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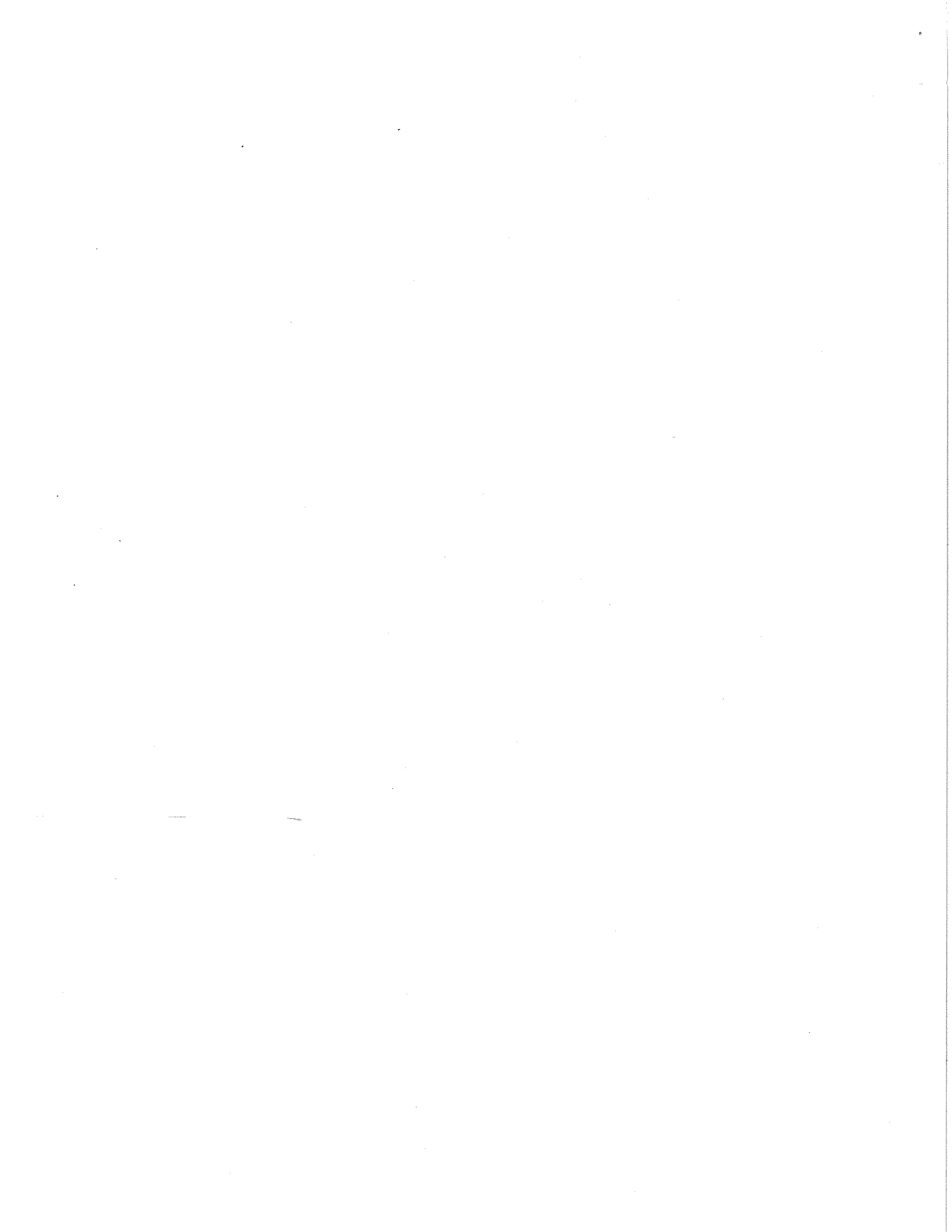

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2 Organization and management

A powerful tradition, rooted in principles of scientific management and the military model of command, has customarily provided the starting point for discussions of police organization and management.[1] This tradition holds that the mission and basic goals of the organization are set externally—by law, by elected officials, or simply by custom. The role of police executives is seen as finding efficient means—organizational, programmatic, and technological—for achieving those goals. Police executives are expected to do so by performing the traditional managerial functions of planning, organizing, coordinating, and controlling.

Planning—both traditionally and currently—requires police executives to translate broad policy goals into more specific, operational objectives; to identify the organizational requirements of those objectives; and to determine which parts of their organization must be expanded or contracted to meet the operational objectives.[2] Planning also requires executives to monitor the organization's environment to identify emerging problems that must be addressed. And it requires them to stay in touch with new problem-solving methods they might adopt to increase their organization's efficiency or effectiveness.

Organizing and coordinating are concerned with the detailed deployment of the organization's resources. One crucial aspect of this function is establishing the basic structure of the organization.[3] A second is defining the process of decision making so as to identify the proper level for making different kinds of decisions and to ensure that the organization has the capacity to identify and resolve important policy questions.[4] A third aspect is identifying and filling any gaps in the administrative systems that guide individual efforts and establish individual accountability. This includes, for example, having a current manual of policies and procedures.

Controlling requires executives to oversee and sanction the conduct of their employees. This includes developing accounting and information systems to keep track of expenditures, activities, and accomplishments.[5] It also means developing performance measurement systems for individual officers and for the organization as a whole. Finally, it includes developing internal investigative and disciplinary procedures to guard against misconduct (including corruption) and misuse of authority.[6]

In addition to these technical managerial functions, police executives are expected to provide inspirational leadership. This involves setting high standards of ethical conduct for themselves and their subordinates and protecting the morale of the organization.[7] Discipline must be accompanied by assurances from the top that those who perform well will be rewarded and that honest mistakes will be consistently and impartially distinguished from careless or badly motivated actions. Otherwise, police officers will feel victimized by what they view as arbitrary managerial actions.

As part of exercising leadership, top managers are also expected to shield their organization from disruptive external influences—particularly improper political pressures. Although it is always difficult to distinguish proper political oversight from political interference, executives are expected to resist demands

to use the organization's assets for the particular personal purposes of politicians rather than the broader, long-term interests of the community. These expectations are felt particularly keenly among employees, who want their leaders to protect the ultimate purposes and values of the organization against arbitrary demands for change.

All this is traditionally expected of police executives. What is *not* traditionally expected is that police executives will raise questions about the basic mission of the organization or will propose new ways of using the organization to meet challenges confronting society. After all, those are matters of policy—not administration or management.

Nor is it considered good form to raise doubts about whether the organization is using the best methods for achieving its objectives. To admit to uncertainty about the best means of dealing with particular problems or to commit large portions of the organization to experimental approaches is thought to suggest professional incompetence and insufficient respect for the accumulated knowledge and traditions of the organization.

Nor are managers traditionally expected to give their subordinates discretion in developing methods of handling the particular problems they face. It is thought that that would look like a retreat from managerial responsibility for setting direction and exercising control. That would also seem to risk substantial abuse of discretion.

Finally, in the traditional view, managers are discouraged from using informal channels to seek outside advice about which problems are locally important. Instead, they are expected to limit themselves to obtaining policy guidance through central, official channels. Otherwise, it is thought, the police department could be accused of playing politics.

For at least the past decade, tradition has been challenged on a number of fronts. It would probably be an overstatement to describe the important changes now impinging on police management as a revolution, but they can certainly be called a fast-paced evolution.[8] And each step in this evolution has implications for the organization and management of police departments and the performance of managerial functions.

Forces shaping contemporary police management

Three broad forces shape current thinking about the effective organization and management of police departments. The most powerful is important changes in the environment of policing—changes that affect the tasks the police must perform and the resources available to them. Another is significant changes in managerial thought in general. A third is the accumulating knowledge about the strengths and limitations of current approaches to policing.

Changes in the environment of policing

Simply stated, the nation's communities are changing. Many jurisdictions are becoming larger and are facing a host of problems associated with growth, while others are shrinking and are facing problems that accompany decline. Inner cities are becoming poorer as middle-class residents move to suburban areas, taking with them the tax dollars that support schools and other public services and institutions. Those who remain in the inner cities are frequently poor people and immigrants, many of whom require special services.[9]

Suburban areas are changing as well. Many local administrators and police chiefs have been alarmed to find in their own communities many of the problems traditionally associated with larger places—drug dealing, homelessness, poverty, and crime, for example.

These trends are fundamentally changing the nature of police work. For one thing, there is more of it to do and fewer resources with which to do it. Police workload, reported crime, calls for service, and arrests have increased—but the resources available have not kept pace.[10] This is true in the rest of the criminal justice system as well. Indeed, the system as a whole is losing its capacity to punish, deter, incapacitate, and rehabilitate. This alone would necessitate some rethinking of police strategies. Second and more important, however, the tasks themselves that the police are engaged in seem to be changing.

One change in police tasks is that, in large and small communities, fear—quite apart from actual criminal victimization—has become a major problem.[11] It is fear that motivates people (particularly elderly people) to stay off the streets and to buy guns. It is also fear that drives small businesses to abandon neighborhoods.[12] With them go jobs for teenagers, contributions to civic groups, and rallying points for community development. The police must therefore deal not only with crime, but also with fear of crime and the effects of that fear.

In addition, the police are being drawn into social emergencies that can produce violence if left unattended. They are asked to mediate domestic disputes, to deal with youthful runaways, to force a landlord to provide heat, or to compel a tenant to live up to the terms of the lease. Indeed, much of the crime that the police handle seems to emerge from nagging disputes among people who know one another, rather than from predatory attacks by hardened offenders.[13]

As police are drawn more deeply into the social structures of communities, important questions about the police mission and role arise.

