



Performance management in police agencies: a conceptual framework

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to define a systematic management structure that helps police practitioners institutionalize performance management and analysis in more rational-technical ways.

Design/methodology/approach – The design is based on Gold's “complete participant” field researcher method.

Findings – The findings suggest a performance management model is more rational than the traditional command-control model and may increase consistency in police management by systematically collecting and reporting on streams of data to measure performance instead of relying on rote compliance.

Research limitations/implications – The model is limited because it does not account for important intangible qualities of performance (e.g. attitude, initiative, judgment); in the hands of autocratic managers it can be oppressive and cause more problems than it solves; it may constrain officer discretion; it has not been advanced as a learning instrument; and performance indicators are subject to measurement error.

Practical implications – Most police agencies are already capturing the necessary data elements to implement a performance management model. Police executives and policymakers can use this model to definitively measure how well police agencies and individual programs are performing.

Originality/value – The paper represents an opportunity for police practitioners to embrace a new management process intended to improve performance and accountability. The framework is a universal management process that can be applied to any size police agency or any police program.

Keywords Police, Performance management, Performance measures

Paper type Conceptual paper

Introduction

Performance management is a systematic effort to improve performance through an ongoing process of establishing desired outcomes, setting performance standards, then collecting, analyzing and reporting on streams of data to improve individual and collective performance (Whitaker *et al.*, 1982). Policing has begun adopting this evolving management paradigm, which represents a departure from the traditional management approach police agencies are accustomed to working with. Traditional police management and supervision place an emphasis on compliance through command and control doctrine, “means over ends” (Goldstein, 1979, p. 238) and symbolism (i.e. “appearances”) (Manning, 1978, p. 192), consistent with institutional theory of the police (Crank, 2003; Crank and Langworthy, 1992; Mastrofski and Uchida, 1996; Meyer and Rowan, 1977). From the top of the organization to the bottom, compliance[1] is the watchword: strict compliance with policy, rules, regulations, verbal orders and written



directives are at the root of police officers' activities, often at the expense of performance (Alpert and Smith, 1994; Cordner, 1989; LeBrec, 1982; Merton, 1940). This management paradigm tends to create stagnation and indifference toward clientele (Kaufman, 1973; Mastrofski, 1998) by sapping the energy and initiative from employees. As such, it is difficult at best to motivate employees to work toward a common goal, with a collective sense to be productive and it is difficult to measure agency success.

Except for some limited research on strategic management in police organizations (Moore and Stephens, 1991) and the recent Compstat literature on reengineering police management (Bratton, 1998; Kelling and Bratton, 1998; Magers, 2004; Moore, 2003; Moore and Braga, 2003; Walsh, 2001; Walsh and Vito, 2004; Weisburd *et al.*, 2003; Willis *et al.*, 2007), little is known about the management processes police departments use to carry out their daily responsibilities and the relationship between those processes and intended outcomes. This implies developing a more practical management model and encouraging police executives to implement it could add value to a largely unknown dimension of police management.

Methodology

The concept for this paper was developed during my tenure as a command-rank officer in the Newark, New Jersey (USA) police department. This paper relies primarily upon written management plans, notes and observations I made over the course of 20 years of participant-observation in policing, ten of which were spent at the supervisory, middle-management and command level. My position afforded me unique access to the internal functions of a major urban police department at the executive level, which provides a distinct perspective on the backstage setting, politics and operations that occur in policing. My daily interactions were typically with mid-level and upper-level management police personnel who had responsibility for personnel and program performance as well as senior elected officials. My role as commanding officer of the research, analysis and planning division was to develop policies and programs to ensure the agency was working as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Participant-observation is perhaps the most tangible method to systematically collect data on police management. With such an extended period of time in the field, I had the opportunity to gain rare insight into police administration from a perspective often closed to outsiders. It was also an opportunity to contemporaneously record temporal/causal sequences as they occurred instead of relying on muddled notes and recollection. I was able to view policing through several successive elected administrations and appointed police administrations, over different social and economic periods and over a new generation of police officers. The issues confronting the agency were virtually the same regardless of the season, policing style or political culture.

Based on my experience, conversations with colleagues across the world and the literature, I developed a cause and effect diagram that served as the template. This helped me identify substantive issues related to the agency's social and political purpose with an emphasis on the agency's mission as the foundation. With the mission as the foundation, it was possible to create a rational structure that can be evaluated empirically.

Literature review

Police departments are complex government agencies that come in various forms with an amalgam of intricate responsibilities (Bayley, 1985; Goldstein, 1977) and they are

organized along bureaucratic lines (Weber, 1946). Similar to Frederick Taylor's *Principles of Scientific Management* (Taylor, 1911), employees are not paid to think, but to follow their superior's orders – right, wrong or indifferent (Stinchcombe, 1980). The ostensible benefits are “rationality, predictability, impersonality, technical competence and authoritarianism” (Nigro and Nigro, 1973, p. 97). However, the efficiencies and “scientific principles” advocated by Taylor (1911), Fuld (1971), Weber (1946) and some forward-thinking police chiefs of the time (Gazell, 1976; Vollmer, 1936; Wilson, 1950) never reached their full potential during policing's professional era. Nearly 90 years after the professional movement began, modern policing still faces some of the same management problems of yesteryear including an underdeveloped technical core and the outmoded command and control management style along with some contemporary issues such as role complexity and rising egalitarianism.

