no longer taking patrol calls and the files you are juggling (if you even are) are not front-line ones. You are banking on the fact that you've made it this far without training and you simply don't need to start. While your physical safety may not be in jeopardy from another human being because you are not on the streets, your physical health may be the issue.

PERSPECTIVE: The number one killer in Law Enforcement is heart attack and sickness. Training Jiu Jitsu absolutely lowers blood pressure and gets you in shape. Also, imagine training as a 55 year old cop, close to retirement. Younger members will be inspired by your dedication and this in turn could get them training! No matter what your age, it is important to the profession and your wellbeing.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 3/10

Excuse 7: I WORK IN ADMIN (not on the road):

"I push paper, not people. No need to train."

This is very similar to the above excuse (I'm Close to Retirement) with one exception- You may have YEARS left until you retire. You may be a detective who isn't taking front line calls and just following up on homicide files or arson investigations. However, any call we go to has the potential to go south, especially when serious crime is involved. It could be potential suspects, family members or even the general public that want to take you on. Emotions make people do strange and dangerous things.

PERSPECTIVE: You have convinced yourself that your chances of needing to physically arrest someone or protect yourself is so low that it just isn't worth the time to invest. We know that Murphy (Law) loves to make himself known at the most inopportune times.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 3/10

Excuse 8: I'M OUT OF SHAPE

*"Who wants to leave the door open to being dominated physically by another human being? Jiu Jitsu gives you the ability to not be dominated by that person, and to me, that's real peace of mind."
- Jocko Willink.*

Lack of sleep. Poor eating habits and no physical exercise lead to cops being out of shape. There is (was) a physical standard when you got hired but 95% of departments do not require that standard to be upheld as the years go on. Your sedentary lifestyle has affected you so badly that you have trouble moving or defending yourself in a manner that would be considered even basic. Police NEED each other and if you are the backup for another officer and they require you to run block to save their life but you can't, this is a major problem.

You use the excuse that you need to get in shape before you can start training jiu jitsu. This is an extremely overused excuse that every coach has heard.

PERSPECTIVE: The best time to start training is when you were 8 and today. You don't have to be in shape to train. You DO NEED heart to do it though. We've literally seen 300 lbs cops start training and lose a ton of weight doing so. Just go slow and embrace that lion attitude-you've likely just forgotten that it's still in there.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 2/10

Excuse 9: I DON'T WANT TO GET BEAT UP

"There's only one way to get good at anything; you surround yourself with the bad mother F&kers who are doing exactly you do and you force yourself to keep up and inspire each other." – Joe Rogan*

There are some amazing Jiu jitsu academies around the world. Many are LEO friendly (we have a list of 200 + gyms that will welcome you on our website by the way). A GOOD gym will protect its students. You will encounter **tough days** (trust us) but training isn't about getting "beat up". There are unfortunately some ridiculous and stupid trainers out there and you've probably seen videos of them beating the shit out of one another. These videos do nothing to help recruit people into jiu jitsu.

Modern training methodologies have changed and we know how to properly go about it and protect students. If you see these dangerous training environments, stay clear and know that legitimate trainers won't try to destroy you.

PERSPECTIVE: Training isn't about getting beat up. It's about learning the mental and physical attributes needed to protect yourself. As you get further into training, you will be able to do more things. Your intensity will increase over time. Don't let a bad trainer throw you into the fire without experience. The better you are the more you can handle.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 5.5/10 (this is a semi legit excuse because bad trainers put out videos of unsafe and archaic training methods which in turn scare off cops).

Excuse 10: INJURIES

"If you want to train for a lifetime, you need to train smart. You also need to know how manage your injuries and listen to your body. But sometimes, your mind needs to tell your body what to do. The mind is a very powerful weapon and ally." -Keith Owen 4th degree Jiu Jitsu Black Belt, Former LEO

Your old football injury is preventing you from training huh? This excuse is a 'saving face' excuse. It clearly lays the blame on something completely "out of your control". Or does it? Injury management and rehab are absolutely essential as we get older. You would be shocked on the injuries many jiu jitsu cops have but they work around them to get their reps in-all without further injury. They train smarter not harder.