These changes in police tasks are drawing the police more deeply into the social structures of communities. As they are drawn in, important questions about the police mission and role arise. Are the calls that are prompted by fears, disputes, and minor social emergencies worth handling well, or are they distractions from the central police mission of dealing with serious predatory crime and remaining ready to deal with still more of it? Are the skills and capabilities police have developed the right ones for such "domestic" or "social" situations? What other agencies might more properly and more effectively be charged with handling these problems? Where should the police turn for guidance on these questions? In essence, the current environment—in which economic decay is a background for problems of crime, fear, and social disorder—is sharply posing the question of what the police mission should be and how they should fulfill it. The answer has important implications for the organization and management of police departments.

Changes in managerial thought

A second important change affecting policing comes from managerial thought in general. In the past, good management—in both the public and private sectors—was held to focus on developing ever more refined internal controls. It was assumed that managers faced stable and predictable environments. To the extent they did not, their task was to improve their ability to predict future events so that the organization would be ready to meet whatever new challenges arose. Effective internal administration depended on well-defined operational objectives, the development of functional specialties, and the daily exercise of tight operational control. Often the path to improved organizational performance lay in the direction of increased standardization of procedures.

This line of thinking about management has been profoundly upset by three factors: (1) the economic success of the Japanese, who have a radically different

managerial philosophy;[14] (2) research findings on the managerial practices of successful private-sector organizations;[15] and (3) the growth of the service economy at the expense of the production economy. Predictable external environments and planned change have yielded, conceptually, to relentless, unpredictable competition and the need for constant innovation.[16] The doctrine of tight managerial control is being supplanted by doctrines of worker participation, total quality management, and shared commitment to excellence as the principal devices for motivating organizational performance.[17] The focus on efficient use of internal resources has been transformed into a focus on developing close connections among the organization, its customers, and its markets.

The doctrine of tight managerial control is being supplanted by doctrines of worker participation, total quality management, and shared commitment to excellence.

It is obvious that a police department is not a service organization in the same way that a restaurant or a bank is. There are important differences between public-sector organizations and private-sector organizations. Yet it is also true that when managerial philosophies change in the private sector, the public sector is affected. And it is not obviously inappropriate for public-sector executives to begin thinking about what value their organizations have for citizens of the communities they police, and about how they are positioned to serve the community. Indeed, some police executives relish the opportunity to ask that basic question about policing—the question of how best to use the assets entrusted to them to make the greatest contribution to their cities and towns—and to assume that the answer may not be already known. More particularly, the shifting conceptions of managerial excellence suggest it may be possible to decentralize police organizations, reduce reliance on rules and constant supervision, and increase reliance on selection, training, and the formal statement of values to create an organizational culture that can properly guide officer conduct.[18]

New knowledge about effective policing

In addition to having been buffeted and stimulated by broad social trends and evolving concepts of management, the field of policing has also been following a logic of its own as it learns from its own experience and develops its own ideas about how best to police the nation's communities.[19]

Crime control remains the central mission of the police, but whether it should be the *exclusive* focus is less clear.

As discussed in the first chapter in this book, a predominant force in modern U.S. policing has been the "reform strategy." That strategy (1) emphasized crime fighting as the primary, perhaps exclusive, task of the police; (2) relied primarily on the techniques of random and directed patrol, rapid response to calls for service, and retrospective criminal investigation to achieve crime-fighting objectives; (3) sought to ensure effective discipline and control through elaborate rules and close supervision; and (4) tried to guarantee the fair and impartial enforcement of the law by insulating the police from close contact with any kind of political influence. That strategy helped to create more lawful, professional, and effective police departments, but this basic conception now contains very few additional developmental possibilities.

A police department that is "more effective" is still not as effective as it could be. Although the police are better and more efficient and effective, the reform strategy has fallen short in dealing with crime problems. Research has shown that the mainstays of random and directed patrol, rapid response, and retrospective criminal investigation are not as effective as was thought. To deal fully with problems of crime, new approaches are required, including working with the community to identify and resolve problems.

As police administrators face the uncertain and rapidly changing environment within which successful policing must occur, traditional ideals and principles continue to provide important guidance. Yet, at the same time, the developments noted above are shaking the traditions of police organization and management. Crime control remains the central mission of the police, but whether it should be the *exclusive* focus is less clear.[20] The principal means of controlling crime is still law enforcement, but it is increasingly apparent that the police can bring other competencies to bear in handling particular problems.[21] It is important for police executives to demand disciplined conduct from their officers, but the best way to achieve that result is now less clear than it once was. And although the police should be insulated from political interference, they must find mechanisms for learning what citizens want from the police and for restoring their own accountability.

A new analytical framework: The concept of corporate strategy

With the field poised on the brink of new strategies and structures for policing the nation's communities, it is timely to consider an unconventional framework for analyzing the organization and management of policing. Forward-looking police executives have turned to an analytic framework that many private-sector executives have used to chart their course into an uncertain future: the concept of "corporate strategy." They have attempted to adapt elements of this framework that are useful in charting the course of police organizations.

Strategic analysis: Definitions of organizational purpose

The development of a corporate strategy has to do with "the choice of purpose [or mission], the molding of organizational identity and character, the unending definition of what needs to be done, and the mobilization of resources for the attainment of goals in the face of aggressive competition or adverse circumstances."[22] More succinctly, corporate strategy means "setting some direction for the organization based on an analysis of organizational capabilities and environmental opportunities and threats."[23] That analysis is called "strategic analysis," or sometimes "strategic planning."

Using corporate strategy in the context of public-sector organizations produces some important shifts in the traditional perspective. Rather than beginning with externally mandated objectives and then figuring out how to achieve them, as policing has traditionally done, the concept of corporate strategy begins with the question of mission. Indeed, strategic analysis is primarily a methodology for deciding what the organization's mission, or purpose, should be. Moreover, it suggests that in defining purposes, managers might be guided not simply by their traditional mandated purposes—nor simply by a technical view of the problem they are responsible for solving—but also by a sense of what their organization might usefully contribute to current problems that may or may not have been part of their original mandate. In other words, in considering the overall goals of policing, one would have to take into account current environmental challenges, what police departments have learned from their own experience, and policing's unique organizational capabilities.

Corporate strategy provides a framework in which questions of organizational purpose and management are raised; it thus opens up areas of discussion that remain closed if one thinks along more traditional lines.

In the traditional perspective, a police executive thinks not about ultimate purpose but about establishing a visible police presence, responding rapidly to calls for service, and successfully investigating crimes. From the new perspective suggested by the concept of corporate strategy, a police executive might consider instead the broader and different question of how he or she might best use a force that (1) is large, disciplined, and resourceful, (2) carries the authority of the state, (3) has access to transportation, and (4) is available on instant notice around the clock—might best use such a force to make the maximum contribution to the quality of life in today's urban and suburban communities. The executive might also ask whether the organization is doing what the citizens of the community want, and how the department is organized to learn what the community wants and needs. Finally, he or she might even consider what gives a public police force a competitive advantage over private security efforts, and how the public effort might complement private efforts. Essentially, corporate strategy, with strategic analysis, provides a framework in which questions of organizational purpose and management are raised; it thus opens up areas of discussion that remain closed if one thinks along more traditional lines.

Three tests of a public organization's purpose

For this private-sector concept to fit the public-sector environment, it must be adapted. Figure 2–1 is a diagram that might help police executives work with the concept of a "corporate strategy" for policing. The basic notion is that if a particular strategy, or statement of mission, is to be successful, it must meet the three tests symbolized by the circles in the diagram. First, the mission, or goals and objectives, must be capable of attracting continued support from political and legal officials who authorize the continuation of the enterprise. Second, it must be operationally feasible and should take advantage of the distinctive competencies and capabilities of the organization. Third, it must be considered valuable to the community. If a proposed strategy fails any of these tests, it fails as an appropriate strategy. The second test—operational feasibility and suitability—is one that the public sector shares with the private sector. The first and

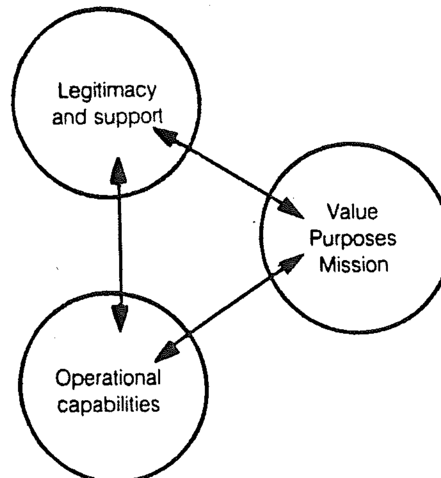

Figure 2–1 Tests of public-sector goals and objectives.

third tests, however, are adaptations of the private sector's approach to corporate strategy.

In the public sector, the executive's focus on political and legal authorization is an adaptation of the private sector's focus on economic markets. In effect, the adapted model draws attention to the question of whether those who authorize the continuation of an organization—for example, elected chief executives, appointed administrators, elected representatives to legislative bodies, oversight agencies, the media, and assorted interest groups—will continue to support the organization, given its announced purposes and accomplishments. In this sense, political enthusiasm for the enterprise—built by promises of value to the community as well as by concrete performance—is considered a barometer of acceptance much as market success is for private organizations.

