December 1976

# COMMON SENSE ABOUT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
Law Enforcement Assistance Administration

44209

LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE ADMINISTRATION

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COMMON SENSE ABOUT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

December 1976

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this book is to help you, the project manager of a grant funded by LEAA, to achieve your grant's objectives as effectively and efficiently as possible. The intent is to give you some general direction and information -- to describe how to begin, what needs to be done, and why certain activities are critical in the management of your grant.

Managing a grant can be complex, and every grant has its own particular set of management demands. Consequently, the booklet is not a cookbook of easy solutions but rather a compendium of ideas, with a few suggestions and some techniques. To supplement this general guidance, we have provided a bibliography and references to LEAA manuals, regulations and policies.

The handbook is divided into four sections:

- management concepts and techniques: some basic material on how to manage a grant.

- grantee obligations to LEAA: a summary of what is expected of the grantee by various parts of LEAA, e.g., grants manager, comptroller.

- LEAA responsibilities to the grantee: an overview of what the grantee can expect from LEAA and how to get it.

- grants management process: a description of how grants are processed by LEAA.

You are encouraged to read the handbook and to share it with your staff. Any questions you have regarding information in the booklet should be directed to your LEAA or SPA grants manager.

I. MANAGEMENT CONCEPTS AND TECHNIQUES

What Is Management?
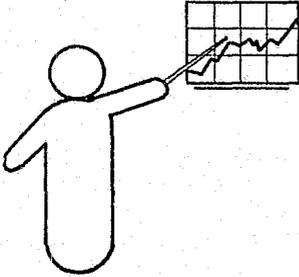
Management is one of the most ubiquitous functions in our society -- it exists in the family, school, government, and almost every group activity. Yet, a precise and understandable definition of management is difficult to find.

The Association of Consulting Management Engineers conducted a study to define management. The study concluded that management consists of:

- establishing objectives;
- directing the attainment of objectives; and
- measuring results.

Other management theorists believe that management is the creation of an environment where groups of individuals can achieve common goals effectively.

It would be helpful to you as a manager to develop and implement your own definition of management. How do you direct and organize yourself and others to get something done? By answering this question, you will clarify your thoughts and place your day-to-day activities into an overall managerial philosophy. In undertaking this process and implementing your particular management definition and style, remember that there is a large body of management literature from which you can draw insight and ideas.

It is also helpful to observe your colleagues and learn by watching other managers do their jobs.

Whatever your particular definition of management, it is clear that you, as a manager, perform or attempt to perform certain activities, including:

- planning and budgeting;
- organizing;
- controlling and directing; and
- supervising, coordinating and communicating.

The remainder of this chapter discusses these activities.

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Planning And Budgeting

Planning involves selecting your objectives, and the policies, procedures, and programs for achieving them. Very simply, it is deciding specifically what to do and how to do it, over a given time period. For many organizations this is an informal, ongoing process which results in inconsistent decisions and little or no policy. Overall performance usually is hurt by such ad hoc "non-planning."
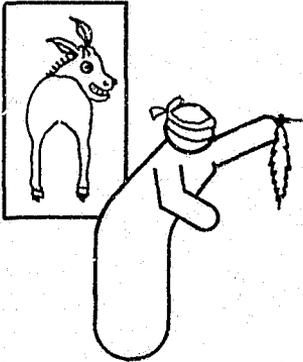
To be sure, ad hoc decisions and "crisis management" may be called for in the management of a grant. But by losing sight of overall plans, the manager runs the risk of damaging his long-term prospects. Consider the grant manager who impulsively agreed to staff demands for a survey of need prior to grant implementation. The unplanned for survey consumed half the grant time period and more than half of the grant budget. This is a dramatic example where one ill-considered decision put everything out of balance; however, small, seemingly unimportant decisions can also have an incrementally-adverse effect which is equally damaging.

Some managers in the social action area use the following steps to establish their overall grant plans:

- identify scope, characteristics of the problem you want to address, or the need you want to meet; e.g., there are 1,000 prisoners released every year in our city who need a job. Most are multiple offenders with minimal job experience. The average age is 28;

- conduct an inventory of the existing resources which are presently addressing the problem or serving the need; e.g., there are two local manpower agencies and three self-help groups who are addressing the problem;

- measure the gap between the problem or need and the present response; e.g., the total client load of all local groups involved is 40% less than required;

- develop a list of actions, in priority order, which will fill the gap between problem and response; e.g., establish a job bank; begin job counseling, begin job placement, provide vocational training.

This process usually can be followed regardless of the level of activity you are planning.

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Another way to begin planning is to define short-term and long-term goals or broad statements of purpose. Then select **objectives** which are measurable accomplishments related to the goals. Objectives should specify a single key result and should concentrate on "what" and "when" instead of "why" and "how."
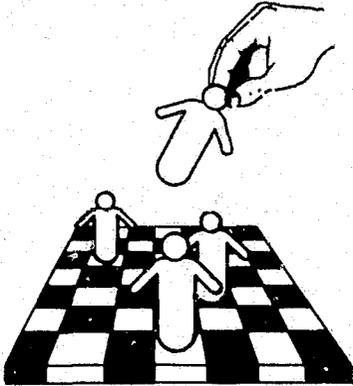
Strategies, which are statements about how you are going to accomplish an objective, are the next thing to develop. Establishing the sequencing and timing of a set of strategies, or the **tactics**, comes next.

Although this all sounds like a logical process, in reality defining objectives, selecting strategies, etc., often occurs simultaneously or in some hodge-podge order. However, even if daily exigencies force such chaos on you, it is important to always keep your goal in mind as a frame of reference for your other activities. This allows you to strive toward a rational planning process.

Both the planning process and the resultant plans must be understood by all involved staff. Since your staff is your primary resource, clear definition of objectives and tasks is essential if your plans are to be implemented successfully.

For many managers, disasters, flaps and mistakes happen with no previous warning -- the day before a report is due you discover that no one has started it. Or six months into a year-long grant period you realize that your initial objective cannot be reached. Adequate managing will only attack problems as they arise. Excellent managing will anticipate them and prevent their occurrence. Establishing, in advance, milestones which are significant points of measurement in the stream of events leading to accomplishment of an objective, is one way to control and monitor actual performance relative to planned performance.

The Gantt chart (named after its originator, Henry L. Gantt) in Appendix A illustrates tasks and milestones relative to achieving an objective. Charting your activities in this manner is a common technique which requires that you clearly plan what to do in order to accomplish your objectives. It is also useful as a means of quickly communicating to others the specifics and timing of the plan. Other planning charts are included in Appendix A.

Budgeting

The most common and often most productive way to plan is to budget, i.e., to translate financial resources into purposes. The budget is a mechanism for making choices among alternative expenditures -- so much for training,

so much for equipment, so much for staff salaries, etc. When the choices are coordinated and mapped out so as to achieve desired goals, a budget has become a plan. Although budgets are established in the initial grant application, often they must be revised based on the actual award of funds. Such revisions call for as much participation on the part of grantee staff as possible. Budget revisions and cuts are easier to accept if one fully understands the reasoning behind them.

