Leadership is a concept that has received tremendous attention recently because of issues and incidents arising from some business, government, and religious organizations. As a result, the public is demanding more effective leadership.

But what is leadership? Are leaders born or can leadership skills be learned and taught? How do leaders emerge? Does leadership differ from management? Do certain organizations stifle leadership? How many leaders can a single organization have? Do good followers make good leaders? Do leaders require specific experience or can they be generalists? This article will attempt to answer these questions.

The Problem
In some respects, leadership is analogous to parenting. However, many in leadership positions do not lead. Rather, they rule over followers. Perhaps it is a case of delusion or self-deception. It may be that leaders and managers do not have a clear understanding of their role. They may believe that their role is to baby sit people. Effective leaders, on the other hand, believe their role is to nurture subordinates to mature as independent and contributing members of the organization. As with parenting, leadership takes a great deal of time, energy, effort, patience, persistence, concern, and thoughtfulness, as well as some degree of risk.

Line-level law enforcement officers require leadership skills to address the community-based policing challenges of the 21st century. In addition, many senior law enforcement managers will retire soon, creating a critical shortage of leadership talent. Therefore, leadership development is a major concern, especially for effective operations and for supervisor and executive succession management.

To be a leader in any organization requires confidence and a willingness to try new approaches and involve others in the process. For many in leadership positions, this is a foreign concept. Many believe that because they were promoted or appointed to positions of authority and responsibility they have a right to make all decisions unilaterally. However, leadership involves much more than independent decision-making. Thus, leadership development programs must address the wide range of leadership competencies. Leadership development must include indoctrination to issues related to generational differences, diversity, empowerment, collaboration, and transparency to the people served. Planning, critical thinking, communications, and evaluation skills are also important competencies law enforcement officers must master.

Leadership is a process, not a position. Many in leadership positions demand respect based on their rank and title. However, respect is earned. It cannot be commanded.
Most police agencies have maintained a tradition and structure fashioned after a military organisational model. Yet, since the Vietnam War era, even the military model has changed dramatically and many departments have failed to keep pace, electing to retain an antiquated, hierarchical structure in which all decision making is reserved for command staff. In Leadership, Ethics, and Policing, Edwin Meese III and P. J. Ortmeier stress the importance of ethical leadership development for all police officers, regardless of rank, position, or title, because leadership skills are required of the individual officer on the street. In addition, the development of leadership skills by all officers can help groom future managers and it can assist current executives to cope with an ever-changing world. Leadership competence also helps to identify actions that can lead to an effective organisational performance.

In an effort to improve the police public image by improving line officer interactions with citizens, Ortmeier identified leadership competencies for line officers in a community-policing environment and categorized them as communications and interpersonal, problem solving, motivation, planning and organizing, and actuation or implementation competencies. Most police training and education programs promoted adequate development in cognitive, procedural, and technical skills, but Ortmeier found that these programs do little to develop the affective competencies necessary for effective leadership. Ortmeier stated that college and police academy curricula generally lack the focus necessary to develop communication, human relations, critical thinking, motivation, and problem-solving skills.

Ethical behavior and leadership skills are essential to policing in a democratic society. Coupled with ethical behavior, effective leadership ability places the police officer in the position of a powerful force to secure and maintain public safety and order.

Police officer leadership skill can help support the creation of a process through which a community can assist itself with the identification and development of solutions to problems. Thus, it is necessary to recruit, select, and train police officers on the basis of leadership potential, and to provide a vehicle for the development of leadership competence among those already employed in the police service.

An important element of leadership in policing is decision making. The decisions made by police leaders are distinct from those on-the-spot decisions often made by law enforcement officers in field situations. In most instances, there is time to reflect, assess, and collect data in order to make more informed decisions. Engaging in a systematic decision-making process can be beneficial if the process includes collecting and evaluating information and data, giving other stakeholders the opportunity to review and provide input, and reviewing previous best practices in organizational decision making.

