

**A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR THE
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND
SECURITY MANAGER**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Jim Smith is a Captain with the Dothan, Alabama Police Department commanding Staff Services Bureau and serves as Executive Assistant to the Police Chief. He supervises more than 80 employees with an agency budget of more than \$12 million. He supervises an incident-based reporting system compliant with federal standards and supervises a busy public safety 9-1-1 center using computer-aided dispatch and mobile data. Smith is an Advanced Law Enforcement Planner certified by the International Association of Law Enforcement Planners. Smith has written more than 100 successful grants in his career not only in the public safety arena but also for emergency management agencies, healthcare agencies, social service agencies and educational entities. He has a Masters Degree in System Safety with a Certificate in System Safety from the University of Southern California. He is well versed in weapons of mass destruction. Smith supervises the Dothan Police Bomb and Explosive Detail and is an Executive Management graduate of the FBI's Hazardous Devices School. He also holds a Level 2 Certification from the International Society of Explosives Engineers. Smith has performed extensive research, published data regarding explosion and fragment mitigation using specialized alcohol-resistant aqueous film forming firefighting foam, which has led to the manufacture of this specialty equipment for explosion mitigation. He is an active member of the International Association of Bomb Technicians and Investigators and a professional member of the American Society of Safety Engineers. Smith is a graduate of the United States Army's Chemical School Domestic Preparedness program and has designed and teaches courses for tactical emergency medicine and WMD events.

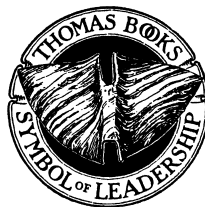
Smith is a prolific writer and has published more than fifty articles in refereed public safety journals and a text *A Law Enforcement And Security Officers' Guide to Bomb Threats* also published by the Charles C Thomas Company. He has more than 26 years public safety experience as a law enforcement officer, in the fire service, as a paramedic and 9-1-1 coordinator. He is certified by the International Association of Emergency Managers as a Certified Emergency Manager and is an Emergency Number Professional certified by the National Emergency Number Association. Smith has an AS degree in emergency medical technology and is also an active paramedic teaching EMS courses throughout the southeast. He also has BS in chemistry, Juris Doctorate and doctorate in adult education degrees.

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A Theoretical and Experiential Approach

By

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PREFACE

This text uses both theory and practical application of leadership and management precepts to lead the reader through a variety of common scenarios. The theory is tied to actual experiences and scenarios that educate the reader through the critical thought process of decision making. This adds a level of learning not found in many texts that address either theory or practical applications but fail to link them. The topics discussed range from effective techniques in communications, decision-making issues and methods, and resource management. Issues that are critical to the manager such as emergency planning, response to critical incidents, supervision of specialty teams and operational issues are explored. One of the essential skills discussed for the manager is the collection, compilation and interpretation of data. Data interpretation is the driving force in the allocation of resources and deployment of personnel. Further, this skill is important in the development of funding through grants. The manager's role in discipline, use of force, and morale are addressed. Timely events regarding the law enforcement manager's response to weapons of mass destruction, racial profiling, and litigation receive attention. Systems analysis is explored to educate the manager to appreciate upstream and downstream impacts of their decisions.

J.S.

INTRODUCTION

Many law enforcement and security officers are thrust into a supervisors or managers position without any transition or formal training. This perhaps is the most common failing of public safety organizations. The philosophy of thinking and acting as a manager is far more complex than it first appears.

The supervisor and manager must think more in technical terms of what his or her decision will have on the incident at hand but must also consider what policies, law, and regulations affect the decision. Further, the supervisor or manager must look both upstream and downstream to see what type of “systems” effect the decision will have. The systems analysis of decision making is crucial not only in tactical decision making that is performed daily but also in strategic decision made regarding policy, goals and objectives.

Many supervisors and managers fall into the trap of doing things the way they have always done them. This lack of innovative thinking and using outside resources to problem solve is a fault of many law enforcement and security agencies.

Supervisors and managers need to abandon the clannish nature of their agencies and network with other support agencies. Many of the problems that they are faced with are quasi-law enforcement issues that border on social problems. The public demands that these quality of life issues be resolved. To accomplish these goals, simply making an arrest is no longer a viable solution and a multidisciplinary approach working with other entities is needed.

