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A PHILOSOPHY IN TEAM MANAGEMENT

By
SCOTT C. SOMERVILLE



*a comprehensive plan
in London, Ontario
to improve management*

THIS ARTICLE will acquaint senior police officers and other law enforcement professionals with the unique process being developed by the City of London (Ontario) Police Force to nurture a conceptual team management philosophy and style that is responsive to community policing needs in contemporary times.

The team management philosophy is evolving from within the senior officer ranks of the London Police Force. This article catalogues some of the background and describes the events that have transpired in the development stages of the process. In addition, an attempt has been made to analyze some of the more significant activities to date as well as the Force's effectiveness at achieving its desired results in terms of its original expectations.

The catalyst in this experience was the London Police Force senior officers' exposure to the implementation strategy of the Local Government Management Project (LGMP), an innovative and conceptual goals and objectives system of management being undertaken by the Corporation of the City of London Administration in conjunction and consultation with The School of Business of Queen's University at Kingston and the Province of Ontario, Ministry of Treasury, Economics and Intergovernmental Affairs, the principal funding agency.

The LGMP represented the model document on which the London Police Force commenced its study in team management in order to: "Improve the quality of Policing by improving the quality of training and supervision and the channelization of energies and efforts towards meeting Force Objectives" (Walter T. Johnson, November 28, 1975).

So what then is the Local Government Management Project as it relates to the City of London, and more particularly, the London Police Force?

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT PROJECT

The principal architects in the development of the Local Government Management Project (LGMP) were Dr. J. R. Nininger and Professor V. N. MacDonald, project principals, The School of Business, Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario, Canada.

The Local Government Management Project is a comprehensive attempt to improve the management of local government. A consistent need has been recognized in management for improvements in planning, organizing, coordinating, cooperating and communicating, as well as a need for a better understanding of a manager's role and responsibilities. The initial LGMP survey revealed that vertically and horizontally integrated goal and objective setting was fundamental to meeting these needs.

Goals identify the purpose and areas of responsibility of the various parts of the organization. To establish these goals, the manager must consider the entire scope of his position and decision-making areas. Objectives evolve from goals and represent specific attainable targets of performance in the various goal areas. As objectives are established, managers are better able to define their actual

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*This article represents an abridgement of a full research paper documenting the experiences of the City of London (Ontario) Police Force in conceptual team management. Copies of the complete document may be obtained from: Walter T. Johnson, Chief of Police, City of London Police Force, P.O. Box 3415, London, Ontario N6A 4K9, Canada.

needs for information. Once these needs are identified, steps can be taken to refine the municipality's information system.

To be useful, objectives must be measurable; therefore, the act of setting objectives involves the development of measures. These measures are indicators of performance for each management level in the municipality, and can act as guides to both councils and the administration in attaining desired levels of service.

When goals and objectives are set in teams containing at least two levels of management (a manager and those reporting to him), effective management is facilitated because:

1. Subordinate managers have input into higher level goals and objectives. Thus, the goals and objectives become more realistic, and subordinate managers are not only aware of them but also more committed to them.

2. Managers at the same organizational level are better able to communicate their goals and objectives to other managers at the same level and to integrate and coordinate goals and objectives when necessary. Thus, not only can mutual support objectives be determined but overlap can also be minimized.

3. Goals and objectives at each level can be set in such a way as to integrate with those at the next highest level.

By nature of the LGMP process, managers become aware of the goals and objectives, not only of those to whom they report, but of managers in other departments. Interdepartmental cooperation and coordination is required if overall objectives are to be accomplished.

While the LGMP uses goals and objectives as the primary form of intervention, the process goes beyond such development. The maturation of meaningful performance measures, the refining of the management information system, the uses of organizational development and human resource management processes, the evolution of a comprehensive or corporate plan, the possible revision of organizational structure, are all part of the LGMP process and are integrated into the process as particular circumstances warrant.

In order to achieve any real success, the LGMP or a similar process, must become the overall organization and management development process for the municipality (police force) integrating and combining all these efforts to improve management.

BACKGROUND TO THE PROCESS

Many organizations, the London Police Force included, operate under a system of implied goals and objectives for the discharging of their responsibilities. This situation is generally found in the activities of many professional organizations.

