

1) Introduction, Day 1

22 August, 2011

Front Sight's Philosophy

Let's talk about Front Sight's philosophy for a minute. What you will be learning in this course are truly state-of-the-art techniques. That differs quite a bit from the industry standard. I would define the industry standard of firearms training to be that given to the average soldier or police officer in this country. Historically, that level of training is pretty poor. Police and military training has been improving over the last ten to fifteen years. However, change, and certainly improvement, comes about very slowly in these large, political, bureaucratic organizations. By contrast, at Front Sight we are free to test, evaluate, and once in a great while, even create techniques. The fruit of that labor comes to you, in the form of state-of-the-art training.

How many full-time police officers do we have? As you can attest, police officers are often forced by departmental policy to do things a certain way with their weapon while on duty. We understand that when you leave us you will have to adhere to departmental policy. However, while you are here, use our techniques so you appreciate the different techniques that are out there.

Also, many of you, police and private citizens alike, may have been shooting a certain way for many years, and doing it well. Again, this weekend we ask you also to set aside your old habits and use our techniques. If, at the end of the course, you still prefer your techniques, feel free to switch back. All we ask is that you tell us why you believe your technique is better.

At Front Sight, we have a motto: "Sometimes an instructor, always a student." If you have a technique that is better, even if it's just a little bit better, we want to know about it. While it may not benefit this class, it may benefit future classes, should we adopt that technique.

Demonstration

Right now we are going to put on a brief shooting demonstration for you. There are two reasons we do a shooting demo at this point. First, we want to prove that we can, in fact, shoot. I know that sounds odd, but there are numerous schools out there where the instructors never fire a shot. The reason is they don't want to make a mistake in front of their students. We understand. We don't want to make a mistake in front of our students either. However, as Front Sight instructors, we believe that we should be able to perform cold, and on demand, exactly what we are asking our students to perform. The second reason we do a shooting demo now is to give you a perspective on the skills that YOU will have at the end of this course.

You won't be shooting, but you will need your eye and ear protection. Let's form a class circle at seven meters.

(Students at seven meters, instructors at five meters) Everyone, protect your eyes and ears. For the instructors only, the range is clear, firing drill. This will be a controlled pair to the center of mass from the holster. The line is set. Ready... Fire!... Head!... Tactical reload!... Holster! ... The range is clear. Instructors go forward, check and tape your targets.

Take your ears off. All right, that looked pretty straightforward, and it was. They came out of the holster, fired two rounds at the center of the thoracic cavity, followed with a headshot, and finally, a tactical reload. However, there are lots of individual steps that not only need to be done correctly, but also in the proper order, to guarantee that kind of performance. That's what we are going to be working on this weekend. So, let's fall back and have a seat.

Instructor Introductions

At this time, I'd like to give you an opportunity to meet the instructors who will be working with you all weekend. We may also have additional instructors coming in to help throughout the course, and we will have them introduce themselves at that time. *(Instructors introduce themselves)*

Four Safety Rules

Let's go over the four firearm safety rules one more time. We go over them again now, not because we think you are stupid and we have to beat this information into your heads – that is not the case at all. The reason we go over these four universal firearm safety rules one more time is because we, as instructors, live and breathe these rules and we expect you to do so as well.

Rule 1: Treat every weapon as if it were loaded.

We'll be doing a lot of dry practice on the line during this course. Hopefully you'll do a lot of dry practice at home with whatever weapons you currently use. By dry practice we mean practicing with your weapon in an unloaded condition to improve your skills. Even during dry practice, you need to treat that weapon with the same respect that you would a loaded weapon. Just that level of respect, or mindset, will help ensure that you never have a negligent discharge. By negligent discharge, I mean firing a round that you didn't intend to fire.

Rule 2: Never let the muzzle cover anything you're not willing to destroy.

Usually, if you violate Rule 2, what you end up covering is yourself. You end up covering your hand or your leg, something along those lines. You need to be what we call "muzzle conscious." Know where that muzzle is pointing all the time.

Rule 3: Keep your finger off the trigger and, in fact, outside of the trigger guard until you're ready to shoot.

The corollary of this is when you're up on target and you've made the decision to shoot, your finger is, in fact, on the trigger, because that's the way the weapon operates. At any other time the finger is straight.

Rule 4: Be sure of your target and what is in line with your target.

Here on the range, this is real easy. You will be shooting at a two-dimensional sheet of paper. Nobody will be in the foreground, between you and your target, because we'll all be on the same firing line. By firing line, I mean one of lines indicated by the blue range flags you can see on the range behind me. There will be nothing in the background except that large dirt berm to absorb the impact of your rounds. This is the best case. It doesn't get any easier than this. On the street, however, Rule 4 is significantly more complicated. With respect to Rule 4, you have several questions to answer. First, are you shooting at the right guy? Is this the correct individual? If that answer is yes, then you have a couple more questions to answer. Next, is somebody going to step in front of your sights in the foreground? And finally, if you press the trigger and that round over penetrates your adversary and continues downrange, could it harm anyone? Remember, you are civilly and possibly criminally liable for every round you fire. You need to be absolutely certain of Rule 4 before you press the trigger.

Any questions about the four universal firearms safety rules?

Range Safety

Let's talk about range safety rules. There are only three places for your weapon. One is in the holster. Two is at the ready. Three is pointed in at the target. Let me repeat that. There are only three places for your weapon: in the holster, at the ready, and pointed at the target. What does that mean? Your weapon is not going to be dangling down beside your leg. It's not going to be in and out of your range bag. It's not going to be on the hood of your car. You're not going to hand it to your buddy to show off your new sights. Your holster is your primary range safety device. When it's in the holster, we know it's safe. The muzzle is not covering anybody and there's no finger on the trigger. So, the only time your weapon will come out of your holster is on the firing line, and under the direction of an instructor.

Next, let's talk about some rules that apply to the firing or dry practice line. You will be dropping gear on the ground during this course, intentionally and maybe even by accident. We know that you need to pick up your gear; but we need you to wait until the entire relay has safely holstered their weapons and has been given the appropriate command. That way we are certain no one is going to get covered with the muzzle of a weapon. Also, never bend over with a weapon in your hand. If you bend over with a weapon in your hand, you will likely start focusing on the gear that is on the ground and lose track of where the muzzle is pointing. So, again, never bend over on the line until everyone is safely in the holster and you've been given the appropriate command to do so. What if you need to leave the line? Let's assume you get an emergency page, or you have to leave for any other reason. That's fine. Unload, holster, then turn around and let us know you need to leave the line. We will dismiss you to handle your business. Never step forward of the firing line during an exercise because, at that point, a dozen muzzles are covering you. You don't want that.

What should you do if you get a piece of hot brass inside your collar during a shooting exercise, and it's burning your neck? We know this is uncomfortable. The natural reaction might be to do what we affectionately call the "hot brass boogie." That's dancing around with a loaded weapon in your hand screaming "Oh my god that's hot!" That cannot happen. Again, we know it's uncomfortable. But, for your safety and the safety of those around you, you need to demonstrate some discipline if this happens. Keep your trigger finger straight and the muzzle pointed downrange. With your support hand, reach up and get a hold of the brass, throw it off to the side and carry on. (*Demonstrate*) Let's take that one step further. Let's assume that brass hits your neck and slides down inside your shirt and is now burning your waistline. The same rule applies. Your trigger finger goes straight and you keep the muzzle pointed downrange. Now, reach over and grab the brass, garment and all, and simply pull it away from your skin. (*Demonstrate*) It'll cool off quickly. You can remove it after you leave the line.

If your weapon malfunctions, we do not expect you to clear it on your own until we have taught you how. So, if your weapon should experience a malfunction, simply raise your hand and an instructor will assist you. However, if you know how to clear it, go ahead and do so.

Let's talk about some of the safety equipment on the table. First and foremost, if you don't have the wrap around style glasses, we have some right here. These are essentially industrial safety glasses that have a very broad temple to protect your eyes from side impact. These are usually large enough to fit right over prescription glasses or sunglasses. You will be required to wear eye protection at all times, even when you are behind the line and under cover. It's also possible for a piece of brass to rain down from above and get caught between your glasses and your skin. Therefore you will need a brimmed hat. If you don't have a hat, we have them right here. You will also need ear protection. If you don't have ear protection, we have the disposable foam kind right here. Obviously, you are required to wear ear protection during firing drills. In addition, we will require ears during some dry practice drills. You are just learning these skills and occasionally we do get a round fired unintentionally during dry practice. You should wear sunscreen, which we have right here. In the first aid kit you will find bandages, aspirin, alcohol wipes, etc. If there is a more significant injury or problem, tell me or one of the other instructors if you need medical assistance. If you are actively bleeding, I will ask you to refrain from digging around in the first aid kit. If the contents of the kit get contaminated with blood, we have to throw everything away. If you are bleeding simply ask an instructor or another student to help you get the supplies you need.

Finally, let's talk about a cold range versus a hot range. A cold range means that when you are done with a given exercise you will holster an unloaded weapon. A hot range, by contrast, means that when you are done with a given exercise you will holster a loaded weapon. A hot range is the only way to go. That's because a loaded weapon is the only one that's going to do you any good. An unloaded weapon, at best, makes a marginal club. We will run a hot range; but not right off the bat. We will start with a cold range and switch to a hot range as soon as we are certain that everybody's weapon handling skills allow us to do so safely.

Do you have any questions about range safety? Okay, let me ask you a question then. Who's responsible for range safety this weekend? *(Pause for their answer)* Everyone. That is correct. The instructors are in charge of running a safe range, but we need your help. Our attention is generally focused on the relay that is up on the line. The relay that is back under the shade is generally not receiving our attention and that's where the problems may occur. So if you see something unsafe, don't be bashful. Tell that person, whatever it might be: "put your weapon away, watch the muzzle, take your finger off the trigger," etc. Let them know. They are not going to be offended. They are here to learn just like you. Let's not let a problem fester and become a habit and turn into a negligent discharge, or worse an injury. You are all hereby authorized to help us run a safe range.

Range Commands

Now let's talk about the range commands. Range commands are very straightforward. You heard me give them to the instructors during the demonstration. They always start with "The range is clear." That means the range is clear; there is nobody forward of the firing line. That command will be followed by one of two commands, either "dry practice drill" or "firing drill." You will hear them in combination. For example, "The range is clear, dry practice drill." Or "The range is clear, firing drill." At that point you would bring your weapon out of the holster and set it up according to the exercise. We will give you all the details on how to do that momentarily. Since we are running a cold range initially, you will unload and holster at the end of each exercise.

Once you have holstered, we'd like you to stay right there on the firing line and simply put your hands at your side and turn and face us. This helps us with range administration. When we see your bright smiling faces, we know that your weapon is safely holstered. If we are looking at your back, we assume you are still clearing out a weapon. That's fine. We'll give you all the time you need. However, once you're done, holster and turn around. At that point you will again hear, "The range is clear," meaning all weapons are holstered. If we had been shooting, we would go downrange and check and tape targets. By tape, we mean physically tape the holes. If we had just been dry practicing, we would either swap relays or simply come back for another block of instruction.

There is one additional range command you need to be aware of and that is "STOP!" If you hear "STOP!" do just that. Don't turn around, don't holster. Don't do anything. Just stop right where you are. There's obviously a range safety issue that we are getting sorted out. Once we get it sorted out, an instructor will give the "Carry on!" command and we will all carry on as a group. "STOP" does not come up very often. In fact, it occurs very rarely. However, you guys are all authorized to yell stop. So, if you see something we don't—don't be bashful. A good example of a time to yell "STOP!" would be if someone started to turn around on the line with a weapon in their hands. Are there any questions on range commands?

Definitions

Let's talk about some very basic definitions. First, there are two major parts of every semi-auto handgun. They are the frame and the slide. The bottom portion of the weapon is the frame. The top portion is the slide. There are numerous components attached to those two major features but you will hear us discuss the frame and the slide again and again.

Magazines vs. Clips. Clips do exist but there are none here on the range today. All of these are magazines. So let's use the proper terminology.

Now the big one: right hand and left hand. It would do us little good to get up on the line and use right hand or left hand for this or that, because it's obviously backwards for a left-hand shooter. So we get away from that confusion and use "firing side" and "support side." The easiest way to define these is to divide your body in half vertically. The side with the weapon is your firing side and the side with the magazine is your support side. These terms are applicable to whatever body part we are talking about. Firing side eye, support side elbow, etc. Any questions?

Indexing Magazines

Let's talk about magazines. You will be handling your magazines a lot more than you handle your weapon because you have multiple magazines and you'll need to reload them numerous times. Let's talk about the right way to handle magazines. The correct way is what we call "indexing" the magazine. A correct index on the magazine looks just like this. (*Demonstrate*) The magazine is in your support hand where your index finger can touch that first round or, in the case of an empty magazine, it's touching the follower. The thumb is along one side and the remaining three fingers are simply wrapped around the back of the magazine. The bottom is in contact with the palm of your hand. Where that floor plate actually hits in your hand is not important. That will depend on the size of the magazine and the size of your hand. What is important is that your index finger touches the top round in that magazine. Why? Let me give you an example.

Let's assume you bring a magazine out of the pouch, and you've got a round that has started forward like this. (*Demonstrate*) That magazine will never go in your weapon in that configuration, it simply won't fit. You won't even know there is a problem until you are thrashing around with it. However, a proper index on that magazine alerts you to the fact that there is a problem. Now, we can solve it before we start thrashing around with it. You can either push that round back into the magazine or simply flick it right off the top. Either way, you now have the problem solved. Any questions?

Let me borrow a speed loader from one of the revolver shooters. Indexing a speed loader is different. You will index it in your firing hand because speed loaders are also stored on the firing side. To index a speed loader properly, you place the index finger between two rounds. It doesn't matter which two. (*Demonstrate*) It's not on top of one, but between two. The middle

finger and the thumb hold onto the knob. When it is time to rotate or push the knob, you'll be doing so with the thumb and the middle finger.

When do you acquire the index on your magazine? You will actually acquire that index while the magazine is still in the magazine pouch. For example, my support hand has a proper index on the magazine right now, even though it has not come out of the pouch yet. *(Demonstrate)* If you have Velcro or some sort of retention device on your magazine pouch, you would remove it prior to establishing a proper index on the magazine. When the magazine comes out of the pouch, you already have it properly indexed. There is no need to adjust the magazine in your hand.

Also, when you acquire a magazine, you want to keep your support side elbow to the rear. If you let your elbow fly out to the side, you'll simply have to tuck it in later, which is wasted motion. Keep your elbow to the rear from the very beginning. Let's check to make sure everyone understands how to acquire a proper index on a magazine. With your support hand, get hold of the magazine, leave it in the pouch, but get a proper index on it as best you can in the pouch. The index finger is up along the front edge of the magazine, three fingers wrapped around the back. Retention devices are released at this time. Now, just pull it out of the pouch, with a proper index, and hold it up. Keep it up until an instructor has looked at it. *(Check all students)* Go ahead and put it back in the pouch. Any questions about indexing magazines or speed loaders?

Reference Point For Trigger Finger

Let's talk about safety rule three one more time. Keeping your finger off the trigger until you're ready to shoot is kind of vague. There are about a thousand places it could be and still be off the trigger. We want to give you a specific location for your trigger finger. This is what we call the reference point. Every weapon has a reference point: a button, screw, or indentation. It will be something that you can feel with your trigger finger when it is straight along the side of the frame. *(Demonstrate)* Where ever it is, it is not on the trigger guard.

On the 1911's it's easy, the backside of the slide stop forms this big button right there. You can feel that button; it's real obvious. That's the reference point for a 1911. As soon as we start dry practicing this morning, you will need to find the reference point on your weapon. Any questions?

2) Student-Coach Discussion

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You will be learning and mastering skills in two distinct formats while you're here. The first is as a traditional student, up on the line and doing the actual technique. The other format is that of a Student Coach. As we begin, the staff will lecture the material and demonstrate the techniques for you to emulate. You will be alternating your role each time, acting once as a student then once as a Student Coach. This allows everyone to participate in each of the roles and get the most benefit.

When it's your turn up on the line you will gain mastery of the techniques by replication and repetition. The Front Sight Staff and the coaches will assist you every step of the way insuring that each technique is performed safely and correctly.

After several iterations of practicing the technique we will clear the range and let you switch positions. You will then be acting as a Student Coach. So let's talk about what is expected of you there.

As a Student Coach your role is very straight forward, you will be assisting your partner insuring they don't violate any of the Four Firearms Safety Rules we just talked about. Don't worry. If you can remember the safety rules and make sure your partner on the line doesn't violate them, you will be successful as a Student Coach.

If you see some violation of these rules you will need to take action. We cannot afford to let violations fester into habits and habits into injuries. So when you see a violation address it immediately with a command such as "finger off the trigger!" or maybe even "STOP!" if the violation is serious. In some cases you may even need to physically intervene.

When you are coaching your partner you will spend most of your time on their firing side. This allows you to best see any unsafe gun handling and react to it. You will move to the support side only after the weapon is safely out of the holster and is clear of the body.

(DEMO) An example of "STOP!" being used would be if you saw the student's finger on the trigger as they begin to reholster. "STOP!" is the correct command. But we are not going to try and grab the student's arm, hand or gun. Why? Yeah, that's right. We don't want to do anything to make them press the trigger. So "STOP!" had better do the trick. Of course this is pretty unlikely since you will have been watching their weapon handling well prior to reholstering and could correct the trigger-finger problem long before it got to this point.