In the public sector, though, the "authorizing environment" of the police department supplies more than just the financial support that is implied by market success. It also supplies authority for the police to compel others to act in the public interest. Indeed, access to public authority is one of the most important differences between private- and public-sector organizations. But the public agencies that have the power to compel are responsible for using it only when justified. So both the use of public money and the use of public authority are overseen by elected and appointed officials—by the appropriations committees and budget agencies, on the one hand, and by authorizing committees of legislative bodies and the courts, on the other hand.

The other change made when the concept of corporate strategy is brought into the public sector is that attention is focused not on financial returns to the organization but on something much harder to define—the value of the organization to the public: the organization's ability to solve public problems. To a degree, the public good is defined by the political and legal mandates governing a public-sector enterprise—that is, by the official statement of the organization's mission and objectives. But there are other ways of defining public value and establishing standards for assessing it. The techniques of policy analysis, for example, can be used to identify important social problems and to propose ways for the organization to solve them,[24] or program evaluations and performance audits can be used to determine whether public-sector organizations have been effective in achieving the purposes set for them.[25] On occasion, benefit/cost analysis can be used to determine whether the public is getting its money's worth.[26] Even citizen surveys can provide a clue to the effectiveness and value of public-sector enterprises. None of these techniques gives a perfect estimate of whether the public interest has been served, but in combination they may provide some guidance.

The concept of corporate strategy requires a manager to define purposes for the organization that can sustain political and legal support and are of public value in addition to being operationally achievable.

In the public sector, then, the concept of corporate strategy requires a manager to define purposes for the organization that can sustain political and legal support and are of public value in addition to being operationally achievable. One can come to a decision about such purposes by examining the political and legal demands on the organization, exploring the environment the organization faces, and thinking through the question of how the distinctive competencies of the organization might best be used. That is the methodology employed here to reach conclusions about the effective organization and management of police departments.

The purpose of police organizations

In defining the purpose of police departments, one must ask what functions police departments are expected to—or could usefully—perform for society (the test of political and legal support). It is also relevant to know how well police departments are performing current functions (the test of value) and what the strengths and weaknesses of their current capabilities are (the test of sustainability). That information contains clues to how police departments may have to be reorganized to improve their performance and how innovative and adaptable police management will have to become. First, though, it is useful to examine the traditional view of the purpose of police organizations.

The traditional purpose: Professional crime fighting

The basic purpose of an organization can generally be summarized in a relatively simple phrase. The traditional purpose of police departments, for example, is often described as professional law enforcement (or professional crime fighting). (The reasons for the dominance of this view of policing are discussed below.) This definition of purpose for police departments can be viewed from several perspectives: political, operational, and substantive.

In the context of law enforcement, "professional" means not only technically competent but also disciplined and fair.

In *political* terms, the concept of "professional law enforcement" appeals primarily to a constituency that is interested in controlling or reducing crime. The phrase "law enforcement" signals the prominence of that task. A little less obvious, but equally important, is the promise implied by the word "professional": the promise to demonstrate the legal virtues of impartiality, nonintrusiveness, and minimal use of force.[27] In the context of law enforcement, "professional" means not only technically competent but also disciplined and fair. Indeed, it is the inclusion of this word that separates the modern era of "professional policing" from the "bad old days" of incompetence, corruption, and brutality (see the chapter on the evolution of contemporary policing). "Professional" also serves to distinguish modern public police departments from the growing ranks of private security guards, whose professionalism has been questioned on grounds of loose entry standards, limited training, and low wages. (There are exceptions to this generalization, but by and large it is valid at the beginning of the 1990s.)

In *operational terms*, "professional law enforcement" directs attention to key aspects of the organization that police administrators must manage. Because the phrase makes enforcement of the law (in an impartial way) the key task and the defining, distinctive competence of police organizations, it directs the attention of police managers to efforts to ensure that their officers are trained and equipped to perform this function. Thus, training tends to emphasize knowledge of the law and the disciplined use of force. Administrative arrangements must require that when officers deploy force to make arrests, they use it properly, and when officers stray accidentally or intentionally, they are subjected to retraining or discipline.

In *substantive* terms, "professional law enforcement" defines the most important purpose of the police as enforcing the laws that protect life and property from criminal attacks. Often, the phrase is construed more broadly to extend to enforcing the laws that protect citizens' rights not to be harassed by other citizens or by the police themselves. For the most part, however, society and police understand the phrase to mean effective action in enforcing the *criminal*

laws. That is why "professional crime fighting" is, in many ways, more accurate than "professional law enforcement." Professional law enforcement is nonetheless the preferred phrase because it avoids raising the issue of the extent to which the police are obliged to enforce and protect civil liberties as they seek to keep society safe from criminal offenders.

The concept of professional law enforcement worked as a statement of the overall purpose of policing because it defined a sustainable "deal" between the organization and the rest of society, and it directed the manager's attention to the most important societal values that were to be protected or advanced by the organization's operations. The question addressed in the remainder of this chapter is whether this phrase (or its broader formulation) is the best strategic concept to guide the organization and management of police departments in the years ahead or whether more-powerful concepts are now emerging and proving their worth in the hands of innovative police leaders. The techniques to be used in answering this question are the techniques of strategic analysis. The mission of police departments is redefined and is then subjected to the three tests described above.

Strategic analysis and the crime control function

As explained above, all discussions of the functions of police departments begin with the subject of crime control. Indeed, to many people, everything else is not only secondary but also a dangerous and wasteful distraction from the primary business of the police.

There are three reasons that crime control has this status in people's ideas about policing. First, crime control is an urgent and compelling societal task. The belief that the police may succeed in reducing crime is what sustains public support for the police. The threat that crime might become uncontrollable if policing were neglected or changed is frequently used to argue against budget cuts or proposals to change the way police departments operate.[28]

Second, the police seem particularly well suited to dealing with the problem of crime. Both citizens and police see criminal law, with its capacity to deter and incapacitate offenders, as an extremely powerful instrument in dealing with crime, and they see the police as uniquely qualified to invoke that power.[29] The police are set up to be on the lookout for crimes and to respond immediately when summoned by those who witness or are victimized by criminal offenses. They are also specially trained to recognize when an arrest is appropriate or required and when and how to use force to ensure that citizens submit to the orderly process of justice.

The police response to crime is largely reactive, and police executives sense the limits of that approach.

Third, crime control is the function, or mission, that evokes the greatest enthusiasm and commitment from the police themselves. Many officers join police departments to become members of the "thin blue line" that protects decent people from predatory criminals. Their training as recruits emphasizes the skills associated with bringing force to bear on angry, resistant people. The attributes that qualify them for transfer from patrol units to detective bureaus are most closely related to their ability to make arrests. As a result, a culture forms in the police department that sees crime fighting as not only the department's most important function but also its only honorable one.

However, powerful forces have begun to undermine the notion that crime fighting is the only way to use the assets of a police department for the benefit

of society. Ironically, the most powerful of these forces leading police executives to rethink their exclusive preoccupation with crime control is the executives' own accumulating knowledge and sophistication about the nature of crime and their growing awareness of the strengths and limitations of current approaches to dealing with it. The most important of the new forces are discussed in the remainder of this section.

Beyond crime control: Crime prevention

The dominant characteristic of the current approach to crime control is that it is "reactive": the police tend to wait until a crime occurs and a call for help is made before they act. This approach has some important advantages. It ensures that the police do not intrude too deeply into citizens' lives and that, when they do intrude, there is an important reason for doing so. In this sense, the reactive approach economizes on the use of state authority.[30]

The police do not rely exclusively on reactive approaches, however. (Alternative approaches are discussed at some length in the chapters on the patrol function, crime prevention, criminal investigations, local drug control, and organized crime.) Patrol operations seek to deter crimes before they happen, as well as to ensure that a car is nearby if a serious crime occurs. If directed patrol operations are well targeted, the likelihood increases that crimes will be deterred. The police have also turned to more proactive efforts with respect to such crimes as narcotics offenses and extortion: to discover offenses and prosecute the offenders, they use informants, electronic surveillance, and undercover operations. They also use these methods to deal with street crimes, such as robbery and burglary.[31]

Still, the police response to crime is largely reactive, and police executives sense the limits of that approach. The reactive approach has always made it difficult to deal effectively with so-called victimless crimes—crimes that do not regularly produce victims or witnesses who are willing and able to mobilize the police and identify the offenders. (Victimless crimes include drug dealing, prostitution, bribery, and gambling.) Increasingly, however, the limitations of the reactive approach have also come to apply to ordinary street offenses, such as robbery and burglary. Such crimes should produce victims and witnesses who request service and offer cooperation, but, in the context of today's cities, they often do not, simply because many victims and witnesses are afraid to come forward.[32]

A frontier that practitioner-researcher teams are exploring is the notion that there might be some "criminogenic" circumstances that breed crime and that could be eliminated.

Another drawback of the reactive approach is that it does not enable the police to prevent specific crimes. Instead of having to wait for a crime to occur before taking action, they would much rather be able to intervene before the crime occurs, thus avoiding another criminal victimization. In a sense, of course, the reactive approach to crime control does have some preventive effects on crime. To the extent that the prospect of arrest, prosecution, and punishment deters criminal offenders, the reactive approach prevents some crimes. Furthermore, although the reactive approach requires that one offense occur—or as many as it takes to bring the culprit to justice—the approach is effective at least in preventing future offenses by that offender. Still, police executives believe there may be a way to prevent crime that is neither as reactive as lying in wait for an offender to inflict harm nor quite as proactive as getting into "social work."