Planning Tips

Managers often assume they can accomplish a great deal in a short time. Being overly ambitious and not accurately estimating the amount of time necessary to finish a job is a common pitfall of planners and managers which results in frustration and disappointment. When you complete a plan, double-check your time estimates to assure that they are realistic. Then add some time; perhaps at least 20% more. Other suggestions to keep in mind when planning:

- select goals and objectives which are realistic relative to your resources and your constraints so that you have a good chance of success;

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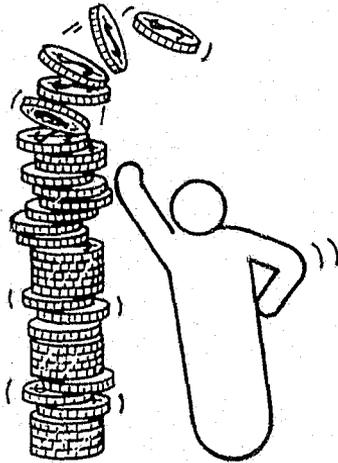
- select objectives which are readily measurable so that you can demonstrate your success without spending undue time and/or money on evaluation;

- allow some leeway in setting milestones for error, mistakes and inefficiency. In other words, give yourself some "slippage" and breathing room;

- assure that your policies, programs and procedures are consistent with your goals and with one another;

- define clearly, and in writing, the assumptions on which you are basing your plans. Make sure that your staff understands your · assumptions;

- include your key staff in the planning process --their efforts will be enhanced if they have contributed to the plans;

- periodically assess your actual performance against your plans and take corrective action promptly if necessary; and

- be prepared to do some contingency planning when your strategies fail or your tactics don't work.

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Organizing

Once you have determined your objectives and your plans, you must organize. Whether the process is a formally recognized one or a **de facto** activity, all groups organize into a deliberate structure of roles. Such organizing involves (a) achieving some common goal of purpose; (b) thorough, effective division of labor; (c) a recognized hierarchy of authority and responsibility; and (d) full coordination of effort.
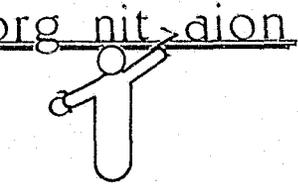
The process of organizing is five-fold:

- first, examine your objectives, strategies, and tactics. What are the activities you must do to implement the strategies and tactics? e.g., research, budget, accounting, communications, counseling, etc.;

- second, group similar activities; e.g., combine budgeting and accounting into a finance unit;

- next, assign a person to be responsible for that group of activities; e.g., Ms. Jones is in charge of all finance;

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- then, determine the additional manpower requirements; e.g., Ms. Jones will need help from a bookkeeper, a secretary, and a budget analyst; and

- finally, establish coordinating mechanisms among the groups of activities; e.g., the finance unit will participate in weekly staff meetings, receive all memoranda, etc.

Some of these traditional organizing steps are taken in the preparation of the grant application. However, a review of your present organizational structure might indicate some areas in need of change. When doing this, consider some key concepts of organizing:

- line personnel have responsibility for direct operational activities while staff personnel have advisory powers and fulfill supportive functions; e.g., personnel, planning, general counsel. The roles of each group normally should not be intermingled.

- when an organization disperses its authority and activities to several individuals or units, it is said to be decentralized. Decentralized organizations can become chaos with no one "in charge." On the other hand, centralized organizations depend
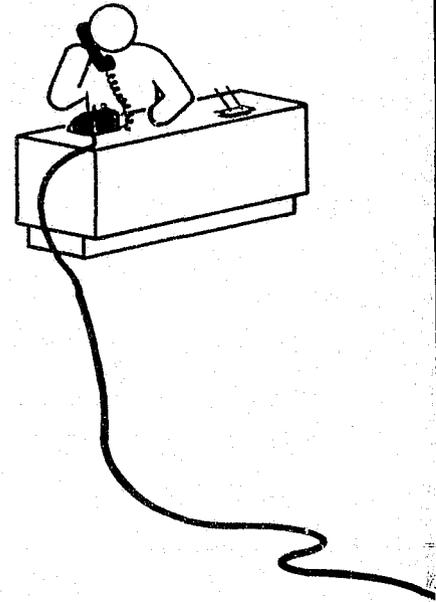
heavily on one person, and performance is closely linked to that person's personality and competence. If you opt for a decentralized structure, establish policies which will provide overall coordination, perspective and guidance. This will help to keep all organizational groups working in the same direction toward their common objective.

- the number of people who report directly to a manager is called the **span of management**. Early theorists believed an effective span of management was limited to 11. Today, most managers adopt a number that is comfortable to them and their subordinates. Personality, capability, style, and the nature of the tasks to be done all enter into determining a workable span of management. Remember, however, that information loses its potency (it gets watered down and misinterpreted) in direct proportion to the number of layers of organization that it must go through to reach your ears. This fact of organization life is like the game of "telephone," in which the first player's original message is distorted beyond recognition by the time it is whispered into the ear of the last player. Thus, a small span of management and a lot of employees who relate to you indirectly, may result in a distorted information flow.

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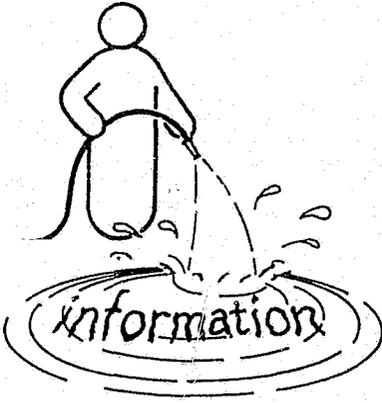
- delegation of authority is important for every manager to practice. All too often a dedicated worker is frustated in his attempts to complete his task because he does not have the authority to get the job done right. Not only should you delegate the authority, but you should define clearly its scope. For example, you delegate the authority to an employee to speak on behalf of your organization but not to commit your organization's resources.

- as a manager, you cannot delegate responsibility. Even if you have someone else do the job, you are still ultimately responsible for its success or failure.

How you use these principles depends upon the size of your organization, its purpose, and your individual managerial style. But remember, regardless of the nature of your organization, each of its members asks: What is my role here? and: How do I relate to the other members of this organization? It is part of your role to have the answers.

Informal Organizations

When the members of an organization coordinate, meet, and establish relationships beyond what is called for in the formal organization chart,

they have created what managers call an informal organization. Such groups or relationships tend to arise in all organizations. Even though organizational roles demand only certain limited activities from each person, it is the whole person who comes to work. Thus, co-workers talk to each other, have lunch together, gripe about the job together, and sometimes, after working hours, meet socially together. The question for you as a manager is not whether you should or should not have an informal organization -- it is almost always there -- but rather how to create conditions so that informal organizations can be compatible with, and supportive of, the formal organization and can function constructively. There is considerable evidence, that if employees feel threatened, demeaned and unappreciated, they will form together into anti-management groups. To prevent negative groups from forming, requires management practices which (a) are not threatening to the employees, (b) allow the employee maximum opportunity to develop and participate, (c) provide maximum opportunity to achieve the organization's goals and (d) keep employees informed of changes in policy and direction.
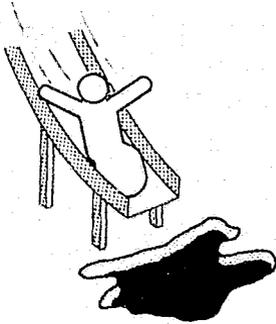
Pitfalls Of Organizing

By using common sense, you can avoid some very common organizational weaknesses, such as:

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- fuzzy delegations of authority — employee is unclear about the boundaries of his responsibilities and authority;

- multiple direction — employee has two or more bosses giving him direction. The worst example is the secretarial pool where one typist has two to five bosses, each requiring his work to be done "next;"

- duplication of effort — two individuals or groups are doing the same things;

- undermining heirarchy of authority — bypassing a superior to work with his subordinates; also called an "end run" and can be worked in either direction; and

- burying the staff — keeping staff groups such as planners, researchers, personnel, etc., so far down in the organizational structure that they can never have an impact or make a contribution.

One of the most common pitfalls of organizing is the unwillingness to reorganize. Your organizational structure should be responsive to the

needs and objectives of your grant. If your focus changes, or a crisis shifts your p.･ ･ 'ties — reorganize! But reorganize to meet the change or chal!ㄹ   ot to avoid it.