(DEMO) An example of the "Stop!" command and physical intervention combined would be your partner bending over on the line. Usually you will physically intervene only to control muzzle direction. Here the concern is that as they bend over they lose muzzle consciousness. You would shout "STOP" and be prepared to help them control the muzzle. You must prevent

them from covering themselves, you, or anyone else with the muzzle as they try to bend over. It looks like this (DEMO). As you can see I don't try and tackle _____. I don't even try to grab the gun. Since I am right there I just get a hold of the firing side arm, behind the wrist and gently resist his effort to bend over. This combined with the stop command should be enough to get anyone back on track.

(DEMO) Sometimes people turn around while the gun is still out and unholstered. You cannot allow that. This is another example of where you will physically intervene and shout "STOP!" If they turn to their firing side, reach forward and block their turn with your arms and use the stop command. If they turn to their support side, it's a little trickier. Don't try and grab the gun or forearm. (DEMO) That will probably put you forward of the firing line. Prevent them from turning by using both arms on their shoulders to resist the turn and shout "STOP!"

(DEMO) Every once in a while someone drops a gun. That's ok. All we would do there is shout "STOP!" The Rangemaster will clear the range and an Instructor will retrieve the weapon. Don't try and pick it up or let the student on the line pick it up.

As you can see, being a Student Coach is pretty straight forward. Just remember the 4 safety rules and you can't go wrong.

Secondly, as a Student Coach you also will be doing some coaching to help each other improve. Coaching is a little more dynamic. When we lecture and demonstrate the material, we will show you the right way to perform the technique as well as all the important details to insure that you can help one another get it right. Again, don't worry. We will be highlighting everything you need to watch for as we progress and the Instructors and myself will be right over your shoulders insuring that everything goes well. In fact, the first couple of times we do any technique, we walk you through slowly, by the numbers, calling out each step and pausing to allow the coaches and staff the time to make any corrections. So even if the technique is totally new to you, you can easily make corrections.

Here are a couple of points about learning and coaching the techniques. First, understand that no one is expected to master any of these skills the first time up, and maybe not even your first time here. What you want to be sure to achieve is that you understand the technique and know exactly what to practice. Your time spent as a student and coach will reinforce what the perfect technique should look and feel like, and what errors to look for so that your own practice can be perfect and error free.

Second, all of these techniques are best learned at about 50% speed, so don't be in a hurry to go fast until you're very confident that you are 100% correct in form. Then only speed up in small, gradual increments, rechecking your technique along the way. The Student Coaches and Instructors will be slowing you down if your technique is not perfect.

When you are coaching your partner you will be doing three things: talking, correcting, and encouraging.

When you are coaching you will certainly be talking to your partner. This communication is critical, but be careful not to overwhelm your partner. Give your partner a chance to learn. Also, both you and your partner need to be able to hear the Rangemaster's commands as they guide you through the techniques. He will be walking you both through the exercise the first couple of times and he will describe everything you need to look for, so be sure to listen. You won't need to repeat our instructional block, just point out anything you see that looks different from what we demonstrated or what is different from the Rangemaster's description as he runs the exercise. If something comes up we haven't covered yet, like a malfunction, just shout for an instructor and we will walk you through it.

When you offer a correction, you have a few choices as to how you will make that correction. You will usually choose verbal communication. A simple verbal correction would be: "Alright Bob, elbow down a little more." Remember, everyone is learning and they are counting on you to help them master the technique, so don't be shy with the corrections. No one is going to hold a correction against you because everyone is here to learn. Just try to be helpful. Don't worry about making mistakes, if you say anything wrong we are right behind you and can make the correction.

(DEMO) Physical Correction is a little touchier...pardon the pun! As you talk, you may also want to position the student into the right technique as you make your correction. That means touching them. It may be something as simple as pointing to or touching their hand. If it's much more than that you need to be very careful. Always start by asking permission by saying "May I touch you?" or "Do you mind if I move your hand?" If they agree, gently make whatever correction you wanted. This need not be too formal. Once you have developed a rapport with your partner, you obviously don't need to ask permission each time you touch them.

When making physical corrections, be careful. Not only do you want to insure that your touch is appropriate, you want to be careful not to hurt your partner. Some people have shoulder, back, or neck conditions that might be aggravated if you just step in and start positioning them.

Last, but certainly not least, is encouragement. If your partner is doing well, be sure to let them know. If they are not perfect yet, make sure they know you want to help and offer whatever advice you think is appropriate. Remember, an encouraging word goes a long way. "That's the way" and "you can do it" are as essential as any corrections you're likely to make. Remember, you are next up on the line so go easy on one another.

So it's all pretty straight forward. Here are a couple tips. We will do each exercise an average of five times on the line to get you familiar with the technique; twice by the numbers and three times on the "Go" command. EVERYBODY, regardless of experience or expertise should be together when we are doing it by the numbers, so we can make any necessary corrections easily. When we perform the exercise on the "GO" command speed up slowly so you and your coach can recognize mistakes and correct them. Remember, only perfect practice makes perfect technique.

You will be teaming up right from the start with someone else and they become your shooting buddy for the whole morning. After lunch you will switch partners (unless you absolutely want to stay together as husband-wife teams, etc.).

The first thing we will do is get everybody comfortable in the Student Coach position and the use of the “Stop” command. First relay will be on the line using the Red Guns. Second relay will be behind their partners and on their firing side acting as coaches. So both relays come on up and let’s get you started.

3) Chamber Checking and Magazine Checking

22 August, 2011

Let's talk about our first technique, Chamber Checking and Magazine Checking. We call this "one-second of cheap insurance" because it only takes one second to perform and, at its conclusion, you will know with complete certainty the condition of your weapon. Don't get this confused with loading and unloading. This is checking the condition of your weapon. If you were a cop responding to an armed robbery call, you would chamber check and magazine check to verify your weapon was loaded. If you were getting ready for dry practice, you would chamber check and magazine check to verify the weapon was unloaded.

I'm going to start with the Glock because it is the simplest of the weapons to manipulate. Glocks do not have an exposed hammer, a grip safety, a thumb safety, or de-cocking levers, and they only fire one way. This makes them the easiest weapon to use. After I've covered the Glock I'll work up the complexity chain covering every weapon we have here today. For those of you shooting Springfield XD's or Smith & Wesson M&P's, the method for the Glock also applies to most variants of your guns.

You will start with your weapon at the Ready. I realize we haven't discussed what the Ready is, but roughly, both hands are on the weapon, the trigger finger is straight, the weapon is at arm's length, and it's down at a 45° angle. First, you will bring the weapon in close to your body where you have better leverage and greater dexterity. Keep the trigger finger straight and the muzzle pointed downrange. Release your support hand and bring it under the slide. Grasp the slide using the pads of the fingers and thumb midway between the muzzle and the ejection port, like this. (*Hold the weapon muzzle up so students can see*) Obviously, I'm holding the muzzle up so you can see. When you do this, your muzzle will be pointed downrange at all times. There is a tendency to use the base of your thumb, instead of the pad. Avoid that tendency because this (*Demonstrate using the base of the thumb against the slide*) becomes this (*Curl the tip of the thumb over the muzzle*) and you can go home one digit short. You don't want that. If you get too close to the muzzle, you run the risk of covering your hand. If you get too close to the ejection port, you can't see into the chamber during your chamber check. Next, drift your trigger finger away from the frame, giving your support hand room to move. (*Demonstrate holding muzzle vertical*) Run the slide to the rear about one-half inch and look into the chamber. If you see brass, the chamber is loaded; no brass, the chamber is unloaded. Next, push the slide fully forward. You need to ensure that the slide is fully forward so that your gun will function.

Now we know the condition of the chamber. Next, we need to check the condition of the magazine, if one is present in the weapon. Most of you will not be able to maintain a firing grip on the weapon and get to the magazine release button using your firing hand thumb. The frame is just too big. You will need to loosen your firing grip on the frame just a little to get the rigid tip of your thumb on the magazine release button. This may involve a slight rotating motion of the weapon in your firing hand. That's fine. Just keep your trigger finger straight and the muzzle pointed downrange. (*Demonstrate*) Press the magazine release with the tip of your

thumb. You want to use the tip because it's rigid due to the thumbnail and the tip of the bone. If you use the pad of your thumb, the pad simply conforms to the button and you don't accomplish anything. **(LEFT-HANDED TECHNIQUE)** For left-handers, you will use the tip of your trigger finger to press the magazine release if your gun is not equipped with an ambidextrous magazine release.

Your support hand will be underneath the magazine well, ready to catch the magazine as it falls from the weapon. In this case, there is no magazine in the weapon. Reestablish a firing grip on the frame and insert a finger into the magazine well to make certain nothing is lodged in there. At that point, you have completed the chamber check and magazine check. Once finished, go right back to the ready position.

I'll demonstrate this one more time. Bring the weapon in close, keeping the trigger finger straight and the muzzle downrange. Get a hold of the slide with the support hand. Drift the trigger finger away from the frame. Run the slide back one-half inch, examine the chamber, then push it forward to seat it. Rotate the weapon in your hand and press the magazine release. Reestablish your firing grip and insert a finger into the magazine well. Once finished, go back to the ready.

What do you do when there is a magazine in the weapon? Let's insert an empty magazine into the magazine well so we have a magazine to check. Again, there is a right way and a wrong way for everything. Let's talk about the correct way to insert a magazine. With a proper index, bring the back of the magazine into contact with the inside back of the magazine well at a slight angle. This method gives you a little room for error, or misalignment, without having to thread the proverbial needle by trying to insert the magazine straight into the weapon. With the magazine set up at the entrance of the magazine well, roll it in as you release your index. Keep the magazine in contact with the palm of your hand and, when the angle is correct, seat it firmly with one brisk motion. There are two things that we do not want to see. First, do not insert the magazine part way and then back your hand off to get a running start at it. Second, do not tap it several times to insert it. The magazine should be inserted with one brisk motion. With the magazine properly inserted, bring the weapon in close and chamber check. Now it's time for the magazine check. Take the magazine completely out of the weapon, keep it indexed, and look at it. Is it full, empty, cracked, rusted, or packed full of mud? Is this magazine going to work when you need it? If you are satisfied with the condition of the magazine, then reinsert it.

I'll demonstrate this again. Bring the weapon in and chamber check...and magazine check...and right back out to the ready. Are there any questions about the Glock?

Next let's address 1911's. Chamber checking the 1911 is very similar to the Glock with one minor addition. 1911's have a thumb safety that locks the slide in place when the safety is on. So, bring the weapon in, disengage the thumb safety by pressing it down and chamber check. Then, the safety goes right back on, and magazine check as usual. Notice how briefly the safety is off. It is off only long enough to chamber check. Then it goes right back on before the

magazine check. Again, bring the weapon in, safety off, chamber check, safety on, and magazine check.

Does anyone have a Sig, or any other weapon with a de-cocking lever that automatically returns to the firing position? Can I borrow that for a minute? Let me take it out of your holster. Thank you. All double-action weapons have a very heavy mainspring that holds the hammer against the slide. If you attempt to chamber check with the hammer down, you will press, harder and harder, until finally the hammer cams out of the way and you eject a round, or induce a malfunction. The proper way to chamber check a double-action is to thumb cock the hammer using your support hand thumb. Now the hammer is out of your way and chamber checking is very easy. After you chamber check, de-cock using your firing hand thumb. **(LEFT-HANDED TECHNIQUE)** Left-handed shooters use your trigger finger to de-cock. Then, perform a magazine check. Again, bring the weapon in close, thumb cock, chamber check, de-cock, magazine check, and right back to ready.

Is anyone shooting a Smith & Wesson, Beretta, or any other weapon with a de-cocker on the slide that must be manually reset to the firing position? Can I borrow that for a minute? Let me take it out of your holster. Thank you. This is a double-action weapon, much like the Sig, except the de-cocking lever is not spring loaded. It will stay in the down position. That is not good. Down is death. With the de-cocking lever down, you cannot fire the weapon. So the chamber checking procedure for the Smith and Beretta is thumb cock, chamber check, de-cock and stroke the de-cocking lever back up. Then, perform a magazine check.

An alternate chamber checking procedure for Berettas and Smiths is the LAPD method. Use the index and middle fingers of your support hand to hook in front of the de-cocking levers. Place your thumb just under the tang. Push the levers down and perform the chamber check (*Demonstrate*). Since the de-cocking levers are down, the hammer will automatically be down at the conclusion of the chamber check. Then stroke the de-cocking levers up using your firing side thumb and magazine check as usual.

Do we have any revolvers in the class? May I borrow that for a minute? Let me take it out of your holster. Thank you. The revolver is completely different. To chamber check a revolver, bring the weapon a little closer to your body and point the muzzle down at the ground. Be careful not to cover your feet with the muzzle. Bring your support hand underneath the weapon. The trigger guard will be touching the palm of your support hand. Drift your trigger finger away from the frame. Grasp the cylinder with the support hand thumb on one side and the middle and ring fingers on the other. Your index finger will be on the frame or barrel in front of the cylinder. Your little finger will be on the frame behind the cylinder, like this (*Demonstrate*). Activate the cylinder release and push the cylinder all the way open using the middle and ring finger of your support hand. Trap it in this position using your support hand thumb (*Demonstrate*). Release your firing hand and hold the weapon with your support hand. Now look at each of the chambers. If there is nothing in the chambers, the weapon is unloaded. If there is brass in the chambers, you still have some work to do. It is possible that you have empty brass sitting in those chambers. Thus, you need to look closely for primer strikes. If you see a

dented primer, that is a spent round. Once you are satisfied with the condition of your weapon, reestablish a firing grip on the weapon with your firing hand. With your support hand, gently close the cylinder and roll until it engages.

Don't do the "Wild West flip" (*Demonstrate gently*) because you can damage the timing of the weapon, which is the alignment of the cylinder to the frame and barrel. With bad timing, you will be shaving lead out one side of the weapon when you fire the gun, which is a serious safety hazard.

(LEFT-HANDED REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) For left-handed revolver shooters this technique is slightly different. Bring the weapon in close and point the muzzle at the ground. Bring your support hand underneath the weapon and grasp the cylinder with your support hand index finger and thumb only. Activate the cylinder release with your trigger finger and push the cylinder open with the support hand thumb. Rotate the weapon onto your support hand thumb so that the thumb comes through the opening in the frame as far as possible. Grasp the cylinder with the support hand thumb and index finger. The remaining support hand fingers should be straight to keep them out of the way. You should have firm control of the weapon with your support hand only (*Demonstrate*). If your support hand thumb is not all the way through the opening, you will not have control of the frame. (*Demonstrate*) Perform a chamber check. Now, reacquire your firing hand grip, rotate the weapon back to a vertical position. Remove your thumb from the opening in the right side of the frame. Press the cylinder closed with your support hand fingers and rotate the cylinder until it engages.

First relay, step up to the dry practice line. You will need an empty magazine. Eyes are required, ears are not necessary.

For Use on the Line Only When Students Can't Do the Primary Method:

For those of you who cannot chamber check from underneath the slide, there are two alternate methods you can try. One is to trap the slide from the top, in the web of your support side hand between your thumb and index finger. This method works well for handguns with dedicated lights, or with very slick slides. For right-handers, the support side thumb will be on the right side of the frame. For this chamber check method, your trigger finger will remain along the frame. That way, when you move the slide back to chamber check, your support side thumb will touch your trigger finger giving you a reference point as to how far back to move the slide.

Another, less preferable method is to grasp the slide on the rear cocking serrations between the heel of the hand and pads of your fingers of your support hand. This is good for people who need more leverage to move the slide. The problem with this method is that you can move the slide back too far and cause a malfunction. Try chamber checking from underneath the slide first. If that doesn't work for you, you may try these alternate methods.

4) Loading and Unloading

22 August, 2011

There are four types of loads with a handgun. Right now we are going to cover administrative loading and unloading. We call this method “administrative” because if the bullets were already flying past your ears, you would perform a different loading procedure, and you certainly wouldn’t be unloading, except by shooting.

Here on the range, the administrative load is done at the beginning of a firing exercise. You will receive the command “The range is clear, firing drill.” You’ll come out of the holster and to that ready position we just talked about (*Demonstrate*). Loading always begins and ends with a chamber check and magazine check. Bring the weapon in and chamber check and magazine check just as you have practiced. You determine that the weapon is empty and it is now time to load. With your support hand, index a fully loaded magazine off your belt and insert it into the weapon. Now you need to run the action to chamber a round. To do that, grab the grasping grooves on the back of the slide with your support hand. Use the heel of your hand on one side and the pads of your fingers on the other side. Next, you will run the slide all the way to the rear. Don’t “sling-shot” the slide (*Demonstrate*). Your hand will come off the slide and continue to the rear until it strikes your firing side shoulder. This ensures that your hand comes off the slide and allows the slide to go forward on its own. If you ride the slide forward with your hand you run the risk of inducing a malfunction. Now that you have chambered a round, chamber check to verify that the weapon is loaded. Remember, it’s “one second of cheap insurance.” Finish with a magazine check. Actually take the magazine out and look at it. Make certain the round you just loaded wasn’t the last round in the magazine. At this point, you are ready for a firing drill. Since we are running a cold range, at the end of the exercise you will be given the command to “Unload.” Unloading also begins and ends with a chamber check and magazine check. Once the magazine is out of the weapon, there’s no need to put it back in because we are unloading. Stow it in a pocket. All right, I have the magazine out of the weapon. Am I unloaded? No, I still have a round in the chamber. To remove the round from the chamber, bring the weapon in close to the body, keeping the trigger finger straight and the muzzle pointed downrange. Roll the weapon 90° to the right, which puts the ejection port down. This allows gravity to help us. With your support hand, form a cup over the ejection port and grasp the slide with the heel of your hand and your fingertips. This cup is where the round in the chamber will end up so make sure there is room in the cup for that round to fall out. Additionally, keep your support side elbow high and away from the muzzle, remember rule number two. Then gently run the slide to the rear and the round will fall into your support hand. Ease the slide forward. Put the round in your pocket. Now what? Right! Chamber check and magazine check.

