Effects of Organizational Design on Communication Between Patrol and Investigative Functions (Conclusion)

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Part 1 of this article focused on the various organizational structures of police departments which can affect the level of cooperation between patrol and investigative personnel. As stated, each design has inherent advantages and disadvantages. The conclusion of this article will consider approaches which can be taken to induce and foster cooperative efforts between members of a department.

The Human Relations Approach

Human relations-oriented theoreticians emphasize the importance of rational, formal organization and emphasize social relationships among workers as factors conducive to efficiency. Perhaps the founding fathers of the human relations approach to organization and management were Professors Fritz Roethlisberger and William Dickson of the Harvard School of Business. In their much-publicized Hawthorne study, they found relationships between workers, ideals, personalities, beliefs, habits, and tradition to be...
greater influences on productivity than physical working conditions. They also found that the small work group exerts a great deal of pressure on the individual employee to conform to the group standards of production levels. This was found to be true, even if the individual's nonconforming behavior or increased productivity would result in financial benefits for the entire group. If these findings can reasonably be transferred to address the problem of patrol-investigative cooperation, it would seem that the willingness of a police officer to work toward organizational goals, including willingness to share information, would be more dependent on his values, attitudes, and relationships with other members of the department than on the nature of the formal organizational structure. It would appear reasonable to suspect that if group attitudes or norms within a patrol unit opposed cooperation with the investigative units, great pressure would be exerted on an individual patrol officer desiring to assist an investigator by volunteering helpful information. Conversely, if established relationships between the patrol and investigative groups were harmonious and cooperative, the individual officer would be supported and encouraged by his fellow workers to assist the detectives' investigative effort. Again, cooperation is a two-way street, and the same reasoning applies to investigators supplying information to their uniformed counterparts. The human relations school would argue that the influence of the group is stronger than organizational rewards encouraging exchange of information. Thus, in an effort to improve patrol-investigative communications, the administrator should consider ways to alter group norms and attitudes, depend on informal as well as formal leadership to encourage cooperation, and not rely exclusively on formal organizational channels to process information.

**Modern Approach**

The modern or revisionist school of organization attempts to synthesize the classical and human relations schools. Revisionists recognize that various types of social groups interact and may or may not cooperate or share the same values. They examine interrelationships of the organization and its environment, the structure of informal groups, and question the value of material rewards in improving employee morale and performance. In general, they recognize that organizational theory must take into account such factors as purpose, goal, status, power differentials, and hierarchy. Within the parameters described, modern theorists differ somewhat in their approach to organizational design. The works of Professors Paul R. Lawrence and Jay W. Lorsch of the Harvard University Graduate School of Business Administration and Dr. Jay W. Galbraith of the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management have provided the basis for the differentiation-integration model. They examine the coordination process. This model has generated serious intergroup problems symbolized by destructive competition, secretiveness, and hostility. The integration process must cope with these issues to achieve unity of effort.

**"Mutual exchange of criminal information benefits both investigative and patrol units."**

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There is a strong inverse relationship between differentiation and integration. When units (because of their particular tasks) are highly differentiated, it is more difficult to achieve integration than when the individuals have similar ways of thinking and behaving. This accounts for the relative ease with which adjacent patrol districts may coordinate activities, as opposed to the difficulty encountered in trying to achieve close cooperation between uniformed patrol and plainclothes investigative units.
The D&I model then focuses on the degree of differentiation required among units responsible for varying tasks and the degree of integration needed. In considering the integration issue, the police manager must determine which units need to work together and how tight the requirement for interdependence is. If, as in the case of patrol and investigative functions, there is a requirement for close cooperation, emphasis must be placed on the problem of achieving high integration.

The normal means of integrating activities of subunits within a police organization is through the hierarchical structure. As subunits become more differentiated, however, the formal structure is no longer sufficient for the problem of achieving high integration. Differentiation, therefore, the formal structure. As subunits become more differentiated, the formal structure is no longer sufficient for creating hierarchies. Hierarchy is used in addition to, not instead of, rules and procedures. 

