



The Arizona Correctional Peace Officers Association Check and Mate Newsletter

No. 10



A bi-weekly newsletter to inform Union members on important grievance results, trends, procedures and important information relevant to a better quality of work life.

In This Issue:

-The secret to passing range with flying colors, each and every time!



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The secret to passing range each and every time.

During my tour of duty with the Arizona dept. of Corrections, at least 7 of my 20 years were dedicated to training staff in both firearms and self defense as a certified Instructor of both disciplines. That's right: I said disciplines. Make no mistake about it. They are both disciplines that require constant practice and attention to detail. Not just from my perspective

as an instructor, but from yours as well.

You see, when you actually teach the craft, you learn from watching and interacting with other human beings, and narrow down what we all have in common when it comes to maintaining proficiency with a firearm.

So, what is it then? What is the secret to achieving the elusive title of "Distinguished Expert" with a perfect score? Or better yet, what is the secret of just passing the range without having to resort to a requalification session?

We'll get to that in a second but first things first:

I'll share with you what happened, each and every time, I ran a range. I would look out into the crowd of correction officers assembled for range and would immediately spot the go getters that were going to pass the range with flying colors. They were ready to go. Most had invested in their own holsters, eye and ear protection, and were eyeballing my every move waiting for me to call for

the volunteers that wanted to go first. In contrast, there was the second group of officers that would take their time to gear up with the worn equipment that we would provide for those that did not have their own and they made it a point that they did not want to go first.

Lastly, there was the third group that simply walked up to you and advised you that they were not probably going to pass because they just weren't very good with firearms, or so they thought.

For those that required extra help, there was always the recaps of the Ghost of Christmas past that included lessons on stance, sight picture, breathing, trigger control and resetting for the Glock, etc., etc.

So, what is the secret then? Is it the breathing? The stance? Sight picture? Sight alignment? Trigger pull? Trigger reset?

Yes!

Yes, to all of them!

But the real secret lies in not having to relearn them again, during range,

while the rest of the year is spent with the trigger finger idle.

This is not a trick question and answer but instead, a reality check. Our jobs as Union members is to improve our work environment and make our lives easier by speaking frankly with one another.

There is no secret to passing range other than ensuring that you remain proficient with your firearm by taking a vested interest in the discipline and practicing on your own time. The answer seems obvious, of course, but few staff take advantage of the privilege of being in a career where a firearm is a part of their everyday accoutrement.

This reasoning should be applied to every aspect of your career to avoid the stress of being put on the spot in any situation.

Not sure of what to do during an escape? Then look up the policy and become an expert with the procedure. Intimidated by auditors that are looking for a needle in a hay stack in your assigned area? Then become an expert in your area and audit yourself

and make the auditors walk away empty handed.

Proficiency with firearms is no different. You don't like getting the jitters when range day comes around again? Then practice the skills by going to range on your own and never fear range again.

With that said, there is nothing intimidating about range. Period!

Let's review the little observed facts about range:

-The A.D.O.C. range is not a Combat range. It is a range where you demonstrate basic handling skills, that's all.

-The events are timed reasonably to ensure you have ample time to apply the basic handling skills in a non-combat environment.

-You are not being asked to shoot from a combat prone position, running or strafing position like on Call of Duty: Black OP's III. You are taking your time from beginning to end.

-You are not being yelled at by a drill sergeant nor will you be required to demonstrate the skills under duress.

-The targets are fixed and static and do not pop up, nor do they move.

-Hand gunning is not difficult.

But you have to keep in mind that hand gunning is Americas martial art and like all martial arts, they require a vested interest and training outside of the dojo, dig?

Want to become an expert and ace range each and every time?

-Invest in your own eyes and ear protection.

-Invest in your own holster.

-Join a fire arms range like Shooters World and enjoy a law enforcement discount.

-Subscribe to a hand gun magazine and learn the modern trends to include training and handling tips.

-Become a fire arms instructor.

Remember: the simple secret to mastering anything is to simply practice.

Like the old joke states when a man asked a passerby in the streets of New York "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?"

"Practice, practice, practice!" was the reply.

Let's all follow suit.

Yours in Solidarity,

Carlos Garcia

Executive Grievance

Coordinator

Deeds not words!