(LEFT-HANDED TECHNIQUE) For left-handers, roll the weapon 90° to the right. Place your support hand thumb on the left side of the slide and the fingers on the right side of the slide, forming a cup over the ejection port. Gently run the slide to the rear and the round will fall into your support hand. Ease the slide forward. Put the round in your pocket. Then chamber check and magazine check.

That is the complete loading and unloading cycle.

Again, you will hear, “the range is clear, firing drill.” Bring your weapon out to the ready, then come back toward your body to chamber check and magazine check. Index a fresh magazine off your belt and properly insert it into the weapon. Run the slide to the rear, allowing the support hand to come off the gun and hit your firing side shoulder. Finish with a chamber check and magazine check. At that point, you are ready for a firing drill. At the conclusion of the firing drill you will be given the command to “Unload.” Chamber check and magazine check and put the magazine away. Roll the weapon 90° to the right, form a cup with the support hand, grasp the slide, keep the elbow high, gently run the slide, and catch the round. Put the round in your pocket, then chamber check and magazine check. If the round coming out of the chamber falls to the ground, let it drop. Do not bend over to retrieve it. If the round won’t come out of the chamber, your support hand probably isn’t properly cupped. The round is trying to escape but it hits your hand and is forced right back in. If that occurs, reposition your hand and try again. Don’t get into a wrestling match with your weapon in an effort to remove that round.

If you do this (*Demonstrate violently racking the action repeatedly*), you run the risk of an “open breech detonation” which means the round goes off while the slide is still open. This can result in a significant injury. Any questions on loading and unloading the semi-autos?

May I borrow your revolver and a full speed loader? I’ll take it out of your holster. Loading a revolver also begins and ends with a chamber check. Obviously, there is no magazine check on a revolver. You will hear, “the range is clear, firing drill.” Bring the weapon out to the ready. Now, bring the weapon in, muzzle down, open the cylinder, and chamber check. You determine that the weapon is empty and it is now time to load. Maintain control of the weapon with your support hand and index a full speed loader with your firing hand. The speed loaders should be on your firing side because you are using your firing hand to access them.

Keep the muzzle pointed down but do not cover your feet. Align the rounds in the speed loader with the chambers and release the rounds. There are two common types of speed loaders. One is HKS, which has an aluminum knob that rotates to release the rounds. The other one is made by Safariland and requires you to push the body of the loader to release the rounds. It doesn’t matter which style you choose, just be sure to practice with it. After the rounds have fallen into the chambers, drop the speed loader on the ground. Do not waste time trying to put it in your pocket. Without ammunition, it is now useless to you. Run your firing side thumb around the back of the cylinder to ensure that all the rounds are properly seated. Then, reestablish a firing grip with your firing hand. With your support hand, gently close the cylinder and roll it until it engages. At that point, you are ready for a firing drill. At the conclusion of the firing drill you will get the command to “Unload.” Bring the weapon in close, open the cylinder, and trap the weapon in your support hand. Tip the muzzle straight up to allow gravity to help drop the rounds out. With the palm of your firing hand, strike the plunger to remove the brass out of the chambers. Let the brass and live ammo fall to the ground. Do not catch them and put them in

your pocket. Then rotate the weapon, muzzle down, and chamber check. Close the cylinder gently and rotate it until it engages.

I'll demonstrate this one more time. You will hear, "the range is clear, firing drill." Rotate the muzzle down and chamber check. Trap the cylinder open and index a full speed loader. Drop the rounds in place and let the speed loader fall. Gently close the cylinder, rotate it until it engages, and go back out to the ready. Now "unload." Bring the weapon in and chamber check. Then tip the muzzle up, trapping the cylinder wide open, palm strike the plunger, and let the rounds fall to the ground. Finish with a chamber check and gently close the cylinder and rotate it until it engages. Once finished, go back out to the ready.

(LEFT-HANDED REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) For left-handed shooters the only thing that's different is the chamber checking technique. Let me demonstrate the entire process.
(Demonstrate)

Are there any questions regarding loading and unloading revolvers?

(Possible discussions needed on half moon clips, full moon clips, speed strips, and loose rounds in pockets. Be certain the students know to keep all gear on their firing side if shooting a revolver.)

Loading Magazines and Speed Loaders

Let's talk about loading magazines and speed loaders. To load magazines take a round, push it down on the leading edge of the follower, and then slide the round under the feed lips.
(Demonstrate) Do that again and again until the magazine is almost full. We want you to load your magazines at least one or two, rounds down. For example, if you are using a ten round magazine, load it with nine. The magazines are far more reliable when loaded one or two rounds down.

Loading speed loaders is a little trickier. First, you need to know how your specific brand operates.

For the HKS variety, hold the speed loader straight up, drop the appropriate number of rounds in, and turn the knob. There is an aluminum device at the bottom of the speed loader that holds the rounds in place. For the Safariland type, hold the speed loader straight up and insert the rounds. Then hold the body of the loader stationary while pushing and turning the knob. Take a couple minutes now and load two magazines or speed loaders.

First relay, step up to the dry practice line. You will need a loaded magazine. Eyes and ears are required.

5) Grip, Stance, and Ready

22 August, 2011

In this block of instruction, we are going to cover a method of holding your weapon and a body position that will help you guarantee good, solid hits downrange. We call this grip and stance. The goal of proper grip and stance is to control recoil and muzzle flip when the weapon fires. Just to make certain everyone knows what we mean, let's define those terms. Recoil is the rearward push of the weapon, and muzzle flip is the upward rotation of the muzzle. Of course, these occur together each time you fire the weapon.

A proper grip begins with the placement of your firing hand as high as possible on the frame. If you let your hand slide down on the frame, (*Demonstrate*) you will have less control of the muzzle flip. The result of proper hand placement should be a bulge of flesh behind the tang of the weapon. The tang is this portion of the frame. (*Point to the tang*) For you 1911 shooters, the tang is part of the grip safety. The trigger finger is straight along the frame, on the reference point. The remaining three fingers are wrapped around the front of the frame. The thumb is high and relaxed. For 1911 shooters, the thumb is on top of the thumb safety. The weapon should extend in a straight line from your forearm. If there is a significant angle between your forearm and the weapon, you will have great difficulty controlling recoil and muzzle flip. That takes care of the firing hand.

The easiest way to describe the placement of the support hand is "fingers on fingers, thumb on thumb." The support hand fingers simply overlap the firing hand fingers underneath the trigger guard. The support hand index finger should hit the bottom of the trigger guard at about the second knuckle. The support hand thumb stacks comfortably on top of the firing hand thumb. The bases of the thumbs touch. That is a proper two-handed grip.

There are two common mistakes you need to avoid in your grip. First, if you let your support hand index finger drift up onto the front of the trigger guard, (*Demonstrate*) it will be more difficult to control muzzle flip. Second, if you let your thumbs curl down into a "crushing grip," you may cause two problems. One, the thumbs will likely hit one of the controls of the weapon at just the wrong time. Two, by crushing your thumbs down, you ruin your trigger control. When your entire hand is flexed, it is very difficult to move the trigger finger with a high degree of dexterity.

Now let's talk about stance. There are two popular stances out there today. The one we favor is the Weaver stance. We favor the Weaver because it allows better control over recoil and muzzle flip of the weapon. This added control enables more rapid follow-up shots.

If this were my downrange direction, (*Face the students*) and I square off to my adversary, this is what we call a 0° position. Facing your opponent squarely, like this, is a position of disadvantage, whether you are a boxer, martial artist, or gunfighter. It is far better to be in a bladed, more aggressive stance. To accomplish this, drop your firing side foot to the rear about

half the length of your support side foot. Rotate your feet toward the firing side until they point about 30° away from your target. Your feet should be shoulder width apart, parallel, and even across the toes. Your hips and shoulders are also at 30°. There should be no twisting of the spine. *(Demonstrate)* Your feet, hips and shoulders are all on the same 30° plane. The only things facing your adversary are your head and obviously your weapon.

Your body and head stay relatively erect. Your knees should be slightly bent, but not too much. You should also have a slight amount of forward lean, just enough to get your weight on the balls of your feet. *(Demonstrate with exaggerated body positions)*

If I extend my arms toward my adversary, clearly one extends much further than the other does. This is the result of being in a bladed stance. To compensate and obtain the proper two-handed grip we just talked about you simply bend your support side elbow down toward the ground and bring the hands together. Don't leave the elbow out to the side, *(Demonstrate)* point it directly down at the ground. *(Demonstrate)* Keep the firing side arm relatively straight. This is the Weaver stance. This is the Weaver stance from the firing side, *(Demonstrate)* and from the support side. *(Demonstrate)*

One thing you cannot see in the Weaver stance is the “isometric tension” in the arms. This isometric tension is created by pushing the weapon toward the adversary with the firing arm, while simultaneously pulling rearward toward your body with your support arm. This isometric tension essentially locks the frame in place like a vice.

Remember, when you fire the weapon the muzzle wants to rise. Notice what happens to the frame when the muzzle rises. *(Demonstrate)* The frame moves with the muzzle. It has to, they're connected. However, if I were to lock this frame in a vice, thereby preventing the frame from moving, the muzzle wouldn't be able to rise. The isometric tension you create with a proper Weaver stance functions as a vice and controls the recoil and muzzle flip of the weapon.

Now that we've covered grip and stance, let's cover the ready position. We've talked about the ready but not in detailed terms. The ready position is a position of readiness from which you can respond rapidly to a threat. It is not relaxed; it is ready. The best way to demonstrate the ready position is to start from the Weaver stance. You are pointed in at your adversary, finger on the trigger, safety is off for 1911's. To get to the ready, simply straighten your trigger finger and drop the weapon to 45° by pivoting from the shoulders. The rest of your body geometry remains the same. If you need to respond to an adversary, simply snap the weapon back up on target by pivoting at the shoulders. You are now pointed in with your finger on the trigger. And back down to ready. Up, down, up, down. Nothing moves except the pivoting of your shoulders, and your trigger finger. If you change your body position to get into the ready position, you will have to correct it when you point in. That wastes time. Once you are certain that the threat is over, the safety goes on, or de-cock. Are there any questions about grip, stance, or the ready position?

First relay, step up to the dry practice line. Eyes are required, ears are not necessary.

6) Grip and Stance Demo Using Instructor's Wrist

22 August, 2011

Remember, I said that you couldn't see the isometric tension created by the push/pull effect of your arms. Well, the instructors can't see it either. So we have a brief exercise that will allow you to feel the proper isometric tension and understand how it helps you control the recoil and muzzle flip of the weapon.

This will not be a firing exercise but rather a hands-on exercise one-on-one with an instructor. *(Bring up a fellow Instructor for demonstration)* First, you will hold up an arm so we can get a hold of it. We will grip your wrist as if it were the frame of a weapon. We will apply the proper amount of isometric push/pull to your arm just as if it were our weapon.

Next, we will switch roles. We will hold our arm up and you will get a proper grip on our wrist. To determine the proper amount of isometric tension, you will slowly build the pressure on our wrist until the point where you start to shake due to muscle tremors. Then you will back off the pressure just until the shaking stops. That's the proper amount of isometric tension. Then we will have you create the crushing "Death Grip" on our wrist so you can also feel how not to do it. Then you will go back to the proper grip. As soon as your grip and stance are correct, we will simulate the recoil of a weapon a few times by pushing against you. You will notice that your entire body, rather than just your hands and arms, will absorb the recoil. This is what makes the Weaver stance so effective. You do not have to be big and strong to handle a large caliber handgun if you use a proper grip and Weaver stance.

When we are all done with this hands-on exercise, we will have you point in with your weapon. You will apply the exact amount of isometric tension to the frame of your weapon as you did to our wrist. This way you will know the proper isometric tension to apply to your weapon.

Any questions?

Let's have the first relay up on the dry practice line.

7) After Action Drills

22 August, 2011

Let's assume you have actually fired on an adversary. Does that mean the fight is over? No, certainly not. All it means is the fight has started and you've had your turn. You don't know what's coming next, but you need to prepare yourself for the next engagement, whatever that might be. Hopefully there won't be one, but you'd better expect one.

There are three questions you need to answer after you've engaged an adversary. First, is there anybody else in my immediate environment that is a threat to me? Second, is the adversary I just shot out of the fight? And third, is there anybody else in my entire surroundings that could pose a threat to me? To answer these questions, we perform what we call After Action Drills. There are several parts to the after action drills: a movement, the quick check, the final check, and the scan. All of these are done from the "ready" position so you have a clear view of the area and you can respond to a threat quickly.

After you have fired, you need to move out of the line of attack. Don't stand still waiting for your adversary to react. As you come down to the ready, you are going to take a step to the side. Initially, the instructors will tell you which direction to move. Later, you will move on your own, but be sure not to knock over your fellow student. You need to maintain situational awareness. You need to know what's going on around you. On the street, you may, in fact, take several steps to make use of cover and concealment.

Next, you perform a quick check. The quick check is designed to pick up the adversary who is standing right next to you at arm's reach. How can somebody be standing within arm's reach and you haven't even seen him? Right, tunnel vision. Under the stress and adrenaline of a gunfight, your peripheral vision closes down. It's like looking through a pair of paper towel tubes. Whatever you're focused on you can see quite well, but beyond that, in the periphery, you'll see nothing. The quick check takes into account that tunnel vision. The quick check involves moving just the head quickly, left and right, so you can pick up someone standing near you. The quick check is very similar to quickly looking left and right at a four-way stop sign. It needs to be rapid but you must see, actually see, what is near you.

The final check is used to study the adversary you just shot. You need to make sure that they are out of the fight. On the street, the final check may last one second or it may last thirty seconds. If your adversary is sprawled belly up in a growing pool of blood and his weapon has landed way over there, you can be sure they are out of the fight. But if they've started to move again, are they out of the fight? Not yet. Here on the range we will limit our final check to two seconds. So count to yourself, one thousand one, one thousand two. We want you to actually count to yourself to make sure you properly engrain the final check. If you hold the final check for two seconds here on the range, you will perform it for the appropriate amount of time on the street.

Now you need to scan your entire surroundings to see if there are any other threats. The scan is a slow, methodical study of the area 360° around you from the tips of your toes all the way to the horizon. The scan is designed to pick up the guy hiding behind the dumpster, or behind the car, or on the rooftop. When scanning, the upper body rotates like the turret on a tank, with your head and your weapon moving together. (*Demonstrate*) You don't want your head and your weapon pointed in different directions. If you see a threat and your weapon is facing the other way, you are behind the power curve in getting that weapon on target. Here on the range we will limit your scan to two targets left and two targets right. On the street, your next adversary may be approaching from the rear. Therefore, you are responsible for scanning a full 360°. Can you imagine what it would be like for everyone on the line to do a 360° scan with loaded weapons? Yeah, it would be sheer pandemonium. So, scan two targets left and right of your target. Once you are absolutely certain there are no other threats in the area, your safety goes back on or you de-cock, as appropriate. Now, let's talk about a critical detail that is often overlooked during the scan. That's your weapon. What if the last round you fired resulted in a malfunction or an empty weapon? Wouldn't this be a good time to figure that out? Make sure you glance at your weapon during the scan. As your eyes are moving up and down, checking from the tips of your toes out to the horizon, glance at your weapon.

Let's put them all together for you now. You'll be at the ready, finger straight. As you come on target, your finger goes on the trigger and you engage your target. After you've fired, trigger finger goes straight. As your weapon comes down to the Ready, take a small step – move. Remember, on the street, this is one of many steps to cover and concealment. Safety stays off at this point. Quick check with just your head. Final check you adversary counting to yourself, one thousand one, one thousand two. Then scan, slowly and methodically left and right, from the tips of your toes out to the horizon, two targets to the left, and two targets to the right. Remember to check your weapon. Then put your safety on or de-cock as appropriate.

Any questions about after action drills? All right, let's give it a try. First relay, step up to the dry practice line. Eyes are required, ears are not necessary.

8) Three Secrets

22 August, 2011

Up to this point, we've been working on weapon handling. Now we want to switch and discuss marksmanship. There are numerous elements of marksmanship. Depending on what reference you check, you'll find anywhere from eight to ten different elements. These include such things as heart rate and breathing. Certainly, these would apply to a sniper taking a thousand-yard precision shot. However, in a defensive shooting with a handgun, you generally have conversational distances, low light, multiple adversaries, and a dynamic, chaotic setting. In that setting only three elements of marksmanship really matter. We call these the three secrets. Now clearly, they are not really secrets or we wouldn't be standing here telling you about them. However, if you go to your local shooting range and watch people shoot, it's obvious that one or more of these elements is a secret to them, thus the name. The three secrets are: sight alignment, sight picture, and trigger control, in that order.