A frontier that practitioner-researcher teams are exploring is the notion that there might be some "criminogenic" circumstances that breed crime and that could be eliminated.[33] A crowded street with cash-and-carry merchants jammed up against check-cashing storefronts, for example, might be a set of conditions that unduly tempt and enable certain people to commit larcenies. A dark hallway in a largely abandoned or fear-ridden housing project might facilitate a rape that otherwise would not occur. Recreational youth activities that end after much of the public transportation has stopped running might create conditions leading to fights among the teenagers or to fear and anger among the citizens living in adjacent neighborhoods.

As police departments are usually organized, however, it is hard to discover and analyze such conditions. The police are organized to notice and respond to incidents, not to notice and respond to the underlying problems or conditions that produce the incidents.[34] If individual street-level police practitioners do notice underlying problems, traditionally they are neither expected to place them on the department's action agenda nor rewarded for trying to do so. Yet police departments are increasingly finding that if they look behind the incidents, they can identify such problems. They also are finding that plausible solutions do not necessarily lie in enforcing the law but often in making such other responses as mobilizing other city agencies to take remedial action, organizing citizens to deal with an underlying problem, or mediating a dispute without recourse to the courts.[35] Indeed, many of the calls the police receive come repeatedly from the same places (see the chapter on the patrol function). If underlying problems can be dealt with, the results might be not only the prevention of crimes likely to emerge from the dangerous circumstances but also the reduction in calls for service.[36] This is crime prevention that is neither social work nor law enforcement as traditionally conceived.

Reducing fear and enhancing security

In pursuing their crime control mission, police executives are also frustrated by finding that citizens' fears are not necessarily tied to the likelihood that they will become victims of crime. Police executives have long assumed that the best way to reduce fear is to reduce criminal victimization. Consequently, they have seen the two objectives as closely aligned. Empirical research shows, however, that people's fears are surprisingly uncorrelated with their real risks of criminal victimization.[37] The fears seem to be triggered much more often by "incivilities," such as noisy teenagers, garbage on the streets, graffiti, and a general atmosphere of decline and indifference, than by actual levels of criminal victimization. In this sense, fear is a separate problem from criminal victimization.

Fear is socially costly.

In addition to being a separate problem, fear is also socially costly. It causes citizens to spend money and time on a variety of security devices. Even worse, it causes them to stay at home, to regard their fellow citizens with suspicion, even to move to another neighborhood. Paradoxically, although such responses may make individual citizens feel more secure, they make the broader society more dangerous, for they tear apart the social networks and informal mechanisms of social control that, in a healthy society, do most of the work of crime control and fear reduction (see the chapter on crime prevention). Such responses may also undermine the community's commitment to public security efforts by shifting resources toward private ones.

The fact that, even with all their precautions, citizens still feel afraid, plus the fact that security is increasingly provided by private individuals and commercial security firms (in wealthy neighborhoods, in places of employment, in public housing complexes), signals an important shortcoming in the traditional approach to both crime control and crime prevention.

As discussed more fully in the chapter on crime prevention, research has shown that there are some things police departments can do to reduce fear. The most important is probably to be as much of a presence in the minds of the citizens as they can be.[38] The method for doing this that is getting popularity is to get out of cars and talk to people. Apparently, the response people get from a 9-1-1 system, with all its capabilities, does not provide a reassuring sense that the police are available. So far, only personal contacts sustained over time seem to produce that effect.

Taken together, all these facts about fear pose an important strategic question for police executives, namely, should fear be acknowledged and responded to as a problem in its own right. A compelling case can be made for seeing fear as an important separate problem. And, indeed, a number of police departments have programs that do independently address the problem of fear. But many police executives have lingering concerns that the resources devoted to dealing with fear might better be spent on reducing real criminal victimization. They sense that stilling fears in a world in which criminal victimization rates have remained unchanged is a cynical and dangerous shell game. A policy maker deciding to forgo spending police resources on fear reduction activities, however, would be well advised to have available some plausible methods of reducing levels of actual criminal victimization and some powerful arguments making the case that citizens' current fears have been grossly overreported.

In sum, thoughtful police executives, taking crime control as their primary if not exclusive mission and rigorously scrutinizing the logic of that enterprise in light of their experience, are beginning to understand that crime will not necessarily yield to current approaches. The reactive strategy does not reach some important crimes effectively, and does not give police broad enough opportunities to prevent crime. Nor does it reduce citizens' fear of crime. These police executives are beginning to think they should describe their mission in terms of crime prevention and fear reduction as well as crime control.

Community roles in crime control

Current thought about the police mission has also been influenced by the discovery that the police are very dependent on the community for success in controlling crime. This discovery began to emerge as the police explored how effective their current programmatic technologies were in controlling crime.

The hardest blows policing had to take in the 1970s and 1980s were research results indicating that the principal programs on which the police were relying to control crime had only a limited effect (see the chapters on evolution, the patrol function, crime prevention, criminal investigations, and local drug control). The Kansas City patrol experiment told police that varying the levels of random patrol had little effect on the levels of crime or fear.[39] Indeed, citizens did not even recognize when patrol had been increased or reduced in their areas. Additional studies in Kansas City and elsewhere suggested that rapid response to calls for service did not necessarily result in increased arrests.[40] A series of studies of the investigative process, for example, found that detectives were crucially dependent not on the rapidity of police response but on the quality of information provided by victims and witnesses: if victims and witnesses could identify the offender, the crime could be solved. If they could not, only rarely could forensic wizardry fill the gap.[41]

Although these studies have been attacked from some quarters on methodological and other grounds, over time they have helped police executives understand why crime and fear could be increasing even as more resources were being devoted to policing. Although many other factors were contributing to increasing crime rates (for example, limited capacities to prosecute, try, and punish those offenders the police caught; a bulge in the proportion of the population in crime-prone ages; and adverse social and economic trends), it becomes increasingly plausible that weaknesses in the police strategy were also at least partly to blame. That was the bad news associated with the studies.

The good news was that the studies pointed to possible improvements in the strategy of policing. Specifically, they reminded police executives of what many already knew intuitively: that the police cannot succeed in their efforts without an effective partnership with the communities they police; indeed, that the community itself is the first line of defense in controlling both crime and fear. Thus, the thin-blue-line metaphor began to yield to the metaphor of a broad blanket of community self-determination.

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The community's central role in securing public safety became apparent once one looked closely at how the police strategy really worked. Many offenses occur far from the view of patrolling police officers, visible only to other citizens. Without the help of citizens, the reach of police patrol is thin and superficial. Unless citizens are willing and able to call the police immediately, the rapid response capability that has been so carefully constructed is of little value.[42] If the call is delayed, the police cannot prevent the crime or catch the offender. All they can do is comfort the victim—which is not without value but is hardly the full measure of desired police service. Unless citizens provide information, police can neither solve crimes nor guarantee an effective prosecution. In this sense, vigilant and motivated citizens are an integral part of police operations. If that piece of the machinery is not working well, the return on expensive investments in police capabilities is limited—like a state-of-the-art aircraft with an inadequate flight plan.

The fact that communities are the first line of defense was driven home by an important and unexpected development. In the 1980s citizens who were dissatisfied with public policing turned more and more to private self-defense. During the decade expenditures on private security rose much more rapidly than expenditures on public police. Employment in private security also grew much faster than employment in public police agencies. By 1985 private security guards outnumbered public police two to one.[43] The fact that the public police were implicitly (and sometimes explicitly) competing with private security activities for a share of the security business made many police executives rethink their role and the way they wanted to relate to the communities they policed.

If the police are operationally dependent on assistance from citizens and citizens must inevitably be the first line of defense in controlling crime, the question of what the police must do to mobilize and guide those forces becomes crucial. In the past, the answer was to be responsive to the citizenry by responding quickly to individual calls for service. That did not, however, create effective working partnerships between citizens and the police. There seem to be two reasons for this.

First, it is by no means clear that the police response to individual incidents has been very satisfactory. Citizens call the police because they want help.

Traditionally, police have arrived on the scene conveying a strong sense that they are interested only in serious crimes and that the only question that needs addressing is whether someone has broken a law. If the incident does not involve a crime, or if no arrest seems appropriate, the police have been eager to cut short the encounter with the citizen and get back "in service" to be available to be dispatched to the next call. This response does not necessarily make friends among citizens or increase their enthusiasm for calling the police next time.

Second, responding to occurrences phoned in by individual citizens focuses police attention on incidents rather than on larger and more lasting underlying problems (see the chapters on the patrol function and criminal investigations). It makes the police think of their clients exclusively as individuals rather than as both individuals and members of groups. The focus on incidents and individual victims has made it hard for the police to form partnerships with community groups.[44] Partnerships have also been inhibited by the organizational structure of police departments. The functional organization of departments implies that geographically based community groups—groups whose concerns cross functional boundaries—cannot gain convenient access to departments because few in the department share their particular perspective.

The question thus becomes to what extent the police are prepared to adapt their organization and management to strengthen their relationships with community networks and thereby strengthen their capacity to control crime. This would require deflecting their current preoccupation with crime enough to see the additional concerns that citizens bring them as worthy of consideration. The idea is that one spends time building the relationship so that it is strong when tested in dealing with crime. To try to deal with crime without developing that relationship is fruitless. Yet one cannot build the relationship by concentrating exclusively on crime. Thus, police executives are rethinking the role of the community in crime control efforts and are exploring how police-community relationships might best be developed (see the chapter on crime prevention).

Other roles of the police

The last important factor shaping police views about their mission is the simple fact that citizens call them for many purposes other than crime control. Crime fighting in the form of interrupting crimes in progress or pursuing fleeing offenders occupies far less than 10 percent of a patrol force's time. The bulk of the time is taken up with other matters—giving information to citizens, filling out reports, responding to medical emergencies, and mediating conflicts that have not yet escalated into crimes.

