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The Cover: Since mass transit systems are an integral part of metropolitan cities, public officials must look for ways to reduce crime and change citizen perception of this mode of transportation. See article p. 1. Cover photo courtesy of Regina Kosicki.

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Developing Police Leadership

By
PAUL HANSEN



Effective leadership, or the lack of it, can impact dramatically on organizations. There have been many instances when private organizations near bankruptcy, such as the Chrysler Corporation, have become more efficient, effective organizations by replacing ineffective administrations with competent, dynamic leadership. Similarly, successful military leaders have turned ineffective military units into highly effective, motivated teams.

Unfortunately, however, police departments often do not evaluate management practices until a crisis, such as a lawsuit, serious accident, or public pressure caused by misconduct or mismanagement, forces them to re-evaluate their positions. This type of crisis management in police organizations has been disruptive and costly and has even threatened the existence of some departments.

The absence of good management practices in police departments may be due, in some part, to the fact that it is difficult to measure the effectiveness of police organizations. However, a lack of measurable standards often allows ineffective organizations, including police departments, to survive without much change.

Fortunately, however, the same leadership principles and skills that turn around private organizations and military units can be used to change police organizations and motivate personnel. This article discusses how some of today's ineffective police practices evolved and what is needed to change these management practices. Various leadership styles will

also be discussed, as well as how effective disciplinary measures can be taken when necessary.

Police Leadership Practices

Certain ineffective police leadership practices that exist today evolved from two sources—the authoritarian military style of management and management practices used during and after the Industrial Revolution to control unskilled factory laborers. These autocratic practices were based on the assumption that employees were basically lazy, and leaders believed that this type of management was necessary to gain as much production as possible from the labor force.

Unethical political influences and corruption were also factors in the early development of police leadership practices. A strong chief executive was required to combat these problems. This, along with the low education level of most officers and the existence of a structure-oriented society, made the authoritarian leadership style both appropriate and effective. However, authoritative leadership practices do not meet the needs and expectations of today's better educated and more technically competent police officers.

For the most part, as society evolved, work ethics and leadership styles changed. Today, police officers are expected to function effectively in a more sophisticated society, and as a result, the education and prestige level of officers has increased significantly. Officers are not willing to accept autocratic leadership that requires them to follow orders without question. This autocratic style of management not only

causes poor morale and reduced organizational effectiveness but it also leads to the loss of quality personnel, who seek employment elsewhere rather than being subjected to ineffective, poor leadership.

Changing Leadership Practices

If police leadership is to improve, officials in the department, from the chief executive down through the chain of command, must be committed to change poor leadership practices and values.¹ They must master leadership skills, such as patience, understanding, fairness, and judgment.² Supervisors must also recognize that leadership is important to successful management, and that past practices, such as public criticism, tactlessness, and unfairness, are destructive to organizations. Instead, leaders should stress the importance of consideration, caring, and loyalty. Stressing the importance of these values produces positive results,

such as a higher degree of employee motivation and morale. This, in turn, may result in more effective organizations.

For example, loyalty, both to the supervisor and to the employee, is important. Some administrators expect loyalty from employees; yet, they fail to show loyalty to the employees. This is often demonstrated through their lack of trust or confidence in their subordinates. Some supervisors, when they receive citizen complaints about their officers, automatically assume the officers are guilty. This seriously undermines employee confidence in the supervisor's leadership ability. It also causes confusion and reduced performance in subordinates. For these reasons, supervisors must presume that employees are innocent of any wrongdoing until the facts prove otherwise.

An important step in the commitment to change leadership practices is to identify the various

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leadership styles and how they impact on employee performance. Studying leadership styles also allows supervisors to identify their personal styles of management and to make necessary changes in their management styles.

Basic Leadership Styles

There are two basic leadership styles—job-oriented and employee-oriented.³ Job-oriented leaders are primarily concerned with tasks, and they rely on the formal power structure and close supervision for task accomplishment. Conversely, the employee-oriented leader is concerned with maintaining good relations with subordinates. Tasks are delegated, and the leader is concerned with the employees' personal growth.

Although one leadership style is not clearly superior over the other, the employee-oriented leader generally promotes higher morale in subordinates. This results in lower absenteeism and fewer employee grievances. Employees of job-oriented leaders generally produce less because they are closely monitored and are not allowed to participate in decisionmaking, which results in employee dissatisfaction.

