

Developing evidence-based crime reduction skills in mid-level command staff

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Abstract

This chapter comprises personal reflections on the development of a training program for mid-level command staff and analysts. While recruits get academy training that focuses on the basics, and leaders have access to executive seminars that develop their strategic perspective, the ranks from Sergeant to Captain/Inspector are often forgotten. This is challenging to police organizational effectiveness because they are frequently asked to lead crime and disorder initiatives with little more than good intentions and a vague understanding of the SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment) from their promotion exam materials. The training course in question was developed to enhance the relatively abstract SARA model with specific practices and checklists more suited to action-oriented commanders, and with a view to introducing more structured working practices (the PANDA model and associated checklists) into police organizational behavior. The PANDA model (Problem scan, Analyze problem, Nominate strategy, Deploy strategy, Assess outcomes) and checklists have now been adopted by several police organizations. The course integrates a harm-focused and intelligence-led ethos into components of problem-oriented policing, and it weaves an evidence-based policing philosophy throughout the course. The need for the course, the response to this need, and the challenges of integrating an evidence-based approach into a practical training program are discussed.

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Introduction

In most countries, there is a gap in police education. Police academy training for new recruits is often state-mandated, structured to address the topics deemed necessary to the education of a new police officer. These training programs tend to minimize the liability of the police service, so are guided by the principles of “shoot straight, drive carefully, and don’t make unlawful arrests.” At the other end of the career spectrum there are opportunities for chiefs and senior command staff to attend conferences, symposiums, and other executive leadership opportunities. These tend to be identifiable by the inclusion of a course dinner or “networking” function.

The education gap lies in middle management. These are the officers who have sufficient rank to shoulder considerable responsibility, yet can lack the necessary experience and education from their service-to-date to perform optimally in the role. I am not saying these officers are not experienced. Instead, it is possible that their existing experience at the point in their career where they take responsibility for crime and disorder reduction policy is not always sufficient for the new role. The move from dealing with individual calls for service to deciding the crime and harm reduction strategy for a geographic area of the community necessitates more than just experience. It also requires an evidence-based knowledge of effective tactics and policies, integrated into a structured approach to decision-making and project implementation.

This chapter comprises a collection of personal reflections on the development of a training program and supporting materials designed for mid-level command staff and analysts. The program has been designed for the “forgotten” ranks from Sergeant to Captain/Inspector, though in reality chiefs and deputy chiefs have responded positively to the course and book, as have crime and intelligence analysts looking for a more structured way to work with decision makers. The move away from dealing with individual calls for service can be challenging for the forgotten ranks because they cut their teeth working on a case-by-case basis. These officers are frequently asked to lead crime and disorder initiatives with little more than good intentions and a vague understanding of the problem-oriented policing SARA model (Scanning, Analysis, Response, and Assessment) culled from their promotion exam materials. The book and training course were developed to enhance the SARA model with specific practices and checklists suited to action-oriented commanders, and with a view to introducing more structured working practices into an area of policing frequently left to the “craft” of the job. The course integrates a harm-focused and intelligence-led ethos into components of problem-oriented policing, and weaves an evidence-based policing philosophy throughout. The need for a structured, evidence-based approach is discussed next.

Introducing science to a craft

Unlike the military, which ensures that inexperienced soldiers with little or no rank are continuously supervised, police officers find themselves with sole responsibility for determining the outcome of incidents within weeks (or sooner in some cases) of leaving the academy. Over time, police officers develop their idiosyncratic version of the “craft” of policing. As Willis (2013: 3) notes, in an environment that favors craft, “experience, not scientific knowledge, is the foundation of effective police work. By encountering a variety of situations and people over time, patrol officers learn valuable practical knowledge and develop specific skills.”

The craft of policing is the theory that, through experience and dealing with different situations, officers gain the wisdom and ability to make astute observations, draw quick and accurate conclusions about a situation, and use psychological tactics and tacit persuasion that—combined with good temperament and management—will resolve incidents successfully. As Willis and Mastrofski (2018) discovered, however, there is little consensus among police officers as to what constitutes good practice or craft. The solitude and general lack of feedback available to officers on the outcomes of their actions results in officers developing idiosyncratic styles. There are no doubt more than the four types of officer identified by Muir (1977) over 40 years ago, but it is likely that most officers feel that their style of policing is appropriate and synonymous with good practice, as well as grounded in their experience.