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When the police talk to communities at meetings with concerned citizens, the citizens are rarely concerned exclusively or even primarily with what the police regard as serious crimes. They are very interested in discussing such matters as disorderly bars, inadequate garbage collection, and poor street lighting. It is not an accident that citizens routinely use the police for help with such problems. Citizens today have many needs and fears, and the police have many capabilities beyond the ability to fight crime that are useful to citizens. Citizens see that the police officer's formal authority can be quite helpful to them in mediating a variety of disputes. They also find the stature and prestige of the officers helpful to them as they seek to organize their own neighborhood activities or to request assistance from other governmental agencies.

An important question is whether these non-crime-related services are beyond the police mandate. Police executives—with the support of the communities they serve—can answer this question in several ways. First, they can decide that these demands are distractions from their essential focus and do what they can to reduce the demands or shift them to other agencies. Second, they can decide that these demands are consistent with their basic crime-fighting mission and are therefore important. Providing these services to citizens might advance crime-fighting objectives by helping to eliminate conditions that can lead to crime and by building the types of relations with the community that help in solving crimes. Third, they can decide that these non-crime-related activities are worth doing in their own right and that the police are uniquely—or at least ideally—positioned to provide them.

Which direction a police executive takes on these questions has important implications for the definitions of the police function or mission; for the enthusiasm that citizens, political and legal authorities, and other influential segments of society feel for their police department; for the kinds of capabilities that must be developed within the department; and for the value of the police to the community. Ultimately, the challenge facing police executives is to find the best use of their department in confronting the urgent problems of their communities.

The accountability of police management

As discussed above, an organization's mission or purpose must meet the three tests of (1) support from public officials, (2) operational feasibility and suitability, and (3) value to the community. Support from public officials—and from the public generally—is a function of police accountability for use of the two main public resources entrusted to them: tax dollars and the authority to bring the power of the state to bear on individual citizens suspected of wrongdoing. (See also the subsection below on accounting internally for the use of authority.)

Recognizing the value of accountability

The current strategy of policing puts heavy emphasis on independence from political interference. Because society has learned to value the impartial administration of justice and the ideal of a professionally competent police department, the police have been insulated from some forms of improper political interference. Chiefs of police have often been protected from arbitrary firing by special civil service rules.[45] In many departments, a host of other appointments and promotions are strictly regulated by civil service rules. Police departments have fought to assign patrol resources on the basis of need rather than political power (see the chapter on the evolution of contemporary policing). Mayors and council members are frequently reluctant to intervene publicly in police affairs lest they be accused of improper political interference.[46]

The acknowledged importance of maintaining police independence from improper political interference, however, has misled some police executives (and even more police officers) into believing that the police are autonomous and that any kind of political oversight is improper. In their view, they should be allowed to enforce the law in ways they see fit, and elected officials and neighborhood associations should not attempt to influence police department operations.

The reality is that political interference and political oversight are quite distinct and that the police, like all public institutions, must remain accountable to both citizens (through their elected representatives) and the law. As discussed in the chapter on the governmental setting, the police are broadly accountable to the chief executive of the local government for which they work. They are accountable to special oversight agencies, such as civil service commissions and budget agencies. They are accountable to citizens through media coverage of their

activities. And they are accountable to courts—through the courts' responses to the criminal cases they bring against criminal defendants and the civil suits filed by citizens against the police for improper conduct.

Police accountability to these agencies, to the media and the citizenry at large, and to the courts is required morally and legally. It is also necessary in practice. However much the police complain about all these forms of oversight, the practical reality is that any of the overseers can rise up in indignation at the police and force them to change their operations. To put fully into perspective the sometimes difficult position in which police administrators find themselves, it should be observed that the rank and file likewise has powerful capacities to rise up in indignation, with equally profound implications for police policy. Moreover, policing is one of the few occupations in which the individual first-line worker possesses substantial de facto power, through egregious misconduct, to "fire" his or her boss (to calm a public that is outraged by some flagrant violation of policy, the chief may—rightly or wrongly—be offered up as sacrificial lamb).

The police are accountable to public officials and the public generally for use of the two main public resources entrusted to them: tax dollars and the authority to bring the power of the state to bear on individual citizens suspected of wrongdoing.

The police have sought to protect their autonomy and limit outside intrusions by seeking to narrow their accountability and establish it on their own terms.[47] In defining their mission as professional law enforcement and in seeing their main (or only) function as effective crime fighting, they have implicitly defined the dimensions of their accountability. Committing themselves to professionalism, they have agreed to be accountable for the qualifications of their officers, the training they provide, and the skill officers show in the field. Embracing the goal of crime control and offering a broad crime-fighting service to the public, they have, at least partly, accepted responsibility for levels of crime, invited individual citizens to make claims on them, and made themselves accountable for the rapidity and comprehensiveness of their responses to calls for service. To the extent that the police perform well in training their officers, fighting crime, and responding to calls, of course, their credibility, autonomy, and legitimacy increase. They may even be able to use successful performance in these domains as proof against criticism and intrusions when an inevitable mistake occurs (see the chapter on performance measurement).

Policing is one of the few occupations in which the individual first-line worker possesses substantial de facto power, through egregious misconduct, to "fire" his or her boss.

By seeking to define their accountability in this way, however, police ignore a central unresolved tension at the core of their relations with society (in all its multiplicity and complexity): the tension between crime fighting and professional crime fighting.

When citizens embrace the police as crime fighters, they focus on results and don't think of the means apart from the results. They like to see the bad guys behind bars—so they admire the toughness, courage, and technical skills the police use to capture dangerous criminals. They also tend to be impatient with legal rulings that "handcuff" the police, and they tend to regard civil suits against the police as the product of money-hungry lawyers and misguided agitators, not

police misconduct. This perspective dominates the public view of policing. It dominates even more the police view of policing. In both cases, it is fed by Hollywood portraits of street cops who exalt ends over means.

At times, however, citizens see the police differently. When the police accidentally shoot an unarmed teenager, break into a person's home without a warrant, or are revealed to be corrupt, citizens begin to see the police as criminals. Instead of admiring the police capacity to lock up bad guys, citizens see the police as reckless abusers of the power that was entrusted to them. They demand a strict accounting.

To a degree, citizens' indignation is justified. Part of the ideal of police professionalism is that the police will use their powers in a disciplined, legal way. That has been part of the promise the police have made to society since the 1970s. This code of professionalism has been part of the unwritten social contract by which the police have sought and gained some degree of autonomy from political oversight.

From the police perspective, however, public indignation inevitably feels like betrayal. After all, up until the events that trigger the indignation, the police feel they are being encouraged to be tough. They think they have a deal with the public that they will be indulged a little in their efforts to control crime. That deal holds up only until the police make their first bad public mistake. Then a backlash occurs. In the backlash, individual officers are made scapegoats, careers are sacrificed, and department morale collapses.

The alternative to going through these cycles of limited and then broader accountability is for the police and the public to work harder at resolving the tension between effectiveness in crime fighting on the one hand and the disciplined, constitutional use of public authority by professional crime fighters on the other. After all, among the laws that it is most important to enforce are those regulating the police. A professional law enforcement agency accepts this regulation as an important goal, not just as a troubling constraint. It works to remind the public of the police's own interest in a disciplined police force, and it does so even, perhaps especially, at times when the citizens wish to indulge the police to ensure greater effectiveness in crime control. In short, professionalism calls on the police to stand for the values of fair and impartial law enforcement rather than ruthless crime fighting and vengeance.[48] That is a difficult thing to stand for if society is only too ready to accept less, but a broader sense of police mission—of the values that police should stand for in the community—is the key first step in giving police accountability a firmer foundation.

Structuring accountability relationships

The second step in firmly grounding police accountability is being clear about exactly how the police will structure their continuing relationships with those to whom they are accountable—local elected and appointed officials, the public in general, the citizens who call for assistance, and the criminal justice system. Partly because the police have sought to insulate themselves from improper political interference, these relationships are fragile, shifting, and episodic.

There are a variety of reporting relationships between the police chief and an elected or appointed executive. In some cities, for example, the chief reports directly to the city manager or mayor. In others the reporting relationship is through a public safety director, assistant city manager, or commissioner. In all cases the police are linked to the political authority largely through budget submissions and annual reports (see also the chapter on the governmental setting). The principal statistical measures used in those reports to evaluate police needs and accomplishments are statistics on crime rates, clearance rates, and response times (see a later section of this chapter, and see the chapter on performance measurement).[49]

Through media coverage of their activities, the police are also held directly accountable to the public. Media coverage, however, tends to focus principally on police performance in solving notorious cases or dealing with instances of officer misconduct. Rarely do the media focus on broader issues of police performance, such as the allocation of resources or policy on how calls for service are prioritized for response.[50]

In an important sense, police are also accountable to the citizens who call them for assistance. To begin with, the speed of their response to these calls traditionally has been one of the key measures of police performance (see the chapter on performance measurement). Furthermore, what they do at the scene of the call is primarily determined by whether or not a law has been violated and by the citizen's willingness to file charges.[51] And it is the concrete experience of the citizen's encounter with the police—and rumors in the neighborhood about the encounter—that provides the basis for the broad public view of the police department.