Other Management Activities

Financial management probably receives more attention from you and from LEAA than any other area of management. The primary focus of financial management is accounting. In addition to establishing an accounting system for the handling of your project's funds, you should be aware of the requirements, procedures and scheduling for the disbursement of funds from your funding sources.

What Is Accounting?

Accounting is the process of recording, accumulating, reporting, analyzing and interpreting the financial effects of business transactions.

Accounting data serve two primary purposes: (1) measurement of financial position of the grantee, and (2) measurement of the various parts of the grant activity for purposes of internal management. Accounting data, such as business papers and subsidiary ledgers, provide documentation for

expenditures. This documentation is required to prove accountability and for audit purposes.

An accounting system is the combined process and procedures employed to gather and report financial data. No two organizations have identical accounting systems, although certain basic techniques are common to most systems. These are summarized below:

- The data-gathering system begins with the preparation of financial papers at the source of each transaction, such as the preparation of a sales invoice. Usually preprinted documents are used for transactions of a repetitive nature; for example, purchase orders, credit memoranda, cash vouchers, daily remittance slips; all of these papers identify either receipt of funds or expenditure of funds.

- The flow of these documents is arranged so that as many similar transactions as possible are accumulated before an entry is prepared or posted.

- A framework of specialized journals and ledgers also is employed to record and summarize the data as efficiently as possible. Two basic financial reports for any organization are the income

statement (revenues and expenses) and the balance sheet (debits and credits). There are additional financial reports for LEAA grantees which are discusssed in Chapter II.

Principles Of Accounting

If the data of an accounting system are to be useful to outsiders (such as an Advisory Board, or LEAA) as well as to you as project manager, they must be collected, prepared and reported in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.

Five of the most important accounting principles or guides are:

- **Conservatism** — which means that the estimates and judgments made in the preparation of financial statements must be held within reasonable bounds and must not be inflated with overly optimistic treatments of the data.

- **Consistency** — which indicates that a procedure selected from among several acceptable alternatives must be followed consistently during successive accounting periods.
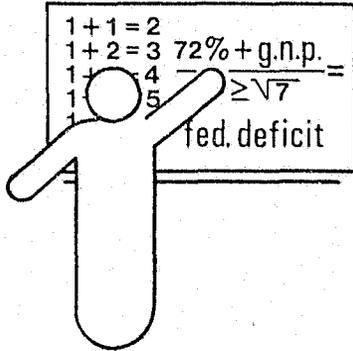
- **Full disclosure** — which means that all information of a material nature must be fully disclosed in financial statements.

- **Objective evidence** — which means that each accounting transaction must be based to the fullest extent possible on objective, verifiable data.

- **Materiality** — which means that the effect of all significant transactions must be reported, in conformity with all generally accepted accounting principles.

In conducting audits of grants, LEAA has identified financial and accounting deficiencies which are common to projects. For example, audits often reveal that:

- amounts reported on the quarterly reports are not readily traceable through the grantee's accounting system and, consequently, financial records are not in an auditable condition. The records do not:

  - separately account for and identify expenditures by the various budget categories;

- identify federal and local matching portions of the project's cost;

- identify funds by federal fiscal year; and

- document cash outlays or receipts.

- policies and procedures are not established to control the accountability and identity of non-expendable property purchased from LEAA funds and:

  - no property control records are being maintained;

  - no complete physical inventory has been taken and recorded annually; and

  - the property is not adequately labeled or marked to indicate ownership.

- funds expended are questionable as a result of inadequate documentation such as time and attendance or equivalent records, invoices, receipts or returned checks;

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- accounting worksheets supporting expenditures did not make
  reference to any supporting documentation. The individuals
  rendering the personal services and/or data of such services are not
  always identified; none of the individuals are required to certify
  that the services rendered were related to the project; the amounts
  rendered for equipment, supplies and material are estimateu; thus,
  no documentation is available to support such claims;

- funds are expended for items not included in the budget and
  several budget categories are overspent;

- adequate procedures are not developed to determine grantee
  cash needs. As a result, the grantee maintains an average monthly
  cash balance that exceeded its total average monthly disbursements
  by several hundred dollars; and

- formal agreements or contracts to support charges for consultant
  fees made to private individuals do not exist. Other contract files
  are inadequate because they fail to identify if the selection of
  the contractor had involved the securing of competitive bids
  or proposals from a group of qualified organizations.

What Makes A Good Accounting System?

An accounting system that communicates, to you and to LEAA, useful information consistent with your grant's financial events is a good accounting system. A good system also:

- provides accurate and current financial reporting information;

- is integrated with your other systems of internal controls, e.g., MBO milestones, budgets; and

- has mechanisms to safeguard funds and assets (dual signatures for disbursement checks; check points; periodic audits) and provides for accountability of all funds.

A good accounting system also provides you with (a) control of funds in conformance with all applicable laws and regulations, and (b) the kinds of financial data you need to report to LEAA. Appendix B provides a ledger sheet and a property inventory schedule which can be adopted for your accounting system. These are samples of what is included in a good accounting system.

The best way to achieve a good accounting system is to have a good bookkeeper or accountant. If you are not trained in this field, there are several options open to you. The most obvious is to hire a bookkeeper onto your staff, or secure the services of a free-lance accountant or an accounting firm. Recently, banks have begun to provide computerized accounting and payroll services to non-profit organizations which maintain accounts with the bank in lieu of interest. If the size of your organization warrants it, you might buy packaged accounting programs from a computer company. Whatever your final course of action, make sure that you understand the basic workings of your system, so you can control it. Financial accountability is all-important to LEAA, and you are responsible for your grant's financial integrity.

Personnel Management

Staffing your organization, guiding and supervising subordinates, and conducting or overseeing the many activities related to employees is a key managerial role. Personnel management, another one of your management responsibilities, is perhaps as closely connected to your success as any single activity. It involves recruiting, selecting, orienting, compensating, training, evaluating and terminating employees.

The process of recruiting candidates and selecting from among them those most likely to be of greatest use to your organization is a critically important activity: whom you hire will, in large part, determine what you can do. Steps which will improve the accuracy of your selection process are as follows:

- Develop job criteria — the organizational roles or jobs to be filled must be adequately described, i.e., explain the purpose of the job and results you expect.

- Determine what factors are required to fulfill these criteria, e.g., years of work experience, education, special skills.

- Obtain a sufficient number of candidates to give yourself the widest possible choice, e.g., advertise and solicit applications.

- Develop standard ways of observing candidates which permit systematic comparison and evaluation, e.g., application form, interview guide.

Above all, don't make snap judgments. The success of your project will largely depend upon the quality of the staff you hire.

Orienting new employees is also important but requires far less of your immediate attention. It is essential to inform new employees about your grant —— its mission, locations, operations, etc. The recruits also need information about internal policies and practices, organizational structure, and where they will fit in.

In essence, basic information transfer is needed here to provide the new staff members with a sense of familiarity and security in their new job and to establish mutual understanding about their role, responsibility, authority, and importance to the overall grant operation. While much of this information can be compiled in a brief handbook to be distributed to new staff along with tax forms and benefit information, a little personal attention by managers during orientation will instill high morale and encourage commitment to the organization.

The primary thing to bear in mind when setting salary levels or compensating employees is to assure a uniform salary level for the same job. Salary should be based on (a) qualifications required for the job; (b) level of responsibility involved; and (c) present market salary levels for that position. It is important that federal grant salaries not be significantly higher paying than comparable jobs in your community. This goes for your salary as project manager as well.

The need for supervisors to communicate to subordinates an evaluation of their contribution to the grant activity is critical. This is the best means for your staff to know how they stand, what their major attributes are with respect to accomplishing their assignments, how their contributions can be improved, and what the future holds for them in terms of the grant. The employee is entitled to know how he is doing. Evaluation can contribute greatly to employee morale, provided it is done intelligently and sensitively.