Rational-technical theory

The impetus for government agencies to perform more efficiently and effectively is partly attributable to the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993. This Congressional measure ensures that federal agencies produce strategic plans so those agencies potentially become better at delivering service. Embedded in these plans is the necessity that agencies redefine their business methods in more rational ways; rational in this sense is aimed at measuring aspects of the agency such as input, output, intermediate objectives, outcome, strategies, work processes and resources, all of which combine to hopefully improve performance.

The rational-technical theory of organizations, as applied to a police department, suggests the agency comports within a normative framework. The normative framework implies the organization behaves and is structured in a manner designed to optimize efficiency and effectiveness toward specific goals (e.g. controlling fear crime and disorder, delivering public value through budgeting accountability, reverence for law and authority, citizen satisfaction) (Thompson, 1967; Blau and Schoenherr, 1971). The intent is to address real issues facing the agency – offender accountability, response time, citizen complaints, crime and disorder – while concurrently synthesizing the interests held by a collection of powerful actors who hold sway over the organization (Crank, 2003; Crank and Langworthy, 1992; Moore, 1995).

Problems confronting police management structures

Some weaknesses of current police management systems. Police forces across the UK and, to a slightly lesser degree, the USA are prominent users of performance management models. In the USA, Compstat has emerged as the leading performance management process. In the UK, police forces are using a more structured framework that is driven by experiences in policing, academia and the private sector. Both processes show promise of creating rational management structures, but also show some weaknesses.

Recent research on Compstat suggests that, while an important and progressive step toward a more rational-technical method of police management, the model reinforces much of the traditional police bureaucracy (Willis *et al.*, 2003, pp. 448; Willis *et al.*, 2004, p. 468) and the evidence is inconclusive as to whether it reduces crime (Eck and Maguire, 2006; Rosenfeld *et al.*, 2005; Weisburd *et al.*, 2003). Compstat's confrontational “show trial”[2] forum tends to increase employees' psychological defensiveness, which prevents lower-ranking officers from sharing potentially

replicable ideas (Delorenzi *et al.*, 2006, p. 37). This is because voicing their opinion in the traditional police bureaucracy is often interpreted as subtle criticism of their commander who did not think of the idea first. Consequently, officers keep quiet – the path of least resistance.

By design, the Compstat model is aimed at holding mid-level managers and command-rank officers accountable for performance but fails to reach the line officers. The officers who actually deliver police services rarely, if ever, appear at Compstat to answer for their performance and rarely must they meet established targets. My experience is that without having to account for their performance, officers may be given to indolence, apathy and may shirk their responsibilities. Individual performance becomes a contest of ingenuity, a trifling game of “catch me if you can” between line officers and management, where line officers snicker and try to outsmart supervisors in their daily work as they try to avoid accountability in the “us” (line officers) against “them” (managers) work environment (Reuss-Ianni, 1984). Although this is by no means universal, it occurs frequently enough to warrant some observers to suggest a small percentage of officers perform the lion’s share of work while the others abrogate their responsibilities in a “game of bluff” (Maple and Mitchell, 1999, p. 6). All of this is contrary to Compstat’s theoretical proposition that it was designed, at least partly, to disentangle the performance problems created by traditional police management.

Across the UK, a culture of police performance has become embedded in police forces. Britain’s Home Office (1999) views performance measures as an incentive to improve service delivery and has published several papers, reports and guides on performance.[3] However, cash-limited budgets have produced some conflict between allotted financial resources and pressure to increase productivity, resulting in unintended consequences for professional integrity and human rights, which ultimately affect legitimacy (Collier, 2001).

As budgets become more limited, police have prioritized efficiency, which means getting more done with fewer resources. Yet, simply increasing funding or staffing levels does not necessarily translate into better performance (e.g. a lower crime rate or a higher clearance rate; Audit Commission, 1997, p. 12). Concerned with “numbers”, the police may sacrifice legal mandates and due process rights in the interest of crime control and efficiency (Lawrence Inquiry, 1999, p. 312). Social pressure to increase productivity while concurrently lowering expenditures may partly explain the gradual erosion of professional standards in some UK police agencies, which has led to increased citizen complaints and at least one case of in-custody death (Police Complaints Authority, 1999). This has also led police forces in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to “trawl the margins” in an effort to portray police performance in the best light (Collier, 2001, p. 36, citing HM Inspectorate of Constabulary, 1999). As a result, critics have called for a renewed emphasis on individual rights and social values in an effort to find common ground between the values expressed by due process and the competing values of crime control (Packer, 1968).

An underdeveloped technical core. In the broadest sense, the technical core of a business is the work performed by the organization, where technology is employed to produce a desired outcome (Scott, 1992). Technology includes the intellectual and physical capital, tactics and strategies used by the agency to process raw materials toward a particular outcome – in policing, raw materials are information, citizens, victims, offenders, and places. My experience is that desired outcomes in policing are often not operationalized, leaving the agency with a poor understanding of how to

apply technology to execute its responsibilities. Often subject to political meddling or budget constraints, the police agency's task environment is subject to limitations and shifting priorities, including power relations that are necessary to sustain the environment (Moore, 1995). The task environment includes environmental factors that impinge on the work of the agency or shape its structure and function including citizens, social and physical attributes of the community and other elements of the criminal justice system (Maguire and Uchida, 2000, p. 535). The amorphous loose-knit operational style that arises in this environment leaves officers and managers to choose an individual course of action as they go along, perhaps relying on intuition, perceptions and experience, instead of a pre-determined plan supported by data and technology. This is the product of "mock" bureaucracy (Bradley *et al.*, 1986) that reduces many police officers to "casual, lackadaisical, offhand, ad hoc and lowly motivated" employees (Punch, 1983, p. xii).