The philosophy or “us versus them,” “thin blue line,” and the police are “good guys” can no longer be afforded. Law enforcement and security agencies must treat the public as a customer and client. The battle for tax dollars and public acceptance has become acute with the shrinking tax base and the public demanding more services at less cost. This

forces the supervisor or manager to think innovatively and seek unique low costs solutions.

This text addresses these contemporary issues from the perspective of the supervisor and manager. The lessons learned and information conveyed is applicable at all levels of management. There is material that addresses not only positive lessons learned but also many negative aspects that were learned experientially. The sad aspect of many managers and supervisors is they learn solely from experience, meaning they make a decision based on prior similar events. This essentially is a decision tree that allows a 50 percent probability of failure. What is worse if the problem is unique or unusual, is that those using an experience base will be baffled as to what to do to mitigate the incident. Those supervisors or managers that use both experience and theoretical skills have a much larger skill set and options in problem solving, giving them a much higher probability of success. Plus, these individuals can think outside the traditional responses to conceive unique or unusual solutions to problems. These skills are emphasized throughout the text.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This text would not have been possible without the support of my wife Denise Smith. I owe much of my drive to be a good manager and to write from the example set by my father, Jim Smith, in his business. The author gladly thanks Chief John C. White of the Dothan Police Department for his encouragement to pursue writing this text and his mentorship. I would also like to thank those supervisors and managers with whom I have served during my career who were exemplary. I especially owe a debt of gratitude to those who had the confidence in my abilities to promote me such as Chief Kater Williams and Chief John White.

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Chapter 1

MANAGEMENT PRECEPTS

It is incumbent upon all leaders to develop their subordinates particularly in security and law enforcement agencies. Rarely does upper management make decisions during dynamic events. It is usually a line supervisor or middle manager making decisions during scenarios particularly in their initial stages and the event may be “over” before the first supervisor arrives. “Day-to-day” operations depend upon consistency. Decisions must be well thought-out. Line supervisors and middle managers make most decisions. Impulsive decisions made in the heat of the moment need to be avoided. Occasionally, the situation permits this mode of operation but the leader must be prepared to make decisions under stressful evolving incidents with minimal data. Leadership is not a popularity contest or an attempt to gain goodwill from employees. Accomplishing the mission and taking care of your people are the priorities for leaders. Leaders do things for people that will never be able to assist them or the organization. They do this simply because it is the right thing to do.

There are several precepts that can assist in decision making. Leadership is a privilege. Managers and supervisors should remember from where they came and use the prior opportunities to observe other managers and their styles. Avoid the common pitfalls, poor leadership styles, and mistakes made by your supervisor. Remember the poor outcomes seen when you were a subordinate. A minor mistake for a line supervisor can be a critical error for an agency head, as mistakes tend to grow in proportion to rank. A dysfunctional leader will bring out the worst aspects in any organization. A leader must be consistent and predictable while being straightforward and direct. Your staff must know where they stand. Explain exactly what you expect of your staff and

never accept an inferior work product. Set due dates for work and have established procedures for your staff to follow. Set an example you wish emulated by your staff. Develop your staff's professional abilities, particularly those that may be "weak" managers. Know their strong points and weaknesses. Training should be available and taken advantage of by your staff. An essential skill is the ability to communicate in writing. Written skills should be developed and refined.

Rigid in thinking, responses, and lack of flexibility in problem solving must be avoided. An open mind while being innovative and flexible is preferable. Staying well informed and read in all facets of law enforcement is important. No manager or supervisor should be afraid to think independently. An important skill is listening to your subordinates. Pay attention, not only to the message, but also to the tone. They may be telling you your idea is good verbally but indicates otherwise with body language. Have your staff play devil's advocates. To do this they must be able to honestly express their opinions. Staff members should not have an unreasonable fear finding faults in plans or ideas. As a manager or supervisor, it is better to have the staff tear apart an idea with its shortcomings than to fail publicly. Stay well informed with a staff that serves as an intelligence-gathering network to keep the chain of command well informed.