Sample evaluation guides for supervisory and non-supervisory personnel can be found in any good personnel management textbook. (See Bibliography.)

Training should be made available to employees whenever possible and appropriate. Whatever training is provided, it should be based on a thorough assessment of employee training needs. Most communities have a wealth of training resources which can be used free or at nominal charge, e.g., universities, YWCA and YMCA, adult schools, non-profit groups, civic organizations, local government agencies. State and federal agencies also provide considerable amounts and kinds of free or low-cost training. These should be fully explored (write for catalogs, get on mailing lists, ask your LEAA Grants Manager) before monies are spent on in-house training.

When an employee terminates his relationship with your grant, an exit interview should be conducted during which the employee:

- returns any keys, credit cards, supplies, furniture, etc., given to him during his employ;

- signs any necessary documents;

- returns travel and other advances; and

- receives his final paycheck.

The exit interview also provides an opportunity for you to obtain feedback on your organization and yourself as a manager. You should ask the employee — Why are you leaving? What did you learn while you were here? What went well? What went badly? etc.

Key Concepts In Personnel Management

In addition to the processes described above, personnel management involves some key concepts. These are described on the following pages:
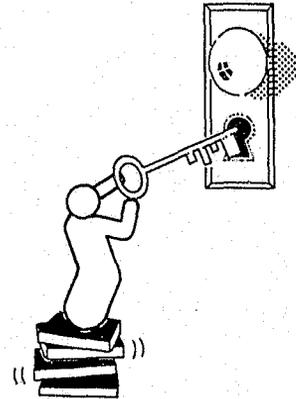
- **team efforts** — a team is a small number of people with different backgrounds, skills and knowledge. They work together as a group and there is minimal emphasis on heirarchy and formality. For a grant with a small staff —— three to seven people —— the team concept of personnel management should work very well. Team efforts on larger grants can also be viable if each team is coordinated with all other teams.

- **job descriptions** are essential for all employees on the grant. The description should be accurate and detailed enough to include as a minimum:

  - purpose of the job, i.e., listing of specific tasks and responsibilities;

  - scope of authority, i.e., number of people supervised, listing of other staff to coordinate with, amount of supervision required; and

  - results expected, i.e., products or outcomes.

- **equal employment opportunity (EEO)**. According to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 11743, as amended,

you, as a recipient of federal funds, may not discriminate on
the basis of race, sex, creed, age or national origin in either
employment or service delivery. Your grant must adopt and
implement an EEO and affirmative action policy. A policy
statement is included in Chapter II.

Key Managerial Concepts

The essence of management and the very heart of your role as a project
manager is leadership, coordination and communication. Each is an art form
which, for the most part, is difficult to teach. Nonetheless, there are some
pointers relating to each which can be passed on and which can improve
your performance as manager. You must then identify how such suggestions
can best fit within your own management style.

Leadership

There are as many definitions of leadership as there are leaders. Consider the
following sample of definitions and observations about leadership and
leaders:

- "Leadership is the capacity and will to rally men and women
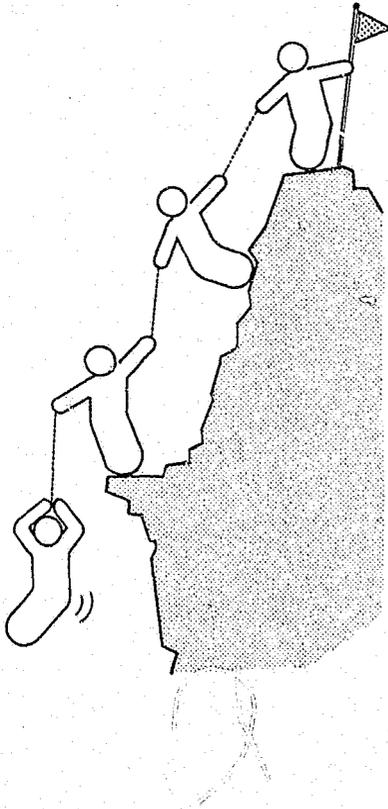
to a common purpose." —— Field Marshall Montgomery

- "The genius of a good leader is that he leaves behind him a situation which common sense, without the grace of genius, can deal with successfully." —— Walter Lippman

- "I sit here all day trying to persuade people to do the things they ought to have sense enough to do without my persuading them." —— Harry Truman

- "A leader is best when people barely know that he exists." —— Witter Bynner

- "A leader should place himself in the very thick of the fight, he should care passionately about the fate of the people he leads, he should be willing to serve them at the risk of incurring their momentary displeasure." —— John Kennedy

- "A leader's task is to induce them to believe that what he wants of them is what their own appraisal of their own responsibilities requires them to do in their own interest, not his." —— Richard Neustadt

In leading your organization, you can adopt a variety of leadership styles. For example, in making a managerial decision there are several options available to you:

- make the decision and then announce it to the staff;

- make your decision and then sell it;

- present your idea and invite questions;

- present a tentative decision subject to change;

- present the problem, get suggestions, then make a decision; and

- define the limits and request the staff to make a decision.[1]

Whatever you adopt as your leadership strategy, it is important to note that the kind of leader that subordinates like best is not necessarily the one who is most proficient in getting results. Nevertheless, the leader must be more concerned about results than popularity.

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[1] Tannebaum, Robert and Warren H. Schmidt, "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern", pp. 395 - 406.

Coordination

Coordination is achieving harmony of individual effort so that you can accomplish group goals. Coordinating involves reconciling differences in approach, timing, effort and/or interest. When your staff understands and sees how their job contributes to the overall goal of the grant, you have achieved some level of coordination.
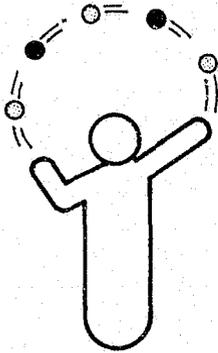
According to a pioneer management theorist, Mary Parker Follett, there are two primary principles of coordination which, if followed, will improve your organization:

- People exchange ideas, purposes and viewpoints through direct personal communication much more effectively than by any other method; and

- After plans are put into operation, it becomes more difficult to unify and time them properly. Thus, one should coordinate in the early stages of planning.

These principles of coordination really are reflections of common sense. Common sense also tells us that information is the foundation of

coordination and in any organization there is a need for continuous interchange of information.

Techniques Of Coordination

The most important means of achieving coordination is the supervisor; he is responsible for coordinating the internal activities of his subordinate group and for coordinating his group with other groups. Organizational structure also impacts on how well your organization coordinates its activities — similar responsibilities and tasks should be grouped together; activities which are interdependent should be grouped together or at least accessible to one another.

Communication is the primary tool for coordination, and there are a multiplicity of communication techniques, such as personal one-to-one contact; briefing sessions; weekly staff meetings; suggestion boxes; and written communications. Other common techniques are inter-group meetings, liaison personnel, and "open-door" policies whereby employees are encouraged to drop into your office and chat.

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External Coordination

The work plans of many LEAA grants call for working with other organizations, such as community groups, citizen organizations, local public agencies, and other grantees. Often these groups represent different interests and constituencies and are difficult to coordinate. The most common coordinating device is an Advisory Council, Action Board, or Steering Committee whose role is to coordinate activities of the membership and sometimes to reach consensus on action.