What tends to keep the technical core of policing from developing is the failure to articulate the specific services to be provided then shaping the organization to deliver those services. For example, police agencies deliver more services than just crime control but frequently subordinate the service orientation to the law enforcement function. Then, they adopt an organizational structure, complete with wartime rhetoric (i.e. the war on crime, the war on drugs, the war against terrorism) that embraces the law enforcement function and ignores the balance of their social responsibilities. This may leave the community dissatisfied by the lack of attention to their other needs or enraged by oppressive tactics (e.g. Gould and Mastrofski, 2004; McArdle and Erzen, 2001). In response to that dissatisfaction and to perceived external pressure for change, police agencies use symbolic means to improve appearances. This creates false favorable impressions with the aim of preserving the status quo and offers little if any substantive improvement (Edelman, 1964; Lorinskas *et al.*, 1985). The real business of the agency – its technical core – never gets accomplished because the agency is chasing symbolism over substance.

Role complexity. The role of the chief executive has become more complex. Litigation and investigative commissions affect police operations, administration and policy (*Escobedo v. Illinois*, 1964[4]; Knapp Commission, 1972; *Mapp v. Ohio*, 1961[5]; *Miranda v. Arizona*, 1966[6]; Mollen Commission, 1994; Rampart Independent Review Panel, 2000). The convergence of litigation, information/technology and the shift from traditional to community/problem-oriented policing have created new demands necessitating changes in the way police organizations are managed (Redlinger, 1994). Based on my observations, it is simply less possible – if not impossible – for today's police chiefs to exercise direct control over every organizational element than years past, regardless of their individual talent. It is also imprudent to try and do so by micromanaging the organization at the expense of leadership, particularly with technically and emotionally competent employees (Whisenand and Ferguson, 1996).

The complex role necessitates devolving decision-making authority to mid-level managers and front-line supervisors who work toward predefined performance standards set inside a logical framework. This frees the chief executive to concentrate on high level policy details instead of daily minutia, where the chief can steer while the workforce rows.

The rise in egalitarianism. Worldwide, hierarchical institutions are leveling, resulting in a general loss of trust, confidence and authority in government in general (Balogh, 1996; Fukuyama, 1992; Hecl, 1996; Orren, 1997) and policing in particular

(e.g. Reiner, 2000; Terpstra and Van der Vijver, 2006). As workforces become better educated, intellectual capital replaces physical capital (buildings, cars and equipment) as the dominant value orientation and the perceived need to control conduct in minute ways evanesces. Intellectual capital lends itself to interpersonal networks and to diffused control, where talent is respected as an individual asset. This rising group of current and future police officers does not appreciate the rigid hierarchical structure of command authority so willingly accepted by less educated officers of years past; they resent unquestioned obedience, the logic and imperatives of the quasi-military structure, particularly when management grants them little or no say in decisions that affect them (Peak, 1990; Thibault *et al.*, 1985, p. 328). Consequently, they perceive their supervisors and top management as distant illegitimate authorities who fail to steer toward definable outcomes and who would rather nitpick at *de minimus* rule infractions to exercise control than to produce quantifiable outcomes.

The evolving social preference is recognition of the individual and respect for dignity over absolute authority and deference to rank (Peak, 1990). Because of changing social attitudes, new police officers are less willing to immediately accept the authoritarian command structure that governs their conduct (Peak, 1990, pp. 63-4). They are more willing to challenge the incongruence between training and reality, the utility of agency rules and their superiors' authority through established means such as civil lawsuits and administrative processes (e.g. merit system board; arbitration; union grievances; Peak, 1990, p. 64; Thibault *et al.*, 1985, p. 4).

By placing an emphasis on outcomes instead of rote compliance, the department is fostering support, cooperation and diligence toward specified goals. Emphasizing results and giving employees something to strive for is part of Maslow's (1943) "hierarchy of needs" theory, where employees desire the challenge of higher achievement, want to be empowered with the autonomy to act, want to feel affiliated, and want recognition for their efforts. Such constructive management practices may breed higher individual performance and achieve the overall discipline and deference the "old guard" so steadfastly cherishes by showing officers management respects them as valued organizational members first.

Command and control doctrine. Dovetailing on egalitarianism is the traditional command and control bureaucracy, which seeks to control officers' behaviors in minute ways through centralized command structures that afford officers little or no voice over the way strategy is created and by placing an emphasis on output over outcome (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux, 1990). This style of management reinforces the quasi-military, paternalistic role the agency assumes, where officers are treated like children and administrators act as parents, micromanaging their every move, lest they get into trouble if left to think on their own (Goldstein, 1990). Former New York City Police Commissioner Lee P. Brown commented:

The command-and-control culture of the police department doesn't treat officers as intelligent, creative, and trustworthy people. It allows them very little discretion. It's designed to make sure that they don't get into trouble, don't embarrass the department, and don't get their supervisors into trouble (Webber, 1991, p. 116).

The result is a management structure bent on conformance with rules and overly concerned with routine and appearances rather than substantive results. Rational performance targets yield to oppressive rules in an effort to "get through the day" because no one is expecting very much anyway. Employees choose the path of least

resistance and tend toward laziness because they are not responsible for producing anything. Line officers want more autonomy but await management's directive on how to proceed. The problem is management's directive on how to proceed is not coming because no one really knows where they are headed. What is left is a group of leaders with acerbic immature personalities who issue vague orders instead of logical instructions on how to solve the problem.