When Chief of Police Walter T. Johnson assumed office in 1971, the Force recognized certain implied objectives to be accomplished over the five succeeding years, the foremost of these objectives being:

1. The development of a performance rating and promotion policy covering all members of the regular Force;

2. The modernization of the Force's communication system;

3. The provision of new quarters for the housing of the Police Force; and

4. The development of a program for senior officer training in the management aspects of administration of justice in addition to the professional side of law enforcement.

The first three objectives have now been accomplished within the time initially set aside for their attainment, and

the fourth objective is of a long-term and ongoing nature: A widely accepted performance rating and promotion policy has been developed for the Force which has received considerable exposure throughout Police Forces in Ontario and Canada. With the completion of construction of the present police administration building in 1974, objectives 2 and 3 were realized. The Police Force has an up-to-date administration building from which to conduct its operations; and coincident with the acquiring of new premises was the installation of a very modern and sophisticated communication system. The "911 system" as it is called jointly serves the communication needs of both the London Police Force and the City of London Fire Service and includes a community disaster control area, a computer hook-up on the Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC), and an interphased computerized records maintenance system.

STRUCTURE OF THE LONDON POLICE FORCE

As a fully operational law enforcement agency, the London Police Force acts within a structure which allows for the maximum amount of flexibility, efficiency, and effectiveness in the discharging of its duties and responsibilities.

The primary functions of the Force are carried out and supported by two main thrusts or pillars of activity: operations and administration. The operations thrust of the Force is overseen by the chief of police in consultation with the superintendents of the criminal investigation division and the uniform division and supported by the superintendent of planning. It is in this operational thrust that the basic law enforcement and protective functions of the force are maintained.

The administrative pillar of activity is managed by the deputy chief of police in consultation with individual branch managers, police inspectors and civilian professionals, responsible for records, personnel, special services, and transportation.

In looking to the future, contingent plans have been formulated to effect an orderly transition of management responsibility in the operations thrust of the Force. As the role and responsibilities of the chief of police expand in the corporate aspects of Force planning, future consideration may, of necessity, be addressed to appointing an additional deputy chief of police to oversee the operations phase of the Force resulting in a chief/two deputy system of executive management.

PHILOSOPHY OF MANAGEMENT

The philosophy of management within the senior office ranks of the London Police Force is best described as proactive in nature. The philosophy is one of anticipation — anticipation of problem areas, operational complexities, and issues before they develop and the consequent undertaking of remedial action to reduce the influence that any specific issue may have on the operations and responsibilities of the Force. It is the translating of planning decisions, policy formulation, and operational complexities into specified stated objectives and then developing the professional expertise within the senior officer ranks to meet the challenge of attaining these objectives as efficiently and effectively as available resources will reasonably permit.

The results-oriented philosophy emphasizes accomplishments and results and encourages wide participation in management at each senior officer level in order that the Force can respond to and influence activities of the future rather than simply reacting to current events and pressures.

To be successful, in implementing an anticipatory/remedial action philosophy of management, four basic ingredients are deemed imperative:

1. There must be explicit communication and agreement between and among the various levels of the senior officer ranks as to the goals, objectives, and overall responsibilities of the organization coupled with an inherent desire on the part of each senior officer to commit his time and professional talents towards the achievement of Force objectives.

2. There must be equitable and meaningful delegation of responsibility for the achievement of Force objectives commensurate with authority to act in the development and implementation of action plans coupled with a responsible vehicle for self-evaluation of progress towards the meeting of stated or implied objectives.

3. A solid commitment must be undertaken to nurture a continuous in-house management development process that is ongoing, participative, and communicative.

4. Continuous effort must be expended in moulding the senior officers' group into a team by developing a planning and problem-solving environment of openness, trust, productive confrontation, efficiency, and effectiveness.

The goals of the London Police Force represent the collective input and consensus of the senior officers of the Force. The goals represent the development of the Force's own guidelines for the conducting of its affairs and the influencing of its action in accordance with its responsibilities to the Crown and the community and are intended to be the focal point to which all policy formulation and operational objectives are addressed:

- Maintain within the economic capability of the community an efficient police service for the protection of life and property, the prevention of crime, and the apprehension of offenders.

- Administer the law in a fair and impartial manner recognizing statutory and judicial limitations of police authority and the rights of all persons to the protection of the law.

