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# International Summaries

A Series of Selected Translations in Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice

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From West Germany

## Personnel Requirements and Recruiting: Outlook for the 1990's

*Psychologists, professors, senior police officials, and private industry leaders discuss staffing challenges facing police during the coming decade.*

### Introduction

Because of declining birthrates, the number of young West Germans entering the work force will decrease dramatically in the coming decade. In 1987, there were 9 million Germans between the ages of 15 and 25; by 1997, that number will drop to just over 5 million. While the resulting shortage of available workers will affect all segments of the economy, the lack of young recruits will hit the police especially hard.

Other crises may be developing: Many of the current officers are well-educated members of the baby boom generation. Because of their large numbers, these officers frequently find their professional advancement opportunities restricted and leave law enforcement to pursue other career options. In addition to losing experienced personnel, the police also face the challenge of meeting expanded demands on reduced budgets. Further, the public's respect for law enforcement professionals has diminished considera-

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bly in recent years. In fact, research shows that the German population does not even consider public safety a top priority.

The following 10 articles discuss how police forces can hold their own in the competitive labor market of the 1990's and how law enforcement officials can raise qualifications of present employees and motivate them to maintain high-quality service.

### Quality versus quantity in personnel decisions

by Dr. Manfred Murck

This article examines current problems facing police personnel recruiters and addresses issues affecting the organizational structure of police departments. Budget increases alone will not be enough to meet police staffing demands. Instead, the police must find non-budgetary alternatives—such as increased personnel development and training—for improving the quality of recruits. Police departments must evaluate the political and social priorities of their constituencies and incorporate these concerns into administrative planning.

If estimates are correct, the police force of the 1990's will not only be too small, but will also be composed of poorly qualified recruits needing a high level of training. These problems can be overcome by providing quality leadership in police academies as well as at the department level. One means of dealing with personnel and recruitment issues is for senior law enforcement officials and line staff to join forces in solving problems, perhaps by creating an association to address mutual concerns. The author feels police leadership issues are simply too important to place on the back burner.

### Changing attitudes toward police work in the 1990's

by Brigitte Melzer-Lena

The youth of the 1960's were political and rebellious, while those of the 1970's were disillusioned and compliant. In recent years, however, attitudes—especially toward work—have changed dramatically. Today's young, raised in a climate of prosperity and permissiveness, approach life with an upbeat, self-centered—almost hedonistic—attitude. Rather than seeing work as simply a

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duty, they consider a career to be an opportunity for self-realization and enjoyment. Unlike their peers of the 1970's, however, today's young people are willing to work hard to maintain the lifestyles to which they have become accustomed. In recent surveys, German young people between 14 and 29 indicated that adequate leisure time is also an important factor in their choice of a career.

On the other hand, the same young people are reluctant to submit to a rigid regime of company rules and working hours, which leave little room for creativity and initiative. Their occupational pursuits are further colored by their changing attitudes about traditional roles; as many as 69 percent of the males believe men and women should share in child rearing, making flexibility in the workplace a high priority during the 1990's.

Young people also seek careers with positive public images that command society's respect and approval—images that, unfortunately, the police have made few efforts to project. Further, few young Germans feel a career in law enforcement would allow them to fully realize their expectations of life. It is critical that these attitudes be turned around. In order to attract well-educated recruits in the 1990's, police forces must reshape their public images and present law enforcement careers in a more positive light.

## What police recruiters can learn from personnel marketing practices of large private firms

by Dr. Randolph Vollmer

As the general population ages, personnel available to the economy—including the police—is shrinking. As a result, many private companies are taking steps to enhance their public images to attract quality entry-level workers. Through extensive opinion research, these companies have learned that young Germans want work that offers varied and meaningful tasks, professional development opportunities, supportive supervisors and coworkers, agreeable working conditions, leeway to make independent decisions, and team management.

In each of these areas, prospective employees see the police as an unpopular option. In fact, only 3 percent of 2,100 college upperclassmen surveyed would consider any type of public service career. For those few, the primary attractions were free time, good benefits, and job security.

These revelations have serious implications for the police, who have become accustomed to selecting recruits from a surplus of well-qualified applicants. In the future, police departments may be forced to choose new recruits from those applicants who have already been rejected by private employers. To counteract this dramatic reduction in the quality of recruits, police forces must adopt aggressive personnel marketing strategies similar to those practiced by private companies.

First, the police should survey young people to explore why they consider law enforcement such an unattractive career option. Then, the police must begin an image-building campaign—using approaches including brochures, public discussions, contests, open houses, and discussions by experienced officers—that stress the positive aspects of police work. Finally, the police must strengthen weaknesses in its current advancement and wage structures in order to retain more employees.

