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PREVENTING  
LAW ENFORCEMENT  
STRESS:

*The Organization's Role*

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***PREVENTING  
LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS:  
THE ORGANIZATION'S ROLE***

Richard M. Ayres

in collaboration with

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For the nation's law enforcement psychologists,  
through whose counseling and employee assistance  
programs the organization has demonstrated its  
concern and care for the officer.

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## INTRODUCTION

### PREVENTING LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS: THE ORGANIZATION'S ROLE

Law enforcement work is generally considered one of the most stressful of all occupations. Great progress has been made over the past 15 years in the study and treatment of law enforcement stress; however, this progress has been paralleled by increased demands and pressures upon the individual officer. Today's officer is expected to perform at higher and higher levels of expertise in an increasingly complex environment.

Much of the recent research on law enforcement stress has concentrated on identifying particular "stressors" and their frequency of occurrence. Other studies have attempted to document the incidence and prevalence of stress-related disorders among law enforcement officers, including physical, emotional, and personal problems as well as impaired work performance (Goolkasian, Geddes, and Dejong, 1985).

Numerous studies have also attempted to relate stress and emotional problems experienced by law enforcement officers to rates of suicide, divorce, and alcoholism. Additionally, post-shooting trauma has received wide attention; and the need to develop strategies to assist officers involved in shootings is widely recognized.

#### THE ADMINISTRATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY

As a consequence of the many studies related to stress and the law enforcement officer, administrators have begun to recognize the degree to which they themselves are responsible for preserving and maintaining a healthy, stable, productive work force. These responsibilities are being met partially today within the numerous agencies that are providing services to prevent or reduce the adverse effects of physical and psychological stress through employee assistance and wellness programs and rehabilitation approaches.

The law enforcement officer's lot is indeed better today in those departments that have employee programs of stress awareness, identification, and management. Procedures such as regular physical exercise, relaxation techniques, and the encouraging of proper nutrition have also offered the employee a means to increase his or her tolerance to stress.

There is no question that these therapeutic and preventive programs are needed, wanted, and should be applauded. Yet, in reviewing law enforcement stress literature, one begins to wonder whether law enforcement administrators have been treating the symptoms rather than the problem.

#### THE MEDICAL MODEL

From a clinical perspective, stress has received much attention. Accordingly, a medical or illness model has provided the basis and direction for the treatment of stress. The medical model, by its very nature, defines the population to be dysfunctional. Law enforcement officers are viewed as either damaged or malfunctioning, requiring treatment of their strains; or they are considered vulnerable to the effects of law enforcement stress and require prophylactic training to reduce this vulnerability. This medical model also tends to concentrate on the *individual* as the subject of intervention or remediation (Kaufmann, 1985).

#### *Person-Centered Approaches to Occupational Stress*

These individual or "person-centered approaches to deal with occupational stress" (Beehr and O'Hara, 1986) have dominated the law enforcement psychology field. These approaches have focused upon individual officers and have thus defined the issue of law enforcement stress in individualistic terms, drawing attention away from any questions that might arise about the effect that the organization and organizational goals might have upon the stress of individual officers (Terry, 1983).

Increasing law enforcement officers' stress-coping abilities and providing clinical treatment for victims of strain is laudatory; however, these approaches do little to reduce or eliminate the stressors faced by officers (Kaufmann, 1985). This fact is particularly alarming since research demonstrates that law enforcement officers are not as bothered by field situations (problems on the street) as they are by the working conditions, role conflicts and ambiguities, and the administrative milieu within which they function (Kroes, Hurrell, and Margolis, 1974; Kroes, Margolis, and Hurrell, 1974; Hageman, 1978; Aldag and Brief, 1978; Singleton and Teahan, 1978).

One author observed that even with all the remedial programs currently being explored about the effects of stress on the individual officer, "no department has looked to the source of the problem and tried to systematically reduce the stress of the job" (Blackmore, 1978).

## THE ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH MODEL

Instead of further examining the individual-centered, clinical, illness model, this publication will concentrate on an approach to managing law enforcement stress through the use of an *organizational* health model. Law enforcement administrators must leave the coping and managing stress techniques, as well as the treatment, to the psychologists. The administrator's responsibility in preserving and maintaining a healthy, stable, productive work force is to *improve the work environment by identifying and eliminating the organizational stressors*. This publication, then, is designed to assist law enforcement administrators, supervisors, and managers in meeting that responsibility.

Emphasis is thus shifted from the person-centered stress management and stress intervention programs of the psychologists to the organization-centered strategies of management. The basic premises are that: 1) personal stress is often the symptom of an unhealthy workplace; and 2) the best stress management approach is to identify the organizational stressors, eliminate them, and work in harmony with the employees in developing a healthy workplace environment.

The following chapter provides a brief overview of the literature on law enforcement stress from a clinical perspective, including the effects of common stressors in law enforcement work. Chapter II examines the stressors internal to the organization; i.e., the management practices and organizational functions that cause stress and their impact on performance. Chapter III analyzes the implications of higher education with regard to law enforcement stress, and Chapter IV presents management strategies for developing a healthy workplace. Appendix A includes selected samples of mission statements and organizational values that have been developed by a wide range of law enforcement agencies. In Appendix B, techniques are presented that have proven effective for encouraging upward communication within law enforcement agencies. Finally, Appendix C is a model stress management training curriculum that provides participants with an overview of law enforcement stress and focuses on an organizational health model as its remedy.

It is important to emphasize that, while the focus of this document is on organization-centered strategies, the intent is not to demean the clinical intervention and preventive services or to question their value. On the contrary, these therapeutic services are recognized as indicators of an organization that is concerned with developing a healthy workplace environment.

## Chapter I

### LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS: A CLINICAL PERSPECTIVE

Everyone seems to know what stress is; yet, there remains disagreement over its precise definition. Stress has been broadly defined as "the body's non-specific response to any demand placed on it" (Selye, 1974). Job stress has been further defined as the condition in which some function or combination of functions at work interacts with the worker to disrupt his or her psychological and physiological equilibrium (Hurrell and Kroes, 1975). These definitions will no doubt satisfy the majority of researchers but will leave some law enforcement officials wondering how they relate to the work-a-day workplace. For these reasons, a simple, more practical definition of job stress is adopted for this publication.

#### JOB STRESS: OCCUPATIONAL PRESSURE THAT ADVERSELY AFFECTS WORKERS

Simply stated, job stress is the occupational pressure or burden that adversely affects workers. Kroes, in describing job stress in this manner, admits that such a definition is not as elegant as either the more sophisticated psychosocial one or as those that posit a medical-biochemical model. However, it serves to reinforce an important point--that whatever is troublesome, overwhelming, or uncomfortable about a job can simply be labeled the "stress" of the job (Kroes, 1985). Using this definition, it is easy to see that every job has a certain amount of stress. There will always be some occupational pressure or burden that will adversely affect workers or make them feel discomfort.

#### HOW MUCH JOB STRESS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT?

The stress issue in law enforcement then becomes a question of degree. How much job stress is there in law enforcement? Is job stress creating an unhealthy workplace?

The popular position of most writers today is that law enforcement work is one of the most, if not the most, stressful occupations in America. Petrone and Reiser (1985), stated, "Over the past 10 years, the inherently stressful nature of police work has been recognized..." Eisenberg (1975) noted, "Police work has been identified as one of a number of high stress occupations." Schaefer's statement in 1985, "Emotional stress, the real danger in police work, is alive and flourishing within police organizations," adds support to the position. Finally, S. Al Somodevilla of the Dallas, Texas, Police Department stated, "It is an accepted fact that the police officer is under stress and pressure unequalled by any other profession" (Reese, 1986).

Terry, on the other hand, maintained that many of these observations overstate the case. That stress-related problems are found in large enough numbers among police officers to be of concern, he admitted, cannot be denied. However, he contended that whether police work is the most stressful of all occupations seems questionable (Terry, 1981). Even more interesting is Terry's "self-fulfilling prophecy" regarding police stress. He contended that as long as police stress is singled out as a significant police problem, and as long as departments institute stress reduction programs that define certain areas of an officer's personal and job-related life as inherently stressful and an individual problem, the more likely police officers are to perceive these difficulties as being stressful (Terry, 1983).

Whether law enforcement work is the most stressful occupation is not the issue. What is important is that psychological stress, real or perceived, has been identified in law enforcement work to the degree that it is a serious occupational hazard capable of causing serious health problems.

#### SOURCES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS

The specific individual negative factors adversely affecting workers are called job stressors (Kroes, 1985). Law enforcement stressors have been categorized in various ways. Kroes found it helpful to divide them into those that law enforcement has in common with other occupations and those that are unique to the law enforcement profession (Kroes, 1985). Additional categories of various stressors impinging on law

enforcement have been identified (Eisenberg, 1975; Reiser, 1976; Roberts, 1975).

Stratton, summarizing the work of these authors, concluded that law enforcement stressors could be divided into four categories: 1) those external to the law enforcement organization; 2) those internal to the organization; 3) those in law enforcement work itself; and 4) those confronting the individual law enforcement officer (Stratton, 1978).<sup>1</sup>

### ***External Stressors***

Stressors external to the law enforcement organization include:

- o Frustration with the American judicial system; e.g., court rulings that are lenient to offenders or that restrict methods of criminal suppression, the premature release of offenders on bail, or the civil rights suits brought against police officers;
- o Lack of consideration by the courts in scheduling officers for court appearances, which can result in long waits, interruption of work assignments and infringement on personal time;
- o The public's lack of support and negative attitudes toward law enforcement;
- o Negative or distorted media coverage of law enforcement;
- o Officers' dislike of the decisions and interests of administrative bodies affecting law enforcement work.

### ***Internal Stressors***

Stressors from within the law enforcement agency include:

- o Policies and procedures that are offensive to officers;
- o Poor or inadequate training and inadequate career development opportunities;
- o Lack of identity and recognition for good performance;
- o Poor economic benefits and working conditions, including equipment and facilities;
- o Excessive paperwork;
- o Inconsistent discipline;
- o Perceived favoritism regarding promotions and assignments and the political implications of everyday administrative decisions.

### ***Stressors in Law Enforcement Work Itself***

There are a number of stressors found in law enforcement work itself, including:

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<sup>1</sup> See also Leonard Territo and Harold J. Vetter. "Stress and Police Personnel." *Journal of Police Science and Administration*, Vol. 9, No. 2, June 1981, p.196, which concludes that most law enforcement stressors fall into four categories: 1) organizational practices and characteristics; 2) criminal justice system practices and characteristics; 3) public practices and characteristics; and 4) police work itself.

- o The rigors of shift work, especially rotating shifts, which result in alterations to body rhythms and the officer's personal life;
- o Role conflicts between enforcing the law and serving the community;
- o Frequent exposure to life's miseries and brutalities;
- o Boredom, alternately interrupted by the need for sudden alertness and mobilized energy;
- o Fear and dangers of the job;
- o Constant responsibility for protecting other people;
- o The fragmented nature of the job, in which one person rarely follows a case through to conclusion;
- o Work overload.

### *Stressors Confronting the Individual Officer*

Stressors confronting the individual law enforcement officer include:

- o Fears regarding job competence, individual success, and safety;
- o Necessity to conform;
- o Necessity to take a second job or to further education;
- o Altered social status in the community due to attitude changes toward a person because he or she is an officer (Kroes, 1985; Stratton, 1978; Goolkasian, Geddes and Dejong, 1985; and Terry, 1981).

### **PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS**

Job stress can affect a person's health, personality, and/or job performance. Research has implicated psychological stress as an important causal agent in such health problems as coronary heart disease, gastrointestinal malfunctions, dermatological problems, severe nervous conditions, neurosis, and a number of other physical and mental disorders. The presence of 35 physiological effects of job-related stressors have been shown. These include "virtually every ailment from headaches and sinus attacks to shrinking thalmsuses, spastic colons, and grinding teeth" (Terry, 1981).

Several studies on stress have been conducted concerning its effects on the police officer. Interviews with 100 male Cincinnati police officers revealed the officers believed their jobs had adversely affected their family lives. Further, 32 percent of these officers reported digestive disorders and 24 percent reported headaches, as compared with only 14 percent of the civilian population (Kroes, Margolis, and Hurrell, 1974).

A 1972 to 1974 study that examined hospital and mental health center records in Tennessee, which included those of police as well as other occupational groups, revealed that the police had more health problems--particularly digestive and circulatory disorders--than other occupations (Richard and Fell, 1975).

One study of police found that the onset of strain occurs early in an officer's career. Fifteen percent of the officers in the study had cholesterol levels which rendered them twice as prone to coronary heart disease as persons with normal levels; 27 percent showed elevated triglycerides; 56 percent were from 6 to 20 pounds overweight, with 28 percent more than 21 pounds overweight; and 27 percent had a medium high or high risk of coronary heart disease (Grencik and Pitchess, 1973).

These reports suggest that police work is related to serious physical disorders--mainly digestive, respiratory, and cardiovascular. Yet, one author, analyzing physiological effects of police stress, concluded

that law enforcement no longer stands above all other occupations in terms of physiological maladies (Terry, 1981). Terry also suggested, having examined the standard mortality ratios for cardiovascular disease and diabetes mellitus on an occupation-by-occupation basis, that these physiological ailments may result from membership in the working class social structure, rather than from membership in certain occupational groups (Terry, 1981).

Removing the hype and hyperbole from the law enforcement stress issue, we find that officers do suffer serious physical disorders. Unfortunately, there is a scarcity of recent research in this area that demonstrates a direct causal relationship between job stressors and specific health problems.

## **EMOTIONAL EFFECTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS**

In addition to the physical disorders confronting law enforcement officers, there are a number of common emotional problems that have been linked to high levels of stress in police work. These problems have often manifested themselves in divorce and other family difficulties, alcoholism, burnout, workaholism, loss of non-police friends, the "John Wayne syndrome," suicide, sexual promiscuity, and post-shooting trauma. The areas that have received the most attention in the literature have been divorce, alcoholism, and suicide.

### ***Divorce***

High divorce rates have often been reported among the police; e.g., 17 percent of the officers in the Baltimore, Maryland Police Department; 27 percent in Santa Ana, California; and 33 percent in Chicago (Durner, Kroeker, Miller, and Reynolds, 1975). Based on data from the 1970 census, 22 percent of the police officers sampled had been divorced at least once--a figure much higher than the average of 13.8 percent for all groups (Blackmore, 1978).

In contrast to these reports, however, one author found low divorce rates among Los Angeles police (Reiser, 1973); and another study found only 5 percent of the officers interviewed were divorced (Kroes, Margolis, and Hurrell, 1974). In view of the fact that some departments have much lower divorce rates than others, Ellison and Gentz (1983) asserted that divorce may be one indicator of the impact of management styles and administrative factors on stress reactions.

Terry (1981), summarizing his analysis of the issue, stated that the best evidence available supports the argument that police divorce rates are lower than the popular depiction of police family life would lead one to anticipate.

### ***Alcoholism***

Alcoholism is reported to be rife among police officers as well as most people in general who carry firearms (Ellison and Genz, 1983). Further:

"Recent evidence indicates that alcohol is an important problem in the police occupation. Unknovic and Brown, in a survey of occupations, found 8 percent of all 'heavy drinkers' to be police officers. In a sample reported by Van Raalte, 67 percent of the officers admitted drinking on duty. Van Raalte also cited numerous incidents of intoxicated off-duty officers who injured others with a firearm. Hitz reported mortality ratios for alcohol-related cirrhosis of the liver to be significantly higher among police than among the general population" (Violanti, Marshall, and Howe, 1983).

