

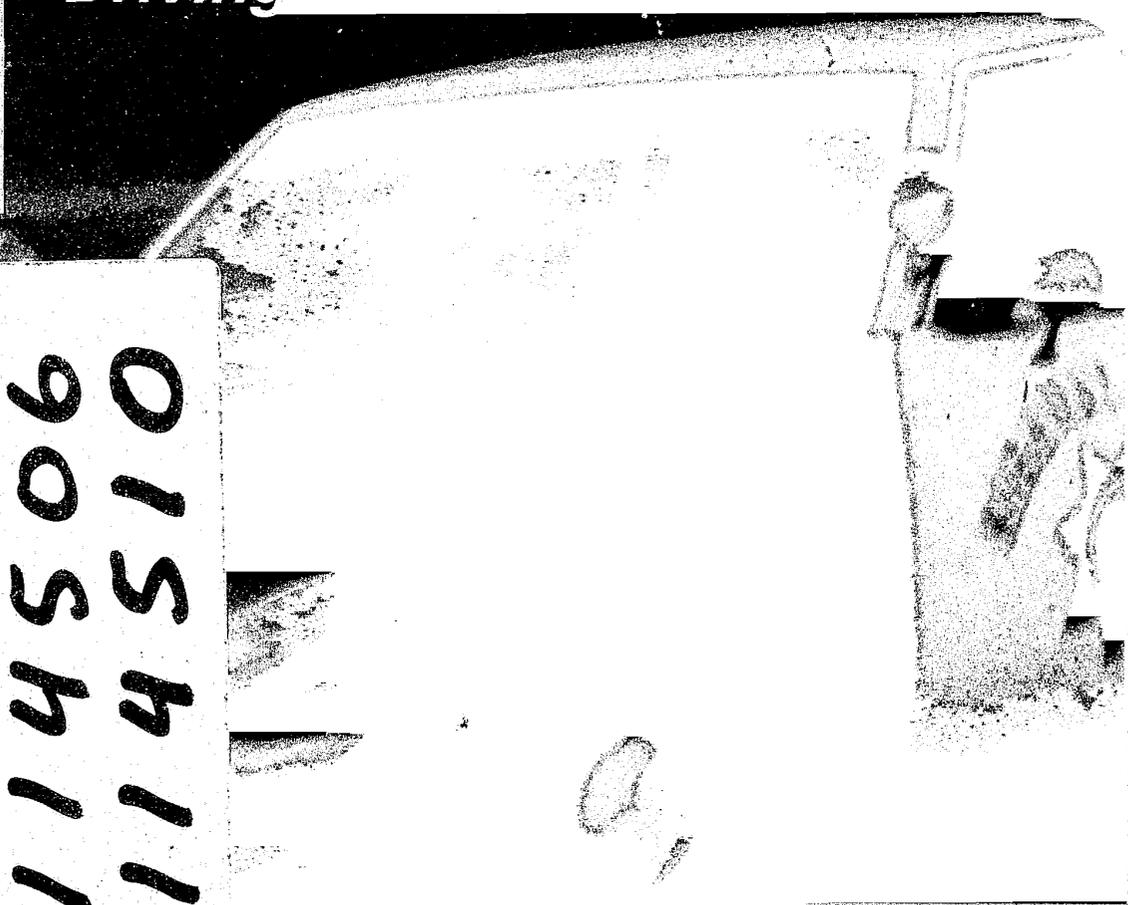
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November 1988

Law Enforcement Bulletin

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*...the most potentially
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Inservice Training COLLECTIONS ***in Economically Distressed Times***

"The challenge to training directors today . . . is to salvage as many of the training programs as possible in light of declining or fixed budgets."

By
SGT. GERALD W. KONKLER
*Police Department
Tulsa, OK*

In recent years, many municipalities have found themselves facing budget deficits and declining revenues. In response, some local governments have instituted hiring freezes;¹ others leave vacancies unfilled² or lay off or threaten to lay off police officers,³ while some positions are simply eliminated through attrition. Law enforcement administrators are having to make do with "status quo" budgets, even though public safety and officer safety demand manpower increases.