Compare this with the function of evidence-based policing. Evidence-based policing “uses research to guide practice and evaluate practitioners. It uses the best

evidence to shape the best practice. It is a systematic effort to parse out and codify unsystematic “experience” as the basis for police work, refining it by ongoing systematic testing of hypotheses” (Sherman, 1998: 4). Given the policing field’s preference for craft, it is understandable why there might have been some pushback on this initial definition, including as it does the idea that researchers might “evaluate practitioners” or that experience was “unsystematic.”

More recent definitions have softened this approach. Lum and Koper (2015: 3–4) state that “research, evaluation, analysis, and scientific processes should have a ‘seat at the table’ in law enforcement decision-making about tactics, strategies, and policies.” For Gary Cordner, evidence-based policing involves “Using data, analysis, and research to *complement experience* and professional judgment, in order to provide the best possible police service to the public” (2020: 2, emphasis added). Evidence-based policing has therefore evolved to complement and enhance the experience of police officers. But where does this experience come from?

Experience

There seems to be an unexamined truism that police leaders become more effective as their experience grows. How experience is defined in this context is unclear and is often used as an inaccurate synonym for “rank” or “time served.” In other words, if you have been around long enough, you must be experienced. I recall sitting in a Philadelphia Police Department office when a senior executive floated the name of

one individual for an available position, arguing “he’s got 25 years’ experience.”

Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey, one of the most astute police leaders I have ever known, looked unmoved by this claim, responding “I’m not sure. Does he have 25 years’ experience, or one year of experience twenty-five times?”

Davies, Rowe, Brown, and Biddle (in press) interviewed police officers from three English police forces and concluded that there was much confusion about what constituted “evidence” for the purposes of evidence-based policing. Some officers thought it related to professional insight and experience, while others simply deferred to their local police leader’s perspective. As Davies et al. (in press) concluded “In a deferential and hierarchical environment, the experiential perspective of senior leaders was regarded by subordinates as a sufficient evidential basis.” The process of deferring to a single source to lead decision-making may stem from the patrol notion of identifying who “owns the scene”, as Herbert (1998) observed. This is usually the first officer on-scene, but perceived seniority can trump the on-scene officer if necessary.

Perceived seniority does not necessarily stem from just rank. It can also emerge from time served or from a reputation for being “natural police” (Ratcliffe, 2019), a reputation awarded qualitatively by colleagues. I try to go on ride-alongs with every agency I work with, and it is common to observe more experienced officers attend a scene to back-up a less seasoned officer. In these circumstances, while everyone is of the same rank, the junior officer (in terms of years on the job)

will often huddle with the veteran, seek their advice, and then resolve the incident in the manner suggested by the more experienced protagonist. In this way, a form of standard operating procedure (at least for that district, precinct, or agency) is transmitted from one generation to the next.

This issue of time served as a perceived correlate for experience can hinder the rise of innovators in the organization. It is also particularly harsh on women. In most Anglo-Saxon police forces you start at the bottom and work your way up. Mired as we are in a culture where women are expected to shoulder most of the burden of raising children, this process can inhibit their ability to reflect the values that the organization too often perceives as essential to leadership. For example, Silvestri noted, after interviewing women in leadership roles across a number of UK forces, that “senior policewomen emphasise the importance of possessing a ‘full-time’, ‘long’, and ‘uninterrupted’ career profile, all of which are essential if one is to establish credibility and commitment as a police leader” (Silvestri, 2006: 269). Credibility and demonstration of commitment therefore stem from time served, and not necessarily demonstrated experience. She concludes, “The strict linear career model in policing together with the continued importance it attaches to time holds serious consequences for all officers but impacts in a particularly damning way for women” (Silvestri, 2006: 278). In more than one US east coast city, senior officers have commented to me that the fundamentals of making it to the top do not consist

necessarily of practicalability but rather passing promotion exams, not rocking the boat, and not getting 'jammed up' (run into discipline problems).