The manager of each unit is the point through which all information flows into or out of the unit. He decides which information should be transmitted up or down the chain of command. Besides being able to control the information exchanged, he knows who is feeding information into the system and can bestow appropriate rewards. Hierarchical communication must travel up the organization to a common manager, then back down to the intended recipient. Hierarchy is used in addition to, not instead of, rules and procedures. Relativistic situations are covered by rules, exceptions by hierarchy.

The weakness of this system is that information channels quickly become overloaded. Delays result, and information is received too late to be useful. The originating officer may receive no feedback on the value of his input and consequently fails to transmit information in the future. Galbraith describes a wide range of integrative devices which are used by various organizations. Included are formal rules, programs and procedures, hierarchy, creation of lateral transfers. While Galbraith does not relate these integrative devices to police operations, their usefulness is obvious.

The simplest way of coordinating interdependent subtasks is to specify the necessary behaviors in advance of their occurrence. The manager assigns tasks and sets procedures. Police departments coordinate information and activities required for successful investigations by creating formal rules stated in a procedure manual. A typical procedure would indicate which unit is responsible for the preliminary and follow-up investigations, what information must be included on the offense report, how many copies of the report are to be made, how they are routed, etc. These rules are adequate to direct much of the information flow required for routine investigations. However, to rely solely on the use of rules and procedures as a method of providing the required information exchange between patrol and investigative officers presumes that it will be known in advance what information is needed by each. In all but the simplest investigations, this is not the case.

The next method for processing information between units is through a formal hierarchy. The manager of each unit is the point through which all information flows into or out of the unit. He decides which information should be transmitted up or down the chain of command. Besides being able to control the information exchanged, he knows who is feeding information into the system and can bestow appropriate rewards. Hierarchical communication must travel up the organization to a common manager, then back down to the intended recipient. Hierarchy is used in addition to, not instead of, rules and procedures. Relativistic situations are covered by rules, exceptions by hierarchy.

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forces is an integral part of departmental operations.

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Critical factors which influenced the exchange of information were regularly scheduled team conferences, the nature of the physical building facilities shared by team members, and the behavior of team leaders. When the team leader encouraged sharing of information and was able to instill a sense of teamwork, the members communicated more frequently and informally. The most comprehensive study of the effectiveness of team police techniques attempted to date was initiated by the Cincinnati, Ohio, Police Division in March 1975. Initial observations of team operations were encouraging, particularly as related to interaction among team members cooperating in criminal investigations. After 6 years' experience and evaluation of area-based investigative structure, it has become apparent that additional mechanisms are needed to facilitate exchange of criminal information between investigators assigned to different teams. As with all forms of organization, there are certain costs attached to self-sufficiency. Due to the wide scope of functional responsibilities assigned to the team, a reduction in levels of specialized skills may result. Functional specialists assigned to generalist teams have less opportunity to interact with other specialists of the discipline, and to share their expertise. Secondary reporting relationships are merely strengthened and used by many police agencies. The findings of one study clearly indicate that managers having interdepartmental experience communicate laterally to a larger number of colleagues than managers not having interdepartmental experience. Similar findings were reported for a Japanese R&D organization. In the second study, it was discovered that the effects of the transfer diminish with time. People transferred 10 years ago behave the same way as if they had never been transferred. The second finding is that individuals who have had the experience are more likely to use a memo. Therefore, the effect of lateral transfers on interdepartmental relationships between subunits to accomplish tasks.

