

**The Bill Blackwood
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**Policing by Values: Getting Rave
Reviews from Your Community**

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ABSTRACT

Management by Values (and by extension, Policing by Values) is relevant to contemporary law enforcement. Adopting a philosophy of Policing by Values can change a law-enforcement agency from a traditional, reactionary agency to a more responsive department that citizens are more likely to support financially and ideologically. Agencies that develop a system of policing by values also see reduced costs associated with hiring and training personnel. Moving from traditional policing to Policing by Values can be accomplished by any department with visionary leadership.

The purpose of this research is to define what constitutes “Policing by Values”, identify some potential benefits of Policing by Values, and to determine the feasibility of making a transition between traditional management and policing by values. The method of inquiry used by the researcher included a review of articles, Internet sites, periodicals, and journals. Subsequent to the review, the researcher surveyed municipal law-enforcement agencies in Tarrant County, Texas (population of over one million) to assess how agency heads with differing management styles perceived conditions in their agencies and communities.

The researcher discovered that while Policing by Values is a relatively new concept in law enforcement, adopting this philosophy can create value for that agency’s citizens in the form of service, for the agency’s employees in the form of working environment, and the agency itself in the form of support and resources. The researcher also discovered leadership strategies necessary for making the transition to Policing by Values.

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INTRODUCTION

This research proposes to examine whether or not citizens, law enforcement agencies, and law-enforcement employees can benefit from a management model that incorporates Management by Values into a police management system called “Policing by Values”. Law enforcement agencies are increasingly competing with other entities for the tax dollars necessary to accomplish their mission. A management model of Policing by Values has the potential to increase citizen satisfaction with the level of law enforcement service provided, retain qualified employees, and boost agency resources; The purpose of this research is to define what constitutes “Policing by Values”, demonstrate the potential benefits of adopting a philosophy of Policing by Values, and to identify leadership strategies necessary for making the transition between traditional law enforcement management and policing by values.

The research question to be examined focuses on whether or not Policing by Values will benefit the citizens served by a particular police agency, whether or not the employees and management of that agency will realize an advantage from implementing this management model, how making the transition from traditional management (Management by Instructions) to Policing by Values can be accomplished in an agency, and how department resources can increase as a direct result of this policy. The method of inquiry used by the researcher included a review of articles, Internet sites, periodicals, and journals. In addition, the researcher sent a survey to each municipal Chief of Police in Tarrant County, Texas to determine his or her attitudes about agency and community conditions. Survey results for agencies using

Management by Values was compared with agencies using other management philosophies.

The intended outcome or anticipated findings of the research is that Policing by Values can, indeed, be accomplished by any agency without the need for additional funding or resources. Additionally, it is anticipated that the research will indicate that Policing by Values yields positive results for the affected community, the personnel assigned to a department that embraces this philosophy, and the department itself.

The field of law enforcement will benefit from the research or be influenced by the conclusions because the research will demonstrate the aforementioned benefits, and will also show that the transition may be made without an initial outlay of resources. Law enforcement agency heads will also benefit from having information on the relationship between creating a great working environment, managing training and personnel budgets, and community satisfaction with agency service.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

There are many different ways to manage tasks and people. Dolan and Garcia (2000) describe the progression of management since 1920. In the 1920's we used "management by instructions". By the 1960's it was "management by objectives". More recently, the idea of "management by values" has become popular in many companies. In government, and especially in law enforcement agencies, we have traditionally used the older method of management – management by instructions, rather than management by values. The two methods of management are vastly different, although both have a role within a law enforcement agency.