The proposed performance management framework

Conceptualizing police performance

Both what constitutes performance and how to measure it have been a conundrum for many years, particularly because there is little consensus about what constitutes performance and because measuring it is complex, technical and takes many forms (Alpert and Dunham, 2001; Alpert *et al.*, 2001; Langworthy, 1999; Maguire, 2004; Skogan and Hartnett, 1997; Weatheritt, 1993). Performance is commonly found in two forms, either as trait dimensions that are scored subjectively by the officer's immediate supervisor based on observed behaviors (e.g. a qualitative appraisal of communication skills, appearance, decisiveness, leadership, emotional stability, assertiveness, etc.; Iannone, 1987; Landy, 1977), or as activities arising from the tasks related to the police function that are scored objectively based on the number of instances per activity (e.g. a quantitative appraisal of arrests, sick days, motor vehicle accidents, directed patrols and self-initiated stops, etc.; Cascio, 1977; Fabricatore *et al.*, 1978).

This model relies on a quantitative appraisal of police activity because it is objective, grounded in relevant activities that relate to the things the police do (i.e. lower level activities) as well as closes a gap in previous studies, where researchers may not have operationalized relevant performance indicators that measure effectiveness, efficiency and quality. For example, effectiveness is the relationship between an organization's outputs (activities) and what the organization intended to accomplish (outcomes) and is expressed as a percentage. Loveday (1994, p. 16, citing the Police Foundation) reported:

... there was no clear relationship between the recorded property crime rate and the *number of marked patrol cars per square mile*. There was no apparent relationship between the recorded property crime rate and *the level of police expenditures per inhabitant*. There was no clear relationship between the rate of violent recorded crime and *police expenditures per officer* and only a tendency for cities with high levels of recorded property crime per officer to have *smaller numbers of sworn officers per square mile* (emphasis added).

The number of marked patrol cars, the level of expenditures and number officers per square mile are not indicators of police effectiveness; they are indicators of budget priority. Merely spending more money on the police, or placing more officers in the field or placing officers on random patrol does not, *per se*, translate into crime-control action (see, for example, Kelling *et al.*, 1974). Indeed, it is the things the police do while they are in the field that should be measured. Thereafter, correlations can be drawn between the amount of police activity and crime rates, which is a more accurate measure of police effectiveness.

Improving police management necessitates a logical structure that connects police activities to intermediate objectives, and to end outcomes. This provides the basis for systematic evaluation of effectiveness, efficiency and quality by creating a more rational structure with the aim of developing the technical core of policing. The framework

introduced here resembles “the corporate strategy” method advocated by Kenneth Andrews (1980), which emphasizes setting goals, designing the organizational structure and allocating resources to achieve the desired ends. The model moves in a linear manner through six stages that connects police department activities to their social utilitarian purpose. Along the way, empirical data are collected that can be used to inform citizens and train personnel through performance targeting (Halachmi and Holzer, 1987). This enables top administrators to pay closer attention to the logic behind their mission, particularly connecting lower-level activities with higher-level goals to clarify employee expectations and define departmental obligations.

To represent how performance management is conceived, a cause-and-effect diagram (Figure 1) is used to reveal the logical relationships among component parts and provide additional insight into process behavior by illustrating the relationship between a given outcome and the factors that influence that outcome. This model revolves around six interrelated drivers that lead to sustainable and measurable performance. At the same time they create a platform to overcome some of the existing problems confronting police management.

Define the mission and desired outcomes

Mission statement. There is some debate about the utility and relevance of mission statements in policing (Mastrofski, 1999) and there is a noticeable absence of studies linking mission statements to performance in general (Lynn, 1996). However, research suggests mission statements are a popular staple of corporate life (Campbell and Nash, 1992; Pascarella and Frohman, 1989; Pearce, 1994) and others suggest they serve a valuable function for police agencies by helping shape who they are and what they do (DeLone, 2007; Schroeder *et al.*, 1995; Weiss, 1996; Weiss and Piderit, 1999; Wilson, 1989). To determine the organization’s mission, it is imperative to identify the mandates imposed on the organization from external and internal sources. Formal external mandates are typically found in state or federal laws, court decisions, city ordinances, regulatory guidelines and city charters. Informal internal mandates are often embedded

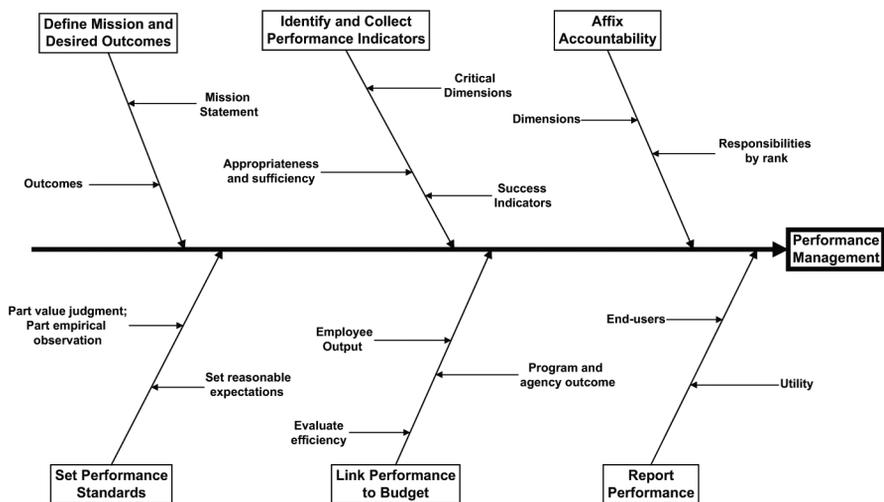


Figure 1. The performance measurement framework

in “cultural norms or expectations” and accepted past practices of constituent groups and key stakeholders (Bryson, 1995, p. 65). Through focus groups with key stakeholders, including citizens, police employees and other criminal justice agencies the organization can clarify what it does and what it prioritizes (Kaptein and van Reenen, 2001).