Additional Leadership Styles

In *The Managerial Grid*, authors Blake and Mouton identified five styles of leadership: Task management, country club management, impoverished management, middle of the road management, and team management.⁴ The "task management supervisor" is concerned with achieving production goals by planning, directing, and controlling subordinates' work, whereas the

"country club" management style stresses the importance of good employee relations. On the other hand, the "impoverished management" supervisor attempts to maintain organizational membership,

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The situational leader takes a commonsense approach to leadership, with the focus on the leader adapting to the follower's needs.

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while the "middle-of-the-road" manager attempts to maintain both good employee relations and production. And, the "team manager" maintains a high degree of production through integration of tasks with subordinate input and decision participation.

Of these five management styles, "team management" is considered to be the most effective. Leaders with this style of management are able to build effective teams, solve problems, resolve conflicts, and encourage employee development.

Although a leader's basic management style is important, it is equally important for the leader to adjust that style according to existing circumstances. This is referred to as situational leadership.

Situational Leadership

A good leader must be flexible, must adapt to a variety of situations, and must have the ability to

select the most effective leadership style for any given situation. While a particular leadership style may be extremely effective in one situation, it may be disastrous in another. Other times, a combination of styles may be necessary to provide the most effective leadership. The situational leader takes a commonsense approach to leadership, with the focus on the leader adapting to the follower's needs.

According to Paul Hersey, author of *The Situational Leader*, a flexible leadership style should be based on the particular employee's needs.⁵ There are four basic styles that could meet these needs, including telling, selling, participating, and delegating.

The telling style is high task and low relations oriented. This style has a greater probability of success when used with new employees who have low readiness levels because of their limited abilities and inexperience in performing tasks.

On the other hand, when dealing with experienced, motivated, or willing employees, leaders will find that the delegating style has the greatest probability of success. This allows employees to participate in decisionmaking and gives them a certain degree of independence.

Correctly analyzing where employees are in terms of readiness and the ability of leaders to remain flexible are critical to the success of situational leaders. Leaders should first evaluate where the employee is in terms of both ability and willingness to perform tasks. Based on these two factors, leaders can determine what management style would most likely be effective.

Hersey further suggests that leaders who work with groups must also remain flexible. This allows the leader to progress from group supervisor to group leader as the group's readiness level increases.

Fillmore Sanford, author of *Authoritarianism and Leadership*, also believes that leadership style should be based on the employee's level of job maturity—the employee's ability to perform a task.⁶ A new employee often lacks the training or experience to function without assistance or close supervision. As the employee matures by gaining experience and training, it is possible for the leader to move from a task-oriented management style to an employee-oriented management style. Eventually, it may be possible for the leader to simply delegate tasks to the employee.

However, the rate and degree to which employees mature varies, and not all employees will mature to the level of simply being delegated tasks. In order to choose the proper management style, then, the leader needs to assess the employee's level of maturity. Choosing the wrong management style may result in the incorrect amount of supervision.

For example, in police organizations, the performance of new officers must be monitored more closely. They generally lack self-confidence and need more feedback. Seasoned veterans, however, view this type of supervision as inappropriate because they have gained job maturity through experience.

Leadership Effectiveness

There are three leadership traits associated with leadership ef-

fectiveness—intelligence, personality, and ability.⁷ Superior intelligence affects the leader's judgment and decisiveness and allows the manager to make correct, timely decisions. Additionally, adaptable, creative, confident leaders with integrity can influence and motivate employees. Tact and diplomacy are also important to gain employee cooperation.

Also found consistently in effective leadership are three leadership dimensions: The assumption of the leadership role, the closeness of supervision, and being employee-oriented.⁸ To assume the leadership role, effective leaders need to plan, delegate, communicate, and supervise. However, close control by the supervisor may result in lower employee productivity. This lack of employee freedom can prevent necessary decisions being made at the

that the officers are expendable. This creates resentment and alienates the officers.

Disciplinary Measures

Disciplinary measures are necessary to ensure that organizational standards of performance and conduct are met. Both inappropriate discipline and the failure of management to discipline can lower employee morale and can also lead to the retention of unqualified or undesirable employees.

