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Improving the Use of Quality Circles in Police Departments

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Scope and methodology

Introduction

This report examines the practical issues that police departments face when deciding about the adoption, design, and implementation of quality circle programs. The report discusses the major issues involved, the conditions that appear to be associated with successful implementation of such programs, and the impacts these programs have had thus far in police departments.

The information currently available on police quality circle efforts and similar police management innovations has rarely been examined from the standpoint of its effectiveness in motivating police personnel to improve agency performance and productivity. Texts on police administration consider motivational issues but often only indirectly (e.g., within the context of leadership styles, personnel management practices, and the like).[1] What is more important, consideration of these issues has often emphasized negative incentives (such as internal inspection procedures and disciplinary actions) rather than positive motivators for police personnel.

This report focuses on one particular "positive" motivational approach: quality circles. Quality circles constitute one of the most promising motivational techniques now being tried by police departments in the United States. The technique also represents a substantial departure from traditional police practices.[2]

What are quality circles?

Quality circles employ a participatory approach to problem solving--an approach in which small groups of employees, primarily nonmanagement personnel from the same work unit, meet regularly to identify, analyze, and recommend solutions to problems relating to their work unit.[3] Quality

circles have received much publicity in recent years because of the apparent success of the Japanese in applying quality circle concepts to the workplace. Many industrial firms in the United States began to apply the quality circle concept in the late 1970's. Since about 1978, a number of local governments have also begun to experiment with quality circles.

Methodology

The main objective of our work has been to identify and illuminate key issues that could help police departments use quality circles more effectively. To do this, we took the following steps during 1983 and 1984:

1. A review of the literature on quality circles and participative management, particularly as it pertains to governments and police departments. Unfortunately, although such literature is widely available on applications to the private sector, there are few reports on quality circle activities in government, and there is very little material specifically related to police departments. (See the bibliography.)

2. A mail survey of police departments in all cities with populations of 50,000 or more and in all counties with populations of 100,000 or more. The survey identified the degree to which police departments use a variety of motivational approaches (including quality circles). It also provided candidates for more indepth examination. The survey was conducted for The Urban Institute (UI) by the International City Management Association (ICMA), which received a total of 300 usable responses (211 from cities and 89 from counties), for a 37-percent response rate.

3. Telephone interviews with department personnel responsible for quality circles and related programs to improve employee participation in 13 police departments. Each of these interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes to an hour.

4. Review of materials provided by many police departments in response to the ICMA-UI survey and our telephone interviews.

5. Onsite fieldwork concerning quality circles in four locations: Dallas, Texas; Orlando, Florida; Mesa, Arizona; and Hampton, Virginia.

Our procedures for site visits included three major data collection efforts:

1. In-person interviews of approximately 1 hour each with police personnel at various levels of the organization to obtain their experiences and perceptions concerning the quality circle program and its pros and cons. Interviews were generally conducted with the police chief, one or more majors or assistant chiefs, several captains, several lieutenants, a few sergeants, and a small number of nonsupervisory personnel. These interviews were semistructured--while the general topics were specified in advance, the detailed questions were not.

2. A self-administered questionnaire for all police department personnel who had participated in the quality circle program and a random sample of police personnel who had not participated in the program. These surveys usually covered nonsupervisory employees plus a few sergeants (who were included either because they were circle leaders or because they had been promoted since the time of their membership in a circle).

3. An examination of available documents and data regarding the police department's quality circle program (including such items as minutes and attendance figures for quality circle meetings) and information, when available, on performance indicators for the department for periods before and after implementation of the program.

It is difficult to provide definitive evidence on the impacts of a quality circle program. Inevitably, many other changes will take place in the department after implementation of the quality circles--changes that can also affect performance. Nevertheless, we were able to obtain

some indications of program impacts from department performance data and from the in-person interviews and self-administered surveys. Quality circle participants were asked in both the interviews and the self-administered questionnaire about the level of, and changes in, service quality, efficiency, morale, and interpersonal relationships for their work groups since the quality circle program was implemented. Similar questions were asked of a sample of nonparticipants. We also asked quality circle participants for their judgments on the specific effects of the quality circles and for particular examples of work changes that resulted from the circle. And we reviewed available data on agency performance and the performance impacts of specific changes and innovations triggered by the quality circles.

These results provided indications of the likely outcomes of police quality circle efforts, as well as considerable information about specific ways to better apply quality circles and similar employee participation programs in police departments.

Chapter 2

The use of quality circles by police departments

Quality circles are currently being used by many public and private sector organizations in the United States. Of the 300 police departments responding to the ICMA-UI mail survey, 48 (16 percent) reported having used quality circles sometime over the previous 3 years. However, our telephone interviews with some of these departments indicated that this percentage is probably exaggerated. Several of the reported "quality circle" programs did not exhibit enough of the characteristics of quality circles noted earlier to qualify as circles in the usual sense. (Many programs were actually some form of committee.)

Quality circles are not currently one of the most popular motivational techniques being used by police departments. Exhibit 1 presents the reported use of various motivational programs by the 1984 ICMA-UI survey respondents. Quality circles appear to be catching on in police departments. The great majority (82 percent) of the police quality circle efforts reported in our survey had begun in 1980 or thereafter, with almost half having started in 1983. Only two departments reported having terminated their quality circle programs.

How do quality circles work?

As noted previously, quality circles usually involve small groups of workers from the same work unit (typically between 6 and 12 persons) who voluntarily and regularly meet to identify, analyze, and recommend solutions to problems relating to their work unit.

A quality circle is typically composed of nonsupervisory employees and a circle leader, who is usually the first-line supervisor for the work unit (for instance, a patrol sergeant or communications supervisor). However, some other person, such as another member of the work unit, can

Exhibit 1

Reported use of motivational programs by police agencies in the United States, 1981–84 (N=300)

Program	Number	Percentage reporting use of the program
Task forces/special problem-solving teams	185	62
Educational incentives	160	53
Generalist officers	142	47
Management by objectives	141	47
Labor-management committees	112	37
Formal job rotation programs	92	31
Miscellaneous formal programs to increase employee participation	87	29
Suggestion awards	77	26
Career development programs	76	25
Attendance incentives	74	25
Pay-for-performance plans	72	24
Safety awards	63	21
Neighborhood team policing	49	16
Quality circles	48	16
Exceptional service awards	22	7

(continued)

(Exhibit 1 continued)

Reported use of motivational programs by police agencies in the United States, 1981–84 (N=300)

Public safety officers	15	5
Other programs	36	12

Source: These findings are from a mail survey conducted by the International City Management Association in early 1984. It covered police agencies in cities with populations of 50,000 or more and counties with populations of 100,000 or more.

be the leader. Circle members receive considerable training, particularly in techniques for group interaction and problem solving. A quality circle "facilitator," chosen by the department from outside the work unit, provides the training, helps the circle get under way, and provides continuing help and guidance to the circle on any problems it may encounter. The facilitator helps the circle leader ensure that the circle remains focused on the problem at hand and develops feasible solutions. The facilitator also acts as liaison between the circle and other units when the circle needs information, assistance, or cooperation from organizational units external to its own area. The circle is allowed to select its own problems for study.

Quality circle programs also usually have an overall "coordinator" who oversees the operation of all the circles and is responsible for training facilitators and circle leaders. (In some police departments, the coordinator serves in the dual role of facilitator and coordinator.) In addition, quality circle programs may have a "steering committee" that sets the policy and goals for the program and may select the coordinator and facilitators. Usually the steering committee consists of upper level management personnel from the department and, in local governments where there is a citywide quality circle program, from the chief administrator's office.

Although there is no consensus on the purpose of quality circles, objectives usually include the improvement of services provided by the members or work unit, working conditions, worker morale and/or communication within the organization, and the personal development of circle members.

Quality circles typically operate in the following manner. Members are first given training in group interaction and problem-solving techniques. The group then meets weekly to choose the problems they want to work on, to analyze them, and to develop solutions to those problems. They generally meet for an hour during working hours at a location near the worksite. The circle leader conducts the meeting and guides the circle through the problem-solving phase. Another circle member records the minutes. The product of

this process is a formal presentation of the circle's recommendation to department management, for example, the police chief and perhaps his management team. All circle members participate in the briefing, during which they explain their proposed solution, how they arrived at it, and its estimated cost. If they receive approval of their proposal (and it is within their expertise), they may help to implement the idea. The circle then goes on to examine another problem.

The following paragraphs briefly outline several police quality circle programs which illustrate some variations on the basic procedures described above.

Orlando, Florida, Police Department.[4] Orlando's 640-person police department initiated quality circles in December 1981 on the recommendation of the Orlando Crime Study Commission, a special body charged with investigating department morale and efficiency. As of early 1984, the department had had five quality circles: three in patrol, one in the airport security unit, and one in its communications division, but only the communications circle was still functioning. About 70 police employees (11 percent of the department) had been members of quality circles at one time or another. The police department was the only agency in the city of Orlando to use quality circles.

Three persons have served as facilitators, all of them sworn officers--two sergeants and (most recently) a patrolman. All circle leaders were volunteers--generally sergeants or, where relevant, civilian supervisors. However, in the long-lived communications circle, two line employees ultimately took over as circle leaders from the supervisor. Most other members of Orlando's police quality circles were line personnel, and all were volunteers.

For the patrol circles, all members of a given circle were drawn from the same shift. However, because the communications and airport security divisions were small, the circles in those units included members from all three shifts.

Scheduling proved very difficult for the multishift circles, and attendance was often a problem. All circles attempted to meet during working hours; circle members who had to come to meetings when they were off duty received overtime pay or compensatory time.

