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First Line Supervisor Training

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of
Master of Arts in Leadership

AUGSBURG COLLEGE
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MASTER OF ARTS IN LEADERSHIP
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Master's Leadership Application Project of:

Diane L. Lind

has been approved by the Review Committee for the Leadership Application Project requirement for the Master of Arts in Leadership degree.

Date of Oral Defense: January 16, 2007

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ABSTRACT

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Leadership Application Project

Review of training opportunities for newly appointed leaders in the field of Public Safety Communications revealed a gap in current training opportunities for newly appointed 9-1-1 leaders. This Leadership Application Project addresses the need for new supervisors to gain both an educational understanding of the leadership skills necessary for success well as address some of the technical knowledge which is unique to public safety dispatching. The project is designed in short blocks which can be presented in a breakfast or lunch seminar type setting . Each topic is designed to introduce the new supervisor to a specific aspect of leadership. The goal is two fold: to present the basic information to develop strong leadership skills and to develop a support system for new supervisors. The project addresses the leadership topics: leadership styles, ethics/integrity, team building, mentoring, and performance management. The technical aspects of media relations, telematics, and voice over the internet protocol are also addressed due to their current critical impact on the 9-1-1 community. These topics were identified by current supervisors as key elements in the development of the next generation of public safety communication leaders. Upon completion of the training session, the new supervisors will have developed their own support system and the understanding of the elements necessary for successful leadership.

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First Line Supervisors Training

Project Background

This is a leadership application project for the Master of Arts in Leadership program at Augsburg College. It is a training program for first line supervisors in the field of public safety communications. As I progressed through the curriculum for the program, I became aware of the gap in education which existed in my profession. As a communications supervisor in a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), there are few opportunities for newly promoted supervisors to gain education or training in the field of leadership. Currently, there is one program for supervisors sponsored by the Association of Public-Safety Communication Officials International (A.P.C.O.). It is a week long class which is held periodically throughout the country. This class is nationally recognized as a standard for education within the PSAP community. While it is a very educationally sound program, it does not lend itself to the ongoing support of a local training program which encourages mentoring as well as classroom education.

In conversations with other managers throughout the area, the need for a training program for new supervisors is often a topic of conversation. Most of the current metropolitan PSAPs have one supervisor or manager. As we became supervisors, we learned in an on-the-job manner. Often we were left to find our own way or to seek assistance from police patrol sergeants or fire captains. While these supervisors could provide command and control supervisory experience, which in some instances is necessary, they could not translate this leadership style into those qualities necessary for the effective running of a communications center.

The PSAP community has various professional organizations. The Minnesota Sheriff's Association, A.P.C.O. and the National Emergency Number Association have all supported the idea of a training program. The Metropolitan Emergency Services Board has begun an initiative to establish a training program for newly hired communication personnel, seasoned personnel and supervisors. The current emphasis has been on the newly hired employees.

As current supervisors retire and communications centers evaluate their staffing needs, there are a growing number of opportunities for the promotion of supervisors. There needs to be a support system in place for success of new supervisors. This need led to my project.

Project Design

This project is an introduction for a first line supervisor's training program. The design for the program is as a series of one to two hour breakfast or lunch seminars. The concept is to invite new supervisors to meet over a meal to review a topic relating to leadership. The first two topics are the foundation building topics of leadership styles and ethics. The following three are the skill building topics of team building, mentoring and performance management. The remaining three topics are technical in nature covering media relations, telematics and voice over the internet protocol. The technical topics may be expanded or changed as the needs of the supervisors dictate. These were chosen based on topics identified by current supervisors as important for the development of new leaders. These supervisors are members of the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board's 9-1-1 Technical Operations Committee and the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officers International which oversees the functional needs of the Public Safety Answering Points personnel.

Each topic begins with a stated objective. It is followed by a series of questions which are addressed in a white paper. This is followed by discussion questions and a bibliography. The topics are arranged in a progressive manner. Each is building on the previous topic.

Project Goals

The goals of the project are two fold. The first is to introduce new supervisors to the knowledge and skill necessary to succeed in their new position. The second goal is to give new supervisors a peer support system. It is to establish a mentoring program where supervisors can bring their thoughts or concerns to share with other supervisors.

Target Audience

The program will be used initially by the Dakota Communications Center (DCC) as a pilot project for new supervisors. In 2007, the Dakota Communications Center will become operational. This will involve promoting up to five new supervisor or 80% of its leadership staff. Training these new supervisors together will encourage team building within their ranks as well as educate them in the broader aspects of leadership.

After the initial training with the DCC, the program will be available to other leaders in the public safety communication field through such training opportunities as the Metropolitan Emergency Services Board, the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officers International (APCO) and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). The last two are professional organizations which focus on public safety communications.

Project Evaluation

The project evaluation will be a written evaluation form all participants will be encouraged to complete prior to the close of each training session. An example of a training evaluation form is attached. The evaluation form will ask for feedback on content, presentation and instructor skills. Adjustments will be made to the training program based on the feedback and suggestions received. Additional topics may be added to address the needs of the participants. A final evaluation will also be given at the end of the series to review topics and suggestions for follow up sessions to continue the team building effort.

Evaluation Form

1. What information did you find useful?

2. What information could be expanded to make it more useful to you?

3. How would you describe the instructor's ability in presenting this topic? (Knowledge of information, clarity in presentation, encouraging interaction, etc)

4. Describe the environment for the class. (Right amount of time allotted, classroom setting conducive to learning, time of day, class location, etc.)

5. What other topics would you like addressed in this series?

Name (Optional):____

Leadership Styles

Objective:

The objective of the unit is to introduce four basic leadership styles, their orientation, and their impact in the communication center.

Questions:

1. What are the basic leadership styles?
2. Why is it necessary to learn about leadership styles?
3. How do these styles apply to the communication center?

Throughout time leadership has been studied and evaluated. One of the earliest and most read studies of leadership is ***The Act of War*** by Sun Tzu (Third century, B.C.). Confucius studied the order between leaders and subordinates in his writings. Machiavelli's leadership review in ***The Prince*** (1513) is still required reading in many colleges. Each viewed leadership in a unique setting. In a public safety communications center, leadership styles are also important. Each leader brings to the organization a unique leadership style. Employees respond differently to each leadership style. The success of a leader often is dependent on their ability to match leadership styles with the employee's needs and current situation.

There are four basic leadership styles. These have been labeled as directing, coaching, supporting and delegating. Each brings a unique style of leadership which is effective in various situations.

Directing

The directing model is also known as the command style. It is a top down method of leading. This model is very task orientated. The goal of the organization or event is the focus. The chain of command is the essential communication element.

"Leaders define the roles and tasks of the follower, and supervise them closely. Decisions are made by the leader and announced, so communication is largely one-way" (Chimaera, 2006). This leadership style draws from the high task/low relationship behavior. It reflects a lack of participatory decision making by the individual worker. It is often used when the person being led lacks the skill set necessary to complete a task without strong supervision. It is also used in situations where the follower lacks motivation or confidence to complete a set task. In critical incidents where decisions must be made quickly, directing is often the required leadership style.

When describing its use by a resonant leader, this style can build resonance by giving clear directions during times of crisis or emergency thus soothing fears (Goleman, 2002). In the communications center, this directive style can be used when there is a situation which requires quick direct action.

An example is when the community is struck by a severe storm such as a tornado. Multiple calls for assistance are received which may require police, fire or EMS response. Directive leadership quickly evaluates the situation and advises the communications personnel what the response priority will involve. Directions may be given to assign responders to life safety issues first, safety hazards second, property concerns third. In this situation, there is no input from the communication center personnel. It gives clear direction to the communication center personnel of the priority order of the call load.

This style can also be used when dealing with a problem employee. When other methods of leadership styles fail, the use of direct orders may be necessary to ensure compliance to a required standard behavior. While this style does not necessarily change the employee's internal emotional response, it does require acceptable behavior to be displayed in the workplace. It gives clear direction to what is acceptable behavior. The consequence of failing to comply with the leader's direction is the motivator.

An example is a dispatcher who is having difficulty with prioritizing the work load. The supervisor has worked with her to outline the need to respond to the requests from the public and responders first, leaving routine paperwork to a later time. After numerous attempts at coaching and mentoring the employee to gain an understanding of the immediacy of the public request for services and responders need for assistance, the dispatcher continued to finish her paperwork prior to answering the phone or radio. This continued to be a safety concern for the responders. The supervisor needed to take a more direct approach. There was a written work plan drawn up which outlined the priority of the dispatcher's work assignments and the supervisor's expectations for the dispatcher to follow the work plan. The plan was signed by both the supervisor and the dispatcher. The dispatcher's work performance was reviewed weekly for six months to ensure compliance with the plan. It was a very direct method of supervision.

The third use of directing is with new employees. New employees are unfamiliar with the policies and procedures of a new organization. Early mentoring requires more direct supervision which enables new employees to quickly become acclimated to the work environment. Since most training in public safety communications is on the job training, using a directing style of leadership is required in the early stages of an employee's career. The focus is training a new employee. This requires step-by-step directions to guide the employee through the challenges of a new career. As the employee progresses through the training cycle, the leadership style will adjust to the employee's abilities.

Coaching

In the coaching style of leadership, the leader continues to define the roles and tasks, but will do so by soliciting suggestions from the others. This type of leaders is described as a logical leader. "The logical leader constantly seeks new information, identifies obstacles, generates alternatives and considers pros and cons in the final selection" (Reardon, 1998). In coaching, input in sought. The final decision, however, is the responsibility of the leader.

Coaching has an additional benefit. It encourages employees to begin to think like a leader, beyond the boundaries of the specific task to see the big picture. It encourages the use their knowledge, skills and talents to guide them into a better decision. It encourages input without the fear of complete responsibility.

Primal Leadership (2002) identifies a resonant leader who uses this style as one who is able to connect the needs and desires of an employee with the organization's goals. This leadership style is highly effective with individuals who may lack the confidence but have the skills and knowledge to make sound decisions. Coaching leaders encourage a team approach and "buy in" to the goals of the organization.

In the communication center, coaching is often used as the next logical step, following directing, in the training phase with a new employee. As the need for direct supervision lessens, more coaching can begin. This takes the form of asking a trainee how he/she thinks a call should be handled. This allows a trainee to think through their newly acquired skills to advise the leader how the trainee feels a call or situation should be handled.

Examples of coaching can be witnessed daily in the communications center. A specific example is a less experienced dispatcher handling his first armed robbery. The dispatcher was partnered with a very experienced dispatcher. The senior dispatcher could have taken control of the call with easy. Instead, the senior dispatcher, the leader, advised the junior dispatcher that the call was his to handle. The leader continued to encourage the dispatcher. The senior dispatcher acted in a subordinate role to the junior dispatcher. The senior dispatcher was there to answer questions, offer encouragement, and take some of the routine tasks which continued to need attention. The junior dispatcher was coached through to the call completion. There are instances when the best thing a supervisor can say is, "You can do this. I will be there if you need help, but I will not do it for you. You have the skills and abilities. You just need some practice. You will do well."

Leaders also need to use this style of leadership when delegating responsibilities. Every leader can not be an expert in every aspect of a task or area of responsibility. Leaders need to encourage employees to develop specialized skills or unique knowledge. This knowledge or ability is used as a guide for the leader when necessary. Individuals who have a special interest in a specific aspect of a task need to be encouraged to develop those specialized interests.

In the field of public safety communications, not every leader has knowledge of the inner working of the radio system. Is it VHF or 800 MHz? Is it a trunked or repeated system? What are the potential points of failure? A leader does not necessary need to know that information personally. A leader needs to know which staff member has the unique ability to understand the radio infrastructure to advise the leader when issue arise concerning the radio system. By using a coaching leadership style, a leader can identify and encourage the development of special or unique talents of employees. He/she can incorporate that knowledge into any decision making activities.

Supporting

In coaching, the responsibility for decision making lies with the leader. While in the supporting style of leadership, the employee makes the decisions with guidance from the leader. "The leader facilitates and takes part in decisions, but control is with the follower" (Chiamera, 2006). The day to day decisions are made by the follower. When needed the leader advises the follower, but leaves the responsibility for the decisions to the follower or group. The employee who does well in this style is one who is experienced and capable, but may not be confident enough to make decisions alone.

Much like the coaching, this style involves mentoring. While coaching is more visible, this mentoring is a behind the scene's advisor. The Center for Creative Leadership conducted interviews with a group of executives. They all commented on the leadership style of the mentors they had as young leaders. The mentors encouraged each of them to take jobs which they felt was beyond their area of expertise. The mentors then guided them through the growing process. The mentors also

protected them from undue critical critiquing of their performance from other employees. The executives all remarked on the need to try new styles and strengths within the safety of a supportive environment. They stated that having one particular mentor who was able to be that supportive leader led to their individual success (Goleman, 2002).

The servant leadership model has aspects of supporting model. This leadership style is based on the Bible's New Testament texts of serving others. Servant leadership values listening skills, empathy and general awareness
of the needs of the employees who are empowered to provide a service or perform a set task. The servant leader is an enabler. They are committed to the growth of the individual employee. "Servant-leadership encourages collaboration, trust, foresight, listening and the ethical use of power and empowerment "(Greenleaf, 2006). The servant leadership model is one of supporting the employees resulting in a more productive, better educated employee. It encourages the employee to take educated risks. It supports the growth of the employee under the watchful eye of the servant leader.

An example of a servant leader in the communication center is one who takes time with employees to determine what the professional goals of the individual employee may be. With that knowledge, the supervisor/leader then individualizes the training opportunities made available to each employee to capitalize on those goals. He/she encourages each employee to expand their skills and knowledge base. If an employer's goal is to specialize in training new dispatchers, the employer will give the employee the opportunity to attend train the trainer classes. There will be encouragement to develop teaching and communications skills which will enable an employee to develop training skills. Opportunities will be found for the employee to take part in the training of new employees. Mentoring will continue until the employee is at the skill level of a trainer. The servant leader empowers the follower to attain their goals. The follower then becomes the leader.

The servant leader also recognizes the needs of their employees to be the best people they can be. A dispatcher was struggling with new motherhood, the work schedule and the fact that she felt she was not utilizing her education to the best of her ability. While she enjoyed the work and her co-workers, she felt she had not achieved a work/life balance. Another position became available within the department. She was very qualified for the position. The dispatcher possessed skills and education which would lead to success in the position. The dispatcher struggled with the direction to take. As she talked with the supervisor, she became aware that the supervisor did not want her to leave, but encouraged her to look carefully at the new opportunity as a means to have a better work/life balance was well as utilize her education in a new manner. Ultimately, the dispatcher chose to leave the communications center for the crime analyst position. Later, she remarked that she could not have made the decision to leave the dispatching if it had not been for the support she received from the supervisor who spent time encouraging her. The supporting leader understands what is good for the employee is ultimately good for the organization.

Supporting leadership can also be witnessed in every day activities. Supportive leaders are often asking their employees, "What can I do to make your job easier or better?" A supportive leader is aware of the work environment. Is the physical setting conducive to conducting business 24 hours a day, 7 days a week? A supportive leader ensures that the dispatchers have the tools and environment they need to perform their job on a daily basis.

Delegating

The final general leadership style is delegating. Delegating is described as a hands off leadership style. It has also been referred to as impoverished management or laissez-faire management. This management style has the leader becoming involved with the employees only when requested by the employees. It is low in directive behavior and low in supportive behavior (Blanchard, 1998).

While it appears that this leadership style lacks any management skills, it is very effective for employees who have a high competence and high commitment to completing stated goals. These are employees who are experienced and comfortable with their own abilities. Often these employees are just as skilled or more skilled than the leader who supervises them. Leaders who are comfortable with their workgroup may use this method of leadership in the general day-to-day operations of an organization, but step in with a more direct approach only when required due to unusual circumstances.