One author unofficially maintained that in one major local police department, over 25 percent of the officers have a serious drinking problem (Kroes, 1985). Kroes cautions that his contention is unofficial, because: 1) drinking is one problem that is kept hidden in the closet; 2) officially, no one drinks on duty; and 3) it is admitted that only a few department employees are alcoholics. Other authors have reasoned that, while officers may be concerned about a colleague's inability while under the influence of alcohol to back them up, to drive safely, or to handle firearms competently, they are in a dilemma in many departments

because of the tradition of not reporting fellow employees for drinking or similar indiscretions (Schwartz and Schwartz, 1975). It can be assumed that this reasoning would be extended today to all types of substance abuse.

That drinking should become such a major problem is not surprising, if one understands the police culture, according to Kroes (1985). Kroes suggested that "choir practice" and getting together after work to drink and thus unwind is an accepted custom. Drinking is the one "vice" that is allowed and considered manly or macho.

While many police administrators believe that alcoholism is not as great a problem in police work as reported, a study of a major suburban police department found that officers may indeed be heavier consumers of alcohol than the general population (Pendergrass and Ostrove, 1986). While no solid statistics have been reported, *any* level of alcoholism is significant among an occupational group that exists solely to maintain law and order and to protect the public. More research is needed in this area to determine the extent of "alcoholism" in police work; however, a number of authors have suggested that every effort should be made to ensure that the police environment does not enable or encourage heavy alcohol consumption.

### *Suicide*

Suicides are often cited as another consequence of the stress of law enforcement work. Several authors have found high rates of police suicide, with one reporting New York police twice as likely as the general population to commit suicide (Niederhoffer, 1967). Another author confirmed this study with his assessment that the New York police suicide rate was approximately twice that of the general population (Heiman, 1975). The suicide rate among Wyoming police officers exceeded that of all other occupations examined (Nelson and Smith, 1970); and Richard and Fell found that the suicide rate of the police in their Tennessee sample was third highest among the occupational groups, surpassed only by laborers and pressmen.

Not all findings, however, confirm the assertion that police are a population at high risk for suicide. Based on findings that the suicide rate for police in Los Angeles was well below the average, police suicides may not be as high as is generally thought (Dash and Reiser, 1978).

There is, admittedly, some difficulty in gathering police suicide data. Departments either do not keep accurate data or are reluctant to release it (Heiman, 1977). Some authors have contended that police suicide figures are artificially low; and that in actuality, police probably rank highest in deaths by suicide (Kroes, 1985). This conclusion is based on Kroes' belief that departments have a tendency to report all deaths that can possibly be viewed in a way other than suicide as accidental. The final consensus, in spite of the difficulty in gathering data, seems to indicate that police officers do suffer higher rates of suicide than do other occupational groups.

### CRITICAL INCIDENT REACTIONS

Law enforcement officers are often at higher risk of experiencing psychological traumas than persons in many other occupations. Accidents, assaults, man-made and natural disasters, and shootings are examples of situations in which officers are involved more frequently than are average citizens. Research has shown that the "critical incident stress" resulting from such experiences affects up to 87 percent of *all* emergency service workers at least once during their careers (Pierson, 1989). While there is a set of symptoms that seems common and normal to all such trauma reactions, a post-traumatic stress disorder may develop from persistence of the symptoms, exacerbation of the condition by additional stressors, and/or the preexistence of psychological impairment (Neilsen, 1986).

The emotional impact of a shooting incident has been recognized as the most traumatic experience a law enforcement officer can face during his or her career. This area of law enforcement stress has received close attention in recent years with regard to the officer's emotional and physical reactions during and after the incident. In a sample of 86 officers, 18 reactions were expressly experienced, including heightened sense of danger, anger, nightmares, isolation/withdrawal, fear and anxiety about future situations, sleep difficulties, flashbacks/intruding thoughts, emotional numbing, depression, alienation, guilt/sorrow/remorse, the "Mark of Cain" (an assumption that others blame or shame them), problems with authority figures/rules/regulations,

family problems, feelings of insecurity/loss of control, sexual difficulties, alcohol/drug abuse, and suicidal thoughts (Solomon and Horn, 1986).

Police clinicians have become more aware of the nature of these stress reactions and are preparing to intercede effectively through psychotherapeutic interventions as well as appropriate utilization of peer support (McMains, 1986; McCafferty, Domingo, McCafferty and Westlake, 1989).

## **REDUCING LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS**

Methods for reducing law enforcement stress have been separated into the following three categories: 1) eliminating the stressors; 2) increasing the officer's stress coping ability; and 3) providing counseling for the stressed officer (Hurrell and Kroes, 1975).

### *Eliminating the Stressors*

Of the three types of reduction methods, the first, identifying and eliminating the job stressors, is the most effective (Terry, 1983). The officer on the street has built up a wealth of experience and intimately knows the stressors that impinge on him. By getting a group of experienced officers together to talk about stress problems, the most significant stressors can be identified. Once the major stressors are known, ideas need to be developed on how these stressors may be eliminated (Hurrell and Kroes, 1975). This, admittedly, is an oversimplified remedy; so much so, that it is probably the least used method for reducing law enforcement stress.

### *Increasing Stress-Coping Abilities*

In discussing the second method, Hurrell and Kroes contend that most people have available a major untapped resource to help them cope with stress--themselves. Yet, they add, this resource will remain untapped as long as the individual is ignorant of how to utilize himself or herself to the fullest. These authors recommend training for officers to help them understand their own reactions to various stimuli. Furthermore, since the officer's job, to a large extent, includes interacting with people, the authors recommend training that addresses what effect such factors as personality, motivations, cognition, emotion, fear, etc. have on human behavior. This approach focuses on increasing the individual officer's stress awareness and upon training officers in how to improve their interpersonal skills in dealing with daily conflict situations.

There have been an abundance of programs designed to increase the officer's stress-coping ability through training on stress-related difficulties before they escalate to the point where clinical intervention is needed (Goolkasian, Geddes and Dejong, 1985; Territo and Vetter, 1981; Schaefer, 1985; Reese, 1982; Reese and Bright, 1982; Greweck, 1975; Hurrell and Kroes, 1975; Reiser, 1973 and 1975; and Jacobi, 1975).

### *Providing Counseling for the Stressed Officer*

The third method of stress reduction involves providing the stressed person with professional counseling. Either an acute situational crisis or a slow buildup of job-related strain to a chronic and dangerous level can cause a law enforcement officer to need professional help. While most communities have mental health professionals available, it is preferable for the police department to employ a full-time psychologist or mental health consultant (Hurrell and Kroes, 1975; Terry, 1983). This is the area of stress reduction efforts where the greatest emphasis has been placed since the mid-1970s, as psychological services for law enforcement and employee assistance programs have developed (Goolkasian, Geddes, Dejong, 1985; Reese and Goldstein, 1986; Reese, 1987; Donovan, 1985).

## **STRESS AS A STATE OF THE INDIVIDUAL**

The emphasis on reduction of law enforcement stress has focused mainly on the individual officers who



suffer from stress in the workplace. This emphasis is two-fold. First, it is thought that individual officers themselves are responsible for coping with stress even within departments and agencies that have initiated stress-reduction programs. Second, the important factors affecting a person's perception and reaction to stressors are thought to be intra-individual (Greweck, 1975).

One study reflecting this emphasis examined the relationship between 119 officers' self-perceived stress and job satisfaction, finding that those officers reporting more stress and more stress symptoms were less satisfied with their jobs, in particular, their work, supervisors, and pay (Lester, Benkovich, Brady, Dietrich, and Solis, 1981). According to these authors, these findings have the following implications for management:

"Since experienced stress is related to job satisfaction, morale in a police department may be related to the experienced stress, and so morale may be improved if police officers are taught ways of dealing with and reducing stress."

As a result of this person-centered approach to deal with occupational stress, the medical or illness model, as described in the Introduction, has provided psychologists with the basis and direction for the treatment of stress. Viewing stress as a state of the individual officer, psychologists have fully applied an illness model and have established a role for themselves in law enforcement. The police psychologist's role today includes: 1) assisting in the selection of officer candidates to screen out people vulnerable to the stressors of the police world; 2) training officers in stress management techniques to mitigate the effects of stressors they will encounter and to reduce the likelihood of strains; and 3) treating the officers who suffer from strains (Kaufmann, 1985).

It has even been suggested that law enforcement officers be afforded psychological services to address the prevention and treatment of occupational stress as a form of compensation for the stress attributable to the work environment (Leonard and Tully, 1980). These authors surmised that psychological services were more appropriate forms of compensation than money because: 1) occupational stress is an intangible factor and cannot be measured; 2) the degree of occupational stress may vary with rank and function; and 3) individuals react differently to stressors and possess different tolerance levels.

Admittedly, this "person-centered" approach is one method for teaching officers stress management techniques for coping with their dissatisfaction with work, supervisors, and pay. However, it is suggested that an organization-centered approach; i.e., identifying the problems the officers have with their work, supervisors, and pay and making appropriate changes may well have a greater influence on improving morale.

Further, defining the issue of law enforcement stress in person-centered terms and concentrating on stress management and counseling programs for individual officers overlooks the possibility that the organization and its goals may actually have had some effect upon the officers' stress.

If, for instance, alcoholism, drug abuse, marital and family problems, suicide, and physiological ailments are viewed as problem areas within any given police department or thought to be linked to certain aspects of organizational life, then attention should be directed at these specific problems rather than attributing their onset to the stressful nature of police work (Terry, 1983).

Beehr and O'Hara (1986) went a step further by questioning whether person-centered approaches to occupational stress are even ethical:

"A final ethical issue addresses a fundamental problem inherent in almost all reported stress management studies in occupational settings. With very few exceptions, the stress management programs described attempt to teach the employee how to cope with the stressors present in the work environment. This is essentially an inoculation approach (Ganster, Mayes, Sime, and Tharp, 1982), which does not address the issue of changing the work environment to make it inherently less stressful...the favored approach has been to train employees to withstand the dangers of stress better. Teaching employees to cope with stress treats the effect while ignoring the cause. Because of this, it is a less desirable and perhaps less ethical strategy than improving the work environment."

According to Kaufmann (1985), the emphasis placed upon person-centered programs by psychologists and police administrators to increase officers' stress-coping abilities and the providing of clinical treatment for law enforcement victims of strain has, therefore, overshadowed the importance of addressing organizational stressors affecting the line officer.

### **STRESS AS A STATE OF THE ORGANIZATION**

For the reasons discussed, the remainder of this publication concentrates on organization-centered strategies of management rather than on person-centered approaches. The first steps in developing such organization-centered strategies are to examine the work environment, identify the internal stressors, and find equitable solutions to remove the stressors, thereby treating the causes instead of only the effects of stress.

## Chapter II

### MANAGEMENT PRACTICES/ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS CAUSING LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS

The important goals in examining management practices and organizational characteristics as they relate to law enforcement stress are to identify the sources of the problem and try to systematically eliminate them.

Using the organization-centered approach in examining the police workplace, the following management practices and organizational characteristics can be identified as contributing to law enforcement stress:

- o Autocratic quasi-paramilitaristic model
- o Hierarchical structure
- o Poor supervision
- o Lack of employee input into policy and decisionmaking
- o Excessive paperwork
- o Lack of administration support
- o Role conflict and ambiguity (lack of or conflicting organizational mission, values, goals and objectives)
- o Inadequate pay and resources
- o Adverse work schedules
- o Boredom
- o Unfair discipline, performance evaluation and promotion practices

#### AUTOCRATIC QUASI/PARAMILITARISTIC MODEL

Most law enforcement agencies are organized on a quasi/paramilitaristic basis, which sees police tasks as technological ones. Every assignment is sure to involve skills that do not vary greatly from individual to individual or from setting to setting. This model views discretion as unimportant and inappropriate for all but high-level supervisors (Ellison and Genz, 1983). Police officers face the same pressures as the average military recruit: excessive dress code, hair length and personal appearance regulations, problems of being low man on the totem pole, being required to show respect and respond properly to a superior officer, observing that "rank has its privileges," etc. (Kroes, 1985).

#### *Authoritarian Management*

In the traditional police organization, authoritarian management approaches predominate, with relatively little attention or concern being given to individual problems or human factors (Reiser, 1974). Reiser stated:

"Typically, the jackass fallacy is operative. This is based on the carrot and stick approach to personnel management, which assumes that without either dangling a tasty reward in front of

someone's nose or beating him with a stick, he will not move."

### ***"Punishment-Centered" Philosophy***

Another aspect of military-style organizations is that they tend to use a "punishment-centered" philosophy in their approach toward employees. This philosophy first assumes that rules are willfully violated, and this assumption is then used to justify punishment. Thus, an individual is presumed guilty before being proven innocent, which leaves the police officer in a continual state of feeling "wrong" in whatever he/she might do (Violanti, 1988).

### **HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE**

A corollary of the paramilitary model is that most law enforcement organizations are built on rigid, centralized structures. There are generally many levels of administrators and line workers in the organization. The greater the number of different ranks in a hierarchy, the greater the social distance between the top and bottom. Thus, in a department with a chief, deputy chief, assistant chiefs, inspectors, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, and patrol officers, it is a long way from bottom to top. Stotland (1975) believes this hierarchical structure decreases the sense of professionalism of those at the bottom of the pyramid, particularly patrol officers, contributing to lowered self-esteem.

Furthermore, people at the top of the structure often lose sight of or are not informed of what is happening on the bottom. When attempts are made to inform top management, the many layers in the communication network cause distortion and diffusion of the information, resulting in employee frustration and damaged morale.

### **POOR SUPERVISION**

First-line supervisors are management's most important link with the officers in the street. Poor supervisory practices, manifested in poor communication, favoritism in assignments and evaluations, inconsistency in applying rules and regulations, lack of direction, and lack of trust and respect can be devastating to law enforcement officers. This was best expressed by Eisenberg (1975):

"Styles of supervision vary tremendously, some providing a haven for the nurturance of psychological stress, while others tend to prohibit its manifestation or at least provide a vehicle available to the police officer for coping with stress. The supervisor who always 'goes by the book,' is never available on a complicated or delicate street situation, is overly demanding, tends not to back up a subordinate when conditions justify such support, or who fails to attend to subordinates' personal needs represents a supervisor who can substantially contribute to the psychological stress of his subordinates. The importance of the supervisor in the life of the patrol officer cannot be underestimated."

Although the importance of the supervisor cannot be underestimated, it often is by management, as demonstrated in the following ways: 1) through poor selection processes, not selecting the most qualified individual with management aptitude skills; 2) by not providing quality supervisory training in interpersonal skills; and 3) by not providing supervisors with authority compensatory with their responsibility.

### **LACK OF EMPLOYEE INPUT INTO POLICY AND DECISIONMAKING**

The lack of input in decisions that vitally affect one's job and life is a serious problem for law enforcement officers. An officer is better able to cope with the stress he faces if he feels that his superiors know and understand his problems and are in his corner. However, because of the militaristic atmosphere within police departments, line officers are discouraged from expressing opinions to their superiors (Kroes, 1985). In Kroes' opinion, administrators could take some pressure off their officers by letting the officers provide

professional input in decisions and policies that affect them.