The results of these actions directly impact the ability to provide training to police officers. It is obvious that when manpower is below authorized strength, priorities will have to be set so that the primary mission of the police department can be accomplished. That mission, order maintenance, arguably requires police presence on the streets, causing other functions to "take a back seat."

The shortage of manpower created by economic conditions may be exacerbated by other factors, specifically summer vacations and mandatory firearms training. These can preclude the possibility of any academic classroom training.⁴ In the worst case, the end result can mean the reassignment of training manpower to field duties, either permanently or temporarily. Whatever the case, the agency's training program is severely disrupted, which could have dire consequences.

The status of training was recognized by Dr. M. Brent Halverson and John C. LeDoux, when they noted:

"While the importance of well-developed inservice training programs might seem obvious, it must be admitted that training is often a low priority activity. Because there is insufficient time to meet the heavy demands of the public, many

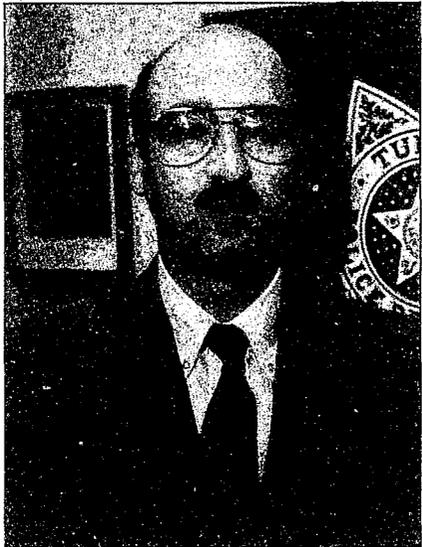
police departments do not have the time to conduct the training which should be provided."⁵

The partial answer to this problem is to be more efficient—to make the hours spent in training more productive.⁶ The challenge to training directors today, much as it has been in the past, is to salvage as many of the training programs as possible in light of declining or fixed budgets.⁷ To do this, law enforcement must learn to do more with less in the training process.

One of the initial questions to be answered relates to the necessity of continuing training. Perhaps for too long, law enforcement was content to provide basic training to recruits and not be concerned with continuing education. Certainly, court decisions to the rights of defendants and the enhanced possibilities of civil judgments made police administrators realize that this was not a wise course to take.



Sergeant Konkler



Drew Diamond
Chief of Police

The last 25 years have seen an increase in the quantity and quality of law enforcement instruction, and the police profession has been well-served by the change.⁸ If indeed the purpose of police training is to develop "operational knowledge, physical and communication skills, and habits which relate to the performance of the job,"⁹ then the changes that occur regularly in police work point toward the necessity, and indeed the duty, of police administrators to provide opportunities for learning.

Another reason for providing inservice training is to satisfy requirements of State law. California, for example, mandates that certain subjects shall be taught on a periodic basis.¹⁰

But there is a compelling reason for periodic training even in those jurisdictions without a statutory mandate. And that is the potential for civil liability against the municipality and/or the officer.¹¹ An administrator has a duty to the employing jurisdiction to take all reasonable precautions to prevent these suits. But doesn't the administrator also owe a duty to the officer to provide him or her with the information to do the job better and easier, as well as decreasing the potential for liability?

Endeavoring to attain professional status for law enforcement is another justification for continuing inservice training. An agency has the duty to provide the citizens with the best possible law enforcement. To do this, it is imperative to have the most qualified officers and to provide for their continued professional development.¹² Although it is argued that professionalism will not be attained until States mandate training standards,¹³ law enforcement can ill afford to wait until the State decides to

legislate this area. Professionalism is in the hands of law enforcement, not legislators. Goals should be set by the agency, not by the State. The training process should not be allowed to falter just because the legislature has not seen fit to require specified courses of inservice training. After all, who is more familiar with training needs—the elected officials or those who are active in law enforcement?

Somewhat related to professionalization are the standards established by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc.¹⁴ Without engaging in the debate over the values of accreditation, if an agency is even considering entering the process in the future, it is important to be familiar with the standards as they relate to retraining and advanced training. Assuming for purposes of discussion that accreditation is valuable in defending civil actions, an argument could be made that the standards should be met.