Finally, police are held accountable to the courts and other elements of the criminal justice system. Prosecutors can decide to process police cases or to reject them.[52] They can comment to the media and to other professional associations about police performance. Judges may hold the police accountable for their actions through evidentiary rulings in criminal cases and through decisions in civil liability cases.[53]

A review of the current structure of accountability reveals two important characteristics. The first is that the structure involves either very broad, overall patterns of police conduct or very specific incidents. Budgets, annual reports, and professional gossip about the police all tend to be about the overall performance of the department. Newspaper stories and civil suits focus on individual incidents. Such incidents may be seen as indicative of broader features of police performance, and that may be what gives them power, but the essential focus is on the individual incident. And the extent to which incidents are representative is often discussed but rarely analyzed. Thus, the specific incident often assumes great importance—without necessarily being an indicator of larger patterns.

The second characteristic of the current structure of accountability is that the most powerful pressures on the police are those associated with the individual incidents. The pressures on the police to perform well on average and across the board are, in general, quite weak. Political authority does not demand this. Oversight of the police budget imposes some financial discipline but does not lead to demands for gains in productivity or for innovations in policing. As for citizen demands for overall improvements in policing, they are quite rare. When they are made, typically they come from either established watchdog groups (crime commissions and other "good-government" groups) or neighborhood-based grass-roots organizations (see the chapter on crime prevention). As a result, most departments are organized to avoid individual mistakes and to handle single incidents well rather than to sustain broad improvements or initiate experiments in better ways of policing.

Over the years alternative mechanisms of accountability have been proposed and implemented with the idea of giving citizens or community groups more of a voice in calling for across-the-board improvements. Civilian review boards represent one commonly proposed mechanism for improving police accountability, but they are handicapped by their narrow focus on incidents of police misconduct and by the resulting police hostility toward them.[54] Some communities have created police commissions of various forms. Some of these have been temporary, and some permanent; some have been established by law, others by more informal means; some exist for limited purposes, such as appointing a chief, whereas others have broader, more continuing powers and responsibilities—at least on paper. The influence of these commissions over police operations depends to a large degree on their responsibilities, the stature

of their members, their history, their specific written powers, and the support offered at any particular moment by the elected and appointed leadership of the municipality.

An important innovation in the structure of accountability is the growing tendency of the police to work with community groups (see the chapter on crime prevention). Sometimes the police create these groups as a way of dealing with neighborhood crime problems. At other times they meet regularly with existing groups. Community groups see and are concerned about problems that neither local officials nor individual citizens see as clearly. These groups also bring different capacities for acting in support of the police than are available at city- or county-wide or individual levels.

Some observers worry that attempting to improve accountability by encouraging police responsiveness to the concerns of groups at the neighborhood level will create problems. They fear the police may lose some of their autonomy and become subject to the parochial interests and needs of some elements of the community at the expense of others. One early police advocate of community involvement cautioned about the risks of "a blind pilgrimage to the temples of community control."[55] Of particular concern to some is the possibility that wealthy and well-organized communities will be able to demand more service from the police than poor and disorganized ones.[56] Although legitimate, this concern should not separate police from neighborhood groups. After all, the skills police executives need in order to forge productive community partnerships include skills in promoting the professional development and integrity of their organization without yielding to local groups their responsibilities for managing the resources entrusted to police. Police are obligated to respond on the basis of need rather than political clout or ability to pay. And they are obligated to protect the rights of the minority as well as the safety of the majority.

Police organizations must work hard to cultivate a constituency by expressing and acting on a commitment to important values.

Strong mechanisms of external accountability—accountability to those who look at across-the-board performance, gains in productivity, and innovative policing, not just at isolated incidents—are a key to public support. Police organizations must work hard to cultivate a constituency by expressing and acting on a commitment to important values.

Strong external accountability is also an important instrument of internal police leadership. This strikes many as a paradox. It seems as if police leaders could be strong only if they were independent of outside accountability, if their legitimacy depended only on their own expertise and vision. Past reality, however, is that when the police were separated from politics, police leaders did not become independent. They simply became more dependent on the most powerful group that was still interested in and capable of influencing police operations, namely, police officers themselves.

Without external accountability, police executives have little leverage over their own organizations. Thus, one of the important ways police leaders can bolster their leadership is to create and keep vital their relationship of accountability with the broader public.[57] That is one of the important lessons that has been learned by those who sought to professionalize the police and eliminate corruption and who are now trying to steer the police toward adopting a strategy of community policing. Without public demands for less corruption or improved policing—demands stimulated through external accountability—police executives are powerless to lead.

Internal organization and control

Once departmental values (or goals) and appropriate external accountability relations have been established, police executives must turn to organizing, staffing, and controlling police operations. The reason for resolving broad questions of organizational strategy before addressing these technical aspects of management is that decisions about the technical matters must be made to serve the strategy. All too often, however, police managers tinker with organizational structure and personnel systems without being able to relate their decisions to the purposes of the organization (see the chapter on human resources).

All too often police managers tinker with organizational structure and personnel systems without being able to relate their decisions to the purposes of the organization.

Although a police executive must continually push for a vision of what ought to be, he or she must also focus on what the organization can realistically accomplish. What can be realistically accomplished depends on how the instruments of managerial influence—namely, organizing, staffing, and controlling—are used to shape the organization's operations and capabilities. This section focuses on how those instruments can be used to create police departments capable of pursuing the broad goals described above. This section also discusses—as an extension of operational capability—how a department's value to society is assessed.

Organizing

Organizing involves structuring roles and reporting relationships within an organization.[58] The structure thus created is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. It must be appropriate to the task of the organization and the available personnel and other resources. Basically, there are three ways of structuring the work of an organization, and the decision about which way or ways to choose requires an understanding of the distinctions among line, staff, and support functions. It also requires addressing the issue of number of levels and degree of centralization.

Functional, programmatic, and geographical organization Generally speaking, the work of an organization can be structured in three ways: by function, by product or program, and by geographical area.

1. In functional organization (the most common type), work is divided on the basis of the kind of work it is—for example, administration, patrol, or investigations.
2. In programmatic organization, work is organized on the basis of its products of programs—which, in the case of police departments, might be kinds of crime (juvenile delinquency, narcotics, robbery, sex crimes).
3. In geographical organization, the work is assigned by area—a Main Street Division, a Lakeside Division, and so on.

Most organizations are hybrids in that they use all three types of structural units. Consequently, in characterizing a given organizational structure as functional, programmatic, or geographical, one is usually describing the dominant logic in the organization, the logic that is used to structure the organization at

the highest level. In this sense, most police departments are organized *functionally* rather than programmatically or geographically. The divisions at the top of the organization typically reflect the major police functions.[59] Most police departments, however, also have some units that are defined in nonfunctional terms. Special units are often created to deal with particular kinds of crimes, and generally patrol is subdivided into geographical units. The investigations unit—a functional division—may be subdivided into units that deal with particular kinds of crime or are defined by geographical area.

Structuring police departments functionally has some important strengths. It can enable officers to develop expertise in their functional domain. It also can prevent special interest groups organized around geographical areas or specific kinds of crimes from exercising undue influence over police operations. Indeed, the decision during the 1960s to shift from a geographical structure of precinct commands to a functional structure was an important device used to break the power of geographically organized political machines.

But the functional structure also has some important weaknesses. It can promote parochialism and competition within the organization. It can make coordination across functional lines difficult. It can create artificial boundaries between divisions (if, for example, no investigative work can be done by the patrol unit). It can encourage managers to think of themselves as technical experts rather than as people whose special skills lie in getting others to work together and develop their own technical skills. Most important, it can mean that the organization often frustrates and fails to garner the support of neighborhood groups because no one short of the chief of police can deal with a problem that requires a multifunctional response.

Line, staff, and support functions Designing a suitable organizational structure for a police department also requires an understanding of the distinctions among line, staff, and support functions:

1. Line functions are those that work directly on achieving the department's objectives. The patrol division, the detective bureau, and the traffic division are all line functions.
2. Staff functions are those that assist top management in directing the organization and in accounting for the organization's activities. The budget unit, the planning and evaluation unit, and legal counsel are all staff functions.
3. Support functions are those that provide services to the entire organization and that cut across the functional, programmatic, and geographical lines. Examples include personnel, vehicle maintenance, and procurement activities.[60]

A frequent problem in police organizations is that support functions or staff functions are placed within a single line unit. It is not unusual, for example, to find the records section (a support function) reporting to the commander of investigations (a line function). This would make some sense if detectives were the primary contributors to and users of records. But they are not—and other units may find it more difficult than necessary to gain access to the information and may be more reluctant than they should be to contribute to it. Not having the records section as a separate unit serving all of the organization's line operations means that attempts to get other units to produce better information for the records section or to use the records in planning their activities, will be less successful than might otherwise be the case.

Number of levels and degree of centralization Two other crucial issues that must be addressed in organizing a police department are the number of levels in the organization and the degree of centralization that is desirable. In the past,

police departments have been organized like the military—with unified command authority, strict hierarchies, and many organizational levels. One important characteristic of the military structure is that any one manager or supervisor has a relatively narrow span of control—that is, he or she oversees relatively few subordinates. The aims of such organizational structures are essentially to (1) ensure effective discipline and control through very close supervision; (2) pinpoint accountability for command decisions; and (3) enable the department to form into operational units of varying size ranging from the individual officer to the entire organization.

The commitment to unified command, strict hierarchy, and many levels tends to produce centralized decision making.

The commitment to unified command, strict hierarchy, and many levels tends to produce centralized decision making—at least formal decision making—in police organizations. This is partly because of the symbolism of tight control and command. Symbolically, each officer embodies the will of the chief, whose directives about how officers should behave are laid down in the organization's manual of policies and procedures and enforced by the ranks of mid-level managers. The department behaves in a uniform and correct manner and thereby reassures citizens that the law is applied equally and properly in individual cases.

