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# A Study of Police Officer's Perceptions of Recruit Training within the Omaha Police Division

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A STUDY OF POLICE OFFICER'S  
PERCEPTIONS OF RECRUIT TRAINING  
WITHIN THE OMAHA POLICE DIVISION

A Thesis  
Presented to the  
Department of Criminal Justice  
and the  
Faculty of the Graduate College  
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by  
Dave Points  
November 1982

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## CHAPTER I

### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

#### Introduction

Recruit training is a key element in police personnel management in the United States. Modern police managers easily recognize the importance of recruit training in terms of job performance and police professionalism. The improvement of recruit training was given special emphasis as a result of the civil disorders of the 1960's. Following a national trend, legislation requiring mandatory training of all police officers was enacted in Nebraska in 1969.

Improvements in police recruit training fall into two areas: the length of training, and the content of the curriculum. In 1967, the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice stated that recruit training should consist of an absolute minimum of 400 hours of classroom work spread over a 4 to 6 month period, so that it could be combined with supervised field training. The Commission believed that this standard should apply to all departments regardless of size. (1) In 1976, eleven of the fifty United States gave an average of 400 hours or more of basic training to their police recruits. Police recruits in the state of Nebraska received an average of 300 hours. (2)

The length of police recruit training for the Omaha

Police Division has increased substantially in the past 40 years. In the late 1940's the police recruit training program consisted of only two weeks of classroom instruction. But the police recruit spent six months on the job prior to the formal training. The police recruit training program in 1982 consists of fourteen weeks of classroom instruction certified by the State of Nebraska. The State of Nebraska requires only 380 hours of training in a seven week course for certification. In addition to the fourteen week training program, the Omaha Police Division also requires that the recruit officer go through three months of training with a Field Training Officer.

The recruit training curriculum has also changed. During the past forty years additional courses have been added and others lengthened. In 1981, the Omaha Public Schools evaluated the content of the recruit training curriculum at the sophomore college level. (3)

The quality of police training is difficult to measure. The ultimate test for the quality of the subjects covered in a training program is if it prepares the recruit for the reality of the job.

Meaningful training is seen as a way to increase the effectiveness of police personnel and to raise their level of professionalism in order to enhance overall police service. To be meaningful, however, training must provide realistic preparation for job assignments and responsibilities. Moreover, the training itself must be presented in ways which provide significant learning experience. (4)



The basic assumption of some experts in the field of police science is that by improving the recruit training of a police officer, you will subsequently improve the performance of that police officer once he is on the job. (5) This line of thinking is probably the major reason for the constant changes made in police recruit training.

While it is difficult to objectively measure the success of training programs, it is possible to determine how the officers perceive the adequacy of training. These are the major questions this research will be addressing: Do individual police officers feel that their training prepared them adequately? As training programs changed over the years has the level of perceived adequacy changed?

### Hypotheses

In this study we will be examining the recruit training program of the Omaha Police Division. What we will discover through this study is whether changes made in the training program have been perceived as improvements by the police officers. The following hypothesis has been developed for this study:

Changes in police training have resulted in police officers' perceptions of being better prepared for the job.

The null hypothesis of this study will be:

Changes made in police training will have no effect on police officers' perceptions of preparedness for the job.

Information gained through this study should prove valuable to the Omaha Police Division. The Training Section should be able to put this information to good use in terms of planning and program development. This study will be an attempt to get a grassroots reaction from police officers to their recruit officer training.

### Footnotes

- (1) U.S. President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society, Government Printing Office, 1967, p. 112.
- (2) Timothy J. Flanagan, Michael J. Hindeland, Michael R. Gottfredson, Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics--1979, Criminal Justice Research Center, Washington, D.C., 1980, p. 210.
- (3) Interview with Omaha Police Division Training Officer, November 1982.
- (4) George E. Shagory, "Assessing the Effectiveness of Police Training," Police Chief Magazine, August 1977, p. 39.
- (5) O. W. Wilson, Roy C. McLaren, Police Administration, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1972, p. 299.

## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

There have been very few studies done regarding a police officer's perception of his recruit training. In the following literature review, we will look at a few studies that dealt with police officers' attitudes and perceptions.

In 1967, John H. McNamara presented findings regarding the attitudes of recruit officers. (1) McNamara first established what he believed to be problem areas for law enforcement officers. He believed that the police officer's perception of legality of police action, police prestige, interpersonal tactics, and organizational sources were problem areas. McNamara then conducted a survey of New York City Police recruits regarding their perception of these issues. McNamara tested one group at the beginning of its recruit training (N=171), at the end of its recruit training (N=164), and after one year in field assignments (N=137). He also tested another group of officers with two years experience in the field (N=83).

McNamara found that the recruits had a lack of consensus regarding basic principles of law. Responses from the group were so different that they couldn't be coded for analysis. When members of this group were tested on this item after two years of field experience the results were the same.

McNamara also showed that there developed an increased support for the belief that police lack the basic legal authority appropriate to their position. This support increased with the length of employment of the recruit class. The largest proportionate increase in this belief among the recruits occurred between the beginning of their recruit training and the end of their recruit training. (2)

In terms of police prestige, McNamara found that recruits at the beginning of their training do not agree with the idea that police prestige is steadily increasing over the years. As the recruits went through the academy and on into the field, this feeling remained a constant. (3)

In the area of interpersonal skills, McNamara showed that the recruits' low estimates of public cooperation improved after they went through the training academy. However, after the recruits spent a year in the field, their high perception of public cooperation reverted back to their original low perception.

The recruits became more convinced during their training that public cooperation and assistance are not extremely rare commodities, but then shifted during their first year's field experience toward a skepticism regarding the availability of such commodities. (4)

Recruits starting training believed that respect for police in a tough area depended on the willingness of the police to use force. McNamara found that this feeling decreased among the recruits after they had finished training, but after one year in the field the group again

reverted to their original beliefs. (5)

McNamara pointed out that recruits moved toward the use of force when challenged as their time on the job increased. However, he also found that an impersonal demeanor in non-criminal matters was also agreed upon more strongly as the recruits' length of employment increased. (6)

The uncertainty of organizational sources by police officers resulted in a progressive move toward inactivity by the recruits. McNamara stated that "inactivity becomes an informal prescription for patrolmen in the context of the uncertainties they face." (7)

McNamara felt that his research brought out two important factors in terms of recruit training. One is that those in charge of a police training program must decide if they want to produce autonomous personnel or personnel more dependent and controlled by the organization. The second problem lay in the inconsistencies between the ideal police practices presented in the academy and the customary and perhaps more practical procedures utilized by field officers. (8)

In 1969, Arthur Niederhoffer conducted a study of police cynicism. Niederhoffer administered a survey to 220 police officers of an urban police department. Niederhoffer believed that his study showed that cynicism increases with length of service, reaching its maximum at some point between five and ten years of service. Niederhoffer stated that

at this point it will tend to level off. (9)

Dennis Smith and Elinor Ostrom in 1972 conducted a study of the effects of training and education on police attitudes and performance. (10) Smith and Ostrom obtained data from interviews with 719 police officers from 29 different police departments. The departments ranged in size from those with only part-time officers to one with 2,200 officers. Smith and Ostrom also obtained data from approximately 4,000 citizens from throughout the jurisdictions of the 29 police departments.