The standards require that the agency have written directives concerning annual retraining, including firearms qualification, and further require that a number of issues be addressed. There are also standards dealing with roll call and advanced training, as well as specialized training. If an agency is considering initiating or changing policy in these areas, these standards should be consulted for direction. In addition, if the governing body is remotely interested in accreditation, these facts could be used to illustrate the necessity of funding for continued training.

There has been a tremendous change in the social, political, and economic arenas in America.¹⁵ Likewise, in the area of law enforcement, there have

"The last 25 years have seen an increase in the quantity and quality of law enforcement instruction, and the police profession has been well-served by the change."

been vast changes over the past 10 years. In 1977, if a suspected DUI (Driving Under the Influence) driver could walk a straight line, he might have been let go without a glance at the condition of his pupils. There were no passive alcohol testing devices on the scene. The search and seizure issues involving motor vehicles were less clear than they are now. What about the advances with recordkeeping by computer? Has there not been an explosion of computer use in this area? And, numerous other technological changes have occurred. This may very well explain why some officers believe that technology is passing them by.

It is the duty of the agency to educate employees in these areas to prevent the occurrence of Toffler's "future shock."¹⁶ Training is necessary to allow officers to assimilate these changes. As will be noted later, law enforcement must become more people oriented in order to serve its mission. This is vitally important in the area of technology, in order that officers may fulfill the task assigned to them in the most effective and efficient way possible.

The foregoing reasons can be advanced to support the general concept of continuing training. They might even be used to attempt to convince the governing body that funding for training is essential. However, as noted earlier, it may be necessary to show more results for less dollars, which may very well entail temporarily discontinuing formal training.

Law enforcement has shown the value of training, but the days of indiscriminate training are long gone. The person responsible for training in an agency must continually question whether the perceived problem can be

solved by training. Training will not resolve all shortcomings within an agency.

Pinpointing the areas where training can have a positive impact on the performance of an officer is most important. In the past, training and development programs used a "shotgun approach." However, if programs are not cost-effective and job-related, they are not worthwhile. Police agencies cannot afford to dedicate resources to useless or repetitious training.

Another reason for assessing training needs is to prepare personnel to accept change. The different levels within an organization will have varying views as to the type of training needed to resolve organizational problems. What can be extremely detrimental to the training program is to have someone with no concept of current field procedures be responsible for determining the training courses to be taken by personnel. However, if all organizational levels are included in the process of identifying training needs, the training will be accepted more readily.

One method of determining necessary training is set forth by James H. Auten.¹⁷ He suggests a cooperative effort among the operational level, supervisors, management, and the training staff, based on an analysis and examination of the problems and conditions of the organization. This process also encompasses the performance, potential, and problems of each employee. Members of the entire agency are asked, either orally or by questionnaire, about the operations of the department. The questions posed to the various levels — operational, supervisory, and staff — will necessarily be different, but generally, they will center on opinions of weaknesses, ways to im-

prove the agency, performance, etc. Questions directed toward the operational level should not include type of training needed, since responses will most likely reveal the type of training personnel would like to have, rather than what is essential.

The second phase is a critical analysis of the day-to-day operations of the agency. The person conducting this analysis should examine the morale of the agency, job knowledge of the employees, communication failures, supervisor performance, and application of job skills.¹⁸

Finally, this method calls for a review of the organizational elements and their operation. For example, organizational plans should note any projected changes in mission, structure, personnel, etc. Employee records should be examined to determine excessive turnover or absenteeism and frequency of accidents or grievances. Inspection records should be reviewed, as should the supervisory selection policy and records of activity generated by the agency.¹⁹

One final note on the identification of training needs relates to the Blockage Questionnaire developed by Francis and Woodcock.²⁰ This instrument is a relatively simple device that may prove helpful in determining what subjects should be taught. A blockage is defined as that which prevents people in organizational settings from putting their intelligence, energy, and effort to productive use.²¹ This instrument requires respondents to complete a form consisting of 110 statements by either agreeing or disagreeing with the statement. It is suggested that this instrument could identify those areas in which there might be resistance to

“Law enforcement has shown the value of training, but the days of indiscriminate training are long gone.”

change. Armed with this knowledge, the training program might be altered to minimize this resistance and make the learning process more effective.

