

Innovations in Policing: From Production Lines to Jobs Shops

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SINCE THE MID-1980s, we have been observing innovations in policing from three vantage points. First, through our involvement in Harvard University's Executive Session on Policing, we have kept abreast of the ideas, experiments, and visions of the nation's leading police executives.¹ We have heard them discuss the important challenges facing their organizations and how the field is likely to develop in the future.

Second, with assistance from the Ford Foundation Program on Innovations in State and Local Government, we developed and tested general methods for identifying the most important innovations in a policy field, be it policing, welfare, or defense.² To discover how important innovations are developed and disseminated within a field, a necessary first step is to reliably identify those important innovations. We tested three specific methods: (1) interviews with a panel of experts, (2) surveys of prac-

1. The Executive Session on Policing was a series of meetings (spread over several years) of a distinguished group of police executives, mayors, police labor leaders, and academics to discuss future strategies of policing. The results of these meetings are presented in a published series of papers entitled *Perspectives on Policing*. See, for example, Moore and Trojanowicz (1988a); and Moore and Trojanowicz (1988b). The series is published jointly by the National Institute of Justice (an agency of the U.S. Department of Justice) and Harvard University. It is available from the National Institute of Justice. See also Sparrow, Moore, and Kennedy (1990).

2. The results of this research appear in Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992); and Spelman, Moore, and Young (1992).

tioners, and (3) content analyses of leading professional journals. The principal aim of the project was methodological: to discover the general strengths and weaknesses of these methods for identifying the most important innovations in a field. Nevertheless, because we used policing as our "test bed," the project also produced an important substantive result: an estimate of the most important innovations in policing.

Third, through our ongoing involvement with the Innovations program, we commissioned, studied, and taught cases about police innovations.³ Often the innovations analyzed were semifinalists, finalists, or winners in the awards program. These cases have helped us understand what policing recognizes as an innovation, how innovation occurs within police departments, and how innovations diffuse from one department to another.⁴

From these activities, we have not only learned what innovations have been important in policing, but also how important questions about innovations in other fields can be framed and investigated. More particularly, we have learned to distinguish strategic innovations that fundamentally reposition organizations in their environments, from smaller, less significant programmatic, administrative, and technological innovations that simply allow organizations to be more efficient or effective in pursuing previously established missions. We have also learned that a significant aspect of particular programmatic, technological, or administrative innovations is their likely impact on the future strategic direction of the organization. Some small-scale innovations facilitate, even force, strategic change; others anchor organizations more solidly in their current mission and strategy.⁵ And we have learned that one of the most important kinds of strategic innovations that public sector organizations make is to become committed to continuous adaptation and innovation to meet unusual or changing circumstances.⁶

We cannot be sure that any of these observations are valuable to those studying innovations in other fields. Policing may be unusual. But our casual knowledge of such fields as welfare, community economic development, environmental protection, and defense policy suggests that some important comparisons and challenging analogies, if not powerful gener-

3. Cases developed about innovations in policing include Arnold and Leone (1990); Kennedy (1990b); Kennedy (1991a); and Kennedy (1991b).

4. Moore and Sparrow (1988); and Spelman, Moore, and Young (1992).

5. Moore and Sparrow (1988).

6. Moore (1994).

alizations, exist. Still, we leave the task of generalizing to the reader and stick to what we know best: analyzing innovations in policing.

Defining, Categorizing, and Evaluating Innovations

One challenge in innovations research is to operationally define "innovation" and to categorize the various kinds of innovations.⁷ A simple definition works well: An innovation is any reasonably significant change in the way an organization operates, is administered, or defines its basic mission.

Qualifying Changes as Innovations

Not all organizational changes qualify as innovations.⁸ Some are simply too small, obvious, or idiosyncratic to warrant much analytic attention. Those changes worth recognizing as innovations should be globally (or at least locally) new to the organization; be large enough, general enough, and durable enough to appreciably affect the operations or character of the organization; or be consciously designed or adapted as a response to a perceived problem by some level of the organization.⁹

Some would also insist that an innovation worth analyzing should improve the performance of an organization. Such a definition would exclude innovations that failed. To study the process of innovation—in particular, to analyze how organizations distinguish successful from unsuccessful innovations—failures as well as successes must be examined. To explore how innovations improve organizational performance, the criterion of success must be included in the operational definition.

How stringently should scholars define innovation? How high should they set the hurdle that any particular organizational change must surmount to count as an innovation? The answer depends upon their analytic purpose. To explore how the most important innovations are con-

7. Authors in this book offer other definitions. Alan A. Altshuler and Marc D. Zegans, in chapter 3, define innovations as "novelty in action." See also Altshuler and Zegans (1990, p. 20). In contrast to this broad definition, Laurence E. Lynn, Jr., in chapter 4, proposes a much narrower one: "Innovation is properly defined as an original, disruptive, and fundamental transformation of an organization's core tasks. Innovation changes deep structures and changes them permanently."