The circles generally presented their suggestions directly to the police chief or, in a few cases, to the appropriate bureau commander. All decisionmakers in the chain of command below the chief (or bureau commander) were present for the circle's presentation to expedite the decisionmaking process. Circle members were rewarded both by the opportunity to present their views directly to the chief and by letters of commendation from the chief. One circle received coverage from the city's employee newspaper. Initially there was no steering group for the department's quality circle effort, but plans were subsequently made to implement a system of facilitator committees.

Dallas, Texas, Police Department.[5] Dallas has probably the most extensive police department quality circle effort of any city. The department has about 2,550 employees. The police department has had, at one time or another, 15 to 18 quality circles. (Information about some of them is, however, sketchy.) More than 100 police employees (about 4 percent of the department) have participated in quality circles from time to time. The circles have covered a great variety of organizational units: patrol (there have been circles in all five geographical districts), detectives, traffic, dispatchers, property, records, legal services, community services, training, vehicle services, the tactical unit, and personnel.

Dallas's first police quality circle was implemented for patrol officers in the southwest district in June 1981. It involved 14 officers and was led by a sergeant. The quality circle effort in the police department was initially adopted as part of a citywide quality circle program encouraged by the city manager. However, two successive chiefs of police proved very receptive to the quality circle program. One of the current chief's written personal objectives has been the establishment of more quality circles.

For nearly 3 years, police quality circles (and all other quality circles in the city) were overseen by a full-time civilian facilitator from the city's central office of budget and research. In early 1984, the department established a facilitator of its own--a lieutenant (who is also in charge of the personnel division). Circle leaders have generally been sergeants or--in a few cases--civilian supervisors. In some instances (e.g., the records circle), the circle leader was a uniformed officer (a sergeant) while the circle members were largely civilians. Most circle leaders were appointed by higher level management. Regular members in most of the early quality circles were volunteers. In recent years, however, circle members have often been recruited by the circle leader. A "recruit" has to attend three meetings; after that the person is "free" to choose whether or not to participate further. Most circle members have been police officers, corporals, or civilians, although in a few cases sergeants have participated as regular members.

To train circle leaders and members, the facilitator used a commercial quality circle training package that was, to some extent, adapted to the needs of municipal quality circles. All circles--with one exception--drew their members from a single shift to avoid scheduling problems. (Shift assignments are permanent in Dallas.) In the one circle that made an effort to include persons from several shifts, the accompanying problems led to the demise of the circle. In general, meetings were held during working hours, if possible at times when the workload was smallest (e.g., at 4 a.m. or early Sunday morning).

Quality circle recommendations in the Dallas Police Department were not presented directly to the chief or assistant chiefs by the circles, despite urging by the facilitator. Instead, the circles respected the chain of command, forwarding their recommendations, in the form of a memo, to the next person in the chain. There was no formal system of rewards or recognition for circle members.

In general, although the Dallas Police Department has had a very extensive quality circle effort, the program has had little coordination or control either within the department

or from the city's facilitator. In some cases, police circles have operated with little or no involvement on the part of the facilitator--indeed, even without his knowledge. A citywide quality circle steering committee exists, but it has been inactive in recent years.

Mesa, Arizona, Police Department.[6] This department initiated quality circles in late 1982 in response to the urging of a city productivity task force and the interest of a very "participative" chief. The department's four quality circles were part of a citywide quality circle effort. The Mesa Police Department has 370 employees, about 25 of whom have been involved with the quality circles (7 percent of the department). As of April 1984, circles were operating in the community relations (crime prevention), communications, records, and patrol units.

Two people have shared the role of facilitator: a person from outside the government (a psychiatric social worker who also was a facilitator for circles in other city departments) and the department's director of planning and research. Circle leaders have been sergeants or civilian supervisory personnel. Circle members have been drawn from civilian and sworn line personnel; one circle involved only sworn personnel, two were all civilian (although one of these had a sworn leader), and one included sworn and civilian employees. The community relations circle included all members of the crime prevention unit.

Mesa used essentially the same package of training materials that Dallas used--materials adapted to some extent to the local government context. Three of the four circles involved employees on shift work. Because of the small size of the units involved (and because of a desire to enhance communication), members were drawn from all shifts. Serious scheduling problems resulted in many cases.

Suggestions developed by the department's quality circles have been presented directly to the chief. One such suggestion--a proposal to consolidate several pamphlets on crime prevention--saved about $3,000, and the members of the relevant quality circle were nominated to receive awards under the city's suggestion award program.

Hayward, California, Police Department.[7] Hayward's 219-person police department had quality circles covering investigations and crime prevention. Quality circles were first introduced for detectives in the investigations unit in 1983 as part of a citywide pilot program on quality circles. Facilitators were volunteers and did not facilitate circles in their own department. Thus, the facilitators for police department quality circles were civilians. All circle members in Hayward were volunteers; a prerequisite for the formation of a circle was that there be at least three volunteers serving under the same supervisor.

Fort Collins, Colorado, Police Department.[8] There were two quality circles in this department of 123 civilian and uniformed employees. The circles were in the dispatching and records units and covered about 25 persons (mostly civilians)--about 20 percent of the department. The effort began in late 1982 as part of a citywide quality circle program.

In Fort Collins, each facilitator handled only one quality circle. The facilitator for the communications circle was a civilian from the finance department. However, the facilitator for the records circle was a supervisor from within the police department and was, in fact, also the leader of the communications (dispatcher) circle. The other circle leader was also a civilian supervisor. All circle members were volunteers.

Major circle suggestions have been presented directly to the chief or the relevant division commander, although less important suggestions have not gone to that level. The department decided that there was no need to apply quality circles to patrol personnel because the department was already using neighborhood team policing (a participative mechanism similar to semiautonomous work groups in industry).

Los Angeles, California, Police Department.[9] Los Angeles established several quality circles in its Wilshire Area police station in January 1982. The circles emerged from the recommendations of a departmentwide human re-

sources development committee, which included the commanding officer of the Wilshire station and one of his sergeants.

All circles were in the patrol division. One involved patrol officers, one involved training officers (uniformed officers assigned to probationary personnel to provide training, guidance, and evaluation), and one consisted of all sergeants (a deviation from the usual quality circle model). Each circle was composed of six to eight members and met about once every 2 weeks. The members were recruited by the sergeant who served on the human resources development committee. Persons from all three shifts were included in each circle. The three watch commanders (all of whom were lieutenants) constituted an informal steering committee.

Among the other police departments that have reported the use of quality circles are Hampton and Virginia Beach, Virginia; Scottsdale, Arizona; and the Michigan State Police. Police departments in Largo, Florida, and Fremont California, report having tried and terminated the use of quality circles.

Other police departments reported using approaches that, although similar to the quality circle efforts already described, deviate substantially from the traditional quality circle model. For instance, the Oxnard, California, Police Department has used "quality circles" composed entirely of managers--one for sergeants, one for lieutenants. The Reading, Pennsylvania, Police Department has used standing committees of line employees and sergeants to identify and solve problems that arose in various areas--for instance, patrol operations and investigations. All participants were volunteers. However, unlike traditional quality circles, committee members were not given special training in problem-solving techniques, and no facilitator was used. Meanwhile, the sheriff's office in Pima County, Arizona, has been implementing an interlocking hierarchy of quality-of-worklife groups that bear many similarities to quality circles.

Some special characteristics of police departments

In our examination of police quality circles, we identified a number of police department characteristics that have important implications for the use of quality circles, including the following:

- The presence of different shifts or watches (particularly for field operations and for communications), changing work hours, geographical dispersion of field officers, and unpredictable service demands. These factors complicate the scheduling of circle meetings and can lead to attendance problems. It is especially difficult to schedule circle meetings that involve shift personnel when shifts rotate.

- The hierarchical paramilitary (rank) structure. Such a structure tends to encourage a more authoritarian management style, whereas quality circles involve a form of participative management. In some cases, people have actually been ordered to participate in circles.

- The action orientation of police officers and their desire for quick results. This orientation tends to make some officers impatient if circle activities involve "research" and "paper" analysis, particularly when these activities extend over many weeks or months.

- Frequent and widespread personnel turnovers, especially when sworn personnel are transferred from one work unit to another. This can complicate efforts to maintain continuity in circle membership for any substantial length of time.

Issues in applying quality circles to police departments

Up to now, there has been relatively little experience with the use of quality circles for police employees, most of it recent. In examining many of these efforts, we identified a number of basic issues that individual police departments should address when considering the use of quality circles.

Exhibit 2 lists these issues. Each is discussed in the following chapters.

Although we offer recommendations on each issue, these recommendations should be viewed as preliminary. Most programs have not been operating long enough for the long-term implications to have become clear.

Exhibit 2

Quality circle issues

1. What types of problems should be addressed by police quality circles?

2. How can attendance be maintained?

3. How can middle-management fears be allayed?

4. What should be the involvement of other (nonsupervisory) members of the work unit who are not in the quality circles?

5. What should be the role of the quality circle facilitator?

6. What training is needed for quality circle participants?

7. Should participation in quality circles be completely voluntary?

8. How should recognition of circle members be provided?

9. What tracking of the impacts of quality circles should be done?

10. To what extent does the management style of police departments affect successful implementation of quality circles?

11. How long should individual circles be expected to last?

12. What have been the effects of police department quality circles?

13. Should other approaches to problem-solving workgroups be encouraged?

Issue one: What types of problems should be addressed by police quality circles?

