

# Overview

## TACTICAL PERCEPTIONS, POLICE TRAINING

### **TACTICAL PERCEPTIONS: THE SCIENCE OF JUSTICE, IS AN EIGHT-HOUR TRAINING**

consisting of 4 Modules that cover the suite of mind sciences that explain how and when racial disparities arise even in the absence of bigotry. Tactical Perceptions engages law enforcement officers in critical thought about racial bias using a framework developed by Dr. Phillip Atiba Goff, identity traps. Identity traps refer to situations that make people more likely to allow psychological factors (such as implicit bias and threats to one's self-concept) facilitate behaviors that are inconsistent with one's values. Importantly, these behaviors are unrelated to the nature of one's character or conscious intentions. By foregrounding the power of situations in producing negative outcomes, Tactical Perceptions resists the temptation to reduce issues of racial disparities to the "hearts and minds" of police, defusing officer defensiveness without compromising the importance of race in producing criminal justice outcomes. Because it is a human tendency to attribute blame to the individual, identity traps is an especially difficult concept to learn much less teach with adroitness and confidence. This is why we developed a new model for training trainers, **Traps Academy**, that is iterative, hands on, and functions more like an introductory psychology course than a data dump.

Trainers move through the Tactical Perceptions Facilitator's Guide in small groups in order to find examples of identity traps in their own professional and personal lives. Through iterative and interactive engagement with the concepts of identity traps, trainers become better versed in the science and produce examples, exercises, and develop their own language to build into customized Tactical Perceptions Training Deck and Facilitator's Guide. Having trainers customize the training eliminates a common impediment to most police trainings: resistance to materials produced by outsiders.

### **Curriculum Development**

This training was developed by Dr. Goff, Kimberly Burke, and CPE staff in collaboration with trainers from Chicago Police Department (CPD) and New York Police Department (NYPD), selected for their experience in curriculum development and adult learning. Like use of force and other tactical trainings, we designed a curriculum that relies on scenarios, interactive exercises, and repetition to increase proficiency in identifying and preparing for identity traps in the situations most frequently faced by law enforcement. Modules were field tested in both departments throughout the curriculum development stage. We conducted a full pilot of

the training with participation from trainers and command staff from both NYPD and CPD, representatives from the Office of Justice Diagnostic Center, and researchers from Yale's Justice Collaboratory and the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

### **Measuring Success**

CPE's Tactical Perceptions teaches techniques that can disrupt cognitive and affective processes that create vulnerabilities to negative outcomes. This should lead to improved performance and our evaluations will reflect that.

In partnership with the Urban Institute, CPE designed a pre-post assessment that:

- Evaluates whether participants achieved the learning goals of the Tactical Perceptions training.
- Assesses participants' intent to apply the strategies outlined in the training to help them avoid falling into Fast and Slow Traps (while on duty),
- Evaluates the effectiveness of the facilitation of the training to foster continued development

### **Roll Out & Peer Exchanges**

Prior to department-wide roll out in each site, CPE coordinates a 2-3 day peer exchange to observe and evaluate the instruction of Tactical Perception in each department. Police trainers from Chicago Police Department and other NI agencies participate in these exchanges to provide insights from their own experiences and take away best practices from each site. Highlights and lessons learned are shared across sites using the PJ Trainers listserv to facilitate the continued evolution of the training and additional resources for training teams.