

Take A.I.M. and Prepare To Win Dynamic Encounters

By Fred Leland

I just had the honor of working together with a great group of cops (over 1,000 plus their families) at the [FBI National Academy Associates 75TH Annual Training Conference here in Boston](#). The New England Chapter presented this conference which was chaired by Deputy Chief William Brooks of Wellesley P.D. and approximately 50 committee members.

The annual training conference had 14 separate training sessions throughout the 4 days. In this post I will discuss the **Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted** presented by **Charles E. Miller**, Coordinator, FBI Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted Program, Criminal Justice Information Services Division which was Sponsored by the **Peace Officer Safety Institute, Center for the Study of Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted**.

This was a great presentation that discussed three key ongoing studies conducted by the Department of Justice and the FBI from 1992 through 2006.

- Killed in the Line of Duty
- In the Line of Fire: Violence Against Law Enforcement
- Violent Encounters:

Numerous lessons all cops could use in preparing themselves for the streets are in these studies. Examining the various components of the **deadly mix of officers, offenders, and the circumstances** that bring them together may offer the key to reducing the number of line-of-duty attacks. I know you're thinking...Yes I have heard this all before but my question is what are YOU doing to apply the lessons? What are you doing to condition yourself for the rare event when someone attempts to assault or kill you on the street? Are you prepared? Mentally and physically? Do you understand that it's not only about you? Do understand that the bad guy does have something to say about it? Do you understand that the environment and climate of the situation has something to do with the outcome as well? Do you understand that your approach and positioning you choose can have a huge impact on the outcome? Do you understand that your attitude and level of awareness have a huge impact on the outcome of any encounter? Are you complacent? Are you prepared? Are you ready to deal with a violent encounter? Have you conditioned your physical abilities, defensive tactics, firearms skills, social skills, tactical skills and your ability to make **critical decisions under pressure?**

The ancient strategist Sun Tzu said: "Know yourself and know your enemy. You will be safe in every battle. You may know yourself but not know the enemy. You will then lose one battle for every one you win. You may not know yourself or the enemy. You will then lose every battle."

To be prepared we must know numerous things about all types of encounters. Then we must be able to take what we KNOW and APPLY that knowledge to a given set of rapidly changing, evolving circumstances. The circumstances we

find ourselves in are always different. The date is different. The time is different. Who we are dealing with is different or if it's the same subject both his and your attitude will be different. To prepare it takes hard work and dedication to win on the street.

To ready yourself Chuck Miller provided a small brochure Titled TAKE A.I.M. which is a technique designed to help you mentally prepare to survive a deadly encounter.

Awareness

- I know that I can be assaulted at anytime by anyone.
- I will remain constantly aware.
- I will never become complacent.
- I am responsible for my own safety.

Image

- I will project a neat, clean and professional image.
- I will maintain good physical conditioning. ****(AND mental conditioning)*
- I will never drop my guard.
- I will convey that I am alert, prepared, and a formidable opponent.

Mindset

- I will take my training seriously.
- I will adhere to safety procedures.
- I will properly search and handcuff.
- I will use the appropriate amount of force.
- I will refuse to quit no matter what.

Why I take A.I.M.

- I may not be projecting the image I think I am projecting.
- I always hope for the best, but I must be prepared for the worst.
- I will protect myself, the citizens, and the community I serve.
- I must survive to go home to my loved ones.

Yearly, more than 50,000 law enforcement officers are assaulted in the United States.

Heed these lessons and prepare by thinking about them and applying them daily before and while you are out on the street. And always remember to **adapt** as necessary.

Stay Oriented!

Fred