We found that quality circles focused much of their attention on problems associated with the quality of the working environment, rather than on the quality, effectiveness, or efficiency of the services delivered. Examples include such problems as office lighting and appearance, washroom deficiencies, advance posting of monthly detail rosters, relocation of shotgun lockers, improved security for police substations, and the need for better parking facilities near central headquarters. The relatively few problems relating to service delivery issues tended to be minor and indirect in their impacts on service quality. Examples include improvements in troublesome patrol vehicle spotlights, a review of the equipment carried in the trunks of patrol cars, and preparation of crime information books to give new or temporary officers a quick and up-to-date introduction concerning the problems of a given beat.

A few police quality circles have tackled issues with potentially important ramifications for police service delivery. Examples include better prioritization of calls for service (Dallas), alterations in shift staffing and manpower allocation policies (Orlando airport security unit), policies to reduce the number of legitimate citizen complaints (Dallas communications division), and procedures designed to provide better service to citizens using the customer service desk (Dallas' property and evidence division).

Although the topics addressed often appear to be relatively narrow in scope, they were usually viewed as important by the quality circle participants. The problems with the working environment often represented minor irritants and inconveniences which had a significant cumulative effect on line personnel (who had to face them every day) but which were routinely ignored by management personnel. Many of the quality circle participants we interviewed--and some

middle-level managers--noted that such problems would probably never have been addressed without the quality circle.

Some top police department officials expressed considerable concern, however, that the quality circles were not tackling important problems--problems that could lead to substantial improvements in work performance. Although most upper level officials agreed that work environment issues were important to line personnel and should be tackled, the officials argued that the circles should also occasionally address problems with a potentially significant impact on service.

Several nonparticipating line personnel responding to our surveys in Orlando and Dallas also indicated dissatisfaction or disillusionment with the scope of the problems addressed by the quality circles. And in one city, a substantial number of people who had dropped out of the circles gave as the major reason the insignificance of the problems addressed by their circles.

A basic tenet of the quality circle concept is that circle participants choose for themselves the problems they wish to work on. This signals to circle members the responsibility, respect, and freedom accorded them by management and enhances their feeling of "ownership" for the effort and for the solutions the circle proposes. The dilemma here is that if upper management (or, for that matter, any level of management) suggests topics for the circle, the circle members may view such suggestions as mandates; as a result, the morale and interest of quality circle members may be undermined. (This situation appears to have developed in a patrol circle at one of the sites we examined. The circle members became unhappy with the authoritarian tone of their management; subsequently attendance fell off, and the circle was abandoned.)

Quality circle concepts generally do not, in principle, restrict the nature of the problems a circle can choose to address. Instead, we found that the following three factors contributed to the limited scope of the problems selected by circles:

1. Emphasis on beginning each circle with easily solved problems. The circle facilitators generally encouraged the circles to focus on easy-to-resolve problems in their initial problem selection. For example, the selection criteria used by quality circles in Dallas emphasized the following characteristics: (a) the problem can be solved with modest amounts of resources, (b) the problems do not require highly complex or technical solutions, (c) the problem can be solved in a relatively short time, and (d) the solutions can be approved and implemented by the team leader (or, at most, one level above the team leader). In Orlando, although the formal training in problem selection did not preclude the selection of more important or complex problems, quality circle facilitators usually tried to steer the circles at first toward the simpler, more readily solved issues.

2. Limited circle duration. The rather limited lifespan of many police quality circles (see Issue 11) often militated against the selection of more substantive problems. Problems addressing service delivery issues are often quite complex, requiring considerable time and analysis. The 6- to 8-month lifespan of many police quality circles militates against the selection of more complex problems. In a number of cases, the circles did not last long enough to get around to dealing with the more important and difficult issues.

3. Difficulty of coordinating with other organizational units. The more significant problems involving service delivery often affect more units than those represented in the quality circles and require approval by several echelons. Thus, strategies to address crime control problems may affect or involve other watches and other geographic patrol districts. They may also require the assistance of, or changes involving, units other than their own. For example, some changes that an investigative circle might recommend could involve patrol units. As noted previously, quality circles in Dallas were urged to avoid tackling issues that involved the approval of anyone other than the next level or two of supervision. Where police quality circles in Dallas attempted to address problems that involved other units, the efforts were often frustrated by

delays and a lack of cooperation from the management of those other units. To avoid such problems while nevertheless addressing patrol issues of larger scope, Dallas' southwest patrol quality circle combined forces with the central division quality circle to tackle mutual problems.

Patrol quality circles in Orlando addressed such operational issues as improving the spotlights used on patrol vehicles, improving flashlights, and selecting the emergency equipment carried in the trunks of patrol cars. The recommendations, when implemented, affected all patrol units, not merely those whose members participated in the circles. As a central part of their problem-solving effort, these circles surveyed all patrol officers on these issues and used the survey results in developing their recommendations. This may well have helped allay the concerns of other units. In contrast, the circles in Dallas were generally precluded from addressing issues that affected other units within the department. Suggestions emerging from the quality circles in Dallas generally addressed issues involving one geographic sector only; rarely were the solutions applicable to, or enacted by, other units.

How important is the scope of the problems addressed, and their potential for improving productivity? The answer depends on management's goals in establishing the quality circle effort. If the emphasis is on improving job satisfaction and morale rather than on improving productivity, the significance of the problems addressed by the circles will be less important.

Even if the emphasis is on improving morale and job satisfaction, however, departments should be cautious in dismissing the importance of having quality circles address significant problems involving service delivery issues. Single-minded emphasis on minor issues relating to the quality of the work environment can undermine the credibility of the quality circle effort. We found in our interviews and surveys of quality circle participants and nonparticipants alike, managers and nonmanagers, that the relatively limited scope of the problems addressed by quality circles is often used as a reason to discount the im-

portance of quality circle efforts. Thus, if the quality circles do not explicitly examine work performance improvements at least occasionally, the long-term viability of the circles may be undermined.

Recommendation: The long-term viability of quality circles is likely to be endangered if the circles are not able, at least occasionally, to address important service delivery problems. To help encourage such efforts, we suggest the following:

- Quality circle training should include material illustrating how the circle could tackle significant service delivery problems.

- Priority-setting procedures used in connection with the selection of quality circle topics should be altered so that important service delivery problems are not automatically pushed to the bottom of the list. Although a few easy problems should probably be attempted first, important service delivery issues should be allowed early in the circles' deliberations. The strategy used in Orlando (e.g., to consider the frequency and scope of the problem as an important positive factor in its selection) appears to be a useful approach.

- Quality circles should not be precluded from dealing with other shifts or other organizational units. This process might be facilitated by giving the circle leader explicit power to bypass the chain of command in consulting with other units (as was sometimes done in Dallas) or, perhaps, by using the facilitator or a steering committee to smooth the way and provide the necessary contacts and coordination needed to gain cooperation.

- The facilitator might be encouraged to gently guide a quality circle towards important service delivery problems. For instance, the circle facilitator could indicate to circles during the training process that the problems they tackle can and should include important service delivery problems facing the unit.

- Management could also tactfully suggest to the quality circle some service delivery issues that might be addressed. The suggestion should be carefully phrased to avoid putting pressure on circle members. In all cases, the final responsibility for selection of a problem should rest with the circle members.

- Facilitators should encourage quality circles to use techniques such as surveys to get comments from all persons who might be affected by a problem that the circle is examining. This practice will encourage quality circles to examine important problems that extend beyond their own workgroups. It will also increase the likelihood that the circle will consider all aspects of the problem and that the circle's findings and recommendations will be acceptable to, and supported by, the other affected personnel.

Chapter 4

Issue two: How can attendance be maintained?

A number of police quality circles, especially those involving patrol personnel, have been plagued by high absenteeism (sometimes as high as 40 percent). Such problems were common when a department tried to include persons from all watches as members of the circle. Although the goal of maximizing the circle's representativeness was commendable, it often led to serious scheduling problems. Thus many departments have tried to rely on circles with membership drawn from single watches. (For example, in Dallas each police circle consists of persons from the same watch.) This strategy is not always feasible, however, especially in small units which have too few volunteers from a single watch to staff a circle. In such cases, the problem of multiwatch scheduling has been somewhat alleviated by scheduling meetings to overlap two watches and by compensating officers who must participate during their off-duty hours. Nevertheless, absenteeism remains a problem.

The need to assemble field officers periodically for circle meetings poses another problem. Taking them off field duty can be viewed by other officers or by the public as diminishing field coverage and the level of service. A few circles have tried to schedule meetings on off-duty hours, but even with compensatory time off or overtime pay, attendance has been a problem for these circles. And some participants became restive when they thought too much time was taken for training circle members, with perhaps several weeks passing before the circle began tackling problems.

We also observed that after a period of intense activity in the months immediately after being established, circles frequently eased off or became dormant. The energy that had marked the initial few months of the circle was gone, and the frequency of circle meetings decreased.

Recommendation: For units with multiple shifts, circle members may have to be drawn from one shift only. For small units, probably no more than two shifts should be in-

cluded. The meeting time should be scheduled formally as part of the watch, perhaps as part of formal training time (as was done in Mesa, Arizona).

Circles should begin to work on problems as soon as possible; training should be interspersed with problem-solving efforts, rather than given all at once, to avoid causing a falloff in member interest. After the initial months of the circle, the circle leader and facilitator will need to make a special effort to maintain the group's interest and enthusiasm. They should review the particular situation to determine whether the circle can be rejuvenated or should be terminated.

Chapter 5

Issue three: How can middle-management fears be allayed?

The quality circle literature (which deals mostly with the private sector) indicates that many middle-management employees oppose quality circles because they feel threatened and bypassed by the circles. Circle procedures call for independent selection of problems, independent determination of solutions, and direct briefings of top management (i.e., to the police chief) on the circle's recommendations. As a result, middle management may be bypassed. Our examination confirms this problem to be an important one for police quality circles, although it did not yet seem to have become a major issue for the departments we examined.