Smith and Ostrom found that a longer training period had little effect on an officer's feeling of preparedness for his job, that departments with longer training did not receive higher evaluations than other departments, and that departments with increased training did not have any greater success in obtaining warrants from their Prosecuting Attorney. (11)

Smith and Ostrom also found that officers with a college education tended to have a progressive outlook toward use of force, probable cause, the Supreme Court, and lateral entry. However, those with college educations still agreed with the military model of organization for police departments. They also felt less prepared for their police assignments, were no more successful in obtaining warrants, and did not receive any higher ratings than other officers from citizens.

Robert M. Regoli and Eric D. Poole implemented a similar study in 1978. (12) Regoli and Poole administered a 103 item questionnaire to a police sample made up of 324 police officers from nine different law enforcement agencies located in Washington and Idaho. The size of these agencies ranged from 10 to 116 police officers. Regoli and Poole found that police cynicism and police experience are curvilinearly related. They found cynicism was lowest in a new recruit but grew, peaking when an officer reached the 7-10 year mark in his career. Regoli and Poole believed that the cynicism then declined gradually, as the police officer neared retirement. (13)

Fred A. Lazin was a civilian instructor for a police officer recruit class when he conducted a study of their perceptions of the press. (14) Lazin had 69 recruit officers study newspaper articles regarding a riot at a rock concert. He then had the recruits write a short essay on whether the press treated the police fairly in the articles. Lazin divided the essays into three categories: those that indicated the press were negative toward the police, those that thought the press treated the police in a positive manner, and those that said the press had reported the incident without taking sides. Lazin found that the majority of the recruits felt that the press were negative toward the police. Lazin found that the recruits felt that the press reacted this way because of political reasons



and profit motive.

While there have been studies regarding the perceptions of police officers, very few have dealt with the subject of recruit training. This study will deal with the police officer's perception of recruit training in depth.

### Footnotes

- (1) John H. McNamara, "Uncertainties in Police Work: The Relevance of Police Recruits' Backgrounds and Training," The Police: Six Sociological Essays, ed. David J. Bordua, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., New York, 1967.
- (2) Ibid., p. 208-210.
- (3) Ibid., p. 217.
- (4) Ibid., pp. 220-221.
- (5) Ibid., p. 222.
- (6) Ibid., p. 228.
- (7) Ibid., p. 249.
- (8) Ibid., p. 251.
- (9) Arthur Niederhoffer, Behind the Shield: The Police in Urban Society, Anchor Books, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, New York, 1967.
- (10) Dennis C. Smith, Elinor Ostrom, "The Effects of Training and Education on Police Attitudes and Performance," The Potential for Reform of Criminal Justice, ed. Herbert Jacob, Sage Publications, Inc., Beverly Hills, CA, 1974.
- (11) Ibid., p. 70.
- (12) Robert M. Regoli, Eric D. Poole, "Specifying Police Cynicism," Journal of Police Science and Administration, Vol. 6, No. 1, International Association of Police Chiefs, U.S.A., 1977, pp. 98-104.
- (13) Ibid., p. 101.
- (14) Fred A. Lazin, "How the Police View the Press," Journal of Police Science and Administration, Vol. 8, No. 2, International Association of Police Chiefs, U.S.A., 1980, pp. 148-159.

## CHAPTER III

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF POLICE TRAINING IN OMAHA

The recruit training program of the Omaha Police Division has changed substantially over the years. Investigating the past history of the recruit training program was not easy. Written records have only been maintained on the training program since 1971. This development was probably prompted by the requirement of state certification for the training program. Unfortunately, even these records were unavailable for review, as they contained personal data on present employees. As a result, research for this section was compiled mostly through personal interviews with police officers and through a search of the archives in the Omaha Police Library.

While interviewing police officers, I found four distinct periods in the history of the recruit training program. These periods are pre-1965, 1965-June 1970, July 1970-1976, and 1977-1981.

Information on the pre-1965 period was derived from interviews with three police officers who were hired by the City of Omaha during this time frame. The first officer was hired in 1946. The police officer related that his first night on the job he was assigned to work a beat patrol with a senior officer. The next night on the job he walked a

beat on North Sixteenth Street by himself and continued to walk the beat assignment on North Sixteenth Street by himself for the next six months. At this point the police officer was brought inside the Central Police Headquarters, then located at Eleventh and Dodge Streets where he attended a two-week training program. The training included subjects on accident reporting, finger printing, and radio procedures. The police officer judged that "the training really did not amount to much and was not anything like the present recruit training program." After a two-week training program he returned to his foot beat on North Sixteenth Street. Eventually he received assignments of motor car patrol, the radio room, and the police ambulance squad. The second officer was hired in 1956 and received his two-week training course prior to receiving a field assignment. The third officer was hired in 1958. At this time the training was increased to a five-week course. None of the officers received field training from a coach-officer. (1)

The police recruit training program was conducted in the basement of the Central Police Headquarters until sometime in 1965. During this period a four-position firearms range was constructed in the basement of the Central Police Headquarters. The training staff utilized this indoor range and an outdoor range at N.P. Dodge Park.

In the second period, 1965-June 1970, the training program was changed by relocation to a new physical plant,

the emergence of a field training program, and the existence of outside influences.

The first indication of a field training program as a part of the police recruit training program of the Omaha Police Division appears in 1965. An interoffice communication, dated 3/25/65, dealt with the assignment of members of the police recruit class to Field Training Officers. The communication does not mention whether the Field Training Officers received any special training prior to receiving their recruits. Still, this is a departure from the past pattern of merely handing out field assignments to the newly trained recruits.