Once developed, the mission statement provides a sense of legitimacy and identity for the organization. It forms the basis upon which the organization builds its policies, programs and ultimately delivers its services (Denhardt, 1999; Eccles and Nohria, 1992; Peters and Waterman, 1982). It communicates management’s intentions, as well as defines its core purpose and serves as a motivating force for employees (Barnard, 1966; Drucker, 1974; Nutt and Backoff, 1996; Selznick, 1957; Vardi *et al.*, 1989; Wilson, 1989). Defining the mission is the first step to resolving the amorphous and loose connections between policy and service delivery that are so prevalent in policing. Instead of leaving individual officers and managers to their own devices, the mission provides coherent guiding principles to ensure employees are working toward a common goal with a collective sense.

Desired outcomes. Scholars tend to agree that performance measures should reflect what the agency is trying to achieve (Ammons, 1996; Hatry, 1999). However, measuring outcomes often gives way to measuring outputs (Coe, 2000; Glaser, 1991). Desired outcomes must reflect an exhaustive list of the substantive things the police do, as reflected in the mission (Behn, 1997). For example, Moore *et al.* (2002, p. 132) identify seven performance outcomes (i.e. call offenders to account; guarantee safety in public spaces; use force and authority fairly, efficiently and effectively; reduce fear and enhance personal security; reduce criminal victimization; satisfy customer demands/achieve legitimacy with those policed; use financial resources fairly, efficiently and effectively) that may serve as the internal accountability structure that motivates the workforce and ignites their commitment to service. These seven desired outcomes reflect the multidimensional nature of police work and better express what the police do, thus helping shape the technical core (Kaplan and Norton, 1996).

Set performance standards. Performance standards specify the minimum acceptable outcome for the agency’s goals. They provide employees with structure, reduce internal dissention and make personnel decisions more fair and consistent (Jones, 1998), something courts have recognized, regarding employment decisions[7]. Previous research suggests that setting performance standards engenders positive action in employees by giving them a better understanding of agency expectations and the “control system” to be used, which improves clarity and reduces ambiguity (Skolnick, 1968, p. 180, see also Wilson, 1968, p. 53).

Performance standards are the numeric values of a performance metric that must be achieved by a given date (i.e. they must be time bound) and are typically expressed as a degree of excellence or some required level that meets or exceeds predefined specifications. By setting division-level goals and monitoring intermediate objectives at specific intervals (Weekly, monthly, quarterly, semi-annually), police managers can assess short-term and mid-term progress toward the stated end outcome and evaluate the collective effect of each division’s progress toward delivering on the agency’s stated mission.

Performance standards are also used to develop baseline measures, which establishes a dataset as of a given date and to provide a starting point for subsequent measurements and comparisons (e.g. crime rates, clearance rates, convictions rates). This is essential because baseline data (see Table I) are the standard against which

individual, program and agency performance will be measured. Improvement over the baseline is typically considered “good” performance.

Identify and collect performance indicators. Performance indicators are qualitative or quantitative measurements that demonstrate meaningful steps are being taken toward the stated goal. Outputs such as the number of arrests, the number of directed patrols and the percentage of cases cleared by arrest are the things police officers do that contribute to a stated outcome. Measuring output is necessary to motivate the workforce and keep them engaged by counting the activities and processes they are tasked with. Police officers can “see” and “feel” the immediacy of an arrest, or a traffic citation or a guilty plea, which helps stimulate them into better practice (Behn, 2004b). It is important to capture several different indices that measure a particular construct, not just rely on a single measure, which improves validity (Behn, 2004a; Carter *et al.*, 1992).

Before performance indicators are collected, the structure of each performance dimension must be described and may take the form shown in Figure 2. The components include:

- the goal;
- the critical dimensions;
- the success indicators; and
- the performance indicators.

The goal, or outcome, is a measure of the degree to which a service has achieved its intended effect, and as defined, meets the needs of its recipients in terms of quantity and quality. The critical dimensions are the principal aspects of a goal that, if achieved, are intended to assure the goal is accomplished. Critical dimensions are often rooted in theory; for example, it is believed (and it is logical to assume) that to control fear and crime (a goal), a few different things must occur:

- crime and criminal victimization must be reduced;
- holding offenders accountable must be increased;
- fear and blight must be reduced;
- feelings of personal safety must be enhanced; and
- the guarantee of safety while in public places must be enhanced.