Much of the threat seems to stem from the opportunity to present recommendations directly to the chief. This lends considerable stature to the circle's activities, assures a high-level audience for the circle's recommendations, and can be a major recognition and morale-building factor for circle members.

We found that police departments using quality circles were informally experimenting with several ways to reduce the threat to, and hostility of, middle management. These included the following:

- The quality circle leader, normally a sergeant, informally kept his lieutenant and captain informed about the circle's activities. (This approach was used most frequently.)

- One circle (in Orlando) gave an advance briefing concerning its suggestions to persons in the members' own chain of command (e.g., the lieutenant and captain). This procedure appears to have worked well. The captain suggested ways the circle members could improve their presentation to the chief, ideas which the circle members endorsed.

• Many circles provided copies of minutes to supervisors in the chain of command. This practice can help keep supervisors informed of the group's activities and avoid major surprises. Most departments with quality circles require each circle to prepare minutes for each of its meetings. The minutes can be quite short, but they should contain key information such as the problems being considered by the circle, the steps taken to analyze those problems, and the circle's subsequent findings and recommendations.

An important question for all three of these procedures concerns the reactions of middle-level managers and the extent to which, if they disagree with the circle's selection of topics to examine or its subsequent recommendations, they will interfere with the process. Such problems can be reduced by properly training managers to deal with the participative process and by providing strong, explicit top-management support for the circles.

Recommendation: Police departments should take steps to reduce middle managers' natural fear of and hostility towards circles under their jurisdiction. Sending copies of minutes of circle meetings and providing advance briefings to middle-level managers in the circle's chain of command prior to briefing the chief seem appropriate. In addition, middle managers (both sworn and civilian) need training in participative management to encourage them to be constructive and resist the temptation to react negatively towards circle choices and recommendations with which they disagree. Thus, we suggest the following actions:

• Circle leaders should send minutes of all circle meetings to the middle-level managers (e.g., lieutenants and captains) in the immediate chain of command;

• The circle leader should provide informal periodic reports to the supervisor at the next level to apprise the supervisor of the projects that are being examined and their status;

• The circle should give preliminary briefings to middle managers in the chain of command before making formal presentations of circle recommendations to the chief and his

staff (but any critique by those middle managers should be constructive); and

- The program coordinator or facilitator should provide training in participative management for police middle managers (both sworn and civilian).

Chapter 6

Issue four: How should others who are not in the quality circle be involved?

Only rarely will all members of a work unit be included in a quality circle (e.g., when the work unit is very small). In units with shift work, such as field operations and communications, many persons who are not included in the circle can be affected by the circle's recommendations. And as discussed earlier, some problems that the circles examine will affect other work units in the department.

Police managers can expect that personnel not directly participating in the quality circles will tend to be highly skeptical of the circles, at least during the early years of their existence. We often received reports of some needling of circle members by nonmembers. How can these other personnel be encouraged to be more interested in and supportive of the quality circle's activities, even though they are not directly participating?

Many circles made their minutes available to others in their work units, for example, by posting them on the bulletin boards.

Survey techniques, which are usually discussed in quality circle training programs, can also be an effective way to obtain input from other personnel. Surveys can be used both to obtain suggestions about problems the circle should examine and, subsequently, to obtain comments from other personnel in work units affected by the problem the circle is examining. For instance, participants could be asked to comment on the extent and nature of the problem and to suggest solutions.

A relatively easy survey procedure is to prepare a questionnaire that is distributed to the other employees for them to fill out and return. A more time-consuming, but at times more productive, approach is to have circle members conduct personal interviews using a structured or semi-structured questionnaire. The personal interview may be practical when only a small number of persons need to be interviewed.

For instance, in Orlando, two patrol circles examining equipment issues distributed questionnaires to all police officers regarding their use of, and experience with, certain equipment (patrol car spotlights, personal flashlights, and the emergency equipment contained in the trunks of patrol cars). This information became a major resource for the circles' deliberations on future equipment needs.

Another technique--one we did not find in use--is to brief those other affected personnel about the circle's recommendations before briefing the chief. This approach would permit the other persons to make suggestions about the circle's recommendations.

Recommendations: Three steps should be undertaken to obtain inputs from other, nonsupervisory, personnel, both to increase the quality of the circles' products and to increase the degree of support from these other personnel:

1. Concise minutes of circle meetings should be provided to non-circle members in the work unit; individual copies are best, but at minimum the minutes should be posted in a readily accessible location;

2. Circles should formally survey their fellow workers both (a) to help identify problems that the circle should examine and (b) to obtain relevant information on those problems from all persons in the department affected by the problems; and

3. The briefing to the chief might, when possible, be presented first to these other affected personnel to permit them to make suggestions for modifications prior to the briefing for the chief.

Chapter 7

Issue five: What should be the role of the quality circle facilitator?

The facilitators we interviewed were of high caliber and quite successful in motivating circle members and circle leaders. We found, however, that the time the facilitator spent with circles dropped substantially a few weeks after the circle started. (In Dallas and Orlando, it was expected that the circles would operate substantially on their own after they had solved their first problem.)

In many of the quality circles, however, the extended lack of facilitator assistance (in one case, because of illness) appeared to coincide with a substantial decline in interest and activity by circle members. Hence, it appears to be important that the facilitator continue to monitor circle activity closely (even if the facilitator spends less time at circle meetings) and be available to help sustain the circles if they have difficulties or otherwise falter. (For example, one circle generated considerable controversy when it bypassed its supervisor with a memo on smoking; local personnel felt the controversy would probably not have arisen if the facilitator had been able to participate in the sessions leading up to the memo.)

Recommendations: The facilitator's role is important not simply to provide training and guidance at the beginning of a circle but also to provide continuing support. Even if the facilitators reduce their attendance at individual circle meetings as the circle matures, they should carefully monitor the activities of the circles through the minutes and periodic discussions with circle leaders. They should step in if absenteeism seems high, meetings become infrequent, the sessions appear to be slacking off in their productivity, or other problems arise. The facilitator's attention is especially important for sustaining a circle in the weeks immediately after it solves an important problem (to help the group determine what happens next), when the circle has been hard hit by transfers (especially the transfer of the circle leader), and when the circle is having difficulty coping with the attendance problems that arise from scheduling around different shifts and days off.

Quality circles are, in large part, a creation of management. Management needs to nurture the circles by making the facilitator's services available as needed.

Chapter 8

Issue six: What training is needed for quality circle participants?

Formal training on group interaction and problem-solving techniques is typically provided to quality circle members when the circle begins. In the departments we examined, training was the major item on the agenda for the first several meetings of the circles.

Several facilitators whom we interviewed reported that when they started the quality circle program, they found the available training materials insufficiently oriented to police department work. In some cases, the facilitators subsequently supplemented these materials with some they developed (e.g., materials that dealt with police service delivery rather than factory production problems).

Some facilitators and circle members also expressed concern about the long training period. Sworn personnel in particular seemed to lose interest when the training went on for several weeks before the circle turned to actual problem solving.

After the first year or so of the program, however, we found a tendency for the amount of training to taper off. Most circles periodically experienced some turnover, but new circle members did not receive the same training. (In one department, 30 percent of the quality circle participants we surveyed reported that they had received no training for the quality circle program.) As the circles matured, the circles appeared to rely less on the more diverse analytical and problem-solving tools taught in the original training. And as time passed, management tended to apply the term quality circle to a wide variety of endeavors, including regular staff meetings, task forces, and representative committees. Furthermore, new "unauthorized" quality circles (in the sense that they were established at the initiative of a single manager, with little preparation and assistance on the part of the facilitator) began to emerge. These efforts often involved little training and a less voluntary approach to the selection of members and leaders. Loose usage of the term "quality circle" some-

times raised expectations that were not fulfilled. The results appeared to weaken overall confidence in the quality circle concept.

Lack of training appears to have been a particular problem for new personnel entering the circles. Even long-time members, however, probably need refresher training periodically on the various problem-solving techniques.

Recommendations:

- Quality circle training materials should be adapted for use by police personnel, for instance, by including police-related examples and by avoiding the overly simplified approach that seems to characterize some of the readily available training materials.

- The training process should not be dragged out. Spending all the members' time in "classroom training" for several weeks dampens the enthusiasm and interest of even the most ardent supporters of quality circles. Training should be introduced periodically as the need arises and should be spliced into sessions devoted to actual problem-solving activities. For example, detailed training on data collection procedures such as surveys could be provided when the circle determines that it needs to consider such procedures.

- Formal training in group interaction and problem-solving skills should be provided for new circle members as they transfer in. Refresher training should be provided periodically (probably at least annually) for members of long-lasting circles.

Chapter 9

Issue seven: Should participation in quality circles be completely voluntary?

As originally designed, quality circles were to involve completely voluntary participation. Although we found that this principle is generally adhered to, some of the police department programs we examined did not follow it for all circles. Middle managers sometimes virtually mandated participation, especially later in the life of the quality circle program--that is, as the "second wave" of circles was established or as circles "matured" and new leaders and managers took over. In one city, the police chief included objectives for the establishment of quality circles as part of his management-by-objectives contract with the city manager. The result was increased pressure on the various bureaus to establish quality circles, frequently on orders from commanding officers. This heavy-handedness seemed to cause substantial problems. In another case, when pressure was exerted on officers to join a circle, the circle subsequently experienced attendance problems and was disbanded. In yet another instance, the existing circle leaders resigned rather than let themselves "be used." We suspect that the move toward less voluntary circles occurred, in part, because of the lack of close oversight by the quality circle facilitator.