The positive aspect of this leadership style is ownership. As a leader steps back and delegates, the employee or group steps forward to take ownership of the work product or goal. In the communication center, as the supervisor gains confidence in a dispatcher's ability, the dispatcher is able to act with more authority and independence. This frees the dispatcher to own their calls and work product. It also frees the leader to focus on other tasks. It does not refer to total abandonment by the leader. It simply reflects confidence in the ability of the employee. The leader is still there to coach and mentor when needed.

The scheduling committee of the newly created consolidated communications center is an example of delegation. Each agency was asked to provide a dispatcher to participate in the committee. The committee was charged with making recommendations for designating holidays, handling overtime needs, handling shift change requests, break times and other schedule related matters. As a group, they were to make decisions which would affect the working environment for the entire work group. When the information was brought back to the individual agencies, a dispatcher questioned where the decisions were being made. The representative firmly stated that she did on behalf of the entire group. She also reminded the individual that she had sought input from everyone prior to attending the meetings. The dispatcher claimed ownership of the benefits described and could articulate the thought process that went into each decision. Leadership by delegating is allowing for ownership and encourages leadership in others.

What style is best?

Most leaders develop a leadership style which is most comfortable for them. However, the most effective leader can adapt other styles of leadership as the situation warrants (Sharpe, 2006). The concept of a mixed leadership style acknowledges the need for leadership styles based on the need of the group or individual

The ability to read the audience and adjust to the needs of the situation is the skill of a resonant leader. "The most resonant leaders go beyond the mechanical process of matching their styles to fit a checklist of situations; they are far more fluid. They scan people individually, and in groups, reading cues in the moment that tip them to the right leadership need, and they adjust their style on a dime" (Goleman, 2002). The sign of an effective leader is the ability to adjust to the needs of the individual. Within a group, there may be those who are very skilled and capable of completing a task. They need very little supervision and a great deal of freedom. There may be others who need more direct supervision or coaching. Knowing when to step in and when to step back is the trait of a resonant leader.

Choosing a leadership style is situational. Each situation requires a different style to achieve the required results. There is not one best style. To make a leadership style work depends greatly on the follower/employee's development level, the work that needs to be done and the time frame in which to make decisions. Direct leadership gives specific guidance when needed. Coaching encourages a dispatcher to stretch beyond what one thinks one's abilities are to reach a new goal. Supportive leadership, like servant leadership, enables dispatchers to attain their goals. Delegating encourages ownership and the development of new leaders.

Discussion Questions

1. What do you see as your predominate leadership style? Give an example of the use of this style in your current leadership situation.
2. Describe a situation which may require use of each of the following leadership styles:
   a. Directing
   b. Coaching
   c. Supporting
   d. Delegating
3. Describe a situation where the style of leadership you used was not the most effective? What was the situation? What were the variables? How could you have adjusted your leadership style to achieve a more effective response?

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The Impact of Ethics

Objective:

The purpose of this unit is to explore the need for ethical decision making in public safety communications.

Questions:

1. As a leader, how can one make ethical decisions?
2. How can leaders model integrity through ethical decision making?
3. What are the five powers of ethical decision making?

If one studies the navigation of ships sailing on the ocean or the great lakes, one finds the importance of a lighthouse. A lighthouse, for the captain of a ship, is the compass which leads to the safety of the port. It is a guide through treacherous waters. It is the beacon of light on which the captain can focus to bring his crew to a successful conclusion of the journey. Ethics and integrity are much like the lighthouse. They guide a leader through the dangerous waters of organizational management. This unit will explore the questions which lead to ethical decisions making.

The Need for Organizational Ethics

Managers are often faced with questions involving ethics. By having a written code of ethics or values which incorporate ethical statements, a manager has the stage set for good ethical decision making. As a leader in public safety communications, there are situations in which there are no clear cut answers. These situations require a supervisor to have the ability to evaluate a given situation and make ethically sound decisions. There are three questions which can guide ethical decision making.

The Ethical Checklist

The first question is ethical decision making is: "Is it legal?" This applies to questions involving legal versus criminal actions. One must remember that when dealing with ethics, the law is not always the best indicator of a correct moral standard. An example is: one of your software contractors is working on your computer. He/she asks you out to lunch. He/she offers to pay for your lunch. Is it legal? Perhaps it is legal based on company policy and state statute. However, will the contractor expect special favors during the next contract negotiations? Will he/she expect a favorable review contract review?

"Laws are the bare essential requirements that maintain social order. They apply to everyone. They are attractive because they are actually written down. But laws are poor substitutes for either moral or ethical choices" (DeMars, 1998). Laws are seen as being the absolute outside standards for ethical behavior. In the above example of the lunch, in Minnesota a gratuity of less than five dollars is legally acceptable. That does not make it right if your organization has a guideline which prohibits gratuity in any amount. It also does not make it right if the gratuity requires a quid pro quo response.

The legal question gives the outside boundaries. The ethical standard is defined by your organizations code of ethics, vision statement or other personal behavior guidelines. Morals outline goals of the highest ethical standards possible. "In short, the law tells you what you should not do, ethics tell you what you should do, and morals tell you what you should aspire to do" (DeMars, 1998). For example, a person calls 9-1-1 and disconnects prior to talking with a dispatcher. The dispatcher places a return call to the caller who states the original call was a misdial. From a legal liability standpoint, the dispatcher has made contact with the caller. Their job is complete. The dispatcher knows that statistically the likelihood of the caller being involved in a domestic dispute where the caller or victim cannot freely talk with the dispatcher is high. Ethically, the dispatcher assigns police officers to respond to the residence to visually verify that the original call was truly a misdial and not an emergency situation. Ethically, there is a need to ensure that each 9-1-1 caller is receiving the best service possible. Morally, a dispatcher in this instance aspires to a high standard of service for all callers whether or not the caller is able to articulate their emergency situation.

The next question in ethical decision making relates to fairness and balance. Is the action balanced? This question should be viewed in both a short and long term perspective. The goal is to create a win-win situation whenever possible. An example is consolidating several dispatcher centers into one center. In Dakota County, each current Public Safety Answering Point will be terminating employment with their dispatchers when the new center opens. The new center will need to employ dispatchers. The win-win situation is that the new Public Safety Answering Point will employ the dispatchers from the closing centers prior to advertising for new employees. The current dispatchers win as they will be given the opportunity to transfer their employment to the new center without the requirement of applying for a new position. The new center wins because it gains experienced dispatchers who know the communities which it will serve.

An example of a win-lose situation is with the same illustration. The dispatchers leaving their employer are treated as terminated employees. Under the severance agreements, not all of the personal time off is compensated. The employee will be compensated for 50% of sick leave after 10 years and 100% after 15 years of employment. Those employees who have less than 10 years seniority will lose all banked sick leave. The winners are those with longevity of over 15 years. Those with less than 15 years will lose some of their compensation. It leaves an imbalance based on longevity. Both groups are being terminated from current employment; however, some are compensated at a higher rate.

The third question ethical decision making relates to emotions. How will this decision make me feel? Can I live with this decision? This is known taking care of your own ethically well-being first, taking care of your subordinates second and taking care of your supervisor third (DeMars, 1998).

In the first instance, the struggle is over what one's conscience is directing. Rushwood Kidder of the Institute for Global Ethics suggests three criteria to evaluate whether the situation or decision is ethically valid. "The stench test, relying on moral intuition, is a gut-level determination" (1995). For many people, the first thought regarding the ethical nature of a situation is usually correct. There are situations in which all the legal and balanced questions appear to be in correct, but there is an underlying tone or feeling that something is not quite right. When one uses ethical guidelines of does the situation feel right or wrong, one's intuition is usually correct. By listening to one's moral intuition, one can determine if a situation is ethically correct even when one cannot identify the reason why the situation feels wrong.

An example is purchasing liquor. An employee who wears a uniform which clearly identifies that this person is an employee of a police department. The employee decided to stop by the local liquor store on the way home from work to purchase liquor for an upcoming event. It is a legal purchase. Ethically, the use of alcohol may be acceptable in an appropriate social situation. The question becomes that of appearances. Does it appear that the employee is making this purchase for the police department?

Does it send the wrong message to the public with regard to tax dollars or employee time? It is legal. The private use of alcohol may be ethically acceptable. However, it does not feel right.

The second criterion is the front page or 6:00 p.m. news test. If the actions one is about to take results in publicity on the front page of the local paper or as the lead story on the evening news, would that be acceptable? If one can answer yes, then one's conscience will rest easily. If the answer is no, then one's decision should be re-evaluated. This is not a question about publicity. It is about making decisions which will not lead to embarrassment on the part of oneself, one's employer, co-workers, subordinates, leaders or one's family.

An example is a dispatcher who receives a complaint of a loud party at a residence. The dispatcher recognizes the address as her own residence. She is aware that there are teenagers unsupervised at the residence as she is a single parent. Instead of handing the call off to another dispatcher or a supervisor, the dispatcher becomes argumentative with the caller. She ultimately refuses to take the complaint and abruptly hangs up on the caller. The caller is refused service, so calls the media. While there are personal issues for the dispatcher regarding this call, there is also an ethical standard of conflict of interest to be resolved. The dispatcher made a poor choice which resulted in unfortunate publicity for the department and her suspension from duty.

Another example is that of a 9-1-1 call in which the caller could not be located due to misinformation. The caller was an elderly female whose husband was experiencing a heart attack. The couple had just moved into a new apartment building. The caller was upset and could not remember the address. Based on what little information the dispatcher could obtain, the dispatcher sent police, fire and paramedics to a two building complex to begin a door to door search. Other residents called the media to complain about the responders knocking on everyone's door late at night. The media researched the event and featured it as a lead story on the morning news broadcasts. Ethically, the dispatcher did everything in her power to assist these victims. The victims were located. The husband did survive. In this instance, the publicity was positive.

The final question relating to conscience is described by in terms of, "If I were my mother, would I do this?" (Kidder, 1995). The word mother may be substituted with father or other trusted individual whose opinion one values. The basis for this question is the Golden Rule. If I were someone else, would I make the same decision?

How would I behave in front of someone I respected and whose respect I valued? Think of the language one uses in stressful situations or to vent one's frustration with an event. In law enforcement, the language sometimes becomes less than professional. As a leader in the communications center, one notices that this language deterioration has become routine conversation. From an ethical standpoint, what is the message that is sent if in routine conversation derogatory language is used?

These three basic questions guide one in ethical decision making. It allows one to focus on what is legal, what is balanced and what allows for a clear conscience. "There is no pillow as soft as a clear conscience" (Blanchard, 1988). The result of maintaining a high ethical standard is that one's decision making skills are trusted and respected. The professional reputation of both the individual and organization is enhanced. It is suggested that the result of ethical decision making is ethical power (Blanchard,1988).

Ethical Power

The first ethical power derived from ethical decision making is purpose. Johannesen in *Ethics of Human Communications* noted that by making ethically decisions in a purposeful manner, one is modeling integrity (2006). By making ethics a part of one's daily decision making process, others will trust the decisions that are being made. It lends itself to a reputation of trustworthiness, fairness and integrity. The purpose in being a communications center supervisor/leader is not to have all the control but to make the best decisions possible for the most people based on sound ethical decision making. The result is modeling a behavior which reflects personal integrity.

The second power is that of pride. Pride often has negative connotations of thinking highly of oneself. Pride in this context is feeling good about one's decisions. Ethical decision making is often difficult. It results in pressures to make decision which one knows are not correct and will lead to feelings of worthlessness. Pride is the ability to make the best decision possible based on the information known at the time and being comfortable with the decision. This pride is described as promise-keeping or promise fulfillment. Trustworthy people keep promises. The promise of ethical decision making even in times of adversity leads to feelings of positive self worth or pride (Johannesen, 2002).

The third ethical power is that of patience. Ethics looks at both long term and short term consequences in decision making. It is estimated that changing one habit takes approximately three months of conscious decision making. To sustain a vision for ethical behavior, each decision involving an ethical issue must be reviewed with the three basic questions. As this behavior becomes second nature, one's through process can more quickly act and react to incidents with ethical implications. "Making lasting change requires a strong commitment to a future vision of oneself – especially during stressful times or amid

growing responsibilities" (Goleman, 2002). Patience is a powerful tool with which to achieve a lasting change.

Persistence is a relative of patience. Persistence is not obstinacy. Rather, persistence is leadership that is not weakened by conflicts or difficulties. When one feels overwhelmed by seemingly insurmountable difficulties, persistence encourages one to continue on course. Winston Churchill gave a speech at a boys' English Prep. School, he said, "Never, never, never give up" (Kanungo, 1996). The speech was to be words of wisdom by Winston Churchill. He believed to never give up was the most important wisdom he could share with these future leaders. Persistence is a long term vision for ethical organizations. It is keeping on course with ethical decision making even when the comfortable or easy route is offered.

An example of persistence is the moving of the dispatchers from a manual paper records system to a computer aided dispatch (CAD) system. Most of the dispatchers did not feel they possessed the computer skills to make a successful transition. Professional CAD trainers were retained to provide each dispatcher with sixteen hours of initial training. The trainers then spend several days with each shift of dispatchers as they experienced the live transition to the computer system. They answered dispatchers' questions and gave general encouragement. The trainers repeatedly encouraged the dispatchers. After this initial training period, the trainers left the dispatchers for several weeks to acclimate themselves to their new environment. After several weeks the trainers returned to provide remedial training as needed. The trainers found that by providing consistent encouragement along with step by step instructions, the dispatchers would succeed to making this huge transition from paper to computer. The decision to automate the dispatch center was ethically sound. It made the center more efficient and ultimately safer for the responders due to the easy in tracking calls. The persistence of the trainers to paint the long term goal for the dispatchers and providing a means of attaining the goal promoted the success of the project.

The final power of ethical decision making is perspective. "Perspective is the capacity to see what is really important in any given situation. The habit of reflection is critical to acquiring a sense of perspective" (Kanungo, 1996). Reflection encourages self evaluation. It encourages one to step back and evaluate the course one is taking. It incorporates purpose, pride or self-esteem, patience and persistence into a reflective decision making process. This is not time dependent. It may be a short look at the big picture or a longer reflective strategic planning event.

This need for perspective occurred in Burnsville just moments after an officer involved shooting. The watch commander asked for a specific number of officers be called back to service to assist with the incident. As officers called in to volunteer for the assignment, two officers who happened to be together also called in. Only one officer was needed to fill the initial request for assistance. The dispatcher, who answered their phone call, advised only one officer could be used. The other was not to respond. Reflecting on the situation, the communications supervisor evaluated the purpose of calling in extra officers and made the decision to accept the extra assistance an additional officer would bring to the situation. The perspective was that officer involved shootings, in Burnsville, only occurred once every 25 years. No responders had personal knowledge of how to handle the situation. Therefore, more officers than initially estimated would be needed. The supervisor took a step back from the actual request for assistance made by the watch commander and evaluated the request in terms of the scope of the incident. In this situation, more officers would be requested as supervisors looked more broadly at the scope of the situation.

On a daily basis in the communication center, reflection is the time one takes to evaluate a caller's emergency in the scope of the larger picture of activity. Just because a caller believes that they are having a life altering event, does not mean that the dispatcher needs to become part of the emergency. Perspective is putting that caller into proper priority order with all the other activities of the day. That call may be the highest priority one is handling at the moment, or it may be a crisis only for that caller. A disagreement between co-workers may feel like a crisis to those involved, but pales in comparison to a victim of domestic violence. A moment of reflection allows one to keep a positive prospective in the face of adversity.