Sometime in 1966 the training section moved from the Central Police Headquarters at Eleventh and Dodge Streets to a new location at Forty-eighth Street and Ames Avenue. (2) This new physical plant had previously served as a fire station for the Omaha Fire Division. The building would now contain office and classroom space for the training section of the Omaha Police Division. The building was also used as an assembly area for police officers assigned to the North Omaha Area.

In 1969, the Nebraska State Legislature passed a law establishing a Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center. (3) Along with this law they also passed legislation which would empower the Nebraska Commission on Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice to certify other schools, public, or private

that taught a basic course in law enforcement training. (4)

That same year the Legislature also passed laws relating to the mandatory training of persons who became law enforcement officers. The statute declared that on and after January 1, 1972 persons receiving appointments as law enforcement officers would have to receive certification from the Commission within a year of their appointment. The certification would be based upon the applicant's satisfactory completion of the course at the state training center, or the completion of a course that the Commission would find equivalent to the training center course. (5)

In brief, the Omaha Police Division's Training Section would have to be annually certified by the State of Nebraska if the section were to issue state certified certificates of completion to its graduates. The alternative would be to send recruit officers to the newly established Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center.

These new laws would have less effect upon the Omaha Police Division than on the smaller law enforcement agencies within the state. The Omaha Police Division already had a training academy established. They would now only have to make whatever changes necessary to receive state certification. However, as mentioned earlier, files were not maintained on the Omaha Police Division's Training Section until 1971. The new legislation at least prompted the proper documentation of the training activities of the Omaha Police Division.

In October of 1969 the International Association of Chiefs of Police conducted a survey of the Omaha Police Division. This study was requested by the Mayor of Omaha, A. V. Sorenson. It took a total look at the Omaha Police Division and made recommendations for its improvement. The IACP evaluated the Training Section as a part of this survey. The IACP made some recommendations for the overall training program, targeting areas of organization, facilities, training aids, and instructors. Some of these recommendations were followed as a result of the move to the new headquarters. This move will be discussed later.

The IACP documented that in 1969 recruit training consisted of a nine-week classroom format, supplemented by one month of field training. The IACP believed that this was not enough.

Few disagree that nine weeks in the classroom supplemented by four weeks of field training is too short a training period. Further, there is little justification for the nine-week program except that it is one week longer and presumably one week better than the previous eight-week program. The length of the recruit training program should be significantly increased. (6)

The IACP commended the field training of the Omaha Police Division, but felt that it should be better controlled.

Field training is already a part of the overall recruit training program. Although the division is to be commended for developing and implementing a field training program, this program is not properly directed or controlled. (7)

The effects of the IACP survey upon the Omaha Police

Division's training were not immediate. The IACP survey covered the entire police division, making numerous recommendations for all sections. The IACP survey really served as a future reference for the planners of the division.

Leadership of the Training Section during the four periods has been fairly consistent. In 1955 the position of "police instructor" was made and filled by a police captain. This captain held this position into the early seventies when he left the division. At this time the position of "police instructor" was abolished but a captain took command of the Training Section. A few years later this captain left the division and the command of the Training Section was given to a lieutenant. In 1982 this lieutenant was promoted to the rank of captain.

In July 1970, the Training Section moved from the facility at Forty-eighth Street and Ames Avenue. The Training Section moved to the fifth floor of the new police headquarters building at Fifteenth and Howard Streets. The new facility had classrooms, office space, a police library, and an auditorium with removable chairs.

The first recruit class to start training at the new location was appointed on July 1, 1970. The researcher was able to interview a member of this class. This officer described the class as nine weeks long followed by about a month of coach-officer training in the field.

I talked to a police officer who was appointed on



February 19, 1974. The training class was about twelve weeks long, followed by a month of coach-officer training. This increase in the amount of training may have been a result of the state certification process.

In the final period, 1977-1981, the training program was in the same physical plant. However, there was a two-year period from 1975-1976 when no new recruit classes were started by the City of Omaha.

In 1978, the recruit officer training program consisted of 14 weeks in the classroom, and roughly three months of coach-officer training. The recruit officer had a uniform coach on all three shifts and worked with each coach for a three-week period. The rest of the recruit's field training was divided among other bureaus of the division. This was done to help familiarize the recruit officer with the workings of the entire police division.

There was some modification of the recruit training up to 1981, but nothing substantial. It should be noted, however, that more emphasis began to be placed on the uniform patrol aspect of the coach-officer training.

### Footnotes

- (1) Coach-Officer training refers to a period when a recruit officer is placed with a senior officer for on-the-job training. This training period was for a short period of time. It was not a regular duty assignment. The term "coach-officer" was replaced by the term "field training officer."
- (2) This interoffice communication from a captain in the training section, dated 4/12/65. The captain was trying to find information regarding the heating bills of the firebarn at Forty-eighth and Ames Avenue, so that he could prepare the budget statement of the training section for the upcoming year.
- (3) See APPENDIX A.
- (4) See APPENDIX A.
- (5) See APPENDIX A.
- (6) International Association of Chiefs of Police, A Survey of the Police Division, Omaha, Nebraska, October 1969, p. 195.
- (7) Ibid., p. 196.

## CHAPTER IV

### HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE SELECTION PROCESS

A natural question that arises is whether changes in the Omaha Police Training were paralleled by changes in recruitment standards. In the following chapter the researcher will show that the selection process was constantly changing throughout the four training periods.

Personal interviews were conducted with persons directly involved with the hiring of police officers. I interviewed a person who worked in the employment area of the Personnel Department from 1949 until 1966. She has moved to another area of the Personnel Department, where she is still employed. I also interviewed a person who has worked in the employment area of the Personnel Department from 1966 to the present. For the purposes of this study the first person will be referred to as Source 1 and the second person as Source 2.

Source 1 said that the Civil Service Commission was instituted by the City of Omaha in 1948. Hiring prior to 1948 was highly political. However, according to Source 1, many persons hired during that period were nonetheless top quality persons. Many later proved to be good leaders. Source 1 attributed this to the tough competition for jobs during the Depression. She believed that this may have acted

as a natural selector of the strongest competitors.

A job description for the position of Patrolman was adopted by the Civil Service Commission in 1949. Job requirements at that time required that the applicant be 21-30 years of age, a registered voter, and must live within the city limits. The applicants also had to take a written test, attend an oral interview, and take a physical fitness test. She stated that the combined scores of these tests had to come to at least 70 percent. The applicant had to have a high school diploma or a G.E.D. certificate. The applicants had to have a background check, including their traffic record. There were also height and weight requirements. The oral interview panels at that time were made up of three persons knowledgeable about personnel hiring practices, but not city employees. Source 1 said that during most of the time that she worked in the hiring section most of the testing was carried out by the staff, which consisted of herself and another worker. At one time an eye test machine was used on applicants. There was also a test which consisted of a flashing red light and a simulated brake pedal used to measure an applicant's reaction time. Source 1 said that various tests were adopted and dropped during her time in the hiring section of the personnel department.