Recommendation: An essential element of participatory management--and of quality circles--is the voluntary nature of the participation. The department's quality circle facilitators should have responsibility for ensuring the voluntary nature of the program. Special attention should be given after the first year to ensure that this principle is not compromised.

Chapter 10

Issue eight: How should recognition of circle members be provided?

Recognition of circle members and their achievements can be an important motivator of department employees, not only by encouraging the members of the quality circles but by indicating clearly to others the department's support of, and interest in, the program. The final briefing to the chief on the findings by circle members can be considered a form of recognition. Circle members who provided briefings to the chief were generally pleased by this interaction. On the whole, however, we found inadequate recognition to be something of a problem in the departments we examined.

Recognition has sometimes been provided through letters of commendation from the chief to the individual circle members, but in one case the impact was diminished because the letters were signed in such a way that it was clear that they had been prepared by the circle facilitator rather than the chief himself. The commendation was therefore perceived as being more the facilitator's view than the chief's.

One department entered a circle's cost-saving recommendation into the citywide employee suggestion system to permit circle members to receive cash awards. However, some upper level managers and even circle members did not believe this action was appropriate, and it is contrary to the usual spirit of the quality circle approach.

Given that most circle recommendations have not been aimed at major improvements in service or significant reductions in cost, the scarcity of explicit provisions for recognition is perhaps justified. Over the long run, however, assuming that circles explore more substantial improvements, more recognition will probably be needed.

Recommendation: A department should ensure that circle members receive both informal and formal recognition for their efforts. If the group has done a good job and useful recommendations are made, the chief and the chief's staff should provide appropriate recognition such as letters of

commendation. Middle managers from the circle's chain of command are also important potential sources of recognition; these managers should also be encouraged to provide recognition, if only verbally, of the group's work. If the agency tracks circle impacts (see Issue 9), the reports of the progress being made by each circle could also be an important motivating factor, especially if names of the circle members are included in the reports and the reports are widely disseminated.

Chapter 11

Issue nine: What tracking of the impacts of quality circles should be done?

This issue involves two separate questions:

1. What should be a circle's responsibility for tracking the results of its own recommendations?

2. Should the department as a whole track the results of its quality circle program?

We discuss each of these questions in turn.

To what extent should a circle track the results of its own recommendations?

Most of the police quality circles we examined did not attempt to follow up on their recommendations once they had been accepted. (An exception occurred in Orlando, where the chief requested two circles to evaluate the results of their suggestions 3 to 6 months after implementation.) Recommendations may be poorly implemented, or the results may be different from what the circle expected. For example, the Orlando department implemented its circle's recommendations regarding rechargeable flashlights but found that some of the new units were unreliable. Our interviews indicated that even though the recommendations did not achieve all the results that the circle members had expected, most police officers in the department believed the change had been a good one.

Although quality circle training materials usually discuss the necessity for project evaluation, we seldom found quality circles undertaking this task for completed projects. Nor did we find that any circles had established specific targets for the expected impacts of their recommendations.

Recommendation: We suggest that circle members be given explicit responsibility for monitoring the implementation of their recommendations for 6 months to a year, depending on the nature of the changes. The circle should examine the results and suggest midcourse corrections that might be needed or, if the recommendation turns out to have been a mistake, recommend that the changes be dropped. Circle members may be somewhat dispersed by the time their recommendations have been implemented, but it would probably be useful for the department to call the group together to review the implementation effort and results. The circle should also be asked to set targets for what it expects to accomplish by its recommendations and to suggest ways to monitor the achievement of those targets (as was done in Orlando, in a few cases). By providing feedback and by indicating mistakes or steps that the circle should have taken and that future circles should pursue, this task should also provide a learning experience, not only for the members of the given quality circle, but for other circles as well. (In one instance, it was learned only after a circle's recommendation had been implemented that the circle had not considered certain important cost factors.)

What should the department do about tracking the impacts of all its circles?

A quality circle program requires time and resources, including the time of circle members and facilitators, training materials, and secretarial help. Thus, it is legitimate for the department to investigate whether it is getting adequate value in return for these resources. We found no formal tracking of the impacts of the department's quality circle program by any of the departments. Facilitators and top management generally expressed the view that tracking or evaluation was unnecessary during the first year or two of the program, when the program should, instead, be nurtured. In a number of instances, however, we found that by the second or third year department heads and, for citywide circle programs, staff in the city manager's office were beginning to be concerned about whether the quality circle program was paying off.

Some quality circle personnel in nonpolice government agencies that have experimented with such tracking expressed concern about the extra paperwork needed for the tracking. Most of the essential information likely to be needed, however, should be available from the circle's minutes and subsequently from central administrative staff. Thus line personnel generally need not be burdened with extra paperwork.

Recommendations: To sustain a quality circle program over the long run, a department will want to determine that it is producing enough worthwhile results to justify its existence. Without periodic information that provides evidence that the program is producing useful results (whether they be improved service effectiveness, reduced costs, or improved morale), the agency will probably find it difficult to mobilize and retain support for the program, both internally and externally. Thus, we recommend that shortly after starting its quality circle program, a department begin to develop a process for obtaining information on circle-initiated efforts. This information should include the recommendations, if any, made by each quality circle; the disposition of each recommendation; the expected impacts of the individual recommendations; and, when the information becomes available, the actual impacts.

Many of a circle's initial recommendations are likely to involve primarily morale-related issues, such as the improvement of working conditions. Morale improvements are legitimate benefits for a department and, for some departments, have been the primary purpose for the program. But some evidence that morale has, in fact, improved is desirable. Such evidence could be provided by annual attitude surveys of affected employees.

To provide perspective on the program's overall value (including consideration of intangibles such as improved morale), the impacts of circle recommendations should be compared with the estimated cost of the circles. This tracking-evaluation process should be kept simple, so that it requires little additional cost. These progress reports on circle activities should be circulated throughout the

department as a stimulus to, and recognition mechanism for, circle members.

Chapter 12

Issue ten: How does the management style affect the success of quality circles?

Our findings, which are based on quite limited information, indicate that, as expected, authoritative approaches to management do not encourage quality circle membership or sustain effective quality circle participation. But it is not necessary for all, or even most, department managers to exhibit a participative style for quality circles to take root. In the cases we examined, we found that there were usually enough police officials ready and willing to try a more participative management approach for quality circles to be feasible--and viable--in those departments.

In general, the circles were introduced first in divisions that were more open and interested in a participative approach. Many of the managers in such divisions expressed the view that older, more tenured police officials tended to be more resistant to and skeptical about quality circle opportunities and thus much less supportive. It seems essential, however, that the police chief actively support the more open, participative style associated with quality circles. The chiefs of the departments with the active programs that we examined were, by and large, quite supportive of the quality circle program.

Police managers are becoming more familiar with participative management concepts. Although considerable skepticism clearly remains, management style seems to be diminishing as a major obstacle toward the introduction of quality circle programs in police departments.

Recommendations: We do not recommend the establishment of quality circles in departments or divisions where management wants to keep a tight rein on its employees. Quality circles should probably be introduced only in departments, and in divisions within those departments, where upper management and a reasonable number of middle managers are willing to experiment with increased participation, are not afraid to give additional responsibility to lower level personnel, and do not feel threatened by the possibility that recommendations made by the circles will not agree

with their own beliefs and nevertheless will be presented directly to the chief. Whenever possible, middle- and upper-level police department managers should be thoroughly exposed to participative management concepts before (or in parallel with) the introduction of quality circles, preferably through a training program.

Chapter 13

Issue eleven: How long should individual circles be expected to last?

Among the police quality circle programs we examined which had been in existence longer than a year, we seldom found individual circles that had lasted more than 6 to 12 months. In Orlando, most circles lasted only long enough to complete action on one major problem, after which they disbanded. Circles in Dallas tended to treat a great number of minor problems but still rarely lasted beyond 6 to 12 months.

There were some exceptions. The communications circle in Orlando exhibited a staying power unique among the police quality circles we have seen: it had been in continuous operation for 3 years. During that period, however, it had undergone several splits, restructurings, and changes in leadership. In Dallas' southwest police district, where the department's quality circle program originated, the initial circle went through a number of major changes while retaining at least some of its original identity (e.g., the circle leader) over a period of more than a year. Originally, the circle included only patrol officers assigned to a specific geographic sector within the southwest district. After a period of several months, the circle expanded to include representatives from all sectors in the district. (In both cases, however, all members were drawn from the same shift--the day watch.) Finally, in an effort to address problems that extended beyond the district, the southwest patrol circle merged with the quality circle for Dallas' central patrol district. The merged circles continued to address problems and suggest solutions for several months. Nevertheless, both circles have subsequently ceased operation (although other circles were later established in each of the two districts).

Our review of police quality circles has identified a number of reasons contributing to the limited lifespan of police quality circles:

• Frequent transfers of circle members, leaders, or facilitators, accompanied in many cases by the disillusionment of the remaining circle members. In some cases, circle members who were transferred were not replaced, depleting circle membership. In one instance, after the leader of a patrol circle was transferred, no further volunteers could be found to take over the leadership of the circle. Turnover of the circle leader does not, however, seal the doom of the circle. For instance, the circle in Dallas' northwest patrol district was able to survive the transfer of the circle leader who had started the circle.

• Problems in scheduling meetings of circle members. Scheduling problems contributed to the death of some quality circles in Orlando. Poor attendance was rarely cited as a difficulty in Dallas, however, perhaps because of Dallas' policy of drawing all circle members from the same shift and the relatively large sizes of the units involved (which made it easier to select circle members with compatible schedules).

