Motivation and control: the police supervisor's dilemma

[Psychology](#), [Motivation](#)

Is there a relationship between the amounts of control desired in a police organization and the ability of police officials to create a motivating environment among rank-and-file officers? If so, how is balance arrived at between these two apparently opposite concerns in police organizations? I believe that the relationship between the control which is desired and the ability to create a motivating environment. It is not a clear cut relationship and it can cause problems within the organization and for the employees.

The problem with this relationship is that while the people in charge of the organization want a specified amount of control, they cannot accomplish this without some repercussions. The difficulty lies within how to gain this control without completely alienating every employee who works within the organization. The important part of the relationship is to compromise and understand that the officers have needs which must be addressed. An example of how important that these two needs are met shows in Maslow's Needs Theory. (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 2003).

Maslow asserts that the officers have the " need to feel safe in their environment and free from and threat of attack by aggressors. " (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 2003). The relevance of this to the relationship in question is with Captain Frebe's new strategy to micromanage the officers. This also forces the hands of the sergeants' to take the lead as the overseer's of the micromanagement. The officers and sergeants believe that they are being attacked by an aggressive force, and therefore, their lower needs are not being met. This causes the higher needs to decrease.

A balance will not be found with the current strategy that Frebe is using. It makes the officers believe that they cannot be trusted to do their jobs. While there were a number of officers who were not doing their jobs, the changes impacted those who were doing their jobs. The system is too complex. Instead of fixing the situation, it only made it worse. The employees believed that they were unable to do their jobs because they were being micromanaged. The sergeants were angry because the fact that they were being pulled away from their duties to watch the officers and write reports about the officers performance.

This was a noble idea, but it was demanding an excessive solution for the situation. If Frebe had requested that the reports were written on a less frequent basis it may have been easier to deal with. For instance a compromise could have been reached if Frebe had solicited feedback before the situation became out of hand. It would have been helpful if Frebe asked the Sergeants and the officers for their input to solve this problem. How could have Captain Frebe instituted the mechanisms for officer accountability without alienating officers?

What role do officers have in creating a motivating environment within police organizations? Captain Frebe' s first mistake was to not ask for advice or for input before implementing such strict changes. The mandatory odometer readings and the quotas for tickets seemed to be an excessive change to implement. There were some officers who were not doing their jobs, but most of the officers were doing a good job. There were other methods that should have been researched before this was implemented. One method

could have been the use of the reflection of their " work performance in their pay raises.

With this technique the " low ratings will hit him in the wallet" (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 2003). Many people are motivated by money, and for those who choose not to do their job up to standard would be paid accordingly. The other option would be to use positive feedback for a job well done. The use of positive feedback can bring and officer a" personal sense of accomplishment (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 2003). Officers are either going to be motivated or not motivated. " There is no such thing as motivation" (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 2003).

A saying that comes to mind is " I can not motivate my guys, the only thing I can do is provide them the opportunities and the environment to become motivated. " While it is not only up to the officers to be motivated, they must have others around them who encourage them in their endeavors, and appreciate the hard work that they do. The main concern is that the needs are being met of the officers, and of the organization. There is a dire need of safety and security within the environment of the policing organization.

With the dangerousness of the job, officers should at least have the guarantee that while they are in the station and out doing their job that they can do it in the safest manner possible. With the added stress of monitoring so many aspects such as odometer readings and quotas, it could cause any good officer to become seriously stressed out. The officers may also take part in groups such as " Quality Circle groups" (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and

Klofas, 2003). These are groups which enrich the officers and their work experience. It is an organization that promotes the " well being of the workers.

These are beneficial groups who meet on a regular basis with non management members to " identify, analyze, and recommend solutions to problems within the agency. " These types of groups can make the employees feel that they have a safe haven within their reach to address concerns. Is it true that you really cannot motivate persons in organizations? If this statement is true, then is there any role for administrators and managers in the motivation of their employees? Are there unique concerns that face police supervisors that make motivation of employees difficult?

If so, what are they, and how would you address them? According to the text, there is " no such thing as a motivation. " (Stojkovic, Kalinich, and Klofas, 2003). I do believe that people who are motivated are that way because they want to do their best, this is regardless of the circumstances. It would take a great deal to cause a self motivated person to become a quitter, there is room for managers and administrators within the organizations. However the managers and administrators are not there to motivate, they are there to make money, sell a product, or maintain the organization.

It does not mean that they aren't concerned with the employees but the bottom line of getting the job done seems to be the priority. There are definitely concerns within the responsibilities of a police supervisor. They are

ever-changing, with time, and with the type of employees. By this I mean that the supervisors may work better with some employees than others. However, in this type of position there cannot be favoritism, you must work and deal with everyone, regardless of whether or not you cannot stand them. The trick is how you approach the situation, hence, the employee.

If you remain objective and fair, by removing yourself from a personal relationship with the subordinates it will be easier to see them on an equal level. I think that the biggest issue overall is getting your employees to do what you want without firing everyone and starting over! This is a huge obstacle. I have heard many times of organizations doing what is sometimes referred to as " cleaning house. " I believe that this should be a last resort tactic. I personally like to believe that most people want to do what is right, and given the right opportunity and environment they can learn how.

I personally hate micromanagers, and I would most likely never use this tactic. I figure that if I have to micromanage an employee that they are causing problems, they do not know their job, or do not care about their job. The first option would be to offer the employee more training, not more of my micromanaging services. There is always the possibility that the employee is unsure about a procedure and needs extra help. I would try several techniques before I gave up. There are many ways that a situation like this could be addressed.

I would pull the employee into a meeting so that he or she could discuss the issues, and possible solutions. I would do everything on my end to make sure

that I addressed all the issues. I do not believe that people should be given up on. I know that there are many other situations a person in this position could be faced with. However, my solution would be to analyze the situation, ask questions, offer help or fins assistance, and take it from there. I believe that people should be treated as people, not just another number.