Although such groups can be cumbersome and unwieldy, they also can function as an effective forum to exchange information. The likelihood of this occurring is enhanced if the group does not try to always reach consensus on issues. You also will improve your chances for obtaining real coordination through an Advisory Board by:
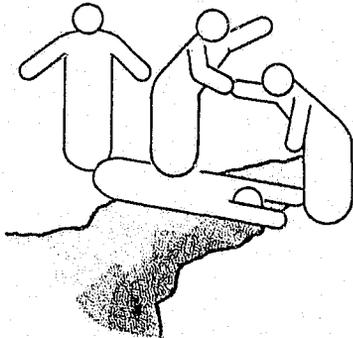
- calling meetings only when there is something important to discuss;

- developing an agenda for each meeting and sticking to it;

- establishing a time limit for any given member to speak; and

- recognizing that the Board is advisory in nature, rather than managerial.

The political advantages and coordination benefits to be gained from a board usually far outweigh the headaches they can create. Most social action grants, for instance, can accomplish a great deal more with the support and advice of the community than without it.

Communication

Many of the preceding areas of management have touched on communication. For example, the need to:

- spell out plans clearly to all staff;

- define clearly the assumptions on which you are basing your plans;

- explain the goals, mission and procedures of the organization to new employees;

- report accurate and current financial information;

- transfer information to achieve coordination.
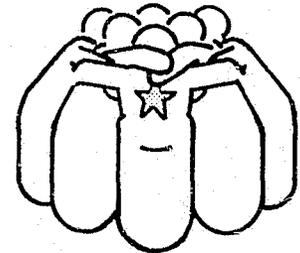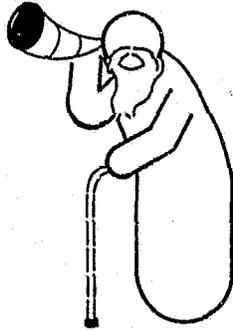
Communication is the interchange of thought or information to bring about mutual understanding. It is the means by which people are linked together in an organization.

As with coordination, much of the management theory and practice of good communication is basic common sense. However, we all have experienced times when we are "not communicating." There is, in fact, no such thing as perfect communication and all efforts of communication struggle against barriers. Such barriers include:

- Badly expressed messages resulting from poorly constructed thoughts, over-use of jargon, inadequate word choice, platitudes, etc;

- Faulty translations occurring when a message from person A is transmitted to C by B. The telephone game principle of distortion often goes into effect; and

- Poor retention causing some 50% of our communications to be lost.

Other barriers to effective communication are: inattention, unclarified assumptions, mistrust of the communicator, premature evaluation and fear.

Some of these barriers can be overcome if you:

- communicate directly;

- communicate in commonly understood language;

- give full, unbiased attention to the communications you are receiving; and

- make your communications support your organizational goals and objectives.

Achieving Your Objective

Achieving your grant's objective depends in large part on whether you can be an effective manager. This chapter has outlined some of the basic concepts of management. By applying these principles and techniques and a lot of common sense, you should be able to manage your grant successfully.

The following chapters address some of your primary obligations to LEAA as a recipient of LEAA funds. These comprise an important part of your overall management responsibilities.

II. GRANTEE OBLIGATIONS TO LEAA
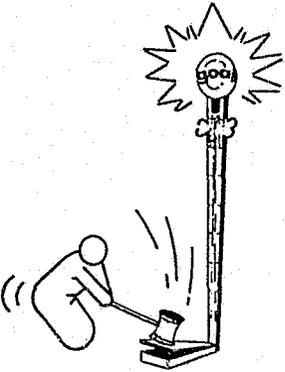
Accepting a grant from LEAA means that you have a legal duty to use your funds in accordance with the conditions of the grant. Almost all grants are awarded subject to **"conditions of fiscal administration"** to which you have expressly agreed and must adhere. In addition, your grant may include **"special conditions"** relating to the administration of your grant, which are a continuing requirement for the eligibility and use of grant funds. This chapter presents an overview of some of the basic conditions which apply to most grants. Additional and more specific information regarding your obligations to LEAA can be found in the two LEAA manuals which are listed at the end of this chapter.

Your Most Basic Obligation To LEAA

If you can achieve the goals and objectives that you set out to accomplish efficiently and in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, you

have met your most basic obligation to LEAA. In other words, if you did all that you said you would in your application for funds, then you have gone a long way toward fulfilling your requirements to LEAA.

Submitting Reports

LEAA uses three types of reports to gather information from grantees: (1) financial, (2) progress, and (3) evaluation.

Financial Reports

There are only two financial reports which are regularly used by LEAA grantees and each of them is relatively short and easy to complete. As the name implies, the Financial Status Report or the H-1 gives data on the status of your funds. It is a quarterly report designed to reflect all information on obligations and outlays. An original and one copy is submitted quarterly within 45 days following the end of the quarter to the Office of the Comptroller, LEAA, Washington, D.C. A copy is also sent to the LEAA Regional or Central Program Office and your SPA if appropriate.

The Report of Federal Cash Transactions or the H-2 is submitted by grantees

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receiving funds through a letter of credit* or with U. S. Treasury checks. It reports federal cash disbursements and cash on-hand and presents the difference between funds received and the disbursement of those funds. This report is submitted monthly, within 15 days following the end of the reporting month. The original report is submitted to the Office of the Comptroller, with a copy provided to the cognizant LEAA Regional or Central Office.

Two other financial forms are the **Request for Payment on Letter of Credit** which is used for securing funds when you are under a letter of credit method of financing, and the **Request for Advance or Reimbursement** (H-3) which is used for securing funds when not under a letter of credit.

Progress Reports

The **Discretionary Grant Progress Report** is the standard narrative reporting form for all discretionary grant awards. There are no fixed requirements as to

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*An instrument certified by an authorized official of a federal agency which authorizes a grantee to draw funds when needed from the Treasury through the cognizant Department of the Treasury Disbursing Office through a local bank.

the length or detail of this report, although it is expected that you will summarize your work and accomplishments to date. This report is submitted on a calendar quarter to your SPA and is due on the 30th day following the close of the quarter. Copies are also sent to the Regional Office or Central Office. In addition, a copy should be sent to any local funding unit you may have assigned monitoring responsibility.

Detailed instructions for the completion of any of these forms can be found on the forms themselves as well as in LEAA grantee manuals.

Evaluation

All self-assessment and evaluation reports should be submitted to your LEAA grant manager who is responsible for further distribution.

In addition to submitting these forms and reports, you should also send your LEAA grants manager any significant products your grant prepares, e.g., survey results, brochures, media materials, studies, inventories, etc. Tangible products are a better way to demonstrate your activities and outcomes than narrative descriptions of your accomplishments.

Other Obligations To LEAA

Meeting your objectives and submitting reports are only two of your obligations to LEAA. In addition, there are a myriad of regulations, laws, procedures, and policies with which you must comply. Most of these are outlined in the grantee manuals. However, there are some obligations which are so important, or so misunderstood, or so infrequently discussed that they warrant discussion here.

Conflict of Interest

In the use of LEAA grant funds you must avoid any action which might result in, or create the appearance of:

- using your position for private gain;

- making an official decision outside official channels; or

- affecting adversely the confidence of the public in the integrity of the program.

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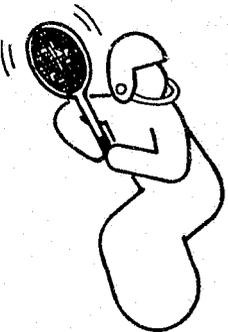
Maintenance And Retention Of Financial Records

Each recipient of LEAA funds must keep records which fully disclose the amount and disposition of the grant funds; the total cost of the project; the amount of the cost of the project undertaken by other funding sources; and "such other records as will facilitate an effective audit."

Records of your financial transactions must be retained for at least three years starting from when you submit your final expenditure report. Such records include:

- books of original entry;

- source documents supporting accounting transactions;

- general ledger and subsidiary ledgers;

- personnel and payroll records; and

- cancelled checks.

These and related records are to be maintained in an orderly manner and made available for audit purposes when required.