Promotion systems have in the past skewed towards personal recommendations from senior officers; however, unions have strived to remove these potentially biased systems because they were open to abuse. And they often were. If your face did not fit, you did not get promoted. But with the bathwater, out went the baby. Absent the recommendation of someone who could attest to a candidate's demonstrated "experience," promotion to a mid-level rank of significant responsibility usually involves scoring as high as possible on written tests. This favors a certain style of candidate, one who can spend the requisite time focusing on the promotion texts. One executive in a large US police department lamented to me that they would assign the least capable command staff to night shift in the sleepest precincts where they would do the least "damage"; however, this policy backfired when it came for promotion. Left to their own devices and largely unbothered, these candidates would study for the exam in job time, often outscoring their more capable colleagues working in hectic 24-7 precincts with nary time to think about the exam.

The promotion system is a process that is more equitable than in the past. You have as much chance of being promoted having worked a decade in the property office as you have in the busiest district in a city. Officers should not suffer career depreciation based on an assignment they usually had no hand in deciding. This does, however, raise doubts about the assumption that experience (read as "time served") in

the job is sufficient to assume a person will be effective in a command role, or that the promotion system is capable of identifying natural leaders who will be proficient in an area command role.

What training is currently available?

If, as Farkas and Manning (1997) argue, police cultures consist of lower-level participants, middle management, and top-level command, then the middle management have been largely forgotten in police training regimes. This issue seems to be nearly universal. Mid-level Norwegian police leaders have complained about not being able to learn from their peers, instead resorting to learning opportunities that are not directly related to their leadership situation (Filstad, Karp, & Glomseth, 2020).

At the time of writing, deep in isolation during the COVID-19 lockdown, the US national training situation is not easy to determine. I have previously noted, however that, in general, mid-level command training on crime or problem reduction is sorely lacking. For example, back in 2004, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) offered 68 programs. Only five courses were available nationally in “Quality leadership,” and none of these courses focused on crime prevention or crime reduction, or had crime reduction or prevention as sub themes (Ratcliffe, 2004).

Perhaps this reflects a lack of demand. Hoel and Barland (2021: 411) found that the police leaders they spoke to felt that their own and their colleagues’ experiences formed an adequate basis for learning. None of them was concerned that learning

based on their own experiences might be a “possible limitation for learning.” After my brief review of the 2004 training schedule, I concluded “the training regime offered to police in the US by the leading police chiefs organization only has one of 68 programs dedicated to general crime prevention, and only three courses that address crime reduction in specific situations. These programs total 16 days of training offered. By comparison, the number of training days dedicated to SWAT tactics and management is 48” (Ratcliffe, 2004: 78).

I have no reason to suspect the situation has improved, and the implications are clear. SWAT tactics—with important implications for officer safety—are viewed as a hard skill requiring training and ongoing maintenance of currency. But crime reduction related to community safety? You pick that up as you go, or you can just wing it when needed. This might reflect a belief in the merits of informal experience-based learning. What Filstad et al. (2020: 611) called “learning facilitated by networks and communities of practice to ensure learning from colleagues and peers.” But as Hoel and Barland (2021: 405) note “Jumping to conclusions based on previous experience and prejudices can be one pitfall with [experience-based learning].” First, we cannot be sure that our experience is sufficiently varied to be confident that our reaction to different situations is correct. Second, we often lack a mechanism for catching our biases.

The following summarizes the situation facing most mid-level leaders in policing when first assigned to an area command. Their academy training, which was

largely geared towards basic instruction on handling calls for service and the mitigation of agency risk, is irrelevant to their new command role and many years behind them anyway. However, they are not yet at a rank elevated enough to attend swanky executive seminars addressing strategic planning. Promotion exam materials remain geared towards administrative processes and bureaucracy, and promotion processes favor uncontested rote learning of non-ambiguous responses that rarely reflect the messy reality of area command. They have a range of experiences but have received little feedback on the effectiveness of their work. And finally, academic research has played little-to-no evident role in their career to date. With this background, new area commanders are immediately required to make potentially life-changing policy decisions for the entire community.