In 1970 the City of Omaha provided funds to hire 100 men for the police division. According to Source 1, the personnel department received permission from the city

council to recruit applicants from outside the city limits, however applicants had to move to the city within six months of their appointment.

Source 1 stated that nothing remains static when it comes to hiring procedures. The greatest changes she has seen in the hiring of police officers has been the gradual dismissal of set passing points and the institution of more minimal requirements. (1)

Source 2 stated that in 1971 the height and weight requirements for police applicants dropped. The reason for this change was that the requirements had prevented the hiring of women and minorities.

In 1971 the polygraph test was brought in to supplement the background investigation of police applicants. Source 2 said that the polygraph is still used in the selection process. After this interview the polygraph test was dropped in 1982.

Source 2 indicated that the written test has been revised four or five times and is still undergoing changes. This is because the written test has been found to discriminate against minorities. According to Source 2, the United States Justice Department, Office of Personnel Management, Public Sector, has ordered that the validity content of written tests had to be evaluated, and that hiring agencies would have to seek out devices that would lessen the impact on minority applicants.

Prior to 1974 there were two classifications of police:

policewomen and patrolmen. Early in 1975 the two were combined to the police officer position.

Source 2 went on to say that the M.M.P.I. psychiatric exam has been used since 1966. About 99 percent of the applicants pass this test. In fact, Source 2 could recall only one or two cases where the applicant had not passed.

A physical fitness test has always been part of the hiring procedure since 1966. The test evolved from a push-up and pull-up type test to a jogging course which in 1975-1976, developed into a job related obstacle course. In the present timed course the applicant has to perform such tasks as going over a 5½ foot barrier, carry a 175 lb. tackle dummy, and leap over a simulated garbage can.

In 1979-1981, a stress evaluator was used as a part of the selection process. This test consisted of taking measurements of the applicant's body, lung capacity, and a treadmill test. The evaluator would then estimate the ability of the applicant's heart and lungs to withstand stress. The stress evaluator has since been dropped, Source 2 said, because it was too expensive to conduct, and because it wasn't fair to demand so much from an applicant when nothing of that nature was expected of police officers currently on the job.

Source 2 said that the structured interview has been the only graded part of the hiring tests since 1979; all other tests were pass/fail.

When asked what had been the greatest change in hiring procedures since he had worked there, Source 2 responded that it had been the effort to bring in minorities. In 1975, this effort resulted in the Referral Device, an agreement reached by the City of Omaha's Human Relations Department, Law Department, and Personnel Department. The agreement was that 40 percent of all people referred to the Police Division as acceptable applicants would be minorities or women. According to Source 2, the Omaha Police Division were so concerned with the scores of the applicants, that they didn't utilize the Referral Device. Since the Referral Device wasn't utilized, the Omaha Police Division would have to accept the responsibility for the present federal decree on hiring applicants.

On October 23, 1980, the City of Omaha entered into a consent decree with the United States Justice Department and The Brotherhood of Midwest Guardians. Under General Provisions, Section 8, subsection (a) of this decree, the City of Omaha was to fill at least forty percent of all vacancies for the sworn entry position of police officer with qualified black applicants. This was to be done until such time as black officers constituted six percent of the overall sworn workforce of the Omaha Police Division. This put a new variable into the selection process for the position of police officer.

Source 2 said that most personnel managers would never

admit this, but that he would say that selection tests were "not to see who is the best, but to eliminate the most." According to Source 2, the purpose of hiring tests is not to select, but to reduce the amount of applicants to a workable number. (2)

The interviews with these two people show that the hiring procedures of police applicants has been constantly changing. The selection process often changed for financial, as well as, political reasons and process is sometimes viewed as merely an elimination process. Out of all of this one thing is certain: the selection process is a variable which we cannot control. It may or may not have an effect on the population with which we are working. However, because of its excessive variability, we have no way of knowing its true impact.



### Footnotes

- (1) Source 1, was interviewed on December 14, 1981.
- (2) Source 2, was interviewed on December 10, 1981.

## CHAPTER V

### METHODOLOGY

#### Population & Sampling Techniques

The population in this study consists of the persons of police officer rank within the Omaha Police Division (N=404). All of the population have completed recruit officer training. This population was chosen because recruit officer training is geared exclusively for the line officer. The hiring dates of the police officers in this study range from 1948 to 1981. The police officers in this population were not hired steadily throughout this time range. They were hired sporadically, and in groups, depending upon the finances and needs of the City of Omaha. A stratified random sampling technique has been employed. In order to see if there was a change in the police officer's perception of training over this wide range of time, the population has been stratified into four sections. Group 1 consists of all police officers hired before 1965 (N=94), Group 2 consists of all police officers hired between 1965 and June 1970 (N=107). Group 3 consists of all police officers hired between July 1970 and 1976 (N=119). Group 4 consists of all police officers hired between 1977 and 1981 (N=84). A random sample of 30 officers have been taken from Group 1, 35 from Group 2, 40 from Group 3, and 30 from Group 4.

These samples were made large enough to allow for the anticipated nonresponse from some police officers.

Those police officers drawn from Group 1 may express a negative response toward their recruit training because they were not promoted. To control for this possible contaminating factor, a random sample of 20 command officers (Sergeants, Lieutenants, and Captains) has been drawn from 119 command officers that were hired before 1965.

### Terminology

The following are terms that will be used in the research instrument.

Omaha Police Training Academy: The section of the Omaha Police Division that is responsible for the training of the recruit officer.

Field Training Officer: A police officer chosen to train the recruit officer in the field for a short period of time. This would not include a police officer who was assigned to a recruit office as a regular partner in a two-man car.

Field Training: The training received by the recruit officer by the Field Training Officer.

### Research Instrument

A survey was administered to the samples drawn from the five groups. (1) A cover sheet explaining the survey to the respondent was attached to each questionnaire. The

survey began with some background questions to be used for controls and descriptive information during the analysis. The survey then had the respondent rate on an ordinal scale the way various Omaha Police Training Academy courses prepared them to do their job. It then had questions regarding the respondent's field training experiences. Finally, the survey asked two open ended questions to see what parts of recruit training are considered the most and least helpful to the officers.