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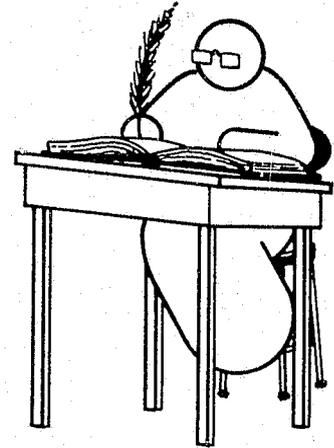
Allowability Of Costs

There are standard cost-allocation and allowability principles prescribed by the Federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for all grant-in-aid programs. What these say is that costs for carrying out unrelated functions of the grant are not allowable. For example, although you may have a line item in your budget labelled rather broadly as "administration," you cannot spend those funds for just anything administrative in nature, but rather only for things (a) related to the grant, and (b) allowed by OMB's principles. According to OMB, to be allowable a cost must be:

- necessary and reasonable for proper administration of the program;

- authorized and not prohibited under state of local laws;

- not allowable to, or included as, a cost of any other federally financed program; and

- consistent with generally accepted accounting principles.

Audit service, communications, employee fringe benefits, materials, and supplies are examples of typical allowable costs. Recruitment fees, entertainment, fines, penalties, contributions and donations are unallowable costs.

Staying Within Grant Scope

You have been given grant funds to perform some activity and to accomplish some objective(s); this scope of activity should not change during your grant period nor should you go outside its boundaries without an approval from LEAA. For example, if your grant is to create films for crime prevention, you should not be providing counseling to ex-offenders.

Likewise, you cannot alter your budget, change your methodology, or shift your objective without prior approval from your LEAA grants manager. For example if, for the same amount of money, you want to hire two secretaries instead of the one research assistant your grant application proposes, you must obtain LEAA approval. (It is usually necessary to have the approval in writing). Without prior approval, you are not in conformance with your grant plan and application.
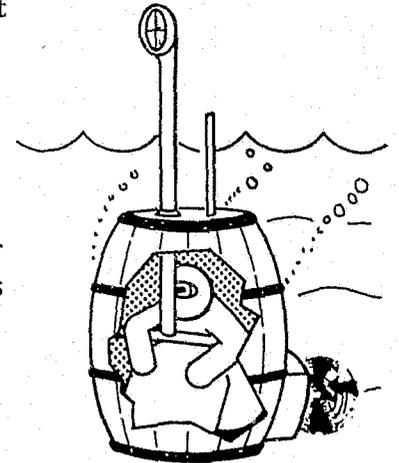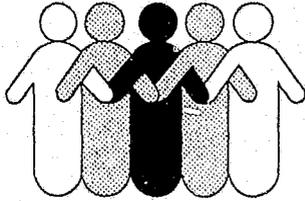
Equal Employment Opportunity

As a recipient of federal funds you must provide equal opportunity in employment for all persons, prohibit discrimination in employment because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or age; and promote the full realization of equal employment opportunity through a continuing affirmative program. Specifically you must not:

- Discriminate in hiring, discharging, compensation, or any other terms or conditions of employment;

- Segregate, limit, or classify employees in any way which discriminatorily deprives them of employment opportunities or otherwise unfavorably affects them as employees;

- Discriminate in admission to, or employment in, training opportunities;

- Use employment ads which indicate any discriminatory preference or limitation;

- Discriminate against a person because he or she has opposed

unlawful employment practices or assisted in any proceeding
under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

This policy must be an integral part of every aspect of personnel policy and
practice in the employment, development, advancement and treatment of
employees on the grant. This policy should also be disseminated to all grant
employees and included in any employee orientation material.

Meeting Special Conditions

In addition to these general regulations and obligations, many grantees have
special conditions attached to their grants which oblige them to meet spe-
cific requirements. Often these conditions are individualized to the particular
grant. For example, if an applicant has a weak evaluation methodology, a
special condition must be added to the award that requires a new evaluation
plan within 60 days from award for LEAA review and approval. Community-
based grants often have a special condition of establishing and maintaining
an advisory board for community input into grant activity.

These conditions carry equal and sometimes more weight than the general
conditions. Not only is it mandatory that you comply with special con-
ditions, it is also good management.

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Reference Material

There are numerous circulars from the Office of Management and Budget, instructional manuals from Treasury and guidelines from the Comptroller General to help the grantee understand the federal grant system. These are listed in the Bibliography. LEAA has several guideline manuals written expressly as an aid to grantees. These are discussed below.

Financial Management for Planning and Action Grants is a complete reference source and guide for financial administration of discretionary grants. It covers:

- accounting system and record requirements;

- allowability of costs;

- grantee contributions and matching shares;

- financial and performance reports; and

- award and payment of grant funds.

Guide for Discretionary Grant Programs gives descriptions of particular programs offering discretionary funds. It also gives:

- guidance to prospective applicants about the steps to be taken in making application for discretionary grant funds; and

- guidance to grantees on their responsibilities for:

  - accounting for funds,

  - reporting on progress, and

  - complying with applicable federal laws and regulations.

These manuals are available from your LEAA grants manager.

III. LEAA RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE GRANTEE
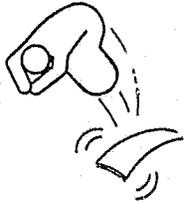
In accepting LEAA funding, you have obligated yourself and your organization to meet certain laws, requirements and policies. LEAA, in turn, has made certain commitments to you. Information, technical assistance, and training from LEAA are three critical services which may be available to you.

Information

There are three primary types of information which LEAA can provide to you:

- material on the state of the art in a particular area of criminal justice;

- information on the goals, activities, and products of other LEAA grantees; and

- data on crime and the impact of crime on society.

The LEAA Office of Public Information prepares the LEAA Newsletter, which is published at least ten times a year and is distributed to some 37,000 people who are involved or interested in the criminal justice system. The Newsletter reports on LEAA projects, policies and programs designed to assist state and local governments in strengthening and improving law enforcement and criminal justice at every level by national assistance.

To stimulate the adoption of advanced criminal justice practices, the LEAA National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice publishes and distributes information on research findings, evaluation results and successful projects. Handbooks distilling the best available research and experience are available on such topics as crime analysis units, neighborhood team policing and correctional programs.

Your primary contact for information is your grants manager. In addition,

you might want to to explore the data capabilities of the following federal
information resources:

- National Criminal Justice Reference Service, 950 L'Enfant Plaza,
  Room 1203, Washington, D. C. 20024
  (202) 755-9704.

- National Institute of Health, Clearinghouse of Drug Abuse
  Information, 11300 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852
  (301) 443-6500.

- LEAA Information Systems Division, 633 Indiana Avenue, N.W.,
  Washington, D. C. 20531
  (202) 376-3886.

- National Criminal Justice Information and Statistics Service,
  633 Indiana Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20531
  (202) 376-2626.

- LEAA Audio-Visual Communications Division, 633 Indiana
  Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20531
  (202) 376-3663.

Technical Assistance

The goal of technical assistance is to improve your capabilities to achieve your objectives as effectively as possible. Technical assistance can also contribute to your being able to:

- comply with special conditions and minimum standards of performance;

- be totally accountable for all funds;

- coordinate with other LEAA activities; and

- develop new and better solutions to meeting your needs.