In his study on job stress, French (1975) found that those who have lower levels of participation have higher job dissatisfaction. Similarly, low participation in decisionmaking about one's job correlates significantly to a number of important strains, namely boredom and depression. French also noted that participation not only has favorable effects on strain and on health, but it also produces good working relations with others, positive attitudes toward work, and high productivity.

### **EXCESSIVE PAPERWORK**

Excessive paperwork, often referred to as "red tape," is one of the most frequently mentioned problems with police administrators. Overemphasis on paper and forms creates problems for officers, who must often fulfill the role of clerks instead of professionals. Paperwork is perceived as more of an obstacle than a necessity (Violanti, 1988).

Eisenberg (1975) remarked that the volume of paper pushed by police officers is "incredible." Equally, if not more important, he asserted, is the fact that all too often, the need, purpose, and value of some types of paperwork is called into serious question by the officer himself. The importance of paperwork cannot be ignored in relation to documentation for performance evaluation, evidentiary matters, and civil litigation. Most officers understand the need for such paperwork. They are frustrated, however, with having to prepare correspondence that superiors should be responsible for, the use of redundant and obsolete forms and procedures, unnecessary reports, lack of clerical support and the underutilization of computers.

### **LACK OF ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT**

Any time law enforcement officers make independent decisions, they can be second-guessed by their superiors. Unfortunately, this second-guessing is highlighted in situations--often widely publicized and controversial--requiring the use of deadly force. Faced with this type of situation, the officer needs to know where his superiors stand. Will they support and back him, or will they abandon him to the wolves? Kroes (1985) contended that many line officers believe that they will be abandoned by their superiors and made scapegoats in the interest of public relations. When an incident occurs where an officer does not receive the administration's backing, the feeling of helplessness and lack of support spreads to other officers in the department. As a result, a general feeling of mistrust of the administration develops among the rank and file.

Further, officers who do not understand society's need for a system of checks and balances that includes close scrutiny of their behavior, particularly as it relates to force, will perceive any such scrutiny on the part of superiors as actual "abandonment." Yet, there is a critical difference between an "abandoning of the troops" and the normal internal investigative process that is a necessary societal control mechanism. Lack of education and understanding regarding this distinction often adds to officers' mistrust of the administration.

Officers also view a lack of support from the administration as a lack of concern for their welfare. They want management to defend the agency and employees against false accusations and innuendos from pressure and interest groups, city fathers, and the media. In addition, officers perceive a lack of support from the administration when top management does not speak out publicly on their behalf for needed wage increases and improved working conditions. The frustration felt by employees when management refuses to support them on these issues usually manifests itself in the form of job alienation or unionism.

### **ROLE CONFLICT AND AMBIGUITY**

Role conflict is defined as being torn by conflicting demands, feeling pressure to get along with people, and having differences with one's supervisors. Role ambiguity, in contrast, is having unclearly defined objectives, being unable to predict what others expect you to do, and having only a vague understanding of the scope of your responsibility (Kelling and Pate, 1978).

Role conflict and role ambiguity are found to be stressful in law enforcement as well as other

occupations. Law enforcement officers experience frustration and anxiety when there is no clear direction or mission for the department; they frequently complain about not knowing the goals and objectives. Frustration is also fueled when goals and objectives are not consistent or are not communicated and coordinated on a department-wide basis. Many departments also have rules and regulations that are ambiguous or conflicting. This is a particular problem for departments that try to make rules to cover every possible contingency. It is impossible for the officer to memorize all the rules in such departments; this results in confusion as to what behavior is expected or what the organization stands for.

Another aspect of role conflict was found in a study involving Miami, Florida, police officers. This study found that the multiplicity of roles officers were expected to perform; e.g., peace keeping, community service, crime fighting, etc., together with the ambiguities, inconsistencies, and conflicts between those roles, contributed significantly to stress and fatigue (Kelling and Pate, 1975). Officers become particularly frustrated over what they perceive as a lack of emphasis on "real" law enforcement matters. Community service is often perceived in the negative sense of taking them away from their number one priority--fighting crime.

### **INADEQUATE PAY AND RESOURCES**

Significant progress has been made in the area of law enforcement wages and benefits during the 1980s, particularly in large departments. In spite of this, however, inadequate pay remains a problem for law enforcement officers nationwide. In performing their duties, officers believe they are performing an important role in the community; i.e., protecting life and property. They also believe, especially in light of the dangerous nature of their work, that they should be paid commensurate with it and with the benefits they are providing to society. Overall, officers are simply frustrated over not being paid what they feel they are worth.

Lack of proper equipment and shortage of personnel also plague the law enforcement profession. When the quality of one's work and safety is partly dependent on one's equipment, the caliber and maintenance of the equipment takes on new significance. Officers' frustrations are manifested in complaints about such factors as too few officers to handle patrol functions; poor maintenance of equipment or facilities; low bid policies resulting in poor equipment; or shortage of ammunition, support personnel, vehicles, radio channels, flares, etc.

### **ADVERSE WORK SCHEDULES**

"The human adult is an animal whose body is tuned by evolution and training to go about its business during the hours of daylight and sleep during those of darkness" (Kroes, 1985). Shift work is considered a significant stressor in that it has substantial adverse effects on one's family life and possibly on one's health (Eisenberg, 1975). Changing shifts every month, every three months, etc. is disruptive to one's personal and occupational lifestyles. Research has shown consistently that rotating shifts, especially those that rotate on a weekly basis, have an adverse effect on one's physical condition and on one's ability to work at maximum efficiency (Follard and Monk, 1979; Meers, Maasen, and Verhaagen, 1978).

The findings in a study of Newark, New Jersey, police officers who rotated shifts weekly exemplifies the frustrations resulting from shift work. Of the officers in this study, 75 percent preferred steady shifts, while only 5 percent wanted to continue their rotating schedules. Further, 74 percent were dissatisfied with their eating habits, 64 percent experienced sleeping disorders, and 91 percent of these officers' wives disliked the rotating schedules (Ellison and Genz, 1983).

### **BOREDOM**

Boredom--a stressor experienced by some law enforcement officers--may stem from repetitive work and resulting mental understimulation or from physical inactivity; i.e., the idleness that arises from not having enough to do on the job. Kroes (1985) refers to research that indicates increased fatigue on the job is most closely related to shifts in which little activity (and resulting boredom) occurs.

## UNFAIR DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND PROMOTION PRACTICES

At first glance, the topics of unfair discipline, performance evaluation and promotion practices might be included under the topic "poor supervision." Supervisors can and do have an impact on how equitably officers will be treated. However, supervision is only one part of the issue, as top management has the overall responsibility for developing an organization climate of fairness. For this reason, the issue of fairness as it relates to discipline, performance evaluation and promotion must be addressed separately.

### *Unfair Discipline*

One of the most common stress factors in a law enforcement organization relates to the internal discipline structure. Officers often perceive themselves as second-class citizens, who do not have even the same rights as the common criminal. Officers are aware that they are not only liable criminally and civilly for an offense, but they can also face punishment from *within the organization*.

Therefore, frustration with the internal disciplinary process is commonly expressed by officers, who often complain of favoritism, overemphasis on negative discipline, excessive time between violation and corrective action, discipline based on external public pressure, lack of criteria or guidelines for disciplinary action, inconsistency and arbitrariness, the "where there's smoke there's fire" syndrome, "nitpicking" when major violations cannot be substantiated, vindictiveness, and lack of due process. The usual reaction by most officers to the disciplinary process is an antagonistic stance, with the expectation of unfair treatment.

### *Unfair Performance Evaluations*

The issue of fairness is also at the heart of performance evaluations. Will the officer be rated fairly? Is the evaluation objective? Is there a quota set by top management for outstanding ratings? Will the old numbers game be the basis for evaluation, or will documented qualitative factors reflecting one's ability to do the job be used? Will there be equal emphasis on and rewarding of good and bad performance? Unfortunately, in many agencies, most of these questions can be answered in a negative manner and thus generate stress. Even a sadder commentary is the fact that, in some departments, performance evaluations are a farce and have little or no meaning to the officers.

### *Unfair Promotion Practices*

Fairness is also the central issue in all promotion systems. The fact that many promotional processes ordinarily lack or are perceived as lacking fairness and objectivity is compounded by the limited opportunities for promotion to higher rank. Furthermore, police officers tend to be extremely competitive; and failure to be promoted in an anticipated time may result in feelings of alienation from the group, depression, and low self-esteem. This loss of group identification may seriously affect functioning ability on the street (Reiser, 1974).

## CONFRONTING THE STRESSORS

The traditional method of dealing with the 11 stressors discussed above has been to utilize a person-centered or illness model approach. This approach provides officers with psychological counseling or training on stress management techniques to increase their coping abilities.

Using an organization-centered approach, however, having examined the workplace and identified 11 management practices and organizational factors causing law enforcement stress, it is now necessary to develop management strategies to remove them, thereby treating the causes instead of merely the effects of stress.

Before addressing these management strategies to remove stress, it is important to consider a variable that has heightened the impact of these 11 stressors--the increased educational level of today's law enforcement officers.

## Chapter III

### IMPLICATIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION ON LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS

Eleven management practices and organizational factors have been documented as sources of law enforcement stress. While, as has been discussed, these stressors are significant on their own, their impact intensifies proportionately with the rise in the level of officer education. The fact is, the more education law enforcement officers receive, the more likely are their chances of experiencing strain as a result of any of these 11 stressors.

#### EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice determined in its primary report, *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*, that the average educational level for police was 12.4 years, barely more than a high school education. The Commission's second report, *Task Force Report - The Police*, considering the need to elevate educational requirements, recommended that: 1) all departments immediately require sworn officers to have a high school diploma; 2) all future personnel serving in that capacity have completed at least two years of college; and 3) educational standards be increased progressively, with the ultimate goal that all police officers have baccalaureate degrees.

In 1973, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals' *Report on Police* made more specific recommendations to ensure the selection of qualified personnel in police work, including the following: Every police agency should immediately require one year of college education as a condition of employment, two years of college by 1975, three years by 1978, and four years by 1982.

While the 1973 National Advisory Commission's goal of establishing a college graduate requirement for employment has not been achieved, significant progress has been made in advancing the education of the police officer. In a recent study by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), *The State of Police Education: Policy Direction for the 21st Century*, it was reported that the average educational level of police has increased from 12.4 years in 1967 to nearly 14 years today. The increase in the percentage of officers who have at least two years of college is even more dramatic. Fully 55 percent of all police officers in this study had completed two years of college, as compared to only 15 percent in 1970.

Yes, progress has been made; however, it is not enough, as evidenced by PERF's May, 1989, call for police agencies throughout the nation to increase educational requirements for officers. PERF's recommendations are as follows:

- o All law enforcement agencies should develop long-range plans for requiring a college degree as a minimum criteria for promotion and employment by 1995;
- o Effective immediately, all candidates for promotion to management and command ranks should be required to have baccalaureate degrees;
- o Effective immediately, all candidates for promotion to first-line and supervisory positions should have a minimum of 60 college credits;
- o The federal government should develop a program to provide financial aid to in-service officers to help further their educations.

It is apparent that law enforcement leaders will continue to encourage and place emphasis on officers' receiving a college education and eventually requiring a baccalaureate degree as a condition of employment. But at what potential price?



## STRESS PRODUCING FACTORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Following the 1967 President's Commission and the passage of the Omnibus Crime Control Act, law enforcement officers found themselves being encouraged and enticed to enroll in college by educational incentive pay, the Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP), and the G.I. Bill. Many officers initially enrolled in courses for the monetary benefits; some were collecting money under both LEEP and the G.I. Bill. Many found they could not afford *not* to go to school, for the more credits they earned, the more money they received through education pay incentive programs.

### *Personal Cost: Diminished Family Time*

While officers soon learned that going to school was financially rewarding, many also learned there was a personal cost involved. For these officers who worked their duty shifts, attended classes, studied, and wrote term papers on their "off" hours found they had less and less time to devote to their families.

### *Program Quality Often Lacking*

Colleges and universities quickly realized there was a demand for criminal justice higher education programs and money to be made. Initially, however, these programs lacked quality in curricula and course content. A limited pool of qualified faculty led some colleges to turn to law enforcement and hire instructors from their training academies. Many of the courses conducted in those early years were even held in law enforcement facilities. Officers in these programs often became frustrated in attending what they perceived as nothing more than a glorified training academy.

Carter, Sapp, and Stephens (1989), in their study on police education, contended that qualitative limitations of criminal justice programs were not a function of "profiteering" by colleges as much as they were the combined effect of a dramatic growth in demand and a lack of planning and direction for program development by colleges and universities. The authors documented their position by citing the ludicrous case, in 1972, in which Central Missouri State University's newly established Law Enforcement Program was placed under the School of Physical Education, because policing was "an outdoor activity."<sup>1</sup>

### *Animosity Toward the College-Educated Officer*

Another source of frustration for the officer pursuing a higher education was the animosity demonstrated toward him or her by the "street-educated" officer. This became a particular problem when a more highly educated subordinate attempted to make a suggestion to a more experienced officer who had not attended college. Resentment abounded between the "college boy" with no common sense and the seasoned veteran who had received his education through "hard knocks" in the streets.

### *Expectations of Spouse, Friends*

Many officers found that once they had received college degrees, their spouses and friends would ask, "Now that you have a degree, when are you going to quit law enforcement and get a *good* job?" Spouses often perceived the officer's spending long hours in classes and studying on their off-duty time simply as preparation for leaving law enforcement and finding a new and more lucrative occupation. As a result, the officer who thought he or she had a good job and, in fact, loved police work, began to have anxiety attacks over whether this was no longer the right occupation.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that this is no longer true; Central Missouri State University's law enforcement program is now considered to be a fine criminal justice and public safety program.

### *Misconceptions About Job Future*

Many officers also had false expectations about being promoted when they received their college degrees. When the promotion was not forthcoming, they perceived the selection process to be unfair because it did not take into account their education. If they received the promotion, some members of the agency looked on them as "prima donnas," assuming they got promoted strictly on the basis of their education, as opposed to ability.

### *Lack of Input into Policy and Decisionmaking*

The more education law enforcement officers have, the more "say" they want to have in how the department is run. The greatest source of stress, then, for college-educated officers is their lack of input into policy and decisionmaking. Phelps (1975), in discussing the increase in educated police officers, commented: "A professional does not like to accept the status quo. In the absence of movement toward a work climate which seeks employee participation in administrative decisions affecting their work, the costs in anxiety and hostility may be intense."

The lack of employee participation into policy and decisionmaking has been identified in Chapter II as an organizational stressor in law enforcement work. Its negative impact is only compounded with increased education. The officer who has worked hard, obtained an education, and attempts to apply the knowledge on the job becomes extremely frustrated when there are no opportunities to be heard or when suggestions fall on deaf ears and he or she is ignored.

### *Increased Boredom on the Job*

As discussed in Chapter II, the potential for boredom and frustration exists for all law enforcement officers. However, its impact is more than likely intensified in the college-educated officer, who has higher expectations and greater ambitions.