8. Governors Center (1993, p. 11).

9. Leonard (1986).

ceived, implemented, and diffused—to focus attention on the small number of truly significant innovations in a field—scholars should set the standard very high. To examine how small-scale innovations occur, they should set the standard much lower. And to get a sample size large enough to study the process of innovation quantitatively, scholars will need to set the standard low.

We set the standard low for two reasons. First, to study which innovations were important, it was necessary to avoid incorporating the idea of importance into the definition of innovation. We wanted to learn how to discriminate among a heterogeneous class of innovations, not purify the category so that everything inside it was already significant. Second, to examine how small-scale innovations occurred and accumulated within organizations and how particular innovations diffused across a field, it was necessary to include both small-scale, local innovations and large-scale, global innovations.

Categorizing Innovations

Using this definition, a wide variety of changes were swept into our analytic net. The challenge was to organize them into different types of innovations, as well as to decide which were more important than others. Four distinct categories emerged: programmatic, administrative, technological, and strategic.

Programmatic innovations establish new operational methods of using the resources of the organization to achieve particular results. In policing, recent examples include setting up stakeouts of likely robbery targets to apprehend and deter robbers, arresting fences as a way of discouraging burglaries, using police officers to provide drug education in schools, and offering victim-resistance training to women.

Administrative innovations are changes in how police organizations prepare themselves to conduct operations or account for their achievements. These include changes in personnel policies and practices such as new methods for recruiting or screening officers, new training approaches, new supervisory relations within the department, and new career tracks for officers. Administrative innovations also include new ways of measuring the performance of individual police officers or the overall performance of the entire department. The development of a national accreditation process for police departments is also an administrative, not a programmatic, innovation because, even though such efforts

undoubtedly have important operational effects, they are often undertaken primarily to establish the credibility of the organization with its overseers.

Technological innovations depend on the acquisition and use of some new piece of capital equipment. These might be simple equipment changes such as lightweight body armor, nonlethal weapons, or more secure radio communications equipment. Other recent technological innovations involved new forensic aids such as deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) typing to uniquely identify suspects and more accurate methods in the automated identification of fingerprints. Still others involved the application of computer technology to report writing, to more secure communications, and to more realistic and challenging weapons training courses.

Strategic innovations foreshadow, reflect, embody, or in some significant way lead to a fundamental change in the overall philosophy and orientation of the organization. These changes could involve important redefinitions of the primary goals or objectives of policing, the range of services and activities they could supply, the principal means they would use to achieve their goals, the key internal and external working relationships, or the methods used to finance the organization's activities.

For example, the shift from the goal of "controlling" crime to a focus on "fear reduction" or the "provision of emergency medical and social services" is an important strategic innovation in policing.¹⁰ So is the shift from "law enforcement" to "problem solving" as the police's primary means of responding to incidents.¹¹ Other strategic innovations include working partnerships with community groups as a primary tactic for dealing with street-level drug markets and long-term contracts with developers to provide foot patrols at fixed locations in new shopping areas.¹² These innovations are strategic because they change some of the basic understandings about the ends or means of policing or the key structures of accountability that now shape the overall efforts of police departments.

These categories are not clearly separated from one another; thus assigning any particular innovation to one category or another is often a judgment call. Nonetheless, these distinctions are useful to capture the variety of innovations that occur and to serve as a reminder of innova-

10. Sparrow, Moore, and Kennedy (1990).

11. Eck and Spelman (1987).

12. Kennedy (1990a); and Reiss (1985).

tions that might be forgotten or underemphasized. A panel of twenty people, nominated by their peers as experts in policing, also divided police innovations along these or closely related dimensions. Furthermore, all of these experts could understand and deploy our scheme once it was presented to them.¹³

RELATIONSHIPS AMONG THE KINDS OF INNOVATIONS. These abstract categories helped us to sort the huge variety of innovations presented in the field's professional journals. Moreover, by struggling to assign each particular innovation to a specific category, we came to understand the logical relationships among the different kinds of innovations.¹⁴

For example, every innovation classified as a technological innovation could be further characterized as either programmatic, administrative, or strategic.¹⁵ The defining characteristic of a technological innovation is not its purpose but the material in which the innovation is embodied. This means that in defining an innovation as technological, we have not yet characterized its purpose; thus every technological innovation is also a programmatic, administrative, or strategic innovation.

Innovations involving new uses of computers were particularly difficult to categorize. In some instances (for example, using computers to support firearms training programs or to search for fingerprints), the classifications were straightforward. (Firearms training would be classified as administrative; fingerprint searches as programmatic.) But in many other cases involving laptop terminals, mobile digital terminals, or computer-aided dispatch systems, the technological innovations affected both operational and administrative arrangements. Although these innovations were more difficult to classify, they were more important to analyze because their implications were so wide-ranging.

Sometimes the current or potential effects of technological innovations were large enough to count as strategic, even though the direction was unclear. For example, cellular telephones could be used to establish much closer contact between police officers and individual citizens, because citizens would be able to call individual officers in their cars directly. In contrast, mobile digital terminals seemed valuable principally because they increased the reliability and security of communications within the police department and gave officers quick access to depart-

13. Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992, pp. 18-20).

14. Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992, pp. 64-70).

15. Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992, pp. 66-68).

mental databases. As a result, cellular phones wired officers more closely to citizens, while mobile digital terminals wired them more closely to their organization and their cars. Each communications technology encouraged particular working relationships and thus had different but important strategic implications.

By far the most difficult distinction to make was between strategic innovations and all the others.¹⁶ By definition, a strategic innovation has large implications for the overall position of the organization in the society. It changes the basic paradigm or gestalt of policing. A strategic innovation does not simply improve performance within an existing structure of goals, operational methods, and administrative structures. Instead, it recasts the overall framework by redefining the purposes, inventing new methods, or establishing new external or internal working relationships to help the organization achieve its newly defined purposes. Our research challenge was to decide which particular innovations had this strategic quality.

In determining what innovations were strategic, we were aided by our knowledge of the trends in strategic thinking now occurring in policing.¹⁷ These include rethinking the ends of policing to include crime prevention, fear reduction, and emergency services that go beyond the goal of controlling crime or apprehending offenders. They also include rethinking the means of policing to emphasize the community's own role in controlling crime and promoting security, and the use of analytic problem-solving methods to identify conditions that produce repeat calls. They also include a shift in external and internal working relationships to increase the visibility and transparency of police operations to ordinary citizens, and to flatten hierarchies and decentralize initiative. Finally, they include new revenue sources for police including special taxes, the creation of local foundations, and the acceptance of gifts of training and property from local donors.

To some degree, these strategic changes all fit within the set of new ideas called community policing or problem-solving policing. When these ideas were presented in the field's journals, we categorized them as strategic. In addition, however, we also recorded as strategic innovations new activities that moved in the direction of these new ideas (usually noting whether their strategic significance was programmatic, administrative, or technological). Innovations that were not themselves strategic

16. Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992, pp. 67-70).

17. Kelling and Moore (1988); and Moore and Trojanowicz (1988b).

Table 12-1. *Distribution of Types of Innovations in Police Chief*

Type of innovation	Definition of "strategic" employed	
	Stringent	Less stringent
Programmatic	33	21
Administrative	26	21
Technological	34	33
Strategic	7	24

Source: Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992).

could, nonetheless, become strategically important because they either pointed the way toward strategic changes, unleashed forces inside or outside the organization that would further a strategic change, or permanently altered how the police conducted their business. For example, new methods of evaluating police department performance (for example, surveys measuring victimization, fear, self-defense activities, and recent experiences with the police) could be strategically important, not only because they reflect different ideas about what police departments should be accomplishing but also because they help to prompt such changes.¹⁸

Data on the distribution of the different kinds of innovations that were discussed since the mid-1980s in *Police Chief*, one of the most widely read journals in the field, are presented in table 12-1.¹⁹ Because of the difficulty of deciding if an innovation is strategic, we have classified the data with two different definitions of "strategically important"—one narrow and exacting, the other broader and more lenient.

Evaluating Innovations

More difficult than categorizing innovations has been evaluating them. One major problem is conceptual: Defining what is a successful, valuable, or important innovation is surprisingly difficult. We specifically asked our expert panel to reflect on and describe the criteria they used to make these judgments. Their intuitive wisdom helped us clarify the criteria for evaluating innovations.²⁰

18. Alpert and Moore (1993).

19. For an explanation for why we used the *Police Chief*, see Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992, pp. 55-56).

20. Moore, Spelman, and Young (1992, pp. 22-32).

OUTCOME-ORIENTED CRITERIA. The most consistent response we received to the question of how particular innovations should be evaluated was that the innovation should have "accomplished what it was intended to do." This statement, while general, does reveal that to our experts an innovation was important only if it produced some valuable, concrete result.

The experts often wanted to give substantive content to this abstract standard and therefore employed additional criteria that reflected their own views of the important objectives of policing. Many said that an important police innovation should "reduce crime," "reduce fears," or "increase public satisfaction." Traditionalists in the group tended to emphasize the importance of "reducing crime"; some thought this was the exclusive criterion for evaluating police innovations. Advocates of the newer strategies of policing nominated both "fear reduction" and "increased public satisfaction" as important results of police innovations.

"Increased public satisfaction" is another ambiguous criterion. Ideally, an increase in public satisfaction would be derived from the police improving their performance in dealing with issues that concern the community. To some experts, those concerns are most importantly crime and criminal victimization; therefore the only proper way for the police to earn increased public satisfaction is to reduce crime.

Other experts believed that the police could also "increase citizen satisfaction" by responding to problems that citizens thought were important, such as unruly conduct or disorderly conditions. They did not assume that crime was the only or most important problem to which the police could make a useful contribution. Instead, they imagined a wide variety of citizen problems that the police could help resolve.

