

The Search for Effective Law Enforcement Personnel

I. What is the Training/Skills Which Make Effective People?

A. Training – Transforming Men and Women

1. Training One – Equipping Character/Intrapersonal and Interpersonal skills
2. Training Two – Acquiring These Skills Through Effective Modeling by Others.
3. Training Three – Maintaining these Skills and Attitudes Through Accountability and Reinforcement.

B. The Test for Training – How People Become Changed in Their Attitudes and Perceptions. What Does Transformation Look Like?

1. From Self (Pride; “**Me**”) to Others (Humility; “**We**”)
2. From Perceptions/Secondhand Knowledge to Reality
3. The Power of Mission/Group Identity – Good/Bad
4. The Power of Peers/Relationships- Good/Bad
5. **The Result:** Failure/Fearful/Emotional to Skilled/Transformed – Effective/Calm/Principled (*Abnormal*)

II. The Bad News – Living and Recruiting in a Society Which is Often Ineffective in Training Skills and Attitudes

III. Recruiting: Why Should Young Men and Women Enter Law Enforcement? *We can provide this training and transformation.*

- A. Law Enforcement, like the military, is one of the few professions that truly “transforms” individuals to become more effective. We *change* people to be different in a positive way. How do we do that?
- B. **We have extensive training and mentorship programs that teach critical skills which make them effective in life**, in both *intrapersonal* (character, maturity, discipline, etc.) and *interpersonal skills* (communication, conflict resolution, etc.). These skills not only make them effective professionally, but relationally as well. Even if they do not make this profession their lifelong career, these skills are valued and considered critical in all professions and in relationships.
- C. **We instill in them a critical mission that is one of the most important in the United States.** This *identity* reinforces their skills in a unifying manner to provide a collective response to a country that has significant social problems such as crime, addiction, and mental health. Despite criticism by some groups and the media, law enforcement in most surveys is ranked second only to the military in respect and trust by the public.
- D. **We support a culture of strong positive relationships forged by that mission.** In a society that has seen a decline of firsthand, positive social ties - law enforcement has a strong “family” perspective that goes beyond individual agencies to the profession.

Their “*first responder*” role also enhances their contact and connection with the communities they serve.

- E. **We provide training and accountability that helps reduce pride/self-centeredness.** In a society often characterized by “*it’s all about me*”, the three factors above create and maintain a realistic view of themselves and the world around them. Unlike much of what they have experienced before, they now have men and women around them who believe they should be “*their brother’s and sister’s keeper*” and tell them the truth when they need correction. As a result, they become people who are humble and regularly demonstrate selflessness and courage in a job that is known for “*running to the sound of trouble*” even during danger.

IV. How Do We Locate Those Individuals to Apply for Law Enforcement Which Can Pass a Background Investigation and Enter Law Enforcement to Go Through this Transformational Process?

- A. Locate People Who Have Been Trained to Be Effective – Military
- B. Create/Maintain Programs Which Give Us Access to Young Men/Women Where We Can Observe their Skills and Attitudes. (DARE, Explorer Programs, Volunteers, Internships).
- C. Have Current Law Enforcement Look for Individuals Who Indicate Their Possession of These Skills/Attitude.

V. Retention: Keeping Effective Men and Women

This section discusses how we can best maintain the factors in Part Three to maintain an environment where people want to stay and come to work despite the demands of this profession. The best “recruiters” are men and women who still love their job, and others they encounter observe this and are drawn to and want to be part of it. Among the topics we will discuss include:

- A. **Leadership** at both the operational and management level must be constantly reinforced. A “healthy” agency must be sustained through leadership. The word “lead” connotes “moving forward”, and we must be diligent to maintain the factors of Part Three to keep us effective. The major components of leadership include:
 - 1. **Communication/Relationships** is the most critical skill of leadership. We maintain effectiveness by knowing and trusting each other. When there is poor communication, we lose the strength of the factors of Part Three. We must maintain “family” by intentional and ongoing contact with each other, the mission, and the communities we serve.
 - 2. **Encouragement** means “*to place courage inside.*” Most operational personnel are effective, and when we regularly communicate with them in their operational duties, we see firsthand that is true. We should always sincerely reinforce and recognize them when they perform one of the most demanding jobs in the world. When they do that job in an effective way, we should say something. We should also encourage others in their personal lives, during both

positive and negative events. We should encourage them about the new baby or finishing their college degree, as well as saying something when losing a family member or having someone in their family undergoing chemotherapy or dealing with dementia.

- i. **On-going Training/Mentorship** is also important because we all make mistakes or say something we should not say. We must address these as a positive learning opportunity and keep each other growing in our effectiveness in both skills and attitude.
- ii. **Confrontation is also critical.** A small percentage of personnel and managers create most of the problems in our organizations. These are *not* mistakes, but **character issues** that *must* be addressed. Operationally we were tasked with confronting “bad people”, and we must also do that with men and women within our agencies. If we fail to do this, it will not only impact our “good people”, but there is also a danger that their toxic and unwanted behavior will impact our communities. This will obviously reduce their trust in our profession, and ultimately their desire to join our ranks. It will also result in effective employees leaving the agency.