### *College Educated Perceived as Discontented by Superiors*

Other concerns about college-educated officers were expressed by police administrators in Carter, Sapp, and Stephens' 1989 report, *The State of Police Education*. Administrators responding to a survey reportedly perceived college-educated officers as more likely to question orders, to request more frequent reassignment, to have lower morale and more absences, and to become more easily frustrated with bureaucratic procedures. The following are specific comments of survey respondents:

"Statistically, the more educated a police officer becomes, (from a formal education framework), the higher the probability that he or she will leave law enforcement."

"Officers with advanced degrees sometimes feel frustrated from lack of challenges and advancement opportunities in law enforcement. Also, their creative abilities are not utilized in a manner that would be fulfilling to the officer."

"The only disadvantage of college-educated officers is meeting their employment needs (job satisfaction, sense of accomplishment). Sometimes they have a tendency to become bored because of not being challenged enough."

"Older deputies seem to sometimes resent young officers with a strong educational background in that they seem to feel that there is no substitute for experience."

## SOME EDUCATION-RELATED STRESSORS NOW RESOLVED

Fortunately, many of the stressful or negative aspects of a college education for law enforcement officers are no longer relevant. Criminal justice programs have evolved from the glorified training academies conducted in the basements of police departments to outstanding academic programs at the nation's leading universities.<sup>2</sup> Gone also, to a large extent, is the animosity in the ranks between the "haves" and the "have nots"--a result of the attrition of the older, uneducated officer.

## PERSISTENT EDUCATION-RELATED STRESSORS, FRUSTRATIONS

Yet, some of the concerns regarding college-educated officers remain. Officers will continue to be frustrated because of their higher expectations for advancement, the sometimes boring nature of routine patrol, the limited ability to grow and develop on the job, and the lack of opportunity for input into policy and decisionmaking. Moreover, it is probable that the more education officers receive, the greater their frustration will be with the management practices and organizational factors identified as sources of law enforcement stress.

### *Advantages of Education Far Outweigh Disadvantages*

These predictions are not to imply in any way that the law enforcement profession has not benefited from the increased level of education of many officers over the past 20 years. Indeed, there is a strong preference for college-educated officers by law enforcement administrators. Carter, Sapp, and Stephens (1989) found that administrators feel that educated officers have a wider range of performance skills that are more effective than those of non-college officers, including the following: being more global in their thinking, adapting better to change, having good relationships outside the police community, and having better written and oral skills.

The more education an officer receives, therefore, the more effective an employee he or she should be. Undoubtedly, the advantages of employing college-educated law enforcement officers far outweigh the disadvantages. Thus, the issue of this discussion is not whether education is good or bad for the law enforcement profession. Educating the officer is recognized as being good for the profession and society as a whole by the vast majority of law enforcement administrators, academicians, politicians, and writers. It is also recognized that educating officers has some disadvantages, and as it relates to this discussion, the potential for intensifying the level of stress experienced by them as a result of poor management practices or organizational stressors.

## HAVE ADMINISTRATORS FAILED TO KEEP PACE WITH EDUCATED WORKFORCE?

The real issue to be addressed is whether law enforcement administrators have kept pace with officers' changing needs since the 1967 President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice and the 1973 National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals made recommendations to elevate educational requirements for the police. Specifically, *how have administrators changed their work environments and their management and leadership styles to adapt to the subsequent increase in the educational level of law enforcement officers?* In the face of a more educated and enlightened workforce, it is clearly apparent that today's administrator can no longer cling to authoritative and paramilitaristic ways of management.

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<sup>2</sup> Examples of outstanding programs are the following: Michigan State University's School of Criminal Justice, East Lansing, Michigan; John Jay College of Criminal Justice, New York, New York; Sam Houston State University's College of Criminal Justice, Huntsville, Texas; and the University of Louisville's School of Justice Administration, Louisville, Kentucky.

To reiterate, the issue is not whether education is good or bad for the law enforcement profession--it is, of course good. The issue, rather, is whether law enforcement administrators have, and can in the future, adapt their management styles to effectively utilize the educated officer.

***"Enlightened" Management: The Goal of Today's Administrator***

The need to change the law enforcement work environment to a more enlightened one is in part substantiated by Carter, Sapp, and Stephens (1989). Discussing the concern of retaining college educated personnel, these authors remarked that while salary benefits are important, job satisfaction and occupational challenges are also important variables. They contended that if, in addition to reasonable compensation, the officer derives satisfaction from his or her assignments and has a good work environment, the probability of losing that officer is reduced.

The authors described their visits to selected police agencies that had implemented higher education requirements for entry and promotions. Following a visit to the San Diego, California, Police Department, the authors concluded:

"Overall, the San Diego Police Department command staff views personnel from what McGregor (1964) called a "Theory Y" perspective; i.e., employees are viewed as motivated, competent, and dedicated individuals who are committed to the goals of the organization. As such, the department does not take a concise position in regard to employee motivation, direction and control. Rather, the police department provides a communal working environment and attempts to facilitate employee self-motivation."

Following a visit to another agency--the San Jose, California, Police Department--the study found that this organization attributed its low attrition rate, high number of applicants, lack of problems with the educational requirement, and limited problems attracting minority applicants to two primary factors: working conditions and a good salary and benefits package. Commenting on the good working conditions, personnel interviewed stated that the cooperative and supportive environment within the department, along with the training and field support, simply makes the San Jose Police Department "*a good place to work.*"

It is clear that the law enforcement administrator of the 1990s who wants to eliminate the management practices and organizational factors identified as sources of stress (and intensified by increased education) must follow the lead of agencies run by "enlightened" management. Quite simply, they must make their departments "*good places to work.*"

## Chapter IV

### MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING A HEALTHY WORKPLACE

The effects of bad or unhealthy workplaces include the erosion of physical and mental health, hypertension, heart disease, ulcers, alcoholism, divorce, absenteeism, a low level of trust, low morale, low productivity, depression, and even suicide.

Unfortunately, many law enforcement agencies have employees exhibiting these symptoms and are, in fact, unhealthy places to work. The unhealthy law enforcement work environment is, to a large extent, the direct result of the management practices and organizational characteristics previously identified as contributing to law enforcement stress. Most agencies attempting to resolve the stress issue have used the person-centered illness model, thus attempting to make changes in the minds of the employees, rather in the policies and practices of the department itself.

The person-centered illness model can and has assisted many officers in their efforts to cope with job stressors and to feel better within the organization; however, this approach has offered little help other than psychological persuasion and counseling.

What is needed is an organizational health model that uses management strategies to identify and eliminate organizational stressors and therefore develop a healthy environment--perceived by employees as a good place to work.

#### WHAT IS A "GOOD PLACE TO WORK"?

In a good workplace, how people are treated is important. Creating a good working environment is a valid objective of the organization. Levering, in his research for *The 100 Best Companies to Work for in America* (1985) and his most recent book, *A Great Place to Work* (1988), found that employees describing good working environments used such terms as the following: "trust," "pride," "freedom," "family," "fair treatment," and "being allowed to make mistakes." In other words, employees talked about the atmosphere of the workplace--the distinctive ways in which people work and relate to each other. Further, in describing what it is like to work for a good employer, employees used the following five phrases time and time again:

- o "A friendly place"
- o "There isn't much politicking around here"
- o "You get a fair shake"
- o "More than a job"
- o "It's just like family"

#### **"A Friendly Place"**

Friendliness--enjoying each other's company--appears to be one of the distinguishing characteristics of a good workplace. Employees working for an organization are forced to interact with others, including their co-workers, bosses, or subordinates. What they think about their workplace has to do largely with the quality of those interactions.

#### **"There Isn't Much Politicking Around Here"**

At good workplaces, employees are not interested in or concerned about others politicking or "backstabbing";

i.e., co-workers are not constantly jockeying for position, trying to gain favor with the higher-ups, worrying about the impact of their actions on their chances for moving up, or looking over their shoulders to make sure someone else is not "setting them up" to destroy their careers. Politicking, from an employee perspective, destroys a sense of community--the sense that everyone is working together for a common cause.

### ***"You Get a Fair Shake"***

Employees at good workplaces consistently believe they are being treated fairly and are not being taken advantage of by the organization--they feel they are simply being given a fair shake. Most people are keenly aware of acts of favoritism, bias, inequity, and abuse within an organization. Good workplaces maintain standards of fairness that ensure the impartial, full hearing of employee complaints; they are committed to overruling a supervisor who has unfairly disciplined or fired a subordinate.

### ***"More than a Job"***

Employees at good workplaces feel that their work is more than just a job--it has meaning. Meaning is derived when employees perceive their work as making a valuable contribution to society, when they feel proud of what they do and who they do it with. Employees also find meaning when they are given more responsibility and control over their work. At good workplaces, employees who feel control over their work are those who have a role in defining their own jobs, in determining priorities, and in criticizing actions of others--including supervisors or top management--without fear of retribution.

### ***"It's Just Like Family"***

People who work for good employers mean something very positive when they say their workplaces have a familylike atmosphere. In such workplaces, people feel valued as individuals; they believe their personal concerns are important to others; and there is a lifelong career commitment to the organization as well as mutual respect and a feeling of harmony.

### ***Good Workplace Relationships***

The five phrases above, which illustrate why people like working for good employers, are, at the same time, the essential characteristics of a good workplace. In addition, Levering (1988) found that a good workplace is comprised of three distinct relationships. The first, the employee-employer relationship, is characterized by trust. When trust exists, the employer believes the workers want to be productive and participate fully in the enterprise; and the employees assume the employer has their interests at heart. This trust frees employees to obtain a deeper sense of fulfillment from their work.

The second relationship in a good workplace is that which exists between the employee and the job itself. Pride characterizes this relationship. Work can be boring or challenging, unimportant or socially significant. However, in good workplaces, work has meaning to the employees; and they feel pride in what they do.

The third relationship in a good workplace is that which exists among the employees, including the managers. This is characterized by a sense of community. There is a kind of camaraderie that makes for a pleasant working environment--a "friendly" place. Employees feel part of a harmonious community that lacks "politics," where people help each other develop and grow personally and professionally.

A good workplace, then, is one in which you trust the people you work for, have pride in what you do, and enjoy the people you are working with (Levering, 1988). Such a workplace is one which, in all likelihood, is free of the negative management practices and organizational characteristics that contribute to stress.

Law enforcement agencies can be good places to work. Administrators can begin developing a good workplace by using an organizational health model to manage law enforcement stress and build, support, and nurture the key workplace relationships.

## **AVOIDING LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS THROUGH AN ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH MODEL**

The chief executive officer of the law enforcement agency; i.e, the sheriff, chief of police, superintendent of state police, etc. is the most important person in the development of a healthy workplace. This leader must be totally committed to making the agency a healthy place to work. The commitment for change and the commitment to examine the organization and remove the stressors identified must start at the top of the organization and work down. This commitment level must be demonstrated not only by words, but by actions in support of changes and by sanctions against those who are not supportive. The leader must be highly visible in his commitments to having a healthy work environment, or the employees will only pay lip service to recommended changes.

Creating a healthy workplace must, therefore, become one of the most important goals of the organization. The following are management strategies to help ensure that this goal is achieved:

- o Examining the workplace;
- o Believing in the mission;
- o Living the organizational values;
- o Encouraging upward communication;
- o Pushing autonomy down;
- o Ensuring fairness;
- o Caring about people.

### ***Examining the Workplace***

The essence of the organizational health model centers on the ability of the organization to examine itself, identify internal stressors, and develop plans for needed change. In Chapter II, this approach was used to examine the workplace and identify 11 management practices and organizational characteristics as contributing to law enforcement stress. While these factors are found in most law enforcement agencies, each agency should examine itself to determine its own main stressors.

There are many mechanisms for obtaining information on employee stressors, including selected interviews with employees, organizational surveys and audits, quality circles, inspection processes, etc. The key to obtaining accurate information is ensuring that employees perceive management as sincere in attempting to identify stress-producing problems. Nothing will frustrate employees more than for management to show interest in their problems, conduct a survey, and then do nothing with the information obtained. Typical comments heard by employees as a result of management's inaction are: "Why complete the survey-- they (management) won't do anything with it," or "We've done this before and nothing happened."

If management is committed to listening to employee problems and obtaining information regarding organizational stressors, it must be equally committed to taking action to solve the problems. Failure to take action on employee input will undoubtedly lead to more stress in the workplace.

For example, excessive paperwork was identified as a major stressor for officers in a large police department in the southwestern part of the United States. Officers surveyed noted that excessive paperwork accounted for more of their time than any other activity; further, they perceived it to be one of their least important functions. The cause of the officers' frustration and anxiety was threefold; 1) the time it took to complete the paperwork; 2) the paperwork's perceived uselessness; and 3) the fact that management knew about the excessive paperwork and did nothing about it.

In this instance, management took steps to identify the problem and asked employees to meet and find ways of resolving it. As a result, the employees identified obsolete and redundant forms and procedures and had them eliminated. They also developed a policy and procedure whereby all forms and procedures are reviewed annually for their relevancy. While paperwork still exists in this agency (even that which might be perceived as excessive) it is worth noting that the paperwork that caused the most frustration was eliminated, thereby reducing the stress factor.

Examining the workplace to identify organizational stressors and working with the employees to find equitable solutions to their problems in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation is an effective strategy for reducing stress. It is important that this strategy becomes a habit; i.e., the organization on a regular basis attempts to identify stressors and eliminate them to ensure a healthy workplace.

### ***Believing in the Mission***

When the department lacks clear direction or a mission, officers experience frustration, anxiety, and stress over the ambiguities, inconsistencies, and conflicts between their peacekeeping, community service, and crime fighting roles. On the other hand, when an agency has a clear sense of its purpose, direction, and desired future state, employees are able to define their own roles, both in the organization and in the community at large (Benis, 1985).

A clear mission statement serves the purpose of: 1) defining for the officer the purpose and intent of the department; 2) allowing the officers to see themselves as part of a worthwhile enterprise; and 3) enabling officers to see how they can make a difference and improve the community through their participation in the department. Thus, a healthy workplace begins to evolve with a clearly defined mission statement.

Formulating a law enforcement agency's mission involves developing a clear statement of what business the organization is in; i.e., a concise declaration of the purpose or function the organization is attempting to fulfill in society. The mission statement, which should be known and understood by all department members, answers the questions of what the organization does, for whom, and how. Further, it identifies the organization's strategic, driving force (Pfeiffer, Goodstein, Nolan, 1985). The following is an example of an effective mission statement:

"The mission of the Houston Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in the City of Houston by working cooperatively with the public and within the framework of the U.S. Constitution to enforce the laws, preserve the peace, reduce fear, and provide a safe environment."  
(See Appendix A for the Houston Police Department's "Missions, Principles, and Values.")

Developing a mission statement is an extremely difficult, time consuming, but important task. The mission statement provides an enormously valuable management tool: it charts the organization's future direction, establishes a basis for organizational decisionmaking, and gives meaning to the job. Enlightened law enforcement management will formulate a mission statement for its department and ensure that every officer knows and understands it. Too often, officers are heard to say, "I think we have one (mission statement), but I have never seen it and I don't know what it is."