Management by instructions is a traditional hierarchal organizational model of management. Managers are “bosses” who control the work environment for employees. The organizational chart is a traditional triangle, with managers at each level controlling a specified number of managers below them who, in turn, control a specific number of supervisors who are allotted a number of workers. Line employees do not generally need to have a high level of education, as decision-making functions are controlled above them in the hierarchy. Similarly, autonomy and responsibility on the part of employees is discouraged, as managers make decisions and take responsibility for the outcome. Specific directions are provided through a policy manual that describes how the employee is to handle specific instances. The organization’s mission is to maintain production, and the vision for the department is generally short-term. Most law enforcement agencies are managed in this fashion. There is a Chief of Police, a number of deputy chiefs, even more captains or lieutenants, sergeants, corporals, line officers, and civilian employees who act as supervisors. A policy manual, usually called “General Orders” or “Standard Operating Procedures”, regulates employee actions.

Police agencies that manage by instruction habitually react to events after they occur. Line employees take calls for service from community members and subsequently pass information up the chain of command through supervisors to managers. Managers formulate a plan of action, and then pass information back down the chain of command through supervisors to line employees. Line employees then implement the strategy as directed. The procedure may be ploddingly slow, and the

problem is unchecked until the correct procedure is adopted. The members of the affected population continue to experience a reduced quality of life.

A law enforcement agency that engages in management by values is an agency that practices "Policing by Values". According to Dolan and Garcia (2000), such an agency is oriented towards quality and customer satisfaction. Managers are charged with developing employees to their professional peak. The organizational chart is flatter, with more decision-making occurring at lower levels in the organization. Line employees require more training and education, as they are expected to make more complex decisions for the organization. Autonomy and responsibility are encouraged, and even required at all levels within the agency. Rather than explicit instructions, employees take actions that are consistent with a mission statement and a set of values that are recommended by citizens and ratified by all members of the group. The department's mission is one of continuous improvement, and the vision of management is long-term.

A police agency that models policing by values tends to react to events contemporaneously. Line employees take calls for service from community members and are authorized to initiate a plan of action that is consistent with the agency's mission statement and stated values. Employees are encouraged to use other department members, other city services, community service organizations, and community members and businesses to accomplish the agency's mission. Complainants receive immediate attention to the problem and experience a commensurate increase in quality of life.

Management by Values (MBV), as described by Dolan and Garcia (2000), is oriented towards quality and customer satisfaction. Managers are charged with developing employees. Decision-making occurs at lower levels in the organization. Autonomy and responsibility are encouraged. Rather than explicit instructions, employees take actions that are consistent with a mission statement and a set of values that are ratified by all members of the group. While specific policies remain, in effect, direct orders, others are now guidelines to be followed by employees who can make decisions as to what course of action best meets the mission of the department within the established values framework. Bureaucracy is minimized, as is the number of layers in the chain of command, and camaraderie is encouraged by allowing employees to work with other divisions and community resources to accomplish value-driven goals. Support personnel are more likely to experience feelings of achievement as they work in conjunction with other department members to realize these goals.

Agencies that police by values tend to develop great working environments that contain the same elements of quality and customer satisfaction identified by Dolan and Garcia (2000), as indicated above, and apply these elements to employees, who are often considered to be “internal” customers. Organizations that create a great working environment are, according to Wahl (2005), more likely to attract and keep desirable applicants, experience greater customer satisfaction, and be more likely to create original improvements in services or products. Wahl (2005) goes on to contend that companies that create a great working environment experience financial benefits, including higher profitability, higher return-on-assets, and better stock performance. The required components of a great working environment are adaptable to the law

enforcement profession and are especially suited to agencies engaged in policing by values. Police agencies that create these great working environments experience many benefits.

The theory of what constitutes a great working environment is relatively standard, even in law enforcement. Bock (1994) describes six elements of a great working environment for police officers that include the ideas listed above. However, many traditional agencies are not able to create these types of environments because of their organizational structure. Dolan and Garcia (2000) inadvertently, but accurately, depict traditional police management as “management by instructions”. Their description of a traditional hierarchal organization where autonomy and responsibility on the part of employees is discouraged, managers make decisions and take responsibility for the outcome, and specific directions are provided telling employees how to handle specific instances tends to describe the antithesis of a great working environment. This management model precludes some integral components of the great working environment, including the idea of expressing policies as guidelines rather than direct orders, minimizing bureaucratic hurdles, and the whole idea of camaraderie in its entirety. The idea of achievement in a traditional police agency is also less likely to be experienced, specifically when considering support personnel such as dispatchers, record clerks, and technicians, who do not “achieve” the traditional police goal of making a big arrest or solving a major crime.