Summary

To make an ethical decision one needs to ask the three questions. Is it legal? Is it balanced? How will it make me feel about myself? This is a scale on which to base ethical decisions. The result of ethical decision making is a leader and organization which is known for its honesty and integrity. It has a reputation of maintaining high standards through adversity. Long term visioning is required.

Through ethical standards, a leader and organization gain purpose, pride, patience, persistence and perspective. A leader whose purpose is to have ethical behavior be the norm gives a vision for others to follow. The more ethical behavior is practiced the higher the self esteem becomes. This results in a pride of ownership. By holding to its ethical values, an organization is led to long term success in balancing ends and means. Persistence puts into action one's purpose. Persistence is a long term commitment to ethical principles. A leader with perspective knows where the organization has been and where it needs to go. Like the lighthouse, ethics are the beam of light that guides our way.

Discussion Questions

1. Give an example of a decision you, as a supervisor/leader, struggled with. What was the issue? What were your options for solving the dilemma? What option did you choose?
2. What are the hardest issues you feel you need to balance? (Work/life issues, scheduling conflicts, training/scheduling issues, etc.) How do you decide which option is best?
3. In reflecting on the five P's, how does one balance long and short term goals in a rapidly changing environment?
4. How do you feel you model ethical behavior? How does your organization model it?
5. What advise would you give a new leader/supervisor who is faced with a conflict of interest?

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Team Building

Objective:

The objective of this unit is to explore the building of a communications team. It will explore gathering individuals to form the team and the growth of the team.

Questions:

1. What are the three aspects of team building?
2. What are the components each team needs to succeed?
3. How can individuals translate their personal passions into a successful team member?
4. Can conflict be managed?

Introduction

"Teams have to develop over time, and simply using the term to describe groups of people does not make them teams" (Martin, 2006). Team building is time consuming and difficult. There are three aspects of creating a team: having the right people, making the decision to be the best, and having the discipline to succeed. As each team grows, it needs to learn to trust its members, develop a means of conflict management, become committed to its goal, be accountable for its successes and failures and measure its results both in terms of its stated goals and its process for achieving those goals.

Right People

Our culture is based on independence. Historically, we read of the strong, independent nature of the pioneers as they made their way west. Today, we read of the large bonuses paid to individual workers for performance above and beyond expectations. CEO's can make more than their salaries in bonus for their individual contribution to their corporation's financial success. Yet studies show that historically successful corporations value and encourage team work, not individual performance. Bringing together the right people is the first step in developing a strong successful team.

In public safety communications, putting together the correct team of people is essential to having a cohesive interdependent organization. Building a good team has been described as that of driving a bus. "If we get the right people on the bus, the right people in the right seats, and the wrong people off the bus, then we'll figure out how to take it someplace great" (Collins, 2001).

Getting the right people on the bus is difficult in public safety communications. With national turnover rates ranging from 17% to 55% and an average retention of 4 years, it is difficult to recruit and staff a public safety communications center (APCO, 2005). In a recent hiring effort by the Burnsville Police Department, 262 applications were received. Eighteen individuals were interviewed. Three were forwarded for the final step of background investigation. Only one applicant successfully completed the background process. With retention rates of 45 to 83%, getting that right person for the position is time consuming and difficult. As a leader, making sound people judgments initially contributes to a successful communications center.

Getting the right people into the right seats is maximizing individual potential within the team. Not only are the right people needed for an effective team but that "the abilities, skills, talents and resources of team members are used to the fullest" (Varney, 1989). Everyone brings a unique talent to the team. Some dispatchers are able to direct victims through medical emergencies in a calm manner. Others can easily talk suicidal individual into accepting help. There are dispatchers who can translate an officer's urgent call for assistance into a clear concise radio transmission and those that handle the routine daily traffic with a consistently high level of service. Each employee has a unique talent which contributes to the team as a whole. These talents need to be maximized for the team to thrive and success to be realized.

Getting the wrong people off the bus is neither easy nor quick. The first step is evaluating if the employee is truly the wrong person on the bus, or the right person in the wrong seat. Colman Mockler, CEO of Gillette, was asked to describe why he made so many changes to the placement of his top management staff, moving 38 out of 50 of his top people into other positions. He defended his actions stating, "Every minute devoted to putting the proper person in the proper slot is worth weeks of time later" (Collins, 57).

Taking the time to evaluate whether a poor performance is based skills or an ill placement will assist a supervisor in deciding an employee's retention. There are two questions when deciding the retention of an employee. First, if you were hiring the employee today, would you hire the person again? Second, if the employee comes to you and states they are leaving the company for an exciting new position elsewhere, would you be disappointed in their leaving or relieved? If the answer to the first question is "no" and the second answer is relieved, it is time to consider if the person should be removed from the team (Collins, 2001). This is very difficult and requires some effort if your agency is a union or civil service organization. There are legal requirements which guide separation procedures. These procedures must be followed when the decision is made to separate an employee from the organization.

Deciding to be the Best

As a team grows, it develops a sense of identity. One of the first things to develop is the sense of worth. The Hedgehog concept is used in business to assist in evaluating what a specific team brings to the organization. In communications, there is not the standard product to be measured. There is not a financial flow chart which reflects the financial gain on the communications center. While the work load may experience ebb and flow, it does not experience a goal in the traditional business sense. Public Safety Communications dispatcher is like a postal worker. Each day, the mail is waiting at the beginning of the shift. Throughout the day, the mail moves from the postal worker's pouch to the mailbox. Calls move from the dispatcher to the responders. At the end of the day the pouch is empty, but the next day, or in our example the next shift, the mail will be once again waiting for delivery. So it is with the call load in the communications center. It never really ends. It ebbs and flows.

In terms of the Hedgehog concept, being the best is a value added concept. As individual teams members, the question is asked, "What are you deeply passionate about in relation to your work?" (Collins, 2001). Each team member brings a specific passion to the work. Some may be passionate about training. Some are passionate about how medical emergencies are handled. Others may be great at processing domestic dispute calls. Each team member brings their individual passion to the team. This results in a well rounded team who brings added value to the organization. The decision is made to be the best at whatever is their passion.

Discipline to Succeed

Passion has a price. The price is discipline. In this concept, the discipline is supported by additional training and experience for team members. This discipline to succeed is strategic planning not goal orientated. In a strategic plan, the values and core beliefs of the organization and team is reflected. Training encourages the concept of being the best. Project RETAINS found that an effective training process is directly related to job satisfaction and retention. When a person is passionate about what they do and is encouraged to be the best through training opportunities and application of skills, the retention rate of the center overall is increased. Supporting the discipline to succeed is a necessary component of a good team. It makes room for personal and team growth.

Team Growth

Teams have five essential elements: trust, conflict management, commitment, accountability, and results. Trust is the first element which a team needs to develop. It is often the hardest. Trust has been define not as the ability to predict one another's behaviors based on past behavior and time, but as vulnerability (Lencioni, 2005). Trust is being comfortable and open with one another to share failures, weaknesses and fears not just strengths and successes. Vulnerable trust is hard to achieve because it is against our natural preservation tendencies. This trust is the ability to say, "I was wrong" or "I made a mistake" (Lencoinoi, 2005). This trust asks employees to take risks without the guarantee of success, to be vulnerable to failure.

Conflict Management

Once trusting has begun, conflict management needs to be addressed. Conflict management is the ability to argue productively instead of destructively. In discussing indicators of team success, it was noted that interpersonal conflict is a normal part of the day-to-day interactions between team members (Varney, 1989). In effective teams, there is a low level of interpersonal conflict. When it does manifest itself, it does so in a healthy manner allowing the conflicts to be worked out within the group.

The goal of conflict management isn't to avoid conflict, but to channel it into a win-win situation where each member in the conflict trusts the others enough to speak openly and honestly about their views, opinions and beliefs. The

conflict management if approached correctly will fall along a continuum between artificial harmony where no one argues about anything to mean-spirited personal attacks (Lencioni, 2005). Either end of the continuum is not healthy for the team or the individual. The middle of open constructive disagreements is where conflict management falls. Each member is encouraged to share their view point and learn from the others. Team member will occasionally step over the bounds of good conflict management and entertain destructive behavior. As long as the team is committed to working through the conflict and not allow it to fester, the team will experience success.

Commitment

As trust and conflict management skills expand, commitment by each team member to the goals of the team is essential. Commitment has two elements: clarity and buy-in. "Clarity is the removal of assumptions and ambiguity from a situation" (Lencioni, 2005). Each team member must state what their assumptions are about a goal or topic. Each assumption impacts the point of reference of the individual and team. An easy way to determine if clarity has been achieved is to ask the question, "What did we decide here today?" By exploring this question, a leader can ensure that the goals of the group are understood by all and the priorities are clearly understood. This also allows a leader to verify buy in.

Buy-in isn't consensus. "Buy-in is the achievement of honest emotional support." (Lencioni, 2005). Buy-in defies consensus. To have clarity and buy-in, team members are not being asked to agree, but rather to support a decision by the group as a whole. In Dakota County, the PSAPs are consolidating. A decision regarding mobile file cabinets needed to be made. The decision needed to be made to either buy 52 two drawer file cabinets with wheels for the dispatchers to move about to their workstations each day or to explore a different workflow which did not require the cabinets. The five communications supervisors trusted each other enough to openly and honestly voice their opinions on the topic. Within the group arguments ensued with everyone stating their beliefs. The moderator of the group clarified the decision to be made – buy cabinets or not.. The decision by the group as a whole was to forgo the cabinets in favor of a new workflow. While two supervisors did not agree with that decision, they supported it when they presented it to their employees. They exhibited buy-in for the process and supported the decision.

Accountable

There are two standards of accountability. The first is the accountability as reflected in productivity or outcome. The second is behavioral accountability. Productive accountability is easy to track and monitor. This is simply monitoring whether assignments were completed in a timely, complete manner by the person who was assigned to the task.

Behavioral accountability is more difficult to define. It is often the peer-to-peer holding each other accountable for the success of the team as a whole. Accountability can also be found in the encouragement of others. Accountability can be found in some aspects of mentoring in which each team members encourages the other to fulfill their responsibilities to the entire group.

Leaders set the tone for what is acceptable peer-to-peer review. If a leader does not hold people accountable for their behaviors, individual members of the team will not be willing to hold themselves or others accountable. Ultimately, the work that was done to build the team, and to create an atmosphere of positive conflict management and commitment will fade causing failure in the commitment to being the best.

If a leader sets the tone for self policing with regards to attitude accountability, individuals will acknowledge the need for giving feedback, both positive and negative, to others in the team. Part of being a team is sharing the responsibility for maintaining a tone of the workgroup (Lencioni, 2005).

Results

Teams are built for a specific purpose. In public safety communications, the purpose of the communications team in its simplest terms is to assure an orderly transfer of information from the public (callers) to the responders. In reviewing specific calls to determine if the results were as expected or anticipated, the question is asked, "Did I, as a dispatcher, do my part to accurately interpret the callers request for assistance and translate that into an appropriate response?" Did my partners do their part to add to the successful completion of the call? Even the best communications team faces the questions of who was responsible for the success or failure of a call.

This is when human self preservation kicks in. "We have a strong and natural tendency to look out for ourselves before others, even when those others are part of our families and our teams" (Lencioni, 2005). To keep the blaming to a minimum, it is suggested that a team keep their goals of trust and appropriate conflict management in the forefront at all times. "Far too many teams assess their success using subjective and unreliable means like politics, feelings, or outside opinions, but none of this really matters. Result orientated teams establish their own measurements for success" (Lencioni, 2005). Team members trust one another to do the best they can with the information they have at the time of the incident. They celebrate the successes with one another. They use difficult calls to educate, not to blame. They pull together as a team in difficult situations to work to the good of the organization and stated goals.

Summary

Team building takes time and effort. It is a very slow process. The first step in team building is gathering together the appropriate staff. In the communications center, that staff may take years to fully develop. Union contracts, labor agreements and legal requirements may impact how quickly a manager may change the team if the removal of a team member is necessary. Each team member needs to decide their passion. That passion needs to be translated into the desire and determination to be the best.

Once the team is established, they need to learn trust one another. Conflict management should allow for all members of the team to address issues or ideas without reprisal. All goals need to be clear and attainable. There needs to be commitment to those stated goals. Each team member must be held accountable for their individual part in attaining those goals. Finally, the results must be measurable and shared. For a leader this takes time and commitment to gently guide a team in the direction it needs to go.

Optional Discussion Questions

1. What are you passionate about?
2. How could you translate that passion into a statement about being the best?
3. How do you determine who the "right" people are on your bus?
4. What hinders your ability to get the "right people on the bus"?
5. What examples of conflict manage do you see in your daily work routine?
6. How do your team members support each other to achieve the department goals?

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Mentoring

Objective:

The objective of this unit is to introduce various mentoring styles and the components which make up the mentoring relationship.

Questions:

1. Who benefits from mentoring?
2. Is there more than one mentoring style?
3. What are the components of a mentoring relationship?
4. Are there obstacles to mentoring?

In Homer's poem, *The Odyssey,* Ithaca's King, Odyssey, sets off to do battle in the Trojan Way. As he prepares to leave, he turns the care and education of his son, Telemachus, to his trusted friend, Mentor. Mentor is charged with raising Telemachus to be the heir apparent of whom Odyssey would be proud. Mentor performs these duties with care and diligence. Telemachus grows into a man who is ultimately deemed worthy to be the son of the great Odyssey. "Originating from this tale, the word mentor becomes synonymous with loyal and trusted friend, enlightened advisor and teacher" (Virginia, n.d.). Mentoring is the sharing of one's education, skills and experience with a colleague of lesser experience. Mentoring has one major goal: the career advancement of a trainee through educational, career and personal development as guided by the mentor.

History

Mentoring is found in early history in the trade and craft guilds. Originally, skills were passed from father to son or mother to daughter. Later, apprenticeships were formed around the specialized skills of guilds such as the building trades of the masons and artisans of the king's court. Apprentices were assigned to master craftsman by matching skills and learning styles. Mentoring in the form of apprenticeships is still found in many unions such as the electrical, plumbing and building trades. Master artisans continue to educate and guide new artists in sculpting and painting. Medicine, law and education continue to have a great emphasis on mentoring new employees to enable them to succeed.

Benefits to Mentoring

Mentoring brings benefits to two groups in a business environment. The first set of benefits belongs to the mentor and trainee. With a positive mentor relationship, the trainee is able to develop his or her own skill set at a faster pace. This, in turn, creates new experts within an organization. It improves job performance and creates a climate where personal and professional growth is encouraged.

For the organization, mentoring has been shown to increase organizational effectiveness. As new relationships are formed, teamwork increases. Teamwork creates a work environment in which employee retention thrives. All this leads to improved profitability (Spencer, 2003).

Mentoring positively affects both the business and individual employees. The form mentoring takes may vary with the organization and individuals. Each form is unique in its style, but uniform in its goals.

Mentoring Styles

Mentoring takes various forms. Often casual mentoring goes unnoticed by the mentor, but is apparent to the trainee. This mentoring takes the form of conversations between two individuals in which the trainee takes away valuable information. In this form of mentoring, the mentor is often unaware that they are influencing another's professional life. "Everyone engages in this type of mentoring, but it has no formal structure or defined objectives-it involved simply learning from the good habits and behaviors demonstrated by others" (APEGGA, n.d.). This mentoring is defined as being a role model.

There are several forms of mentoring (APEGGA, n.d.). The first is informal mentoring which is just a step above casual mentoring. It is formed through unplanned relationships which naturally develop. The transference of skills and knowledge occur subtly through the growth of a personal and professional relationship. These mentoring opportunities encourage professional and personal growth which last a life time. It is not restricted by a timeline or formal mentoring contracts.

