



Jeffery J. Turney

“For” versus “With” – “My” versus “Our” **IN POLICE AGENCIES**

The difference between a good or great police department could be as simple as the way four words get used within an organization. Do employees work “For” or “With” leadership? Do leaders identify their departments using the term “My” or “Our?” The atmosphere within any institution can be enhanced when employees feel a connection with the management teams responsible for reaching

established goals.⁸ Many police organizations continue to use an exchange management style of leadership to promote and develop the awareness, empowerment, and personal integrity of police personnel.⁴ Exchange management techniques offer rewards in return for services and may work if the driving force within a department looks for the “quantity” of provided services.

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However, if "quality" is an important aspect of the organizational strategy, then understanding the need to have employees feel valued is an integral part of reaching the highest levels of production.

Employees provide an invaluable service to an organization and without their support, attaining established goals can be diminished. Effective leadership requires a process where leaders achieve objectives by setting the example and getting followers to complete tasks that they would not normally accomplish.^{2,7} Listening to the way employees identify their relationship with management can provide insight into the connection they have with their employer and the quality they will provide to assigned tasks. When an employee says they work "for" someone, they give up their individualism, and become subservient to the supervisor they are identifying.⁶ By stating they work "with" someone, they are implying they have agreed to follow leadership's established vision and feel they are contributing to the overall mission as an important team member.¹⁰

Identifying individuals as "my" unit, section, department, or people give the impression leaders have ownership over those working "for" them.⁶ Changing the terminology to "our" unit, section, department, or people allows employees to see themselves as a part of the management team where thoughts and opinions are appreciated. Before getting to this level of cooperation, employees have to trust leadership will support their efforts and care for their wellbeing.³ The development of the group concept encourages organizational development and advancing organizational development can then encourage community involvement and commitment.¹ When employees feel they are working "with" management to achieve success, the quality of the work product increases.⁸ The team concept reduces individualism and replaces it with collaborative efforts designed to enhance the overall endeavors of everyone as a whole.⁹

Police officers are prone to be individualists, due to the nature of police work where line-level officers rarely have management's direct input at calls for service.⁵ Individualism can be detrimental to establishing environments where mutual efforts and collaborative decision-making processes generate quality products or services.⁹ The entire team shares in the success or failure of programs and collectively, the entire organization reaps the rewards of a job well done. Those in lead-


ership positions within and outside the team must ensure they celebrate the successful efforts of the team and should not attempt to assign personal ownership to the results. In conclusion, employees working "for" leadership can produce results within "my" organizations, while employees working "with" leadership have the potential to produce superb results within "Our" organizations. 

About the Author: Jeff Turney's thirty-four year law enforcement career began after he entered the United States Air Force. While with the Air Force, he held many assignments and worked his way up from a patrol officer to a superintendent's position managing law enforcement operations. His selection to attend the FBI National Academy (193rd session) preceded his final assignment with the National Reconnaissance Office (NRO). While with the NRO's personnel security division, he assumed an expert investigator's role and assisted in protecting our nation's space assets. Upon completing his military requirements in 2000, he left Washington D.C. and moved to Arizona where he obtained a sworn officer's position with the Glendale police department. He is currently a sergeant within the patrol division and his background with the department includes five years as a domestic violence detective. Jeff's educational background includes a PhD in Public Safety, specializing in Leadership; a Master's degree in Public Administration; a second Masters in Business & Organizational Security Management; and a Bachelor's degree in Workforce Education & Development.

End Notes

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"Lapel" Cameras: Viewing Law Enforcement from a new Lens *continued from page 15*

As society progresses and deals with new technology, we must bear in mind that our U.S. Constitution provides the framework for public policy. The stakes are high and complaints still exist about the reliability of this technology. Should we expose the public and law enforcement officers to this evolving technology before its time? Or is it time? 

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Preparing for a Transition from Public Service to Private Industry *continued from page 12*

Ask or Look for Assistance

There are others who have gone before you, some successful, some not. Seek out both and learn from their mistakes and successes. Yes, there are companies that can provide direction and assistance, but the most important step is recognizing you need to prepare and invest the time, energy and enthusiasm into your transitional career as you did when you transitioned into your public service career.

Summary

Change is hard. You need to be resilient in your efforts to transition to your next career. Expand your capabilities and your network, and remember, "It's Only the Beginning..." of your next chapter. Good Luck and God Bless. 

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