Still others believed that the police could increase citizen satisfaction not by producing results but simply by improving the quality of service. The police could be more prompt, more courteous, and more helpful in responding to calls; they could also be more accessible to citizens on the street and less confrontational and defensive at neighborhood meetings. Thus some experts advocated such criteria as "improved service quality" or "increased police responsiveness."

To some of our experts, however, such criteria suggested public relations gimmicks. They worried that the police might cheat by doing nothing more than putting on a good face. That would be particularly objectionable if the good face were not earned day to day in specific, concrete encounters with the public, but on a wholesale basis through a

public relations campaign that obscured the police department's real performance.

Thus our experts were divided on the question of whether "increased public satisfaction" was a proper criterion. Nearly everyone believed that it was important; yet many were concerned that this result could be produced dishonestly as well as honestly. Most experts wanted to give credit only to the honest ways.

COST-EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, AND PRODUCTIVITY. In addition to producing some valuable result, said our experts, important innovations should reduce costs. Some explicitly nominated "cost-effectiveness" as an important criterion. Other respondents used phrases such as "increased efficiency" or "enhanced productivity." To our experts, however, these different phrases carried somewhat different connotations.

"Cost-effectiveness" was an appropriate criterion for judging both particular operational programs and those administrative innovations designed to improve the overall functioning of police departments. "Increased efficiency" and "enhanced productivity" were used in a more limited way—namely, when discussing the administrative or technological innovations designed to support the overall performance of the organization. In this pattern of responses, the concepts of "efficiency" and "productivity" were most appropriate when examining the performance of the whole organization in the pursuit of a well-established, general police objective such as controlling crime or responding rapidly to calls. In contrast, the concept of "cost-effectiveness" was most commonly used in evaluating the impact of a particular programmatic initiative to deal with a particular part of the police department's mission.

IMPLEMENTATION. The expert panel also identified several criteria for implementation. For example, a commonly cited criterion was the impact of the innovation on "officer morale and satisfaction." For many experts, this factor was important because it influenced the ease of implementation. For others, this criterion was itself an outcome. For them, the impact of the innovation on their officers' morale was as important as its impact on objective social conditions or the perceptions of citizens. For still others, this criterion was important because it affected the general climate within the organization. It helped "commit the officers" to the enterprise or readied the organization to develop and respond to other new ideas. The second most commonly identified implementation criterion was the "survivability" or "institutionalization" of the innovation. An innovation could not be important if it did not

survive. In general, the expert panel preferred innovations that had a favorable impact on officer morale, fitted comfortably within the existing culture of the police, and survived. They were less inclined toward innovations that faced opposition and resistance.

But some experts sounded a different note. Important innovations were the risky ones. Instead of fitting neatly within the organization's culture, these innovations challenged it. If an innovation could influence the organization and the field by "teaching them to ask better questions," or "broadening discussions" and leading to "productive ferment," that would be as valuable as an innovation that fit comfortably. In this view, even innovations that failed could be important. But the most valuable innovations would both stretch the thinking of the field and succeed.

These observations mesh with the views of those experts who were less interested in the immediate effectiveness of the innovation in achieving its stated goals than in what one expert called its "the second and third round implications." These experts thought that some innovations had reverberating effects—like a stone tossed in the water. To evaluate an innovation required an examination not only of its immediate impact but also of its side effects. And, in some cases, these side effects would be more important than the immediate consequences.

VALUE TO THE BROADER FIELD OF POLICING. Many respondents evaluated innovations by their impact on the broad field of policing. Thus they focused attention on such issues as the "diffusion" of the innovation, its "widespread adoption," or its "diffusibility," "replicability," and "adaptability." Intuitively, they believed that the more widely used an innovation becomes and the more properties it has to foster wider use, the better it is.

Others saw innovations as experiments designed to expand the boundaries of knowledge about "what works." From this perspective, innovations were evaluated as contributions to the goal of "systematizing police knowledge," "using research to modify operational procedures," "filling gaps" in the array of police techniques, "adding to police knowledge," or both "exploiting and fitting within the cumulative development of knowledge within the field." In this view, innovations are "research and development projects" that contribute to the overall stock of knowledge about policing that is, in principle at least, broadly available to the field. The most significant innovations show how police resources may be more efficiently and effectively used to solve an important problem. Those that solve important problems are more important than those that succeed in unimportant areas

or those that fail (even in instructive ways). They are important because they teach the field a new, general, and permanent lesson.

Here, too, a contrary theme arose—one that valued risk, ambition, and failure as well as replicable successes. Many respondents, for example, stressed that "novelty" was an important characteristic: If a program was not new in some important sense, it should not be called an innovation and could not be valued as one. Even more boldly, some argued that valuable innovations challenged common assumptions and beliefs. In this view, exploring new areas about which no one knows much (so that any approach seems reasonable) is less useful than upsetting and correcting a widely endorsed conventional wisdom.

