

Chapter 4

The Evolving Role of Police Leadership and Organizational Culture

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores three critical issues that intersect with law enforcement and society which are predicated on the word “NO”. The first issue focuses on police authority and the use of the word “no.” There is an inherent challenge in balancing the power embedded in an authoritative role with the ability to say “no” in a way that avoids rebellion or rejection. For police officers, this requires striking a delicate balance in being firm in authority while maintaining respect and understanding. To achieve this, police officers must be devoid of hubris and grounded in practical common sense, tempered with humanistic values.

INTRODUCTION

Building on the *Conterminous Spheres of Dependency* theory introduced in Chapter Three, this chapter explores how these spheres reflect humanistic values, particularly in situations where the word “no” is used. One essential aspect of these values is the concept of “saving face.” When a police officer needs to tell someone “No,” the way it is delivered can lead to various outcomes. However, when the word no is employed with respect, it helps avoid humiliation and can defuse potential conflict, preventing defiance or rebellion. Sherwin offer examples from his own experiences when he employed the word “no” in police/citizen encounters, applying a humanistic approach that preserved dignity and fostered cooperation.

The second issue is the examination of the criticism and conflicts surrounding this issue.

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Being denied something, whether material or in terms of action, prompts the question, “Why?” This questioning often touches on citizens' constitutional rights, creating a space where law enforcement must ensure that their actions are lawfully justified. The key to maintaining authority while using “no” is having clear, lawful reasoning that aligns with the rights of an individual, thus ensuring that authority is not abused but properly exercised in a manner that respects and upholds citizens' rights.

This requires police officers to use sound judgment, possess a humanistic spirit, and exercise discretion rooted in lawful methods. The lack of humanism was tragically underscored in the George Floyd incident, where the responding officers relied on authoritative power rather than humanistic discretion. By failing to de-escalate the situation, they exacerbated a social wound that sparked global outrage and rebellion. There are moments when saying “no” is clear-cut, and others when it is not. In those cases when it is not clear, it is essential to provide a lawful explanation that fosters understanding and cooperation. The ability to tell someone “No” and have them peacefully submit to the demand is a humanistic skill that must be an integral part of a police officer's character.

However, the way “no” is communicated matters just as much as the decision itself. From parents telling children “No” to signage in public spaces, the word is integral to shaping our actions, thoughts, and decisions. Yet, we are far more receptive when we understand the reasons behind it. It is crucial for police departments to recruit individuals with exceptional moral and ethical values, those who are receptive to practicing humanism in their work. Police work is not for everyone. It is an inherently stressful and challenging profession, but it is also a deeply rewarding human experience. Sherwin expresses that he loved being a police officer. Throughout his career, he had the privilege of meeting remarkable individuals, including world leaders, actors, and even Pope John Paul XXIII. But beyond these extraordinary experiences, Sherwin had the honor of working with exceptional citizens in the communities he served.

The third issue encourages society to be part of the solution rather than the problem. During Sherwin's tenure with the Chicago Police Department, he had the privilege of working with police officers from various units and departments, including federal, state, and county law enforcement agencies. The focus of all of them is to ensure equal justice for every citizen, including those who perpetrate crimes against society. Most police officers possess exceptional moral and ethical virtues, trustworthiness, professionalism, and humanistic values. Despite the negative depictions of police officers, their devotion to duty and desire to serve and protect remains undaunted. Their kindness, care, and professionalism are not always highlighted to the public, only the police/citizen encounters that have unfortunate endings. Citizen's trust and respect for police officers rarely is acknowledged by news or social media, only

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