Effective Community Policing Leadership Skills
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Overview
• Quick overview of community policing; its background and what activities do officers do in this environment
• Review both the Internal and External Skills leaders need to have to effectively lead policing in a COP/POP environment
• Discuss the role that police may play in community wide problem solving
• Review some available resources to replicate “what works”.

Community Oriented Policing
a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.

• Partnership between police officers and their community
• Intensely focused on solving problems
• Police organization is transformed
• Community Partnership
• Problem Solving
• Transformed Police Department
• Shifting decision making to the lowest possible level
• Empowering employees to be problem solvers
• Shifting from Rule Driven to Mission Driven
• Empowered Problem Solvers
• Community Policing is not just about drinking coffee!
• COP/POP versus Traditional Policing
• Officers are actively seeking opportunities to engage with citizens (proactive AND reactive)
• Officers follow through with identified community problems
• Officers seek internal AND external partners to address problems
• Officers wait for a call for service (reactive)
• Officers are basically report takers
• Officers usually turn follow up over to other internal resources
• COP/POP versus Traditional Policing
• Root cause driven
• Often shifts reliance to more community-based resources
• Beat Officer often retains coordination of problem solving efforts
• Engages community to be part of the solution
• Incident driven
• Relies on use of the criminal justice system
• Prevalence of specialized policing units
• Often isolates community from the problem
• Typical Officer Activities in COP/POP agency
  • Assigned specific patrol beats; incorporate foot patrols to engage residents, businesses, students, etc.
  • Analyzes data of all activity 24/7 within assigned beat to identify potential problems and “hot spots”
  • Develops a complete resources manual of all potential agencies and partners to help with identified problems
  • Attends formal and informal gatherings and meetings throughout their beat; works with residents to identify problems
  • Coordinates problem solving process; may use tools like SARA model
  • Draws in other partners as needed
• Effectively leading COP/POP requires skills
  • Internal Skills
    • Empowering employees
    • Establishing expectations and boundaries
    • Developing organizational mission and values
    • Providing an organizational vision
    • Reinforcing and training the organizational mission, values and vision
    • Understanding the role of mission and values, rules, and policy
    • Resolving conflict
  • Effectively leading COP/POP requires skills
  • External Skills
    • Listening
    • Earning trust and respect
    • Tolerance and acceptance of diverse views
    • Getting past anger and disenfranchisement
    • Developing collaboration and partnerships toward a common community vision
    • Mobilizing and empowering the community to problem solve
    • Marketing and publicizing
  • Internal Skills for leaders
  • Empowering employees
    • It all starts with MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES
      • Mission: our purpose for being; what we’re here to do
      • Vision: an inspiring description of what we aspire to be
      • Values: the principles and beliefs that define our behavior
    • If you don’t already have these, or if they’re getting “stale”, it might make sense to develop these anew
      • Will signal “change is coming”
      • Good chance to get employees engaged as major stakeholders
• Vision statements can be the leader’s, or a collective
• Internal Skills for leaders
• Empowering employees
  • Move from "rules driven" to “mission driven"
    • Every day, every employee should measure their day’s activities and behavior as primarily advancing the organization’s mission.
    • In this culture, employees aren’t acting to AVOID a violation of the rules...they’re acting to PURSUE the mission!
    • Behavior is guided by the organizational values, not simply its rules
  • Leaders MUST practice what they preach...
• Internal Skills for leaders
• Role of the Middle Managers requires clarification and reinforcement
  • Middle Managers can be “threatened” in this environment
    • They’re used to “giving high level orders”.
  • Their job is to help identify needed resources and connect subordinates with available resources
  • They need to closely monitor their subordinate supervisors to ensure they’re supporting their troops’ problem solving efforts
  • They need to continuously instill in their subordinate supervisors their role in accountability of the mission and values
• Internal Skills for leaders
• Role of Supervisors requires clarification and reinforcement
  • Supervisors must constantly instill the mission and values within their employees
  • Supervisors should provide guidance and expertise to help officers in their problem solving
  • Supervisors can help free up “red tape” and streamline internal processes
  • Supervisors must hold their officers accountable to organizational values while empowering them to act with some independence
  • As in traditional policing, supervisors are “where the rubber meets the road”
• Internal Skills for leaders
• An example of an employee empowerment “decision making tool”
  • Is it Legal?
  • Is it Ethical?
  • Does it carry out our Mission?
  • Is it consistent with our Values?
  • Are you willing to be accountable for it?
  • Optional:
    • Would you be comfortable with it on the front page of the newspaper?  Or
    • Would your mother be proud?
  • If the answer to all of these is YES, don’t ask, JUST DO IT.
• Internal Skills for leaders
• Empowerment “traps” for leaders to watch for and avoid....
  • “But Boss, I was just doing what you said, being empowered” as an excuse for poor decision making
  • “But Boss, I was just letting my employees be empowered like you said” as an excuse for poor supervision and lack of accountability
• “But Boss, I didn’t think it was my job anymore now that we’ve empowered employees” as a middle manager’s excuse for failing to oversee their unit’s operations and upholding the mission and values

• Internal Skills for leaders
• Leaders must establish expectations and boundaries
  • A foundational piece of clear ethical boundaries is a must. What are the absolutes?
• Leaders must link organizational values to employee conduct
  • Employees shouldn’t need to “ask permission”
  • Their question should be, “am I acting consistent with our values”
  • This requires a steady dose of “do the right thing”
• Leaders THEMSELVES must follow the mission and values
  • Absent this, little hope that employees will
• Leaders need to provide a sense of fiscal boundaries for empowered employees to operate within