Regardless of what type of industry is being discussed, there are basic concepts that work to create a great working environment. Sirota, Mischkind, & Meltzer (2005),

who surveyed 2.5 million employees in 237 companies, break these concepts down into three categories: equality, achievement, and camaraderie.

Equality is a concept that indicates a feeling of security and fairness. It includes avoiding or minimizing layoffs, offering good pay that includes supplemental salary based on accomplishing group goals, treating employees as important assets, and expressing policies as guidelines rather than direct orders. Honest and clear communication is important when creating a fair work environment.

Achievement encompasses the idea of organizational meaning and goals and the employees' understanding of their role in the company's success. Martensen & Gronholdt (2001) conducted a study that concluded that an employee's loyalty is determined by how the employee's supervisor and colleagues treat the employee, how much professional development occurs, and whether the employee is committed to the work and proud of what is accomplished.

Camaraderie, according to Sirota, Mischkind, & Meltzer (2005), is the concept of working collaboratively throughout the organization, regardless of division or assignment, with a minimum of conflict. . Implementing a system of policing by values in an agency can foster a work environment where employees believe they are treated fairly and they experience achievement and camaraderie, which makes for a more enjoyable work environment as described above. Employees who enjoy their work environment are more likely to remain with the organization (Martensen & Gronholdt, 2001), and less likely to use sick time (North, et al., 1996). Employees who remain with the organization reduce costs associated with hiring and training. Employees who use less sick leave also save an organization money in overtime and health care expenses.

Employees who remain with the organization, declare Martensen & Gronholdt (2001), “will be among the most competent, productive and motivated employees, that is, employees who are loyal to the company and its values” (p. 949). These are positive results for law enforcement agencies and the citizens these agencies serve.

Management by values can lead to a great working environment for employees, which can lead to exceptional customer satisfaction and actual financial benefits to the people who sponsor the agency.

Any agency that aspires to create value within a community must have visionary leadership. The concept of “leadership” is one that is not necessarily understood, nor is there a universal definition for what it means to be a “leader”. However, if a law enforcement agency is found to be lacking in leadership, the results are obvious. For example, Nalder & Kamb’s article summarizes one such incident:

“A 10-member blue-ribbon panel today called for independent oversight of the King County Sheriff's Office and sweeping reform of the department's internal culture to correct what it found were longstanding problems in accountability for officer misconduct and the handling of citizen complaints.” (Nalder & Kamb, 2006, para. 1).

The problems indicated by the King County panel’s findings are usually problems that are associated with leadership. However, how do we know what is involved in being a leader? Leadership guru Stephen Covey says, “The role of leader is most important. Without strategic leadership, people may dutifully climb the ‘ladder of success’ but discover, upon reaching the top rung, that it is leaning against the wrong wall” (Covey, 1991, p. 244). The West Point Leadership and Command Program teaches participants

"leadership is the process of influencing human behavior so as to accomplish organizational goals" (Dinse & Sheehan, 1998, para.11). Really, both of these assertions point to the same concepts for leadership. A leader who hopes to lead a law enforcement agency from traditional policing to a concept of policing by values must have a vision for the organization, a strategy for accomplishing that vision, and be able to influence those associated with the organization to work within the organizational strategy toward the realization of the organization's vision.