Sight alignment is the alignment of your eye, the rear sight, and the front sight. (*Use magnetic props*) This represents your rear sight. This represents your front sight. There are many different sight configurations; however, this represents a basic set of sights. So how do you align these for proper sight alignment? The front sight must sit in the rear sight notch such that its top is flush with the top of the rear sight, and there are equal amounts of daylight left and right of the front sight. There is only one proper sight alignment, and this is it. (*Demonstrate*) This is too high. This is too far to the left, etc.

Now let's talk about sight picture. Now that you've established this perfect sight alignment, what do you do with it? Place the top of the front sight exactly where you want your bullet to hit, in this case, the center of the thoracic cavity. (*Demonstrate*) However, this is a little deceiving because on our training aid, the target, front sight, and rear sight, are all on the same plane. In reality, there is some spatial separation between these elements. Since your eye works much like a camera it can only focus on one distance at a time. You must choose what to focus on. You can focus on the rear sight, the front sight, the adversary, or some indeterminate distance in between. Now, here's your first big test. Given the name of the school, what do you think we want you to focus on? Correct, the front sight. How hard should you focus on the front sight? You need to apply 110% of your focus to the front sight, if that were possible. Only by focusing hard on the front sight can you maintain proper sight alignment. Everything else is going to be blurry. The rear sight will be blurry and the target will be blurry, especially in low light. That's fine. Additionally, you will close one eye. Closing one eye allows you to get a perfect sight picture without any double or ghost images. But which eye do you close? Generally it will be the eye on your support side. Your dominant eye is usually your firing side eye, however, this may not always be the case.

Now let's perform a quick exercise to determine which eye is your dominant eye. Please listen to the instructions closely and stay with me. First, take both hands and bring them together in front of you and make an aperture about the size of a quarter. Next, focus on a target number

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downrange. Keep both eyes open and bring your hands up until the number is centered in the aperture. Next, keeping that number in your aperture, slowly bring your hands back toward your face and see which eye you come back to. If your dominant eye is on your firing side, great. If not, then you are cross dominant. Who found that they are cross dominant? If your dominant eye is opposite of your firing side, there is nothing wrong with you. It simply means that your brain likes the images from that eye better.

There are a couple of ways to compensate for being cross dominant. Our recommendation is to close the support side eye and use the images from your firing side eye. You will have to do this anyway if you shoot a rifle or shotgun since there is no way to get your dominant eye behind the sights. The less preferred method is to move the head over a little and move the weapon over a little splitting the difference, so you can bring the dominant eye behind the sights. This compromises your stance somewhat, but allows you to use the dominant eye.

Some people worry that if they are focusing so hard on the front sight with one eye, and closing the other, that they will lose the adversary if he moves. That's not true at all. In fact, to prove that, let's do an interactive exercise. Point your thumb up and hold it at arm's length. Your thumb will represent your front sight. Pretend that I'm your adversary, and hold your thumb in the center of my thoracic cavity. Now, focus on your thumbnail to the point where you can see a scratch in the nail. Close your support side eye. I'm going to move around a little bit and you just follow me. Stick with me. Did anyone have a problem following me with your front sight? The same is going to be true on the street. You won't have any doubt where the bad guy is. Let's sum up sight picture: hold your sight alignment on the center of the thoracic cavity, focus 110% on the front sight, close the support side eye, and let the target and the rear sight go slightly blurry.

Trigger control is significantly harder. It begins with proper finger placement on the trigger. You want the pad of your trigger finger to contact the face of the trigger, right there, (*Use a marker to show placement*) across the swirl of the fingerprint. However, if you are shooting a heavy, double-action trigger, you may need a little more mechanical advantage. So, place the first knuckle across the face of the trigger. (*Use a marker to show placement*) Start with the pad and move to the joint only if needed.

For the single action weapons, we want to remove the slack from the trigger. Slack is that small amount of movement in the trigger that really doesn't have any function. (*Demonstrate with a Glock*) Get rid of the slack. As soon as you're up on target, your finger goes on the trigger and you take the slack out.

For you double action shooters, there is no slack in your trigger on the first press. You will simply press smoothly and evenly all the way through the trigger press. Do not do what we call "staging the trigger." That's when you press a little bit and stop, then press a little bit more and stop, and so on. Just press all the way through, smoothly and evenly.

Next, we want to achieve what we call a surprise break. A surprise is something you didn't expect. By break, we mean the trigger actually functioning. If you were dry practicing, you'd get a click. In the case of a firing drill, the weapon would fire. Begin building pressure on the trigger slowly, smoothly, evenly, to the rear until the weapon fires. You're not stupid, you know it is going to fire sooner or later but you don't know exactly when. A surprise break means you will get a perfect hit. Why is a surprise break so important? If you're anticipating the recoil, as you start pressing the trigger, everything looks good, and you say to yourself let's fire the weapon now. (*Demo flinch or anticipation*) The shots will hit low because you're anticipating that recoil, or mashing the trigger and you're forcing the front sight to dip. You want to avoid that. You want it to be a surprise.

The next step after firing the weapon is trigger reset. We accomplish that by holding the trigger to the rear through recoil, then allowing the trigger to go forward only until it clicks, or resets. (*Demonstrate with actual weapon in vertical orientation*) Keep your finger in contact with the trigger. If you let your finger fly forward and off the trigger between shots, you lose contact with the trigger, and double your workload. You must then reestablish the proper finger placement and remove the slack before you can begin pressing. So maintain contact with the trigger between shots and let it go forward only to the reset. For you double action shooters, after you reset your triggers you will need to take some slack out of the trigger again. That's just the way your gun works. (**Revolvers**) For you revolver shooters, there is no slack. So, to sum up trigger control, the elements are: proper trigger finger placement, slack out, surprise break, trap the trigger to the rear, and proper reset. That's trigger control.

Are there any questions about the three secrets or how we use them?

9) Diagnostic Trigger Drills

22 August, 2011

Now we are going to do some diagnostic trigger drills. We would love to say we invented these, however, we did not. These have been in use by the United States Marine Corps since the late 1930's. LAPD resurrected them in the mid 1980's for their recruit training and have had great success with them. There are a total of six. We will use a couple of them right now. We'll have the first relay step up on the line, protect your eyes and ears, and wait for an instructor to come to you individually. As soon as an instructor comes to you, he will give you the command "the range is clear, firing drill." At that time, you bring your weapon out of the holster and load it. The instructor will then take your weapon from you and fire one shot directly in the center of the thoracic cavity. That does a couple of things. Number one, it ensures that the weapon is properly sighted in. Secondly, it gives you a very specific point to aim at.

The instructor will then hand the weapon back to you and have you point in at the shot he just fired. (*Demonstrate with fellow instructor*) For the time being, keep your trigger finger straight on the reference point. He will then take a magazine and cap your rear sight. This is to test your sight alignment. You should see your front sight perfectly aligned in the rear notch. You should not see a band of daylight above the front sight, nor should that magazine be cutting off any portion of your front sight. The instructor will then have you maintain that proper sight alignment and sight picture. The instructor will put his finger on the trigger. Your job is to maintain a good sight picture. The instructor's job is to press the trigger. Talk about a surprise break. You won't have any idea when that weapon is going to fire. If you do your part, and the instructor does his, that round will land directly on top of the first round. You will fire several shots in this fashion.

Next, the instructor is going to have you place your finger on the trigger. The instructor will put his finger on top of your finger. The instructor is still running the trigger. Your finger is just along for the ride. Your finger is there strictly for sensory input. Remember, your responsibility is the sights. The instructor will run the trigger. This exercise will show you what it is like to take the slack out, properly press until a surprise break is achieved, and then properly trap and reset the trigger. So he will fire a shot, reset, and fire another shot. Again we should be making one ragged hole downrange.

After that, he will turn the weapon completely over to you. You are going to fire one round, trap the trigger to the rear, properly reset, and fire another round. You will fire several shots in this fashion. The exact number will depend on what the instructor wants for you specifically. In total, you may fire ten to fifteen rounds so you will need two full magazines. Any questions?

First relay: eyes, ears, and two loaded magazines on the seven-meter line.

11) Speed and Accuracy, Front Sight Target, Reading Your Target

22 August, 2011

Success in defensive shooting depends on three factors. They are Speed, Power, and Accuracy. You've probably heard these used as buzzwords. Let's define each of those terms. Speed is how fast you shoot. Power is the ability of the round you are shooting to stop your adversary. Accuracy is how precisely or how well you shoot.

Of these three, Power is the easiest to discuss. Power is what you brought with you to the gunfight. It is your weapon and the round that you are shooting. There is a lot of debate about the best handgun caliber. The fact is, any reasonable handgun round will do, whether it's .38, 9mm, .40, .45, or 10mm. However, none will do very well. That's because all handgun rounds are ballistically deficient. On a ballistic efficiency spectrum, shotguns and rifles are up near the top and handguns are down at the bottom. We don't carry handguns because they are powerful. We carry them because they are portable. That takes care of power.

Before we can talk about accuracy, it's important that you understand the Front Sight target. Dr. Piazza developed this target. He was a chiropractor for ten years before devoting his efforts full-time to Front Sight. Over those ten years, he examined and treated over ten thousand patients. With each new patient, he would measure and X-ray the thoracic, cervical, and head areas. He took three thousand of those X-rays and measurement sets and created an average. This is the result. This target represents the average sized adversary you are likely to encounter on the street. Certainly, some will be bigger and some will be smaller. This dome shaped region in the center of the target is the thoracic cavity. The edges of the thoracic cavity represent the inside edges of the rib cage. The top arched portion represents the top of the lung field, which sits just behind the clavicles, commonly called collarbones. The bottom represents the diaphragm at rest. Therefore, if your adversary is inhaling, the thoracic cavity will be slightly larger. If your adversary is exhaling, the thoracic cavity will be slightly smaller. So this represents the average size thoracic cavity. We will talk about the head a little later.

Your standard response to an adversary will be to fire two shots, or what we call a "controlled pair" to the center of the thoracic cavity. We teach this as the standard response because the thoracic cavity is a very large and a vital area. It contains the heart, lungs, and major blood vessels. A controlled pair here will generally stop an adversary. A hit anywhere in the thoracic cavity is a good hit. So, a hit near the edge of the thoracic cavity has as much fight-stopping potential as a hit in the center.

Now that you understand the Front Sight target, let's talk about accuracy. After you have fired a few controlled pairs, a group or pattern will become apparent. The goal is to shoot a hand-span size group in the center of the thoracic cavity. Now here's a question for you. If all areas of the thoracic cavity have equal fight stopping potential, why do we want to see a hand-span size group in the middle of the thoracic cavity? Right. Stress. You will only be half as good in a gunfight as you are here on the range. On the range, you are warm, comfortable, well fed, there

is plenty of light, and no one is trying to kill you. With some, or all, of those factors working against you, your group will probably double in size. So, a hand-span size group on the range means that all of your hits will still be in the thoracic cavity under the stress of a gunfight. On the other hand, if we accept hits on the edges of the thoracic cavity while on the range, what will happen to those rounds under the stress of a gunfight? Right, they would be peripherals, at best, or even complete misses.

That establishes the accuracy criteria. Now, what about speed? How fast can you shoot and still maintain a hand-span size group? How fast you shoot is dependent upon how accurately you must shoot. Generally, the more accurate you have to be, the more time you need to guarantee the three secrets. The good news is you have a gauge. It's right there on the weapon. It's your front sight. If you present your weapon and see a very small front sight against a large thoracic cavity, you're probably at conversational distances. You should be able to shoot very rapidly and still guarantee hits. On the other hand, if you were going to take a headshot on one of those targets from right where you sit, you would see a huge front sight and a tiny target. Under those circumstances, the pendulum swings all the way to the accuracy end and you must shoot much slower. Generally, a small target is a function of distance, but not always. Let's say this area here was actually a wall and I am the adversary leaning out with just the weapon and my right eye visible to you. If you had to shoot my right eye, you would see a very large front sight against a small target, my right eye. So, even at conversational distances you may need to shoot slowly, depending on the size of the target.

In summary, power is what you have brought to the gunfight. You can't change it once the fight begins. But speed and accuracy are left for you to balance according to the situation. The goal is to shoot as fast as you can guarantee the hits. Again, the goal is to shoot only as fast as you can guarantee the hits.

Are there any questions about speed and accuracy?

Let's talk about reading your target. You can get a lot of information about how you are shooting by understanding what the hits on your target mean. (*Use the magnetic target to show groupings*) If you have a hand-span size group in the center of the thoracic cavity, great! Keep it up! It shows the proper balance of speed and accuracy. If your group is small and tight in the center of the thoracic cavity, you are shooting too slowly. You need to speed it up some. It looks good on paper but you are giving a time advantage to your opponent. If your group is too large but still centered in the thoracic cavity, you are going too fast. Slow down just a little to get that hand-span size group. Remember, only hits count. If your group is huge but roughly centered, you are not using the front sight. You are either looking over the sights or through the sights. Remember focus on the front sight. If your group is too high, generally you are seeing too much front sight. This is fairly common with visually complex sights such as three-dots, and "U and dot" on factory Glocks, etc. If your group is left or right, you may be pushing or pulling the weapon as it is fired. You are not pressing the trigger straight to the rear. Make sure your trigger finger placement is correct. If your group is low, usually left for right-handers or right for left-handers, you are anticipating the shots. You are mashing the trigger or squeezing the entire

hand in an effort to overcome recoil. Make sure the slack is out, concentrate only on the front sight, and then begin building pressure until you achieve a surprise break. Dry practice will help you with this. If you would like to have this information about reading your target, and everything else we cover in this course to take home and use in your training, pick up a copy of the Dry Practice Manual in the Pro Shop.

Are there any questions about reading your target?

You will need eyes, ears, and ammo, form a class circle at seven meters. We are going to shoot a brief demo to illustrate the balance of speed and accuracy, and then you will shoot.

12) Tactical Reload

22 August, 2011

Let's talk about the first of our reloading procedures. That is the tactical reload. The tactical reload is by far the preferred reloading procedure. It is performed during a lull in a gunfight, and its purpose is to keep your weapon fully loaded in preparation for the next gunfight. It's far better to reload during a lull in the gunfight than in the middle of a gunfight. The overriding philosophy here is to reload when you want to, not when you have to.

The tactical reload is performed with the weapon at the ready position. Let's assume that you've already fired at an adversary and he's out of the fight, you've come down to the ready, and performed after action drills. There appears to be no immediate threat, so safety on or de-cock. This is a lull in the gunfight, but it may not be over. You're not certain if there are more bad guys around the corner. You're a few rounds down from your first engagement. This is the ideal time to perform a tactical reload and bring your weapon up to full capacity. Otherwise, you run the risk of engaging the next adversary with a partially depleted magazine. You don't want to be in that position.

The tactical reload is done completely at the ready. First, reach back with your support hand and check to make sure that you have a full magazine on your belt. Then bring your support hand up under the magazine well. Drop the partially depleted magazine out of the weapon and into your support hand. Put that partially depleted magazine in your pocket, not on your belt. Now your support hand is empty and ready to grab the fresh magazine off your belt. Properly index the new magazine and insert it into the weapon.

That's it. This is a very simple technique and can be accomplished very quickly. Let me show it to you again. Check to verify you have a fresh magazine. Drop the old magazine into your support hand and then into a pocket. Secure a fresh magazine and insert it into the gun. Now you are again equipped with a fully-loaded weapon.

Any questions?

(REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) Now let's discuss revolvers. A tactical reload with a revolver is dependent upon having loose rounds or a speed strip. Bring the weapon in from the ready and keep the muzzle pointed down. Open the cylinder and trap it open just as you have done previously with loading and unloading. With your support hand thumb, depress the plunger about half way. This will lift the rounds up but not eject them from the weapon. Then release the plunger. Generally, the live rounds fall right back into their chambers while the empties stand up. With your firing hand, simply pluck out the empties that are standing up and insert fresh rounds from your loose rounds or your speed strip. Once you are fully loaded, close the cylinder and return to ready.

There are several problems with this technique. First, it is slow. Second, the empties don't always stand up in the chambers. At that point you are fishing around trying to determine which rounds are live and which are empty. Third, you must look at the weapon and not downrange at your potential danger area. Lastly, you must have plenty of light to see your gear. Thus, with a revolver, tactical reloads are extremely difficult in the dark under stress.

With that said, at least try tactical reloads with your revolver. If you are having great difficulty, you may eject all the rounds and just load with a fresh speed loader.

(LEFT-HANDED REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) For the left handed shooter, open the cylinder of the weapon and transfer the weapon to the support hand with the support side thumb through the frame. Trap the cylinder all the way open. Depress the plunger about half way using the index finger of your support hand. Let the plunger go. Using your firing hand, pluck out the empties and replace them with fresh rounds. Close the cylinder, transfer the weapon back to your firing hand, and you are ready to go. Any questions about this?

First relay, step up to the dry practice line. You will need two loaded magazines. Eyes are required, ears are not necessary.

13) Malfunctions Preamble

22 August, 2011

Let's talk about the stoppages that can occur with your weapons. There are two types of stoppages: jams and malfunctions. A jam is essentially a broken weapon. A jam may take a gunsmith, some tools, and some time to fix. Malfunctions, on the other hand, are a temporary stoppage of your weapon. Malfunctions can be fixed reflexively in the middle of a gunfight. Malfunctions are divided into three different types. We call these Type 1, Type 2 and Type 3. Before we get into the malfunctions, it's important for you to understand that clearing a malfunction is a reflex response, while shooting requires a conscious decision. Why do we make that distinction? A lot of police departments, military, and firearms schools have taught malfunction clearances such as "tap, rack, bang." You may have heard of that in the past. The problem with "tap, rack, bang" is you are ingraining the act of shooting as a reflexive response. That's not a good thing. The situation may have changed while you were clearing the malfunction and you may not need to shoot again. However, if you have ingrained "bang," through hundreds or even thousands of repetitions, the bang is going to be included automatically.