I therefore set about writing a book for these forgotten leaders and creating a podcast that they might find interesting and informative. Subsequently I was asked to provide training to fill this gap. The next sections detail these developments.

The police commander's crime reduction course

There is a risk that the remainder of this chapter becomes a blatant advertisement for a book that I wrote and for a course that I run. In my defense, I would point out that I was specifically asked to write about this particular topic. Moreover, I hope there may be some broader points herein about the development process for emerging police leaders.

The central structure of many crime reduction processes is the problem-oriented SARA model. There is good reason for retaining the SARA structure – it mirrors components of the scientific method. Originating with Herman Goldstein's seminal work (1979, 1990) and the acronym designed by Eck and Spelman (1987), the process of scanning, analysis, response, and assessment is well known, even if some places have generated variations (Scott, Eck, Knutsson, & Goldstein, 2017) such as Ekblom's 5i's (Ekblom, 2011).

While meta-analysis has found that problem-oriented policing is an effective crime control strategy (Braga, Papachristos, & Hureau, 2014; Hinkle, Weisburd, Telep, & Petersen, 2020), particular feedback that I have noticed over the years is that the SARA model can be critiqued as a bit vague and overly abstract, an assessment also identified by Sidebottom and Tilley (2011). They highlight that it can oversimplify the complexity of the processes, pays too little attention to implementation, minimizes the role of partnerships between police and other agencies, and is insufficiently specific. The lack of detail was also noted by Ekblom (2005). Sidebottom, Tilley, and Eck (2012) cite a presentation of John Eck's that details a number of problems when conducting problem-oriented policing, including: failure to detect or define a problem, lack of analysis, failure to structure a crime science focus to analysis, poor implementation of responses, measuring the wrong outcome, and weak evaluations.

Both the book (*Reducing Crime: A Companion for Police Leaders*, Ratcliffe, 2019) and the training use an expanded model designed to specifically address these concerns. The PANDA model retains aspects of SARA while adding more specificity to the articulation and deployment of a response:

- Problem scan
- Analyze problem
- Nominate strategy
- Deploy strategy
- Assess outcomes

These steps can be seen in the model outlined in Figure 3.1. This shows the cyclical nature of problem-solving, not dissimilar to the SARA model, with extra emphasis placed on having a clear strategy and deploying that strategy—a nod to the challenges of implementing problem-oriented policing.