METHODOLOGY

The research question to be examined considers whether or not Policing by Values can be a successful strategy in contemporary law enforcement. The researcher hypothesizes that Policing by Values can not only be successful, but that it will become a necessary strategy to maintain public support for law enforcement. Specifically, the researcher hypothesizes that the review of related literature will support the philosophy of Policing by Values, and that a subsequent survey of municipal law enforcement agencies in Tarrant County, Texas will affirm the literature review. The researcher intends to determine if a correlation exists between a philosophy of management by values and the role of line employees in management decisions. Additionally, the researcher intends to examine the extent of any relationship between management by values and employee use of sick leave, employee turnover rates, officer productivity, employee morale, employee compensation, the perception of the agency by the respective community, citizen complaints on officers and employees, and the rate of Part I crimes in the community.

The method of inquiry will include a review of articles, Internet sites, periodicals, and journals. Additionally, a survey of all 33 municipal police departments in Tarrant County will be used to gauge executive attitudes toward their department in relation to the executive's management style. The instrument that will be used to measure the researcher's findings regarding Policing by Values will include a comparison analysis between surveyed agencies that identify themselves as embracing a philosophy of management by values and those who indicate they use a different management philosophy.

In furtherance of this effort, the researcher proposes to design a short survey and mail the survey to the Chief of Police of each of the 33 municipal law enforcement agencies in Tarrant County, Texas along with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Survey participants will be asked to complete the survey anonymously and return it in the envelope provided. The survey intends to subjectively measure the perceptions of agency heads about their agency.

FINDINGS

A total of 33 surveys were mailed out, one to each municipal law enforcement agency in Tarrant County. One survey was returned by the U.S. Postal Service as "not deliverable". Of the remaining 32 surveys, 18 were completed and returned for a return rate of 56%.

Of the 18 surveys returned, ten respondents identified their agency's management style as "Management by Values". Two agencies identified their management style as "Management by Objectives", two described their style as

“Traditional Management”, one agency indicated they used “Management by Policy”, and three agencies indicated “Other” as their method of management.

When analyzing the survey results, the researcher compared the ten agencies that used Management by Values with the eight agencies that did not. Due to the small sampling, the researcher considered variations of 15% or more to be significant. Using this standard, there were a number of significant differences between agencies that espoused Management by Values (MBV) and agencies that preferred other management philosophies.

The first significant disparity occurred in the area of employee participation in management decisions. Survey respondents were asked to indicate how much participation first-line employees had in management decisions. The results were similar between MBV agencies and non-MBV agencies for decisions regarding Budgeting, Staffing, and Policy Development. However, MBV agencies reported that they were much more likely to involve first-line employees in decisions regarding work conditions than non-MBV agencies. Ninety percent (90%) of MBV respondents indicated that first-line employees enjoyed “Much Participation” in “Work Conditions” decisions as opposed to only 50% of non-MBV respondents.

The next significant differences between the two management styles become apparent in the respondents’ perceptions of employee satisfaction and productivity. Half of MBV respondents indicated that their agency is experiencing a decreasing turnover rate, while only 13% of non-MBV respondents thought their turnover rate was decreasing. In fact, three of the eight non-MBV respondents actually reported an *increasing* rate of employee turnover. Seventy percent of MBV respondents felt

employee morale was increasing, as opposed to 50% of non-MBV respondents. Eighty percent of MBV respondents believe officer productivity (as measured by calls for service, arrests, and traffic enforcement efforts) is increasing. Sixty-three percent of non-MBV respondents felt their officer productivity was increasing.

The last significant difference between MBV respondents and non-MBV respondents has to do with agency crime rates. While 70% of MBV respondents reported that Part I crimes were increasing in their community, 25% of non-MBV respondents felt the same.

DISCUSSION/CONCLUSIONS

The problem or issue examined by the researcher considered whether or not a philosophy of Policing by Values will create value for the agency stakeholders, including citizens, law enforcement personnel, and the agency administrators, and determine the feasibility of implementing such a management philosophy in a modern law enforcement agency.