PHILOSOPHICAL AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS. A majority of our experts evaluated innovations not only by their effectiveness or their contributions to knowledge but also by their influence on both the future development of the organizations into which they were introduced and the overall development of the field. In describing the potential importance of innovations, these experts used phrases such as "changes the mind-set of the police," "alters the paradigm of policing," "changes definition of policing," produces a "big effect on what police do," or "shifts policing toward becoming a serious, human service enterprise."

Moreover, these experts had specific ideas of how innovations could produce such effects. They watched for the influence that one innovation had on the likelihood of additional innovations being attempted. They wanted to see how an innovation "helped ask better questions," "stimulated a climate of innovativeness," "encouraged continuous improvement," or "stretched thinking within the department."

They also considered the extent to which the innovation, or the process by which the innovation was initiated and implemented, shifted the location of decisionmaking and initiative downward in the organization. They were concerned with how an innovation diffused responsibility and authority more broadly. The more an innovation encouraged other innovations at many different levels of the organization, the more important it was.

In addition, they valued innovations that involved citizens. They liked innovations that responded to the explicit concerns of citizens or engaged them in the operational solution of the problem. Some emphasized innovations that "tapped into public concerns," "opened doors to the outside," "mobilized others to deal with crime," or "got citizens involved and distributed the responsibility for preventing and solving crimes to other agencies and to the citizens themselves."

These are characteristics of police departments that are shifting to "community-oriented" or "problem-solving" policing. Thus many respondents evaluated particular innovations by looking at their impact on the transition to this new strategy either within a particular organization or in the field as a whole. Others, however, saw in innovations only the potential for improvement within the existing frame of policing.

Assessing Award-Winning Innovations

Using this framework for defining, categorizing, and evaluating innovations, we examined the innovations in policing that have been finalists or won awards in the Innovations program. Our objective was not to evaluate the awards process but to use the award winners as a set of innovations to analyze.

Between 1987 and 1990, the finalists and winners in the awards program included six local and state police organizations with seven innovations that reflect the diversity of creative thinking within police organizations.

In 1987 the Duluth, Minnesota, Police Department won an innovations award for its Domestic Abuse Intervention Program. In the words of its award application, this program "reverses the indifference of the legal system to the plight of abused women" and "unites courts, city police, and human services agencies through a tough arrest policy, mandatory jail sentences, and mandatory counselling and follow-up for offenders."

Also in 1987 Baltimore County's Citizen Oriented Police Enforcement (COPE) Program was a finalist. COPE focused on reducing fear instead of criminal victimization. COPE did this by establishing a special unit within the police department to administer victimization surveys, to work closely with local community groups and businesses to identify the particular problems that frightened the communities, and then to resolve these problems by making arrests and by using whatever combination of traditional and innovative tactics seemed appropriate.

In 1988 the St. Louis County Police Department won an innovations award for Computer Assisted Report Entry (CARE). CARE allowed patrol officers to call in their incident reports to specially trained clerks who would type the reports directly into a computer system that would automatically send out multiple copies. These copies would go to the detectives assigned the responsibility for investigating the case, to the

national databases that helped police forces around the country identify and return stolen property, and to the logs of crime incidents that were maintained at both precinct and central levels and served as the basis for reporting on crime trends and for targeting patrols.

Also in 1988 the Minneapolis Police Department's Repeat Call Address Policing Unit (RECAP) reached the finals of the award program. RECAP used computer-based analyses to identify the relatively small number of addresses in Minneapolis that accounted for the largest proportion of the calls for service. The addresses were then closely analyzed to determine the cause of these multiple calls and what could be done to solve the underlying problem. Sometimes the response involved arrests; sometimes it required different interventions by other agencies such as liquor control boards or mediation services.

In 1988 Baltimore County's COPE unit once again made the finals, this time with a special program focused on responding to and resolving "hate crimes" in which racial or religious bias seemed to be part of the motivations of the offenders and part of the experience of victimization.

In 1990 the Alaska State Police Department's Village Public Safety Officer's (VPSO) Program made the finals. VPSO trained local residents in the skills required to fight fires, enforce laws, and search for and rescue citizens lost in the arctic wilderness. It also taught the Alaska State Troopers to adapt their conventional police operations to the traditional values of Alaska's ethnically diverse communities.

Also in 1990 the Newport News Police Department's Problem Oriented Policing (POP) initiative reached the finals. In the language of the award application, POP sought to "institutionalize the concept of police officers as problem-solvers." All officers were authorized, when not responding to incidents, to work pro-actively on problems they identified on their own or with advice from the community. They were taught a four-step method to use in responding to problems: (1) scan, (2) analyze, (3) respond, and (4) assess. Over the previous year, the department identified and solved seventy-nine particular problems from local vandalism to citywide prostitution and thefts from vehicles.

Assessing the Innovations

In their impact on the current performance of the police and their significance for the future, these programs are different. Two—the Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Program and the St. Louis County CARE

Program—can best be viewed, respectively, as straightforward program and technological innovations. The four others—Minneapolis's RECAP Program, Newport News's POP Program, Alaska's VPSO Program, and Baltimore County's COPE Program—both herald and facilitate some important strategic changes in policing.