- Provide a service that anticipates, identifies with, and is responsive to the needs of the community.

- Maintain an effective working relationship with all law enforcement bodies; municipal, provincial, and federal elected and appointed officials; community services; and news media.

- Provide an environment conducive to the individual growth and development of Force personnel.

- Develop new structures, methods, and procedures to improve the efficiency of the Force.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Out of the senior officers' group, a management committee has been established comprising of the chief of police, the deputy chief of police, three police superintendents and the director of records. The committee is chaired by the chief of police.

The prime objective for the establishment and maintenance of the management committee is to maintain the momentum of the goals and objectives system of management and to monitor and evaluate the results of the objective setting exercises in terms of the overall effectiveness in utilizing the Force's manpower resources.

From its inception, the management committee has met, as a team, once per week on a regular basis, for approximately three hours per session. Evolving from these weekly meetings has been the *terms of reference* for the management committee:

1. To identify those policy, problem-solving, and decision-making areas requiring specific attention; to determine their priorities with respect to identified issue areas

requiring remedial planning or action; and to initiate objectives to meet the requirements of the situation.

2. To delegate to a member of the senior officers' group the initial responsibility for the attaining of a specific objective with commensurate authority to act based on his concurrence to accept the assignment and his understanding as to what that assignment entails.

3. To coordinate with the senior officer responsible for the attainment of the objective, the action plans to be formulated and the specific tasks and manpower resources required to accomplish the desired results.

4. To evaluate the rationale for each objective and task necessary to meet an objective and to provide consultative advice and assistance to those responsible for carrying out each assignment.

5. To review progress in the attainment of those objectives which have been delegated in the past and to reevaluate the effectiveness of the objective in meeting its initial prerequisites.

6. To recommend through the office of the chief of police to the board of police commissioners, policies and/or recommendations arising out of the findings and activities of completed objectives.

7. To issue and implement the necessary procedure orders and/or other requirements upon the adoption by the board of police commissioners of recommendations arising out of the completing of a specific problem-solving, decision making, or police formulation objectives.

It should be noted that the responsibility for attaining objectives and/or the performance of tasks leading towards the attainment of objectives is not delegated solely to any one level of the senior officers' groups. The chief of police, superintendents, inspectors, and civilians can all be delegated certain specific objectives and/or tasks by the management committee. The committee as a whole is responsible for providing the necessary advisory and technical assistance to those responsible for the attainment of the various objectives.

Integrated with the management committee process is the general communications process. Monthly senior officers' meetings are held for the purposes of exchanging information on the various activities going throughout the Force that are germane to their positions and responsibilities. On a more frequent basis, short, daily operational meetings are held between the chief of police and his divisional superintendents designed specifically: (a) to keep all senior operating personnel aware of Force operational activity over the previous twenty-four hour period by examining daily exception reports and charting any necessary operating strategy based on the results; (b) to co-ordinate and integrate the day-to-day activities of the operational divisions; and (c) to identify areas of concern and sensitivity in order that Force resources are available to respond to need should it occur.

ANALYTICAL VIEW OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE PROCESS

The goal and objective-setting process in the London Police Force has now been a reality for approximately one year; and at this stage, it is seen as having a positive impact on the management of the Force. Initial observations would indicate that Chief of Police Walter T. Johnson and the senior officers' group of the Force are pleased with the progress that they have made.

It is, however, the management committee, working as a corporate team, that in reality is the management process under examination. It must be recognized that as objectives are attained and policies are formulated, the process itself

becomes further integrated into the day-to-day operations, activities, and interrelationships of the Force. In the discharging of its responsibilities, the process is not looked upon as a separate management tool or entity; nor is the process seen to be a monitor of the individual performance of any senior officer, but rather as a training vehicle for the performance of management responsibilities and the undertaking of a professional manager's role in a unique and specialized law enforcement environment.

The role of the management committee as seen by the senior officers themselves is a vehicle to come to grips with Force planning and decision-making responsibilities through its emerging management philosophy of pro-action, anticipation, and constant challenging of the concepts and procedures that have permeated the Force over the years. The committee is viewed as a reasonable, pragmatic vehicle to manage professional law enforcement activities by providing the format for deliberation, continuity of problem resolution, and, most importantly, communication.