Whatever the results of the assessment, economic conditions and manpower shortages may very well mandate that traditional classroom training be curtailed or even eliminated for the duration of the fiscal crisis. But, even in these events, the training program *should not* be completely abandoned, especially in the area of firearms training. It is also imperative that employees of the agency be kept apprised of recent court decisions and changes in case law. In the 1985-86

term, the U.S. Supreme Court issued 50 criminal opinions and 12 relating to civil rights suits.²² Add to this the number of other relevant Federal, State, and local decisions and enacted legislation of which police officers should be aware and it becomes apparent that a proactive posture must be taken with regard to inservice legal training.

How, then, can these topics be covered in a time of “crisis” training? Answer: “Every crisis brings opportunity.”²³ Agencies must impress on their members, particularly the first-line supervisor, the importance that must be placed on training.

One method of training in these difficult times is not new but rather sorely underemployed, i.e., roll call or squad room training. In practice, it appears that only a portion of roll call is used for constructive, job-related purposes. Assuming a 15-minute meeting, the typical officer may spend over 60 hours per year in roll call. Experience reveals that not all of this time is spent exchanging information necessary to shift change. Only 10 minutes dedicated per week for training will amount to over 8 hours for the year — the equivalent of 1 day’s training during roll call. The training officer or unit provides the relevant information to supervisors who, in turn,

BLOCKAGES

A. Inadequate Recruitment and Selection. The people being hired lack the knowledge, personality, or skills appropriate to the organization's needs.

B. Confused Organizational Structure. The way in which people are organized is wasteful or inefficient.

C. Inadequate Control. Poor decisions are made because of faulty information in the hands of inappropriate people.

D. Poor Training. People are not learning efficiently to do things that would materially improve their performance.

E. Low Motivation. People do not feel greatly concerned about the organization and are not willing to expend much effort to further common goals.

F. Low Creativity. Good ideas for improvement are not being properly put to use, so stagnation occurs.

G. Poor Teamwork. People who should be contributing to common tasks either do not wish to work together or find that there are too many obstacles to do so.

H. Inappropriate Management Philosophy. Conscious and unconscious decisions and principles that underlie decisions and create the atmosphere are unrealistic or inhumane.

I. Lack of Succession Planning and Management Development. Sufficient preparation for important future job vacancies is not being undertaken.

J. Unclear Aims. The reasons for doing things are either obscure or badly explained.

K. Unfair Rewards. People are not rewarded in ways that satisfy them, or the reward system works against the health of the organization.

BLOCKAGE QUESTIONNAIRE ANSWER SHEET

Follow the instructions given at the beginning of the questionnaire.

In the grid below there are 110 squares, each one numbered to correspond to a question. Mark an “X” through the square if you think a statement is broadly true. If you think a statement is not broadly true, leave the square blank. Fill in the top line first, working from left to right; then fill in the second line, etc. Be careful not to miss a question.

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Totals

When you have considered all 110 statements, total the number of “X’s” in each vertical column and go on to the next page.

SOURCE: *People At Work: A Practical Guide to Organizational Change* by Dave Francis and Mike Woodcock, by permission of University Associates, Inc., La Jolla, California © 1975

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disseminate it to line personnel. A second session should be conducted for those who were absent due to days off or vacation. It is vital that this method of instruction be documented by the supervisor.

Training bulletins are another method of disseminating information. In times of limited manpower, the responsible trainer should prepare and distribute these on a regular basis. Ideally, for purposes of documentation, each officer should receive a copy and sign an acknowledgement. An alternative is to distribute one copy per shift or squad, with documentation prepared by the supervisor and returned to the training unit or officer after dissemination. One of the advantages of this type of training is the ability to reach the entire department in a short period of time. A disadvantage, particularly if the first-line supervisor doesn't recognize the value and necessity of training, is the possibility that the information will not be passed along or that it will be negated by the poor attitude of the supervisor.

Many agencies have acquired or have access to video cameras for taping statements and confessions of criminal suspects. But, this technology can also be an effective training tool, particularly for those topics taught through demonstration. The legal adviser or city attorney can be taped discussing new laws and case decisions or legal updates. In addition, this method can provide an excellent vehicle for the head of the agency to make a brief address to the rank and file on important issues.