A CLASSIC PROGRAM INNOVATION. The Duluth Domestic Abuse Intervention Program is, in many ways, a classic program innovation. All over the country, police departments must decide how best to respond to domestic assaults. The basic question is whether to arrest the offender (almost always the husband) or to find some other means for resolving the dispute. In the past, the police rarely made an arrest, typically because the women refused to press charges. Even when the victim was willing to swear out a complaint that would justify the arrest, the police still hesitated; experience had taught them that women rarely prosecuted their husbands. Moreover, the police often thought the problem could be more effectively resolved through mediation and counseling agencies instead of by the criminal court. These domestic incidents were simply not police business.

More recently, however, three factors have spurred the police to reconsider this common practice. First, research revealed that, for a domestic homicide, the police had been previously summoned to the scene an average of four to six times.²¹ Clearly, the police were missing an important opportunity to prevent murders.

Second, the women's movement gradually established a different understanding about why women were refusing to swear out a complaint: The abused women did not make a considered judgment about their interests and then refuse to press charges. Instead, they were psychologically and economically dependent on their husbands, who coerced them not to file charges.²² Thus the police should not take the abused wife's expressed preferences to avoid her husband's arrest as controlling; her real preferences and interests could not be determined until the coercion was removed. That required the police to arrest the husband and learn later what the woman really wanted.

Third, some experimental studies, also carried out in Minnesota, indicated that mandatory-arrest policies seemed more effective in reducing the likelihood of subsequent attacks by the husband than did the alternatives of counseling or no action.²³

21. Sherman and Berk (1984).

22. Weingart (1989).

23. Sherman and Berk (1984).

From such pressures, a police department inevitably would develop a new way of responding to domestic assaults, and this "new" approach undoubtedly would emphasize arrest and continued controls over the conduct of the offender. Duluth's program innovation was worth an award because it was a clear change from past practices and because it held some prospect for improving a police department's response to what has been a stubborn, consistent problem. If this new approach to domestic violence proved effective, it would be just the sort of programmatic innovation that should be disseminated widely.

But this innovation seems to have only limited significance for the evolving strategy of policing. Because it drags the police into the domain of domestic (as well as stranger) violence, makes them responsive to women's groups, and involves them in more collaborative efforts with prosecutors and courts, the innovation may have some strategic significance. But no one has ever doubted that the police should respond to domestic violence, and nothing is more central to the current strategy of policing than arresting violent offenders. Thus the program is nothing more (and nothing less) than an important new idea about how to use conventional police methods to deal with an important, recurrent problem.

A CLASSIC TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION. St. Louis County's CARE Program seems equally important—and equally limited. It is a classic technological innovation relying on computer technology to improve the routine operations of the police. By using telephones to report crimes and computers to distribute, store, and analyze the data from the reports, some old organizational routines are speeded up, and resources are saved.²⁴ If faster, wider response to crimes increases apprehensions and clearances (thus more effectively deterring and incapacitating offenders), such changes will be effective and will save money and time. The innovation can also be easily and widely disseminated, and it increases the overall knowledge available to the field. Thus CARE meets many of the criteria for a successful and important innovation.

Missing, however, is any significant strategic implication. Unchanged is the basic concept of policing: to respond effectively to crimes after they have occurred, and to increase the likelihood that offenders may be apprehended. CARE's faster processing of reports might, however, help precinct or departmental managers notice and respond to trends in local crime by putting more patrol officers in the vicinity of crimes when they occur.

24. Arnold and Leone (1990).

Both the Domestic Abuse Intervention Program and the CARE Program leave the essential strategic concepts of "professional policing" undisturbed. The end remains effective crime control. The means remain arrests produced through patrols, rapid response to calls, and retrospective investigation. The key working relationships remain unchanged: Citizens are nothing more than the eyes and ears of the police; patrol officers are directed to incidents reported by citizens; and their responses are monitored by their immediate superiors.

Because these programs fit so neatly within the existing strategy of policing, they may not only fail to move the field forward. They may more solidly anchor police practices in the past strategy of policing. Even as they are making the police more efficient and effective in the short run, they may become a drag on the future development of policing.

Strategically Important Innovations

The Minneapolis RECAP Program is important because it promises to use police resources more efficiently and effectively in responding to incidents and because it changes a police department's basic conception of its work.²⁵ A cornerstone of the traditional strategy of policing has been the development of a communication system linking citizens to police officers through telephones, centralized dispatching, and two-way radios. This has allowed the police to be available to citizens with unprecedented speed. Within most cities, the police can respond in under five minutes to an urgent call from anywhere. It is a great accomplishment.

Unfortunately, this network has also become one of the greatest obstacles to innovation and change in policing.²⁶ The growth of the urban population and the successful marketing of 911 emergency telephone systems have led to a dramatic increase in calls. Yet the financial problems of the cities have prevented them from responding with increased manpower and equipment. Thus the police find themselves now struggling to meet a very specific, well-defined, easily measured, and politically visible objective: to keep response times low.²⁷ The pressure exerted by this system has made it difficult to explore any alternative uses of police resources.