Critical dimensions separate police activities and create conceptual order for the performance indicators; this is the systematic nature of performance management

Research findings	Legal mandates
Expert opinion	Geographical areas within the same jurisdiction
Similar jurisdictions	Technically developed norms for similar programs
Past agency trends/historical data	Private sector results for similar programs
Industry/government/professional standards	Community expectations
Pre-program baseline level	Cost or relative cost
Ethical or moral basis	Customary practice

Source: Modified from Rossi *et al.* (2004, p. 75)

Table I.
Data sources for
performance standards

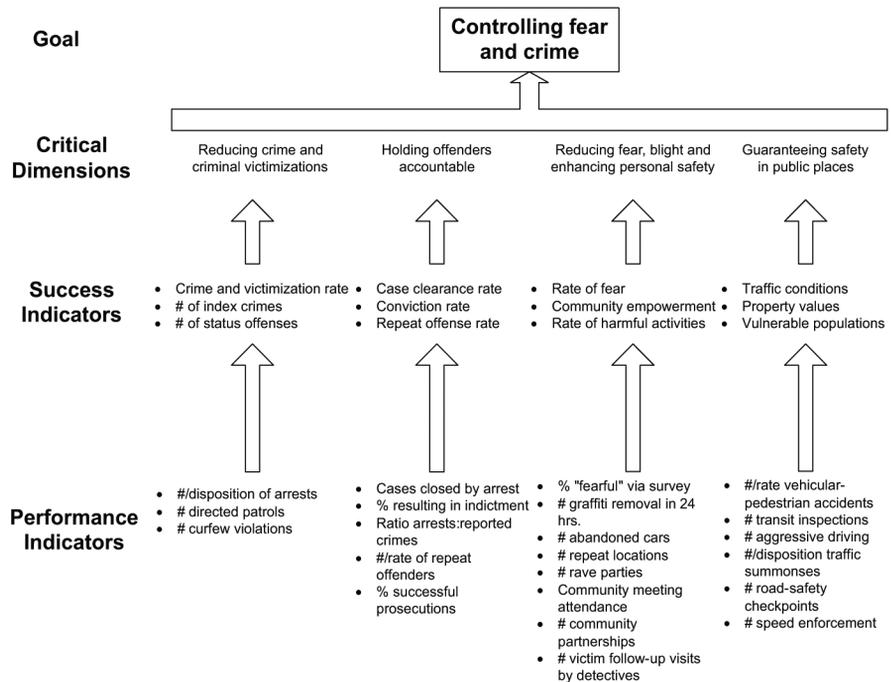


Figure 2.
Basic structure of
performance dimensions

because the activities the police engage in measure different things and they must be arranged in a logical order.

Critical dimensions are measured through success indicators. Success indicators define the attributes or characteristics to be measured and include a particular value or characteristic used to measure output. The management question being asked is: if we are to reduce crime and criminal victimization, then where will success manifest itself? In this case, success will come from the crime and victimization rate, the number of index crimes (e.g. FBI Uniform Crime Report, Part I crimes) and the number of status offenses, to name a few.

Link performance to the budget. By linking performance to the budget, top administrators can decide where to expend resources and for what purpose. Linking the budget to performance shows how resources are allocated to achieve qualitative and quantitative outcomes and has at its core the following question: "What did we get for our money?". This process offers a meaningful indication of how dollars are expected to turn into outcomes, how dollars fund daily activities, the required resources (input), the expected output and the resulting outcomes.

The appropriate budget orientation is a performance-based budget (PBB). A PBB answers the question "What is to be done?" and is oriented toward management and efficiency (Carter, 1994). The intent is to establish a nexus between activities, processes and outcomes to determine which activities are cost-effective in relation to the desired outcome. The PBB is an outgrowth of the earlier planning-programming budgeting system (PPBS) that sought to improve accountability by emphasizing outcomes and coordination of activities that are consistent with the management responsibilities of

chief executives (Hudzik, 1977). Linking performance to the budget also engenders a sense of accountability by demonstrating that financial resources are scarce, they are not limitless and come with expectations.

Affix accountability. Police agencies are judged by their record of achievement. To ensure the agency achieves its desired outcomes and provides the best level of service possible, it is necessary to affix accountability across the entire spectrum of rank in the department. Accountability need not be associated with punishment, as it typically is with the command and control system. Rather, accountability should focus on performance targets, where supervisors work in a concerted manner to meet managerial expectations instead of focusing on rote compliance. Public accountability means police employees have an obligation to accept responsibility and proffer a statement or explanation of the reasons, causes, or motives to account for their actions[8]. It does not mean that every shortcoming must result in negative discipline.

Before accountability may attach, the chief executive must:

- clarify what is expected from employees;
- examine activities and performance measures and compare actual performance with what is expected;
- act on findings to improve activities and performance measures; and
- communicate findings in accordance with agency and regulatory policy (Kuykendall, 1975, cited in Meagher, 1986).

This element of transparency provides a structured operating framework for employees by striking a balance between management's right to demand accountability and the employee's right to be free from unfettered discretion – these are the same employees who will ultimately reject management as illegitimate for imposing inconsistent and sporadic accountability. These requirements are satisfied in this model through the following rational structure, which is absent from the command and control model:

- policy objectives are developed at the administrative level after consultation with the community, employees and elected leaders to define what is expected from employees and to communicate those expectations in accordance with agency and regulatory policy;
- goal-directed strategies are developed at the command level, where division-level managers are responsible for implementing and monitoring strategies and comparing actual performance with what is expected;
- coordination of resources and personnel assignments are developed at the supervisory level, where front-line supervisors act on findings to guide personnel toward established targets with an eye toward improving performance; and
- field activities are initiated at the operational level, where line officers carry out the daily work of the agency and consult with supervisors to ensure performance targets are achieved (Table II) (Butler, 1983; Dean, 1984).

This creates unanimity of purpose, the lines of accountability are clear and the authority to execute is devolved to each successive level, which reduces the prospect of inefficiency and redundancy and affixes specific responsibilities for each rank and for each organizational element.