Non-facilitated mentoring takes on a more formal structure. While the relationship is not assigned as it is in a facilitated situation, it does carry with it a contract or goal and set time frame. The trainee usually requests assistance from the mentor with a specific issue, skill or project. The duration of the mentoring contract is directed by the length of the project or learning opportunity. The goals and expectations are contracted between the trainee and mentor without outside influence.

In a facilitated setting, the relationship between the trainee and mentor is often assigned as part of a work assignment. These relationships are very well defined with set goals and timelines. The overall goal of facilitated mentoring is the sharing of skills and knowledge which will enhance the professional development of the trainee. These relationships can often be found in the medical profession; intern, resident and doctor. It is also common in the legal profession where associates are assigned to partners for mentoring in a specific field of law.

Another example of an interesting facilitated mentoring program is that of the United States Air Force. In true military style, there is a directive ordering an Air Force mentoring program. "Per Air Force Instruction 36-3401, *Air Force Mentoring*, and Air

Force Policy Directive 36-34. *Air Force Mentoring Program,* mentoring is to be emphasized throughout the Air Force" (USAF, n.d.). This directive is very clear in nature. It outlines the goals of the program, the expectations of both the cadet and the superior officer. It also gives direction to the chain of command as it relates to mentors. Mentors must be a superior officer but can not be the direct supervisor of the cadet. While this is an extreme example of a mentoring contract, the elements are the same other facilitated mentoring relationships. There is a goal, personal expectations and a set timeline.

Group mentoring is a variation of the art or trade guilds. There is more than one mentor for a group of trainees. The groups meet at set intervals to promote the mentoring contract through group discussions and training. In the PSAP community, this occurs through a series of training opportunities where trainees or new dispatchers meet either weekly or monthly with trainers to critically review of specific calls or discuss a specific type of incident which the dispatcher is expected to handle. A trainee will bring a specific incident to be reviewed. The mentors will facilitate a review of the call and offer suggestions on options. This situation is where a mentor can share a more professionally mature or skilled point of reference with the group. Since there are numerous mentors present, individual approaches may be discussed. Each mentor may handle a call differently with the same outcome. Group mentoring encourages broad thinking.

The subset of group mentoring is multiple mentoring. This provides one trainee with multiple mentors. Each mentor brings a specific skill or knowledge base that the trainee needs. In dispatch, this is often identified with the individual learning plans. Each mentor or trainer is skilled in a specific area; CAD, telephone communication skills, emergency medical dispatching, etc. The advantage to the trainee is that they have the opportunity to take the best skill from each mentor and incorporate it into their own skill bank. In this situation, it is usually up to the trainee to approach the mentor to request assistance.

Basic Components of Mentoring

While each mentoring style brings a unique combination on trainees and mentors, mentoring itself has three basic components. The first component is establishing expectations (Pinnington, 2004). This is an opportunity for the trainee and mentor to discuss the goals of the trainee. The mentor is able to evaluate whether his or her skills and experience is a suitable match for the trainee. While a trainee may personally enjoy and have a good relationship with the mentor, it does not necessarily translate into a productive mentoring relationship.

The second component is a contract. Once the mentor and trainee have agreed to the relationship, the boundaries of the relationship need to be established. A written contract outlining goals, responsibilities, time lines, and working relationship is formed. This contract may be formal and written with both parties signing the document or an informal verbal discussion. The culture of the organization may dictate the formality of the contract. In the legal or medical profession where mentoring is a part of a job description, a written formal contract may be needed. In a communication center, it may be an informal agreement between a trainee and dispatch trainer/mentor for assistance on a specific job skill such as CAD historical lookups or handling 9-1-1 calls involving domestic disputes. This contract is verbal only with the boundaries being a critique of all 9-1-1 calls involving domestic situations, but no other call types.

The final component is the evaluation or conclusion of the mentoring relationship. When the components of the contract have been reached or the timeline has lapsed, there needs to be the ability for either party to conclude the relationship. Often that is when the goal has been reached or the timeline has run its course. The other opportunity for a conclusion is in the event that either the trainee or mentor feels that the relationship is no longer productive to either party. An unscheduled conclusion may be needed when a mentor's professional obligations have changed; leaving the mentor without the time to adequately commit to the relationship or the trainee no longer needs the services of the mentor. While informal or casual relationships may continue for years, a formal mentoring relationship has a formal conclusion.

An example of a mentoring relationship is that of Elisa Doolittle and Dr. Henry Higgins in "My Fair Lady". Elisa wants to learn proper English so that she will be able to gain employment in a flower shop (goal). She is challenged by Dr. Henry Higgins to learn to speak better (mentor identified). After some thought, Elisa goes to Dr. Higgins to negotiate a contract for services (formal contract established). They arrive at a contract of six months for Eliza to learn to become a proper English lady (timeline). Eliza rises to the challenges set forth by her mentor. She follows his directions. In six months, she is successfully presented to the upper class in England at the Queen's ball.

While the contract ended with the ball, the relationship between Doolittle and Higgins continued (Spicer, 2003).

An example of how this could work in the communication center may involve a dispatcher who wants to learn to handle domestic dispute calls in an efficient manner. A seasoned dispatcher, who calmly hands calls involving domestic disputes, is approached to be a mentor. The dispatcher and trainee agree to work together to share concerns and options for handling these calls. They agree to review all domestic dispute calls received for the next month. A goal has been set. A mentor identified. A contract agreed upon and a timeline set.

Obstacles in Mentoring

As with Eliza and Dr. Higgins, there are some obstacles which may hinder the mentoring relationship. One of the first obstacles is that of a clash in learning or teaching styles. When entering into a mentoring contract, both the mentor and the trainee need to evaluate learning styles. "If you are a detail-orientated person, you probably tend to give extensive directions or outline each step in an assignment. If you are a person who tends to see the big picture, you are probably more inclined to give looser, perhaps even vague directions to your mentee" (U.S. Army, n.d.). If the learning/training style of the mentor and trainee are opposite, it may lead to frustration and failure. In a mentoring relationship, a mutually agreed upon teaching style is necessary for a positive outcome. With Eliza, the teaching style of Dr. Higgins was unexpected and almost caused a severing of the mentoring relationship. Both need to understand the others approach prior to entering into the relationship.

Growth takes time. When a mentor has insufficient time to spend with a trainee, the professional growth of the trainee suffers. Setting a realistic time line and giving the necessary time to the trainee is needed to develop the professional and personal relationships needed for success. When goal setting, mentors should allow enough time for mistakes or set backs. Everyone reaches their goals at a different pace.

Another obstacle to a successful mentoring relationship is a trainee who has a hidden agenda. This is when a trainee enters into a mentoring contract with unspoken goals in mind. "Hidden agendas are harmful to the mentoring relationship because the relationship is built on deceit" (U.S. Army, n.d.). The mentoring relationship is built on trust and honesty. The trainee needs to be open about the expectation of the relationship. The mentor needs to be honest about their ability to provide a nurturing relationship. If the needs of the trainee change, the trainee needs to be able to renegotiate the mentoring contract to meet the new goals of the trainee. Having a hidden agenda is professionally harmful to both the trainee and mentor.

Summary

Mentoring relationships take many forms. Each has its own unique style. Regardless of the form, the goal of mentoring remains the same: the career advancement of a trainee through educational, career and personal development as guided by the mentor. Each mentoring relationship has established expectations, a contract and a means of evaluation. Mentoring can be very formal such as a new dispatcher assigned to an experienced dispatcher for the goal of learning "hot files" within the six month timeframe set forth by the state. It can be informal such as a mentor who is a "go to" dispatcher for less experienced dispatchers or newly trained dispatchers. Mentoring has positive benefits for the trainee, the mentor and the organization. Recognizing the need for and establishing the environment where mentoring is encouraged promotes employee retention, increased teamwork, organizational effectiveness and a highly skilled workforce.

Discussion Questions

1. Give an example of someone who you consider a mentor in your professional career? What qualities did they possess which impacted your relationship?
2. What types of mentors do you identify in your PSAP? How would you classify the type of mentoring situations?
3. As part of your department's training program, how do you feel mentoring enters into the formal training?
4. What steps could you take to extend a new employees training to include a mentoring component?

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Performance Management

Objective:

The objective of Performance Management is to gain an understanding of the cycles in performance reviews: Planning, Coaching and Appraising.

Questions:

1. Why is planning an important feature in a performance review?
2. What are S.M.A.R.T objectives?
3. How can the stage be set to have a positive performance review?

Introduction

"Ask any manager what he hates most about his or her job and you'll likely hear "performance reviews." (Wolfe, 2006.) Performance reviews are often listed as the most dreaded tasks of manager and employees alike (Smith, 2006). Yet performance reviews can improve employee morale and retention. Performance reviews are only one part of the performance management process of planning, coaching and appraisals. These three components work together to enhance an organizations greatest resource – its employees. Performance management encourages employees to grow with the organization and to maximize their own potential.

Planning

The first step in the performance management cycle is planning. This involves developing standards and objectives for each employee or work group. There are five broad considerations for establishing these standards. The first is the organization's overall mission and values. The Burnsville Police Department gives all its new employees a legacy coin to carry with them. The coin is a reflection on the department's values. Surrounding a Burnsville Police badge on one side of the coin it reads: "Burnsville Police Department: Pursuing Excellence in Policing." Surrounding a shield on the other side of the coin are the words, "Knowledge, Integrity, Honor, Courage, Excellence" (Burnsville, 2004). The mission is to protect and serve the public. The values are reflected in how the mission is carried out.

The second consideration is the department's objectives and priorities. With some communication's centers, the objective is to process an incoming 9-1-1 call within a predetermined time frame. The Emergency Communications Center in Vancouver, British Columbia has a priority to process all 9-1-1 calls in under 30 seconds. Since this department only answers 9-1-1 calls and determined response zones, the 30 second processing time was reasonable. Its objective was to move the call to the correct police, fire or ambulance service within 30 seconds. The personnel were trained to answer the phone with "This is the ECC. Is this a police, fire or medical emergency for what city?" Based on the answer, the call takers transferred the calls to the specific agency for further processing. The objectives and priorities were very measurable and clear. The objective was the correct delivery of the call to the correct agency. The priority was based on time management.

Another consideration is the broad job responsibilities. The job responsibilities may vary among Public Safety Answering Points. Each agency needs to define its own broad responsibilities. An example of a broad job responsibility is to work as a member of the communication's team to ensure efficient and effect communications between the public and the responders. The broad responsibility is to be the conduit which translates caller needs to who should respond. This consideration is based on filtering the mission and values with the objective and priorities to set the tone for the broad responsibilities.

The fourth consideration is the job functions and accountabilities. This directly relate to having a well written job description. A job description outlines employees the span of responsibility. It also outlines the specific duties which are expected of an employee. Some job descriptions are very specific in nature. Others are very broad and written in generalities. The 9-1-1 dispatcher job description for the Burnsville Police

Department is broken into three areas: essential job functions; knowledge, skill and abilities, and minimum qualifications. This outlines expectations for the communications supervisor and the dispatcher. It delineates who is responsible for what tasks within the communications center. In the planning phase of performance management, a job description gives guidance to the coaching and review process.

The final consideration is the key results which promote high performance and success. There are employees which perform all the key elements, but still are not outstanding, high performers. They minimally achieve the basic requirements but do not go above and beyond the basic elements for meeting the requirements of their performance reviews. Some of these considerations are more intangible elements such as positive attitude, willingness to mentor new employees, being on time and ready to work at the assigned time. The key result is promoting a positive caring work environment where success is attainable.

Planning lays the groundwork for successful coaching. It is the first in the continuing cycle of planning, coaching and review necessary in building successful employees and a successful organization.

Coaching

The elements of coaching and mentoring are numerous. They will be dealt with in another chapter in more detail. For the purpose of performance management, coaching involves sharing the elements of the planning stage in a realistic manner with the employees. An easy way to describe the need for these elements is to be S.M.A.R.T. specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and timely (Greeno, 1993).

Before the review period begins, meeting with an employee gives both the employee and manager an opportunity to discuss the basis for a review. "S" is for specific. Specific goals give an employee an attainable target. An example of an attainable goal is the review process for Emergency Medical Dispatching. It gives points for following each set of protocols. Each question in the protocol is worth a specific number of points. The goal is to achieve a score of 100% in at least 95% of the calls (NAEMD, 2001). This involves asking the correct question in the correct manner in the order as prescribed by the Emergency Medical Dispatch program. It is a specific attainable targeted goal.

The second element is measurable goals. "M" is for measurable. In public safety dispatching, this can be somewhat difficult. In the above example of EMD, the goal is both specific and measurable. Based upon the telephone, radio and computer aided dispatch (CAD) equipment used; technology may able to assist a manager in measuring such tasks as; time a 9-1-1 call is in queue, , processing time, idle time and other call processing events. Processing time, however, can be somewhat deceiving since it may take longer in process an in-progress burglary than it would an after the fact burglary. The processing time for an in-progress burglary may include the travel time of the responding officers if the dispatcher felt the need to keep the caller on the phone for safety reasons. In processing an after the fact burglary report where the caller was away for several hours or days and returned to find the burglary, the dispatcher or call-taker may not find it necessary to keep the caller on the line until officers arrived. Thus, a burglary call processing time may vary greatly. This would affect the call processing time for the call takers or dispatchers. Being consistent in how items of the job description are measured is the key factor in this element.

"A" is for agreed upon. Management experts suggest employees within the same work group or function write some of the objectives to be evaluated for the upcoming review period. These would be reviewed with the manager and adjusted to fit each employee's unique situation. Each employee may have a different level of expertise or experience within a specific objective which would need to be accounted for appropriately. This encourages employees to build a stronger workgroup and essentially a stronger organization. It would allow for both group and individual acknowledgements and commitments with the manager for agreed upon goals and objectives. Whether it is done as a group or an individual, there needs to be an acknowledgement of the agreed upon objectives.

"R" is for realistic. All objectives need to be realistic. "Each objective should contain a degree of stretch to encourage maximum effort and performance. The standards are then used to evaluate actual performance by comparing the performance to the standards" (Greeno, 1993) Setting objectives which promotes growth in the employee should be balanced by the standard itself. Again, the objective should be attainable. Realistically, an employee should be able to expand their skills to attain a new objective. For a manager, this includes planning for continuing education and training for the employee. One must set the stretch and the means to achieve it.

"T" is for timely. The feedback must be timely. As a manager, giving timely feedback is necessary for a successful performance review. If an employee does a good job on a task, acknowledge it immediately. If an employee needs coaching on a specific task or skill, do it as close to the time when the activity occurred as possible. This will give the employee time to take corrective action. When it is time for a performance review, both the manager and the employee will be able to see the progress the employee has made at correcting any deficiencies in their performance and celebrate the success which have occurred throughout the year.

Coaching for this purpose involves S.M.A.R.T. By meeting with an employee at the beginning of the review period to set goals which are Specific, Measurable, Agreed upon, Realistic and Timely will prepare both parties for the formal review which follows.

Performance Reviews

Performance reviews or appraisals may take on various forms. There are the traditional reviews of a manager to an employee. There are peer reviews in which each member of a team evaluates the other based on specific criteria. There are self-reviews where the employee ranks their own progress. A newer evaluation format is the 360 degree review where everyone in the chain of command evaluated everyone else is a round about manner (Toolpack Consulting, 2005). No matter which format is used, there are common elements in each. Each contains a summary, a list of strengths, weaknesses or opportunities for improvement and feedback.

Many reviews combine elements of all of the above. No matter which evaluation method is used, "conducting a good performance review requires careful preparation in two different ways. You need to decide what you (as a manager) are going to say and how you are going to say it" (BusinessTown, 2006).