PERSPECTIVE: You don't bend to Jiu Jitsu-Jiu Jitsu should bend to fit you (and your body type). The adaptability of Jiu Jitsu is incredible and there are so many ways to train with injuries or physical limitations that not doing just doesn't cut it. Sometimes you need to take time off (we are ok with that) and sometimes an injury may be so severe that returning may be impractical for a long time but we have literally trained with athletes that were blind, amputees or had conditions such as cerebral palsy and they STILL hit the mats.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 3/10

Excuse 11: FEAR :

"I must not fear. Fear is the mind-killer. Fear is the little-death that brings total obliteration. I will face my fear. I will permit it to pass over me and through me. And when it has gone past I will turn the inner eye to see its path. Where the fear has gone there will be nothing. Only I will remain."- Paul Atreides-Dune

There are so many other things on the planet that we should be afraid of-training shouldn't be one of those (but alas, it is). Cops fear training for so many reasons. They may not want to look bad in front of their peers. They may fear injury. They may fear (insert excuse here). We literally are in a profession that puts us face to face with the worst and scariest things that humanity has to offer. You need to change your perspective on how you look at training and identify what the underlying holdback is. Much of the time, EGO is what causes your fear (see next excuse).

PERSPECTIVE: You must sit with your fear around training and jiu jitsu. You need to first identify WHY you are afraid. The biggest hurdle most have is walking through that gym door for the first time. Its really not as scary as you think-you've only made it so. Find a buddy and let them help you navigate the experience. You may have a ton of questions about it so ask (reach out to us-we would be more than willing to help).

Invictus Excuse Validity: 5/10 (another legit excuse that can be overcome with the right guidance and mental attitude)

Excuse 12: EGO

"Ego is not your amigo."-Master Pedro Sauer-8th degree black belt

EGO is a catch all term that encompasses many aspects of human behaviour. EGO also is the number one accompanying excuse to others on this list. You may be ex military and have a ton of CQC under your belt. You may be built like a body builder and stronger than anyone you know. You may have been in several use of force encounters and always "won". EGO is insidious and it is one of the top reasons cops don't train (and ALSO GET INJURED).

PERSPECTIVE: If you want a wake-up call and think that your EGO is stronger than someone who has dedicate hundreds if not thousands of hours to defensive tactics, we can introduce you many people that will pop that delusion. EGO ridden cops typically don't train because they can't comprehend that they can lose to someone smaller or "less than them". Their EGO won't allow them to continue because in order to learn Jiu Jitsu, LOSS is built into the system. It literally is self correcting for behaviour. There is a calmness and understanding students who train develop over time.

Statistically, there are more people walking around who are trained than ever before. When your EGO meets one of those bad guys who train, it is going to be a very bad day and a huge wake up call. LEO's need to be humble, professional and always strive to do better. Shelve the EGO and get after it.

Invictus Excuse Validity: -1000/10

Excuse 13: LAZY:

*"Be the person that when your feet touch the floor in the morning the devil says, 'Awe sh!t, they're up!' -
Dwayne Johnson*

We ALL have those days where we don't want to do things but if your lazy for no reason other than being lazy, we can bet that probably bleeds into your police work. The current climate of law enforcement is fighting many different problems at the moment and lazy cops is one of them. Laziness is a great way on getting killed on the job as it also leads to complacency, cutting corners and even dishonesty. Don't be this person.

Perspective: The difference between a successful person and others is not lack of strength, not a lack of knowledge, but rather in a lack of will.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 0/10

Excuse 14: IGNORANCE/ DON'T UNDERSTAND THE BENEFITS

Jiu Jitsu is a super power-Every practitioner of the art

This actually is a one of the excuses that we can give a pass to and the only one that is above a 6 on this list. Many cops simply are so far removed from defensive tactics in their thinking that it doesn't even register that they should train. Their ignorance stems from them not knowing what they don't know. They haven't been educated in the benefits of Jiu Jitsu or simply think their mandatory departmental training (all 8 hours a year) is sufficient to do the job.

Perspective: Ever try to knee strike the thigh of a person who isn't compliant only to realize that your technique doesn't work? There are many officers who don't understand basic anatomy or physical manipulation so they simply rely on their police academy training as the gold standard in defensive tactics. Unfortunately, these officers (like many others who don't train), need to escalate their use of force option because they simply don't have the tools (or options) to deal with a situation. Spend 5 minutes on the mat with someone who trains and you feel like a kitten be played with by a lion.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 6/10 (also these officers are dealt a huge disservice because they often escalate their UOF because they have limited options at their disposal.

Excuse 15: I WORK OUT AND/OR I AM BIG AND STRONG:

If size mattered, then the Elephant would be king of the Jungle.-Rickson Gracie.