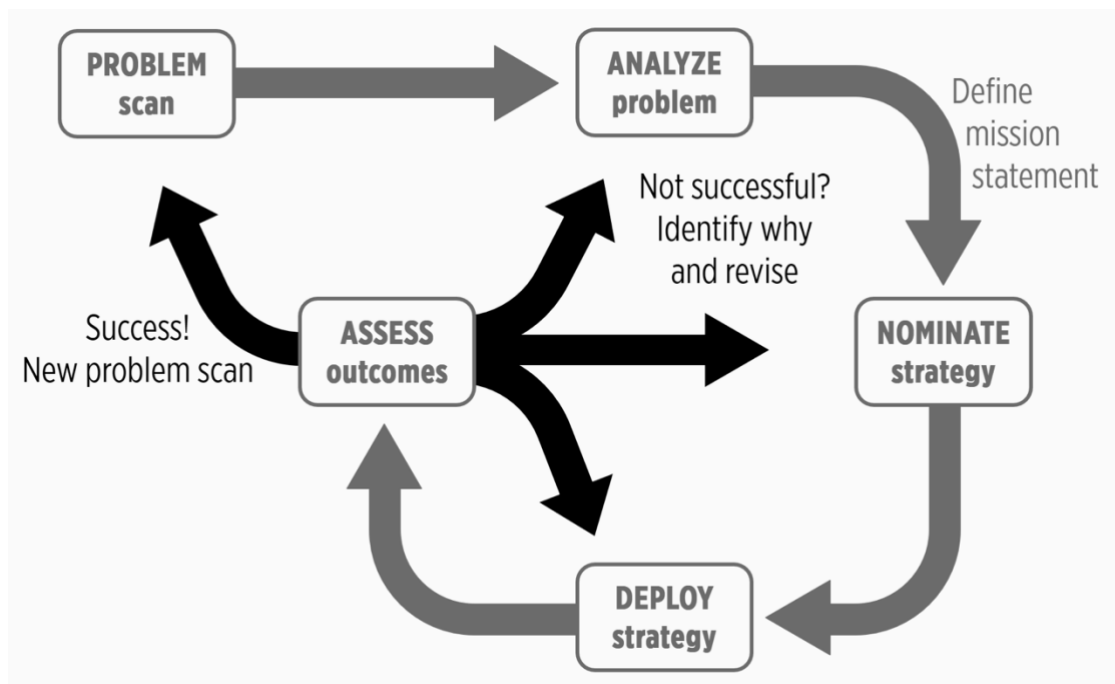


Figure 3.1: The PANDA crime reduction model

Specifically dealing with implementation is one new aspect addressed in the PANDA model. A second is the concern about vagueness that plagues the SARA model. More than one officer has said to me some equivalent of “I get the idea of the SARA model, but can you just tell me what to do.” Both the medical and aviation fields have enhanced safety through the introduction of checklists (Gawande, 2011) and their value for policing has already been noted by, among others, Sidebottom et al. (2012). Each stage of the PANDA model, therefore, has an accompanying checklist. This constitutes a structured approach to decision-making (Adams, 1993) that can enhance the existing skill set of police leaders.

Like aviation checklists, it is not a requirement to activate each component. For example, there are situations when a pilot may decide to only partially lower the aileron flaps on landing or may adjust the fuel–air mixture only when the aircraft reaches a certain altitude. The importance lies in these being explicit decisions to act (or not), decisions that are highlighted within a structured flow of activities. A second benefit to a checklist is that it takes the intricacies in many tasks and breaks the complexity into more manageable components. For example, tasking an analyst at the analyze problem stage with the instruction “tell me everything you can about our burglary problem” is amorphous and vague. But many crime problems can be deconstructed into what is known, and what is not known, about a problem. The checklist associated with the analysis stage is VOLTAGE:

- Victims
- Offenders
- Locations
- Times
- Attractors
- Groups
- Enhancers

Each VOLTAGE item explicitly pushes an analyst to break down a crime issue into these component parts, a disaggregation that can illuminate possible avenues for

intervention. They are also explicitly connected to crime science theory, and the opportunities theories (hence crime *attractors*) that are integral to problem-oriented policing (Scott et al., 2017).

The model implicitly addresses another commonly identified issue. The premature rush to crime control responses is a recognized problem with implementing problem-oriented solutions (Sidebottom & Tilley, 2011). By focusing on the problem scan, analysis, and creation of a mission statement (see Figure 3.1), only at the nominate strategy stage are solutions considered. In the training, this comes on the afternoon of the second day, and only after modules that address what is currently known about crime control and the effectiveness of various policing tactics. These aspects gently introduce the participants (or readers) to evidence-based policing.

Introducing evidence-based policing

As Lum and Koper (2015: 18) posit, experience is important to policing, but “it can often be overvalued. In combination with high levels of discretion, this can work against officers being receptive to outside knowledge.” Yet while proponents of evidence-based practice realize an empirical knowledge base can enhance professional experience, training, and judgment, at present in policing there is little penalty or censure for not using an evidence-based approach. Evidence-based policing (EBP) is an entirely discretionary activity. Pointing this out is tricky. As any lecturer

or trainer will tell you, you do not get to better practice by telling people they are doing it wrong.

The first step is therefore *not* to tell people that their existing abilities are of no value.

An analogous situation is that of aviation safety. In aviation, the process of aeronautical decision-making that helps pilots make good decisions, involves “situational awareness and a structured approach to decision-making to enhance the pilot’s application of conventional flight training, knowledge, skill and experience” (Adams, 1993: 2). The structured approach does not *replace* the pilot’s ability but *enhances* it. This is an important distinction, worthy of transposing to EBP. Evidence-based policing is best thought of as a structured, more scientific approach to making good tactical and strategic decisions that can enhance the existing training, knowledge, skill, and experience of police officers. The PANDA model brings the structured approach, but we should also encourage officers to use the existing knowledge bank within policing.

