

# Criminal justice assignment

Law



Have aspired to be a police officer my whole life and found it only fitting to interview a police Officer from the Northern Virginia area. The officer told me of his own aspirations to become a cop and it only furthered my motivation. He said his goal as a police officer was/is to make positive influential changes for his peers by protecting and serving his community to his fullest potential. Before returning back to patrol the streets, the officer was a Student Resource Officer (SRO) at Whereon High School. The positive presence of the officer while I attended Whereon was evident in the attitudes of the students. Even students notorious for causing trouble were exhibiting great changes in their attitudes solely because of the officer. He was well respected and known for bonding and socializing with students throughout the day. Having dealt with him personally my senior year, was quickly reminded that police officers are not out to ruin people. They are there to make the best of situations ensuring people who are in the wrong learn from their mistakes, make changes in their actions to facilitate better choices for future decisions. The officer furthered my aspirations to work towards becoming a police officer. The positive feedback I received from him about the work he does to aid the community in becoming a safer place was truly inspirational to me. The officer has made himself accessible to the community at all times. While on duty he responds to calls for anything from minor car accidents and triggered alarms to backing up fellow officers and incidents of domestic violence. A daily challenge that he faces is not having enough hours in the day to help everyone in need of assistance, including his family.

The officer, unlike many officers he knows who “let their badge get to their heads,” he is proud of the work he does to protect his community and would never use the power of his badge in a detrimental way to get ahead. The officer helped me further my opinion of aggressive patrolling a strategy used by officers to maximize police observation, that it only aids in creating negative vibes from the community and very rarely produces a readily cooperative situation, often leaving citizens with the idea that police officers really are out to get them.

Understandably, there are cases in which people have violated the law and deserve to be reprimanded by a police officer, but more often than none people are pulled over and intervened with unnecessarily. The officers love for his job and constant mentality that he is changing lives of fellow citizens by elucidating a strong, positive influence is what keeps him going regardless of the challenges. These challenges are not only within his work day, they carry on when he returns home because being a police officer is not only physically grueling but mentally as well.

It’s often said that long term Police Officers tend to, “bring their work home with them,” physical and mental fatigue leads to mistakes on the job, large amounts of time away from home– on holidays as well, high divorce rates, etc. For the officer, being married and away from his wife is something that has to be adapted to for the better of the relationship and his police officer lifestyle. The shift work officers face is physically exhausting and dangerous in return for low pay, family/relationship issues low pay, and all the physical and mental tolls that come along as well. Nothing on earth is perfect.

Yes, some things are made better than others but every thing comes with its own flaws. The Criminal Justice System (CSS), we live by is a great example off not so perfect thing. The officer I interviewed described the system as one with many loopholes. The loopholes are bringing back many repeat offenders because the system has become continually easier to work with and get around. In scenarios I have seen, many criminals will outsmart the system before they have even committed the crime. More specifically, they know exactly what to do to get him or her UT of the situation before they are even in it.

Once they commit the crime they get their sentences reduced and they are out in a much shorter time than what they were charged with. Although this may not change, because regardless of the criminals that out-smart it, there are many law-abiding citizens that keep the system in its place. The only way for people to truly do the time they deserve for their crime something needs to be done in the Criminal Justice System to reduce the amount of repeat offenders and better the community. Every job comes with likes and dislikes.

The officer did in fact say that he likes everything about his job. This satisfaction is directly correlated with the instant protection people feel when he arrives on a call?? the feeling that makes it all worth it. The feeling of relief that washes over people's faces when a bad situation becomes okay is described as, " unlike any other" by the officer. Although he loves his job in the majority of its aspects, the biggest dislike is being away from his family at night. It's a very tough job, and only remains more grueling to Dylan Garter page 4 9/1 1/shish family life.

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He's missed Christmas, birthdays, and milestones in his children's life. Taking the day is a consideration that the officer does not really have, "There's no substitute police Officers!" he stated, in regard to teachers having substitutes. The feeling he gets from this makes him want to protect his wife and kids even more than the average parent because he knows what is out there. For him, like many others, work follows him everywhere all day long, so whether he does get that extra time to be with his family, he is still mentally on the job?? someone could need his help at any our.

He has had students call him as early as three in the morning to report crimes or bad accidents, instead of dialing 91 1. These incidents are all due to the dedication the officer has put in to truly make a difference among the citizens that he serves to protect. Regardless of the endless challenges the officer has endured to serve as a Police Officer the end result is what is truly worth it. At the end of the day the officer is left with the satisfaction that he has served his community to the fullest. It is the officer's commitment to his bob and community that has left me with some great ideals to live by.

In every career, it is extremely important to give it your all and not take advantage of the opportunities you are given. First hand, the officer is able to witness situations where people have not been given the opportunities to succeed and live their lives in and out of our very own Criminal Justice System. Yes, perhaps these people have outsmarted it, but in the end that's not really an accomplishment. It is people like the officer was able to interview that are ring to make the community a better place.