Chapter IX

Police Investigation Knowledge

Introduction

Governments have become increasingly focused upon the setting of targets in efforts to improve the efficacy of police performance. However, performance assessments for police work are lacking clarity. In this chapter, we suggest the value shop for performance assessment. Based on a literature review, we suggest potential determinants of police performance in the value shop. Based on identified value configuration and determinants, this chapter develops research propositions linking police performance to team climate, knowledge sharing, leadership roles and stages of information technology. Future research should both consider revisions of propositions and also conduct an empirical study based on hypotheses derived from propositions. The police investigation leader will find guidance in leadership roles, knowledge-sharing initiatives, IT possibilities as well as team climate actions. Professional management thinking is introduced to police leadership by applying concepts from the business management research literature.

Police investigation units represent a knowledge-intensive and time-critical environment (Chen, et al., 2002). The primary mission of any police force in the world is to protect life and property, preserve law and order and prevent and detect crime (Luen & Al-Hawamdeh, 2001).

In response to the September 11 terrorist attacks, major government efforts to modernize federal law enforcement authorities' intelligence collection and processing capabilities have been initiated worldwide. At the state and local levels in many countries, crime and police report data have rapidly migrated from paper to

automated records management systems in recent years, making them increasingly accessible (Chen, et al., 2003).

Police investigations are often dependent upon information from abroad. For example, the intelligence communities of different countries cooperate and share their information and knowledge, such as the Mossad with the CIA (Kahana, 2001). According to Lahneman (2004), knowledge sharing in the intelligence communities after 9/11 has increased rapidly.

According to Ashby and Longley (2005), there is a lack of clarity and clear methodology in assessing the performance of policing. We argue that police investigation units have the value configuration of a value shop. Furthermore, we argue that police investigation success can be defined as the extent to which each primary activity in the value shop is successfully conducted in police investigations.

Knowledge in Police Work

The public sector is turning to knowledge management, having recognized that they too face competition in funding and from alternative services. Increasingly, customers of the public sector are demanding higher service quality, particularly in the area of e-government. Services, particularly e-services, are expected to be available all the time with immediate response, simplified and with one-stop processing. According to Luen and Al-Hawamdeh (2001), knowledge management is thus a natural solution to improve operations and enhance customer service. Large organizations around the world are implementing knowledge management.

The activities and work carried out by police forces are primarily in the areas of crime prevention, incident management, investigation and community policing. Crime prevention implies the detection, and hence prevention, of crime. These activities can be carried out through both reactive and proactive means. Reactive measures such as roadblocks, spot-checks and showing police presence are routinely carried out by police officers as part of their investigation duties. Proactive measures include public education to help prevent crime. Police forces routinely use mass media as a means to convey crime prevention advice relating to current crime trends. In Singapore, police officers also reach out to the community via grassroots and community agencies to educate the public on the latest crime trends and threats. Police officers performing both reactive and proactive measures effectively, will need to know the latest legal and policy directions regarding these functions as well the latest information on crime trends and the corresponding knowledge about the detection and prevention of crime.

Luen and Al-Hawamdeh (2001) find that the amount of information that police officers come into contact with in the course of their work is astounding. This and

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