Many training units have resources in their possession that are not made available to the people who need it the most — the street officer. Articles of interest and other materials can be cir-

culated and posted on bulletin boards. However, this method of training should be adopted only if someone in the training function has the responsibility of maintaining the bulletin boards in a manner that promotes readership. In other words, the materials should be kept up-to-date and posted in such a manner as to make for easy reading.

The police administrator and staff members should survey their offices for current, professional law enforcement journals or books relating to criminal procedure. Rather than gathering dust in an executive's office, such literature should be kept in a place that is accessible to all members of the organization. The modern-day officer, in most cases, wants to know how he or she could better perform the job and would take advantage of the opportunity to look over these magazines or books — either on or off duty. The obvious answer is to establish a small library and encourage officers to use it. The appealing aspect is that it does not cost the agency anything. Furthermore, it emphasizes the value the agency places on keeping personnel informed of current practices in the profession.

One theme in the training function that cannot be stressed too heavily is that of documentation. Frequently, in determining training needs or in defending lawsuits, it becomes necessary to ascertain the training afforded a particular officer. Unfortunately, all too often, agency training records have not been kept. This lack of documentation should not be allowed to continue. Whether used to provide rebuttal to civil suits or to justify additional training, documentation allows management to keep abreast of officer development.²⁴

It is tempting, in times of limited budgets, to limit training to field officers and to forego the training of supervi-

sors, a temptation which should be resisted. As a practical matter, it would seem difficult for a supervisor to perform the function properly if he or she has not been instructed as were the field officers. How can a supervisor determine if subordinates are functioning in a proper manner if the different levels have not received the same training?

The last few topics discussed can be performed in conjunction with, or in lieu of, traditional classroom inservice training. But the training function in an organization cannot afford to focus only on the short term. The training function must begin searching for ways to enhance police officer training for tomorrow.

There has been considerable emphasis in the private sector placed on the importance of employees, which has resulted in substantial gains for the companies. There is no reason to believe that law enforcement would not likewise benefit. Administrators of police agencies have had a paternalistic attitude toward police officers for too long. There is ample evidence that people will respond well to having trust placed in them and being treated as adults.²⁵ This is manifested in the training function by expecting them to learn the latest information about the occupation, and thereby, demanding that they keep current. The corresponding duty of management is to provide these learning opportunities and promote an atmosphere of professionalism.

Another concept that has received much attention is the concept of the "customer."²⁷ This idea suggests that in the private sector, all business success rates on the sale, which momentarily weds the company and the customer. Peters and Waterman suggest that the excellent companies are close to their

“... the administrator and agency can ill afford to surrender to the economic issues and completely forego training.”

customers and illustrate a “seemingly unjustifiable overcommitment to some form of quality, reliability, or service.”²⁶ Can this concept be related to police work? And more specifically, can this concept be related to police training?

Perhaps it can. The “customer” in law enforcement would hopefully be interpreted to be the citizenry. Ultimately, the citizen is also the customer of police training, since the goal is to provide better police service. However, in order to ensure that the service is improved, officer conduct must conform to the prescribed norm. The point is that there must be a strong belief within the agency for providing the customer/officer with the highest quality training, which must be subscribed to by everyone. In designing a training system for implementation after a financial crisis, administrators must use the concepts of the “excellent companies” and recognize the trainee as the “customer.”²⁹

The implementation of such a training system may require that traditional methods be reevaluated. Innovation is another mark of the excellent companies.³⁰ If the officer is the customer, then why is he trained only on the terms and turf of the trainer? If an officer is working the graveyard shift, is it not appropriate that he be trained on that shift rather than be forced to adjust to days? And in distressed economic times, why should the training function only occur on weekdays? Certainly, if the choice is to pay overtime to 1 instructor or to 25 officers, the decision is easy — open the academy or unit on weekends so that more training can occur in less time. What's wrong with training officers at the precinct level during slack times? If the volume of

calls increase, then the class can be dismissed until the next slack period.