In preparation for the review, a manager needs to recognize some of their bias which may creep into the evaluation format. The most common is the clash in personal styles. Each individual has their own unique work style. Some may be very loud and out going. Others might be quiet and aloof. Each employee may be achieving the same goals and objectives, but the manner in which they achieved them may be very different. A manager needs to acknowledge their own bias to measure the work of others.

Personal relationships also come into play in performance reviews. If a manager rose though the ranks to achieve their position, he or she may now be in a position of supervising and evaluating friends or individuals with whom they have had differences. Keeping a professional view is necessary to providing an objective performance review. This is especially difficult if the employee is a close friend who needs specific improvement. Again, being prepared and keeping the evaluation S.M.A.R.T. keeps the personal feelings in check.

Another area which all too often happens is the short term memory syndrome. As a manager, keeping year long notes on performance is a good way of evaluating an employee for the entire year, not just the last 3 or 4 months. "When it is time to evaluate your employees begin at the beginning of the performance cycle. Keep in mind you are reviewing all year. Look to the beginning of the folder" (Carnegie, 2004).

In sharing a performance review, be aware of cultural and racial assumptions. A manager needs to understanding one's own biases and prejudices. Learning cultural differences enables a manager to better prepare for the interchange with employees. As an example, "Hispanic employees may have trouble talking about their performance because culturally they have learned not to brag about accomplishments and, therefore, have not given them much thought. They also have been taught to respect authority figures and may see defending their behavior as disrespectful" (Smith, 2006). An understanding of cultural differences allows a manager to prepare a different delivery style based on cultural need.

Based on the planning and coaching which occurred throughout the year, a manager needs to prepare an objective performance review. Reviews should be a time for one on one interaction with an employee. This should be a time to discuss past performance and future growth opportunities. Since there are agreed upon objectives, there should not be any surprises on the part of the employee as to the expectations. Encouraging conversations regarding what went well and where improvement is needed will help set the goals for the up coming year. The performance review should just be a formalization of the work which has been accomplished throughout the year.

Summary

Performance management consists of three parts: planning, coaching and appraising or review. It is a cycle which in always evolving and every changing. The planning stage sets the standards and objectives for the coming review period. It encompasses the organizations mission and values, department objectives and priorities, broad job responsibilities, specific tasks and functions and keys essential to success.

The coaching phase involves S.M.A.R.T. Managers need to share with employees' objects which are specific, measurable, agreed upon, realistic and timely.

Coaching is a continuing function of a manager which enables and encourages an employee to expand their skills and abilities.

Performance appraisals or reviews are a time for the employee and manager to formally review the work which has been accomplished throughout the year. It is a time to acknowledge successes and set goals for improvement. Performance management is a cycle which continues throughout the year culminating in a formal review.

Optional Exercise

1. Discuss in small groups your departments mission and values. How are you able to incorporate these into a measurable goal in a performance appraisal?
2. Review the job description for your dispatchers. How would you apply the elements of S.M.A.R.T. to the job description?
3. You are scheduled to share a performance appraisal with a former peer with whom you have had disagreements in the past. This employee now needs remedial training in an essential element of their job. What are some of the ways you might approach this subject with this employee?

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The previous chapters discussed the management tools necessary to become a successful supervisor in the field of Public Safety Dispatching. Those skills are the same skills one would find in the business world. Skills involving leadership style can be adjusted to fit any situation. Ethics and integrity are reflections of our core value system. Team building is a necessary component to a successful organization where employee retention is high. Mentoring encourages individual growth to occur. Performance management is the cycle of goal setting, achievement and adjustment which is necessary to achieve both organizational goals and personal growth. These five topics are adaptable to any leadership situation. Each is unique in itself, but together build the foundation for a successful leader.

The follow three chapters are more specific to the world of public safety dispatching. The chapters deal with media relations, telematics and voice over the internet protocol. These topics were suggested by current public safety supervisors who manage 9-1-1 centers. While media relations are often handled by a public information officer, there are situations such as public education events where a PSAP manager or supervisor is asked to present materials unique to their center. Telematics and voice over the internet protocol are new technologies which are beginning to have an affect within the PSAP. Telematic test trials are being conducted at Mayo Clinic and other facilities. This technology may impact the PSAP in the near future. Voice over the internet protocol telephones are becoming more of a challenge within the centers. By having a basic understanding of the technology, a supervisor will be better equipped to deal with the impact to their centers.

Media Relations

Objective:

The object of this unit is to introduce the F.A.S.T method of media relations.

Questions:

1. What role do the media play in the Communication Center's operation?
2. How do data privacy issues impact media relations?
3. What information is public and accessible to the media?
4. What guidelines do we use to determine the release of information?
5. How can we prepare for encounters with the media?

<u>Media's Need for Information</u>

As Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) call takers and dispatchers, we have experienced the 9-1-1 calls which we know generate media interest. The threats of school violence, the violent domestics, large fires, and the multi vehicle accidents all legitimately draw the attention of the media. Public education is also an area of interest for the media. As supervisors, we need to be prepared for those media encounters so that we can be clear, concise and truthful in the information we relay to the public.

Matt Welch, Associated Editor of the media review magazine <u>Reason</u>, reviewed the media's response to Hurricane Katrina in his article, "They Shoot Helicopters, Don't They?" (Welch, 2005.) He found that when the media were faced with a deadline in the absence of official information, they would fill the void with unsubstantiated rumors. Rumors abound ranging from helicopters being shot at to the rape and murder of young children to the Superdome becoming a morgue with bodies stacked in the freezer. When the rumors were investigated, it was found that there was no evidence of the shooting of helicopters. There were no children to be found raped with their throats slit. Finally, there were only 10 deaths of natural causes in the Superdome and the convention center. "From a journalistic point of view, the root causes of the bogus reports were largely the same: The communication breakdown without and especially within New Orleans created an information vacuum in which wild oral rumors thrived. Reporters failed to exercise enough skepticism in passing along secondhand testimony from victims (who often just parroted what they picked up from the rumor mill), and they were far too eager to broadcast as fact apocalyptic statements from government officials. . ." (Welch, 2005).

A plan to mitigate a potential informational vacuum is needed when dealing with the media so that the public receives accurate information.

Media's Role in Public Information

In the event of a public safety response generating a media event, proactive planning is critical. The media do have an important job to fulfill. They bring us information from around world and throughout our community. They have the power to influence change by focusing on the successes and shortcomings in our 9-1-1 system and need for change. They are part of our community. We need to find the balance to work with them.

The news media is also a revenue generating provider of information which makes its profit in providing the most up to date information. This leads to strong competition between rival news outlets for the biggest and best story. This competition results in pressure being placed on the law enforcement community to provide information in a timely manner to meet the deadlines of the media outlets. By having standard operating procedures for processing media inquires prior to a major event, the balance can be struck between the public's right to know as represented by the media and the victim's right to privacy.

In preparing to deal with the media there are three things to remember:

1. "First, the media are not going to go away.
2. Second, the media will run the story whether law enforcement officials like it or not.

3. Finally, bad new does not improve when it stays in the spotlight" (Vance, 1997).

We often hear such things as the local law enforcement officials have no comment or there is no word from local officials on this matter. Those types of comments leave both the media and the public with questions about specific incidents and attempting to fill in the blanks. While the media has a right to certain facts regarding specific incidents, the law enforcement community has an obligation to balance the citizens' right to know, the victim's right to privacy and the integrity of an ongoing investigation.

Based on those three premises, taking a proactive stance with the media becomes important. Often, public safety is in a reactive mode, responding to calls for service as needed without regard for the media's involvement. Responding to requests for service from the public is our primary focus. However, when dealing with the media, we need to be ready, be proactive and acknowledge the role of the media.

Preparing for the Media

Many departments have a designated Public Information Officer (PIO) or senior official who is responsible for the release of all department information. This person is typically trained in media relations, data privacy, department policy and other pertinent information. This person takes the leadership position in dealing with the media. They set the tone for all department public relations encounters. A single point of contact is essential to the consistent, accurate and timely release of information. As with other positions within the department a three deep approach to the PIO position is recommended in the event that the primary point contact is not available due to schedule conflicts such as vacation, illness, or other activities. By having a PIO, the media has a designated contact person within the department to whom they may direct inquiries. In the event that the primary public information officer is unavailable, the communication center is prepared with backup personnel to step in and fulfill those duties.

One of the most common requests from the media to the communications supervisor is for a copy of the audio tape of a specific incident. Within the State of Minnesota, there is provision for this request. In 1994, the Minnesota State Statute 13.82 Subd. 4 was amended to protect the audio portion of 9-1-1 call. While the media advocates the citizen's right to know, the State Legislators acknowledged that the victim, who calls 9-1-1, also has the right to protection from further the trauma of hearing their call for assistance played over and over again on the media outlets. The balance is that the factual information found in the 9-1-1 tape is public information; however, the emotions of the audio portion is private information. Thus, while a written transcript of a particular call is public information which can be released to the media; the audio portion cannot be released. The formal release of this information and other call information should follow the standard operating procedures of the individual department.

In order to present fair and balanced information, the media may also seek other sources for information on a specific incident. They may interview neighbors, witnesses, friend and relatives of involved individuals. While the Public Information Officer cannot control this, they need to be prepared to address questions which could arise from these interviews.

In addition to the immediate needs of a crisis situation, there are other reasons for preparing for encounters with the media. There are news worthy events such as National Night Out, 9-1-1 Hero Awards, public recognition of positive citizen involvement in critical events or public education which encourages media involvement.

Whether the media's request for information is reactive based on a specific incident or proactive based on a public education, being prepared is essential to positive media relations. There are some steps a supervisor can take when planning for a media encounter. The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO) describes the preparation for good media relations as the F.A.S.T. approach. (APCO, n.d.).

Framing

The F.A.S.T. method of media relations begins with framing. Framing is the defining of the issue or putting the issue into an identifiable context. "Developing organizational messages in concert with accurate information is the single most important of interview preparation" (Vance, 1997). Gather together the information which the media needs for the story background. Define your message. Be familiar with the topic so you can address it with the air of authority. If the message is public education, define the need for the information and its impact on the public. Good framing will enhance the importance and value of your message.

An example of framing is the information which was gathered when educating the public on Public Business Exchange (PBX) phone service when it was introduced into apartment complexes. It was discovered that when a PBX system was installed into an apartment complex, the address of the PBX switch or that of the apartment complex office would appear on the 9-1-1 screen. The 9-1-1 information on the Automatic Location Information (ALI) screen did not display the specific caller's name, address or phone number. In one instance in Burnsville, this resulted in a building by building, apartment by apartment search for an elderly man who was having a heart attack in the middle of the night. The victim's wife called 9-1-1, but because they were new residents and she was upset, she could not provide a correct address for the emergency responders. Information was gathered on specific incidents of delayed response to emergency calls as well as the scope of the issue to set the framework for this public education information.

In the above instance, the framing was the context of a delayed response to a medical emergency due to the issues involved with a PBX phone system. By framing the information in a context of emergency personnel responding to a medical emergency, the serious nature of the issues was highlighted or framed in an understandable manner which the media could understand and relate to the public. Framing makes the issue understandable.

Analogies

Analogies are the second component of media preparation in the F.**A**.S.T. approach. "PIOs often overlook the fact that professional reporters represent a conduit for relaying news to the community. Law enforcement officials should remember that when they talk to a reporter, they are talking, essentially, to their community" (Sparks, Staszak, 2000). Analogies give information by example. By providing analogies, the media are able to understand some of the more difficult aspects of public safety communications.

Using the same example above, regarding the concern the dispatchers have expressed about Public Business Exchanges (PBX) telephone systems. An analogy of a PBX phone system is when a customer calls to have a pizza delivered. The caller routinely orders pizza using his home phone number. The pizzeria has the normal delivery address listed for the phones in its data base. The caller asked to have a pizza delivered. The store clerk requests the caller's home phone number. The phone number displays the address from its files. The caller does not verify the address because the caller believes the pizzeria is using a mapping system to locate the caller. When the pizza is delivered, it is to the wrong location. The caller is actually calling from a friend's home down the block. The analogy shows a correlation which is easily understandable by the citizen and media alike. A PBX system is analogous to the pizzeria, if only one address is known; the pizza will go to that address.

Sound Byte

The third aspect of the F.A.S.T. media relations is the sound byte. A sound byte is a short single sentence or phrase which captures the message in an engaging, compact manner. Sound bytes are an important means of relaying information to the public. "A prepared official is a believable official." (Vance, 1997).

Rehearse what needs to be said out loud to bring to life the message being delivered. "A rehearsal produces a highly prepared, polished spokesperson with a heightened awareness of the agency's position on the issue. At the same time, it greatly reduces performance anxiety and helps to ensure the clear transfer of factual data to the reporter" (Vance, 1997). With preparation, a supervisor can produce a message which results in the sound byte the media can use in the time restrictive television setting.

An example of a sound byte might be that of explaining the new technology of voice over the internet protocol (VoIP) and its ability to reach the PSAP. 9-1-1 routing is handled as an optional feature in some of these new services. In the effort to educate the public, a news conference has been called. An example is, "The 9-1-1 community is concerned for the safety of anyone who uses voice over the internet protocol for their phone service. Customers are not aware that 9-1-1 is an optional service with this technology. In an emergency, you will not be able to reach 9-1-1 unless you have subscribed to the 9-1-1 service and completed the appropriate paperwork and registration information for your service provider. Without subscribing to this service, you will not be able to reach 9-1-1 in the event of a police, fire or medical emergency." These four sentences are a sound byte which makes the public aware of the need for diligence in reviewing their telephone needs. It enables the media to capture the essence of the story in a short, concise manner.

Tale

The final aspect of media relations is the tale. Often one thinks of tales as fictional stories filled with imagination. In the world of media relations, a tale is the telling of factual information in a compelling manner. "Stories make a lasting impression and humanize your message. Stories are also useful ways to relate a complex idea to the local context" (APCO, n.d.). Tell the tale or relate the information in the most personal manner possible. "Remember, reporters are always looking for the local angle. So package your message or information in the context of a local story." (APCO, n.d.).

Telling the tale is important. Carver County told the tale well of an incident with a voice over the internet protocol phone services and a house fire. The homeowner called 9-1-1 repeatedly with no response. Finally, he was connected with to call center in Canada. He gave his address. The call center had a contact phone number for the Carver County Communications Center and forwarded the information. Unfortunately, the call center just left a message on the only contact phone number they had, that of the supervisor's. The supervisor was not in her office at the time and did not receive the message until hours later. In the meantime, the caller finally went to the neighbor's to call 9-1-1 on a traditional analog phone line. The Fire Department was notified, but not before the house was a total loss. An after action investigation found that the victim had registered for 9-1-1 service with his voice over the internet protocol telephone service, but had not filled in the information correctly or completely, nor did he return the phone calls from the service provider who was attempting to following up on the incomplete information. Telling the tale is describing the circumstances, incident or concern in a compelling manner. The tale is given from a personal point of view to bring home the serious nature of the situation. It is given so the public takes action to correct the issue it faces.

Summary

The media play an important role in disseminating information to the public both during news worthy events and in public education. When dealing with the media there are two positions; proactive and reactive. In the reactive mode of crisis management dealing with a specific call, Minnesota State Statutes and local policy dictates the manner in which call information can be disseminated. If available, the use of a Public Information Officer (PIO) is preferred by many departments. A PIO is specifically trained in media relations and data privacy. They work to develop positive professional relationships with the media.