Stanko and Dawson (2016) pointed out that police are often thought to favor minimalist research and their craft-based experiential knowledge in preference to scientific evidence. As one British police constable said to Davies et al. (in press: 9), “The vast majority of the frontline would struggle to see the relevance [of research].”

Lum and Koper (2015) noted that officers who had the least exposure to research knowledge argued that the police had all the information necessary to fulfill their mission, while those officers more exposed to scientific findings related to policing

were less convinced that the organization had sufficient information about crime and responses to it.

This has been my experience as well. Officers who have previously been exposed to policing research are initially more receptive. It is therefore important to work hardest with officers who are not familiar with the research. Time is taken in the training class to discuss the merits and limits of individual experience, and to reframe research studies *not* as the work of academic eggheads, but instead as the collective experiences of thousands of fellow officers. This helps to tackle one conundrum when explaining the value of evidence-based policing. When the research evidence contradicts the limited experiences and limited recollections of a single officer, that single officer often remains skeptical. If the evidence is framed as the collective experiences of thousands of officers with just as much experience as the skeptic, it appears to provide a more acceptable route to changing the officer's mindset.

Adjusting one's professional beliefs based on the word of a quirky, foreign-sounding college professor with a questionable sense of humor might be a reach, but is more palatable if framed as adjusting strategy based on shared professional experience. This seems to help with the cognitive dissonance that can occur when long-held beliefs about crime, crime control, and the criminal justice system are challenged, as they often are during the training program.

Two other things are worth noting about the course. First, it is three days long. Most respondents in their course evaluations ask for it to be a five-day course, but the

reality of modern policing is that, in most departments, the middle management are deemed essential and cannot get away for an entire work week. Second, every attendee gets a 32-page workbook and a copy of *Reducing Crime: A Companion for Police Leaders*. Many officers tell me they appreciate getting a free copy of the book with the course, because they do not like spending their own money on professional literature. This creates somewhat of a conundrum for police departments. They are probably most efficient with coordinated structures and approaches to crime and harm reduction, but it is difficult to get everyone on the same page. Departmental policy manuals are often horribly dry reads, and rarely embraced with enthusiasm, akin to the quote by German Field Marshal Erwin Rommel, who noted about the British Army: “The British write some of the best doctrine in the world; it is fortunate their officers do not read it.” Kudos therefore to at least a handful of police departments that have invested in coordinated approaches to leadership and bought copies of *Reducing Crime* for their entire management teams. Several departments now have the book embedded in their mid-management promotion exams. As one respondent from a British police force explained, “PANDA seemed like an opportunity ... it might get people to think a little bit more about the stages that they were doing” (Sidebottom et al., 2020: 34).

The *Reducing Crime* podcast

The evidence-based concepts behind the book and training course are supported in part by the *Reducing Crime* podcast. The monthly podcast features interviews with influential thinkers in the police service and leading crime and policing researchers. The podcast is an attempt at “translational criminology,” or “the study of how the products of criminological and criminal justice research turn into outputs, tools, programs, interventions, and actions in criminal justice practice” (Lum & Koper, 2017: 266). Recall from the last paragraph that officers are reluctant to spend their own money on books related to their professional work. If we are to translate research for an audience that has some reluctance to engage with it, or who think it bears little relevance to their work, then academics have to find different mechanisms to reach this reluctant audience. The podcast is an experiment in alternative ways to engage with people potentially interested in policing research.

At the time of writing, the podcast has been in operation for over three years with new episodes released towards the end of each month. Each episode lasts about 40 minutes and comprises an edited interview. The policing field has few dedicated podcasts, and it was therefore difficult to gauge how many listeners I might expect. My initial hope was to have maybe one- or two-hundred listeners. However, as of July 2021, the podcast now attracts more than 40,000 downloads a year, with listeners accessing the podcast directly via SoundCloud or through other platforms such as Apple podcasts and Spotify. Listeners come from over a dozen countries. I make a spreadsheet with multiple choice questions for each episode available for college

instructors and faculty to encourage university students to engage with thinkers in policing. Transcripts are also available for each episode at reducingcrime.com/podcast.