When failures occur, fix the problem, not the blame. A poor manager will assign fault without investigating. Defend personnel when they are right although such a stance may not be popular. Met out discipline fairly when they are wrong. There are always multiple facets to any issue so explore and review all available data before acting particularly in personnel issues. Internal investigators should not drive decisions regarding discipline. Discipline is the sole prerogative of the command staff.

Have a good attitude even when you are having a bad day. The old adage if you do not succeed then try again is important. Be tenacious with those projects and ideas that are worthwhile. Concentrate on the important issues where you have the wherewithal to make a difference. Remember a positive outcome is important. If you have a bad attitude, your staff will detect it. Certainly, do not express your dissatisfaction about personal or professional problems to your staff. A manager or supervisor is always careful about what they say. Subordinates will latch onto any off-the-cuff comment, particularly when you are angry or disappointed. Do not overreact to bad news or failures. Do not take your

frustrations out on your staff. It is important to develop relationships with other agencies prior to needing their assistance. A time of crisis is not the setting to develop working relationships or enlist assistance. Knowing the other supervisors and leaders is important as is having face-to-face meetings to resolve issues and conflicts rapidly. Have outside sources of information so you can gauge the public opinion, the position of elected officials, and other agencies on important issues. Stay informed by noting what is broadcast and printed by the local media. In many instances, this will give you insight into how well your organization is performing. Reading and observing other professionals and the public's reaction to issues can allow you a different perspective regarding important issues. Listen to and solicit constructive criticism. You may be surprised how many good ideas can come from constructive criticism. It may help you gauge the perception of the organization. A working relationship with the media is essential. Use them to your organization's advantage. Try to be available and provide the information the media requests. Never be afraid to say you don't know the answer. Follow up with the correct information as soon as possible.

Be available to your staff and appear at social functions and important incidents. Your role is more than symbolic as a leader. Some incidents may require your command presence to obtain the resources needed in critical incidents. The leader or supervisor should be available as a resource when needed in day-to-day operations. However, when feasible, delegate and try to provide managerial discretion to the lowest level of employee possible. Conduct unannounced visits and talk to line personnel. Remember the important role support personnel play as they provide a valuable service. Support personnel should know what they think and say are important. When feasible, make ownership of important projects and missions agency wide. Employees are far more likely to accept ownership and participate in projects when they have had input into the issue. Information must get to all employees. A common organizational fault is that many line personnel never receive critical information from management. Rumors and gossiping are detrimental. Stop them by promptly getting the truth out to all employees. The chain of command must stay well informed and briefed. Good intentions should be documented remembering legal discovery. Remember attorneys are advisors. They are not trained as decision makers and if you depend solely upon their advice, organizational paralysis will likely ensue.

Monitor what goes on in your organization. Encourage weak managers and control strong subordinates. When issues arise, have your staff present a united front. Work out dissent behind closed doors. Promotions and assignments are critical to the future of the organization. These selections should be made based upon who and what is objectively best for the organization. Personalities should not be a consideration when possible. Avoid the appearance of impropriety or favoritism. Hard work, loyalty, and dedication should be rewarded. Supervisors and managers should review crime statistics and complaints from citizens. This data will reflect how well the organization is performing. A monthly or quarterly “state of the agency” report with all outstanding projects scrutinized can be a good management tool. Projects may require modification, revitalization, or discontinuation if they are presenting diminishing returns. Some projects will be short-lived in their effectiveness. Close monitoring of overtime with frequent audits of operations and finances will keep the manager well informed. Initial training with cultivation of probationary employees should be a priority. Weed out or correct problem employee behavior promptly. Do not transfer problem employees. Either correct their behavior or terminate them. New employees have a different perspective. Pay attention to what they say, as they are far more likely to give an unbiased candid report of what they perceive as problems and issues. Long-term employees should be challenged with new projects and involving them in new and innovative tasks can be a good motivator. Use senior personnel’s maturity and experience wisely. Match personalities to the task when feasible. This makes knowing your subordinates well enough to accomplish this goal important. Place personnel where they are really needed to accomplish the agency’s mission. Maintain a balanced approach when allocating resources.

CONCEPTUAL THINKING

Many factors influence our perception of the environment and mode of thinking. Some of these factors are positive while others tend to be negative. Some problems can result from work overload, distrust of colleagues, or the failure to reward ideas. Internal factors that can influence or serve as a conceptual block may include gender, education,