In the event that a Public Information Officer is not available, a communications supervisor may be asked to present information to the media. These situations can include release of 9-1-1 information or public information materials. In this proactive mode, F.A.S.T. is an easy way to remember how to approach the public dissemination of information. The four components of F.A.S.T are framing, analogy, sound byte and tale. Framing puts the information in an understandable context. Analogy is giving an example of a similar situation which has a similar result. Again, the goal is to make the information understandable. Sound bytes are short phrases which can be used by the media to emphasis the information. The tale is the actual information given in a situational manner such as the Carver County example.

As stated earlier, the media have a task to perform. It is important to develop a positive relationship with the media to provide a conduit for factual information. By being prepared for encounters with the media, a supervisor can represent the concerns of the department and public in a professional manner.

Reference Sheet for Media Relations

- **F** – Framing. Define the issue.
- **A** – Analogies. Giving concrete examples of the issue
- **S**- Sound Bytes. Giving short, concise sentences or phrases to emphasis the message. Practice what needs to be said.
- **T** – Tale. Relate the information in the most compelling, personal manner.

Remember that department policy and state statutes may dictate what information can be released to the public. The use of a PIO can help maintain good public relations with the media by providing a single point of contact.

Optional Exercises

1. Working with a partner, take 5 minutes to introduce yourself to your partner. Exchange such information as name, agency, position, reason for taking this class. Be prepared spend 1 minute each introducing your partner to the rest of the class.
2. Pick a topic for a 2 minute public education sound byte. Topics may range from use of 9-1-1 to concerns over internet phone usage. Outline what the topic is and why it is important to public safety
3. Pick a new article out of the daily paper. Outline the important topics and explain how you might emphasis the important features of the story. Critique the article using the F.A.S.T method.

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Telematics

Objective:

The objective of this unit is to gain an understanding of telematics and its impact on public safety response.

Questions:

1. What is telematics?
2. What are the components of telematics?
3. How does telematics impact the assigning of responders?
4. Does the telematics information impact patient care?
5. What are APCO's best practices regarding telematics?

Introduction

"Burnsville 9-1-1, what is the location of your emergency?" "We are showing the GPS in your 1992 Honda Civic has been activated. The vehicle is northbound on County Road 11, approaching Burnsville Parkway." This is how telematics began in Burnsville in the early 1990's, as a test site for what is now an industry standard in vehicle location information. Throughout the country, various police departments were used as test sites for a developing technology which could tract vehicle locations through global positioning systems. This technology is now known under the trade names such as General Motors' OnStar and the Ford RESCU system. Telematics has an increasing impact on the 9-1-1 system. It can provide information to Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) personnel who can positively effect the responses of public safety providers and ultimately save lives.

Background

Telematics was originally coined in Europe to mean the study of human-computer interface (Allen, n.d.). Today, it refers to a system of electronics installed in vehicles to provide everything from concierge service to crash notification. This technology uses a combination of on-board global positions systems and cellular telephone technology. In 1996, the concept of telematics was first sold by the Ford Motor Company. A year later General Motors released its first version of OnStar. The technology was factory installed only in high end vehicles such as Lincolns, Jaguars, and Mercedes-Benz. Other vehicles could be equipped at the owner's request.

As this technology became more popular, the American Automobile Association (AAA) launched a subsidiary called AAAResponse. In January, 2001, AAAResponse began marketing telematics to its 42 million members. It is estimated that by 2003, there were 4 million customers. General Motors has plans to install the OnStar system in all of its vehicles as standard equipment by 2007 (Telematics, 2001). .

Features

Telematics is composed of four parts: the customer service, the global positioning, the cellular phone and the data collection. The concierge service provides a variety of services. It can remotely unlock vehicles based on account number and personal identification number (PIN). There is an advisor features which can connect the driver with local weather, road conditions, and news updates. Driving directions with mapping can be obtained as well as recommendations for restaurants and hotels using the concierge service. For those customers who drink too much, the RideAssistant will locate a cab to see the caller home safely.

In addition to the concierge service, global positioning equipment is a major component of the telematics system. In the public safety arena, this is a two-fold benefit. The first benefit is obtaining accurate accident location information. When an accident occurs, especially in rural areas, the victim often cannot give an exact street address. The global positioning is given in latitude and longitude through satellite triangulation. These coordinates are presented to the call center through a mapping application. This translates the latitude and longitude to a street or road address to give responders an accurate means of identifying the crash location. This, in turn, shortens the response time of EMS personnel and ultimately saves lives. When an air ambulance is needed, the latitude and longitude provides the pilot with the exact coordinates to enable a quick response.

The other use for global position is when a vehicle is stolen or lost or the driver's life is endangered. With the global positioning feature, a vehicle's location may be ascertained which enables it to be recovered by law enforcement personnel. This feature only engages when the vehicle's engine is running. If the vehicle is moving, the GPS feature allows law enforcement personnel to track the vehicle. This provides the officers the opportunity to position themselves in such a manner as to recover the vehicle while the suspects are still inside. By allowing for a well thought out felony vehicle stop, both officer and public safety are enhanced.

When a driver is believed to be a missing or endangered, global positioning assists law enforcement with locating the vehicle in hopes of locating the victim as well. Cooperation is needed from the reporting party, the telematics center personnel and law enforcement to quickly resolve these types of calls. A subpoena may by necessary to obtain information global positioning information if the reporting person is not the registered owner of the vehicle. Data privacy laws may impact with ability to obtain this information in a timely manner.

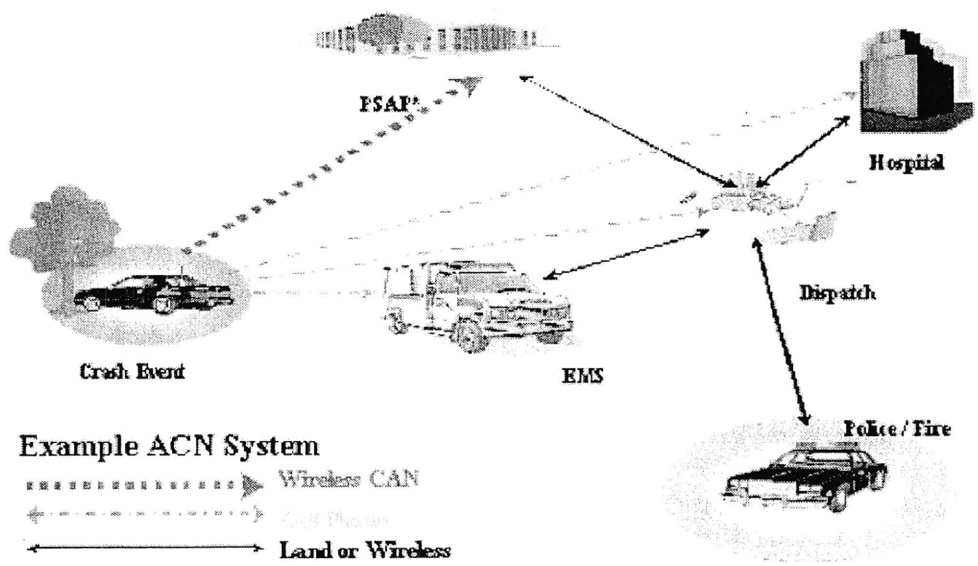
Hands free dialing using the cellular phone feature is becoming a safety concern in today's driving. The Department of Transportation in reviewing accident reports found the use of cellular phones while driving is a prevalent factor in the cause of accidents. Many of the telematic systems are now offering hands free dialing via voice command. While this solves the issues of the use of hands, it still does not address the issue of driver distraction.

The fourth feature of telematics is the data collection system. Each vehicle is equipped with a set of sensors. The sensors record information much like that of a commercial airliner's black box. Information regarding speed, seatbelt usage, number of occupants based on seat sensors is collected and recorded. In some models, it can also detect when routine maintenance such as oil changes and brake maintenance was performed. In the event of an accident, point of impact and airbag deployment information is sent to the call center. If the vehicle has rolled over, the direction of the roll and how many rotations occurred is also available. Call center personnel are able to forward this information to the PSAP. The PSAP is then able to make appropriate response decisions.

Automatic Crash Notification

These four features together make up the automatic crash notification system. It combines the features of global positioning and hands free dialing with a system of vehicle sensors which notifies a call center of an accident involving one of its vehicles. When the driver is able to do so, they can either depress a button to contact the call center or call 9-1-1 directly to request assistance. If a call center is used, the call center notifies the appropriate PSAP of the crash either by call forwarding the original caller or relaying of information. The vehicle sensors relay information to the caller center regarding velocity at impact, airbag deployment, seatbelt usage and other relevant information.

The public safety answering point is then able to notify appropriate police fire and EMS to respond to the emergency.



The above illustration shows the information flow from a telematics system (American College, n.d.). The vehicle accident occurs. A call is placed through the wireless/cellular telephone network to the telematics call center via an automatic crash notification (ACN) system. This information is transferred to the appropriate PSAP which assigns the Police, Fire and EMS based location and severity of the incident. Information from the black box is able to be transferred to both the responders and the hospital. The hospital and EMS responders are then able to appropriately prepare for the treatment of trauma patients.

MayDay System

In 2002, the Minnesota Department of Transportation, partnering with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, began planning their telematics 9-1-1 integration system. It was deployed in 2003 under the title of "MayDay." The goal of the project is twofold. The first is to bring better coordination to the responding agencies. This enables a more appropriate response by police, fire and EMS as well as prepares hospital personnel for the arrival of trauma patients. This ultimately results in the saving of lives.

The second goal is to enable the Department of Transportation to educate the public in a more real-time manner of traffic situations which could lead to traffic delays, or routing alternatives. The overall goal is to reduce the number of traffic accidents. U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) estimates "that an ideal advanced automatic call notification systems would result in at lease 1,676 fewer deaths from traffic crashes each year in the United States, which represents a reduction of approximately 6 percent" (Estochen, 2003). By partnering with the Mayo Clinic, the Department of Transportation is able to review vehicle accidents from the initial call notification to arrival at the hospital.

Chain of Survival

In the medical community the concept of the chain of survival "describes the sequence of events that must occur to ensure the best possible outcome for the victims of trauma, cardiac arrest and other life-threatening situations" (American College, n.d.).

Much of this first link in the chain is the communications system which enables appropriate assistance to be summonsed.

Emergency Medical Care 'Chain of Survival'

(American College, n.d.)

The PSAP is the first link in that survival chain. Quick access either through a 3rd party vendor such as a telematics call center or directly through the 9-1-1 system enables the PSAP to begin patient care with pre-arrival instructions or post dispatch instructions. It is estimated that access to emergency services via 9-1-1 involve over 30,000 calls daily in the United States for EMS response, over 5,000 involve motor vehicle accidents (American College, n.d.). Without a solid first link, the chain of survival in compromised.

By having telematics information readily available regarding the mechanism of injury such as principal direction of force (front or side impact), seat belt usage, airbag deployment, velocity of the crash and other vehicle sensor data, both the field responders and the hospital trauma personnel are better equipped to treat trauma patients. This enhances the chances of survival for those patients who have experienced a serious vehicle crash. The chain of survival is strengthened through full deployment of this system.

An example of the importance of the mechanism of injury is an accident which occurred in the spring of 2006 in Farmington, Minnesota. One evening, a 17 year old driver pulled out from a side road on to the highway. She was struck by a vehicle driving approximately 55 miles per hour. The airbags deployed. The passenger side of the vehicle received the initial impact, pushing the passenger seat into the driver's area. The PSAP received a call of a serious injury accident. The dispatcher assigned police, ambulance, and fire rescue. Police was first to arrive and determined, based on the mechanism of injury, an air ambulance would be needed to expedite the transport to the hospital. The victim was unconscious, but appeared uninjured. A quick assessment by EMS responders confirmed traumatic injuries due to the mechanism of injury. She was quickly transported to Regions Hospital. For three weeks she remained in a coma with multiple internal injuries including a broken neck. The victim has made a full recovery and is expected to graduate with her class in 2007. Her survival is credited to the dispatcher who, when receiving the telematics information, sent the initial maximum response, the first officer who recognized the importance of the mechanism of injury, and both of the ambulance crews who stabilized the victim initially and transported her quickly to the hospital which was prepared for her arrival.

This deployment involves new types of partnerships with the telematics providers, 9-1-1 public safety answering points, emergency responders and hospitals. Each has its own set of best practices in place to enhance the survival chain.

APCO's Best Practices

How does this deployment of telematics impact the communications? What is involved in creating a partnership with telematic vendors? How do we determine the "best practices" for dealing with the additional resources which telematics brings? These were questions posed to the Association of Public Safety Communications Officers International (APCO) as it began to deal with the issue of best practices in telematics.

There are 4 basic types of call notification: emergency calls with voice, airbag deployment or automatic crash notification without voice, emergency button activation without voice and emergency vehicle location calls. APCO, partnering with the telematic providers, have set some guidelines for call processing in each of these situations. The goal of each set of guidelines is to maximize survivability and mitigate loss.

Emergency Calls with Voice Activation

In accidents where the voice activation has occurred, the telematic service center personnel are able to speak directly with the victim. Center personnel triage the call prior to sending the call to the PSAP. Information such as type of call, location, caller's name and phone number should be obtained prior to calling the dispatch center. The PSAP is then notified via their 10 digit phone number of the type of event for which response is needed. All event information should be relayed to the dispatchers. The telematics center should remain on the line with caller in the event that the PSAP requests a 3 way conference call with the victim to confirm or clarify information.

The dispatchers will follow their internal procedures for call processing. The telematics service center personnel may elect to remain on the line with the caller after the initial call interrogation is completed pending the arrival of responding personnel. This insures that any changes in the situation or event may be quickly relayed to the PSAP for updates to the responding personnel.

Airbag Deployment without Voice Activation

In this instance, the telematics call center has received information from the vehicle indicating that the airbags have been deployed. With airbag deployment, there is reason to believe that a serious accident has occurred which resulted in an injury. The call center operator will contact the appropriate PSAP with information such as location of vehicle, make and model of vehicle, sensor information, and vehicle owner's name. It needs to be clearly stated that the air bags sensors are indicating a deployment. This information is important in judging the severity of the crash. Information such as movement within the vehicle, number of occupants, and any vehicle crash sensor information should also be shared at this time.

As with any 3rd party report of an injury accident, the PSAP personnel should follow its internal standard operating procedures in determining response. When in doubt, a larger response from Police, Fire and EMS is usually required until the first response unit is on scene. The first unit then provides updated information to the rest of the responders.

Emergency Button Activation with No Voice

This activation involves the emergency in-vehicle button being activated but no telemetry information regarding an accident accompanies the activation. No voice contact can be made with the driver. The lack of voice contact may be due to a medical emergency which renders the caller unconscious or a caller depressing the button then exiting the vehicle. Accidental activation can also happen when the vehicle is in a car wash and the attendant has wiped down the vehicle console thus activating the button.

The telematics operator will attempt to verify the existence of an emergency situation prior to notifying the PSAP. They will monitor on-board vehicle sensors to determine if the caller is still in the vehicle. In an attempt to reduce false alarms, several attempts will be made to establish voice contact prior to notifying the PSAP of the situation.

When the operator contacts the PSAP, they will provide all the appropriate information regarding vehicle location, vehicle make and model, owner name and an explanation of the steps which were taken to verify the existence of an emergency situation. As with any call, the PSAP will document the information provided. Response determination will be based on the local established procedures. This call is much like a 9-1-1 open line call where in the absence of confirmed information, response personnel should be assigned to evaluate the situation.

Emergency Vehicle Location Calls

Emergency vehicle location calls involve such things as stolen vehicles, carjacking, and suicidal or at-risk individuals. These calls require a special response due to the potentially violent nature of the call. When a telematics customer initially subscribes to the service, they are given a pre-registered password which is used by the telematics service center to verify the ownership of a vehicle. This password is necessary to enlist the aid of the telematics call center to recover a vehicle involved in the above activity.