In designing and delivering technical assistance, LEAA tries to assure that specific technical and managerial assistance needs of your grant are met. However, regardless of the specific content of technical assistance, there are certain procedures which are required for a successful transfer of capability. Key concepts of technical assistance are:
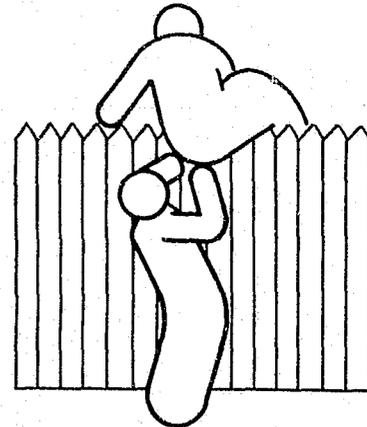
- You as the grantee define the need for technical assistance with guidance from your grants manager;

- Technical assistance will be provided at a level and using techniques appropriate to your grant's needs; and

- You as grantee will be viewed consistently as the technical assistance client.

Skill transfer is the major emphasis of such LEAA activities: the objective of the technical assistance is to assist you in meeting immediate crises, as well as to address your long-term concerns.

Programmatic and managerial technical assistance in a wide range of specific technical areas can be delivered. For example, technical assistance can be delivered in:

- **Management** areas such as developing milestones and MBO strategies; establishing coordination with other crime prevention organizations; creating an accounting system; outlining a self-evaluation methodology; and planning a program.

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- Programmatic areas such as planning a community needs assessment; designing a data system; establishing a rape crisis center; training volunteers for prison work; evaluating law enforcement equipment capabilities; and counseling first offenders.

For almost every activity you are involved in, and for almost every problem you may have, technical assistance resources are available. However, given that technical assistance resources are limited, not all requests for technical assistance from grantees are approved by LEAA.

Contact your grants manager if you would like help or additional information on technical assistance.

Training

LEAA has a variety of training resources which are available to grantees. For example:

- The National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice provides training and program material for governmental and other grantees.
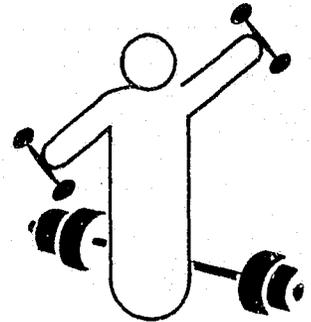
- Central and Regional Offices conduct national seminars and
  training programs in specific areas such as law enforcement,
  citizen initiative, court administration, planning and evaluation
  for grantees.

- State Planning Agencies periodically conduct courses on
  (1) new developments in an area; (2) management techniques;
  and/or (3) programmatic issues.

Grantees are usually notified when training is available in their area of
endeavor or geographic region. However, if you have any questions regard--
ing training opportunities for you or your staff, contact your LEAA grants
manager.

Monitoring

LEAA has a responsibility to monitor all projects supported by discretionary
funds. The monitoring entails:

- a comparison of your grant's actual activities and results with your
  original plans;

- an examination of your project's impact on your objectives and the specific problems addressed by your project; and

- an assessment of progress and problems of your project.

Monitoring occurs on a continuing basis. Your grants manager is reviewing your submitted reports and products with an eye toward appraising your activities, and he may also make site visits to monitor your progress.

Evaluation

Evaluation has a high priority within LEAA and this means that evaluation is important to you. LEAA has defined three main purposes of its evaluation activities:

- to generate information about the level of and the reasons for the success or failure of projects and programs funded with LEAA monies;

- to determine the extent to which discretionary fund projects are contributing to LEAA program objectives, general objectives and overall goals; and

- to determine the relative effectiveness and cost of different approaches to the same objectives.

In short, LEAA is asking what works, why does it work, and is there some way to accomplish the same thing for less money? To come up with the answers, LEAA uses four types of "performance" measures:

- self-assessment by the grantee in accordance with an evaluation plan approved by LEAA;

- monitoring by the appropriate LEAA offices; and

- project evaluation and program evaluation which are only used in selected program areas and usually done by an independent evaluator, i.e., a contractor.

For project and program evaluation, LEAA reserves the right to select the evaluator. In those cases where the evaluator has been previously selected by the grantee, LEAA must approve of the choice.

All evaluations are made available to the National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice. The Institute disseminates the reports with assistance from LEAA program and regional offices. The Institute also main-

tains a list of potential evaluation contractors which can be utilized by grantees.

Audit

It is LEAA's policy that financial audits be performed by an appropriate LEAA office. The audit is intended to be a comprehensive audit which covers financial operations, accountability for funds, compliance with laws, management practices and overall program accountability. This includes:

- a review of underlying or supporting documentation to determine the allowability and appropriateness of receipts and expenditures;

- a review of managerial policy and direction, organizational structure and degree of compliance with federal, state and local laws and regulations;

- a review of operational procedures to promote efficiency and to assure reliability of data contained in financial and progress reports; and

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- a review of practices regarding custody, utilization and control over property, equipment, supplies, etc.

Any organization with which you subcontract is also subject to audit from LEAA. In addition, your practices and techniques of monitoring that sub-grantee or subcontractor will be audited.

In summary, the purpose of LEAA's audit is to assure that your funds are (a) properly recorded and controlled, (b) spent for the purposes agreed upon, and (c) reported in a complete and reliable manner.

STOP!

GRANTS AVE.

GO!
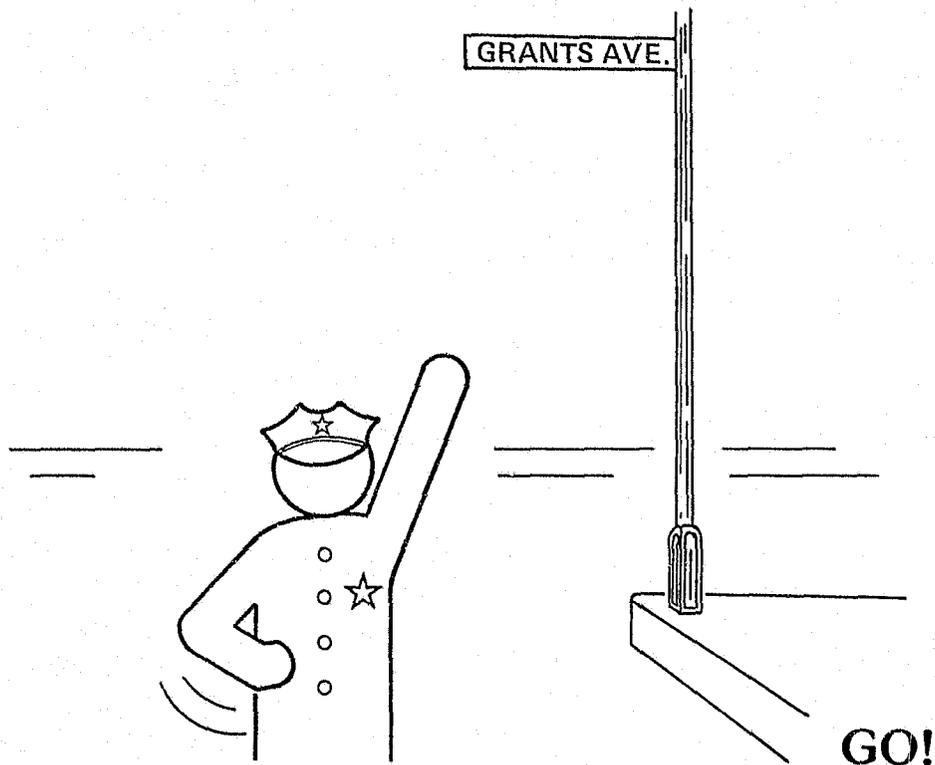
IV GRANTS MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Who Is The Grants Manager?

The key figure in the grants management process is the grants manager. In LEAA's Central Office in Washington, the grants manager is that person who:

- receives grant applications, analyzes their contents, develops the project further as necessary;

- writes a grants manager's memorandum advocating the approval or disapproval of a grant application;

- monitors the grant through close-out; and

- answers questions and provides information and guidance to the grantee.