Dimensions	Accountable rank	Level	Organizational function
End outcome	Chief/Deputy Chief	Administrative	<i>Overall general direction of the department: policy development, long-range planning, rational and comprehensive decision-making, budgeting, coordinating external requirements with organizational resources</i>
Division goals Intermediate objectives	Captain Lieutenant	Command Command	<i>Overall implementation of policies and programs developed by top administrators: Devising strategies that capitalize on strengths, overcome weaknesses, seize opportunities and reduce threats; determining staffing requirements; devising and adjusting goal-directed strategies, as necessary</i>
Input	Sergeant	Supervisory	<i>Overall operational control of the workforce, production of outputs and, to a degree, consumption of inputs: initiating actions to ensure specific activities are coordinated and carried out efficiently and effectively, devising personnel assignments, ensuring performance standards and targets are achieved</i>
Output	Police Officer/ Detective/Civilian	Operational	<i>Overall execution of specific activities, processes and individual productivity: performing activities specified in policies, programs or when directed by supervisors, direct outputs that meet or exceed performance standards or targets</i>

Table II.
Structure of
accountability within the
rubric of organizational
function

Source: Modified from Gaines and Cain (1981)

This type of accountability structure breeds conformity instead of dichotomizing line personnel and management personnel, as happens in the command and control model (Reuss-Ianni, 1984). It also provides each agency level (administrative, command, supervisory and operational) with a clear idea why they are pursuing particular goals and at the same time retains operational control, something Compstat neglects.

Report performance. Reporting on performance is essential if top administrators are to make responsible, effective decisions, and foster full transparency and accountability across the agency. The utility of the reports should be such that the findings are clearly, accurately and consistently presented and compare what was achieved with what was intended. Police administrators should use three types of reports to inspire confidence in the agency and to manage operations:

- (1) *Police business plan.* Documenting and disseminating where the agency wants to be and how it plans to get there may be accomplished through a business plan. The business plan is the chief executive's foundation to justify to taxpayers what services the agency provides and the strategies for meeting its social and political obligations. It also serves as a communication, management

and planning tool. As a communication tool, the business plan is used to attract investment capital to the jurisdiction, develop community partnerships and attract strategic partners (government, non-profit and corporate). It is also the primary means for communicating management's expectations to the workforce who carry out the business strategy. A comprehensive business plan requires a realistic look at every phase of operations and allows the chief executive to show that he or she has worked through various assumptions and decided on potential alternatives before actually implementing a given strategy, which reduces unwelcome surprises (Dewar, 2002).

As a management tool, the business plan helps the agency to monitor and evaluate progress. Because planning is an iterative and "continuous" process (Schroeder *et al.*, 1995, p. 43), the business plan will be modified as the department gains knowledge and experience. By using the business plan to establish timelines and milestones, the chief executive can monitor progress and compare projections to actual accomplishments. As a planning tool, the business plan guides the agency through various phases of its operations and management. A thoughtful plan will help identify load-bearing vulnerable assumptions, so shaping actions can address issues that arise (Dewar, 2002). The completed business plan should be widely distributed among employees, elected leaders and the community to foster a broader understanding of where the department is going and to secure individual commitment.

- (2) *Interim performance reports.* Interim performance reports should be the focal point of a continuous improvement and feedback process. The essence of organizational control is an information feedback system that enables management to respond to the information it receives and ask: where did we do well? Why? What can we replicate? Where did we fall short? Why? What is the action plan for improvement? Interim reports should contain the necessary data to answer these questions and should be published at regular intervals (weekly, monthly) to measure incremental progress or setbacks.
- (3) *Annual police report.* There is limited previous research on annual police reports; however, that which is available suggests that the annual report is an aspect of police management that is completely under-developed and has been of little or no importance to top administrators (Timmerman, 1929; National Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, 1973). The annual report is perhaps the single best opportunity to express accountability in an open system of government, however, recent research by Law (2001) suggests while annual police reports have improved, they still lack information necessary to establish accountability. Many annual police reports read like a "scrapbook" replete with action photos memorializing various events; the report typically over-emphasizes the crime control function, lacks meaningful substance, displays inconsistent data across years making comparisons nearly impossible, and does not connect actual performance with intended performance (as reflected in the mission). Consequently, police executives miss a rare opportunity to express to the public the complexity of police work as well as communicate the social and political responsibilities of the organization and its progress (Vanagunas, 1982).

For citizens to hold their elected representatives accountable for the money and authority entrusted to them, they must have a statement comparing what

was planned and what was actually achieved; indeed, the consent to govern is derived from the authority of the people in a democracy (Simey, 1984). If the consent of the people establishes the authority to govern, then the logical extension is to provide the governed with information that calls the police to account for their behavior so the public may continue with, modify or retract their consent (Stewart, 1984). Information is the impetus for public officials to justify decisions and shape future states. Placing information into the public forum for scrutiny completes the accountability circuit.

To be effective and informative, the annual police report must contain information that is relevant to the user base – the various internal and external authorizing agents that can hold police accountable (Moore, 1995). This means the annual report must revolve around the multiple dimensions of police work and must contain measures of effectiveness and efficiency from a quantitative and qualitative perspective (Moore *et al.*, 2002).

Limitations

For all its potential contributions, this model does have limitations. First, quantitative performance data do not obviate the need for competent supervisors to reinforce the intangible qualities of policing that are important for success, such as attention to detail, manners, equity and fairness (Mastrofski, 1999). Objectively measuring these dimensions of performance is always difficult and often leaves employees angry and disappointed.

Second, the danger of a data-driven model in the hands of intimidating autocratic managers can also lead to progressively deeper problems than that which the model seeks to improve in the first place. A good illustration is the “Powertrac” scandal – a Compstat-like management process – that unfolded in the Broward County (FL) Sheriff’s office in the late 1990s, where a corruption investigation led to indictments of several members of the sheriff’s office for altering official records to appear more favorable (Olson, 2006).