When a vehicle is involved in one of the above scenarios, such as a vehicle theft, carjacking or at-risk situation, the reporting party must first file a report with the local law enforcement agency. The caller must obtain the police department's case file number along with the officer name and badge number. The police agency will appropriately document the information with the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Activating the Amber Alert system is also recommended at this time if the appropriate criterion has been established. Since this is considered an in-progress call for service, the call information is expedited; taking only minutes to enter into the NCIC computer system.

Upon completing the NCIC entry and police report, the caller then contacts the telematics call center to request assistance in locating the vehicle. The telematics operator will verify the information with both the caller and the controlling law enforcement agency. The operator will document the case file number, as well as the NCIC number. Subscriber's pre-registered password must be provided prior to any location information being given out to the law enforcement personnel. Again, time is essential. Often this information can be provided and verified while the reporting party and officer are together as the initial report is being filed.

After verifying the existence of an immediate life-threatening situation or vehicle theft, the telematics operator will attempt to locate the vehicle using global positioning. Information obtained will be forwarded to the law enforcement agency where the vehicle is currently located. They will also update the originating agency with the vehicle location.

The telematic operator should provide the vehicle information, originating law enforcement agency's case file number, the NCIC number associated with the case. The operator should also advise the direction of travel if the vehicle is moving. The telematics operator will forward all location information as it becomes available until the vehicle is located by law enforcement or the global positioning signal is disconnected.

The best practices, as outlined by APCO, included not only the outline for the four specific types of calls listed above, but also call center standards for the telematic centers. The standards were meant to encourage proper training for the telematics center personnel. It is important that employees understand their role in the survivability of victims of vehicle crashes, the safe recovery of victims of car-jacking and endangerment and the mitigation of loss to the customer by aiding local law enforcement in the recovery of stolen vehicles.

Summary

Telematic is an emerging technology which is just beginning to impact the Public Safety Answering Point. Its combination of customer service, global positioning, cellular phones and data collection enables the public to quickly obtain information or assistance while in their vehicles.

When a customer is involved in a vehicle accident, the information provided by the caller, and the vehicle's on-board sensors, assists the first responders in rendering appropriate medical attention. By providing timely, accurate information regarding the mechanism of injury, hospitals are better able to prepare for the treatment of trauma patients thus increasing survivability.

The best practices, as outlined by APCO, give guidance to the collection and flow of information from the vehicle and victim to the telematics center and on to the PSAP. The overall goal of the best practices is to increase survivability, mitigate loss and enhance public safety. Telematics requires a public, private partnership working together for the good of the public it serves.

Optional Exercises

1. Imagine you are involved in a traffic accident, what are the ways you could contact 9-1-1 using the telematics system? What information would you want the dispatchers to know to better assist you?
2. You are a paramedic responding to an accident, what information do you need to better prepare you to assist the victims of an accident?
3. Your mother is an Alzheimer victim. She has not come home from the grocery store. She is driving a vehicle equipped with telematic equipment. What steps would you need to take to locate your mother's vehicle and possible your mother? What would you expect of the telematic service? Of the PSAP? Of the law enforcement community?

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Voice over the Internet Protocol (VoIP)

Objective:

The objective of this unit is to understand the basic function of VoIP calls and its impact on 9-1-1 call delivery.

Questions:

1. What is the technological progression of telephone service?
2. How does VoIP work?
3. What are the layers that make up a VoIP call?
4. What are the three call delivery options for 9-1-1?

"9-1-1. what is your emergency?" These words are a lifeline in a police, fire or medical emergency. If you subscribe to an internet phone service, these words may have a difficult time finding an answer. Voice over the Internet Protocol (VoIP) is an emerging technology which provides telephone service to a growing number of individuals. There are both benefits and concerns of its ability to meet the public's expectation for fully enhanced 9-1-1 service. The VoIP service is growing faster than the 9-1-1 network can accommodate. To understand the technology, there needs to be an understanding of the history of 9-1-1 call delivery.

Background

Today's most common telephone system consists of copper wiring with a point to point relay. This is called a POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service) line. When dialing 9-1-1, the call is transported to a central switch where it is routed to separate 9-1-1 circuits. These circuits are separate and diverse from the standard phone call. These separate circuits allow for the transmission of the automatic location information (ALI) and the automatic number identifier (ANI) to be added to the call. The ALI and ANI are delivered to the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) which enables the communications personnel to determine response location of the caller. The separate circuits allow for a redundancy within the system to ensure the call delivery to the appropriate 9-1-1 PSAP. This service is dependable, but based on 1960's technology.

The next expansion of the telephone service was the introduction of the cellular telephone. These use radio waves to transmit calls to and from cellular telephones. When a call is made, the phone transmits a radio signal which is captured by the nearest radio antenna. The transmission are then forwarded to either a POTS line or rebroadcast to the receiving cellular telephone.

When a cellular subscriber calls 9-1-1, the call is routed to the radio tower which, in turn, forwards the call to the 9-1-1 circuits. In Phase I wireless, the address of the cell tower along with an area descriptor is forwarded to the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). The carrier information is listed, but not the subscriber. The only telephone number associated with the 9-1-1 information is that of the cell phone tower.

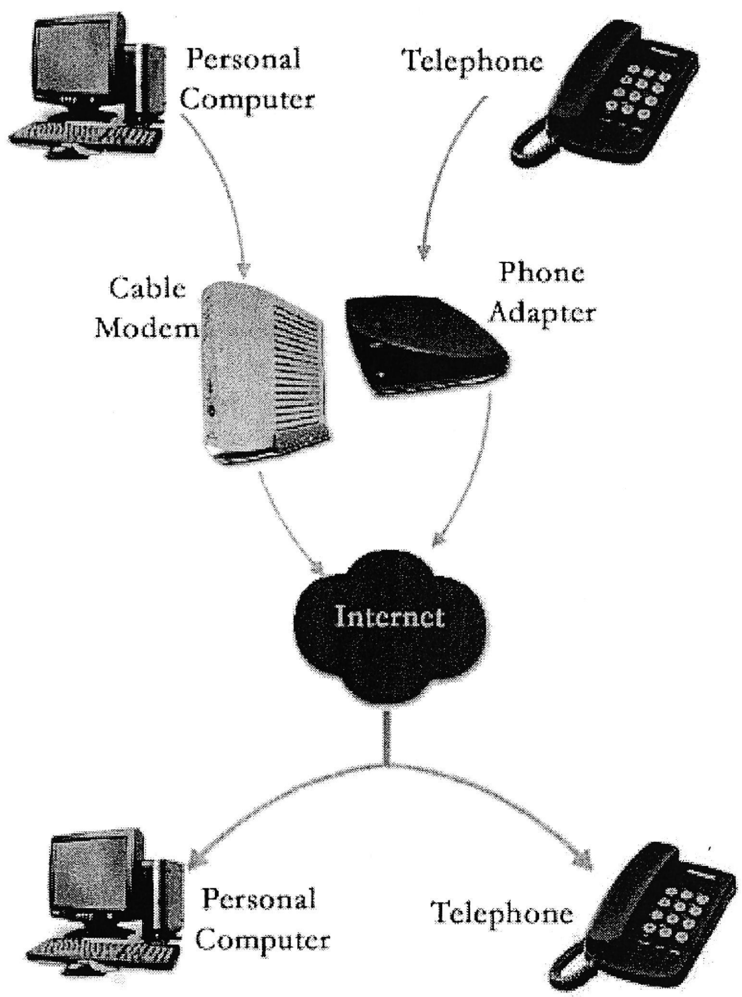
The next generation of wireless was Phase II. For most cellular service providers the latitude and longitude within 100 meters or less with a confidence accuracy ration of 75% to 90% was provided. This means that the location of the caller is within 100 meters of the address associated with the latitude and longitude of a given call 75 to 90% of the time. This technology does not provide for the altitude of the caller, which if the caller is in a multiple story building is important information. If the PSAP does not have the ability to translate the latitude and longitude into street addresses, the location information is unusable. While this poses problems, it does give emergency response personnel a starting point to search for a victim. Again, it is a step forward in the goal of total enhanced 9-1-1. With both Phase I and Phase II, the public needed to be educated in the shortcomings of wireless technology as it related to 9-1-1.

Emerging Technology

The latest emerging telephone technology is the Voice over Internet Protocol or VoIP. VoIP uses broadband internet connections to replace the copper wiring of the POTS lines. How it works varies somewhat by internet provider. Very simply put, when one places a phone call from a VoIP phone it converts the call from an analog signal into a digital signal or data bytes also known as packets. This signal is routed much like a POTS phone call through a broadband internet web to another telephone device. When the call arrives at its destination, it is converted back to the analog signal or phone call we are familiar with.

VoIP Technology

Calls can be made from either a computer or a standard telephone which has been equipped with a special adapter. The following diagram shows how it works:



When placing a call from a computer, the call is converted to digital data bytes. It is then forwarded to a cable modem where the first routing takes place. The call is forwarded through the internet to the destination computer or telephone. If a telephone is used, the call is routed through a telephone adapter to convert the voice to digital data. When the call is received, the process is reversed. The data bytes are converted to sound waves and back to voice (FCC/NARUC, n.d.).

Four Layers of VoIP

The conversion of the phone call to data, back to voice, can be described as having four layers. The National Emergency Number Association (NENA) in its technical information packet on VoIP describes the service as follows:

1. Application layer: This is the part of the system that the user sees. It includes the software, the desk top operating system such as the telephone. The domain name or telephone number resides within this layer.
2. Transport layer: There are two major components in this layer. They are the Transfer Control Protocol (TCP) and the User Datagram Protocol. This layer is used by the Application layer to access the internet. Within this transport layer are the mechanisms to check for quality of transmission. It also checks for error, flow control, verification to ensure the integrity and completeness of the information being transmitted. There is an important difference between TCP and UDP though both transport information. TCP is a slower protocol. It is a connection orientated protocol which

maintains a connection between two devices for the duration of the transmission. UDP is a faster protocol, but does not have the error checks of TCP. Because real time transmission is necessary for VoIP, TCP is usually not used in this application. UDP is the protocol of choice because it can support Real-Time Transmission Protocol (RTP) of VoIP.

3. Internet layer: There are three protocols which reside in this layer. They are the internet protocol (IP), the address resolution protocol (ARP) and the internet control message protocol (ICMP). The IP standardizes how the devices (computer and phones) are identified and differentiated from one another. The ARP's job is to translate the logical IP address (ex: www.fcc.gov.) to a physical equivalent address. The ICMP is used between routers to acknowledge the completion of a message back and forth between the devices. This is sometimes referred to as the handshake. There are also two seldom used protocols: Reverse Address Resolution Protocol (RARP) and Internet Group Management Protocol (IGMP). RARP and IGMP are older protocol which no longer is prevalent in residential computers, thought some legacy systems may still have it.
4. Physical layer: In this layer, the final error checks are performed. It is similar to the old manual telephone operator who checks for the complete and correct telephone number prior to making the connections. This physical layer makes sure everything is in order to be sent and waits for a

reply from the receiving end that the information was successfully and completely received (NENA, 2004).

Technology Issues

There are several issues with VoIP services that don't exist with POTS service. Latency is the time in milliseconds it takes for the data to travel from the origination point to its destination. For most people, this may not be noticeable because of the normal pauses that occur in speech patterns. When watching old movies from the 1940's and 50's, latency was illustrated by the pause in a conversation actors would have when "placing" a long-distant call. The caller would wait while their voice was received at the other end of the line. Latency in the VoIP world is a small pause, much like taking a breath in preparation for the next sentence. In the event of a 9-1-1 call, this latency can lead important information loss between the caller and the dispatcher.

Another concern is jitter. Jitter is when a packet of data arrives at the destination out of order. This will affect the latency. A jitter buffer is used by many manufactures to counter the effects. It allows for a small time delay in which the packets of data are rearranged into the correct order. Again, jitter may be the cause of latency and again contribute to an important information loss.

Packet loss is the final area of concern. This is when one or more packets of data, or in this case conversation, is lost completely in the transmission. In VoIP, it appears as a pause or short loss of audio. This is only a problem when there is a significant loss of data or the data is dropped at a crucial point in the conversation. This could manifest itself as a dropped call, much like losing a radio signal in a cellular phone call.

While there are still issues facing this emerging technology, it is estimated that there are currently approximately 220,000 VoIP subscribers. By 2007, it is estimated that there will be over 3.5 million subscribers of this service.

Benefits of VoIP

There are many benefits for using VoIP. Since the VoIP is nomadic, calls can be made or received anywhere there is an internet connection. With most VoIP providers, there are no long-distance charges for out of area calls. Most of these calls are transparent to both the caller and the receiver. Calls appear as any other type of telephone service. Depending on the configuration of a particular provider, it is possible to use both the telephone service and the computer access at the same time. Also, if a computer if video capable, one can do real time video conferencing. A future feature that is being explored is telephone type instant messaging for the hearing impaired community. While this is still in the development stages, it would be of great advantage to the hearing impaired community who has to rely on email or TDD technology. Most PSAP's don't currently have the technology to accept instant messaging for emergency calls.

9-1-1 Concerns

With the advantages of internet calling for the general public, there are concerns when those calls are placed to 9-1-1. Reliability is issue. The VoIP network, while secure, is still only as good as the firewalls or security on the individual devise and routers. VoIP is subject to virus attacks just like a home or work computer. Since VoIP is computer dependent, it is also electricity dependent. With the loss of power comes the loss of VoIP telephone service. POTS lines are not electricity dependent. When there is an electrical outage, phone service is often still available.

When a person calls 9-1-1, the caller expects to reach the 9-1-1 PSAP which services the address from which the call is placed. People expect that a call to 9-1-1 contains the ANI and ALI information. Currently, the information which is supplied to the PSAP via 9-1-1 is dependent on the subscriber and the carrier.

Three Levels of 9-1-1 Connectivity

There are three levels of 9-1-1 service connectivity in the VoIP world. The first is I1. In I1, the 9-1-1 call is routed to the 10 digit administrative telephone number of the PSAP. While the call is delivered, there are no assurances that the administrative phone is answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If the phone is manned 24/7, it is often answered in a lower priority order than a traditional 9-1-1 call due to the administrative presentation of the call. The incoming call does not have the ANI or ALI information which accompanies traditional 9-1-1 calls. The public expects that the name, address and phone number is presented with all 9-1-1 calls. In the event that the caller can not communicate the address of the emergency, the dispatchers are unable to render assistance in a timely manner.

The second level is I2. This is much like the basic 9-1-1 service. The call will route through the 9-1-1 network. It presents the ANI information. This is helpful because the dispatcher is able to obtain a call back number from the ANI in the event of a 9-1-1 disconnect.. However, it may not be capable of presenting the ALI information which does not rise to level of the public's expectation of an enhanced 9-1-1 call, but it is an improvement.

The fully interfaced 9-1-1 call is l3. This provides all the current information in the ALI and ANI fields. It is capable of call transfer, automatic call back and other enhanced 9-1-1 features. There is a potential for further enhanced features such as data transfers such as with instant messaging, medical monitoring information, and telematics call information. This would meet the current public expectation for a fully integrated VoIP/9-1-1 solution.

There are always funding concerns with enhancing a public service such as 9-1-1. The PSAP's are concerned that they will face an unfunded mandate to enhance their technology to provide a mechanism to receive VoIP calls. The VoIP providers are concerned that the federal government will set standards which will undermine their ability to provide a cost effective VoIP service to the vast majority of the public thereby impacting profits.