Independent variables relating to age, sex, race, etc. were used in the first section of the survey to help describe the subsamples. However, to evaluate officers' perceptions of recruit training, 29 independent variables were used. The independent variables were police report writing, radio procedure, traffic stops-misdemeanor, traffic stops-felony, suspicious persons, proper response to robbery-in-progress call, proper response to burglary-in-progress call, emergency first aid, high-speed pursuit driving, domestic disturbances, police officer conduct-misconduct, traffic accident investigation, motor vehicle laws, criminal laws, constitutional law, adjudication of criminal cases and court system, fundamental criminal investigation, sexual assault, community relations, juvenile offenders, missing persons, firearms-handgun-classroom, firearms-handgun-range, firearms-shotgun-classroom, firearms-shotgun-range, baton techniques, defensive tactics, handcuffing techniques, and the use of mace.

The dependent variables were the ratings of poor, below average, average, above average, excellent, wasn't presented and no response. The dependent variables were later collapsed to aid in the statistical analysis of the data. The dependent variables of poor and below average were collapsed into a below average category. The dependent variables of average, above average and excellent were collapsed into an above average category.

I then distributed the 155 surveys to the officers, and received 125 of them back. I received 20 from Group 1, 27 from Group 2, 33 from Group 3, 28 from Group 4, and 17 from the command group. I was pleased with the overall response and felt that the inflated sample sizes easily made up for the nonresponse of some sample members.

#### Analysis of Data

The data collected from the four groups was analyzed using the statistical package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) on the University of Nebraska at Omaha computer system. (2)

Crosstabulation tables were employed to compare how the groups rated training subjects and how these ratings varied among the groups. The Chi-square test for statistical significance was used on the crosstabulation tables. Fisher's exact test was used when there were fewer than 21 cases. Yates' corrected Chi-square was used for all the others.

### Footnotes

- (1) See APPENDIX B.
- (2) Norman H. Nie, C. Hadlai Hull, Karin Steinbrenner, Dale H. Brent, Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, McGraw-Hill Inc., 1975.

## CHAPTER VI

### ANALYSIS

The ages of the members of the sample groups ranged from 22 to 59. The older officers were concentrated in the groups that were hired earlier while the younger officers were concentrated in the groups that were hired later. This was anticipated because of earlier age requirements on the hiring of police officers and the natural patterns of career development.

TABLE I: Age of the Respondents by Subsample

	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	
pre 1965 command	0	0	13	4	17
pre 1965	0	2	13	5	20
1965-June 1970	0	17	10	0	27
July 1970-1976	2	29	2	0	33
1977-1981	<u>21</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>28</u>
	23	54	39	9	125

The sex of the survey participants tended to be male. Only 4% (N=5) of those responding were female and these were in the two groups with the latest hiring dates. It should be remembered that it was not until 1975 that the job classifications of policewomen and patrolmen were combined into the police officer position.

TABLE II: Sex of the Respondents by Subsample

	Male	Female
Pre 1965	20(100%)	0
1965-June 1970	27(100%)	0
July 1970-1976	33(90.9%)	3(9.1%)
1977-1981	26(92.9%)	2(7.1%)
Pre 1965 command	17(100%)	0

Of the 125 respondents to the survey, 121 were White, two were Black, and one was Hispanic. A respondent listed himself in the Other category in the 1977-1981 group.

TABLE III: Race of the Respondents by Subsample

	White	Black	Hispanic	Other
Pre 1965	19(95%)	1(5%)	0	0
1965-June 1970	27(100%)	0	0	0
July 1970-1976	33(100%)	0	0	0
1977-1981	25(89.3%)	1(3.6%)	1(3.6%)	1(3.6%)
Pre 1965 command	17(100%)	0	0	0

There were originally seven categories for the respondents to list their educational background. Upon review, the categories were collapsed into two groups, High School Graduate and Some College Courses. This seemed like a natural division as the pursuit of education beyond high school has never been required by the Omaha Police



Division for its police officers.

TABLE IV: Education of the Respondents by Subsample

	High School Graduate	Some College Courses
Pre 1965 command	3	14
Pre 1965	8	12
1965-June 1970	6	21
July 1970-1976	5	28
1977-1981	2	26

Crosstabulation tables were prepared for each pair of sampled groups. The  $X^2$  test was run on each to determine if there was a significant difference between the groups in regard to education. No significant differences were found between any of the pairs of groups. (1)

The Omaha Police Division conducts In-Service training sessions after recruit training. So that the respondents would not confuse their In-Service training with their evaluation of recruit training, two control questions were placed in the survey at this point. These were questions asking the number of sessions attended and the respondent's overall rating of the In-Service training.

TABLE V: Number of In-Service Training Sessions

	0-10	11-30	31-40	41-50	over 50
Pre 1965	3(15%)	6(30%)	5(25%)	2(10%)	4(20%)
1965-June 1970	2(7.4%)	13(48.1%)	6(22.2%)	2(7.4%)	4(14.8%)
July 1970-1976	2(6.1%)	27(81.8%)	4(12.2%)	0	0
1977-1981	24(85.7%)	4(14.3%)	0	0	0
Pre 1965 comm	0	5(29.4%)	5(29.4%)	0	7(41.2%)

TABLE VI: Evaluation of In-Service Training Sessions

	No Response	Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
Pre 1965	1(5%)	0	0	14(70%)	5(25%)	0
1965-June 1970	0	1(3.7%)	2(7.4%)	14(51.9%)	6(22.2%)	4(14.8%)
July 1970-1976	0	0	1(3%)	21(63.6%)	9(27.3%)	2(6.1%)
1977-1981	2(7.1%)	0	2(7.1%)	17(60.7%)	5(17.9%)	2(7.1%)
Pre 1965 comm	0	0	1(5.9%)	8(47.1%)	8(47.1%)	0

The groups with earlier dates report attending more sessions than the late-dates but this was anticipated as the groups with earlier dates had more opportunities to attend sessions. The groups appear to give the sessions a high rating, however the majority of the respondents rated them as average.

Prior to coming to the Omaha Police Division, officers may have been exposed to other law enforcement training programs. Other law enforcement agencies, security firms, and the military law enforcement system are all examples of

places where officers may have received prior training experiences. To be sure that members of one group did not have more exposure to outside training than the other groups, the respondents were asked if they had received any prior training. Chi-square tests were then run for each pair of groups to see if there was any significant differences between them in regard to prior training. The tests showed no significant differences between any of the pairs.