In fact, that very thing happened to an unfortunate southern California police officer. He followed a suspect into a hallway where a gunfight ensued. He ended up with a Type 1 malfunction. To clear that malfunction, he had been taught "tap, rack, bang." So that's what he did. He tapped, racked, and began to press off another shot. During the clearance process, an innocent bystander stepped into the hallway from his apartment to see what all the commotion was. The officer recognized the problem and his mind was screaming "Stop, don't shoot! Don't Shoot!" But pressing the trigger had been so deeply ingrained that he was unable to stop himself. Bang! He fired the shot and killed the innocent bystander.

We are not going to allow that to happen to you. Here at Front Sight, we separate the reflexive act of malfunction clearances from the conscious decision to shoot. On the street, in all likelihood, you will have to fire after a malfunction clearance. With that in mind, we want you to be prepared to shoot. So, you will finish your malfunction clearances with the weapon pointed in and your finger on the trigger. Taking that next step, actually firing the shot, is a conscious decision that only you can make.

At Front Sight, we address all malfunctions on a symptom/solution basis. If you don't pay attention to the symptom before you try to clear the malfunction, you will waste an extraordinary amount of time.

14) Type 1 Malfunction

22 August, 2011

With all of that said, let's talk about Type 1 malfunctions. A Type 1 is a failure to fire, which means that you pressed the trigger and the weapon went "click" instead of "bang." This has been referred to as the loudest sound you will ever hear in the middle of a gunfight. The cause of a Type 1 may be a dead round in the chamber, empty brass in the chamber, or nothing in the chamber at all. An empty chamber is usually caused by a failure to fully seat the magazine. To set up a Type 1 you'll simply unload the weapon and then insert a loaded magazine. Now you've got an empty chamber and a loaded magazine in the magazine well. Perform one last chamber check to ensure that you have an empty chamber. We will have you point in and press the trigger. You will get a click. That click is your symptom.

To clear a Type 1, keep the weapon high. Remember, on the street you will likely have to shoot after clearing the malfunction. Keeping the weapon high minimizes the time to get back on target. Your trigger finger will go straight. Tap the magazine with the heel of your support hand. This ensures that the magazine is fully seated. With your support hand, grasp the slide behind the ejection port on the grasping grooves. Briskly rack the slide while simultaneously flipping the weapon 90° to the right. This puts the ejection port down and lets gravity help clear the chamber. Reestablish your firing grip and point in with your finger on the trigger. However, you will not shoot. Come down to the ready and finish with after action drills.

Let me set that up one more time. Slide is closed on an empty chamber, loaded magazine in place. Perform a final chamber check to ensure there is not a round in the chamber. We will have you point in and on the "GO" command you will press, get a click, trigger finger straight and "tap, rack-flip." You will end up pointed in but you will not shoot. Finger goes straight, come down to the ready and complete after action drills.

(REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) For revolvers, the Type 1 malfunction clearance is very simple. When you get a click, you simply reset the trigger and prepare to press again.

Do you have any questions on Type 1 malfunctions?

First relay, step up on the dry practice line. You will need one loaded magazine. Eyes and ears are required.

15) Type 2 Malfunction

22 August, 2011

Let's talk about our next malfunction and that's the Type 2 malfunction. This is defined as a failure to eject. You've fired a shot but the weapon has failed to eject the fired piece of brass, and has trapped it in the ejection port. You end up with brass high in the ejection port. To set up a Type 2 malfunction, unload your weapon, and lock your slide to the rear. This is done by running the slide to the rear while simultaneously pushing up on the slide release lever. For left-handers, reach over the top of the slide with your support hand so your thumb is immediately above the slide lock notch. Pull the slide to the rear and life up on the slide stop lever with your support side thumb. (*Demonstrate*) Then insert a loaded round into the ejection port. Just lay it up against the side of the ejection port and ease the slide closed, trapping it in there. Then insert a loaded magazine.

Glock shooters, you will then trip your triggers as a part of the setup. What we mean by "tripping your trigger" is to simply press the trigger after you have completely set up the malfunction. The trigger will be to the rear when you have a Type 2 for real and we want to duplicate that on the range. Don't worry; your weapon will not fire when you trip the trigger after you are completely set up for the malfunction.

This is what a Type 2 looks like. (*Hold it up for students to see*) Notice the brass high in the ejection port. This is sometimes called a "stovepipe" malfunction. To practice fixing this, we will have you point in, hard focus on the front sight and press the trigger. Unlike the Type 1 malfunction where you got a "click," which felt like a normal trigger press, here you will get nothing. The trigger just does not work. This is not enough information to make a diagnosis. So, the finger goes straight and you must look to see what the problem is. Keeping the weapon high, point the muzzle up and look. As you are looking, move. On the range, you will just take a small side step to simulate a movement out of the line of attack, or to immediate cover or concealment. You will see brass high in the ejection port, so you'll know this is a Type 2 malfunction. Keep the weapon high and look downrange at your adversary. Now, fix it the same way you did the Type 1. Tap, rack-flip. You are right back into the fight. Again, you will end up back on target with your finger on the trigger but you are not shooting. Finger straight, come down to the ready and finish it out with after action drills, including another step. To set this up again, unload your gun and lock the slide to the rear, trap that loaded round in the ejection port, and insert a loaded magazine. Glock shooters trip your triggers. At this time, we will have you point in and hard focus on the front sight. When you receive the "go" command, you will press, get a dead trigger, finger straight, look and move. Diagnose the problem as a Type 2 and tap, rack-flip. Now, your finger goes on the trigger, sights on the target, slack out. Again, do not fire this is just a weapons manipulation. Finger straight come down to the ready and finish it out with after action drills. Are there any questions about Type 2 malfunctions, or how to clear them?

(REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) There is no equivalent to Type 2 malfunctions for revolvers. So, revolver shooters can simply practice more Type 1's if you like. First relay, step up to the dry practice line. You will need one loaded magazine. Eyes and ears are required.

17) Type 3 Malfunction

22 August, 2011

The final malfunction we are going to talk about is the Type 3 malfunction. This is commonly referred to as a double feed or feed way stoppage. The actual cause of this malfunction is generally a failure to extract. You've fired a shot and the weapon has failed to extract the spent case, leaving it in the chamber. The slide has come all the way to the rear and stripped a new round from the magazine on its way forward. However, that new round has nowhere to go. So you end up with a fired case in the chamber and a live round nosed up against it. The result will be a whole lot of brass low in the ejection port. We affectionately refer to the Type 3 malfunction as the "mother of all malfunctions." This is a tough one to clear. It is going to take a lot of time and effort on your part to clear it. This would be a good time to deploy a back-up gun should you have one. It is going to be faster to do that than it is to clear this malfunction.

But let's assume you've only got the one weapon, and it has now experienced a Type 3 malfunction. To set up a Type 3 malfunction, unload the weapon, and lock the slide to the rear. Point the weapon toward the ground, but do not muzzle your toes. Drop a round down into the chamber, and insert a loaded magazine. Ease the slide forward. It's only going to go forward about an eighth of an inch. Now you have a round in the chamber and a second round pressed up against it. Glock shooters, you will then trip your triggers as part of the setup. This is what it looks like. (*Show the class*) We will have you point in, focus on the front sight, and press. Nothing is going to happen. It is going to feel just like a Type 2 did. Again, we need to look in order to have enough information to make a correct diagnosis. So, your trigger finger goes straight, muzzle up, and you look into the ejection port. While you are looking, take a step to simulate movement out of the line of attack, or to immediate cover or concealment. Look and move simultaneously. At this point you'll see a lot of brass, low in the ejection port. That's a Type 3. After you've looked and identified it, you need to physically check and make sure you have a spare magazine on your pouch, and then lock the slide to the rear. To accomplish this you will grasp the slide just like you did to load the weapon. Now run the slide to the rear and push up on the slide release with your firing side thumb. The slide release lever will go into the slide lock detent on the side of the frame and lock the slide in place. Doing this will take the pressure off the ammunition in the magazine. Next, strip the magazine out of the weapon and let it go to the ground. Don't baby it. Get it out of your way. Now, with your support hand, reach up over the top rear of the slide, grab the grasping grooves and rack three times. Rack. Rack. Rack. Hold onto the slide the entire time. This is going to clear out whatever is in the chamber. You now have an unloaded weapon.

Keeping the weapon high, index a fresh magazine off your belt, insert it into the magazine well and rack one more time. Now get back on target, finger on the trigger, slack out, but do not shoot. Then your finger goes straight, come down to the ready, and you finish it out with after action drills. So the steps to clear a Type 3 malfunction are: Look/Move, Check, Lock, Strip, Rack/Rack/Rack, Insert, and Rack. I will set it up again. Lock your slide to the rear, point the weapon toward the ground but do not muzzle your toes. Drop a live round into the chamber,

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insert a loaded magazine, and ease the slide forward. Glock shooters trip your triggers. Make sure you've got another magazine on your belt ready to go. Point in, hard focus on the front sight, press, nothing happens, finger straight. Look/Move, check, lock, strip, rack-rack-rack, insert, and rack.

(LEFT-HANDED TECHNIQUE) For left-handed shooters the only thing that's different is how you lock the slide to the rear. You will tip the weapon over 90° to the right and grasp the slide the same way you did to take a round out of the chamber. Now run the slide to the rear and pull up on the slide release lever with your support hand thumb. This is what a left-handed Type 3 malfunction clearance would look like. *(Demonstrate)*

(REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) There is no equivalent to Type 3 malfunctions for revolvers. So, revolver shooters can simply practice more Type 1's if you like.

First relay, step up to the dry practice line. You will need two loaded magazines. Eyes and ears are required.

AFTER DRY PRACTICE, DELIVER RETENTION INFORMATION.

At this point, you might be wondering what to do if you didn't have another magazine to put into the weapon. In other words, you don't have a spare on your belt, or you are down to your last magazine. Whatever the reason, the only magazine you have is the one in the weapon. If you strip that magazine out onto the ground, now you have nothing. In that case we look/move, check, lock, strip, but hold onto the magazine. Just tuck it under the firing hand little finger. Hold it there as you rack-rack-rack. Re-index the magazine, insert it and rack. Do you have any questions on Type 3 malfunction clearances? I know it's a lot to remember. We will work you through it by the numbers a couple of times. Remember the steps: look/move, check, lock, strip, rack-rack-rack, insert, rack...and you'll do fine.

19) Weapon Presentation from Holster (no concealment)

22 August, 2011

We are going to start working on presentation from the holster. Some people call this “drawing.” Presentation from the holster is a five-count process. There are five individual steps involved and each one of these steps has a specific purpose in mind.

On count one, both hands have something to do. The support hand comes to the mid-section of the body, basically right to the belly button. The firing hand is going to drive down on the weapon to obtain a firing grip. By firing grip, I mean the grip that you are actually going to use to fire the weapon. The grip should not be modified or adjusted after count one. At count one, all retention devices, such as straps and Velcro, are released. When you grasp the weapon at count one, keep your trigger finger rigidly straight. (*Demonstrate*) If you arch it out like this (*Demonstrate*), you run the risk of immediately pushing the trigger finger into the trigger guard when the gun clears the holster. This error HAS resulted in a negligent discharge and bullet wound to the leg several times. Remember Rule 3! Count one is an explosive movement. The support hand moves to the mid-section and the firing hand obtains a firing grip on the weapon and safely releases any retention devices.

On count two you simply lift the weapon straight up and out of the holster. There is no canting or rocking, just straight up out of the holster. The goal here is to clear the muzzle from the top of the holster. The safety is still on and the trigger finger is straight. The support hand is still on the mid-section.

On count three, drop the firing side elbow and shoulder down. The muzzle rotates straight downrange. The heel of your hand and the base of your thumb are indexed against your ribs. The safety is still on and the trigger finger is straight. The support hand is still on the mid-section.

On count four you start to push the weapon straight toward the adversary. Your support hand comes up to meet the firing hand right in front of your sternum. The trigger finger is still at the reference point. At this point, safeties come off on 1911's. We choose count four to disengage safeties because both hands are now together on the weapon. There is no danger of shooting your support hand.

At count five you will push the weapon directly toward your adversary. As the weapon travels from count four to count five, you start building the isometric tension against the frame of the weapon. As the weapon intersects your line of sight, your trigger finger finds the trigger and starts to take the slack out. By the time you are fully pointed in at your adversary, you have the proper push/pull tension on the weapon and the slack is out of the trigger. You are ready to fire, if necessary.

Let's assume you have fired your controlled pair. The trigger finger has gone straight, you've come down the ready, and are sure the environment is safe. Then you put your safety on or de-cock. Now it is time to put the weapon back into the holster.

As your weapon comes back toward your body, the hands will separate. The support hand again goes to the mid-section. The firing hand returns to a position we call "Close Contact." At close contact, the firing hand thumb and the bottom of the frame should be touching the ribs. Also, the weapon should be leaning away from the body slightly. If you fire from Close Contact, you don't want the gun to get hung up in your clothing and cause a malfunction. The muzzle should be pointing downrange at about thoracic cavity level. Should you need to fire from close contact, you would be able to get good hits. Pause for just a moment at Close Contact. This is your last chance to assess your environment, making sure the fight is really over before the weapon goes back in the holster.

Once you are certain it is safe to holster, lift your firing side elbow and rotate the muzzle down toward the holster. Find the holster with the muzzle of the weapon. Then, slowly and gently holster, without looking. Holstering should be done slowly enough that you can feel any resistance as you go into the holster. Clothing, a retention strap, or the holster closing on itself could cause this resistance. If you force it through the resistance you may end up with a negligent discharge into your leg. So holster slowly. If you do feel resistance, come back out to the ready. Keep the weapon at the ready with your firing hand and fix the problem with your support hand. Be careful not to cover your support hand as you come back to the holster. Ensure the weapon is firmly seated in the holster. At this point you can fasten any retention devices.

I'll demo this again, moving through the presentation a little bit more quickly. This is what we call the sequence of shooting. Count one: obtain a firing grip on the weapon as your support hand comes to the mid-section. Two: clear the muzzle out of the holster, keeping the trigger finger straight and the safety on. Three: support side hand at the midsection, rotate the muzzle downrange. Four: hands come together in front of the sternum, 1911 safeties off, trigger finger remains straight. Close the support side eye. Five: point in, build isometric tension, finger on the trigger, and slack out. Press. Trap. Reset. Press. Trap. Reset. Finger straight, down to the ready.

To holster, engage the safety or de-cock as appropriate to your weapon. Come back to Close Contact and pause. Then rotate the muzzle down and gently holster while keeping your eyes downrange.

Any questions so far?

Let's talk about the presentation from the holster to the ready. Counts one through four are exactly the same as we just described. The only difference is, of course, count five. Instead of pointing in at your adversary, you will simply come to the ready. Remember, this is a ready position, not a relaxed position. You will have the proper push/pull tension on the weapon and

the trigger finger is straight. The safety is off because it came off at count four. When you present to the ready, do so briskly, like you mean it. An impressive presentation to the ready may be just enough to stop the attack before it even starts.

Holstering after your presentation to the ready is done exactly as before.

Let's talk about some of the mistakes we see during presentations. Do not bend the knees on count one. Many of you martial artists will have to fight that one. Don't bend from the waist on count one. If you really have to bend at the waist to secure a firing grip, the weapon is probably in the wrong place. Let us know you are having problems and we will help you find the correct spot for the holster. Do not dip the weapon as you present. This is called bowling. It wastes time and does not allow you to pick up the front sight quickly. Similarly, don't arc the weapon skyward as you present. By far the most common problem with presentations is the lazy support hand. The support hand must move with the firing hand. If the support hand lags behind, you are wasting time.

You 1911 shooters must know when to manipulate your thumb safety. The safety always comes off at count four of the presentation. If there is no immediate target, that safety goes right back on.

In just a second, we are going to have the first relay step up to the dry practice line. We are going to go through this by the numbers. We will walk you through all five counts in a slow, methodical fashion. The reason for this is to ingrain the proper movements into your muscle memory. Right now we need to program proper technique, we will worry about speed later.

First relay, step up to the dry practice line. Eyes are required, ears are not necessary.

20) Trigger Reset Drill

22 August, 2011

Now we are going to perform what we call the trigger reset drill. We talked about trigger reset in the three secrets lecture. This exercise will help engrain the proper trigger reset into your muscle memory. When you get up on the line, we will give you the command “the range is clear, firing drill.” You will present your weapon to the ready, load it up appropriately, and holster. On the command of “point in,” you will present your weapon to the target. You will take the slack out but do not press the trigger. On the command of “press,” you will press the trigger, firing a shot and trapping the trigger to the rear. An instructor will then come by and verify that your trigger is trapped to the rear by pressing on your trigger finger. If you’ve trapped the trigger to the rear, all is well. Nothing is going to happen. If you cheated and released the trigger, when the instructor presses the trigger, you are going to get a bang. Hold the trigger to the rear! Then we will give you the command “reset.” We want to hear a chorus line of trigger resets. Then we will give you the command “press.” Once more, we will come around and test the triggers. Then we will give you the command “reset.” Again, we want to hear a chorus line of resets. Then we will give you the command “finger straight, down to the ready.” At that point your trigger finger goes straight, you will come down to the ready and put your safety on or de-cock as appropriate to your weapon system.