• Internal Skills for leaders
• Providing a Vision
  • Leaders need to articulate WHO we are, WHY do we exist, WHAT is important to us, and most important, WHERE are we going
  • The leader’s vision must include a sense of the future target that the organization is aiming for…what will success look like?
  • It is crucial that middle managers and supervisors understand the Vision
    • They are the ones who will ‘translate’ it into employee actions!
• Internal Skills for leaders
• Training to the Vision
  • Constant restatement by the leader
  • Managers and supervisors must learn it to be champions
  • Employees need training on strategic risk taking
• Policy Development and Evaluations
  • Policies help to define boundaries, provide framework for empowered employees
  • Policies illuminate organizational priorities
  • Evaluations assess projects, work, problem solving process.
  • Evaluations reflect employees’ actions to carry out mission within values
• Internal Skills for leaders
• The role of rules in a COP/POP culture
  • NOT designed for “gotcha” moments
  • NOT designed to be inconsistently applied
  • Are rarely designed as absolutes
    • Exceptions: use of force, ethics, compliance with law, etc
• The rule book can shrink in size; policy book may grow a bit, but ultimately, mission and values are the yardstick of employee behavior!

• Internal Skills for leaders
• Internal conflict is inevitable.
  • Leaders must be adept at resolving at earliest point possible
  • Leaders are the buffer between politics and problem solving
  • “Politics stop at the chief’s office”
• Courage at the top: are you prepared to be fired for blocking external forces such as politics from the ethical deliver of the mission?
  • External Skills for Leaders
  • Listening Skills
    • Leaders must be extremely patient
    • Leaders need to demonstrate that they’re listening to EVERYONE...especially the disenfranchised!
  • External Skills for Leaders
    • Earning Trust
    • Showing Respect

  • Earning and Keeping Trust
  Trust is TOUGH to earn, EASY to lose
  • Earning and Keeping Trust
  Once lost, it is twice as tough to earn back
  • Earning and Keeping Trust
  Cannot be demanded
  • Earning and Keeping Trust
  Is not automatic
  • Earning and Keeping Trust
  Relationship, person by person
    • Dignity and Respect
    • Dignity and Respect

Culture
Traditions
Practices
  • External Skills for Leaders
  • Demonstrating tolerance and acceptance of diverse views
    • Stephen Covey: “Seek first to understand, THEN be understood.”
  • Getting Past Anger and Disenfranchisement
    • Listening, patience, and acceptance of other views are first steps towards productive conversations
    • Encouraging the disenfranchised to get involved requires proof that their views are important, too
  • External Skills for Leaders
  • Moving towards a common vision
    • Requires widespread and active community involvement
      • Social Media
      • Slow to grow, small turnouts are the norm
      • Turn to other partners to convene
    • Requires buy in to sustain a common vision
    • Requires constant reinforcement, selling and telling
  • External Skills for Leaders
  • Developing collaboration and partnerships.
    • Leadership needs to show both employees within your agency, and people in the community, how to forge partnerships.
    • Pick some early “wins” with pre-existing partners
      • Fire Chiefs can be great partners with police chiefs
• School districts, the faith community, the business community all are natural partners
  • With time and practice, move into non-traditional partnerships
    • Youth organizations traditionally distant from police
    • Advocacy groups for traditionally disenfranchised
• External Skills for Leaders
• Police leaders need to be deeply engaged in the activities and cultural life of their communities
• Moving the Common Vision to a shared agenda
  • Be active on social media
  • Public Forums remain a powerful way to engage the community
  • Be active on the “rubber chicken” circuit
• External Skills for Leaders
• The agenda for action is focused on SOLVING PROBLEMS
  • This IS, after all, about Community Policing
  • By definition, COP is about police and community solving problems together
  • Engaging a broad and diverse set of partners will yield the strongest process to identify problems, develop strategies, and resolve the problem
• External Skills for Leaders
• Empowering the Community!
  • This is more than a mere cheerleading exercise...it is leadership!
  • Mobilize the community, neighborhood by neighborhood
    • Assign neighborhood liaison officers who fully buy in and have special skills in public engagement
    • Structure your patrol beat assignments to ensure your officers are accountable for a defined geographic area for a prolonged period of time....”ownership”
• Tell your story, keep the energy alive!
  • Use Social Media!!!
    • Don’t overlook traditional media and methods like Public Information Officers who partner with the press and broadcast media consistently
• What police leadership means in the Community Policing environment
• Traditional policing....Police Leader was focused internally on his agency, control oriented.
• Community policing...Police Leaders focus equally internally (empowerment oriented) and externally (engaged with the community)
• Police can provide leadership on social issues within the community WITHOUT having to take “the lead role”....
• What police leadership means in the Community Policing environment
• Police leaders can lead by stressing the importance of broad based coalitions
• Police leaders can demonstrate through statistics and analysis where the overlaps in services are, where the gaps are, and how to pull from the duplicity to plug the gaps
  • Ex: the community may not NEED another soup kitchen; but, it is likely to need a place for homeless to get showers and receive mail and email instead
• Leaders find “what works”
• Rarely does a leader need to start “from scratch”
  • “There is very little new under the sun”
• No such thing as proprietary information in policing...we brag and we share!
• Stay well networked within your industry (associations, schools, newsclips, research) and outside your industry (service clubs, churches, Chamber of Commerce, etc)
• Leaders find “what works”
• Resources
  • COPS Office Publications
  • POP Center website
  • PERF
  • IACP
  • The Police Foundation
  • The FBI Academy library
  • Universities
  • NCJTC