The law enforcement leader must understand and believe in the department's mission and effectively communicate it to everyone to keep the organization faithful to its purpose. Belief in the mission inspires all employees, management as well as line officers, to commit to the organization and provide the type of involvement and dedication necessary to establish a healthy workplace to more effectively serve the community.

### ***Living the Organizational Values***

Law enforcement officers in departments fashioned after the autocratic quasi-paramilitaristic model do not think of their workplaces as good places to work. According to this approach, employees cannot be trusted; and they must be coerced, controlled, directed, and threatened with punishment to put forth adequate effort. This style of management undermines most aspects of a healthy work environment. Because of its



impersonal techniques, people working under it describe themselves as "robots" or "just cogs in the wheel." There is little room for personal discretion and individuality in an organization where the manual of rules and regulations is the premier management tool. This impersonal, highly structured, uncaring atmosphere breeds stress and prevents harmony in the organization.

Enlightened law enforcement managers have come to realize that the autocratic style of management is not appropriate for today's educated officers. Rather, these leaders believe that officers are pressed toward excellence by management through values; by creating a sense of purpose, direction and performance that is conducive to a healthy workplace.

**Values: Beliefs that Guide the Organization.** Values are the beliefs that guide an organization and the behavior of its employees (Wasserman and Moore, 1988). Typically, an organization's values are organized and codified into a philosophy of operations, which explains how the organization approaches its work, how it is managed internally, and how it relates to its external environment. Organizational values determine what both individuals and organizations consider to be appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Thus, values play an important role by influencing administrative decisions as well as employee actions.

Law enforcement agencies that are committed to developing a healthy workplace must define and articulate those beliefs that guide them. Lee Brown, former police chief in Houston, Texas, saw establishing the department's value system as his responsibility and part of his leadership role. This value system, he contended, written as statements of policy, would determine how police services were ultimately delivered on the streets of the city (Brown, 1984).

**Values Determine Nature of Work Environment.** Chief Brown should also have noted that the value system will determine the nature of the work environment. Among the values relating to police services, Houston police also list "Improve Quality of Life," which states, "We are dedicated to improving the quality of work life in our department through interaction and concern for each other."

Law enforcement leaders must not overlook the impact values can have in changing the organizational atmosphere from an autocratic to a supportive, nurturing one. Inappropriate organizational behavior that creates an unhealthy workplace cannot be successfully changed by order, directive, or fiat; i.e., by the same autocratic method that initially caused the problem. To change such inappropriate behavior effectively, leaders must communicate that one of the core values of the organization is "respect for the people." All members of the organization are expected to know and understand the operating philosophy behind this value and use it in their day-to-day work. Furthermore, serious sanctions are invoked against any members who treat people inappropriately.

Thomas J. Watson, Sr., founded IBM in 1914 based on three core values: 1) the individual must be respected; 2) the customer must be given the best possible service; and 3) excellence and superior performance must be pursued (Rogers, 1986). Thomas J. Watson, Jr., commenting about IBM values, once wrote that IBM considers "respect for the individual" the most important single belief; and this belief was "bone-deep" in his father (Peters and Waterman, 1982).

The senior Watson, by identifying "respect for the individual" as a core value of IBM, truly wanted the people who worked for him to feel good about themselves and their work. By Watson's standards, no one could be paid enough money to be compensated for being made uncomfortable and unhappy by his supervisors (Rogers, 1986). IBM continues to adhere to this value by priding itself on being hard on supervisors who mistreat employees. As one IBM executive remarked: "The easiest way to get fired around here is for a supervisor to be capricious or unfair with subordinates (Levering, 1988).

Other successful private industry organizations have similar types of values:

**Bell South: "Respect for the Individual"**

"We provide our people full opportunity to contribute to the success of the business through individual participation and challenging responsibilities. We believe our people are capable, loyal, and concerned about the success of the business. We encourage them to use their own initiative

to satisfy customers and improve profitability, and we respect their opinions and ideas. The dignity of each individual is central to the way we conduct our business."

### **Champion International Corporation**

"...Wants to be known for fair and thoughtful treatment of employees. We are committed to providing equality of opportunity for all people, regardless of race, national origin, sex, age or religion. We actively seek a talented, diverse, enthusiastic workforce. We believe in the individual worth of each employee and seek to foster opportunities for personal development" (McCoy, 1985).

Organizations that do not have a heritage of mutually accepted shared values tend to become unhinged during stress. For organizations to be strong, the members need to share a preconceived notion of what is correct behavior; i.e., a "business ethic"; and they must think of this ethic as a positive force, not a constraint (McCoy, 1983). Law enforcement agencies must clarify their values as to what is correct behavior in how they approach their work, how they manage internally, and how they relate to the community.

The organizational health model for reducing or eliminating stress requires in particular that law enforcement agencies clarify their values as to how people are to be managed and treated. A healthy workplace is one where the organization holds one of its core values to be "respect for the individual"--believing its employees are capable, loyal, and trustworthy, and treating them in a fair and dignified manner. This value must be clearly articulated to everyone in the organization and repeated so often that everyone understands just how seriously they are to be taken. What brings values to life is the awareness of them and why they are important by everyone in the organization. It is not just values--it is the extensive sharing of them that makes a difference (Deal and Kennedy, 1982).

### ***Encouraging Upward Communication***

Law enforcement agencies that encourage open communication and employee input into decision- and policymaking are good places to work. Unfortunately, too many agencies have a militaristic atmosphere that discourages officers from expressing their views. The negative impact of not permitting employee participation is intensified, as pointed out in Chapter III, by the increased level of education among law enforcement officers. The officers' frustration and anxiety over not having a voice in matters that affect the workplace usually manifests itself as low morale, employee dissatisfaction, job alienation, low productivity, and the formation of labor associations.

Former Baltimore Police Commissioner Don Pomerleau, in discussing some of the negative consequences of poor communication, stated:

"Employee organizations develop many times because we have not established all-inclusive and progressive communications. We and our subordinates have not listened, nor have we provided our personnel with a means to seek redress for their real or imagined problems. The old autocratic and dictatorial approach to problem-solving has come under severe criticism, and rightly so.

Opening lines of communication is an effective means of creating a stable labor environment. Communication between the police administrator and his officers gives each an understanding of the other's problems. Two-way communication is best facilitated by periodic, informal discussions. An informal discussion offers three decided advantages: officers are able to express their needs and dissatisfactions; more time-consuming and costly methods of achieving changes in employment conditions, such as lobbying and collective bargaining are avoided; and police officers develop a better understanding of management problems" (Burpo, 1971).

Open communication channels are obviously beneficial to a law enforcement agency and its employees. Ideas can be exchanged, and many problems can be resolved or avoided. Suffice it to say, if law enforcement

leaders are dedicated to improving channels of communications, high levels of stress will be reduced, creating a healthier work environment. Splendid advice. The only problem is that it is not happening--at least it is not in practice in many departments today. Too many law enforcement officers still believe that they have no safe, credible, and accessible route through which to present their concerns and complaints.

***Traditional Chain of Command Inefficient Communication System.*** The traditional chain of command has proven to be an inefficient communication system. Even officers with legitimate concerns will not always use the chain of command if they perceive it as arbitrary or career-limiting. As a result of this frustration, many employees turn to unions, courts, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and other governmental agencies to air their grievances (Ventura and Harvey, 1988).

Some law enforcement administrators also discourage upward communication, adding to anxiety levels by such inappropriate actions as: 1) violating an employee's trust by revealing confidential information; 2) publicly confronting or ridiculing an employee; 3) creating an atmosphere where employees believe they will be discriminated against for voicing criticism or holding an opposing view; 4) agreeing with a suggestion and promising to take action and then doing nothing; and 5) being too busy to take the time to listen to employees (Thomas, 1985).

In spite of the inadequacies of present communication systems and dysfunctional managerial styles, almost everyone agrees that a fair, open and readily accessible process for resolving problems is essential for a healthy and productive law enforcement organization. Being given the opportunity for meaningful participation not only has favorable effects on strain and health, but employees are more likely to consider the best interests of the organization and make sound decisions.

***"Bottom Up" Flow of Ideas Needed.*** Law enforcement leaders committed to creating a good workplace must adopt a participative decisionmaking style that encourages a "bottom-up" flow of ideas. This means that all people who are affected by a decision have the opportunity to participate in it. In a good workplace, employees participating in this "bottom-up" flow of ideas must also feel free to tell management what they think is right rather than what is merely acceptable. Peter F. Drucker, eminent management consultant, learned this on his first consulting assignment, a study of the management structure and policies of the General Motors Corporation. Alfred P. Sloan, Jr., who was the company's chairman and chief executive officer, called Drucker to his office at the start of the study and said:

"I shall not tell you what to study, what to write, or what conclusions to come to. This is your task. My only instruction to you is to put down what you think is right as you see it. Don't you worry about our reaction. Don't you worry about whether we will like this or dislike that. And don't you, above all, concern yourself with the compromises that might be needed to make your recommendations acceptable. There is not one executive in this company who does not know how to make every single conceivable compromise without any help from you. But he can't make the right compromise unless you first tell him what 'right' is" (Drucker, 1966).

Upward communication is essential for an organization, but only if it carries accurate information. Good decisions are based on good information. Law enforcement officers become extremely agitated when they observe the information they furnish to their superiors becoming distorted as a result of the superiors' effort to tell the chief what they think he wants to hear.

Law enforcement leaders promoting a healthy work environment must insist that all departmental employees who are providing input start out with what is *right* rather than what is merely acceptable. Leaders must also ensure that there will be no recriminations brought against anyone bringing "bad news" to management's attention or disagreeing with management's position. In fact, the enlightened manager will insist that complaints and criticism be communicated upward and will encourage organized disagreement.

Law enforcement leaders cannot implement this type of communication philosophy overnight. Instead, they must commit themselves to a give-and-take process that has to be worked at daily.

***Statement of Policy Must Communicate Organizational Value.*** Agencies must establish a strong organizational value, written as a statement of policy, that encourages officers' participation and upward communication. The policies must be based on management's recognition of the officer's need to have impact on departmental policy and decisionmaking and of the importance of fulfilling that need. Management must structure these policies on integrity and honesty, draw them up cooperatively, and respond to legitimate questions. Most importantly, these policies must be verbalized and fully supported by the law enforcement leader and his management staff (Sigband, 1974).

To be successful, policies of upward communication must be based on management's desire to create a healthy organizational climate where:

1. Managers believe officers who, because of their daily contact with operational problems and needs, can provide unique expertise on law enforcement policy issues;
2. Employees feel free to voice their concerns and dissatisfactions to management;
3. Employees are willing to tell management what they think is right rather than acceptable;
4. Employees may voice concerns without fear of reprisals;
5. Organized disagreement is encouraged, and management's commitment to effective problem-solving is emphasized;
6. Innovation and creativity are encouraged; employees are rewarded for trying and succeeding but not penalized for trying and failing;
7. Managers are encouraged to take time to listen to employees on a regular basis.

An organizational climate developed along these guidelines will promote employee input into the department's policy and decisionmaking. This is the real challenge for law enforcement leaders today, particularly in light of the officers' increased level of education--to identify new techniques for encouraging upward communication. The more techniques offered, the better the chance for development of employee commitment and the solution of management/employee problems.

***Techniques for Encouraging Upward Communication.*** Some of the techniques used by law enforcement agencies for encouraging upward communication include the following:

- o Advisory groups;
- o Brainstorming sessions;
- o Career planning;
- o Code-a-phone telephone messages;
- o Command and supervisory staff meetings;
- o Department newspaper;
- o Designated Devil's Advocate at staff meetings;
- o Electronic mail;

- o Employee council;
- o Employee-executive breakfast, lunch, coffee;
- o Executive visits to the field;
- o Executive visits to union meetings;
- o Executives working on line jobs;
- o Exit interviews;
- o Grievance procedures;
- o Inspection processes;
- o Labor management committee;
- o Open door systems;
- o Quality circles;
- o Recruit interviews;
- o Retreats;
- o Suggestion programs;
- o Surveys;
- o Task forces.

The benefits derived from providing employees with some of these upward communication techniques in an atmosphere of trust and cooperation are undeniable: better decisions and problem resolutions; improved supervisory practices; increased consistency in policy application; lessening of labor/management conflict; and ultimately, improved trust and a healthier workplace (Ventura and Harvey, 1988).

### *Pushing Autonomy Down*

The traditional paramilitary law enforcement organization of today is not conducive to a healthy workplace. The hierarchical structure creates a social gap between the top and bottom, distorts and dilutes information traveling through the many levels, and decreases the sense of professionalism and subsequently the self-esteem of those at the bottom. Educated law enforcement officers want more responsibility and discretionary power in performing their tasks and in many cases are only frustrated by the many layers of authority and the decisionmaking process.

In their study of excellent companies, Peters and Waterman (1981) found that none of them had formal matrix structures. In other companies--those that did have formal, top-heavy structures, the employees were often confused and unsure about to whom they should report for what. The critical problem, it seems, is that in the name of "balance," everything is somehow "hooked" to everything else. These top-heavy organizations, the authors claimed, become paralyzed because the structure not only fails to clarify priorities--it actually dilutes them. "In effect, it says to people down the line, 'Everything is important; pay equal attention to everything.' The message is paralyzing."

Virtually all of the excellent companies, on the other hand, were found to place a high value on pushing autonomy far down the line and on preserving and maximizing practical autonomy for large numbers of people (Peters and Waterman, 1981).

***"Operational Streamlining" Predicted for Law Enforcement.*** This type of "operational streamlining"--flattening the organizational pyramid--is being recommended for law enforcement. Large departments in the future will have fewer lieutenants, captains, and majors; fewer staff departments; and fewer staff assistants. On the other hand, they will have more sergeants and officers. Thus, the traditional paramilitary police organization of today will change (Robinette, 1989).

Robinette based his predictions of a flatter police organization with fewer levels of management on: 1) the strong pressure to reduce the cost of government; 2) the need to reduce the complexity of police service delivery; and 3) the reduced need for intermediate levels of reviews with the advent of electronic information systems.

In addition to increased efficiency and cost-reduction, Robinette contended that pushing autonomy down also benefits the working environment through increased job satisfaction and as an antidote for police officer burnout.

Pushing autonomy down, then, will help create a healthy workplace by permitting officers to have more control over their work, more decisionmaking opportunities, and increased responsibility and challenge.

Law enforcement leaders concerned about developing a healthy, yet effective workplace should consider streamlining their departments--reducing the levels of management as well as the number of managers. They should also play an active role in defining the supervisors' and managers' responsibilities and authority and insist that decisionmaking be kept at the lowest level possible.

### ***Ensuring Fairness***

Law enforcement officers, like other employees, are interested in fairness. When they perceive a lack of fairness in disciplinary matters, performance appraisals, promotions, etc., they become frustrated, anxious, and at times, antagonistic. Law enforcement leaders must promote fairness in the workplace to keep employee stress at a minimum. Fairness needs to be one of the organization's core values or be closely tied to another core value, such as "respect for the individual." When employees know that fairness is one of the guiding principles underlying all organizational decisions, they are more likely to view the organization as a good place to work.