Centralized control tends to create very steep vertical organizations with many levels of middle managers. It requires that officers look to higher levels of the organization for authorization to act. And those at higher levels are required to take responsibility for the actions of subordinates. It is for this reason that, as suggested earlier, the police officer can "fire" his or her boss through misconduct. Because there are a great many middle managers who conceive of their jobs as controlling the conduct of subordinates, there is always someone of higher rank with whom lower-level officers may consult. Moreover, such consultation will absolve the subordinates of any blame if the action goes sour. These arrangements tend to push formal decision making to the top in police organizations.

In a decentralized organization, individuals have much greater freedom to make decisions about what work should be done to contribute to the overall objectives of the organization and about how it should be done.

The opposite of centralization—decentralization—is a concept often misunderstood in a police organization. For some, decentralization means having substations and ministations in which patrol officers and investigators work. The existence of such facilities is often a basis for describing the department as "decentralized." In this chapter, though, a decentralized organization is defined as one in which initiative, decisions, and responsibility rest at the lowest possible level. In a decentralized organization, individuals have much greater freedom to make decisions about what work should be done to contribute to the overall objectives of the organizations and about how it should be done.

Decentralization has essentially three advantages. First, it frees higher-level managers from having to spend all their time and intellectual energy on pressing operational matters. It enables them to concentrate on strategies that will improve the organization's capabilities to perform in the future. Second, it improves operational decisions because those decisions are more

timely and are made by people who are closer to the facts of the situation. Third, by pushing responsibility and initiative downward in the organization, decentralization challenges more people to be creative and useful workers. That generally results in higher job satisfaction, as well as a greater opportunity for managers to spot talent in the organization. To be sure, challenging people in this way makes it possible to identify personnel who, at least currently, lack the judgment that would justify managers' entrusting them with the power of the state.

Centralization is currently the dominant way of structuring decision making in police organizations, but it has several drawbacks. The principal one is that the day-to-day work of the police does not lend itself to this structure. Police officers have a wide range of discretion in handling situations.[61] Police officers and investigators operating on the street confront many nonroutine situations. They must decide largely on their own whether to arrest and whether to use force. The situations they confront often develop so quickly that they cannot ask in advance for advice or approval. Some situations are so nearly unique that they are not covered by existing policies and procedures, and officers must handle them using a great deal of informal discretion. In reality, then, the quality of policing generally depends on the initiative, values, and discretion of the officers rather than on the completeness of the policies and procedures manual and the closeness with which officers are supervised. A centralized, hierarchical police organization tends to discourage initiative and discretion in officers rather than guiding and harnessing these qualities.

A second drawback of centralization is that it works against police aspirations for professional status. The essence of being a professional is that one can be trusted to exercise discretion for the benefit of society on the basis of one's accumulated expertise and commitment to the values that guide the profession. Professionals are not seen as requiring close supervision. As a result, the institutions in which they serve have very few organizational levels. Professionals are held accountable through peer evaluations of their performance rather than through close supervision and prior authorization for their actions.

A third disadvantage of centralization is simply that it tends to make rising through the ranks the most important means of getting ahead in the organization. This can be valuable if mid-level managers find useful ways to contribute to the performance of the organization. It can be disastrous if the managerial ranks simply provide a refuge for officers who wish to escape the rigors of operating as the work force of the organization and who find no way to make important contributions as managers.

One can imagine a department in which lieutenants become mid-level managers not simply by dutifully writing out the shift schedule and staffing the station house but by proposing tactical solutions to problems, devising innovative police operations, or working with community groups to identify their priorities. One can imagine sergeants assuming primary responsibility for training and developing officers and coaching them on how to improve their performance, rather than overseeing the officers' activities and replacing their subordinates' expertise with their own. But in today's police organizations, mid-level managers seldom take on these kinds of responsibilities. In fact, with or without a redefinition of the role of sergeants and lieutenants, some observers question whether police departments need as many mid-level managers as most of them now have.

Reducing the number of levels and replacing the traditional centralized structure with a more decentralized one would leave two important problems unresolved, however. First, the department would have to develop other career paths through the organization (other than up through rank structures) to maintain the commitment and motivation of officers during the course of

their careers. Second, the department would have to find a way to assure citizens that officers remain under control and that their actions are guided by the public values now formalized in policies and procedures. The section below on staffing ends by suggesting a solution to the issue of career path, and the section on controlling ends by suggesting alternatives to close operational supervision as a way to maintain the accountability of officers.

Staffing

Staffing is a critically important and complex function of police management. Staffing responsibilities encompass a range of activities—human resource planning, recruitment, selection, training, development, evaluation, and promotion[62]—all of which are discussed at greater length in the chapters on human resources and performance measurement. Each aspect of the staffing process presents challenges and opportunities for the police manager.

Human resource planning The first step in the staffing process is human resource planning. It involves setting out the framework for how future personnel needs will be met. It requires managers to determine how many employees are needed, when, and with what skills and experience. A human resource plan does not determine the number of positions needed to achieve organizational goals. Rather, it is a way for managers to use the department's resource allocation plan plus knowledge of the department's turnover and projected growth rates to develop a replacement chart that guides recruitment efforts. The human resource plan can help managers solve the age-old problem departments have in reducing the time associated with filling vacant positions. In most communities it takes a minimum of two years to fill a position with an officer functioning reasonably well on the street. A well thought out human resource plan will help reduce the effect of this process because it will provide the basis for hiring and training cycles that allow departments to stay within their personnel budgets.

Recruitment and selection Recruitment and selection have been particularly difficult for police departments for several reasons. In the first place, in many departments the police leadership itself plays a minor role in recruitment and selection, with the bulk of the work and decisions in the hands of a city or county personnel department. Moreover, regardless of who has primary responsibility for recruitment and selection, it can be difficult to find suitable candidates. On average, police agencies screen about ten candidates for every one who is hired, and many police departments are finding it difficult to fill vacant positions. Although this ratio is often considered an indicator of stringent employment standards, it may also reflect poor recruiting practices; that is, it may indicate that the department is failing to identify the strongest possible candidates. Drug abuse, too, is part of the problem. Departments across the nation indicate that as many as three-quarters of their applicants have experimented with drugs,[63] and many of these applicants are rejected. Moreover, population projections for the 1990s point to a shrinking of the age group from which the police generally recruit.[64]

Recruitment and selection are further complicated by police desires to increase entry-level educational standards and to meet affirmative action goals. Progress has been made in both areas. A 1988 study, for example, indicates that the educational level of the police increased from an average of 12.4 years in 1967 to 14 years in 1988.[65] The study also indicates growth in the number of women and minorities in policing, although not at the upper levels of most police departments. In an effort to increase their educational requirements without negatively affecting recruiting goals, some departments have

developed special programs to recruit in high schools, including offering part-time jobs and tuition for students to attend community colleges after graduation. The idea is to develop in young people an interest in policing and to channel that interest before the students leave high school or develop other occupational interests.

Training and development of operational personnel After a department has hired new officers, it must train them to carry out their responsibilities (see the chapter on human resources). One of the greatest investments a police department makes in new officers is their entry-level training, which usually begins with from three to six months of classroom training and is followed by from one to three months of field training. By the time an individual has completed classroom and field training and a probationary period, the department has worked with that person for about two years.

The costs of this training process are very high, and departments have begun to seek alternatives that are less expensive but will not increase their liability for failure to train properly. Minnesota, for example, has an innovative plan requiring that an officer be certified by the state before being employed.[66] Certification requires, among other things, that applicants complete most of their police training in state-supported schools at their own expense. Although the police department must still orient new officers to its policies, procedures, and customs, the cost is much lower than it was before. In Florida, individuals may attend state-certified training academies on their own under sponsorship of a police department. This procedure enables applicants to increase their employability and also reduces the department's costs. These programs are still exceptions to the norm, but they show considerable promise as low-cost alternatives to more traditional police practices.

Following the probationary period, police departments must continue to provide employees with opportunities for training and development so they can hone their skills in their current job and prepare themselves for promotion. Formal in-service training is one way of doing that, and some states require a specific number of hours for individuals to maintain certification. This training is of critical importance to the department and the community. It should be conducted at least annually on the basis of an analysis of training needs. Some departments routinely conduct training needs assessments. These assessments use a variety of informational analyses and surveys of personnel. The analysis of training needs enables a department to structure its training program to address specific organizational needs. The analysis is also useful to executives when they must make decisions about sending employees to training programs outside the department.

Executive and management development One area that has been neglected in many departments is the development of supervisory and managerial personnel. The reasons for this vary, but most police executives would point to the cost of formal programs and the limited number of programs that have a police focus. Nevertheless, police departments do have opportunities both on and off the job for developing personnel in supervisory and managerial positions.

On the job, personnel can be developed in at least four ways. Perhaps the most effective way is through coaching. Coaching is day-to-day support and encouragement of employees by the supervisor to help them learn and develop to the best of their abilities. Under supervision, aspiring managers deal with supervisory and management problems in a real-life setting. A police department that makes conscious use of coaching can make great strides in developing a cadre of competent supervisors and managers. This method requires careful evaluation of potential coaches, and personnel in need of development must

be carefully matched with those most capable of providing it. If a formal coaching program is viewed in the same light as a field training program, it may require training for the coaches.