## Hesse prepares for possible recruiting shortages

by Werner Heinrichs

The German State of Hesse provides an example of how to deal with the impending shortage of young recruits. Though estimates of future police staffing requirements are necessarily rough, it is safe to assume that the police must at least maintain its present workforce. Age statistics indicate that the number of retirees will peak in 2003; unfortunately, this is also the year when the number of Germans between 15 and 25 years will be lowest. In addition to replacing retirees, the police must replace those who leave the force before retirement (approximately 2 percent) as well as those who do not complete the initial 2 1/2 year probationary period (20–25 percent of trainees). Even with the increased

number of female officers, the shortage of prospective applicants will be felt as soon as the early 1990's.

What can be done? When the State of Hesse faced a similar shortage of recruits in the late 1970's, the police conducted extensive research to identify the attitudes young Germans held about law enforcement careers. Researchers found that German youth saw law enforcement careers as having both disadvantages and advantages, and that these views were influenced by the subjects' families, peer groups, and the media. On the positive side, subjects expected police work to be interesting, team- and people-oriented; and liked the athletic aspects of police training. They resented, however, the emphasis on strict rules, the irregular working hours, and the necessity to obey orders.

Based on this research, Hesse police developed a comprehensive advertising campaign incorporating brochures, newspaper ads, and public service announcements in an attempt to reach both young Germans and their parents. This campaign presented an honest, yet humane, portrayal of a police officer; it was scrapped, however, after an influx of applicants suddenly reduced the need for extensive recruiting.

Now facing a new shortage of recruits, Hesse is reviving the campaign and implementing it on a step-by-step basis. The department is also debating whether it can relax some of its physical and intellectual entrance requirements without lowering overall police effectiveness. Finally, Hesse prepared for this anticipated shortage by training additional officers during the late 1980's when the department had a steady supply of recruits. These new officers fill the department's most immediate needs, allowing leaders to develop long-range solutions to the personnel problem.

## Personnel development as part of police management

by Lt. Günter Berndt

During the 1990's police officers will face new challenges including terrorist threats, increased public expectations,

and rapidly changing technologies. At the same time, the number of available recruits will decrease, placing even higher demands on existing personnel. Seen in this light, personnel development—systematic and ongoing professional and personal training for employees and future leaders—becomes a vital aspect of police management.

A personnel development concept can only succeed if it is fully integrated into all aspects of personnel management, including policymaking, planning, and administration. First, policymakers must set general guidelines on staffing patterns, career ladders, training schedules and curriculums, and job requirements. To be effective, the program must be a joint effort within the department, bringing in personnel planners charged with implementing policy and well-qualified employees and administrators who oversee such practical matters as vacations, benefits, and hiring procedures. In creating and instituting a personnel development program, however, it is the senior police officials who must ensure both quality performances and worker satisfaction by coordinating organization's needs with employees' wishes.

### **Concepts of organization and personnel development: The new curriculum of the Police Leadership Training Academy** by Dr. Wolfgang Kokoska

Police trainees face many leadership challenges, both now and in the future, which the German Police Leadership Training Academy's recently revised curriculum will try to meet. Focusing on the social sciences, courses now stress personnel and organization development to help police plan and implement changes.

*Organizational behavior and change.* As social systems, organizations define and regulate the behavior of their members. For instance, an organization's norms and values will create standards—to which most employees conform—such as appropriate dress or communications with the media. Within the larger organizational structure, task forces

serve as important social substructures giving individuals common goals and generating a sense of belonging. Departments can use employee surveys to analyze the organization's strength and weaknesses. Further, staff should be enlisted in fostering cooperative organizational change; for example, a group of employees might volunteer to discuss problems in the work place and to develop or implement solutions.

*Employee motivation and job satisfaction.* The police should evaluate and incorporate such private sector practices as job enlargement and enrichment and rotating assignments that can add purpose and enliven otherwise dull police routines. By understanding the factors that contribute to job satisfaction—such as self-realization, initiative, and creativity on the job—police departments can retain trained officers and attract recruits.

*Training and supervision.* Police academies and departments should adapt methods of selecting, training, and evaluating future police leaders as well as study different theories of human motivation to gain insight into employee and supervisor behavior. Trainees should be encouraged to evaluate both successful and unsuccessful organizational changes to gain an understanding of what can be accomplished.

### **Lessons in police training from private industry: The example of the Deutsche Bank, A.G.** by Bernhard C.W. Klinzing

The central task of personnel management is to supply companies with an adequate number of well-trained employees, a goal the Deutsche Bank A.G. meets by placing special emphasis on systematic and ongoing personnel training. In 1988, the bank's training budget topped 157 million deutsche marks for 1,596 seminars, and 24,862 employees—more than half of the 43,652 personnel at the bank—participated. The bank offers three levels of training: basic job skills enhancement; specialized training in investment, credit, and personnel administration; and leadership training—the latter receiving the major focus.