Use of Lateral Transfers

Galbraith reports on the use of lateral transfers as an integration device. He comments present significant implications for police managers seeking ways to improve patrol-investigative communications. Lateral transfer, or job rotation, has been used for some time by both private and public sector agencies as part of management development programs. Findings of studies conducted at M.I.T. have shown the effect of lateral transfers on interdepartmental relationships between subunits within the same organization communications. While the studies focused on managers of organizations, they suggest that similar techniques might be equally effective for improving communications among first-line operational personnel. The findings of one study indicate that managers having interdepartmental experience use more formal means to communicate laterally to a larger number of colleagues than managers not having interdepartmental experience. Similar findings were reported for a Japanese R&D organization. In the second study, it was discovered that the effects of the transfer diminish with time. People transferred 10 years ago behave the same way as if they had never been transferred. The second finding is that individuals who have had the experience are more likely to use a memo. Therefore, the effect of lateral transfers on interdepartmental relationships between subunits to accomplish tasks.

"There is a strong inverse relationship between differentiation and integration."
As long as the detective enjoys higher prestige and pay than his uni-
formed counterpart, this situation is not likely to change. Although certain task
characteristics require that the detective be given greater flexibility in his
work, nothing appears inherent in his job that would justify higher pay for an
investigator than for a patrol officer. In fact, according to Wilson, the detective
works in a less hostile, more certain environment than his uniformed co-
worker.19 When assigned to an investiga-
tive unit, the officer has a better idea of
what is expected of him and enjoys
greater public support than when he is
assigned to the uncertain patrol task of
"keeping the peace." This would seem to
indicate that financial incentives are not
necessary to induce officers to
accept investigative assignments and in
fact serve to widen the "prestige gap"
between the two roles.

The pay differential issue is raised here to illustrate the effect it has in
discouraging routine lateral transfers. Municipal Police Administration
endorse rotation of vice-control per-
soneel to maintain undercover effec-
tiveness and transfers out of the
detective bureau to prevent it from be-
coming a "sinkure for the incompa-
tent." The text suggests that
intradepartmental transfers should not
necessarily be a reflection of a police
officer's inability to do investigative
work.20 In the same volume, however,
it is recommended that when the officer
is returned to uniform assignment, he
lose the "incentive" pay he enjoyed
while assigned to investigations.21 The
loss of pay hardly seems congruent
with the idea that the officer was per-
forming his work effectively and is not
being penalized by the transfer.

If use of lateral transfers is to be
an effective means of improving cooper-
eration and communications between
the patrol and investigative forces of a
department, status and pay dif-
ferentials must be reduced or elimi-
nated, and officers must not be stig-
tomized by a transfer from an investigative
to a patrol assignment.

Summary

The problem of inducing coopera-
tion between the patrol and investiga-
tive forces is long standing and is
present in varying degrees in all police
agencies. Interrelated factors contrib-
uting to the situation are organizational
problems of structure, competition, and
assignment of responsibility; social
problems of role and status differenti-
ation and subcultural values; and main-
tenance of adequate information
systems.

Organizational structure affects
the level of cooperation among mem-
ers of an organization. The organiza-
tional approach most commonly
observed in police departments is the
classical design. Tasks are divided
among subunits in the organization
and coordination is achieved through a
formal hierarchy. Each base of specializa-
tion (pursuits, process, clientele, area,
and time) has inherent advantages and
disadvantages to be considered when
designing a structure which will permit
adequate communication to occur be-
tween independent subunits. Hu-
man relations theorists minimize the
importance of formal structure and
concentrate on individual and group
norms as means for inducing coopera-
tion. Modern practitioners of organiza-
tion design attempt to synthesize the
classical and human relations
approaches.

The patrol and investigative func-
tions develop differential characteris-
tics due to the nature of their tasks. As
organizational subunits become more
differentiated, integration becomes
more difficult to achieve. High integra-
tion is necessary if high interdepend-
ency exists between units.

Integrative devices include use of
rules, procedures, and programs; hier-
archy; lateral relations, including direct
contact; liaison rules; task forces;
teams and matrix structure; and lateral
transfers.

There is no one best way for a
department to organize which
will insure effective communication be-
tween patrol and investigative ele-
ments. All forms of organization are
not equally effective, however, and
each police executive must consider
the trade-off costs and benefits at-
laced to the described organizational
techniques when searching for the op-
imal design for his own agency.
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