The survey respondents were next asked the number of weeks that their training in the Omaha Police Academy lasted. The estimates of the different groups generally correspond with the information gained from the earlier interviews with other officers regarding the length of their academy training. This showed that any problem with recall by the older officers would be of a minor nature.

TABLE VII: No. of weeks of the Omaha Police Academy by Subsample

	2	3	4	5	6	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16*	17*
Pre 1965 comm	6	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	2	0
Pre 1965	3	3	2	0	6	3	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0
1965-June 1970	0	0	1	0	2	2	5	1	0	11	1	0	0	3	1
July 1970-1976	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	21	1	3	1	3	0
1977-1981	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	10	13	0	0	1

16\*=Don't Remember      17\*=No Response

Respondents rated the extent to which each of 29

subjects that were taught in the Omaha Police Academy had prepared the officer to handle police work effectively. It is possible that the Pre-1965 group might feel resentment over their failure to achieve promotion, and express this in terms of a negative evaluation of their training experience. In order to control for this, a control group of command officers hired before 1965 was also given in the survey. Crosstabulation tables comparing the two groups on each of the subjects was set up and a  $X^2$  test was run on each table. There was no significant difference between the ratings of the groups on 27 of the subjects. (2)

TABLE VIII: Baton Techniques Pre 1965/Pre 1965 Command

	Below Average	Above Average	Wasn't Presented	No Response
Pre 1965	10(55.6%)	8(44.4%)	2	0
Pre 1965 Command	2(14.3%)	12(85.7%)	3	0
$X^2=4.09735$	D.F=1		$P < 0.0430$	

TABLE IX: Misd. Traffic Stops Pre 1965/Pre 1965 Command

	Below Average	Above Average	Wasn't Presented	No Response
Pre 1965	0(0%)	18(100%)	2	0
Pre 1965 Command	7(43.8%)	9(56.3%)	1	0
$X^2=7.42126$	D.F=1		$P < 0.0064$	

There was a significant difference found between the

groups on the subjects of Baton Techniques and Misdemeanor Traffic Stops. (3)

There were only 2 cases out of the 29 subjects where there was a significant difference between the Pre 1965 group and the Pre 1965 Command group. This would indicate that if the Pre 1965 group have any negative feelings toward the Division because they were not promoted, it is not reflected in their evaluation of their recruit training.

Crosstabulation tables were then run on the 29 subjects comparing the ratings of the Pre 1965 group with the 1965-June 1970 group. There was no significant difference found between the two groups in their rating of 28 of the subjects. (4)

TABLE X: Constitutional Law Pre 1965/1965-June 1970

	Below Average	Above Average	Wasn't Presented	No Response
Pre 1965	7(43.8%)	9(56.3%)	4	0
1965-June 1970	3(11.5%)	23(88.5%)	1	0
$X^2=4.02868$	D.F=1		$P < 0.0447$	

Only the crosstabulation table on the subject of Constitutional Law showed a significant difference between the ratings of the groups. (5) The 1965-June 1970 group gave the subject a higher rating than the Pre 1965 group.

Crosstabulation tables were then run on the Pre 1965 group and the July 1970-1976 group and their ratings of

the 29 subjects. There was no significant difference found between the ratings that the two groups gave 27 of the subjects. (6)

TABLE XI: High Speed Pursuit Pre 1965/July 1970-1976

	Below Average	Above Average	Wasn't Presented	No Response
Pre 1965	8(47.1%)	9(52.9%)	3	0
July 1970-1976	26(81.3%)	6(18.8%)	1	0
$\chi^2=4.60651$	D.F=1		P < 0.0319	

TABLE XII: Defensive Tactics Pre 1965/July 1970-1976

	Below Average	Above Average	Wasn't Presented	No Response
Pre 1965	6(33.3%)	12(66.7%)	2	0
July 1970-1976	22(68.8%)	10(31.3%)	1	0
$\chi^2=4.51515$	D.F=1		P < 0.0336	

A significant difference between the ratings of the two groups was found in the subjects of High Speed Pursuit and Defensive Tactics. In both cases the July 1970-1976 group gave a lower rating to the subjects than the Pre 1965 group.

When comparing the Pre 1965 group with the 1977-1981 group there were 28 subjects where no significant differences were found in their ratings. (7)

TABLE XIII: Community Relations Pre 1965/1977-1981

	Below Average	Above Average	Wasn't Presented	No Response
Pre 1965	6(37.5%)	10(62.5%)	4	0
1977-1981	2(7.1%)	26(92.9%)	0	0
$X^2=4.43192$		D.F=1		$P < 0.0353$

A significant difference was found between the groups ratings on the subject of Community Relations (8).

Crosstabulation tables were run on the subject comparison between the 1965-June 1970 group and the July 1970-1976 group. No significant difference was found in the way the two groups rated 28 of the subjects. (9)

TABLE XIV: High Speed Pursuit 1965-June 1970/July 1970-1976

	Below Average	Above Average	Wasn't Presented	No Response
1965-June 1970	11(47.8%)	12(52.2%)	4	0
July 1970-1976	26(81.3%)	6(18.8%)	1	0
$X^2=5.35690$		D.F=1		$P < 0.0206$

Only 1 table out of the 29 tables showed a significant difference between the ratings of the two groups on the training subjects. This table concerned the table on High Speed Pursuit driving. The July 1970-1976 group gave the subject a lower rating than the 1965-June 1970 group.

When crosstabulation tables were run comparing the

subject ratings of the 1965-June 1970 group with the 1977-1981 group, none of the tables showed a significant difference in the ratings between the two groups. (10)

There was no significant differences found between the way the July 1970-1976 group and the 1977-1981 group rated the subjects. (11)

The 1965-June 1970 group, the July 1970-1976 group, and the 1977-1981 group all had a large percentage of their members indicate that they had received field training from a Field Training Officer. The Pre 1965 group and the Pre 1965 Command group had a large percentage of their members indicate that they had not received field training from a Field Training Officer. This information confirmed what other police officers had told me in my earlier interviews.

TABLE XV: Field Training Officers by Subsamples

	No Response	Yes	No
Pre 1965	0	7(35%)	13(65%)
1965-June 1970	0	27(100%)	0
July 1970-1976	1(3%)	27(81.8%)	5(15.2%)
1977-1981	0	28(100%)	0
Pre 1965 Comm	0	3(17.6%)	14(82.4%)

Ninety-two percent of the members of the 1965-June 1970 group gave their Field Officer Training an above average rating. Seventy-six percent of the members of the July



1970-1976 group gave their Field Officer Training an above average rating. Eighty-nine percent of the members of the 1977-1981 group gave their Field Officer Training an above average rating.