• Circle "burnout". Circle leaders and facilitators in both Dallas and Orlando indicated that circles frequently "ran out of gas" and lost enthusiasm after a number of months. Circle members apparently had addressed all the issues that were of interest to them and seemed feasible, and new ideas were not forthcoming. It seems common for circles to enter a "dormant period" of several months, perhaps later to be reactivated as new problems and, in some cases, new members emerged.

• Lack of interest in the circle's specific activities. Although most dropouts from the Dallas and Orlando circles we surveyed reported transfers or personal problems as the reason, substantial minorities cited frustration over the ineffectiveness of the circle (e.g., the relative unimportance of the problems the circle tackled, especially in Dallas) or, in Orlando's communications circle, impatience with the time the circle took to resolve problems. (It took the communications circle about a year to complete work on its first problem.)

The important question is whether the limited lifespans of most police circles indicate their ineffectiveness or represent a reasonable expectation for individual police department circles. The coordinator for Dallas' citywide quality circle effort reported that the lifespan of police quality circles did not differ appreciably from the lifespan of circles in other city departments. However, the short lifespan, or, at best, the episodic existence of the police quality circles we have seen can detract from their value as a participative mechanism. An important aspect of the quality circle concept is the status of the circle as a regular, even routine, opportunity to draw on the talents of line personnel in solving work problems and in making decisions about their work. Clearly the great majority of the police quality circles we have examined have not achieved the status of an institutionalized mechanism that provides regular opportunities for increased participation.

Given the action orientation of police officers, perhaps police departments should plan for individual circles to last for relatively short periods (e.g., 6 to 12 months), while counting on replacement circles to carry on the concept (and to give many different persons in the department an opportunity to participate at least once).

Recommendations: Increased effort appears needed to encourage greater longevity and a continuing presence for police quality circles. While a lifespan of 6 to 12 months may be a fundamental fact of life for police (and perhaps all public sector) quality circles, efforts should be made to explore procedures that would contribute to lengthening their lifespans. We suggest greater participation on the part of the facilitator to maintain the circle, timely "restocking" of the circle to make up for transfers of circle members, and special efforts to maintain the continuity of the circle leadership and to ease periods of transition between circle leaders (e.g., by planning to have the old and new leaders jointly conduct the quality circle for a number of meetings).

Chapter 14

Issue twelve: What have been the effects of police department quality circles?

This issue is the "$64 question" for local governments and police departments.

We found little available information in the literature on the effects of public sector quality circles and virtually none on the effects of such circles in police departments. On the other hand, a number of positive experiences have been reported by companies using quality circles in the private sector. In the following paragraphs, we review the results of our examination of several police department quality circle efforts. This information should, however, be considered preliminary. Most of these efforts had been under way for only a year or two. Also, there has been little systematic, indepth assessment of the impacts of these programs.[10] Thus, the effects reported in this section need further substantiation. We group these effects under the following categories:

- Changes in working conditions and procedures,
- Service productivity (efficiency and effectiveness),
- Morale and job satisfaction,
- Relations with supervisors,
- Program costs, and
- Miscellaneous effects.[11]

Changes in working conditions and procedures

Do quality circles lead to changes in police departments? We found that most circles did effect numerous improvements in working conditions or operating procedures. The majority of these were minor changes (and were generally

characterized as such by police officials). Some of these have already been described. Other examples are the re-establishment of private rooms for client interviews (Hayward, California), improved standards and procedures for evidence collection (Hayward), consolidation of neighborhood-watch pamphlets and the redesign of neighborhood-watch window signs (Mesa, Arizona), alphabetization of internal telephone directories to facilitate the location of police personnel by communication division staff (Mesa), development of an additional promotional step for dispatchers (Hampton, Virginia), clarification of the rules for issuing citations to shoplifters (Dallas), specification of no smoking areas (Dallas), coordination of crime patrol efforts between police officers and (separate) city security forces responsible for public buildings and public housing complexes (Dallas), and reduction of unnecessary radio chatter (Dallas traffic division).[12]

Dallas police personnel reported some net improvements in working conditions in the 2 years after quality circles were initiated there; of the quality circle participants we surveyed, about 36 percent reported working conditions in their unit "somewhat" or "considerably" improved over the past 24 months, as opposed to about 15 percent who rated them "somewhat" or "considerably" worse. However, similar results were reported by persons who had not participated in Dallas' quality circles, so it is not clear to what extent the improvement was due to the quality circle program.

Service productivity (efficiency and effectiveness)

Our examination indicates that, in many instances, police quality circles led to small, but identifiable, improvements in service efficiency or effectiveness, at least over the short run. Because of the limited scope of most of the problems tackled to date by police quality circles, major changes in service delivery outcomes were not found and cannot be expected, at least over the short term.[13] Experience with quality circles and information on their impacts are relatively limited, but the following results indicate the improvements that have been (and can be) realized:

• The introduction of a new staff allocation procedure, including a four-shift approach, for the airport security division of the Orlando police department resulted in better use of manpower and more complete coverage of high-crime areas and time periods. The results were a slight decrease in reported Part One crimes and a substantial increase in traffic enforcement (and tickets for traffic offenses). The number of reports of suspicious persons increased substantially. However, we could not discern any lasting effect on arrests.

• Overall, Orlando's police department exhibited a substantial decrease in complaints by citizens against officers during 1983, the second year of the quality circle effort. However, it is difficult to isolate the extent to which the quality circle effort contributed to this reduction.

Police officials in Dallas expressed the view that the changes in call prioritization and increased training of officers in legal considerations improved services to the public in that city's southwest patrol district. In addition, they reported that changes in the procedures used by the property bureau in dealing with the public had reduced waiting time and increased service.

In Orlando, quality circle participants whom we surveyed generally expressed the view that the efficiency and quality of service had improved during the previous 24 months (the approximate amount of time since the introduction of the quality circle effort). Nonparticipants, however, were much less positive.[14] In Dallas, participants and nonparticipants alike generally agreed that the quality and efficiency of police services had improved during the previous 24 months.[15] Of course, this does not indicate the extent to which the quality circle program contributed to these perceptions of improvement.

We also surveyed quality circle participants and nonparticipants in Dallas about their perceptions of changes in the innovativeness of their work units. In general, higher proportions of participants and nonparticipants alike reported improved innovativeness than reported worsened in-

novativeness in the 24 months following implementation of the quality circle effort.[16]

In summary, the quality circle efforts in the two cities were perceived as having improved service efficiency and effectiveness, at least to some extent. The limited factual data available appear to support this, although with some qualifications (e.g., the lack of evidence for an increase in arrests by Orlando airport security personnel).

We found little evidence that the quality circles themselves had caused problems. At worst, the circles had had little positive impact. Quality circles seem to have the potential for making small-scale improvements in productivity, but on the basis of the evidence available, the circles should probably not be expected to have a major impact on a police department's service delivery unless they address more significant service delivery issues, as discussed under Issue 1.

Morale and job satisfaction

In an evaluation of its citywide quality circle program 6 months after implementation, the City of Hayward found no change in the job satisfaction of either participants or nonparticipants in the circle effort.[17] (One of the four quality circles included in this evaluation was in the detective division of the police department.) Our surveys produced similar findings in both Dallas and Orlando. In Orlando, participants in the police department quality circle effort reported mixed results with regard to changes in morale and job satisfaction during the 24 months after the program was initiated.[18] In Dallas, perceptions of changes in morale and job satisfaction by quality circle participants were also mixed. Although a larger proportion of participants reported improvements in their job satisfaction than reported a worsening, there was generally no perceived net improvement in overall morale during the 24 months after the introduction of quality circles.[19]

Some managers reported other benefits for employees in connection with the programs we examined. These benefits included valuable training in problem-solving techniques and

in making presentations to top-level management, experience with the problems management has in achieving a consensus, and better understanding of the reasons for supervisory actions.

The evidence to date, although mixed, suggests that quality circles have, on balance, had a neutral or positive effect on employee morale and job satisfaction. Reports of improved morale and job satisfaction generally outnumbered negative assessments. Nevertheless, the changes were not substantial. Given the fact that less than 10 percent of the employees in the departments were directly involved in quality circles, major overall improvements in morale and job satisfaction probably should not be expected.

There was also evidence that quality circles had little power to address major personnel problems. Quality circles in Mesa and Orlando that attempted to address substantial interpersonal difficulties were unsuccessful. (For such problems, it is probably more appropriate to use some other approach--e.g., team building or personal counseling--before initiating the circles.)

Relations with supervisors

Another benefit expected from the use of quality circles is improved relationships between employees and supervisors. Such improvements were reported in Hayward's assessment of the first 6 months of its quality circle effort.[20] In Orlando, quality circle participants and nonparticipants alike reported a net improvement in relationships with supervisors in the 24 months since the establishment of the quality circle effort. More than one-third of the participants credited the quality circle effort with improvements in these relations.[21]

We found similar results in Dallas. In the 24 months following implementation of the quality circle effort, substantially larger proportions of both quality circle participants and nonparticipants reported improved relations between themselves and their supervisors than reported worsening relations. As in Orlando, about one-third of the

quality circle participants credited the quality circle effort with improvements in relations with their supervisors.[22]

Thus, in all three cities, the quality circle effort was associated with a period of improving relationships between employees and their supervisors.

Program costs

The initial out-of-pocket costs for police department quality circle programs appear to be modest. In the case of Orlando, out-of-pocket costs involved a one-time startup expense of about $1,500 (for training materials). A local aerospace firm trained the facilitator and the circle leaders at no cost. In Dallas, the corresponding out-of-pocket startup cost was about $22,000 for materials and consultant time; however, these costs were for the entire citywide quality circle effort (not just the police department). The city program coordinator estimated that approximately one-third of the costs were for the police department program. The total out-of-pocket startup cost for materials and consultant assistance in the citywide quality circle effort (including one police department circle) of Hayward was $5,500.