Any questions?

Relay one, eyes, ears, and ammo on the seven meter line.

21) Emergency Reload

22 August, 2011

Let's talk about our next reloading procedure, the emergency reload. There are a total of four methods of loading, this is number three. The reason this is called an emergency reload is that you have fired your weapon completely empty. The slide has locked back on an empty magazine. You're in the middle of a gunfight and this is definitely an "emergency."

Some schools consider it a cardinal sin to run the weapon dry. Certainly firing until your weapon is empty isn't desirable but there is an occasion where it is a tactical necessity. Who can tell me when that is? Right, when you still have a target. Should you stop to perform a tactical reload or fire your last round? Absolutely, fire your last round. That may be the round that stops the fight. It would make no sense to stop shooting to perform a tactical reload.

To setup for an emergency reload, unload, and then insert an empty magazine and run the slide to the rear. The slide should lock to the rear automatically. Make sure you have a loaded magazine on your belt ready to go. Glock shooters, you will trip your triggers as a part of the setup.

We will have you point in, hard focus on the front sight, and press. Nothing will happen. Just like in a Type 2 or Type 3 malfunction, you pressed the trigger and nothing happened. You cannot be sure why the weapon didn't fire until you look. So, the trigger finger goes straight as you look and move. Tilt the muzzle up and you will see a whole lot of nothing. There is no brass anywhere. Keep the weapon high and look downrange at your adversary. Next, with your support hand, index a full magazine on your belt.

It's important that you do not drop the depleted magazine until you are certain you have a spare one on your belt to replace it. If you drop that empty magazine on the ground first, what did you just tell the bad guy? Yeah, you're out of ammo. So reach back and insure you have a full magazine. Now bring that magazine out of the magazine pouch and start it up toward the weapon. Press the magazine release button with your firing hand thumb. The two magazines, the full one coming up toward the weapon and the empty one falling from the weapon, should pass in the air. Place the back of the full magazine against the inside back of the magazine well at a slight angle, rock it into place, and insert it with one brisk motion.

At this point we have three options to drop the slide. The fastest way is to use your firing hand thumb to depress the slide stop. If you cannot reach it with your firing hand thumb, the second best option is with the support hand thumb. As your support hand starts to acquire your normal grip, simply depress the slide stop with your support hand thumb. If you are left-handed or you can't get your support hand thumb up to drop the slide, your only option is to reach up with your support hand and rack the slide. Don't baby it forward. Let it fly forward like your normal loading process, chambering that round. That method is the least preferable in terms of speed.

The key to performing the emergency reload quickly is economy of motion. Keep your weapon high, in-line with your adversary. Your focus should be downrange, watching your adversary.

I'll demonstrate that again. To set up the emergency reload, start by unloading your gun. Once unloaded, insert an empty magazine and rack the slide to the rear. Glock shooters, you will need to trip your triggers. You need to make sure you have a loaded magazine in your belt pouch. We will have you point in, hard focus on the front sight, and press. Again nothing will happen. Your trigger finger goes straight, look and move. There will be no brass anywhere. Acquire a full magazine with your support hand. As that full magazine starts toward your weapon, press your magazine release button. The two magazines will pass in the air. Insert the full magazine. Now, drop the slide. Finger back on the trigger, sights are on the target. Stop there. Remember, the emergency reload is reflexive but shooting is a conscious decision.

About the only thing that can go wrong in this process is that the magazine does not fall free from the weapon when you press the magazine release button. This is common to the first generation Glock magazines. The solution is simple. Your support hand is already coming towards that magazine well with a magazine in it. With your support hand little finger, simply hook the front edge of the magazine in the magazine well, strip it out, insert a loaded magazine and carry on.

(REVOLVER TECHNIQUE) The emergency reload technique for revolvers is as follows. To set it up, make sure you are unloaded. Point in at the target and press the trigger. You will hear a click. This could be a Type 1 malfunction, a failure to fire. So simply press the trigger again. If you get another click, your weapon is probably empty. It is time for an emergency reload. As you step, bring the weapon in close and open the cylinder. Trap the cylinder and point the muzzle straight to the sky. Strike the ejector rod with the palm of your firing hand. Now point the muzzle straight down at the ground and acquire your speed loader; make sure you have a proper index. Insert it, release the rounds, and close the cylinder. Then point in at the target, with your finger on the trigger. That's the emergency reload technique for the revolver.

Are there any questions about emergency reloads?

How do you prevent emergency reloads? That's right, by performing tactical reloads whenever you can. Remember, reload when you want to, not when you have to.

Relay one, step up to the dry practice line. You will need one loaded and one empty magazine. Eyes and ears are required.

22) Speed Reload

22 August, 2011

The last of the reloads that we are going to talk about is the speed reload. The speed reload is performed the same way as an emergency reload. The difference is that you are dropping a partially full magazine from the weapon and inserting a fresh one. The speed reload is very common in competition. The shooter will fire from one position and then head to the next position executing a speed reload on the way. This is fine for competition where the competitors may have ten magazines on their belt. On the street, a speed reload is very unlikely.

The speed reload has a very small, very limited, tactical niche. What scenario can you imagine where a speed reload would be preferable to a tactical or emergency reload? (*Solicit answers from students*) One scenario that may warrant a speed reload would be against multiple adversaries. Let's say you have engaged multiple adversaries and you know your ammunition is partially depleted. Another adversary just disappeared behind a vehicle. You are almost out of ammunition and it is very likely you will have to shoot again any second. There is no time to perform a tactical reload because that takes several seconds. In this case you could perform a speed reload.

You will start with a round in the chamber and a partially depleted magazine in the weapon. (*Present to ready for demonstration*) In the scenario described above, you would have the weapon at the ready. Simply press the magazine release, letting the partially depleted magazine fall to the ground as you insert a fresh magazine. (*Demonstrate*) The downside to this procedure, and it is a significant downside, is that you have lost access to the rounds in that partially depleted magazine. Once those rounds are on the ground, you are never going to get them back in the middle of a gunfight. So whatever rounds you had remaining in there, you have effectively lost.

Let me demonstrate the speed reload again.

For revolvers, the speed reload is identical to an emergency reload.

We don't even practice this, because it is essentially a subset of the emergency reload, which you just did. Any questions on the speed reload?

23) Failure to Stop

22 August, 2011

Let's assume that you actually have to present your weapon and fire at an adversary. What is your goal? What are you trying to accomplish? Correct, you're trying to stop him. We often hear kill, incapacitate, neutralize, etc. All you are trying to do is stop that aggressive behavior towards you or a loved one and nothing more. Let's say you've fired a controlled pair to the center of your adversary's thoracic cavity and the aggressive behavior doesn't stop. In other words, he continues to fight. This is what we call a "Failure to Stop." You can see the logic in the name. What do you think could cause a failure to stop? Body armor, drugs, dedicated opponent, and misses. Let's talk about each of these individually.

Body armor is very common these days. Anyone can buy it out of the back of any firearms magazine and over the internet. A good example of the effectiveness of body armor is The Bank of America robbery in North Hollywood in February 1997. Those guys were covered from head to toe in two layers of body armor. The police officers were getting good hits on the two bad guys but the body armor did its job and stopped their bullets. The bad guys continued to fight.

Then there are drugs. Drugs are even more common than body armor, and frankly, can be just as effective at causing a failure to stop. Drugs affect a person's physiology. Therefore, you may get good thoracic cavity hits, but they aren't going down. This adversary may have received mortal wounds and will bleed out in thirty seconds or three minutes, but in the meantime you have a failure to stop.

Next is the dedicated opponent. They have no body armor, and have no drugs on board other than adrenaline. He's just a real stout individual and he's simply not impressed with the caliber of your weapon. He is so focused and determined that good hits don't stop him. A good example of this was the 1986 Miami FBI shooting. There were two adversaries in this particular engagement, Platt and Matix. Matix was put out of the fight almost immediately. The other guy, Platt, continued to fight even after sustaining a serious wound in the opening volley of the fight. He took a round through the arm. It shattered the humerus, severed the brachial artery, went into the thoracic cavity, through one lung and stopped just short of the heart, nicking the aorta. That is about as much penetration as you can ever hope for. But, he was determined to continue the fight, and fight he did. He was bleeding so profusely that later they were able to track his movements around the crime scene by following the arterial spurts of blood on the pavement. This guy was bleeding out in a hurry. But for the next fourteen minutes, he tore the place up. He killed two FBI agents and wounded five more before they finally put him down.

And finally there are misses. The misses we're concerned about aren't the ones where you mashed the trigger so badly that you know you aren't even on the target. We're talking about the kind where you're not getting sufficient penetration. For example, you have to shoot through drywall because it's the only shot you have and it looks like a good clean shot. But, instead of hitting the adversary, your rounds are being stopped by a stud between the drywall. Another

example would be shooting through a car door. Instead of penetrating through the thin sheets of steel, your rounds are being stopped by the sprocket, or window crank.

Ultimately, you don't care what the cause is. Your only concern is that you have a failure to stop, and you need a solution for it. There are several schools of thought with respect to solutions for the failure to stop. One is more of the same, or more rounds to the thoracic cavity. Second is the pelvic shot. And third is the central nervous system. Let's talk about each one of these individually.

Continuing to shoot at the thoracic cavity is ineffective. More rounds to the body armor, or more rounds to the drug-crazed individual isn't going to do anything except waste time and ammunition, neither of which you have very much of in a gunfight. So that's not a good solution.

Next is the pelvic shot. The pelvic shot came from law enforcement circles as a means of stopping somebody armed with a contact weapon like a knife or baseball bat. If he's all the way across the room and closing the distance with a Louisville Slugger and you shatter his pelvic bone, you have stopped him. What if he's armed with a firearm? Have you actually stopped the fight? No, he can definitely continue to fight from the ground because the trigger finger is not connected to the pelvis. In fact, now he's on the ground and in a more stable position to shoot from. You may have just made your adversary more lethal, rather than putting him out of the fight. The other flaw with the pelvic shot is the ballistic deficiency of handgun rounds. Rarely will they shatter a pelvis. Instead they will generally bore a nice clean hole right through the pelvis. It will go in one side, and out the other. You may destroy the bladder, colon, and intestines but that's certainly not vital tissue anyway.

So what does that leave? It leaves the central nervous system, specifically the brain and the spinal cord. If you sever that cervical spinal cord, you remove all the electrical impulses from that point down and he will pile up like a wet rag. But how difficult is that shot? It's like hitting my little finger as it's closing in on you. I couldn't guarantee that shot. I don't think anybody can, especially under stress. That leaves us with the brain, not the head, but the brain. There's a whole lot of head that isn't brain. For example: the jaw, the ears, and the upper part of the forehead. Handgun rounds to any of these areas will not stop this adversary. If you hit this guy in the teeth, what's going to happen? The teeth are very hard bones. They all move independently and thus absorb a lot of energy. The round is not going to get penetration either to the brain stem or the spinal cord. The ears, of course, are totally irrelevant. The forehead, especially as it arcs to the rear, is very difficult to penetrate. Generally a round here will either deflect into the air or it will penetrate the scalp and hug the skull over the top of the head to simply exit the scalp at the back of the head. So the forehead is out.

In the end, we are left with the cranio-ocular cavity. That's this three-inch by four-inch rectangular box as represented on this target. This is essentially the eye sockets and the soft honeycomb tissue of the sinuses. On an actual individual this is the area between the outside edges of the eyes, and between the eyebrows and the bottom of the nose. If you drive a handgun

round through this guy's cranio-ocular cavity, will he stop? Yes, definitely. I know of no circumstances where an individual took a legitimate cranio-ocular cavity hit and continued to fight. I'm not talking about an oblique shot that takes the eye out. I'm talking about a round straight into the brain. Now I realize that killing the adversary isn't the goal, but will he die? Yes, this individual will most likely die. Hopefully, that's not a moral dilemma for anybody. Remember, it was his decision to start this fight. You delivered your controlled pair to the thoracic cavity. It was his decision to continue the fight, forcing you into that cranio-ocular cavity shot. He made all the decisions that started and escalated this fight, not you. It is always unfortunate when someone dies, but better him than you. Think of it this way: you are shooting for the cranio-ocular cavity not to take a life, but to save a life.

How are you going to deliver that shot? The cranio-ocular cavity is a very small area compared to the thoracic cavity. Therefore, you have to slow down and make this a surgically precise shot. Bring the weapon up, pause, focus on the front sight, and achieve a surprise break. In a real gunfight, you'll most likely only get one chance to take this shot. Bad guys are generally stupid, but most are not stupid enough to stand there with rounds whizzing past their ears while you take a second or third shot at their head. So you have to make the first one surgically precise. Stop and think about this for a minute. Which is faster: to take an extra two to three tenths-of-a-second to guarantee the first shot, or to rush the first shot, miss, and have to take a second shot? Take the extra time on the first shot and guarantee the hit. With that understanding, never quit fighting if you do miss the first shot. The thoracic cavity is Plan A. The cranio-ocular cavity is Plan B. There is no Plan C. Plan C is more of Plan B.

What if your opponent is not facing you directly when the time comes for a failure to stop? You may be looking at the side of their head or even the back of their head. Under what circumstances would you need to shoot someone in the back of the head? And I'm not talking about an execution. Right, generally in the defense of someone else. If they were on top of your child beating the hell out of them, you would fire a controlled pair to the thoracic cavity. If that failed, you would switch to Plan B, and take the same shot as viewed from the side or rear. That same three-inch by four-inch box extends horizontally around the entire head.

There are two different ways we practice failure to stop on the range. First will be the designated failure to stop. We'll designate this exercise as a failure to stop drill. You'll come up and you'll fire your controlled pair to the thoracic cavity. You'll take your step to the side as your weapon comes down to the ready. Immediately, you'll recognize that this guy is still standing and he's still a threat. Transition immediately to the cranio-ocular cavity and take the head shot. Make a perfect hit and then come down, move again, and finish your after action drills.

The other way we'll practice failures is on a semi-surprise basis. The command will be "fire a controlled pair to the center of the thoracic cavity." You'll come up, fire your pair, come down to the ready as you move, and start your after action drills. Somewhere along the line we'll yell, "Head!" That will be your indication there's been a failure. Wherever you are in your after action drills, transition right to the head, pause, relax, and guarantee a perfect shot to the cranio-ocular cavity. So we'll work it various ways. Any questions?

We are going to do a quick demonstration so grab your eyes and ears, and your ammo and come on down to seven meters.

24) Put It All Together Drill

22 August, 2011

Right now, we're going to do an exercise that we call the "Put It All Together Drill." This exercise is designed to put all the skills you have learned together in one exercise. Here's how this will work. We will have the entire relay protect their eyes and ears. You will be shooting individually with an instructor. You will individually get the command "The range is clear, firing drill." You will present to ready, load and holster. On the "fire" command you will present your weapon and fire a controlled pair to the thoracic cavity. Guarantee the hits. If you don't get two good hits, or take too long getting those hits, the instructor will shout "Head" indicating a failure to stop. Following your head shot, you will come down to the ready, perform after action drills, and do a tactical reload. Then, the instructor will have you unload and holster.

Any questions on the put it all together drill?

Everyone, bring your eyes, ears, and ammo. First relay step up to seven meters.

26) Hot Range

22 August, 2011

We are now going to switch to a hot range. That means your weapons are going to be loaded when they are put in the holster and you step off the line. Remember, the only place your weapon leaves the holster is on the firing line and then only at the direction of one of the instructors. If, at the end of an exercise, you have a depleted magazine in your weapon, just leave it alone. The next time up to the line, when you receive the command, "The range is clear, firing drill," you can perform a tactical reload and get a full magazine in the weapon. So please, when you are behind the line, go ahead and feel free to load up your spare magazines, but the one that's in the weapon stays in the weapon. Next time up you will be able to change it.

Additionally, should you need to leave the range while loaded, tell an instructor. They will get you unloaded so you can leave to take care of your business. When you return, they will get you loaded back up so you may continue with the drills immediately.

Any questions?

28) Closing Comments, End of Day Two (2-Day Course)

On behalf of myself and the staff, let me say that we've seen significant improvement on everyone's part. You have come a long way since yesterday morning. You owe yourself a round of applause. *(Start the applause)* Do you have any questions about anything we have learned today or yesterday? Students often wonder, "What's the next step; where do I go from here?" We suggest that you capitalize on the momentum you have generated in this course and enroll in another course at Front Sight as soon as possible. The staff will remain behind after we have dismissed and will be happy to discuss with you which course would be appropriate as your next step.

<Staff hands out Critique Sheets>

The staff is handing out a critique sheet. We ask that you take a few minutes when you return home to email Dr. Piazza your comments about the course. Tell him what you liked and what you would like to see improved. Please be candid, no one here is thin-skinned. We sincerely want to provide you with the best training possible, and we need your feedback to do that.

We will now hand out your course certificates. Please listen carefully for your name to be announced. *<Staff hands out certificates>*

<Once certificates are passed out>

For those of you with rental guns, program guns, or other school gear, we will be collecting them here on the range as soon as we dismiss the class.

If you will be attending the CCW course on Tuesday, please be here by 7:15. You will meet in the classroom. You will need 30 rounds per gun you intend to shoot (maximum of two guns). You must also bring your driver's license. Without it, you will not be allowed to participate.

Everybody please step up to the dry practice line so we can clear you out one last time.