The last section of the survey dealt with the two open ended questions that asked the officers what parts of the training helped them the most and which parts helped them the least. Although the responses to these questions varied to a high degree, some common themes were detected. Field Officer Training was thought of very highly by the respondents. About 50% of the members of the July 1970-1976 group listed Field Training as being the part of recruit training that benefited them the most. Report writing and Firearms training was also mentioned by members of the different groups as being beneficial. It is interesting to note that two members of the 1965-June 1970 group mentioned that close order drill was the section of training that did the least to prepare them for their work. There was a small, but notable number of respondents that expressed the opinion that more time should be spent on defensive tactics and baton techniques.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY

The following hypothesis was developed for this study:

Changes in police training have resulted in police officers' perceptions of being better prepared for the job.

The null hypothesis of this study has been:

Changes made in police training will have no effect on police officers' perceptions of preparedness for the job.

After reviewing the data that was collected in this study, it was found that in only a very few of the cases was there found to be a significant difference between the way the groups rated their recruit training subjects. Out of the 174 tables that were run comparing the ratings of the subjects between the four police officer groups only five of the tables showed a significant difference. The table comparing the ratings of the Pre 1965 group and the 1965-June 1970 group on the subject of Constitutional Law showed a significant difference. The table comparing the ratings of the Pre 1965 group and the July 1970-1976 group on the subject of High Speed Pursuit showed a significant difference. The table comparing the ratings of the Pre 1965 group and the July 1970-1976 group on the subject of Defensive Tactics showed a significant difference. The table comparing the ratings of the Pre 1965 group and the

1977-1981 group on the subject of Community Relations showed a significant difference. The table comparing the ratings of the 1965-June 1970 group and the July 1970-1976 group on the subject of High Speed Pursuit showed a significant difference.

Out of the five tables that showed a significant difference three of the tables had the later group giving the subjects a lower rating than the earlier group. The July 1970-1976 group gave the subject of High Speed Pursuit a lower rating than the Pre 1965 group. The July 1970-1976 group gave the subject of Defensive Tactics a lower rating than the Pre 1965 group. The July 1970-1976 group gave the subject of High Speed Pursuit a lower rating than the 1965-June 1970 group.

The evidence brought out by this study was very conclusive. Overwhelmingly the tables showed that no significant differences appeared between the way the different groups rated their recruit training. Evidence this strong cannot be ignored. In light of the information gathered by this study I feel that the null hypothesis should be accepted.

Changes made in police training will have no effect on police officers' perceptions of preparedness for the job.

The findings of this study support the research that was done by Dennis Smith and Elinor Ostrom on the effects of training on police officers. Smith and Ostrom found

from interviews with police officers from different departments that a longer training period had little effect on an officer's feeling of preparedness for his job, that departments with a longer training period did not receive higher evaluations, and that they did not have any greater success in obtaining warrants from their Prosecuting Attorney.

#### Implications for Future Research

An interesting discovery brought out by this study was the similar ratings given to the training subjects by the Pre 1965 group and the Pre 1965 Command group. Any negative feeling that the Pre 1965 group may have from not being promoted did not manifest itself in their evaluation of recruit training. Possibly the Omaha Police Division has a low level of cynicism as compared to other police departments. This is an area that might be explored by future researchers.

The influence of education and police training prior to the Omaha Police Academy were two factors that I thought could have caused problems if they had varied among the groups. However, tests run showed that there was no significant difference between the groups in regard to these factors. A subject for future research would be to see if educational level or prior police training affect an officer's perceptions of training.

Some officers related that certain topics were not

presented during their recruitment training such as Field Officer Training. Some may feel that they could have used the training, others may feel that they did not need the training, and others might not feel strongly one way or the other regarding the subject. Determining how the officers felt about this would be an area for future research.

### Footnotes

- (1)  $X^2$  tests run between the Pre 1965 group and the July 1970-1976 group, the Pre 1965 group and the 1977-1981 group, and the 1965-June 1970 with the July 1970-1976 group all had a warning that 25% of the valid cells had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.0.  $X^2$  tests run between the 1965-June 1970 group and the 1977-1981 group, and the July 1970-1976 group and the 1977-1981 group had a warning that 50% of the valid cells had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.0.
- (2) 17 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 50% of the valid cells in their tables had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.0. 5 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 25% of the valid cells in their tables had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.0. 1 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 75% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.0.
- (3) The  $X^2$  test that was run on the subject of Misdemeanor Traffic Stops had a warning that 50% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.0.
- (4) 5 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 25% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5. 17 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 50% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.
- (5) The  $X^2$  test ran on Constitutional Law had a warning that 25% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.
- (6) 11 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 25% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5. 9 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 50% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.
- (7) 10 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 25% of the valid cells had an expected cell frequency of less than 5. 11 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 50% of the valid cells had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.

- (8) The  $X^2$  test that was run on the subject of Community Relations had a warning that 25% of the valid cells in the table had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.
- (9) 3 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 25% of the valid cells in the tables had an expected cell frequency of less than 5. 10 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 50% of the valid cells in the tables had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.
- (10) 15 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 50% of the valid cells in the tables had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.
- (11) 9 of the  $X^2$  tests run had a warning that 50% of the valid cells in the tables had an expected cell frequency of less than 5.

APPENDIX A



Revised Statutes of Nebraska, Reissue of Volume V, 1976, published by the Revisor of Statutes pursuant to LB 1 83rd Legislature, First Session. 1973, R.R.S. 1943.

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81-1402. Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center; created; purpose. There is hereby created the Nebraska Law Enforcement Training Center under the supervision and control of the commission. The purpose of the training center shall be to conduct pre-employment and advanced law enforcement training programs. Source: Laws 1969, c773 & 2, p. 2926; Laws 1971, LB 929, & 2. (3)

81-1403. Commission duties; duties. The Commission, after consultation with the Nebraska Police Standards Advisory Council Shall:

- (1) Adopt rules and regulations for the operation of the training center;
- (2) Appoint and remove the director of the training center and delegate appropriate powers and duties to him;
- (3) Establish curricula and requirements for satisfactory completion of preemployment and advanced training programs;
- (4) Issue certificates attesting satisfactory completion of preemployment and advanced training programs;
- (5) Set the tuition and fees of the training center;
- (6) Annually certify all schools, public or private, providing a basic course of law enforcement training which complies with the qualifications and standards promulgated by him and offers training comparable to that offered by the training center;
- (7) Extend the programs of the training center throughout the state on a regional basis; and
- (8) Do all things necessary to carry out the purpose of the training center.