Efforts to manage response times have stimulated innovation—much of

25. Sparrow (1994).

26. Sparrow, Moore, and Kennedy (1990).

27. Kennedy (1987); Kennedy (1988); and Kennedy (1990c).

it based on technology. The most common innovations are called "differential police response."²⁸ The basic idea is to establish clear priorities among calls, delaying police responses to nonurgent calls, and sometimes responding with something other than a patrol car. For example, for a minor break-in that occurred long before the call was made, the police sometimes ask the citizen to mail in his or her complaint. Other responses include wringing additional efficiencies out of the available patrol force through automated vehicle-locator systems and using dispatch algorithms that find the patrol car closest to the scene. Still, the basic strategy remains unchanged: Police respond to incidents, which they then examine to see whether a law has been broken and whether an arrest is appropriate.

Traditionally, the police have accepted the demand for their services as a given—an exogenous variable that they could not influence—and attempted to respond to that demand as effectively and as efficiently as possible. When calls increased, the police sought to be more effective and more efficient. RECAP also responds to the increase in calls for service but in a wholly different way. RECAP sought to reduce the demand for service. Because a large majority of calls come from a limited number of addresses, which the police seem to visit repeatedly, RECAP seeks to reduce the demand for service by resolving the problems underlying the repeat calls.

The RECAP strategy requires the police to shift from an incident-handling to a problem-solving approach.²⁹ In the past, the police thought problem solving would reduce rapid-response capabilities; the only way to do problem solving was to take officers off the line. Because that threatened to increase response times and created greater burdens for those officers who remained in rapid-response units, it always seemed a difficult and risky experiment. The RECAP program links problem solving to the objective of keeping response times low. The solution to the response-time pressure is to solve the problems that are producing repeat calls. Thus the most pressing problem faced by police executives—the increase in demand for service—requires a shift in focus from incidents to problems.

The significance of this strategic change is hard to exaggerate. To eliminate problems that are stimulating calls for service requires a wholly different investigative and analytic approach.³⁰ Police look less

28. McEwen, Connors, and Cohen (1986).

29. Goldstein (1990); and Sparrow (1994).

30. Sparrow (1994).

for offenders and more for other precipitating causes of crime such as frustrating relationships or ongoing disputes. Police seek solutions less often in arrests and more often in other kinds of intervention that renegotiate relationships. The solutions are less likely to rely solely on police resources and more likely to draw on resources from outside the department. This has important implications for the orientation and skills of the police officers, and even for the role of the police department within city government. That makes RECAP important not just programmatically but also strategically.

The POP program in Newport News explicitly identifies the opportunities for problem solving suggested by the RECAP program and extends that approach across the entire organization. POP specifically authorizes the police department as a whole to identify problems and to work out solutions that draw upon powers other than arrest and upon resources other than those controlled by the department. Moreover, this is not an isolated staff activity located near the center and top of the department; everyone in the organization is authorized and encouraged to engage in this undertaking.

The Alaska VSOP Program is based on the complementary ideas that the community itself must do much of the work of policing and that policing is more than crime control. In Alaska, the police seek to mobilize communities not only to be their eyes and ears but also to coproduce deterrence, enforcement, and crime prevention. Moreover, these police recognize that once a vigilant, competent community has been established to deal effectively with crime, it can undertake such other tasks as fire fighting and search and rescue. Finally, VSOP recognizes that if the police are to be successful in establishing close and effective relationships with local communities, their operations will have to be adapted to meet community norms and expectations. Police cannot be entirely outside the community if they are to develop close working partnerships; they must be "of" the community as well. These ideas have challenging implications for the traditional strategy of policing that assigned citizens only a limited role, focused obsessively on crime control, and operated independently from the community.

But the innovation with the most important strategic implications is Baltimore's COPE Program. For four reasons, COPE is significant in the revolution now shaping policing.³¹

31. Kennedy (1990b).

First, COPE is one of the first efforts to focus on citizens' fears as a separate and solvable problem. Traditionally, police departments have viewed fear reduction as an important objective but assumed that it would result from reducing criminal victimization. Most departments thought it dangerous and cynical to seek to allay citizens' fears without reducing crime. What the field gradually learned, however, was that fear was an important problem in its own right—reducing the quality of life for individuals and degrading the cohesion of neighborhoods and their ability to defend themselves.³² Furthermore, fear was unexpectedly disconnected from actual levels of victimization, and police could reduce fear through efforts that were different from those they employed to reduce crime.³³ The Baltimore County Police Department was one of the first departments to act on these findings and use fear reduction as an organizing concept.

Second, COPE demonstrated the causal link between close community relationships and the goal of reducing fear. To reduce fear, the police had to get into close contact with communities so that they could discover and respond to whatever frightened citizens.