The second method of on-the-job development is job rotation. This involves regularly moving supervisory and managerial personnel into different types of assignments so they can learn about various aspects of the organization. The third method is to designate certain staff positions as training positions. Some departments use aides to the chief or senior commanders in this way. The fourth method is planned work activity. This involves assigning individuals to a task force, committee, or major project. For example, an individual could be given the responsibility of managing the department's effort to become nationally accredited.[67] Many individuals have been promoted as a result of that kind of experience, and, in some cases, the experience has served as a springboard to the position of police chief.

Off-the-job opportunities for supervisory and managerial development range from enrollment in graduate degree programs offered at a local college or university to attendance at nationally recognized law enforcement programs. The FBI sponsors a number of national programs—the National Academy, the Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar, and the National Executive Institute. Other national programs are offered by the Southern Police Institute, the Southwestern Law Enforcement Institute, and Northwestern University. The Police Executive Research Forum has sponsored the Senior Management Institute for Police since 1981. This three-week program is conducted in conjunction with faculty from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. All these programs—and others noted in the chapter on external resources—make a contribution, but they cannot fully meet the national demand for high-quality supervisory and managerial training.

Police departments continue to struggle with basic decisions on what aspects of performance to measure, and how.

This has led to the development of programs at the state level. One of the best known is the California Command College. Officers must participate in a rigorous selection process to attend. The two-year course combines classroom and field work with independent research on some aspect of policing and the future. Other state-level programs are being developed around the country—notably in Ohio and Florida.

Evaluation An important aspect of the staff development process is the use of performance evaluation (see the chapters on human resources and performance measurement). Police departments continue to struggle with basic decisions on what aspects of performance to measure, and how. This problem exists at all levels of the policing hierarchy. At both lower and higher levels the current emphasis is on "bean counting." At the lower levels, this means emphasizing the number of arrests, tickets written, and calls answered. Usually there is little regard for whether the number of those activities has anything to do with solving the problems they represent. At higher levels of the organization, the bean counting continues as managers and mayors count reported crime, response time, arrests, and crime clearances. As discussed more fully in other chapters, this preoccupation with crime-related statistics ignores major aspects of the police workload. Efforts to resolve this dilemma have met with minimal success. Police supervisors and managers—together with mayors, appointed managers, elected councils, chambers of commerce, and the media—are part of the problem and, potentially, part of the solution. Bean counting

has its place in policing, but the emphasis has shifted to developing and using other measures that more accurately reflect the effectiveness and importance of what police do at all levels of the organization.

Promotion The final aspect of staffing to be addressed here is promotion (for elaboration, see the chapter on human resources). Promotional decisions are of critical importance to any organization, and police departments are no exception. Some changes have been made in the promotional processes police use, but standardized written tests and interviews continue to be the most common methods of developing lists of candidates. Although tests and interviews are useful in measuring a candidate's knowledge, they are limited when it comes to predicting how that knowledge will be applied on the job. Moreover, the standard approaches to developing the promotional lists generally do not consider past performance (unless the individual has made a serious mistake)—yet past performance is frequently the best predictor of future performance. Many departments are using assessment centers, which are specially developed simulations designed to evaluate performance in job-related situations. This method, too, has its limitations, but if properly used it allows a much more in-depth evaluation of a candidate's potential.

Besides the process by which police make promotional decisions, two fundamental issues need to receive much more consideration by the police. The first has to do with a system that essentially forces officers to seek promotion to enhance both their financial condition and their status. As the pressure to do more with less continues, it will be important for the police to develop ways for officers to remain on the street or in an investigative capacity without sacrificing their ability to increase their status and salary (see the sidebar on "master" police officers in the chapter on human resources).

Second is the issue of lateral entry. Few police departments consider candidates from outside for filling vacancies in the sworn supervisory and management ranks. Although there is great resistance to the concept of lateral entry and some inherent practical problems (for example, pensions, reduced motivation for lower-ranking officers to develop managerial skills), this lack of mobility limits the development of individual officers and the department as a whole. The best witnesses on this point are the relatively small number of police leaders who have had the opportunity during their careers to participate in an executive exchange program, in which a department loans one or more key managers to a department in another community for a period of weeks or months. Almost invariably, the participating managers describe this experience as one of the high points of their executive development. For the most part, the only way to be hired in a sworn position is to enter at the bottom or at the top. The result is that police departments often end up filling key positions with the best they have, not necessaraily with the best they can get. In large departments, it is often an open question whether leaders are even aware of the best they have for particular assignments. In some states the opportunity for lateral entry is greater because of statewide pension systems and training programs, but even in those states little lateral movement between police departments actually takes place.

Controlling

The third key managerial function that police managers must perform, after organizing and staffing, is controlling the resources and operations of the department and accounting to external authorities for the financial costs and results of their efforts. Financial accounting includes assessing the police value to the community. Finally, the resources the police are responsible for controlling are not only monies but also the power to compel.

The principal mechanisms for controlling the organization's financial resources are the budget and the cost accounting system. The budget sets out a planned use of expenditures for the organization and is approved annually by higher political authority. The cost accounting system measures the flow of expenditures through the organization and attributes them to particular activities. Police executives must address three major issues associated with financial control systems: (1) how to develop the budget; (2) how to use the budget to reflect not only operational expenditures but also key investments needed to improve the organization's future performance; and (3) how to measure organizational activities and accomplishments.

Developing the budget In most police departments, budgets are prepared by civilians in administrative support units. The principal line commanders of the organization are not directly involved. Often, even the chief executive is not significantly involved. To the extent that police managers are involved in the process, they focus their attention on staffing levels in the units for which they are responsible. This kind of budgeting system makes sense in an organization that thinks about its activities in terms of staffing up existing organizational units, but it does not make sense in an organization that is forward thinking and that identifies problems to be resolved.

To the extent that new projects propose solutions to problems that the police department's overseers consider important they may garner additional resources for the police.

In a department that focuses on identifying and solving problems for the community, managers must constantly be thinking about specific initiatives to be undertaken, as well as about filling existing posts and assignments. Ideas about what problems to address should be reflected in budgeting decisions. Proposed projects may become contenders for the organization's resources—or, to the extent that new projects propose solutions to problems that the police department's overseers consider important, they may garner additional resources for the police. In a problem-oriented department, then, the budgeting process will be more participatory and bottom-up than it is in a traditional department (see the chapters on the patrol function, criminal investigations, and local drug control).

Investing in organizational capability Although most local governments budget for new police facilities and other capital investments, they sometimes fail to recognize another kind of expenditure that is crucially important in organizations that are labor intensive rather than capital intensive and that are going through periods of innovation. These are investments in organizational capabilities. Such investments do not look like capital expenditures because they do not involve bricks and mortar or even very large amounts of money. They are investments, however, because they are expenditures whose value will be realized in the improved future performance of the organization. Such expenditures could include the specialized training required to reorient a department from one kind of policing to another, the redesign of computer-aided dispatching systems to give as much emphasis to maintaining beat integrity as to minimizing response times, and the documentation of experimental approaches to commonly encountered police problems, such as domestic disputes (see the chapter on research and planning).

Because budgeting procedures make these kinds of expenditures difficult to identify, managers and overseers cannot really track the investment as a

police department improves its operational capabilities. There is no routine way to observe the way a police department operates, manage it, or plead for funds to change it (see the discussion of resource generation in the chapter on external resources). The traditional police department budget reinforces the false assumption not only that the most effective programmatic and technological ways of achieving goals are well known but also that they are already incorporated in police department operations.

Measuring results Current budgeting and cost accounting systems are also relatively weak in measuring the results of the police department's operations and attributing costs correctly to the different results. Consequently, it is hard for police executives and their overseers to determine the true value of police efforts for the citizenry and to pinpoint the activities that were particularly valuable.

As noted earlier, police departments generally measure their results in terms of crime-related statistics and response times. Some of these measures are relevant to judging effectivness because they are related to the desired *outcomes* of public policing (for example, the measured levels of reported crime). Others are relevant to judging efficiency because they measure only the organization's *outputs* (for example, arrests and response rates). Some analysts, however, make a strong argument for relying only on outcome measures, such as reduced crime, to assess the value of police departments. They argue that it is these anticipated results that define the value of the department and that only the demonstration of such results can justify continued expenditures on police departments.[68]

From a managerial perspective, however, such outcome measures have some important disadvantages. It is possible, for example, that the value of a police department for the citizens of the community is not well represented by the impact of the police department on levels of crime. Other outcome

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Experimental police district The Madison, Wisconsin, police department created an experimental police district (EPD) as a field laboratory to test new models of leadership and service improvement similar to those being used in the private sector.

The department established four measures to evaluate expected outcomes: crime statistics, pre-implementation customer research, incident-based customer surveys, and attitudes of the forty members working in the district.

From 1987 to 1989 the EPD increased traffic enforcement (a strong neighborhood concern) by 88 percent, while enforcement in other city districts remained the same. The EPD experienced a significant decrease in home burglaries (28 percent) between 1986 and 1989, while burglaries in the rest of the city increased 15 percent. Although violent crime increased 5 percent during these years, the overall rate for the city was 13 percent.

Information on quality of service is gathered by an incident-based customer survey and then returned to the officer for direct feedback (see the chapter on performance measurement). A comparison revealed that EPD citizen customers (including arrested persons) provided significantly higher ratings than those in other districts.

When officers compare their experience in the EPD with previous assignments through internal surveys, they consistently report higher job satisfaction levels, greater belief that leaders are making positive efforts to improve work systems, increased perception of crime solving effectiveness, and improved interaction and feedback with supervisors.

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