Law enforcement could take a lesson in innovation from the Richmond, IN, Police Department. They ran an 80-member police department for 1 week with the only supervisors being the chief and two majors. Where were the others? They were at inservice training learning about tactical operations!³¹

In summary, police agencies face a challenge in economic downturns. That challenge is to do more with less. This will require determining whether perceived problems can be solved by training or other methods. This will also require an assessment of training needs to prevent the waste of resources. At the same time, it is possible to inspire the agency with a new dedication to the importance of training. The use of techniques other than traditional classroom training can assist in providing information to the employee and can actually improve the function. The point is that the administrator and agency can ill afford to surrender to the economic issues and completely forego training. This should be looked upon as an opportunity to illustrate to the governing body the dedication of law enforcement to the training process. It should result in a new emphasis within the agency to create a training system that is responsive not only to the officer but to the citizens of the jurisdiction as well.

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Footnotes

¹Frank Douglas and Tom Campbell, “Police Manpower Problem Bigger Than a Single Vote,” *Richmond Times-Dispatch*, February 9, 1986.

²N. Scott Vance and Bruce Alpert, “City Reduces Police Hiring,” *Detroit News*, February 11, 1987.

³James Strong and Ann Marie Lipinski, “City Lays off on the Line-7600 Police Officers, Firefighters Face Ax,” *Chicago Tribune*, September 20, 1986.

⁴For example, the Tulsa, OK, Police Department, in policy and procedure 31-101F, mandates that yearly

firearms training will take place no later than September of each year. Since this training requires 25 officers per day to be effective, it would dangerously deplete the field strength to schedule academic inservice during this period. Likewise, during the traditional vacation months, manpower is low and inservice is all but impossible. This leaves, realistically, a “window of opportunity” to train approximately 650 officers from January (after firearms training and the holidays) to the end of May. As can easily be calculated, if only 25 officers per week are given 40 hours of instruction, this would not allow all of the officers to receive training.

⁵Dr. M. Brent Halverson and John C. LeDoux, “Designing Inservice Training: A Better Approach,” *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, May 1979, p. 18.

⁶*Ibid.*

⁷Edward J. Tully, “The Training Director,” *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, July 1979, p. 1.

⁸*Ibid.*

⁹Charles P. Smith, et al., *Role Performance and Criminal Justice System*, vol. 1, summary (Cincinnati OH: Anderson Publishing Co., 1976), p. 137.

¹⁰Cal. Penal Code, sec. 13500, et seq.

¹¹Michael L. Ciminelli, “A Positive, Procedural Approach to Legal Training for Police Officers,” *Police Chief*, November 1986, p. 28.

¹²Neal E. Trautman, *Law Enforcement Training: A Comprehensive Guide for the Development of Effective Law Enforcement Training Programs* (Springfield IL: Thomas Publishing Co., 1986), p. 6.

¹³*Ibid.*

¹⁴Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement, Inc., *Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies: The Standards Manual of the Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation Program*, 1983.

¹⁵*Supra* note 7.

¹⁶Alvin Toffler, *Future Shock* (New York: Random House, 1970), p. 3.

¹⁷James H. Auten, “Determining Training Needs,” in *Criminal Justice Group Training*, eds. Michael E. O’Neill and Kal R. Martensen (LaJolla CA: University Associates, 1975), pp. 96-99.

¹⁸*Ibid.* pp. 99-100.

¹⁹*Ibid.* p. 100.

²⁰Dave Francis and Mike Woodcock, *People at Work: A Practical Guide to Organizational Change* (LaJolla, CA: University Associates, 1975).

²¹*Ibid.* p. 3.

²²39 CrL 4117.

²³Gene Stephens and William L. Tafoya, “Crime and Justice: Taking a Futuristic Approach,” *The Futurist*, February 1985, p. 18.

²⁴*Supra* note 12, p. 167.

²⁵Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman, Jr., *In Search of Excellence* (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 235.

²⁶*Ibid.* pp. 236-237.

²⁷*Ibid.* p. 157.

²⁸Tom Peters and Nancy Austin, *A Passion for Excellence* (New York: Random House, 1985), pp. 156-157.

²⁹Dilip K. Das, “What Can the Police Learn from the Excellent Companies?” *Journal of Criminal Justice*, April 13, 1985, p. 84.

³⁰*Supra* note 25, pp. 115-192.

³¹John W. Bowman, “Tactical Training for Supervisors,” *Law and Order*, March 1987, p. 37.