While it is easy to maintain the status quo, the challenge is to identify the need for change, and encourage people to support and keep pace with change. It is also important to know how to best select, train, motivate, and retain quality personnel who can adapt to changing times. Most government organizations are bureaucratic and do
not allow or encourage the creativity and innovation necessary to accommodate change.

A study conducted by Morreale indicated that line officers reported increased job satisfaction and exerted extra effort when their leaders demonstrated transformational leadership behaviors. Avolio and Bass identified characteristics of the transformational leader that focused on interpersonal leader behaviors. These behaviors were identified and described as the ingredients of transformational leadership:

- **Charisma**-providing vision and sense of mission, instilling pride, gaining respect and trust
- **Inspiration**-communicating high expectations, using symbols to focus efforts, expressing important purposes in simple ways
- **Intellectual stimulation**-promoting intelligence, rationality, and artful problem solving
- **Individualized consideration**-giving personal attention, treating each follower individually, coaching and advising.

According to the Center for Leadership Studies (CLS), transformational leaders set high standards of conduct and become role models, gaining trust, respect and confidence from others; articulate the future desired state and a plan to achieve it; question the status quo and continuously innovate, even at the peak of success; and energize people to achieve their full potential and performance.

Leadership is not management, although managers can exhibit leadership skills. See figure 1 for a comparison of leaders and managers.

What is the difference between leadership and management in law enforcement? Law enforcement activity is often reactive. Law enforcement agencies generally function as emergency organizations offering a vital public service. Playing multiple roles, while keeping the peace and maintaining order, the modern police officer or deputy sheriff functions as a cleric, medic, psychologist, bouncer, and mediator. Consequently, the police officer must possess multitasking abilities not generally expected in most other occupations. In addition, to meet the challenges of the 21st century, law enforcement officers must be proactive, seeking to prevent harmful incidents. Leadership skills are a necessary ingredient to proactive approaches.

**Executive Core Qualifications: A Partial Solution**

Police leadership is at a crossroads. Many agencies need a fresh perspective on the delivery of services as well as the treatment of police personnel and the citizens they serve. A trend indicates that many agency executives are being chosen through nontraditional means. Command staff and agency CEOs are being selected not from the ranks of deputy chiefs but from the cadre of lower level managers who exhibit leadership talent. Captains are being appointed over deputy chiefs, sergeants are being promoted over lieutenants. The trend indicates a nontraditional response to the need for new leadership perspectives in executive positions. A useful tool for the development of
leadership talent is the Leader Skill and Behavior Inventory developed by the U.S. Department of Personnel Management. It is used to determine executive core qualifications (ECQs). The OPM inventory can be adapted for use in any organization.

The executive core qualifications (ECQs) were created by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management to help define the competencies and characteristics needed to build a federal leadership culture. As one seeks leaders who will achieve results, serve customers, and build successful teams and internal and external coalitions, the ECQs serve as a guide for selection and development of executives. The ECQs can be used to select personnel, evaluate performance, and develop leadership competence for those seeking management and executive positions. As leaders, managers and executives should demonstrate ECQ ability. The ECQs include the following:

- Leading change
- Leading people
- Driving results
- Business acumen
- Building coalitions and communicating

**ECQ 1: Leading Change**

This core qualification focuses on the ability to develop and implement an organizational vision that integrates key program elements, such as goals, priorities, and values. Inherent in this ECQ is the ability to balance change and continuity, to continually strive to improve customer service and program performance within the basic organizational framework, to create a work environment that encourages creative thinking, and to maintain focus, intensity, and persistence under adversity. ECQ 1 competencies include the ability to do the following:

- Exercise leadership and motivate managers to incorporate vision, strategic planning, and elements of quality management into the full range of the organization's activities; encourage creative thinking and innovation; influence others toward a spirit of service; and design and implement new or cutting-edge programs and processes
- Identify and integrate key issues affecting the organization, including political, economic, social, technological, and administrative factors
- Understand the roles and relationships of the components of policy making and implementation processes, including community leaders, state and local governments, and interest groups; and formulate effective strategies to balance interests consistent with the purpose of the organization
- Be open to change and new information; tolerate ambiguity; adapt behavior and work methods in response to new information, change conditions, or unexpected obstacles; and adjust rapidly to new situations warranting attention and resolution
- Display a high level of initiative, effort, and commitment to public service; be proactive and achievement-oriented; be self-motivated; pursue self-development; and seek feedback from others as well as opportunities to
master new knowledge
  • Deal effectively with pressure; maintaining focus and intensity and remaining persistent, even under adversity; recover quickly from setbacks

ECQ 2: Leading People
This core qualification addresses the ability to design and implement strategies that maximize follower potential and foster high ethical standards in meeting the organization’s vision, mission, and goals. ECQ 2 competencies include ability to do the following:

  • Provide leadership in setting the workforce’s expected performance levels commensurate with the organization’s strategic objectives; inspire, motivate, and guide others toward goal accomplishment; and empower people by sharing power and authority
  • Promote quality through effective use of the organization’s performance management system (e.g., establish performance standards, appraise staff accomplishments using the developed standards, and take action to reward, counsel, and remove followers, as appropriate)
  • Value diversity and other differences; foster an environment in which people who are diverse can work together cooperatively and effectively in achieving organizational goals
  • Assess employees’ unique developmental needs and provide developmental opportunities that maximize employees’ capabilities and contribute to the achievement of organizational goals; and develop leadership in others through coaching and mentoring
  • Foster commitment, team spirit, pride, trust, and group identity; and take steps to prevent situations that could result in unpleasant confrontations
  • Resolve conflicts in a positive and constructive manner, to include promoting labor-management partnerships and dealing effectively with employee relations matters, attending to morale and organizational climate issues, handling administrative, labor management, and EEO issues, and taking disciplinary actions when other means have not been successful

ECQ 3: Driving Results
This core qualification stresses accountability and continuous improvement. It includes the ability to make effective decisions and produce results through strategic planning and the timely implementation and evaluation of programs and policies. Key ECQ 3 competencies include the ability to do the following:

  • Understand and appropriately apply procedures, requirements, regulations, and policies related to specialized expertise; understand the linkage between administrative competencies and mission needs; and stay current on issues, practices, and procedures in technical areas
  • Stress results by formulating strategic program plans that assess policy and program feasibility and include realistic short- and long-term goals and objectives
• Exercise good judgment in structuring and organizing work and setting priorities, balancing the interests of clients and readily readjusting priorities to respond to customer demands
• Anticipate and identify, diagnose, and consult on potential or actual problem areas relating to program implementation and goal achievement; select from alternative courses of corrective action; and take action from developed contingency plans
• Set program standards; hold self and others accountable for achieving the standards; act decisively to modify standards to promote customer service and the quality of programs and policies
• Identify opportunities to develop and market new products and services within or outside of the organization; and take risks to pursue a recognized benefit or advantage

ECQ 4: Business Acumen
This core qualification involves the ability to acquire and administer human, financial, material, and information resources in a manner that instills public trust, accomplishes the organization's mission, and uses technology to enhance decision-making. The key ECQ 4 competencies include the ability to do the following:

• Assess current and future staffing needs based on organizational goals and budget realities; and apply merit principles to develop, select, and manage a diverse work force
• Oversee the allocation of financial resources; identify cost-effective approaches; and establish and assuring the use of internal controls for financial systems
• Manage the budgetary process, including preparing and justifying a budget and operate the budget according to organizational and governmental procedures; and understand the marketing expertise necessary to ensure appropriate funding levels
• Oversee procurement and contracting procedures and processes
• Integrate and coordinate logistical operations
• Ensure the efficient and cost-effective development and utilization of management information systems and technological resources meeting the organization’s needs; and understand the impact of technological changes on the organization

ECQ 5: Building Coalitions and Communicating
This core qualification involves the ability to explain, advocate, and express facts and ideas in a convincing manner and to negotiate with individuals and groups internally and externally. It also involves the ability to develop an expansive professional network with other organizations and to identify the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organization. ECQ 5 competencies include the ability to do the following:

• Represent and speak for the organizational unit and its work to those within and outside the unit; make clear and convincing verbal presentations to
individuals and groups; listen effectively and clarify information; and facilitate an open exchange of ideas

- Establish and maintain working relationships with internal organizational units (e.g., other program areas and staff support functions); approach each problem situation with a clear perception of organizational and political reality; use contacts to build and strengthen internal support bases; and secure understanding and support from superiors
- Develop and enhance alliances with external groups; engage in cross-functional activities; and find common ground with a widening range of stakeholders
- Work in groups and teams; conduct briefings and other meetings; gain cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals; and facilitate win-win situations
- Consider and respond appropriately to the needs, emotions, and capabilities of people in different situations; and be tactful and treat others with respect
- Make reports, memoranda, and other documents reflect the position and work of the organization in a clear, convincing, and organized manner

Finding Leadership Success
The five ECQs focus on leadership skills that include the ability to lead change and people, be results-oriented, possess business acumen, build coalitions, and exercise superior communications skills. The common thread woven through the ECQs is the ability to promote and accommodate change in organizations through effective leadership.

With the public need for accountability in organizations, strong leadership is necessary to promote significant change in deeply entrenched organizational practices. In addition, public organizations, especially those involved with law enforcement should do the following:

- Strive for organizational transparency
- Insist on ethical decisions and integrity
- Develop leaders with good judgment and innovation skills
- Make decisions in law enforcement based on facts
- Demonstrate planning skills
- Use personnel performance appraisals effectively
- Manage projects efficiently
- Recognize the importance of review and evaluation
- Develop strategic thinking and planning skills
- Distinguish tactics from strategy

In many instances, it is better for the leader to force issues to the surface, rather than ignore or smooth over conflicts. The leader should help people recognize their responsibility to shape the future. A leader is a risk taker and a visionary. Leadership implies followers, but leaders must lead by example.

More than 35 years ago, Reddin, then a police chief, wrote:
Law enforcement does a pretty good job of stifling creativity and encouraging conformity. A strong body of opinion exists that the conformist is the one who gets ahead. . . . It appears that one would almost be a fool to experiment, encourage creativity, suggest changes, and in doing so, perhaps risk his reputation. As the doctrine of an organization, conformity can spell stagnation and a descent into mediocrity.14

Reddin's message is as relevant today as it was years ago. Why? Why are many reluctant to introduce change into police agencies? Why are law enforcement personnel, people who accept extreme risks in their jobs, averse to risk in their organizations or careers?

With heightened public attention and expectations, the arrival of the information age, and a general distrust of organizations, the police administrator must develop and use leadership skills. The leader of the future must possess a variety of skills in order to survive in a climate of heightened expectations and constant change. Authorities are searching for leadership talent that can balance the need for structure in police agencies with the need for reform and empowerment. They are seeking new blood, with fresh perspectives. Managers who retain the bureaucratic mindset and are unwilling to lead change will face extinction. Executives who demonstrate leadership competence, challenge systems, and seek improvements have a much better chance for success. ■

Manuals.

9 Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Executive Core Qualifications.
10 Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Executive Core Qualifications.
11 Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Executive Core Qualifications.
12 Adapted from U.S. Office of Personnel Management, Executive Core Qualifications.

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Recommended Reading on Management and Leadership

Fig. 1. Leadership Is Not Management

- The manager administers; the leader innovates.
- The manager is a copy; the leader is an original.
- The manager maintains; the leader develops.
- The manager focuses on systems and structure; the leader focuses on people.
- The manager relies on control; the leader inspires trust.
- The manager has a short-range view; the leader has a long-range perspective.
- The manager asks how and when; the leader asks what and why.
- The manager has his eye always on the bottom line; the leader has his eye on the horizon.
- The manager imitates; the leader originates.
- The manager accepts the status quo; the leader challenges it.
- The manager is the classic good soldier; the leader is his own person.
- The manager does things right; the leader does the right thing.