Source: Laws 1969, c 733, & 3, p. 2926; Laws 1971, LB 929, & 3. (4)

81-1414. Law enforcement officers; certificate of satisfactory completion of training center; employment, advancement; required.

(1) On and after January 1, 1972, law enforcement officers already serving under permanent appointment shall not be required to meet any requirement of subsection (2) of this section as a condition of tenure or continued employment.

(2) On and after January 1, 1972, no person shall receive appointment as a law enforcement officer unless he has been awarded a certificate by the commission attesting to his satisfactory completion of the minimum curriculum of the training center as established by the commission or has been awarded a certificate attesting to his satisfactory completion of a training program which the commission finds equivalent thereto. Any person who has not been awarded such a certificate may receive an appointment conditioned on his satisfactory completion of such training within one year from the date of his appointment. If such training is not completed within one year, his employment shall not be renewed by appointment or otherwise.

(3) On and after January 1, 1972, no law enforcement officer shall be promoted in rank unless he has been awarded a certificate by the director attesting to the satisfactory completion of such advanced training as the director may require for the rank to which he is to be promoted.

(4) The director shall issue a certificate attesting to a compliance with the requirements of subsection (2) or (3) of this section to any applicant who presents evidence of satisfactory completion of a training program, other than that of the training center, found by the director to be equivalent to that of the training center.

Source: Laws 1969, c. 773 & 14, p. 2930; Laws 1971, LB 929 & 7. (5)

APPENDIX B

## SAMPLE OF SURVEY

Dear Officer:

Thank you for agreeing to fill out this survey on recruit training. The first eight questions are merely background questions needed for evaluation at the end of the project. Either fill in the blank or circle the appropriate response as instructed.

The next section deals with the recruit training subjects that were presented to you DURING YOUR RECRUIT OFFICER TRAINING AT THE OMAHA POLICE TRAINING ACADEMY. You are asked to rate each subject on a scale from 1 to 5. Circle the number you believe best represents the extent to which THE SUBJECT PREPARED YOU TO HANDLE POLICE WORK EFFECTIVELY. The number 1 represents a poor rating, progressing to the numeral 5 that represents an excellent rating.

Questions 39-42 will deal with the Field Training you received as a recruit from a Field Training Officer, that is A POLICE OFFICER CHOSEN TO TRAIN A RECRUIT OFFICER FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME. THIS WOULD NOT INCLUDE A POLICE OFFICER WHO WAS ASSIGNED A RECRUIT OFFICER AS A REGULAR PARTNER IN A TWO MAN CAR.

Results of this study may be used to improve the recruit training program within the Omaha Police Division; however, the main reason for the study is that it is a requirement that I must meet before I can graduate from UNO. Thanks again for your help in this project.

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex: 1) Male 2) Female
3. Race: 1) White 2) Black 3) Hispanic 4) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Education: 1) GED 2) High School Graduate 3) Some College Courses  
4) Technical College 5) College Graduate 6) Some Post-Graduate  
Studies 7) Master's Degree
5. How many in-service training sessions have you attended as an Omaha  
Police Officer?  
1) 0-10 2) 11-30 3) 31-40 4) 41-50 5) Over 50
6. How would you rate the overall quality of the in-service training  
sessions that you attended?  
1) Poor 2) Below Average 3) Average 4) Above Average 5) Excellent
7. Did you receive any law enforcement training before you came to the  
Omaha Police Division?  
1) None 2) Military 3) Law Enforcement Agency 4) Security  
5) Military and Security 6) Military and Law Enforcement Agency  
7) Military, Security and Law Enforcement Agency 8) Other: \_\_\_\_\_
8. How many years have you been employed as an Omaha Police Officer?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Circle the number of weeks that your recruit training lasted in the  
Omaha Police Training Academy.  
1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10      11  
12      13      14      15      Don't remember

Rate the quality of the training for each of the following subjects presented in your recruit training in the Omaha Police Training Academy. Quality is defined as the extent to which it prepared you to handle police work effectively.

Rating Scale: 5 = Excellent  
 4 = Above Average  
 3 = Average  
 2 = Below Average  
 1 = Poor

Circle the appropriate response in questions 10-38.

Police Patrol

10. Police Report Writing

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

11. Radio Procedure

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

12. Traffic Stops - Misdemeanor

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

13. Traffic Stops - Felony

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

14. Suspicious Persons - Field Interrogation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

15. Proper Response to Robbery-in-Progress Call

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

16. Proper Response to Burglary-in-Progress Call

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

17. Emergency First Aid

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 18. High-Speed Pursuit Driving

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 19. Domestic Disturbances

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 20. Police Officer Conduct, Misconduct

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

Traffic

## 21. Traffic Accident Investigation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 22. Motor Vehicle Laws (state laws and city ordinances)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

Legal

## 23. Criminal Laws (state laws and city ordinances)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 24. Constitutional Law (Search and Seizure, Arrest, Suspect's Rights)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 25. Adjudication of Criminal Cases and Court System

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

Investigation

## 26. Fundamental Criminal Investigation (Crime Scene Protection)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 27. Sexual Assault

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

Human Services

## 28. Community Relations

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 29. Juvenile Offenders

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 30. Missing Persons

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

Defensive Skills

## 31. Firearms, Handgun, Classroom Instruction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 32. Firearms, Handgun, Range Instruction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 33. Firearms, Shotgun, Classroom Instruction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 34. Firearms, Shotgun, Range Instruction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 35. Baton Techniques

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 36. Defensive Tactics (Chokes, Armbars, Come Alongs, etc.)

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

## 37. Handcuffing Techniques

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented



## 38. The Use of Mace

1	2	3	4	5	6
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent	Wasn't Presented

Field Training

39. Did you receive Field Training from a Field Training Officer?

Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ No: \_\_\_\_\_

If you answered "No" in question 39, go on to question 43.

40. How many Field Training Officers did you have?

\_\_\_\_\_

41. How many weeks did your Field Training last?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

42. How would you rate the Field Training you received?

1	2	3	4	5
Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent

43. What parts of the entire recruit officer training program did the least to prepare you for the job?44. What parts of the entire recruit officer training program did the most to prepare you for the job?

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