One of the bank's primary goals is grooming managers who can earn the respect of both employees and customers. To improve their supervisory skills, trainees study management tools and techniques, practice communication skills, and role play in cooperation, self-assertion, and conflict situations. They also work on developing positive personal qualities such as fairness, empathy, integrity, courage, and sound judgment. Because their executive roles will call for an understanding of national and international developments, trainees also receive intensive background on economics and finances and attend national and international conferences.

All classes are taught by experienced bank professionals who volunteer to share their expertise with junior colleagues. Trainees, selected by their supervisors, are expected to make the most of this learning opportunity by taking an active part in the seminars.

### **Using the assessment center concept for selecting and training police personnel** by Dr. Heinz Holling

More than half the major private companies in Germany are now following the American trend of using assessment centers as part of their personnel selection and development. In a typical assessment center, a small number of candidates for a particular position come together over several days to demonstrate their qualifications through a broad range of activities. These include psychological testing, discussion of contemporary issues, public speaking and presentations, and role playing in work situations. Professional observers rank each candidate on cooperation, tolerance, ability to deal with conflict, initiative, problem solving, and other skills.

By its very nature, the assessment center incurs higher operating costs than traditional personnel recruiting practices. American research, however, indicates the concept is far more reliable in predicting future performance than more conventional preemployment oral and written tests.

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At the same time, the centers provide excellent opportunities for measuring training effectiveness. Participants are evaluated both before and after instruction, and any statistically significant difference may be attributed to the training. Control groups confirm that changes actually resulted from the training, rather than from extraneous factors.

Encouraged by the private sector's positive experiences, German police departments are gradually accepting the assessment center concept. In Project TEAC, the Police Leadership Training Academy, in conjunction with the University of Osnabrück, is using the assessment center concept to evaluate some of its training procedures.

To prepare for expanding the assessment center concept—especially when selecting future leaders—German police conducted two major surveys in 1988 and 1989. In their responses, senior police officials likened their professional tasks to those of private company executives and managers, and these observations were echoed at two nationwide meetings. Senior police leaders further identified work situations that are especially difficult: supervising employees, handling complaints, directing police operations, and public relations. Findings from the surveys and the conferences will serve as the basis for assessment-center exercises and evaluation criteria.

## **Police personnel and their superiors: A troubled relationship**

by Hansjörg Trum

Although low pay remains a significant police concern, "anger with superiors" also ranks high among the frustrations of police officers. Responding to a 1988 survey, Munich's police officers most

frequently named problems with superiors as negative professional experiences. Although dealing with employee dissatisfaction is included in the curriculums of all German police academies, the subject is often taught in academic and abstract terms dissociated from real-life leadership situations. Further, problems in the workplace are often preempted by what police leaders consider more critical issues: the war on drugs, traffic safety, and new police deployment strategies.

The author's informal conversations with police officers reveal the extent of employee dissatisfaction. Police officers frequently feel like pawns in a chess game dominated by political constraints and statistical planning. They feel they have no control over their professional destiny, but rather are at the mercy of their superiors. Officers would like to communicate more with their supervisors who too often avoid genuine interaction by pleading lack of time. Further, police officers distrust their supervisors, who they consider incompetent leaders, often concealing problems or errors from them rather than risking disapproval.

These findings are alarming; however, police officials may discover that even small changes in their own attitudes can create significant differences in a worker's satisfaction. The author recommends that police supervisors praise their subordinates more often, trust them, be loyal to them, and treat them as human beings.

## **Women—their futures as police officers**

by Horst Olszewski

Until 1982 wearing a police uniform was a male prerogative. Now, however, more than 2 percent of Germany's police

officers—and approximately 30 percent of new recruits—are female. While sexual stereotypes (such as men being rational, strong, and aggressive and women being soft, passive, and emotional) have little scientific basis, in practice, women often prove to be better leaders because they tend to possess such qualities as tact, empathy, trust, and positive attitude. These aptitudes may eventually compensate for the continued discrimination against women in leadership positions. In the United States, for instance, women have already gained access to numerous leadership positions.

The statistical analysis of police entrance exams in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia indicates some differences between the sexes. Women excelled in problems requiring concentration and good memory while men scored higher in analytical tasks. Further, women entering the police force are more educated than male recruits; 54.6 percent of the women in the police force have at least 13 years of education as opposed to 39.7 percent of the men.

Based on past experience, these women will probably be promoted more rapidly than the men. Of the current police force, 59.2 percent of the women and 45.9 percent of the men received the highest possible grade at their first professional exam. Despite family responsibilities, which may continue to create role conflicts, women will undoubtedly make their way up the police career ladder.

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