Federal Express, a company that does not tolerate autocratic management, developed a peer review system for handling employee grievances. The system, known as the Guaranteed Fair Treatment (GFT) procedure, has been described by a Federal Express executive as "the glue that holds this company together." Levering (1988), commenting on this metaphor, stated:

"In a profound sense, fairness is the glue that holds a good workplace together. When employees perceive that the management makes a sincere effort to be fair to employees in compensation, in benefits, in handling promotions, and in coping with disputes with supervisors, they are more likely to extend their trust into other areas. An atmosphere of fair treatment affects every aspect of the workplace."

Law enforcement agencies committed to relieving stress and creating a healthy work environment cannot tolerate unfair employee treatment. If they do, employees will turn to unions, litigation, backstabbing, politicking, sabotage, or simply quitting the force. Leaders, therefore, must be highly vocal, visible, and demonstrative in their efforts to promote fairness.

### ***Caring About People***

Supervisors who give the impression that they don't care about their people can substantially contribute to employees' psychological stress. Ellison and Genz (1983) suggested:

"Good supervision itself is the best stress management tool. Good supervisory techniques not only increase efficiency, they also help officers withstand outside pressures. In contrast, inappropriate supervision can itself be one of the worst sources of pressure."

There are numerous publications describing the tenets of good supervisory practices; there is no need to reiterate them here. What must be emphasized, however, is the importance of law enforcement leaders recognizing the critical role supervisors can play in reducing stress. Once recognized, management must place a high priority on selecting the most capable supervisors and providing them with appropriate training, stressing the interpersonal skills of facilitation, coaching, and counseling. Thus far, law enforcement management has not done an adequate job in developing among its supervisory staff a management-consciousness and a need to care about people.

Caring about people must also extend beyond the supervisory ranks. Organizations that care about people provide their employees with equitable wages and benefits, job security, training, and the opportunity for growth and development. Caring organizations also see that the agency and its employees are defended against false accusations and innuendos; further, they speak out on behalf of the employees on matters affecting the workplace. Caring organizations create a familylike atmosphere by taking an interest in employees' personal time, making them feel valued as individuals, and providing a feeling of community.

Law enforcement leaders wanting to reduce the psychological stress caused by poor supervision and apathetic attitudes toward employees must be committed to making the workplace a "worthplace"--where people care about people and where both organizational and employee needs are emphasized.

## CONCLUSION

Individual, or "person-centered" approaches to occupational stress have long dominated the law enforcement psychology field. These approaches have focused on individual officers and have thus defined the issue of law enforcement stress in individualistic terms, drawing attention away from any effects the organization might have on officer stress.

This report shifts the emphasis from the person-centered stress management and intervention programs of the psychologists to the organization-centered strategies of management. The basic premises are that: 1) personal stress is often the symptom of an unhealthy workplace; and 2) the best stress management approach is to identify the organizational stressors, eliminate them, and work in harmony with the employees in developing a healthy workplace environment.

Whether law enforcement work is the most stressful occupation is questionable, if not irrelevant. The fact is that psychological stress, real or perceived, exists in law enforcement work, causing an unhealthy workplace that can be dysfunctional to the organization, to the community it serves, and to the individual officer.

### *Law Enforcement Stressors*

Using the organization-centered approach in examining the workplace, the following 11 management practices and organizational characteristics were identified as contributing to law enforcement stress: Autocratic quasi-paramilitaristic model; hierarchical structure; poor supervision; lack of employee input into policy and decisionmaking; excessive paperwork; lack of administrative support; role conflict and ambiguity (lack of or conflicting organizational mission, values, goals, and objectives); inadequate pay and resources; adverse work schedules; boredom; and unfair discipline, performance evaluation, and promotion practices.

Moreover, an increased educational level among officers will likely be accompanied by increased frustration with the stress-producing management practices and organizational factors. Therefore, the challenge facing law enforcement leaders in the 1990s is whether they can adjust their work environments and their management and leadership styles to adapt to the increased educational level among officers.

Enlightened law enforcement managers can meet this challenge by eliminating organizational stressors and developing a healthy environment that is perceived by the employees as a good place to work. Employees describing a good workplace use such terms as "a friendly place to work," "a place with no politicking," "an atmosphere of fairness," "meaningful work," and "a place where people are treated like family."

***Seven Management Strategies for a Healthy Workplace.*** Law enforcement leaders committed to developing a healthy work environment should implement seven management strategies: 1) examining the workplace; 2) believing in the mission; 3) living the organizational values; 4) encouraging upward communication; 5) pushing autonomy down; 6) ensuring fairness; and 7) caring about people.

Finally, it is perhaps most fitting to end with some sage advice from a police union leader. Robert Kliesmet, President of the International Union of Police Associations (IUPA), an affiliate of AFL-CIO, commenting on relieving labor-management stress, stated:

"We must continue to develop programs which ameliorate stress: counseling, therapy, and other stress reduction and management programs. Additionally, we must work to improve working conditions as they pertain to shift work, officer safety, better training and reward systems, and improved supervision. But at the heart of our current problem in maintaining the health and well-being of police officers is the stubborn maintenance of a management style which demeans police officers, deliberately creates task ambiguity, and attempts to remove from police work some of its most successful and satisfying functions.



When communities and the 'police profession' address the problem of the current organizational strategy and its attendant managerial style, many of our major problems of stress and well-being will be solved. We will still need special programs for assisting some people to manage stress, but stress will not be an endemic aspect of the job" (Kliesmet, 1986).

It is time to stop treating the symptoms rather than the problem. Helping people manage and cope with stress is important, but it does not cure the unhealthy workplace. Law enforcement leaders and organizations will have to change to create a healthy environment--where everyone is committed to making the workplace a "worthplace."

**APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

### SAMPLE LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

Many law enforcement agencies throughout the nation and the world have established and clearly outlined for their employees their basic values and missions. Recognition of the shared values within their agency provides officers with an understanding of what is expected of them--a foundation on which to base their professional and private lives.

The following both exemplify and encourage commitment to organizational values for all employees:

***"These are our Values"***

Alexandria Police Department  
Alexandria, Virginia

***"The Values of the Boston Police"***

Boston Police Department  
Boston, Massachusetts

***"Basic Values of our Agency"***

Foster City Police Department  
Foster City, California

***"The Department's Mission, Principles, and Values"***

Houston Police Department  
Houston, Texas

***"Values"***

Michigan State Police  
East Lansing, Michigan

***"Our Key Principles of Policy"***

Northamptonshire Police  
Northamptonshire, England

***"Mission Statement"***

San Francisco Sheriff's Department  
San Francisco, California

**"These are our Values"**  
**Alexandria, Virginia, Police Department**

The Alexandria Police Department exists to serve the community by protecting life and property; by preventing crime; by enforcing the laws; and by maintaining order for all citizens. Central to our mission are the values that guide our work and decisions and help us contribute to the quality of life in Alexandria.

Our values are characteristics or qualities of worth. **They are non-negotiable.** Although we may need to balance them, we will never ignore them for the sake of expediency or personal preference. We hold our values constantly before us to teach and remind us and the community we serve of our ideals. They are the foundation upon which our policies, goals, and operations are built.

In fulfilling our mission, we need the support of citizens, elected representatives, and city officials in order to provide the quality of service our values commit us to providing.

We, the men and women of the Alexandria Police Department, value:

**Human Life**  
**Integrity**  
**Laws and Constitution**  
**Excellence**  
**Accountability**  
**Cooperation**  
**Problem-Solving**  
**Ourselves**

***Human Life***

**We value human life above all else. *Therefore:***

- o We give first priority to situations which threaten life;
- o We use force only when necessary;
- o We treat all persons with courtesy and respect;
- o We are compassionate and caring.

***Integrity***

**We believe integrity is the basis for community trust. *Therefore:***

- o We are honest and truthful;
- o We are consistent in our beliefs and actions;
- o We hold ourselves to high standards of moral and ethical conduct;
- o We are role models for the community.

### *Laws and Constitution*

**We believe in the principles embodied in our Constitution. We recognize the authority of federal, state, and local laws. *Therefore:***

- o We respect and protect the rights of all citizens;
- o We treat all persons fairly and without favoritism;
- o We are knowledgeable of the law;
- o We obey the law.

### *Excellence*

**We strive for personal and professional excellence. *Therefore:***

- o We do our best;
- o We have a vision for the future;
- o We seek adequate resources: staffing, facilities, equipment, training, salaries, benefits;
- o We recruit and hire the best people;
- o We train and develop our employees to their highest potential;
- o We are committed to fair and equitable personnel practices;
- o We provide organizational mobility;
- o We recognize and reward good performance;
- o We support reasonable risk-taking and are tolerant of honest mistakes;
- o We are receptive to new ideas and to change;
- o We work toward realistic, mutually-agreed-upon goals;
- o We meet nationally recognized law enforcement standards;
- o We lead by example.

### *Accountability*

**We are accountable to each other and to the citizens we serve, who are the source of our authority. *Therefore:***

- o We communicate openly and honestly among ourselves and with the community;
- o We understand the importance of community values and expectations;

- o We are responsive to community concerns;
- o We acknowledge our mistakes and are open to constructive criticism;
- o We manage our resources effectively;
- o We thoroughly investigate complaints against our employees.

***Cooperation***

**We believe that cooperation and teamwork will enable us to combine our diverse backgrounds, skills, and styles to achieve common goals. *Therefore:***

- o We work as a team;
- o We understand our role in achieving Department and City goals and objectives;
- o We share our responsibility to serve the citizens of Alexandria with many other agencies and organizations;
- o We strive to understand those who disagree with us;
- o We seek the help and cooperation of others;
- o We seek to resolve conflicts;
- o We rely on community support and involvement.

***Problem-Solving***

**We are most effective when we help identify and solve community problems. *Therefore:***

- o We work to anticipate and prevent problems;
- o We give a high priority to preventing crime and helping citizens feel safe;
- o We actively seek opinions and ideas from others;
- o We plan, analyze, and evaluate;
- o We recognize that crime is a community problem;
- o We listen to problems and complaints with empathy and sensitivity;
- o We seek innovative solutions.

***Ourselves***

**We are capable, caring people who are doing important and satisfying work for the citizens of Alexandria. *Therefore:***

- o We respect, care about, trust, and support each other;
- o We enjoy our work and take pride in our accomplishments;
- o We are disciplined and reliable;
- o We keep our perspective and sense of humor;
- o We balance our professional and personal lives;
- o We consult the people who will be affected by our decisions;
- o We have a positive, "can do" attitude;
- o We cultivate our best characteristics: initiative, enthusiasm, creativity, patience, competence, judgment.

***"The Values of the Boston Police"***  
**The Boston, Massachusetts, Police Department**

The values of the Boston Police were defined by Commissioner Francis Roache shortly after he was appointed. The values are reflected in policy making and have also been incorporated in recruit training. They provide the foundation for the Department's goals in the year ahead.

The values are to:

- I. Guarantee the constitutional rights of all citizens;**
- II. Maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity;**
- III. Promote the professionalism of Boston Police personnel;**
- IV. Enhance the working relationship between the Department and the neighborhoods;**
- V. Improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods.**

The values of the Boston Police Department are important because they set standards for the quality of our performance. These values directly affect every department employee--from civilian clerks to police officers to commanders.

***Goals for the Year Ahead***

The Boston Police Department's goals and program priorities were developed over 18 months and are based on the Commissioner's discussions with citizens as well as the recommendations of the Command Staff and the Mayor's Management Committee. Progress in meeting the goals will be monitored and the Commissioner will receive regular performance reports. The goals are to:

- I. Improve the delivery of police services to the neighborhoods;**
  1. Begin implementation of the neighborhood based patrol plan;
  2. Improve the management of the Emergency 9-1-1 Response System;
  3. Increase drug enforcement and education programs;
  4. Increase traffic enforcement.
- II. Provide the necessary tools for effective service delivery;**
  1. Continue hirings and promotions;
  2. Open new neighborhood stations;
  3. Provide improved support services to Department personnel;
  4. Upgrade supervision and training.
- III. Maintain a strong working relationship with the neighborhoods;**
  1. Expand crime prevention programs;
  2. Expand education efforts.



***"Basic Values of our Agency"***  
**Foster City, California, Police Department**

- I. Integrity is basic to the accomplishment of the law enforcement mission. Both personal and organizational integrity is essential to the maintenance of the F.C.P.D. This means that we:**
- o Ensure that accurate reporting occurs at all levels;
  - o Promote and recognize ethical behavior and actions;
  - o Value the reputation of our profession and agency, yet promote honesty over loyalty to the Department;
  - o Openly discuss both ethical and operational issues that require change;
  - o Collectively act to prevent abuses of the law and violation of civil rights.
- II. Due to the dynamic nature of our profession, the F.C.P.D. values innovation from all levels of the Agency. This means we:**
- o Reward and recognize those who contribute to the development of more effective ways of providing the policing service;
  - o Strive to minimize conflict which negatively impacts our work product, yet we support the constructive airing and resolution of differences in the name of delivering quality police services;
  - o Listen to and promote suggestions emanating from all levels of the Department;
  - o Wish to promote an atmosphere that encourages prudent risk taking and that recognizes that growth and learning may be spawned by honest mistakes.
- III. The law enforcement profession is recognized as somewhat close and fraternal in nature. The F.C.P.D. reflects this tradition, yet supports community involvement and ongoing critical self-appraisal by all its members. This means we:**
- o Encourage employees to socialize with employees and community members alike to promote the reputation of the Agency;
  - o Promote programs that improve the relationship between our members and the community at large;
  - o Report and confront employees who violate laws and the basic values of the organization;
  - o Promote and discuss the positive aspects of the Agency and its product throughout the community.
- IV. The provision of law enforcement services is a substantial expense to the taxpayer. The F.C.P.C. is obligated to provide the highest quality of police service for the resources expended. This means that we:**
- o Regularly assess the cost v. benefits of the various programs of the agency;
  - o Require a standard of professional performance for all members of the Department;

- o Administer the Departmental funds in a prudent, cost-effective manner;
  - o Publicly acknowledge and praise employees that excel at their jobs;
  - o Support and encourage employees in their pursuit of higher education.
- V. **Law enforcement, in the course of performing its primary mission, is required to deal with both dangerous and difficult situations. The F.C.P.D. accepts this responsibility and supports its members in the accomplishment of these tasks. This means that we:**
- o Review and react to an individual's performance during such an event based upon the totality of the circumstances surrounding his or her decisions and actions;
  - o Encourage all employees, as the situation permits, to think before they act;
  - o Take all available steps and precautions to protect both the city's and employees' interest in incidents that provide either danger or civil exposure;
  - o Keep our supervisor informed of any incident or pending action that jeopardizes either the reputation of the Agency or an individual employee;
  - o Attempt, conditions permitting, to reason with individuals in the enforcement setting prior to resorting to the use of physical force;
  - o Recognize that it is our duty to prevent, report, and investigate crimes, together with the apprehension and the pursuit of vigorous prosecution of lawbreakers. We also recognize that it is the domain of the court to punish individuals convicted of crimes.

*"The Department's Mission, Principles, and Values"*  
The Houston, Texas, Police Department

*Departmental Mission*

The mission of the Houston Police Department is to enhance the quality of life in the City of Houston by working cooperatively with the public and within the framework of the U.S. Constitution to enforce the laws, preserve the peace, reduce fear, and provide for a safe environment.

*Guiding Principle*

We believe that life and individual freedoms are sacred.

We believe in fair and equitable treatment of all individuals.