A number of other costs need to be considered: the time spent by employees in meetings (averaging about 1 hour per week for each quality circle participant), additional time spent by circle leaders and facilitators, tasks for the circles' secretaries, reproduction costs for minutes and reports, and the time required by top management to review progress reports and attend presentations of quality circle findings. Most of the agencies we examined provided overtime pay or compensatory time off for quality circle members who had to participate during their regular time off. This practice added to the cost of the programs. Finally, there are the costs associated with implementing the suggestions that are adopted.

No comprehensive tally of the foregoing expenditures is available at this point for the police quality circles we examined, but the cumulative total for a program involving

several circles is likely to be substantial.[23] Furthermore, among the circles we examined, the total costs do not appear to have been offset by savings or cost-reducing suggestions, at least not as of the time of our examinations.

Miscellaneous effects

Police personnel identified some indirect and secondary benefits. In Orlando, for example, the circles prodded middle-level managers to take the initiative in solving persistent work problems. When quality circles posted in their meeting rooms a list of problems they had identified as candidates for circle activity, supervisory personnel frequently scanned those lists and proceeded on their own initiative to alleviate some of the problems identified.

Another "spillover" effect was the spreading use of quality circle concepts in other forms, such as wider use of the problem-solving techniques and participative focus associated with quality circles. Without proper controls and training, however, such "unauthorized" (and, at times, crude) implementation of quality circle concepts can, and on occasion did, lead to disappointment and disillusionment with the quality circle approach.

Other benefits noted by survey respondents in Dallas and Orlando included the additional training, the chance to contribute to solving a problem that was important to the individual, and greater authority for line personnel.

Survey respondents also noted a number of problems: difficulties that emerged from the changes implemented by the circles, additional work with no immediate benefits for circle participants, fear that management would view the circle members as "complainers," and increased dissatisfaction with management if it rejected quality circle recommendations.

Chapter 15

Issue thirteen: Should other approaches to problem-solving workgroups be encouraged?

Earlier, we noted that in some departments with quality circles, police managers (acting on their own) had established problem-solving workgroups that were based partly on quality circle principles but that lacked certain traditional circle features. This situation has occurred in nonpolice city and State agencies as well. In some instances, these groups clearly involved a less formal version of quality circles. They did not utilize facilitators, formal training for members, fully voluntary selection of members, or selection of the problems the workgroup would address by the workgroup members themselves. These groups also were likely to be ad hoc rather than continuous. Nevertheless, such efforts still retained some important features of quality circles, such as the use of small groups consisting of members of the same work unit attempting to alleviate work-related problems.

Should these quality circle variations be encouraged or discouraged? Although our study provides little direct evidence on this, we found in one police department that failures of such "unauthorized" groups damaged the reputation of the other, more carefully implemented, "authorized" circles that were also being used. This suggests that police departments should control the spread of quality circles to ensure that the circles which are implemented benefit from what is known concerning what it takes for such an effort to be successful--help from a trained facilitator, training in problem-solving skills, the encouragement of a truly democratic, participative environment, etc. As with so many management innovations, what appears on the surface to be simple is, in fact, difficult to execute properly. Quality circles are fragile. An ill-conceived, partially or improperly implemented effort can give circles a bad name, providing skeptical middle-level managers with the ammunition they need to resist all circle efforts. Departments that have established formal quality circles

should discourage circles that do not receive a full share of training, facilitator assistance, and management support. Such control is probably best executed through a central steering committee that establishes and enforces a departmental policy on the growth of the quality circle program (and the corresponding commitment of facilitator resources).

This is not to say that other types of participation and problem-solving groups should be discouraged. There is some evidence from both the public and private sectors that techniques such as task forces, joint labor-management committees, and autonomous (self-managing) workplace teams have been effective in improving productivity and job satisfaction.[24] As Exhibit 1 indicates, more police departments have experimented with these approaches than with quality circles: 62 percent of the departments responding to the ICMA-UI survey reported using task forces and special problem-solving teams, 37 percent indicated the use of joint labor-management committees, and 16 percent had used neighborhood team policing. Moreover, 87 departments (29 percent of the respondents) reported various other formal programs designed to increase employee participation: patrol councils (with elected representatives from various units), periodic "skip" meetings between top management and line personnel (without the presence of any intermediate supervisors or managers), departmentwide "round-table" discussions, and boards or standing committees with representation from all levels.

With the exception of neighborhood team policing, the effectiveness of these techniques for improving police productivity and job satisfaction has rarely been formally examined. Although the anecdotal evidence seems promising, more definitive research and evaluation--by police departments and others--are needed. Clearly, there is much to be said for encouraging greater experimentation with such approaches. Indeed, there are indications that task forces and similar techniques may be especially appropriate when a major goal of increased participation is the achievement of significant improvements in service quality and efficiency.

Experimentation with variations in the "traditional" quality circle concept also appears warranted. There is no a priori reason why the original quality circle model--which is based on private sector manufacturing situations--should be the best approach for police departments. Thus, for example, a circle involving management personnel (e.g., a circle of sergeants or of lieutenants) might be a good way to increase the scope of the problems addressed.

Some of the police departments we examined were using a mix of techniques to improve employee participation: quality circles (including circles of managers), task forces, skip meetings (see above), representative employee councils, and--in a few instances--management-by-objective efforts that involved line personnel in setting objectives. Such efforts are to be applauded. However, a major finding from the cases we examined is that participative management in police departments, and elsewhere, is a fragile enterprise. It is basically a management-sponsored innovation, and great care--coupled with much management support and nurturing--is needed to make it survive and thrive.

Many of the quality circle lessons reported previously are also applicable to the other participative approaches being tried by police departments. Failure to learn from them may condemn the participative programs to being counterproductive. However, careful attention to these issues and the recommendations that have been made earlier can be expected to enhance the effectiveness of, and appreciation for, these participative techniques.

Recommendations: Police departments should encourage variations in the traditional quality circle approach (e.g., by trying circles of managers) as well as other participative mechanisms such as task forces, problem-solving teams, autonomous work groups, and representative councils. In using such approaches, departments should follow (or adapt) the recommendations for quality circles made in previous chapters. The departments should also plan and undertake simple evaluations of the effectiveness of these programs.

Although these other approaches can be used in parallel with traditional quality circle efforts, departments should take care to distinguish clearly between the quality circles and the other participative techniques. The adoption and spread of quality circles--and close variants of such circles--should be carefully controlled, perhaps by the department's steering committee, to ensure that all quality circles receive adequate training, facilitator help, and management support.

minor problem in the examples we looked at. Of more concern to police departments, however, have been the practical difficulties of scheduling circle meetings for patrol officers and other work units operating on a shift basis, which created operating problems for some circles in each department we examined.

Summary of major recommendations

We believe that police department quality circles must achieve greater improvements in productivity if they are to achieve greater credibility and long-term viability. This requirement, plus the other concerns that have been discussed, have led to the following major recommendations:

1. Department managers, circle facilitators, and quality circle leaders should encourage police quality circles to tackle operating problems involving significant service delivery issues to a greater extent--even if the issues also affect the activities of other work units. (Issue 1.)

2. The quality circles should use surveys of personnel in their own and other work units and similar techniques to obtain comments and suggestions from those units concerning the problems and their solutions. (Issues 1 and 4.)

3. To reduce absenteeism from quality circle meetings, membership should be limited to one or at most two shifts. The circle facilitator should carefully monitor the circles to determine when circle activities are being affected by absenteeism and nonproductive meetings and to set in motion corrective actions. (Issues 2 and 5.)

4. To allay middle-management fears, quality circles should keep middle-level managers in their chain of command informed about the subjects they are examining and about their recommendations (e.g., by providing minutes of their meetings and preliminary briefings on their recommendations to these managers before the circle presents them to the police chief). Middle-level managers should be encouraged to make constructive suggestions in response to this information, even when they disagree with a circle's findings. (Issue 3.)

Chapter 16

Summary of findings and recommendations on police quality circle programs

The use of quality circles in police departments appears to have reasonable potential for effecting a number of small-scale service improvements and for improving morale somewhat in work units that have such circles. The introduction of quality circles appears unlikely to produce major negative side effects, so police departments appear to be taking little risk in choosing to use such circles. A quality circle program can, however, be expected to require modest expenditure outlays for training, overtime pay relating to circle participation, and so on.

We have seen no evidence thus far that quality circles produce major improvements in service delivery or productivity. The circles have generally focused on improving working conditions and on resolving relatively small-scale, narrowly specified operating problems. There are also indications that quality circles require continuous, careful attention. In practice, however, there has been a tendency to cut back on the amount of training and other circle prerequisites such as voluntary participation, adequate amounts of facilitator time, and continued explicit support and recognition from upper level management. There thus appears to be a strong tendency for the program to deteriorate after the initial year or two of enthusiasm.

Police departments probably have somewhat greater problems than other public agencies with quality circle concepts because of their more authoritarian management style and hierarchical rank structure. Despite this tendency, we found a surprising number of police officials who were willing to try participatory techniques. Thus, management style appears to be less of a problem than we had expected. The action orientation of police officers (leading to impatience with "preliminaries" such as lengthy quality circle training and pencil-and-paper studies) was also only a

5. To hone or maintain skills and to help rejuvenate circles, circle facilitators should provide formal training to new circle members and refresher training to longer-term members. (Issue 6.)