On the police side, guests have included chiefs like Tom Nestel (SEPTA Police), Bill Bratton (ex-NYPD and Los Angeles PD), Carmen Best (Seattle PD), and Chris Magnus (Tucson PD, Arizona), and “pracademic” (Huey & Mitchell, 2015) professionals leading evidence-based initiatives, including (then Sergeant and PhD) Renée Mitchell (Sacramento PD, California), Major Wendy Stiver (Dayton PD, Ohio), Commander Alex Murray (London’s Metropolitan Police), and Detective Inspector Mike Newman (Queensland Police Service, Australia). Evidence-based policing academic guests include Lawrence Sherman, Lorraine Mazerolle, and Geoff Alpert. Topics have included crime theory (John Eck, Marcus Felson, Tamara Herold), officer wellness (Ian Hesketh and Bill Walsh), implicit bias and racial awareness (Phil Goff and Rod Brunson), urban violence (Thomas Abt), consent decrees (Deputy Commissioner Danny Murphy) and women in policing (Mo McGough).

Conclusion

If we consider a profession (as opposed to a job) is defined as “a public-interest occupation that restricts entry to those who have mastered knowledge and skills needed to provide a particular set of complex services” (Sherman, 2013: 5), then we

should to be concerned about the lack of training available to help those in mid-level positions master the knowledge and skills of their considerable responsibility. That being said, little is known about the merits of training and education in policing generally. Senior police officers attend executive training and national conferences, just like prominent medical practitioners; however, when more senior cardiologists are away at national meetings, patients have healthier outcomes (Jena, Prasad, Goldman, & Romley, 2015)!

This caveat aside, the absence of training and education for mid-level leaders should not be ignored. Any training should balance new information and knowledge while respecting existing experience, however varied. As Wood, Fleming, and Marks (2008: 83) have written, “Although the practices of police are shaped by the ‘webs of meanings’ surrounding their situated lives, they are not determined by them. They do have the ability to reflect on the relationships between their situated beliefs, knowledge and practices and to adjust those in accordance with their environment.” I agree. The “web of meanings” around the workplace for many police leaders is situated within experience, opinion, and deference to time served. If we are to enhance police practice with evidence-based knowledge, then this web should be acknowledged. Only then can we help those leaders increase their appreciation for a more evidence-based practice.

Like a poor stepchild who does all the work but is often ignored, problem-oriented policing through the SARA model is demonstrably effective, though often

relegated in practice. A recent systematic review confirmed this effectiveness (Hinkle et al., 2020). As Scott et al. (2017: 25–3) discovered, “while one finds elements of problem-oriented policing imbued in many other policing frameworks ... it is increasingly harder to find applications of problem-oriented policing faithful to all of its essential, inter-related elements.” The PANDA model reinvigorates and updates the SARA model with checklists necessary to structure good practice (Sidebottom et al., 2012).

As one officer noted, the only difference between a police officer and a staff member is “I’ve got operational experience. I know what it’s like to go through a door first. I know what it’s like to be challenged. I know what it’s like to face an angry person. I know what it’s like to feel frightened” (quoted in Belur & Johnson, 2018: 778). While my personal policing experience dates from the previous century, I remember these feelings well. Evidence-based policing will succeed when it integrates the best available evidence-based knowledge from high-quality systematic research with the “individual clinical expertise” (Sackett, Rosenberg, Gray, Haynes, & Richardson, 1996: 71) of police officers. Until continuing professional education becomes mainstream and mandatory, like medicine, nursing, and aviation, we have to reach out to police officers in different ways. The PANDA model, the associated training program, and the *Reducing Crime* podcast are all designed to avoid traditional mechanisms, like paywall-protected journals and esoteric conferences, that can make scholarly research appear elite and inaccessible. If we want to see policing

research central to public policy, we have to make academia and deeper learning opportunities more accessible to police officers and leaders. As Stevens (2007: 32) concludes, “if researchers make sure that their findings are available to all the people who have an interest in them, then not only can truth be told to power, but the chances are increased that power can be given to truth.” Details of the book and podcast discussed in this chapter are available at reducingcrime.com and from the author.

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