The purpose of this research was to define what constitutes “Policing by Values”, identify the potential benefits of Policing by Values, and to determine the practicability of making a transition between traditional management and policing by values. The research question that was examined focused on maximizing the service and efficiency provided by a police agency to its citizens.

The researcher hypothesized that a management philosophy of Policing by Values will benefit a police agency by fostering a work environment that encourages employee to remain in the employ of the agency and to provide a high level of service

while in that agency's employ. The researcher believed that a review of related literature would support the philosophy of Policing by Values. The researcher also hypothesized that the literature would be born out in actual practice through the results of a survey.

The researcher concluded from the findings that the Policing by Values model is a viable management philosophy. The researcher further concluded that Policing by Values maximizes agency efficiency, creates support for the agency from citizens, reduces employee turnover, increases agency productivity, possibly increases employee morale, and benefits all stakeholders in the process.

The researcher's conclusions are based on the findings of the research, which did support the hypothesis. One reason why the findings supported the hypothesis is contained in the review of available literature. All studies and material reviewed indicate that companies benefit from creating a desirable work environment for employees. Because professional management philosophies are becoming the norm in law enforcement, and because of the expense associated with hiring and training police employees, it is reasonable to assume that law enforcement agencies can also benefit from creating a great working environment.

Another reason why the findings supported the hypothesis is contained in the results of the survey. Chiefs of Police who use a system of Management by Values report that they allow line employees more control over work conditions than their counterparts who use different management philosophies. This control by employees helps foster a favorable work environment as defined by various sources in the literature review.

Yet another way in which the hypothesis was validated by the survey results was contained in the Chiefs' opinions regarding employee satisfaction. The survey results emphasize that agencies that manage by values have less employee turnover, higher employee morale, and increased productivity as compared to agencies that use other management philosophies.

Limitations that might have hindered this study include the small survey sampling and a survey that could have more accurately filtered the needed information. A larger survey sampling would have made smaller differences in survey results more significant. In other words, a 5% difference in responses would have been meaningful, rather than having to have a 15% difference in responses with the smaller sample. However, had this survey gone out to each municipal law enforcement agency in the state of Texas, I believe the hypothesis would still have been born out.

One result from the survey that was not anticipated is the assertion by 70% of MBV survey respondents that Part I crimes are increasing in their communities, while only 25% of non-MBV respondents indicated increasing Part I crimes in their cities. One possible reason for this differing demographics: so-called "bedroom" communities in the county might not be experiencing rising crime rates commensurate with rising populations, while other communities find that population increases lead to crime increases. Another possible explanation for this disparity may be the motivation of the officers themselves. Officers who are more productive are naturally more likely to find, report, and investigate criminal activity. Aggressive enforcement can lead to increasing crime rates as more investigations and arrests are made. A different argument might be made that citizens who believe their police department will actively investigate crime are

more likely to report crimes, again leading to an increase in the reported crime rate. If this particular result was borne out in a larger survey sampling, more study would be required to determine if there is actually a correlation between MBV and crime rates.

The study of Policing by Values is relevant to contemporary law enforcement because as budgets tighten, due in part to initiatives such as the tax rate cap imposed upon school districts, cities must become more efficient. As indicated by the literature review and subsequently confirmed by the survey results, a policy of Policing by Values means less employee turnover and higher productivity. Both of these factors mean that agencies with these conditions can reduce funds normally devoted to training and recruiting budgets.

Policing by Values also emphasizes service, which benefits any community. Citizens expect more and different kinds of service from their police force. Policing by Values reduces the conflict between police personnel, who formerly only enforced laws and kept the peace, and a community that might expect a variety of functions be performed by their public servants. Police agencies, police employees, the community and its citizens all benefit from this model of police management.

“Rave reviews” only come from exceptional performance. In law enforcement, this means providing exceptional service in the most efficient manner possible. Law enforcement leaders who truly want to generate rave reviews for their departments should strongly consider moving to a management style that embraces the idea of Policing by Values.

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