Third, COPE revealed the need to rely on problem solving instead of law enforcement methods to reduce people's fears, which are most commonly stimulated by things such as graffiti, litter, and disorderly youth.³⁴ Against such problems, the traditional police powers to arrest and prosecute have little impact. The police need other solutions. Baltimore County's police helped to organize block groups and used their influence with other county departments to eliminate graffiti and litter. They also mediated conflicts over the use of public spaces.³⁵

Fourth, COPE continues to be a laboratory for showing how these ideas of fear reduction, community relations, and problem solving begin to infect the rest of the department. Originally, COPE was a separate unit, small and vulnerable. Gradually, that unit grew. Now COPE has reached the stage where further development requires disseminating the techniques into the general operations of the department and the dissolution of the special unit. Is the COPE "culture" now strong enough to stand on its own without the protection of a special structure and powerful enough to dominate the traditional patrol culture? The answer will

32. Skogan (1990).

33. Moore and Trojanowicz (1988a).

34. Wilson and Kelling (1982).

35. Kennedy (1990b).

determine whether COPE remains an important program in the repertoire of police operations or becomes an important wedge in transforming the overall strategy of policing.

Programs such as RECAP, POP, VSOP, and COPE are simple ideas that have radical implications for the future strategy of policing. Even though their origins and purposes are different, they all push the police in the same general direction—toward a more sustained engagement with communities. The police are no longer allowed to stay at the surface of community life dealing only with criminal incidents through arrest and prosecution. Instead, they are drawn into the conflicts and frustrations that are frightening citizens and causing them to call the police. Once enmeshed in these problems, the police have to find new solutions; simply arresting someone does not solve the problem. So the police are compelled to reach outside their department. That, in turn, forces the department into a more decentralized, entrepreneurial style and draws the police into a much different relationship with the community and with other agencies of local government.

Institutionalizing Innovation: Commissioning the Officers

If problem solving and community policing are the wave of the future, then much of the concept of policing and many of the administrative arrangements that now connect individual officers to the rest of the department will have to change.³⁶ The notion that policing is the routine application of policies and procedures must be discarded. It needs to be replaced with the idea that policing requires invention and improvisation as officers encounter new situations and problems. The image must be abandoned of policing as a "production line" for which a few engineers have designed processes that can be used over and over again to produce a consistent result. It needs to be reconfigured with the image of a "job shop" in which each police assignment is treated as a new challenge that might require a new solution.

Correspondingly, administrative relations within a department must change. The tradition of centralized control to ensure that the officers follow the established procedures must give way to decentralized responsiveness in which the officers themselves are encouraged to invent new

36. Eck and Spelman (1987); and Moore (1994).

Table 12-2. *Administrative Style of Police Departments*

<i>Traditional style</i>	<i>Community-policing style</i>
Bureaucratic organization	Professional organization
Centralized	Decentralized
Command and control	Commissioned officers
Control through rules	Control through values
Control through supervision	Control through after-the-fact accountability
Citywide accountability	Local responsiveness
Management as supervision	Management as coaching
Functional specialists	General practitioners
Promotions through ranks	Promotions through pay raises
Academy training	Clinical training

solutions or adapt old solutions to new circumstances. The officers must define the problems to be solved and the appropriate means for doing so. Their supervisors can be coaches in this activity but not controllers. Otherwise, too much of the necessary initiative will be lost.

This shift in strategy from professional policing to community or problem-solving policing is itself an innovation that creates a new administrative framework within which the police are asked to engage in a continuing process of innovation and adaptation. The strategies of community and problem-solving policing are innovations, representing a fundamental change in the basic strategy of policing. These strategies also commit police organizations to a continuing process of innovation and adaptation. Instead of top-down experiments with new programs, individual officers, working with the community, are authorized to define problems and find solutions. Instead of applying known technologies for dealing with a problem now embedded in the policies and procedures of the department, police officers are expected to invent a response. Each problem that is identified and solved is, in some important sense, an innovation. Thus the new strategies of policing require administrative arrangements that institutionalize innovation.

The key changes in administrative relationships and style that must accompany a shift from professional crime fighting to community or problem-solving policing and that are designed to institutionalize innovation in policing are listed in table 12-2. Dangers arise in making such changes. By giving greater initiative to officers, the organization and the community becomes much more dependent on their individual qualities. If they are skilled, the risk to the community will be less than if they are badly trained. Even more importantly, if they have the proper values, the

community will be safer than if they are badly motivated.

In problem-solving and community policing, the society and the organization are asking the officers to be real professionals—to have not only the skills of their trade, but also to reflect in their actions a commitment to society's values instead of their own. In short, to implement these new strategies of policing, the society must commission the officers to act on their behalf.³⁷ It must trust them to have the values and the skills necessary to deal with the problems the community wants addressed. Then the potential of problem-solving and community policing can be realized without losing control of the officers. That set of changes will be the most important innovation of all—the development of a true profession of policing.

37. Sparrow, Moore, and Kennedy (1990).

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Part Five

IMPLEMENTING INNOVATION