Our role is to resolve problems through the law, not to judge or punish.

We recognize the neighborhood as the basic segment of the community.

We cannot carry out our responsibilities alone; thus, we must be willing to involve the community in all aspects of policing.

Our fundamental responsibility to the community is quality service.

We, as employees, are our department's most valuable asset.

We believe employee involvement is vital to a productive environment.

We are committed to the recognition of human dignity and enrichment of work life through fair and equitable treatment of employees.

We demand of ourselves the utmost in honesty, integrity, and professionalism.

We hold ourselves to a higher standard of social and professional conduct.

*Values*

*Preserve and Advance Democratic Values.* We will uphold the fundamental values of this democracy through belief in the Constitution and dedication to liberty and justice.

*Improve Quality of Life.* We are dedicated to improving the quality of life in our city through spirited and quality service.

*Improve Quality of Work Life.* We are dedicated to improving the quality of work life in our department through interaction and concern for each other.

*Demonstrate Professionalism.* We will demonstrate honor and integrity in all we do through ethical behavior.

*Values*  
Michigan State Police

**"A Proud Tradition of Service Through Excellence, Integrity, and Courtesy."**

*Mission*

**"The Michigan Department of State Police shall provide leadership, coordination, and delivery of law enforcement and support services in order to preserve, protect, and defend people and property, while respecting the rights and dignity of all persons."**

*Philosophy of Leadership*

The philosophy of the department is to create an organizational environment in which our mission is realized through excellence in leadership. This environment is created through implementing our mission statement in the following manner:

*Leadership*

The management plan of the Michigan State Police requires that our leaders provide organizational vision to departmental members and the people we serve through:

- o **A positive attitude and a desire for action**--Optimistic commitment to our mission and goals which is demonstrated by constantly searching for opportunities to improve the department;
- o **Hands-on leadership**--Remaining close to the essential activities of the agency and to the people who perform them;
- o **Professionalism and dedication**--Providing reinforcement and support to those individuals who offer contributions to a work environment that reflects dedication to departmental values.

*Coordination*

Our leaders serve the department when they create an enthusiastic and dedicated commitment within their fellow employees toward accomplishing our mission through:

- o **Success through people**--Promoting the desire in all departmental members to put forth their best effort by recognizing and celebrating their individual contributions;
- o **Synergism of action**--Recognizing that more can be accomplished when individual actions are taken cooperatively rather than separately.

*Delivery*

The primary responsibility of our leaders is providing law enforcement and support services to the people they serve through:

- o **Quality of service**--Acknowledging the needs of those we serve and demonstrating a willingness to be of service;
- o **Commitment to responsibility**--Ensuring that all members of the department understand the importance of their individual roles to the accomplishment of the department's mission.

***"Our Key Principles of Policy"***  
**Northhamptonshire, England, Police**

In our endeavor to sustain and enhance our quality of service to the public, it is important that all members of the force both understand and practice the following key principles, which if adhered to, will form the essential underpinning of future performance:

- o **The pursuit of the highest professional standards in managerial, operational and personal performance.** This emphasizes the duty of all members of the force to accept an individual responsibility for achieving the highest professional standards, and in particular by continuing to demonstrate impartiality to all, regardless of sex, race, color, creed, or social position.
- o **The efficient and effective use of all our resources.** This requires the sensitive balancing of limited resources to meet increasing calls for service, and the exercise of professional judgment in setting priorities to meet the aims of the force.
- o **The continuing development of an effective partnership with the public and other social agencies, both statutory and voluntary.**

P - PRIDE

E - EFFICIENCY

O - OBLIGATION

P - PARTNERSHIP

L - LEADERSHIP

E - EFFECTIVENESS

**"PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT PEOPLE"**

***"Mission Statement"***

San Francisco, California, Sheriff's Department

**The mission of the San Francisco Sheriff's Department is to be an effective part of the civil and criminal law enforcement efforts of the State of California and the City and County of San Francisco.**

The Department will accomplish its mission through competent performance by its deputized personnel and support staff, according to the duties imposed on it by the laws of the State of California and the Charter and ordinances of the City and County of San Francisco. To this end, the Department will:

- o Develop and maintain a force of well trained, thoroughly professional deputy sheriffs dedicated to public service and the protection of the people of the City and County of San Francisco;
- o Maintain and operate a safe and secure jail system;
- o Provide effective and efficient court services for the Municipal and Superior courts of the City and County of San Francisco;
- o Provide effective and efficient execution and enforcement of civil processes;
- o Develop and provide viable alternatives to incarceration, which offer opportunities for prisoners to function in a productive, non-criminal manner.

## **Appendix B**

### **TECHNIQUES FOR ENCOURAGING UPWARD COMMUNICATION**

Law enforcement administrators committed to creating a good workplace must adopt a participative decisionmaking style that encompasses a "bottom-up" flow of ideas. This means that all people who are affected by a decision have the opportunity to participate in it. The following are techniques for encouraging upward communication that have proven effective in law enforcement agencies throughout the country.

#### **ADVISORY GROUPS**

Participants are selected from a representative sample of employees. These representatives meet on a regular recurring schedule to discuss current topics of interest and to provide ongoing feedback to executive management. Field commands have local meetings and bring departmental issues to the advisory groups.

#### **BRAINSTORMING SESSIONS**

Employees are encouraged to generate creative alternatives concerning group missions, specific objectives, or problem solutions. Popular "creativity" techniques may be used. The primary focus is on idea generation as opposed to critique or analysis.

#### **CAREER PLANNING**

Each employee completes several work sheets on self-assessment, goal establishment and analysis, time inventory, and an action plan for his or her personal life. The supervisor is responsible for scheduling a meeting with each employee on a quarterly basis, during which the employee's job/career work sheets are reviewed and compared with: 1) the department goals and objectives; 2) the most recent department goal analysis; and 3) the employee's job description.

#### **"CODE-A PHONE" TELEPHONE MESSAGE LINES**

Two "Code-a-Phone" telephone message lines are available for information dissemination and the offering of employee suggestions as well as employee opinions and concerns to management. One line is allocated to the office of the chief of police for receiving messages from employees. The chief responds to questions on an individual basis if the caller identifies himself or herself, or he may respond through publication of a Chief's Bulletin if the problem is of concern to a broad range of employees.

The second message line is assigned to the Employee Relations Section for use in providing information through a recorded announcement. The caller may listen to the announcement and leave messages or suggestions. As with the line in the Chief's office, a message will be responded to personally if the caller identifies himself or herself. Messages are also responded to through the Employee Relations Newsletter or through a subsequently recorded message, as appropriate to the situation.

#### **COMMAND AND SUPERVISORY STAFF MEETINGS**

The chief of police and or the deputy chiefs will attend command and supervisory staff meetings to involve all management levels in discussions of department policies, procedures and personnel practices. The command and supervisory staff meetings will be hosted by individual participating units in accordance with an established schedule.

## **DEPARTMENT NEWSPAPER**

The newspaper is a bi-weekly publication of the public affairs section, designed to keep personnel better informed on departmental issues. Questions are submitted anonymously to the public affairs section by telephone, letter, or by the Law Enforcement Information Network; they are then directed to the department person most likely to provide the best answer. The questions and answers are then published and sent into the field.

## **DESIGNATED DEVIL'S ADVOCATE AT STAFF MEETINGS**

Several days before any scheduled staff meeting, a "devil's advocate" is designated by the manager. This person is expected to challenge all issues at the meeting with well-reasoned arguments. Other meeting participants can approach the devil's advocate prior to the meeting to coach him or her on arguments to use or issues to raise.

## **ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Personal computers (PCs) are tied into a mainframe computer to send memos or letters to other users electronically. It allows the rapid transmission of information up, down, or across all levels of management.

## **EMPLOYEE COUNCIL**

A peer-elected council of employees representing each division within the organization provides management with employee concerns, ideas, suggestions, and planning goals. Members rotate quarterly among those interested in serving on the council, and meetings are held monthly. Minutes taken at all meetings are typed, copied, and distributed so that all department employees are kept informed of council activities and discussions. All suggestions must be submitted in the form of completed staff work, so nothing remains to be done except for approval or disapproval by the final authority.

## **EXECUTIVE-EMPLOYEE BREAKFAST, LUNCH, COFFEE**

A cross section of employees (five or ten) have breakfast, lunch, or coffee with one or more senior executives. The session features relatively unstructured, open discussions on issues of mutual concern.

## **EXECUTIVE VISITS TO THE FIELD**

The chief of police or members of the command staff visit the various precincts/bureaus and hold informal discussions with employees. Some commanders actually ride along with patrol officers or detectives during a shift. Visits may occur during roll call, training programs, or other similar activities.

## **EXECUTIVE VISITS TO UNION MEETINGS**

Members of executive management attend union meetings during which questions are fielded and open discussions are held with the union representative.

## **EXECUTIVES WORKING ON LINE JOBS**

Executive administrators (captain and above) are required to work Friday and Saturday nights on a rotating basis one weekend in each ten-week period. This assignment is titled "Command Duty Officer." The command duty officer is required to contact varied work stations to facilitate upward communication of concerns and/or ideas by lower and entry level personnel. This increased communication eliminates many misconceptions, rumors, and frustrations and enables the organization to function more productively.



## **EXIT INTERVIEWS**

All employees who separate from the department are required to meet with a staff member from the psychological services unit for an exit interview. This interview is informal and is centered around the following four topics: 1) reason(s) for leaving; 2) positive aspects/experiences with the department; 3) negative aspects/experiences with the department; and 4) suggested areas of change/improvement. This data is then collected in aggregate form and reported to the chief and executive command staff on a quarterly basis.

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

When an employee claims a violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of the department rules or regulations affecting the terms and conditions of his or her employment (excluding disciplinary matters), he or she initiates the procedure by presenting the grievance to the immediate commanding officer. If satisfaction is not obtained, successive higher levels of appeal are initiated up to and including the police chief, commissioner, and/or an impartial arbitrator.

## **INSPECTION PROCESS**

Staff inspections are conducted to ensure an objective review of office facilities, property, equipment, personnel, and administrative and operational activities outside the normal supervisory and line inspection procedures. These inspections are conducted annually on each component of the department; upon their conclusion, a written report with recommendations is submitted to top management.

## **LABOR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

The committee consists of the chief of police, four additional management representatives, the police union president, and four additional union representatives. They meet at least once quarterly and discuss issues or changes of concern to either of them. Participants may vote; however, the chief of police and the union president retain the ultimate authority to make decisions on police issues and union issues, respectively.

## **OPEN DOOR SYSTEM**

Employees are encouraged to express their concerns to higher organizational levels if they cannot reach a resolution with their immediate managers. The employee may choose to appeal to a second-level manager or, in some organizations, to the top executive. After a high-level executive receives an appeal, an investigator who has no involvement in the case may be chosen to conduct a thorough, confidential probe of the situation. After determining the validity of the employee's concern, the investigator recommends appropriate action and documents the case. The executive makes the final resolution and the employee is notified as to the decision and reasoning.

## **QUALITY CIRCLES**

A team of employees who share common duties are brought together voluntarily on company time to develop, discuss, and resolve pertinent issues facing the department. A sergeant serves as the circle leader, and the problems and issues addressed are passed up the command ladder for consideration and implementation as they are approved.

## **RECRUIT INTERVIEWS**

New recruits are personally interviewed during their probationary period about their perceptions, opinions, and ambitions as police officers. This process is based on the belief that new recruits may be best qualified

to explain the similarities and differences between the way they expected police work to be and how it actually is (given preconceived notions and the unavoidable limitations of modern day police training methods). The interview is conducted with the use of a questionnaire covering a series of issues involving police work and some of its effects on the individual.

### **RETREATS**

A selected group from within the organization is brought together in a location away from the workplace, so they are physically removed from the distractions of the job. An outside facilitator explains to the group the process that will be followed. In one scenario, for example, all supervisory and management ranks, including the agency head, are gathered for two and one-half days. The facilitator tells the group that their purpose is to set goals. Starting in small work groups and ending with the entire group, a list of three to five of the management team's desired goals--reachable within the next 12 months--are agreed upon and prioritized. These are then presented to the agency head in written form.

### **SUGGESTION PROGRAM**

The suggestion program was established to encourage employees to point out possible inefficiencies, wasted effort, or unsound practices in the organization. This program offers a means of bringing viable, realistic ideas to the attention of supervisors and top management.

### **SURVEYS**

A printed survey is distributed to employees at specified time intervals, containing questions pertaining to a department, division, unit or other activity. Respondents' identities are confidential. Responses are compiled, results are published, and findings are acted upon by appropriate personnel.

### **TASK FORCES**

An employee group consisting of individuals of similar rank is formed to investigate a certain topic or to work on the solution of a perceived problem. The group usually develops a set of recommendations, which are presented to executive decisionmakers for action. Group members can be appointed or can volunteer. Topics or problems are usually determined by organizational need.

## APPENDIX C

### MODEL STRESS MANAGEMENT TRAINING CURRICULUM

#### LESSON PLAN OUTLINE

#### MODULE I

**Lesson Title:** Law Enforcement Stress - A Clinical Perspective

**Functional Area:**

This module will provide participants with an overview of law enforcement stress from a clinical perspective, including the sources of stress, the physical and emotional effects of stress, and the traditional methods of reducing stress.

**Performance Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this module, the participant will be able to:

1. Define, verbally or in writing, job stress;
2. Identify the four sources of law enforcement stress;
3. Discuss the physical effects of law enforcement stress on a person's health and/or job performance;
4. Describe the emotional problems that have been linked to high levels of stress in law enforcement;
5. Discuss the psychological traumas related to critical incident reactions;
6. Recognize and distinguish the three methods for reducing law enforcement stress;
7. Explain and differentiate between stress as a state of the individual and stress as a state of the organization.

**Topics:**

- I. Definition of job stress and its relationship to law enforcement
- II. Sources of law enforcement stress
  - A. External stressors
  - B. Internal stressors
  - C. Stressors in law enforcement work itself
  - D. Stressors confronting the individual officer
- III. Physical effects of law enforcement stress
- IV. Emotional effects of law enforcement stress
  - A. Divorce

- B. Alcoholism
- C. Suicide

V. Critical incident reactions

VI. Reducing law enforcement stress

- A. Eliminating the stressors
- B. Increasing stress-coping abilities
- C. Providing counseling for the stressed officer

VII. Stress as a state of the individual

VIII. Stress as a state of the organization

**Methods:**

- Lecture
- Group discussions

**Resource Materials:**

- Lesson plan
- NSA monograph and bibliography
- Slides, overhead transparencies
- Flip chart

**Time Requirement:**

4 hours

**MODULE ONE  
OVERHEAD A**

**PREVENTING**

**LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS:**

**THE ORGANIZATION'S ROLE**

**THE MEDICAL MODEL (PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH)**

- **DEFINES THE POPULATION TO BE DISFUNCTIONAL;**
  
- **LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS ARE VIEWED AS EITHER DAMAGED OR MALFUNCTIONING, REQUIRING TREATMENT OF THEIR STRAINS; OR**
  
- **THEY ARE CONSIDERED VULNERABLE TO THE EFFECTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS AND REQUIRE PROPHYLACTIC TRAINING TO REDUCE THIS VULNERABILITY.**

## THE ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH MODEL

THE BASIC PREMISES ARE THAT:

- (1) PERSONAL STRESS IS OFTEN THE SYMPTOM OF AN UNHEALTHY WORKPLACE; AND
  
- (2) THE BEST STRESS MANAGEMENT APPROACH IS TO IDENTIFY THE ORGANIZATIONAL STRESSORS, ELIMINATE THEM, AND WORK IN HARMONY WITH THE EMPLOYEES IN DEVELOPING A HEALTHY WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT.