The apparent success of the management committee objective-setting process within the London Police Force is a result of the active support and commitment of the chief of police; the acceptance of the process by the senior officers of the Force; and the umbrella commitment of the senior officers to turn their energy and talent towards the accomplishment of the Force's objectives.

The following observations are advanced for consideration by the reader as to why what has happened *has* happened and perhaps better explain what makes the process work?

1. The LGMP process of a total management system rotating around the establishment of goals and objectives is consistent with the precepts of the philosophy of the London Police Force and its chief of police. The LGMP proved to be flexible in meeting the specific needs and requirements of the Force at the time when it was looking for a forward thinking management development process.

2. The process is integrated into the day-to-day management activities of the Force owing to the establishment of the management committee and its review and evaluation functions.

3. Most importantly, Chief of Police Walter T. Johnson and his senior officers want the process to work; consequently, they were willing to devote the necessary time, energies, and talent to afford the process a healthy environment in which to nurture and develop free of constraints.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the analysis of events to this point in time, the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The London Police Management Committee process of a goal and objective system of management is indeed working and is indeed highly anticipatory and innovative in nature by providing the long-range planning and decision-making policies necessary to enable the Force to respond to the community's law enforcement and policing needs of today and of the future, and to adequately provide, when required, the necessary resources to meet those needs in a responsive, responsible manner.

2. The apparent, universal acceptance of the process by the senior officers of the Force speaks well for a philosophy and management style which has culminated in a participative and communicative method of accomplishing desired results, a style which advocates commitment, communication, and total delegation of responsibility with commensurate authority to act.

3. A management process such as the Local Government Management Project must be flexible and adaptable to fit the needs, philosophy, and style of the organization which looks to it for assistance and advice when developing a goals and objectives system of management. Recognition of the differences between a formal process such as the LGMP and

an implied process where sound management practices are being maintained is imperative. Then, one must allow for a significant degree of "compromise" in the development of a responsive goals and objectives system of management meeting the needs of the organization implementing the process.

4. There must be good understanding by the senior officers of the process being implemented within the organization prior to the taking of the process further down into that organization; but a firm commitment by the chief officer greatly enhances the chances for optimum usefulness of the process to the organization, its senior officers, and its total staff.

5. As can be appreciated from the description of the events leading up to the evolution of a working goals and objectives system of management, the process does take time and this fact has to be so recognized. The analysis of the events and the conclusions drawn to date indicate that the pay-off is attainable; therefore, it appears that it is worth the time.

Although it is difficult to generalize conclusions reached about the London Police Force experience with a goals and objectives system of management, two concluding observations may be helpful to others: (a) leadership is important; commitment and support to the process is essential in order to realize anticipated results; and (b) the process must be tailored to fit the style of the leader and his senior team if it is to be successful.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

In looking forward in management planning and practices within the London Police Force, the following objectives appear to command significant attention and also to give an indication as to the direction towards which the Force will turn its energies in 1976 and 1977:

1. The continuing program of senior officer training not only in the professional aspects of his work but in the skills and practices of management. This entails working for, and with, the senior officer to enable him to be a more effective manager and to assist him in obtaining the necessary skills and practice to become not only a responsible senior officer within the Force but also a teacher, a trainer, and a supervisor of his respective subordinates.

2. The undertaking of an active program through a variety of specialized objectives and tasks, to enhance and make the Force's management information system more responsive to the ever-changing informational needs and requirements of the London Police Force.

3. The development of a comprehensive in-service training program for non-commissioned officers to create an awareness in these officers of the supervisory and training benefits to be gained by the employment of sound management practices in the discharging of their responsibilities to the Force.

4. The development of a program to be known as "Dialogue 76" whereby the London Police Force is facilitating the process of making the board of commissioners of police more aware of the ongoing activities of the Force and its interrelationships with the community;

5. The initiation of specialized objectives with policy formulation and operational orientations in order to enhance the pro-active nature of the Force's ability to respond to the needs of the community it serves and protects.

It is well recognized by Walter T. Johnson, chief of police, and the senior officers of the London Police Force that if desired results are to be obtained from objectives to be established in the future, then sound practices of management and professional development must be actively promoted in the present, to ensure that all activity is supportive of the goals of the London Police Force.

The London Police Force is prepared for today by "looking to the future." ★

END