Firearms Skills: Saving More Than One Life
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CM107-45
February 13, 2013
I. Thesis: Those who are preparing for a career in law enforcement need to have firearms skills to be successful in their chosen field.

II. Accuracy when shooting is essential for police officers.
   a. Handgun skills include developing accuracy, practice, and target background.
   b. Inaccurate shooting can lead to serious injuries to bystanders and property.
   c. Officers must also consider how a shot might ricochet.

III. Police officers need to decrease their stress levels.
   a. The more stressed out the police officer is, the more likely he or she is to over react in tense situations.
   b. Managing stress allows officers to better deal with intense situations and take accurate shots when necessary.

IV. Identification of target is very important to accurate shooting.
   a. Staying calm is essential when evaluating a situation.
   b. A clear line of site is necessary to visually identify the target.

V. Avoid shooting the wrong people.
   a. Shootings are always investigated.
   b. It’s difficult to shoot people and accidentally shooting the wrong person can end a PO’s career.

VI. There are consequences to shooting a person.
   a. There may be legal consequences to shooting the wrong person.
   b. The officer may deal with psychological trauma after the shooting.

VII. There are many ways to develop firearms skills.
   a. Officers should go to gun ranges often and practice their skills.
b. Officers should practice strategies for managing stress.

c. It is also important that officers who are involved in shootings follow up with departmental procedures to ensure they are mentally processing the events well.

VIII. To be a successful police officer, one needs to be skilled in using a firearm

a. Police officers need to be accurate shooters.

b. It is essential to calmly assess all situations

c. Officers need to fully consider the potential legal, physical and mental aspects of their career