6. Departments should track the progress of the various circles, especially the status and impact of circle recommendations. This information should be reported regularly and disseminated throughout the department. This process need not add to the paperwork requirements of circle members, but it can enable the department to demonstrate the value of the circles while giving encouragement to circle members and recognition to successful circles. Quality circles require sustained commitments of time and effort by a number of people. For long-term viability, a quality circle program will need to demonstrate that it is, indeed, producing substantial benefits for the department. (Issue 9.)

Given the national trend toward encouraging greater participation by nonmanagement employees in decisions concerning their own work, quality circles, or variations thereof, appear to be a promising approach for police departments. Thus far, however, they have not yet demonstrated an ability to generate significant improvements in agency performance, in part because the topics selected have been too narrow and in part because the circles have covered only a very small proportion of the workforce in any one police department.

Perhaps quality circles should be expected to produce only small-scale work improvements and enhancements in the working environment of a work unit, rather than substantial improvements in service delivery. However, there seems to be no inherent reason for limiting quality circles to such a role. Police quality circles should spend some of their time focusing on the more substantive service delivery problems facing the individual work units. If this change of focus can be successfully accomplished, the long-term outlook for quality circle programs would be greatly strengthened.

Notes

1. For example, see O.W. Wilson and Roy C. McLaren, Police Administration, 3rd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972); Paul M. Whisenand and R. Fred Ferguson, The Managing of Police Organizations (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1973); and Bernard L. Garmire, ed., Local Government Police Management, 2nd ed. (Washington, D.C.: International City Management Association, 1982).

2. Another potentially promising "positive" motivational technique--management by objectives--is aimed primarily at management personnel. This approach is the focus of a companion report, "Improving the Use of Management by Objectives in Police Departments."

3. Adapted from a definition given in The Quality Circles Journal, vol. 6, no. 3 (September 1983), published by the International Association of Quality Circles.

4. See also John C. Bowden, "Quality Circles: Orlando's Policy and Procedures," The Police Chief, vol. 51 (November 1984), p. 56, and "An Examination of the Use of Quality Circles in the Public Sector" (Orlando, FL: Rollins College, August 1983).

5. See also James Mangaras, "The Coming of Age of Quality Circles in the City of Dallas," City of Dallas, Office of Budget and Research (Dallas, Texas, December 1983); Deborah D. Melancon, "Quality Circles: The Shape of Things to Come?" The Police Chief, vol. 51 (November 1984), pp. 54-55; and James L. Mercer, "Quality Circles: Productivity Improvement Processes," Management Information Service Report, vol. 14, no. 3, International City Management Association (March 1982).

6. See also City of Mesa, Arizona, "Quality Circles Program: Policies and Procedures" (February 25, 1982).

7. See City of Hayward, California, "City of Hayward Quality Circle Program Charter" (January 17, 1983; revised January 1984), and Quality Circle Steering Committee, "Pilot Quality Circle Program Evaluation," City of Hayward, California (November 16, 1983).

8. See Mercer, "Quality Circles," and Joyce Kelly, "Participative Management: Fort Collins Success Story," Colorado Municipalities (July-August 1983), pp. 4-8.

9. Susan Page Hocevar and Susan A. Mohrman, "Quality Circles in a Metropolitan Police Department, Report G84-12 (60), University of Southern California, Center for Effective Organizations (1984).

10. An evaluation of a quality circle at the Wilshire-area station of the Los Angeles Police Department was recently reported by Susan P. Hocevar and Susan A. Mohrman, "Quality Circles in a Metropolitan Police Department," Report G84-12(60), Center for Effective Organizations, University of Southern California (1984). For two assessments of city-wide quality circle efforts that included police department circles, see James Mangaras, "Evaluation of the Quality Circles Program," Office of Budget and Research, City of Dallas (June 1983), and Quality Circle Steering Committee, "Pilot Quality Circle Program Evaluation," Office of the City Manager, City of Hayward, California (November 16, 1983).

11. The City of Hayward, California, identified the following objectives of the quality circle process: (1) Promote personal and leadership development, (2) Instill self-pride and performance, (3) Inspire more effective teamwork, (4) Promote job involvement, (5) Increase employee motivation, (6) Create a problem-solving capability, (7) Build an attitude of "problem prevention," (8) Improve communications, (9) Develop harmonious manager-employee relationships, (10) Enhance service quality, and (11) Improve the work environment. See "Quality Circle Program Charter," City of Hayward, California (January 1984), p. 2.

12. More evidence that the circles helped bring about improvements in working conditions or operating procedures

comes from our surveys of police personnel in Dallas and Orlando. In Orlando, only 12 percent of the respondents to the survey reported that their quality circles had been responsible for no changes in procedures or work methods, 19 percent said circles had been responsible for one or two small changes, 22 percent for more than two small changes, and 35 percent for at least one major change. In Dallas, these percentages were 20 percent, 44 percent, 23 percent, and 11 percent, respectively. In Orlando, patrol personnel not associated with the quality circle efforts were surveyed about the effects of specific changes that had occurred as a result of the quality circles. Of these, 80 percent reported that the changes in patrol vehicle spotlights constituted an improvement (versus 8 percent who regarded them as a worsening), 90 percent viewed the introduction of rechargeable flashlights as an improvement (versus 7 percent who viewed them as a worsening), and 66 percent of those surveyed rated the changes brought about by the quality circle in the emergency equipment carried in the trunk of patrol vehicles as an improvement (versus 7 percent who viewed them as a worsening). Respondents from Orlando's airport and communication divisions, however, generally gave mixed or negative ratings of the changes in shifts and manpower allocations brought about through the efforts of the quality circles for those groups.

13. The findings on the Los Angeles Police Department's Wilshire circles were quite similar, both here and on morale and job satisfaction. See Hocevar and Mohrman, "Quality Circles in a Metropolitan Police Department," especially p. 11.

14. In Orlando, 64 percent of the quality circle participants we surveyed reported efficiency somewhat or considerably improved, and 60 percent reported quality of service somewhat or considerably improved. Moreover, 70 percent and 60 percent of the quality circle participants, respectively, reported that efficiency and quality of service had improved because of the quality circle effort. Nonparticipants, however, were much less positive: 32 percent reported improvements in efficiency and quality of service, while 44 percent reported no change and 4 to 5

percent reported a worsening since the program had been introduced.

15. In Dallas, efficiency was rated somewhat or considerably improved by about 37 percent of the quality circle participants and 47 percent of the nonparticipants; quality of service was rated somewhat or considerably improved by about 35 percent of the participants and 38 percent of the nonparticipants in Dallas. Only 7 to 12 percent of the participants and nonparticipants reported a worsening in service quality or efficiency during that period. Of the quality circle participants, 39 percent expressed the view that service efficiency was somewhat or much more improved because of the quality circle effort, and 34 percent believed that service quality had improved because of the quality circle effort (versus 4 to 6 percent who believed that the quality circle had had a negative effect).

16. A total of 28 percent of the nonparticipants reported somewhat or considerably improved innovativeness (versus 6 percent who reported a worsening), and 21 percent of the quality circle participants reported improved innovativeness (versus about 6 percent who reported a worsening).

17. Quality Circle Steering Committee, "Pilot Quality Circle Program Evaluation," Office of the City Manager (Hayward, California, November 16, 1983), p. 2. Separate data on the police department were not provided.

18. Of the Orlando quality circle participants that we surveyed, 38 percent reported improved morale, versus 32 percent who reported worsened morale; similarly, 45 percent reported improved job satisfaction, versus 29 percent who reported a worsening. It appears, however, that the worsening in morale and job satisfaction that was reported had little to do with the quality circle effort: 60 percent of the participants reported that quality circles had improved morale (versus 6 percent who said the circles had worsened morale), and 44 percent reported that the circles had enhanced job satisfaction (versus 3 percent who reported worsened job satisfaction because of the quality circles). Nonparticipants in Orlando quality circles were somewhat more negative towards changes in morale and job

satisfaction: 13 percent reported improved morale, versus 39 percent who reported a worsening; 26 percent reported improved job satisfaction, versus 19 percent who reported a worsening. And 31 percent and 37 percent reported no change at all in morale and job satisfaction, respectively.

19. When asked about the impacts of the quality circle effort on their overall job satisfaction, 30 percent of the Dallas participants reported that the program had improved their job satisfaction, while 14 percent reported a worsening; the majority indicated no change. Similar results were reported for changes in morale due to the quality circle effort.

20. Quality Circle Steering Committee, "Pilot Quality Circle Program Evaluation," p. 2.

21. Thus, 47 percent of the quality circle participants and 22 percent of the nonparticipants reported improved relations with supervisors, versus 3 percent and 15 percent respectively that reported a worsening of relations. No change in relations with supervisors during the period was reported by 35 percent of the participants and 48 percent of the nonparticipants. Among the quality circle participants, 38 percent reported improved relations with supervisors because of the quality circle effort, whereas 61 percent reported no change attributable to the quality circles.

22. About 33 percent reported that the quality circles had positively affected relations with their supervisors, whereas about 7 percent reported they had worsened relations.

23. The city of Dallas has estimated the total cost of its citywide quality circle effort (including 10 police circles) to have been $211,365 during the program's first 2 years of operation. This figure includes startup costs, the salary of the city's full-time facilitator, consultant fees, and $140,400 in wages paid to circle members for time spent in circle meetings. See Mangaras, "Evaluation of the Quality Circles Program."

24. See John M. Greiner, Harry P. Hatry, Margo P. Koss, Annie P. Millar, and Jane P. Woodward, Productivity and Motivation: A Review of State and Local Government Initiatives (Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute Press, 1981), chapters 20 and 21.

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