In a news release by the Telecom Intelligence Group, dated September 15, 2006, it was announced that the IP-Enabled Voice Communication and Public Safety Act of 2006 contained E911 mandates which were included as an amendment to the Safe Port Act. While this is still has not passed all its political hurdles, it addresses the funding and operational issues which concerned the 9-1-1 world. "The legislation reportedly confirms state authority to impose and collect 9-1-1 fees from VoIP providers; provides lawsuit liability protections and parity for official call handling public safety answering points (PSAPs), VoIP providers and VoIP users equivalent to existing liability protections for wireless and wireline services; ensures VoIP providers have access to E-11 infrastructure necessary to complete E911 deployment. . ."(Telecom, 2006). While this bill does not answer all the issues of VoIP, it clearly gives direction to the need for VoIP providers to be a full partner in the delivery of enhanced 9-1-1 services. It also provides a means of state and local governments to recover a portion of the costs related to this new form of call delivery.

Summary

VoIP is an emerging technology which has great potential in a variety of applications. Today, there are still some issues with quality of service, reliability and public safety. There are also benefits of call mobility, lower costs and greater technology application such as video conferencing and instant messaging.

As it applies to 9-1-1, the three levels of call delivery need to be addressed. The Safe Port Act begins to address some of these concerns. The public needs to be educated on the concerns of E9-1-1. As subscribers, they need to ask the questions of their provider to ascertain where their responsibility for their own 9-1-1 information lies. The VoIP community needs to understand their role in providing for the overall public safety of their subscribers and the community which they serve.

Discussion Questions

1. How does VoIP affect your PSAP today?
2. What concerns do you have for your centers ability to process VoIP 9-1-1 calls?
3. How can you educate the public on the advantages and disadvantages of using VoIP as sole source of telephone service?
4. How can legislation enhance your ability to enhance the technology of your center to prepare for the growth in VoIP?

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Reflection Statement

Introduction

The Master of Arts in Leadership program has three basic components: sense of vision, action orientation and the facility for persuasion. There are two subsets beneath each major area. Vision relates to the ethical and creative aspects of leadership. Action orientation includes risk taking and decisive decision making. The facility for persuasion deals with communication skills and cultural awareness. Each has had an impact on my views of leadership.

It has called me to re-evaluate my leadership skills and direction. As a leader, this program has reminded me of preparing others for leadership roles. Currently, there are limited opportunities for the training of leaders in the area of public safety communications. As a current supervisor, I need to take an active role in preparing others to step forward into leadership positions. My Leadership Applied Project is designed to bring the knowledge I received in the Master of Arts in Leadership program to a training program for new communications supervisors.

Sense of Vision

Napoleon Bonaparte once said, "A leader is a dealer in hope" (n.d.). Hope implies a vision for the future. I have often returned to that quotation over the course of the past two years. When I began the MAL program, I had spent 21 years as an employee with the Burnsville Police Department with the past 16 years as communications supervisor. I was drawn to the MAL program because of the emphasis on vision. To have hope is to have a vision for tomorrow. At the time, I was not sure what that vision was for me. I was the senior member of the supervisory staff. In seniority, I had more experience than the Chief, the Captains and the Sergeants. I felt, however, that I needed to expand my professional horizons. I needed to be in a learning environment again.

While in the program, that vision for tomorrow changed dramatically. The communications center was to be come a part of a joint powers agreement which would merge the five communications centers in Dakota County into one center. It would mean the closing of the current centers and the opening on one combined center. My job would change dramatically. I was being called upon to deal with the organizational change on a grand scale. This led me to begin to re-evaluate my leadership skills and look for way to share my education and experience with new leaders

Ethics

Ethics is not just the legal boundaries of a situation. It also deals with social and environmental awareness, tolerance for differences and appreciation for the complexity of a situation. As I ventured through the ethics class, I became more aware of the complexity of ethics. It deals not only with communications, but actions based on a specific set of values. Being from a Judeo-Christian background, I believe in the guiding principles of the Golden Rule of doing unto others. But I became more aware of the "golden" part of that statement. Gold is an element of high value. It is the considered a standard of richness and quality. The golden rule is found in not only Christianity, but Confucianism, Judaism, Islam, Jainism, Buddhism, and Hinduism. "The adjective *golden* became attached to this rule. Gold has long signified the highest possible quality in many cultures, as in sporting competitions, where the gold medal first place is the competitors' goal" ((Jensen, 1997).

As a leader, my ethical stance needs to set an example for others. It means that I need to make decisions based on the three questions of: Is it legal? Is it balanced? How will the decision make me feel? (Blanchard, 1988). Situations which have an ethical impact need to have the highest standard set, not the lowest standard. In the MAL program, I learned that ethics is not a separate element of leadership. Ethics are integrated into every decision a leader makes. It is a part of the integrity of the leader.

An example is that of a communications trainer. The trainer invited her new trainee to attend a Chippendale male stripper show. As the supervisor, I needed to guide the trainer through the ethical dilemma that she set into motion. The invitation was for an after hours event. However, the invitation to this sexually explicit event was given during business hours when the relationship was trainer/trainee. The power of that invitation lies with the trainer who is in a position of authority over the trainee. The lowest ethical standard is that the invitation was for an off-duty event and did not involve the department. The highest ethical standard was that this invitation was given work hours during an imbalance of power. The trainer needed think of her invitation based on the three ethical questions. Was the invitation legal? Yes, in the strictest sense of the question. One can offer an invitation to whom ever one chooses for an after hours event. Is it balanced? There was an imbalance of power on the part of the trainer and trainee. No, it was not balanced. How does it make one feel? The potential for the trainee to feel uncomfortable was very high. The potential for other co-workers who witnessed the invitation to feel uncomfortable was equally as high. The answer to the ethical question was this was an unethical invitation. The trainer was guided through the ethical labyrinth to find the highest standard.

As I worked through the need for a leadership training manual for leaders in public safety communications, I had to evaluate the need for a specific section on ethics. While ethics is a rather personal topic, I felt there was a need to discuss the impact of ethical decision making on the integrity of leaders. Some of the situations a leader encounters has little to do with work product, but has a great deal to do with the work environment which does have a strong link to ethical behavior.

Creativity

As with ethical decision making, creativity involves innovative thinking. Creativity involves long range thinking. It encourages one to be innovatve and adaptable. A creative solution to a pending war was illustrated in Christine De Pizan's *The Book of the City of Ladies.* De Pizan told the story of the Sabine women. They were originally kidnapped by Romulus and his army. Over the years, the women grew to love their kidnappers. They had families and homes with the Romans. The Sabine king, however, wanted his daughter who was now the Roman Queen, and the other women back. The queen realized this was going to cause the women to lose loved ones, no matter who won the war. As the two opposing sides lined up to battle, the queen, followed by all the other women and children, walked out into the battle field between the armies. She called out that one side would win and one would lose, but the group that would lose the most was the women and children. Since she felt there was nothing to lose, she called for the armies to kill the women and children first so they would not have to witness or take sides in this battle. She told her father, the King of the Sabine's and her husband, Romulus, that she would rather die than lose either of them. With that, both sides withdrew from battle, embracing each other for the sake of their loved ones. (De Pizan, 1999).

This story illustrates all of the characteristics of creativity. The Queen had a vision of what the future would hold if their loved ones went to war. She knew that normal diplomacy would not solve this problem. Adapting to the circumstances of pending war, she called upon the women to take an innovative approach to peace by intervening between the two armies. This story reminds one to look beyond the immediate to the future. As a leader, one needs a broad vision for the future. One needs be willing to try innovative ways of problem solving and needs to be willing to take risks.

While this illustration does not appear to have a direct link with the field of leadership in the public safety communications field, it does illustrate the need for a vision and ability to creatively solve problems. In public safety communications, there are instances when creative problem solving is necessary. New supervisors need to understand that in some situations, the normal response to an issue is not an option. They will need to be able to look beyond the normal to the creative to solve an issue. An example of why it is important to discuss creativity in the Leadership Applied Project, is that of a telephone outage between the Burnsville Police Department and the Eagan Police Department. One evening the Burnsville dispatchers discovered that they were unable to call the Eagan Police Department on their administrative phone lines. The

9-1-1 telephone circuits, which are separate from standard office administrative lines, appeared to be unaffected by the outage. The solution to reaching the Eagan Police Department was to the Burnsville dispatchers called themselves from an administrative phone line to the 9-1-1 lines. They, then, transferred the 9-1-1 call to Eagan. Thus, they were able to talk directly to the Eagan Communications Center. It was a creative solution to a crisis situation.

Action Orientation

I saw a poster many years ago. It had a cow standing on a railroad track. The train was approaching in the distance. The caption read, "You may be on the right track, but if you just stand there you are going to get hit." Leadership is not a destination, but a journey. It is a call to action. The call to action can be witnessed through the various roles a leader plays, leader, mentor, strategic planner, and guardian.

Risk Assumptive

Jim Collins in *Good to Great,* introduced the concept of the Hedgehog in describing level five businesses. The Hedgehog Concept can be applied to individuals also. The questions posed: "What are you deeply passionate about? What drives your economic engine? What can you be the best in the world at?" (Collins, 2003). These questions encourage personal reflection. As a leader, one needs to determine what about one's profession keeps the passion alive. The passion, for me, is the servant leadership of encouraging dispatchers to be the best that they can be. Each dispatcher has a specific talent. Not everyone has the same talent. Some handle medical emergencies in an efficient manner which calms the patients and their families. Some are extremely organized and have the ability to track numerous responding emergency vehicles with little effort. Others can keep a victim of abuse on the phone until help arrives, all the while updating officers on the situation. The passion involved with emergency dispatching enables growth in each dispatcher.

What drives my economic engine is not financial but emotional. Goleman talks about the ever-changing ideal. "People's dream and aspirations change as their career unfolds, reshaping what they consider important in life and work; likewise, the ideal self becomes more protean as life goes on. These changes not only determine which of their talents or competencies people are willing to use, but also where they feel most engaged in using them and where they can create resonance. Sometime people can stray from their calling by just continuing to do the same thing, ignoring changes in their dreams and what is important to them" (Goleman, 2002). The drive is the emotional feedback I receive in doing a job well, in seeing a dispatcher exceed their own concept of their abilities. I, also, need to remember to keep in touch with my dreams not just my daily tasks.

Returning to school was one of those dreams for me. When I began to look at graduate school, I was look for a purely selfish reason. I wanted to prove to myself that I could, in fact, learn new skills. The thought of going to college at age 50 was frightening and challenging. The risk that I was accepting was the risk of failure as well as success. To fail was the signal that I did not have the ability to learn. To succeed meant that I should be expecting more of myself, as a person and a leader in my organization. The highest risk of all was not to attempt to return to school and always wonder if I could have attained a graduate degree.

Being the best in the world is a high goal for anyone. As one looks at resonant leaders, they do not have just one leadership style or one set of skills. They possess the ability to adjust their style to fit the situation and the individuals. Being the best is fitting one's skills to the circumstances. It is fitting individuals to the task. Risk assumption is being willing to change and grow as a person and as a leader. It is exploring what is the best one can be and fitting one's skills to the circumstances.

Decisive

To be action orientated is to have the skills for critical thinking. The MAL program encourages critical thinking in all levels. Critical thinking is the ability to look at an issue or situation from all angles. It is the one's ability to step back and view the whole picture with a vision for the past, present and future. As one evaluates organizational development and strategic planning, one needs to look at capital: human, informational and organizational.

While I often could think critically in terms of organizational goals, I did not always take the time to balance my decisions in terms of the three capitals. The human capital is easy to evaluate. If one knows one's work group, a leader can evaluate if an individual or group has the skills, talents and knowledge to fulfill an organizational goal. This is especially true if the informational capital is abundant.

An example of an organizational goal is that of emergency medical dispatching. The fire department set aside money to have all dispatchers trained in emergency medical dispatching. The organizational goal of providing a higher level of service for medical emergencies was easy to understand. The information on the program, the training requirements, the time commitments were also abundant. The personal capital was harder to read. While many of the dispatchers were first responder trained and all were CPR certified, the commitment to a complete program of supplying a higher level of service was not as clear. After much evaluation and input from staff and references, the decision was made to implement the emergency medical dispatching program. While I, as the supervisor, could do as much evaluation as possible. From a critical thinking point of view, all the necessary evaluations had indicated that implementing the emergency medical dispatching program as the right step. The action step of implementing the program was necessary to have a successful project. Now after two years, the dispatchers do not want to lose the benefits the program brings to them and the public.

The organizational capital was not something the one consciously thinks about as one sets goals and objectives for a work group. This type of capital is taken for granted until it is challenged. For me, this organizational capital has become a very strong force in organizational change and decisive decision making. At this point in my career, the strategic planning and organizational development as presented in the balanced score care has had the most lasting impact.

Organizational capital includes cultures, leadership, alignment and teamwork. Culture is described as, "Awareness and internationalization of the shared mission, vision and values needed to execute the strategy" (Kaplan, 2004). One needs to know one's current mission and vision to have the ability to influence a new one. To develop a new culture, one needs to be culturally aware and possess the communication skills necessary to persuade others to move in a new direction.

As a member of the transition team for the new public safety answering point, we have been given the charge to begin to develop the culture, leadership and teamwork for the new organization. We need to have an alignment between the demands of the larger joint powers group and the realistic scope of the new communications center. We are combining five public safety answering points which services thirteen law enforcement agencies, fifteen fire departments and three ambulance services. What I have learned through the Master of Arts in Leadership program is that as leader, I need to work with the other five supervisors to develop a strong sense of personal and professional identity to be able to foster a new culture within our combined organizations. I became aware of some of the details I was not focused on, such as a transitional roadmap from individual entities to one large entity. I became more aware of needing to find agreement in the cultures, instead of the differences. The MAL program gives me a greater appreciation for the task we are undertaking.

Culture and communications

Culture awareness and effective communications are both necessary for one to possess the ability to persuade. As a leader, one needs to understand that culture is a reflection of values, morals and heritage. Culture awareness is to appreciate the differences we all have and embrace one's uniqueness.

The culture of an organization is often reflected in its mission statement or statement of ethics. It sets the tone for the entire organization. To be a resonant leader, one needs to understand the power of organizational and individual culture. This culture is reinforced by the leaders of the organization in how they conduct their daily business both internally and externally. My leadership project is to begin an education process which cultivates a culture where leadership skills are important and valued. By encouraging leaders to explore their own skill sets, it encourages a culture of self discovery, skill enhancement and an appreciation for those with which one works.

Effective leaders are able to influence cultural changes within an organization by using good communications skills. "The message and tone established by leaders influence others to voluntarily make day-to-day decisions that enhance the organization's long-term value. Honest communications enables control through socialization, shared beliefs, norms and values" (Kaplan, 2004). Communications is a combination of what is said, how the message is delivered and the actions which follow. To be an effective leader is to be an effective communicator. Listening skills, critical thinking, evaluation of information, clear speaking, writing and action orientation are all skills of a resonant leader. My goal for my Leadership Application Project is to bring together a group of new supervisors to begin the learning process to encourage critical thinking, effective communications and cultural awareness in an action orientated manner. Ultimately I would like to begin the process which encourages them to be resonant leaders.

Summary

If there is one thing that I can take away from the Master of Arts in Leadership programs, it is the capacity to learn new skills as a leader and a person. It has given me a greater understanding of the importance of vision. Vision without action, however, is just a vision. It is a dream out there somewhere. To be an effective leader is to put into action the vision. It is to be able to develop a strategic plan to outline the steps that will be required to succeed. To put a strategic plan into action, one needs to the ability to persuade others to join in, to become a team, to make that vision happen. Then it is letting go of the plan and let others take the lead. It is stepping back and guiding the process, not leading it. MAL taught me the importance of being a leader, not just a manager/supervisor.

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