Some employees will not respond to positive leadership practices and motivational techniques. Sound leadership practices mandate the use of discipline only when all other reasonable courses of action have failed; however, the negative effects will be minimal if management is not indiscriminate and if the administration of punishment is

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lowest level possible and creates a lack of employee ownership.

Additionally, the degree to which a supervisor cares about subordinates has a significant impact on leadership effectiveness. If police department organizational practices and procedures are designed to aid management at the expense of employee safety, it sends the message

fair.⁹ Supervisors must ensure that employees know what the standards are and that those standards are not being met. Employees must also be aware of what disciplinary action will be taken for continued poor performance. Leaders, however, should ensure that employee deficiencies are not the result of a lack of training.

When a leader takes disciplinary action, it should be done quickly and fairly. This is critical in order to ensure that there is as little adverse effect on organizational morale as possible. Leaders should always bear in mind that the objective is to correct performance, not to teach employees to avoid discipline.

Fairness and proper administration of the disciplinary process are also critical to avoid legitimate complaints. Leaders should also avoid the shift of focus from the issue of performance to the issue of management's fairness.

Promoting Employees

In some police agencies, administrators fail to implement a fair promotion system, while in other agencies, administrators try to circumvent systems already in place in order to promote the officer of their choice. For example, some administrators fail to promote from an existing list of qualified officers, and instead, wait for a new promotion list to be established in the hopes a particular officer will be promotable.

This type of leadership is demoralizing to the entire department, and it reduces organizational effectiveness. Officers soon learn that hard work, education, and good performance are not the criteria on which promotions are based, undermining everything leaders hope to accomplish. For this reason, leaders must set the highest standard of integrity possible when promoting officers.

Conclusion

In many police organizations, especially poorly managed depart-

ments, the leadership philosophy is to control the officer rather than encourage team building. When this type of leadership exists within departments, it becomes increasingly difficult to retain officers. Leaders within police departments must, therefore, shift their emphasis from employee control to employee team building, and they must involve officers at every level in decisionmaking. They must also work to develop the traits found in effective leaders, and they should study effective leadership styles.

Sound leadership knowledge and practices are critical to effective police organizations. Dynamic leadership can lead to progressive, highly successful, and innovative departments. It is only through this type of leadership that departments will meet both the demands of today and the challenges of the future.

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Footnotes

¹ James B. Lau and A.B. Shani, *Behavior in Organizations* (Homewood, Illinois: BPI Irwin, 1988), pp. 16-17.

² B.M. Bass and Roger M. Stogdill, *Handbook of Leadership* (New York, New York: Free Press, 1982).

³ R. Likert, *New Patterns of Management* (New York, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1961).

⁴ Robert Blake and Jane S. Mouton, *The Managerial Grid* (Houston, Texas: Gulf Publishing, 1964).

⁵ Paul Hersey, *The Situational Leader* (New York, New York: Warner Books).

⁶ Fillmore H. Sanford, *Authoritarianism and Leadership* (Philadelphia Institute for Research in Human Relations, 1950).

⁷ *Supra* note 2, pp. 75-76.

⁸ David Krech, Richard S. Crutchfield, and Egerton Ballachy, *Individual and Society* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), pp. 472-473.

⁹ James Gibson, John Ivancevich, and James Donnelly, Jr., *Organizations Behavior Structure Process* (Homewood, Illinois: BPI Irwin, 1988), pp. 210-211.

Telemarketing Crime Prevention

By
DAVID I. RECHENMACHER

In dealing with residential burglaries, traditional law enforcement practices tend to be strictly reactive and do little to deter future crime. Additionally, due to fiscal constraints in many jurisdictions, this problem is compounded by the limited number of police officers available to patrol neighborhoods. And, while neighborhood watch programs are important, they can be difficult to maintain due to the high mobility of our society.

The problems of residential burglaries confront every law enforcement agency in the country. And, the Downers Grove, Illinois, Police Department, with a sworn and civilian staff of 92, is no different. However, even with a crime prevention program in place, local residents did not request any crime prevention assistance.

Home Security Survey

The police department determined that the best service it could provide to deter residential burglary was to offer a home security survey. The home security survey, performed by members of the department's Crime Prevention Unit, is a proactive program aimed at reducing the number of residential burglaries.