## **JOB STRESS**

- **THE OCCUPATIONAL PRESSURE OR BURDEN THAT ADVERSELY AFFECTS WORKERS**
  
- **WHATEVER IS TROUBLESOME, OVERWHELMING, OR UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT A JOB**



## SOURCES OF LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS

1. EXTERNAL STRESSORS
2. INTERNAL STRESSORS
3. STRESSORS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT WORK ITSELF
4. STRESSORS CONFRONTING THE INDIVIDUAL OFFICER

## EXTERNAL STRESSORS

- FRUSTRATION WITH THE AMERICAN JUDICIAL SYSTEM
- LACK OF CONSIDERATION BY COURTS IN SCHEDULING OFFICERS FOR COURT APPEARANCES
- PUBLIC'S LACK OF SUPPORT
- NEGATIVE OR DISTORTED MEDIA COVERAGE
- OFFICERS' DISLIKE OF ADMINISTRATIVE BODIES' DECISIONS

## INTERNAL STRESSORS

- **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES THAT ARE OFFENSIVE**
- **POOR OR INADEQUATE TRAINING AND INADEQUATE CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**
- **LACK OF IDENTITY AND RECOGNITION**
- **POOR ECONOMIC BENEFITS AND WORKING CONDITIONS**
- **EXCESSIVE PAPERWORK**
- **INCONSISTENT DISCIPLINE**
- **PERCEIVED FAVORITISM**

## STRESSORS IN LAW ENFORCEMENT WORK ITSELF

- RIGORS OF SHIFT WORK
- ROLE CONFLICTS
- FREQUENT EXPOSURE TO LIFE'S MISERIES
- BOREDOM
- FEAR
- RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROTECTING OTHER PEOPLE
- FRAGMENTED NATURE OF THE JOB
- WORK OVERLOAD

**STRESSORS CONFRONTING THE INDIVIDUAL OFFICER**

- FEARS REGARDING JOB COMPETENCE
  
- NECESSITY TO CONFORM
  
- NECESSITY TO TAKE A SECOND JOB
  
- ALTERED SOCIAL STATUS IN THE COMMUNITY

**EFFECTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS**

- **PHYSICAL**

- **EMOTIONAL**

- **CRITICAL INCIDENT REACTIONS**

**REDUCING LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS**

- **ELIMINATING THE STRESSORS**
  
  
- **INCREASING THE OFFICER'S STRESS COPING ABILITY**
  
  
- **PROVIDING COUNSELING FOR THE STRESSED OFFICER**

## MODULE II

**Lesson Title:** Management Practices/Organizational Factors Causing Law Enforcement Stress

**Functional Area:**

Using an organization-centered approach, this module will examine the workplace and identify 11 management practices and organizational factors causing law enforcement stress.

**Performance Objectives:**

At the completion of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Identify the 11 management practices and organizational factors causing law enforcement stress;
2. Describe how these management practices and organizational factors cause stress;
3. Recognize the importance of using the organization-centered approach to reduce job stress.

**Topics:**

- I. Management practices and organizational factors causing law enforcement stress
  - A. Autocratic quasi-paramilitaristic model
    1. Authoritarian management
    2. Punishment-centered philosophy
  - B. Hierarchical structure
  - C. Poor supervision
  - D. Lack of employee input into policy and decisionmaking
  - E. Excessive paperwork
  - F. Lack of administrative support
  - G. Role conflict and ambiguity
  - H. Inadequate pay and resources
  - I. Adverse work schedules
  - J. Boredom
  - K. Unfair discipline, performance evaluation, and promotion practices
- II. Confronting the stressors through an organization-centered approach

**Methods:**

Lecture  
Group discussion  
Case studies

**Resource Materials:**

Lesson plan  
NSA monograph and bibliography  
Case studies



Slides, overhead transparencies  
Flip chart

**Time Requirement:**

4 hours

**MANAGEMENT PRACTICES/ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS  
CAUSING LAW ENFORCEMENT STRESS**

- **AUTOCRATIC QUASI-PARAMILITARISTIC MODEL**
- **HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURE**
- **POOR SUPERVISION**
- **LACK OF EMPLOYEE INPUT INTO POLICY AND  
DECISION-MAKING**
- **EXCESSIVE PAPERWORK**
- **LACK OF ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT**
- **ROLE CONFLICT AND AMBIGUITY**
- **INADEQUATE PAY AND RESOURCES**
- **ADVERSE WORK SCHEDULES**
- **BOREDOM**
- **UNFAIR DISCIPLINE, PERFORMANCE EVALUATION,  
AND PROMOTION PRACTICES**

## MODULE III

**Lesson Title:** Implications of Higher Education on Law Enforcement Stress

**Functional Area:**

This module will discuss how the impact of law enforcement stressors is intensified proportionately with the rise in the level of officer education.

**Performance Objectives:**

At the completion of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Discuss the state of law enforcement education in the United States;
2. Identify the stressful effects of higher education on law enforcement officers;
3. Describe how increased education increases the likelihood of law enforcement officers' experiencing strain as a result of the poor management practices identified in Module II;
4. List the advantages of education for law enforcement officers and explain how they far outweigh the disadvantages;
5. Discuss how law enforcement administrators have failed to keep pace with the educated workforce;
6. Recognize the need for law enforcement administrators to change their management styles to effectively use the educated officer.

**Topics:**

- I. Educational level of law enforcement
- II. Stressful effects of higher education
  - A. Personal costs: diminished family time
  - B. Program quality often lacking
  - C. Animosity toward the college-educated officer
  - D. Expectations of spouse, friends
  - E. Misconceptions about job future
  - F. Lack of input into policy and decisionmaking
  - G. Increased boredom on the job
  - H. College-educated perceived as discontent by superiors
- III. Some education-related stressors now resolved
- IV. Persistent education-related stressors, frustrations
- V. Advantages of education far outweigh disadvantages
- VI. Administrators have failed to keep pace with educated workforce
- VII. Enlightened management: the goal of today's administrator

**Methods:**

Lecture  
Group discussion

**Resource Materials:**

Lesson plan  
NSA monograph and bibliography  
Slides, overhead transparencies  
Flip chart

**Time Requirement:**

2 hours

## STRESS PRODUCING FACTORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- PERSONAL COST: DIMINISHED FAMILY TIME
- PROGRAM QUALITY OFTEN LACKING
- ANIMOSITY TOWARD THE COLLEGE-EDUCATED OFFICER
- EXPECTATIONS OF SPOUSE, FRIENDS
- MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT JOB FUTURE
- LACK OF INPUT INTO POLICY AND DECISIONMAKING
- INCREASED BOREDOM ON THE JOB
- COLLEGE EDUCATED PERCEIVED AS DISCONTENTED BY SUPERIORS

**KEEPING PACE WITH EDUCATED WORKFORCE**

**HOW HAVE ADMINISTRATORS CHANGED THEIR WORK  
ENVIRONMENTS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT AND  
LEADERSHIP STYLES TO ADAPT TO THE SUBSEQUENT  
INCREASE IN THE EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF LAW  
ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS?**

## MODULE IV

**Lesson Title:** Management Strategies for Developing a Healthy Workplace

**Functional Area:**

This module will discuss the development of an organizational health model that uses management strategies to identify and eliminate organizational stressors and develop a healthy environment--perceived by the employees as a good place to work.

**Performance Objectives:**

At the completion of this module, participants will be able to:

1. Describe a "good place to work";
2. Discuss the role of the chief executive officer (police chief, sheriff, etc.) in implementing an organizational health model;
3. Identify the management strategies needed to ensure a healthy workplace;
4. Discuss how "examining the workplace" can reduce law enforcement stress;
5. Explain how "believing in the mission" can reduce law enforcement stress;
6. Describe how "living the organizational values" can reduce law enforcement stress;
7. Explain how "encouraging upward communication" can reduce law enforcement stress;
8. Discuss how "pushing autonomy down" can reduce law enforcement stress;
9. Explain how "ensuring fairness" can reduce law enforcement stress;
10. Explain how "caring about people" can reduce law enforcement stress;
11. Discuss the importance of making the workplace a "worthplace."

**Topics:**

- I. What is "a good place to work"?
  - A. "A friendly place"
  - B. "There isn't much politicking around here"
  - C. "You get a fair shake"
  - D. "More than a job"
  - E. "It's just like family"
  - F. "Good workplace relationships"
- II. Avoiding law enforcement stress through an organizational health model
  - A. Examining the workplace
  - B. Believing in the mission

- C. Living the organizational values
- D. Encouraging upward communication
- E. Pushing autonomy down
- F. Ensuring fairness
- G. Caring about people

### III. Making the workplace a "worthplace"

#### **Methods:**

Lecture  
Group discussion  
Group exercises

#### **Resource Materials:**

Lesson plans  
NSA monograph and bibliography  
Organizational clarification values exercise  
Interpersonal communication exercise  
Management/motivation exercises  
Slides, overhead transparencies  
Flip chart

#### **Time Requirement:**

8-16 hours



A GOOD PLACE TO WORK

- A FRIENDLY PLACE
- THERE ISN'T MUCH POLITICKING AROUND HERE
- YOU GET A FAIR SHAKE
- MORE THAN A JOB
- IT'S JUST LIKE A FAMILY

## GOOD WORKPLACE RELATIONSHIPS

- (1) EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER - CHARACTERIZED BY TRUST
  
- (2) EMPLOYEE AND THE JOB ITSELF - CHARACTERIZED BY PRIDE
  
- (3) AMONG THE EMPLOYEES, INCLUDING THE MANAGERS - CHARACTERIZED BY A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

A GOOD WORKPLACE

IS ONE IN WHICH YOU TRUST THE PEOPLE YOU  
WORK FOR, HAVE PRIDE IN WHAT YOU DO, AND  
ENJOY THE PEOPLE YOU ARE WORKING WITH.

**SEVEN MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR A HEALTHY  
WORKPLACE**

- EXAMINING THE WORKPLACE
- BELIEVING IN THE MISSION
- LIVING THE ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES
- ENCOURAGING UPWARD COMMUNICATION
- PUSHING AUTONOMY DOWN
- ENSURING FAIRNESS
- CARING ABOUT PEOPLE

## EXAMINING THE WORKPLACE

THE ESSENCE OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH MODEL CENTERS ON THE ABILITY OF THE ORGANIZATION TO EXAMINE ITSELF, IDENTIFY INTERNAL STRESSORS, AND DEVELOP PLANS FOR NEEDED CHANGE.

## BELIEVING IN THE MISSION

**A CLEAR MISSION STATEMENT SERVES THE PURPOSE OF:**

- (1) DEFINING FOR THE OFFICERS THE PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THE DEPARTMENT;**
- (2) ALLOWING THE OFFICERS TO SEE THEMSELVES AS PART OF A WORTHWHILE ENTERPRISE;**
- (3) ENABLING OFFICERS TO SEE HOW THEY CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE AND IMPROVE THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE DEPARTMENT.**

## LIVING THE ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

- VALUES ARE THE BELIEFS THAT GUIDE AN ORGANIZATION AND THE BEHAVIOR OF ITS EMPLOYEES.
  
- ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES DETERMINE WHAT BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSIDER TO BE APPROPRIATE AND INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR.
  
- LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES MUST CLARIFY THEIR VALUES AS TO WHAT IS CORRECT BEHAVIOR IN HOW THEY APPROACH THEIR WORK, HOW THEY MANAGE INTERNALLY, AND HOW THEY RELATE TO THE COMMUNITY.

## ENCOURAGING UPWARD COMMUNICATION

### CREATING A HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE WHERE:

- (1) MANAGERS BELIEVE THAT OFFICERS, BECAUSE OF THEIR DAILY CONTACT WITH OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS AND NEEDS, CAN PROVIDE UNIQUE EXPERTISE IN LAW ENFORCEMENT POLICY ISSUES;
- (2) EMPLOYEES FEEL FREE TO VOICE THEIR CONCERNS AND DISSATISFACTIONS TO MANAGEMENT;
- (3) EMPLOYEES ARE WILLING TO TELL MANAGEMENT WHAT THEY THINK IS RIGHT RATHER THAN WHAT IS MERELY ACCEPTABLE;
- (4) EMPLOYEES MAY VOICE CONCERNS WITHOUT FEAR OF REPRISALS;



**ENCOURAGING UPWARD COMMUNICATION (CONT.)**

- (5) ORGANIZED DISAGREEMENT IS ENCOURAGED, AND MANAGEMENT'S COMMITMENT TO EFFECTIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING IS EMPHASIZED;**
  
- (6) INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY ARE ENCOURAGED; EMPLOYEES ARE REWARDED FOR TRYING AND SUCCEEDING BUT NOT PENALIZED FOR TRYING AND FAILING;**
  
- (7) MANAGERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO TAKE TIME TO LISTEN TO EMPLOYEES ON A REGULAR BASIS.**

## PUSHING AUTONOMY DOWN

- EDUCATED LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS WANT MORE RESPONSIBILITY AND DISCRETIONARY POWER IN PERFORMING THEIR TASKS AND, IN MANY CASES, ARE ONLY FRUSTRATED BY THE MANY LAYERS OF AUTHORITY AND THE DECISIONMAKING PROCESS.
  
- PUSHING AUTONOMY DOWN, THEN, WILL HELP CREATE A HEALTHY WORKPLACE BY PERMITTING OFFICERS TO HAVE MORE CONTROL OVER THEIR WORK, MORE DECISIONMAKING OPPORTUNITIES, AND INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY AND CHALLENGE.

## ENSURING FAIRNESS

**"IN A PROFOUND SENSE, FAIRNESS IS THE GLUE THAT HOLDS A GOOD WORKPLACE TOGETHER. WHEN EMPLOYEES PERCEIVE THAT THE MANAGEMENT MAKES A SINCERE EFFORT TO BE FAIR TO EMPLOYEES IN COMPENSATION, IN BENEFITS, IN HANDLING PROMOTIONS, AND IN COPING WITH DISPUTES WITH SUPERVISORS, THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO EXTEND THEIR TRUST INTO OTHER AREAS. AN ATMOSPHERE OF FAIR TREATMENT AFFECTS EVERY ASPECT OF THE WORKPLACE."**

## CARING ABOUT PEOPLE

LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERS WANTING TO REDUCE THE PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS CAUSED BY POOR SUPERVISION AND APATHETIC ATTITUDES TOWARD EMPLOYEES MUST BE COMMITTED TO MAKING THE WORKPLACE A "WORTHPLACE" - WHERE PEOPLE CARE ABOUT PEOPLE AND WHERE BOTH ORGANIZATIONAL AND EMPLOYEE NEEDS ARE EMPHASIZED.

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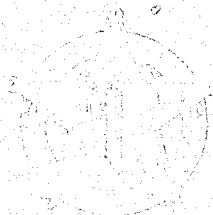
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