Cops need to be in shape. It's a physical job that requires you to put your body in harm's way from time to time. If you are below the standard, you are going to be a liability to yourself or others should something happen. However, working out alone does not equal defensive tactics or combatives training no matter how your gym markets it. Police culture tends to be a 'work out culture' in many parts of the world but don't think that this replaces how to 'fight' or deal with 'fighting'.

Perspective: Spend some time on YouTube and you'll see plenty of big, strong and in shape cops getting tossed, outworked or outfought by people who are dedicated or have some training. You absolutely need resistance training (like Jiu Jitsu) that will teach you how to deal with combative individuals.

Jiu Jitsu gives you the ability to control another human that does not want to be controlled by using leverage, positioning, joint locking, throws and numerous other avenues to achieve its goal.

Invictus Excuse Validity: SHAME ON YOU if you use this excuse. 2/10

Excuse 16: IT WILL TAKE TOO LONG TO GET GOOD:

If I quit now, I'll soon be back to where I started. And when I started, I was desperately wishing to be where I am now. Does it get easier over time? No, after a while you just stop trying so hard. -Dan Phillips, Black Belt

This is a curious one but one we have heard surprisingly more than you'd think. Many cops won't train because they believe the return on investment won't happen soon enough. They think doing Jiu Jitsu will take 10 years to be of any benefit to them so they figure their time is better spent elsewhere.

Perspective: What these cops don't realize is that a two-year investment in training (average blue belt) will absolutely wreck the average cop with no training. That's a pretty damn great investment if you ask us. Jiu Jitsu is like insurance-better to have and not need than need and not have.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 1/10

Excuse 17: I do the required amount as directed by my department:

Don't do a technique 5 times and wait for the instructor to tell what's next-do the technique 500 times and wait for the instructor to tell you to stop.

Holy shit...if you use this excuse and believe it, you have some major rethinking to do. You are offered the bare minimum and the standards for use of force in many departments is exceedingly low (Not all but those are far and few between). Many departments actually have ZERO recert standards meaning the only training they may have received was in the police academy. You must augment your training in order to be able to actually use what you have learned in the field.

Perspective: The average use of force required of police officers is 6 hours. This is the AVERAGE per year. Of that 6, it's usually broken down into recertification on baton, OC, taser and then hands on training. Breaking it down further, you are likely to receive less than 90 minutes of actual hands on type reps per year. Cops usually spend an average of 8-12 hours of firearms practice per year but an officer is 1000 times more likely to go hands on than discharge their firearm.

Invictus Excuse Validity: Two rotten tomatoes /10

Excuse 18: I USE TO DO “INSERT MARTIAL ART HERE”

The right tool for the right job. Get your tool box sorted.

This is not a knock on other arts but your Kung DO CHI lessons when you were 16 are likely not going to help you 20 years later in a dark ally with a bad guy who wants to smash your face in. As we have already pointed out, training is a perishable skill and if you don't keep up with it, you won't have much luck applying it. The reason we are such advocates for Jiu Jitsu and Police style Jiu Jitsu is that the art is literally geared for what we do. How do take people into custody? Why put our hand on them. That won't ever change but if all you know is how to do a head kick, you'll likely end up sitting in Internal affairs trying to explain your use of force option on that resisting shop lifter.

Perspective: UFC 1-10. Enough said. Just watch.

Invictus Excuse Validity: 2/10 (There are many great martial art systems that compliment policing but there are also many more that don't. Do your research).

Excuse 19: I'M A BLACK BELT (any belt) in JIU JITSU ALREADY

Defensive tactics and training is a perishable skill. We cannot rest on our laurels. We must keep hitting the mats until the very end. A blackbelt is in a position to teach other officers lifesaving skills and you should make it your mission to do so. If you are at this stage in your journey, you absolutely know that defensive tactics keeps evolving. It is your duty to remain up to date in the latest techniques to help the next generation of practitioners.

Perspective: There is always more to learn. Don't be that black belt that quits.

Invictus Excuse Validity: While you may have the skills, its your duty to keep on learning and pass that knowledge on to other officers.

“Instead of bitching and moaning how you'd do this or do that-why don't you just shut the F#\$k up and go train?” -Jason Rebsch, Jiu Jitsu Black Belt, C4c PP

Instructor, 20+ year LEO and Invictus Co Founder.