

"HOW TO TRAIN AN ARMY"

AFTER ACTION REPORT (AAR), ISRAELI DEFENSE FORCE (IDF) CLOSE COMBAT INSTRUCTOR COURSE

BOTTOM LINE UP FRONT (BLUF):

An instructor trained in neural-based training design implements those principles to reduce required training time to achieve superior student results. A 5-day course was accomplished in 3 1/2 days with the students achieving superior results on established standards.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT:

INSTRUCTOR BACKGROUND:

"S" is an Active Reservist in the Israeli Defense Force. His duties have included Swimming Coach, Performance Enhancement Coach, Knife Combatives Instructor and Krav Maga Instructor. He worked for the IDF Naval Commandos, the Israeli SEAL unit, and also trains other Special Operations units within the small IDF-SOF community in performance enhancement, mental/soft skills, knife and empty hand combatives. Other training responsibilities include training instructors for the mandatory IDF Basic Training (Israel has universal conscription). He has a MA in Exercise and Sports Psychology. He is an internationally ranked instructor in the Filipino Combat Systems (FCS Kali).

Among the personal attributes that contribute to his excellence as an instructor are:

- Curiosity
- Sense of humor
- Intelligence
- Mental toughness/resilience
- Pragmatism
- Courage
- Moral and ethical
- Compassion
- Think out of the box
- Innovative
- High tolerance for risk
- Strong ego and leaves it at the door
- Incapable of quitting.

He continues to improve his knowledge, skills and abilities as an instructor through continuous education via reading widely, as well as consultation, coaching and mentorship from his instructors.

COURSE BACKGROUND:

Self Defense Instructor Course (SDIC) is the basic Krav Maga Instructor Course in the IDF. Krav is the generic Hebrew term applied to empty hand and cold weapon (uncharged or malfunctioning weapon) skills meant to protect the soldier until the threat is neutralized and/or

the weapon is able to be deployed. All IDF Basic Trainees receive 3-hours of training using empty hands, kicks and an M16/M4 as a striking weapon to defeat a close range surprise attack, or in the event of an uncharged or malfunctioning primary weapon. Other skills taught in Basic include weapons retention, release from grabs, chokes and holds, all delivered in surprise attack.

SDIC is meant to prepare NCO's to teach the basic Krav Maga course skills to soldiers in Basic Training.

The NCO students have an average of 10 months of military experience. They have attended Basic Training as well as the Basic NCO Course. Most have no Krav Maga or firearms training beyond Basic Training Boot Camp. None, as yet, have any combat experience. They are very motivated, with good self-discipline with the desire to learn and train and are proud of their selection as IDF NCOs.

[NOTE: Most IDF advanced courses are taught by Active or Active Reservist SOF Operators, who train new NCOs to conduct the basic entry level courses.]

NEURAL-BASED PROOF OF CONCEPT PARAMETERS:

The IDF Chief of Krav Maga (head of all Krav Maga training and doctrine) established the following certification examination for students in the experimental course:

- 1) Evaluation of empty hand skills for one minute (striking padded opponent or pads)
- 2) Evaluation of weapon strikes with M4/M16 as impact weapon for one minute (striking padded opponent or pads)
- 3) Verbal instruction of ONE subject out of the SDIC manual (basic strike, kick, weapon retention technique, etc) to the examiner.

Training goals for SDIC Proof of Concept as further assigned by Chief of Krav were:

- 1) The students must react to any and all attacks.
- 2) "Cold weapon" is defined as a knife attack.
- 3) No training (in this course) on loading or clearing M16/M4 to fire.
- 4) EMPHASIZE THROUGHOUT importance of situational awareness.
- 5) Students must be able to perform and teach the material, both with safety equipment (pads, padded gear) and WITHOUT safety gear (field gear only).

Original Training Schedule

Preset course schedule					
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
8:30 – 10:00		Weapon strikes 1: Ready stance, weapon strikes	Defense from a knife attack	Exam training preparation	Exams
10:00-10:30	Report and registration	Break	Break	Break	Break
10:30-12:00	11:30-12:00 base designated course CO Base orientation and procedures	Weapon strikes 2: striking 360°	Continue knife attacks and assign participants personal training manuals	Exams	Exams
12:00-13:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch

13:00-14:30	13:00 -14:00 Lecture 1: intro to Krav	Weapon retention single attacker	13:00-14:00 Lecture 2: instruction skills	Exams	Base departing procedures time
14:30-15:00	14:00-15:30 Empty hand 1: ready stance and empty hand strikes	Break	14:00-15:30 Lecture 3: Krav safety protocols	Break	SDIC certification ceremony
15:00-17:00	15:30-16:00 break 15:30-17:00 empty hand 2: kicking, striking 360°	Release from grabs/chocks/holds	Review training session	Exams	End of SDIC schedule
17:00	End of SDIC schedule	End of SDIC schedule	End of SDIC schedule	End of SDIC schedule	

Neural-Based/Accelerated Training Schedule

Actual course schedule					
	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
8:30 – 10:00		Weapon strikes 1: Ready stance, weapon strikes,	Situational awareness training, basic visual training Defense from a knife attack	Exam training preparation	Base departing procedures time
10:00-10:30	Report and registration	Break	Break	Break	SDIC certification ceremony
10:30-12:00	11:30-12:00 base designated course CO Base orientation and procedures. assign participants personal training manuals	Weapon strikes 2: striking 360° Multiple attackers	knife attacks striking 360°, multiple attackers,	10:30-10:45 SDIC CO introduction and SDIC values. 10:45-11:00 mental state prep for exam 11:00-12:00 Exams	End of SDIC schedule
12:00-13:00	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	
13:00-14:30	13:00 -14:00 Lecture 1: a. importance of Self - defense at 02-03 level. b. Obstacles training SD at 02-03 bootcamp and solutions. c. Situational awareness. d. Predator/prey mindset.	Weapon retention single attacker, Multiple attackers	13:00-14:00 Lecture 2: Krav safety protocols 14:00-15:30 Lecture 3: a. Video review and debrief of attacks against IDF personal. b. Instruction skills c. design	Exams	
14:30-15:00	14:00-15:30 Empty hand 1: ready stance, empty hand strikes, striking 360°	Break		End of SDIC schedule	
	15:30-16:00 break				

15:00-17:00	15:30-17:00 empty hand 2: kicking, multiple attackers, Kicking while down	Release from grabs/chocks/holds	Exam training preparation and individual skills' training		
17:00	End of SDIC schedule	End of SDIC schedule	End of SDIC schedule		

TAKEAWAYS

- The training protocol enabled instruction of ALL required material and additional material in 3.5 days rather than 5.
- Safety instruction embedded within training rather than as a separate block enabled instructors to verbalize and enact all safety procedures immediately.
- All students were exposed to non-verbal, pre-conscious training in emotional and mental state management throughout the class and were able to perform exceptionally in the designed stress-inducing scenarios.
- 46 out of 47 students passed the final examination.
- Subjective and objective measurements indicate that the students performed at an exceptional level after this training.
- Quote from the Commanding Officer responsible for this block of training: "Best course we have ever had."

SUMMARY

Neural-based training design by skilled designer-instructors results in dramatic reductions of training time AND improved student performance.