<Once students are facing staff>

Thank you again for training with us. We look forward to seeing you back at Front Sight very soon. Until next time we meet, stay in Condition Yellow.

31) Photographic Targets

22 August, 2011

As you can tell, these targets are photographs of people. Until now, you've been shooting at abstract targets. But on the street, there will be large variations in people. There are variations in size, not only in the thoracic cavity, but also the cranio-ocular cavity. For example, Ron has a very large thoracic and cranio-ocular cavity compared to this guy (*Target with the striped shirt*). Also, in a gunfight, your adversary may not be facing directly toward you. He may be at an angle. That angled body position will require you to change your point of aim. Let's pretend that I am your adversary. If I am facing you squarely, my second button is the center of my thoracic cavity. However, if I turn, would you still hold on that second button? No, obviously not. You would need to move your point of aim to the center of my thoracic cavity as you now see it. The point is this: the center of the thoracic cavity is relative to the position of your adversary. You must shoot at the center of the thoracic cavity whether you are looking at the front, side, or back of your adversary.

To make it even more difficult, you'll notice that some of these targets have an obstruction in front of the thoracic cavity. For example, this target has a hand and a weapon in front of the thoracic cavity. Many people believe they should aim to avoid the obstruction. That would be a mistake. Even though there is an obstruction, aim at the center of the thoracic cavity. Remember, a gunfight is a dynamic environment. That arm and weapon will probably not stay in the same place for long. That weapon may not be there by the time your rounds hit the thoracic cavity. Even if the hand doesn't move and your rounds actually hit the hand or the weapon, what's wrong with that? You will likely disable the hand or the weapon. Additionally, the rounds may penetrate right through the obstruction into the thoracic cavity. You already have enough to think about in the middle of a gunfight. You need to concentrate on target identification, and then, if appropriate, sight alignment, sight picture, and trigger control. You don't have time to worry about aiming high or low. Just aim at the center of the thoracic cavity and deliver perfect hits.

Let's look at the various levels of threat. To determine the level of threat, we look at the hands. Ron has a revolver, his trigger finger is straight, the weapon is down around the waistline and the muzzle is pointed off in a safe direction. On the other hand, this guy has a weapon pointed in, his finger is on the trigger, his support side eye is closed, and he is ready to shoot. It doesn't get any worse than this.

Let's create a little scenario. Assume you are at home and you hear a noise in the garage. You open the door to the garage and there's a bad guy standing about seven meters away from you. What if you were confronted with this guy (*target with weapon pointed in at you*)? How many of you would shoot? Almost everyone. Good. What if it was Ron instead? His finger isn't even on the trigger yet and his weapon is pointed away in a safe direction. Who would issue some sort of verbal command to Ron? (*Pause and wait for students to respond*) A few of you would.

To help you understand the implications of that decision, we are going to put on a demonstration. The purpose of this demonstration is to point out the critical distinction between action and reaction. I am going to hold my weapon down around my waistline just like Ron. _____ (*Instructor's name*) will be serving as the homeowner. He is going to bark out a few commands. Let's see how this play out. Everyone, protect your eyes and ears. (*Demonstration*)

Take your ears off. After that demonstration, how many of you would rather shoot instead of talk to Ron? It looks like most of you would shoot. You may be forced to talk under some circumstances. Realize, however, that if you choose to talk, you are giving your adversary several precious tenths-of-a-second to initiate an aggressive act before you will be able to react. In a gunfight, that may be the difference between life and death. Remember, if you're talking, you're reacting, and your adversary has the advantage. Now, let's look at my hits. I did not even use my sights. I thrust the weapon out there and cranked off a couple rounds. I still got a couple of good thoracic cavity hits, and a perfect headshot. Even a blind idiot, with a rusty piece of junk, can get lucky at conversational distances. The point of this demonstration is this: you do not have any spare time in this sort of engagement. So do not talk unless you absolutely have to. If you have to talk to your adversary, do so with the understanding that you are giving them the advantage.

There may be circumstances where you may wish to issue a verbal command. When would that be? (*Elicit answers*). Exactly. What if you don't know if that person is going to cause you immediate harm? Maybe no weapon is visible, or their intent is not yet clear. That being said, this is how we will run this next shooting exercise. On the "Challenge" command, issue your verbal warning. You may say something like, "Stop right there!" Keep your hands out in front of you. This is the universal "stop" signal, and it looks good on video in your defense. On the "Present!" command, snap to count one and present your weapon to the ready and issue another verbal warning. "Stop or I'll shoot." If you hear the "fire" command, the target has not fled and now represents an immediate threat, deliver your controlled pair.

That being said, it is critical that you bring your support hand back to your midsection BEFORE presenting. Again, bring that hand back. You don't want to shoot it under stress.

First relay, step up to three meters.

32) Designated Head Shots

22 August, 2011

So far, our standard response to an adversary has been a controlled pair to the center of the thoracic cavity. That's Plan A. If that results in a failure to stop, then we transition to the head. That's Plan B. However, there are times when we absolutely cannot risk a failure to stop. One good example of this would be a hostage situation. The bad guy has a weapon to the head or throat of someone you love and you have one chance, one shot, to save your loved one. In this case you need to come right out of the holster and immediately place a single round in the cranio-ocular cavity. We call this a "Designated Headshot." Don't get this confused with "Designated Failure to Stop," which transitions to the head after the controlled pair to the thoracic cavity has failed. The designated headshot skips the thoracic cavity and goes immediately to the cranio-ocular cavity.

There might also be situations where the headshot is the only shot available. A good example of this would be an assailant that is obviously wearing body armor. It is pointless to put round after round into that body armor, so go straight to the head. Or maybe your adversary is hiding behind a cinder block wall with only their head and their weapon exposed.

So, how are we going to perform this headshot? You need to present the weapon rapidly. Do not slow down your presentation just because this is a precision shot. Your presentation should be lightening fast. Now pause, relax your grip slightly, and concentrate on the three secrets. Once you have perfect sight alignment and perfect sight picture, build the pressure on the trigger and guarantee a surprise break. You will have a perfect hit.

Remember, you're probably only going to get one chance at this shot. If you miss, the hostage is likely to die. So, shoot only as fast as you can guarantee a hit. As you practice this today, keep that reality in mind. With that said, if you do miss, take it again. Any questions?

First relay, five meters. Eyes and ears are required.

34) Three Ways to Speed Up

22 August, 2011

We are now going to introduce some more time pressure to the shooting drills. We do this because it is more realistic. No criminal is going to stand still while you slowly present your weapon and very carefully fire a controlled pair. You need to be able to deliver a controlled pair before your adversary does. The way we add time pressure is with a shot timer. A buzzer will sound, indicating the start of the drill. A buzzer will again sound when the prescribed time for the drill has expired.

Let's talk about how to shoot faster. There are three ways you can immediately increase your speed. The first is to increase the speed of your presentation. Just for the sake of argument, let's assume you have two-point-five seconds to deliver two hits on your adversary. If you burn up two seconds on the presentation, that would leave you only one-half second to devote to sights and trigger. Wouldn't it be better if your presentation took only one-second? That would leave you with a full second and a half to get two good hits. Every tenth-of-a-second you shave off your presentation can be used to guarantee your hits. The key to a quick presentation is Count 1. Move your support hand as fast as you can to your midsection. Your firing hand will automatically move faster to your gun. Once on your gun, smoothly present to the target. Do not try to complete the entire presentation as fast as you can. Slow is smooth, smooth is fast – but count one must be explosive.

The second way you can save time is by trusting a Flash Sight Picture. What do I mean? You don't need an absolutely perfect sight picture to get a good hit at conversational distances. When you present the weapon, the front sight may be a little too high, or a little too far to the right. If the tip of the front sight is within the rear sight notch (*Demonstrate with sight props*), even if it's a little high, you have a green light to shoot. Even with this slight imperfection, you will still get a good hit in the thoracic cavity. The old analogy is this: "If the light is green, it won't get any greener." Don't take the time to achieve a perfect sight picture at conversational distances. By conversational distances, I mean out to five meters.

The last way you can immediately increase you speed is by decreasing the time it takes to achieve a surprise break. We call this a "Compressed Surprise Break." This is the exact same surprise break of the trigger that you have been working on so far, just compressed into a shorter time frame.

Remember, a lightning fast presentation will give you more time to guarantee your hits, regardless of the distance or size of the target. However, a flash sight picture and compressed surprise break are only appropriate at conversational distances, and only for thoracic cavity shots. With longer shots or very small targets, you will need to slow down to ensure perfect execution of the three secrets.

To make certain everyone understands what we mean by a Flash Sight Picture, we are going to do a brief demonstration. Everyone, bring eyes, ears, and ammo. Form a class circle at seven meters.

36) Home Invasion

22 August, 2011

Now we are going to put you through a live-fire tactical simulator. This will be a high-intensity, short-duration event. There will be a lot of activity, and win, lose, or draw, it will be over in a few seconds. Much like reality, right? You will be shooting at photographic targets. There will be bad guys and there may be good guys. How are you going to tell the difference? Right! Look at their hands. If he is holding a weapon, he is an adversary. If he is holding a can of Coke, he is a good guy and you do not want to shoot him. If you can't decide whether he's a bad guy or a good guy, you may talk to them. Give the target some sort of verbal command. The instructor will answer for the target. With that said, I need to make one thing perfectly clear. The instructors are not targets! About a year ago we had a student raise their hand at this point and say, "You know, I really don't feel comfortable shooting the instructors." Obviously, something was not fully communicated. Again, even if that's the instructor that has been on your back all morning, you will not be shooting the instructors. You will be shooting the targets. Is everyone clear about that?

I did not set up this particular scenario so I don't know exactly which targets are being used. However, if you encounter a hostage scenario, what is the proper response? Correct, one shot to the cranio-ocular cavity. The reason you want a single headshot is because you cannot risk a failure to stop or the hostage will die. Take the time to make a perfect cranio-ocular shot. If you miss this shot, the hostage will die.

The scenario is a home invasion. You'll be sitting at home on a beautiful Saturday afternoon watching TV, or reading the newspaper, or whatever is appropriate to your lifestyle. All of the sudden, there is a horrible ruckus at the front door. People are banging on the door, yelling and screaming. It's clear that these people want in and they want to do you some harm. Now it's up to you to handle the situation appropriately. I'm not going to tell you how to respond, that would take away the element of surprise.

On the range, our instructors try to maintain a professional demeanor. However, in the simulators they pull out all the stops. They use all sorts of gutter language. Like, "Fuck you, you piece of shit!" or "I'm gonna kick your ass, you Bitch!" We're not trying to offend anyone. We believe that no matter how crass that language may seem, it is a necessary element to make these scenarios as real as they can be. After all, that's the way these dirt bags really talk. So just let the gutter language go in one ear and right out the other. If you get mired down thinking about the language then you are not thinking about what you need to think about. You should be concentrating on identifying your target, and should it come time to shoot, the three secrets.

All right, let's talk about the logistics of running the simulators. We have two identical simulators set up. Each of you will only shoot in one of them. The simulators are over on bays ___ and ___. In a minute, I will send 10 of you to those simulators. Five will go to each. When

you get to the simulators, you will see some chairs. Take a seat and wait to be called up by an instructor.

We will have one instructor in each scenario for safety and coaching. The instructor will hook a carabineer to your belt for safety. They will then take you through the simulator. When finished, you may be asked to assist the instructor with the simulator operation. If you are selected, the instructor will tell you what needs to be done. If you are told to come back to the range, please come right back here. I want you to go down to the bays as a group, but come back as individuals. If you wait for your group to get done with the simulator, it fouls up the logistics of running everyone through. Again, when dismissed from the simulator, come back to the range immediately. When you return to the range, inform whoever is running the line that you are back. You will be given instructions on where and how to join the range exercises.

Please don't talk about the simulator when you return. It ruins the element of surprise for those who have not yet been through it. We will have a group debrief once everybody has been through the simulator. You will need two magazines for the simulators. If you need any more than that, make sure you save one round for yourself. Just kidding. You will need eyes and ears. The scenario is set up outdoors, so you will definitely need your sunglasses and your hat.

Send 10 students to the simulators.

Relay one, eyes, ears, and ammo, at three meters.

37) Presentation From Concealment

22 August, 2011

From this point forward in the course, you will be working from concealment. For the majority of you, that's how you are going to carry your weapon on a regular basis. I understand that law enforcement officers or security personnel usually carry their weapon exposed. For you, this will be applicable to off-duty carry. The primary consideration when carrying concealed is finding the proper balance between concealment and accessibility. With that said, the preferred place for your weapon is right where you have it now, on your firing side hip. However, let's talk about some of the other options.

Concealment Options

While carrying concealed, it is your responsibility to ensure that your weapon stays concealed. In many states, you can lose your permit to carry for allowing your weapon to be seen. Therefore, finding a method of carry that allows the weapon to stay concealed is critical. A businessperson, for example, may not be able to carry on the belt while at work. This would require a more concealed, but less accessible method, such as a briefcase, ankle holster, purse, etc. The first rule in a gunfight is to have a weapon. It's far better to have a five-shot revolver in an ankle holster than no weapon at all. Just because you can't carry a full size weapon on your hip, doesn't mean you shouldn't carry.

Inside the Waistband (IWB) holsters. These are holsters that actually go inside of the waistband of your pants. A weapon carried inside the waistband is a bit easier to conceal than outside the waistband because about half of the weapon is already concealed inside the pants. The only down side is that your pants will need to be oversized. You'll need to buy your pants an inch or two larger than you normally wear. If you do carry inside the waistband, make sure your holster remains open when you remove the weapon. This will require reinforced leather or Kydex. Kydex is the preferred material because it will protect the weapon better from sweat.

Small of the Back (SOB) holsters. Small of the back holsters carry the weapon in the small of your back. They are very effective with respect to concealment. No one looking at you from the front can see the weapon at all. Even from the back the weapon is fairly well hidden, because of the natural hollow in the small of the back. However, there are a few problems with this location. First is accessibility. They are slow to present from. You've got farther to reach and it's also more difficult to clear the concealment garment to get at the weapon. Small of the back holsters are very comfortable while standing, but very uncomfortable if you sit down. If you are driving, the weapon is inaccessible because you are actually sitting against the weapon.

Shoulder holsters. There are two basic styles of shoulder holsters, horizontal and vertical. The problem with horizontal shoulder holsters is pretty obvious. You end up covering everyone with the muzzle, thus violating Rule 2 all day long. Also, in a horizontal configuration, it is very difficult to conceal a full-sized weapon. It pokes out from both the front and back. Presenting

from a horizontal shoulder holster is fairly perilous. You are likely to cover yourself and others before you get to your adversary.

Vertical shoulder holsters are significantly better. They don't violate Rule 2. They conceal full-sized weapons much easier. And they are pretty comfortable to wear, especially if you spend a lot of time driving or sitting.

Cross draw holsters. A cross draw holster may be worthy of consideration if you are going to spend most of your time driving or sitting. However, once you stand up a cross draw holster has some limitations. If somebody tries to disarm you, it is more difficult to retain your weapon in a cross draw holster. It is also more difficult to conceal a cross draw holster because it sticks out away from your body a little bit more.

Ankle holsters. An ankle holster as a means of carrying your primary weapon has some serious shortcomings. First, they are very slow to present from. Secondly, you will only be able to carry a small weapon in an ankle holster. Ankle holsters are popular in law enforcement circles for carrying a back up weapon.

Fanny packs. Fanny packs have been fairly popular over the last ten years. They are starting to go out of vogue a little bit now. I think one reason is everyone knows you are carrying a weapon. If you walk through the mall with a big, black, fanny pack that has a parachute rip cord sticking out of it, there's no question you have a weapon. In fact, you may have people ask what kind of weapon you are carrying. A fanny pack is a little slower to present from because you have to open it before you can obtain a firing grip. Most types of fanny packs carry the weapon horizontally which means you are covering everyone to your support side. This is a clear violation of Rule 2. If you want to carry in a fanny pack, buy one in some color other than black and add a patch, such as Nikon or Cannon. This will help to disguise the fact that you are carrying a weapon. Fanny packs work well for a "grab and go" situation. You can have the fanny pack sitting on your nightstand with a weapon, extra magazine, a can of O.C., and a flashlight. If something occurs in the middle of the night, you can grab the fanny pack and have everything you need.

Purses. Purses are often the ideal form of carry for the ladies. Unlike a fanny pack, purses look very natural. There are purses designed specifically to carry firearms. Most of them are very well made. They have a special compartment in them just for the weapon. This is a mandatory feature. Simply dropping your weapon into your purse is unacceptable. If the weapon is mixed in with your sunglasses and car keys, you may never get a hold of the weapon when you most need it. Additionally, if any of these objects find their way into the trigger guard, you could have a negligent discharge. The problem with the purse is that it is an "off the body" method of carry. Therefore, you can become separated from your weapon. If you set the purse down and take your eyes off it for even a minute, you may lose your weapon.

Briefcases and day timers that are designed to conceal a firearm are also "off the body" methods of carry and present the same problems as purses. However, you may work in an

environment where it's necessary to take your jacket off, thus making it impossible to conceal a weapon on your belt. Under these circumstances, a briefcase may be a viable option. Just like purses, purchase a day timer or brief case specifically to hold a weapon.

Gimmicks. There are quite a few items of concealment gear out there that I consider gimmicks. Among those are "Thunderwear." Thunderwear is underwear that carries your weapon below your belt line inside your pants. They are not only very uncomfortable, but they sure are slow! The real problem with the Thunderwear is where the muzzle is pointing. Never let the muzzle cover anything you are not willing to destroy. Guys, enough said.