In the Regional Offices, however, the grants manager's job is undertaken by several individuals. In some regions, State Representatives play part of the role, particularly in monitoring and overseeing grantee progress. Technical

or program review of the application, however, is done by the technical representative, e.g., the corrections specialist or the police specialist.

What Is The First Step? *

LEAA's grants management process actually begins before submission of a formal application to LEAA for funds. Prior to submission, the LEAA grants manager can provide guidance to potential grantees at conferences, through letters and over the telephone. An informal "concept paper," which is a draft of an application, may also be submitted to the grants manager for revision and comment. These pre-application activities are actually an initial screening of potential grantees.

The nature of the formal grants management process depends upon the type of project funded. There are two types of projects funded by LEAA:

* national impact projects, which are multi-state projects crossing several LEAA regions, with immediate national impact from data of project initiation; and

*See Appendix 2, Guide for Discretionary Grant Programs, LEAA Guidelines Manual M4500, Effective Edition.
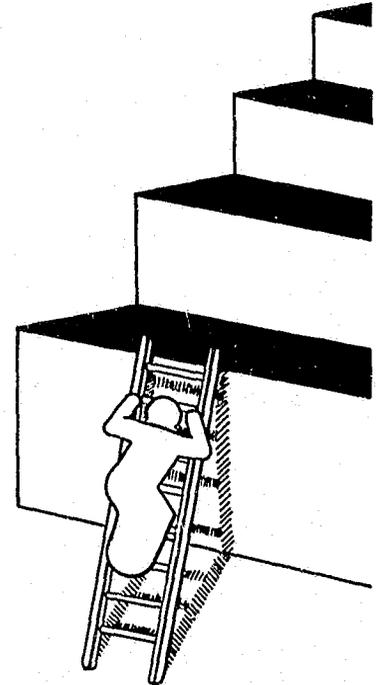
- local impact projects, which are projects which have impact entirely within a single jurisdiction or selected jurisdictions within a region and are without national impact during the short run or during a demonstration phase.

National Impact Grants Management (Track I)

The management process for national impact grants is centered in the Central Office of LEAA in Washington. The original application is sent to the Grants and Contracts Management Division in Washington. They send the application to:

- the appropriate Central Office program office;

- the appropriate Regional Office (R. O.); and

- the appropriate State Planning Agency (SPA).

The program office completes a program review and does a financial review. Budget and financial approval of the Financial Management Services Branch of the Grants and Contracts Management Division is also required. Following

receipt of R.O. and SPA comments, the program office prepares a Grant Manager's Memorandum which is designed to require the grants manager to do a thorough analysis of the application, to prepare him to do a thorough monitoring job and to ensure that results are utilized.

The memo has four major sections:

- project information;

- grant applicant information;

- financial information; and

- summary and recommendations.

The memorandum, signed by the appropriate Assistant Administrator, goes forward to the Administrator for a decision on the application. If the Administrator makes a favorable decision, the grant award letter is signed.

Applicants are notified of either approval or disapproval of their formal application normally within 90 days from the date the application arrives at LEAA. If the application is disapproved, the notification will contain the specific reason(s) for disapproval.

For the duration of the grant, program and financial monitoring is either done from the Central Office by the grants manager or delegated to the cognizant Regional Office. Copies of progress reports, financial reports and monitoring reports are furnished to the affected Regional Office and State Planning Agency.

Local Impact Grants Management (Track II)

Applications for local impact projects are sent to the cognizant Regional Office (and a copy to the SPA) which does a quick review of the application within ten days. All applications meeting guideline requirements are forwarded to the Central Office program office; all others are rejected.

The Central Office reviews applications and selects those which it would like reviewed in full. For those applications which are rejected, written reasons are sent to the R.O. This screening occurs within 30 days of receipt of the application.

For the approved applications the Regional Office completes a financial, programmatic and regulatory review; prepares a Grant Manager's Memorandum; and sends forward its recommendations to the Regional Administrator.

Applications which meet any of the criteria listed below are sent to the Administrator at the Central Office for a decision:

- over $300,000;

- an original approach, i.e., the concept has not been demonstrated or tested elsewhere;

- controversial in nature; and

- construction grants.

All other applications can be approved or disapproved by the Regional Administrator.

APPENDIX A
MANAGEMENT CHARTS

GANTT CHART

TIME (Project weeks or months)

MILESTONES CHART

TIME (Project weeks or months)
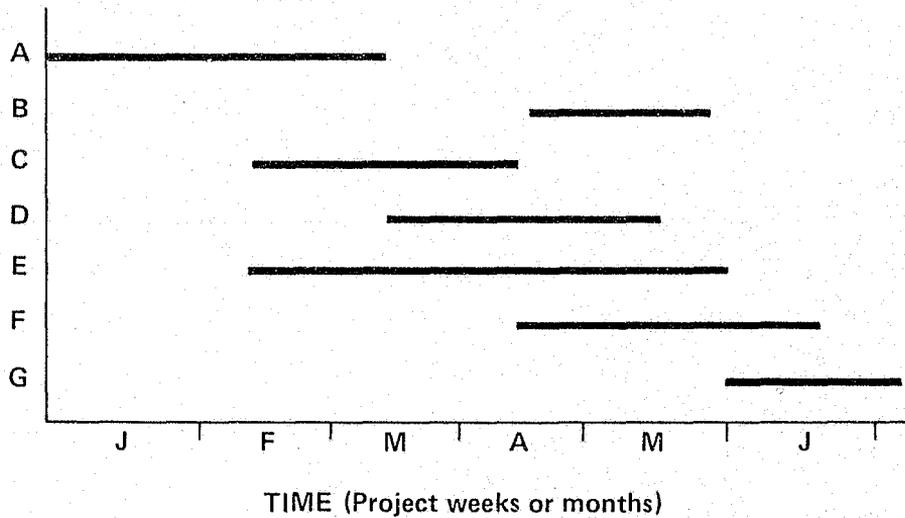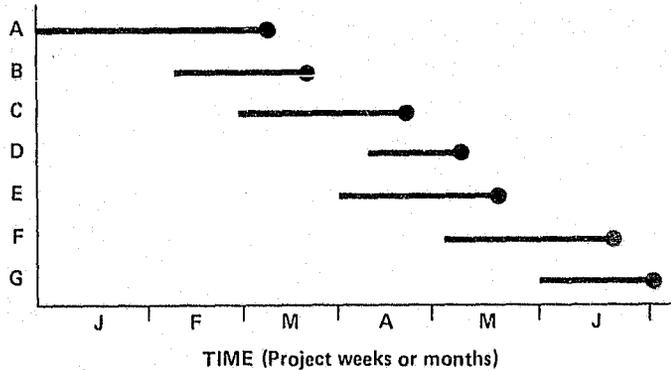
PROJECT ACTIVITY TIME SCHEDULE

Activity	Target Date Of Completion	Date	Review Comments

A-2

APPENDIX B
ACCOUNTING FORMS

PROPERTY INVENTORY SCHEDULE FOR THE PERIOD ENDING

GRANTEE NAME _____   GRANT NUMBER _____

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	VENDOR NAME	P. O. NO	LOCAL I.D. NUMBER	PROPERTY SER. NO.	ACQUISITION DATE	FEDERAL FUNDS	STATE FUNDS	LOCAL CASH	TOTAL COST

SUBMITTED BY _____   DATE _____

GENERAL LEDGER

Account Number —————————

Account Title —————————

Date 19	Items	Fol.	√	Debits	√	Credits	Dr. or Cr.	Balance

B-2

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*Copies of these documents are appendices in the LEAA Manual, *Financial Management for Planning and Action Grants.*

+Copies of these documents are appendices in the LEAA Manual, *Guide for Discretionary Grant Programs.*

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Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974.

COMMON SENSE ABOUT PROJECT MANAGEMENT

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