We could talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the different modes of carry all day long. The bottom line is this: the best place for your weapon is on your firing side hip. If you must carry somewhere else, that's okay. Just realize that you are going to be slower. The real take-home message from this lecture is "Dry Practice." You must practice from concealment, whichever method you choose, if you are to be proficient.

Presenting From Concealment

Let's talk about presenting from a holster concealed on your firing side. There are two basic types of concealment garments that we are going to concern ourselves with: the open front garment and the closed front garment. By open front garment, I mean something like an unbuttoned sports jacket, an unbuttoned shirt, or a vest. A closed front garment could be any of those same items simply buttoned or zipped up. Other examples of closed front garments would be sweaters, sweatshirts, or T-shirts.

Let's start with open front concealment garments. To present from open front garment concealment, count one is the only thing that changes from your normal presentation. Count one is modified because you have to sweep the garment out of the way. On count one, the support hand goes to the mid-section as normal. The firing hand forms a hook or "C," and hooks the front of the garment on the firing side. Then the firing hand briskly sweeps the garment back and out of the way. The garment must completely clear the weapon. In fact, it should come back and hit you between the shoulder blades. A little bit of weight in the firing side pocket will help accomplish this. A couple of loose rounds will do the job just fine. The garment must come all the way back to give you time to obtain a firing grip. If you don't sweep it far enough you may end up with part of the garment in your grip and that's not good. So again, on count one your support hand goes to the mid-section as usual. The firing hand briskly sweeps the garment and then obtains a firing grip. Once you have a firing grip, your presentation is the same as usual.

Once you've fired your shots and completed the after action drills, it's time for a tactical reload. To get to your magazine pouch, form a hook with your support hand and briskly sweep the garment out of the way. Again, the garment must come all the way back to give you time to obtain a proper index on the magazine. Now, complete your tactical reload. The same process would apply if you needed to acquire a flashlight or any other piece of gear on your support side.

Now it's time to holster your weapon. Before we move on, you need to understand the importance of holstering slowly and carefully. With a concealment garment you are much more likely to get something caught in the holster while holstering. It may be a piece of fabric, a drawstring, or a zipper. If it gets inside the trigger guard and you force the weapon into the holster, what's going to happen? Right, a negligent discharge into your leg! Also, if you find that you have holstered part of your concealment garment with your weapon, do not try to pull the garment out of the holster while the weapon is holstered. Why? Because that garment might be running through the trigger guard and across the face of the trigger. If you pull on it, you may have a negligent discharge. If you have clothing in your holster, very carefully remove the garment and the weapon from the holster at the same time. So remember, if you feel any resistance, come back out to the ready and fix it. Any questions?

Holstering is the most perilous part of presenting from concealment. Keeping the weapon at the ready, the support hand comes back under the firing side arm and grabs the front edge of the garment. Push the garment back and away from the holster and up into the armpit. The holster is now completely exposed. At this point, controlling the garment becomes the responsibility of the firing side arm. As you bring the weapon back to close contact, drag and trap the garment against the body and well rearward of the holster. The support hand returns to the mid-section as usual. Here's the critical part; slowly holster the weapon. If you feel any resistance at all, bring the weapon back out to the ready. Then with your support hand, clear your holster of obstructions and then repeat the holstering process. Any questions?

Now let's talk about closed front garments. Presentation from a closed front garment is a little different. On count one, both hands grab the hem of the garment. The support hand grabs in front of the weapon and the firing hand grabs to the rear of the weapon. Pull the garment away from the body and arc it over the weapon and up to the armpit. Hold the garment right there with your support hand while your firing hand comes down and establishes a firing grip. From here, the rest of the presentation is normal. Do not drag the garment over the weapon during count one because it will snag on the holster or the weapon.

Let's say you need to do a tactical reload while wearing a closed front garment. With your support hand thumb, hook the garment underneath the hem and raise it up high. Now let your support hand come down on your magazine, flashlight, or whatever it is that you need to acquire.

To holster with a closed front garment, leave the weapon at the ready. Your support hand is going to control the garment by grabbing the hem near the holster and pulling the garment up, fully exposing the holster. With your support hand near the center of your chest, hold the garment during the entire holstering process. Bring the weapon back to close contact, making sure not to cover your support hand. Now safely holster. Again, if you meet any resistance, bring the weapon back out to the ready, clear the obstruction in the holster and then start the holstering process again.

One additional note. You will be working from concealment all day long including all of the shooting exercises, even the skills test. When you are back here under the shade, feel free to take it off.

Any questions? First relay, step up to the dry practice line. Eyes are required, ears are not necessary.

41) One Ragged Hole Drill

22 August, 2011

Now we are going to perform a drill to fine-tune your mastery of the three secrets. We call this the “One Ragged Hole Drill.” For this exercise, the balance of speed and accuracy is irrelevant. Your only concern will be accuracy. The goal of the exercise is to fire five shots from five meters and create one ragged hole in your target.

There are one-inch by one-inch black squares on either side of the head on each target. The black squares give you a very specific aiming point. On the “Fire” command, you will present your weapon from the holster and fire one round, very slowly, right through the center of the black square. You will follow up with four more perfect shots, making a total of five. Take your time between shots. Generally, the person who finishes last has the best group.

Once everyone has completed their five shots, we will unload. On the go command, you will come out of the holster and take a perfect dry press at a different black square. Make sure your press is perfect. The front sight should not move when the trigger breaks. After your first press, reset your action, and take four more perfect dry presses. After your fifth dry press, go back to the holster.

Once everyone has finished their dry presses, we will load back up. On the fire command you will present from the holster and fire a perfect shot through the center of the black square. After your first shot, fire four more at the same square. Take a pause between shots. There is no hurry. Perfect accuracy is your only goal. After your fifth shot, finish with after action drills and holster.

Any questions?

42) Multiple Targets

22 August, 2011

So far you have been shooting at only one adversary. However, on the street you may be faced with two, three, or even more adversaries all at the same time. And why is that? Because rats travel in packs. You need to have a solution for dealing with multiple adversaries. Your first and best solution is avoidance through condition yellow. If you see a multiple adversary scenario developing, look for a tactical retreat. If for some reason you are not able to retreat, then the next plan of action would be to move to a position of tactical advantage. For example, move to concealment or cover and even line up your adversaries such that they are in a position of disadvantage. (*Demonstrate with four students*)

If it does come time to shoot, which adversary are you going to shoot first? The closest? Or how about the one with the most dangerous weapon? No, you are going to take the one that poses the most serious threat to you at that moment. For example, there may be an individual standing very close to you with a shotgun, but at this point he is still loading rounds into the shotgun. He has a very lethal weapon, and he is close, but he's not ready to use that weapon yet. Farther in the distance, there is somebody with a .22 rifle, which is certainly a lesser weapon, and he is at greater distance. But his weapon is already loaded and he's pointing it at you. His finger is on the trigger and he's ready to shoot. That would be the individual that you would shoot first. Remember, it's the one that represents the greatest threat to you at that moment.

When engaging multiple adversaries, your plan changes from the controlled pairs that we have been shooting. Instead of shooting two rounds per adversary, we're going to switch to firing just one round per adversary. The reason for that is to save time and ammunition. Obviously, when you are facing multiple adversaries, you have very little spare time. If you fired controlled pairs on each of four adversaries, by the time you got to bad guy number four, you may be out of ammunition and you would certainly be out of time. By that time, adversary number four has probably shot you. So instead of controlled pairs, we will be firing one round to the thoracic cavity of each adversary.

After you have shot, you will perform the after action drills. However, the after action drills are modified slightly because of multiple adversaries. You will step and come down to the ready, and quick check as usual. Final check now involves more than just one adversary and you cannot become fixated on any one of them. You need to final check each of the adversaries that you shot. You will actually be checking each one, back and forth. This may look like the scan, but it's not. It's simply the final check of each of the adversaries that you just shot. Once you're satisfied that they are all down and out of the fight, you will transition to the scan.

Since you are shooting only one round per adversary, it is far more likely that you will have a failure to stop. If you have a failure to stop, go with the exact same plan that we have used in the past. Switch immediately to the cranio-ocular cavity. Fire that one surgically precise shot. Any questions regarding how we are going to handle multiple adversaries?

Let's talk about how we are going to do this on the range. First, we are going to train for the worst-case scenario. We are going to put all four adversaries right out in front of you, all equally armed, all looking directly at you, all equal threats. It's your job to handle them in the appropriate fashion. You may shoot from left to right, right to left, or in a random order. It's your choice. Again, realize that in a real gunfight you are probably not going to have that luxury. You will be forced to handle the threats as they are posed to you.

Regardless of the order you shoot, the first shot is by far the most important. The reason is, wherever shot number one lands, generally so do shots two, three and four. In other words, if you mash shot one, you'll generally follow up with additional mashes. Or if you get a perfect hit on shot number one, then you get three subsequent perfect hits. Of course, that's what you want. Don't waste any time between adversaries. Present your weapon, get a flash sight picture, perform a compressed surprise break, and, during recoil, move to the next adversary. If you stay on the same adversary through recoil and then take the opportunity to move, you have wasted a significant amount of time. You want to be moving to your next adversary during recoil. If you get a peripheral hit, the instructor will yell out "Head!" on the appropriate target number. For example, "Head, two!" This does not mean that if you are shooting on targets seventeen through twenty that I want you to swivel and try to hit the head on target two! You will shoot the second target in your bank of four! When the headshot is called, immediately transition to head of the appropriate target and guarantee the shot.

You will form ___ single file lines at seven meters. The first person in each line will then move to the five meter line. On the fire command you will present your weapon and fire one round on each of two targets. Then one round on each of three targets. Then one round on each of four targets. Again, the instructor may call for a failure. Finish with after action drills and keep your weapon running with tactical reloads.

Once you have fired on all four targets, go to the back of the line. After you have shot this two times, fall back under cover.

Everyone on the seven meter line. Eyes and ears are required.

43) Man-on-Man Competition

22 August, 2011

We are now going to have a Man-on-Man competition. Some schools don't hold a Man-on-Man competition because they don't want to humiliate anyone. On the other hand, some schools hold a Man-on-Man competition to find the best shooter in class. The reason we hold a Man-on-Man competition is for heightened stress. You will be shooting against a fellow student and everyone else is watching. We want to see how well you hold up under increased pressure.

Here's the scenario. You will be shooting reactive steel targets. There will be three "shoot" targets and one "no-shoot" target per side. The targets are painted either gray or a solid color. The gray targets are the hostages. The solid color targets are the adversaries. Gray is good. The solid color targets are bad. Your goal is to leave the hostages standing and knockdown the adversaries before your opponent does. The hostage situation will obviously require a headshot. When the targets are hit solidly, they fall down. The targets will fall for any caliber here if the shots are properly placed. They will not fall to any caliber if the hits are too low. If a target has not fallen, shoot until it does fall. The key here is to make every shot count. Don't get caught up in what your opponent is doing, concentrate on sight alignment, sight picture, and trigger control.

You will be shooting from the holster, but without concealment garments. We will have everyone step up to the firing line and load your weapons. After that initial administrative load, it's up to you to keep your weapon running by performing tactical reloads. The first person to knock down all three adversaries without hitting the hostage wins. If you hit the hostage, you're out...but don't give up. Continue fighting until all the adversaries are down. If you both hit the hostage, you are both out. Once you're done shooting, remember to perform after action drills and a tactical reload. If you win, take a seat. If you lose, you will go downrange and help set up the targets. At the beginning, we will need volunteers to help set up the targets since we will not have any losers yet. This is a single elimination competition. Since we are shooting steel, keep your eyes and ears on during the entire event, even if you are not shooting. Are there any questions? We are going to do a roll call now to be certain everyone is present.

46) Skills Test Briefing

22 August, 2011

We're about to begin the skills test. There are no new techniques in the skills tests. You will shoot a total of twenty-five rounds from concealment.

Each round has a value of five points, making the entire test worth 125 points. When a "controlled pair" is called for, each shot in the thoracic cavity is worth five points. Shots that hit in the periphery or the head are valued at only two points. When "head shots" are called for, shots in the cranio-ocular cavity are worth five points. Shots in the periphery of the head are two points. Shots below the chin are considered misses and are worth zero points.

If a shot breaks the line, you get the full value. However, on the heavy border, you must break through the line and into the gray to earn points.

The scoring breakdown is as follows: 90% or better, or 0-13 points down, earns a Distinguished Graduate certificate. 70-89%, or 14-38 points down, is a Graduate certificate. Below 70%, or 39 or more points down, is a certificate of achievement. I will offer some advice here. Let us worry about the math. You focus on rapid presentations and the three secrets. Do your job and your score will take care of itself.

You will be called by name and assigned to a specific target. That is your target for the entire test. So listen carefully for your name when we call you up. You will fire controlled pairs from three to fifteen meters using the same times you have been using all day.

Next, you will shoot failure to stop from seven meters. You will fire a controlled pair under time pressure. Once everyone is done shooting the controlled pair, I will call a headshot. This headshot is untimed. These are the easiest shots on the test. There is no time pressure, so there's no reason to miss these shots. Unlike practice, if you do miss it, you do not get a second shot! You will perform this drill twice.

Finally, you will shoot designated heads at five and seven meters under time pressure. These are designated headshots, so you will present from the holster directly to the head and take one shot. Again, if you miss you do not get to shoot it again. You will shoot five of these at the 5 meter line, and 2 at the seven. That concludes the shooting portion of the test. The next group will then be called up in target order and shoot through the same exercises.

After you have shot, we will call you up to standby at three meters while we score your targets. We will write the number of points you lost on that given exercise in the upper corner of your target. After we have scored, please tape your target. Tape it well because you will continue to shoot on that target for score. If you disagree with our scoring, speak up before you tape. Once the tape is on, the score is permanent.

After both groups have shot, everyone will come up to the dry practice line, again in order, to do malfunctions and reloads. You will do each manipulation twice. These are timed manipulations and will start on a beep. At the prescribed time, there will be a second beep. Even if time expires and you're not done, don't quit. Finish the manipulation. You cannot earn points on these manipulations. You can only lose points for overtime and procedural errors. Procedural errors are doing the manipulation incorrectly, such as not looking at the problem before clearing a Type 2 malfunction.

If you experience a malfunction during the shooting portion of the test, go ahead and clear it and continue shooting. If you cleared the malfunction properly, you will not be penalized for any late shots. If you cleared it improperly you will be penalized for each late shot. Shooting your weapon dry because you failed to perform tactical reloads is not a malfunction. That's a cerebral malfunction and qualifies as a procedural penalty. So bring enough ammo for twenty-five shots and lots of tactical reloads.

Are there any questions?

(Instructor's name) will call out your name and target number. As soon as your name is called, grab your eyes, ears, and ammo and stand in front of your target at three meters.

47) Closing Comments, End of Day Four (4-Day Course)

On behalf of myself and the staff, let me say that we've seen significant improvement on everyone's part. You have come a long way since day one. You owe yourself a round of applause. (*Start the applause*) Do you have any questions about anything we have learned during the class? Students often wonder, "What's the next step? Where do I go from here?" We suggest that you capitalize on the momentum you have generated in this course and enroll in another course at Front Sight as soon as possible. The staff will remain behind after we have dismissed and will be happy to discuss with you which course would be appropriate as your next step.

I would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to join Front Sight's First Family. There is still time to take advantage of the 2-for-1 Legacy Membership. It truly represents the most economical way to train at Front Sight. If you are interested in purchasing a First Family membership, please see the staff in the Pro Shop before you leave.

If you will be attending the CCW course tomorrow, please arrive by 7:15. You will meet in the white tent. Please bring 30 rounds for each gun you intend to shoot (maximum of two guns). You must also bring your driver's license. Without it, you will not be allowed to participate.

<Staff hands out Critique Sheets>

The staff is handing out a critique sheet. We ask that you take a few minutes when you return home to email Dr. Piazza your comments about the course. Tell him what you liked and what you would like to see improved. Please be candid, no one here is thin-skinned. We sincerely want to provide you with the best training possible, and we need your feedback to do that.

We will now hand out the course certificates. The Skills Test you took this afternoon brings with it three different levels of certificates. First is "Distinguished Graduate" for those who shot 90% or better on the Skills Test. Next is "Graduate" for those who shot between 70 and 90% on the test. And finally, "Certificate of Achievement" is for those who shot less than 70%. Please don't think that if you receive a "Certificate of Achievement" that you have somehow flunked the course. That is simply not the case. In fact, it is often the recipient of the Certificate of Achievement who has shown the greatest improvement over the last four days. So, regardless of which certificate you receive congratulations on a job well done.

I would like to personally hand out the Distinguished Certificate certificates.

<Say "Distinguished Graduate" each time>

- Distinguished Graduate...David Jones
- Distinguished Graduate...Mike Smith
- Distinguished Graduate...Roger Adams

At this point, the staff will hand out the remainder of the certificates. Once you have your certificate, please stay seated because we have a couple of final announcements.

<Staff hands out certificates>

For those of you with rental guns, program guns, or other school gear, we will be collecting them here on the range as soon as we dismiss the class.

Everybody please step up to the dry practice line so we can clear you out one last time.

<Once students are facing staff>

Thank you again for training with us. We look forward to seeing you back at Front Sight very soon. Until next time we meet, stay in Condition Yellow.