Third, the police may feel their discretion has been limited and may opt for formal action over informal action even where informal action is preferred. Attitudes toward performance management among various levels of Dutch police left them feeling somewhat constrained by targets. Chiefs believed setting targets was gamed and they would vacillate between taking things seriously and being unenthusiastic; police officers believed their work was more routinized and subject to political pressure; and citizens believed being fined was due to the officer having to meet his or her target, resulting in distrust (Hoogenboezem and Hoogenboezem, 2005).

Fourth, there are many skeptics, fewer advocates and mixed research findings. Although there has been a global movement toward adoption, adoption has not been global. There are few advanced performance management training courses for police executives, the link between performance and legitimacy and citizen satisfaction is tenuous, it has not been promoted as a learning instrument, and some believe it is nothing more than a passing administrative fad (Behn, 2002; Hoogenboezem and Hoogenboezem, 2005, p. 577; Kay, 2001; Kelly, 2003; Sanderson, 2001; Terpstra and Trommel, 2009; van Reenen, 1999). The challenge is convincing police executives that it does more than invite unwanted scrutiny and criticism. It invites unambiguous leadership insofar as it instills a sense of accountability in people, it provides control

over an essential public resource, and can stimulate managerial and professional competence throughout the agency.

Lastly, the model is limited by measurement error and invalidity (Klockars, 1999, p. 198; Maltz, 1975; Starbuck, 2005). The data used to measure performance may contain conceptual errors. Police agencies must rely on proxies to measure ambiguous constructs that are difficult to quantify (e.g. equity, fairness, fear, offender accountability), unlike concrete measures such as height, weight and temperature. The performance indicators outlined in Figure 2 may be high in face validity but low in construct validity, which is more important. Performance indicators may also contain errors that affect reliability such as clerical mistakes, changes in collection procedures, corrections made by the agency, data manipulation, instrumentation and categorization (Jacob, 1984). To close the gap between the information that is sought and the information that is actually measured, police executives must ensure the data is audited for accuracy and integrity (Serpas and Morley, 2008) and consider how performance indicators are, theoretically, related to the constructs before adopting them.

Discussion

The police management model presented in this paper represents a departure from the existing management models. The command and control model is an outmoded style that does little to respect individual talent as the primary means of achieving desired outcomes consistent with the agency's mission. Command and control is a model that concerns itself with authoritarianism, compliance and control at the expense of performance. This may be why many scholars view institutional theory as a better explanatory framework for policing than rational-technical theory.

The benefit of the performance management framework is that it logically connects what the police intended to achieve with what they actually achieved through empirical measures, better enabling them to account for their performance in a public forum and develop internal capacity to deliver services. It also represents an opportunity to capitalize on individual talent, where employees at every level are accountable for specific goals instead of accountable for perfunctory rules.

The organization benefits from both hindsight and foresight. As a "learning organization" (Senge, 1994), the police department develops the capacity to look backwards (hindsight) and extract useful information from the data as it forges ahead connecting strategies and tactics to sustainable outcomes. Foresight is found in imagination and proactive management, which is the capacity to forecast various future states in order to anticipate vulnerabilities, improve resource allocation and enhance service delivery through scenario-based planning. Imagination also helps top administrators envision where the agency will be if they do not do things differently. This comes through continuous reporting on streams of data to ensure performance standards are achieved; if performance standards are achieved, then it is likely the outcomes will be achieved. With hard data about what personnel are doing, a chief executive is well poised to defend the agency against criticism; they no longer must rely on affability, impressions, conjecture or anecdotal evidence to justify their practices and they are better able to clarify expectations, which benefit the community, the employees and the organization.

Top police administrators must take the initiative to break from the makeshift and haphazard management processes of yesteryear, those driven by "management by crisis" and institutionalism and integrate performance management with existing

operations. Police administrators have the opportunity to capitalize on an element of professionalism that once before escaped them during the reform era of policing. Imagine the benefits that might accrue if thousands of police agencies adopted a universal management model. Meaningful comparisons across agencies worldwide could be undertaken, “performance” could be ranked and agencies could be graded (Sherman, 1998). Future research should examine the relationship between performance management and citizen satisfaction and legitimacy to ensure the quantitative aspects of management align with Constitutional guarantees and human rights. For if police departments over emphasize quantity and sacrifice quality, then we are no further along than our predecessors at the beginning of policing’s professional movement 90 years ago.

Notes

1. In a police department, compliance, which also connotes control, means conformity, obedience and a tendency to defer to a ranking superior, especially in a subservient manner, based on rules, policies and orders. In police organizations, obedience is characterized by submission to authority without question; questioning an order (or rule or policy) is tantamount to disobedience, an infraction subject to disciplinary action. As the demand for, and enforcement of, compliance rises, creativity and initiative decrease, so much so that police officers adopt an “I do nothing until I am told” attitude, and even then, they do only as much as necessary to get by without raising their supervisor’s attention. This attitude arises because police agencies are pervasively regulated bureaucracies with a quasi-military orientation and it is extremely easy to violate some obscure policy or rule buried at the back of the third volume of the policy manual. Therefore, the less the officer does, the less negative attention they attract. Very quickly, many police officers do little or nothing except that which they are compelled to do, such as answer calls for service.
2. This reference is to Joseph Stalin’s show trials. The harsh public criticism at the center of some agencies’ Compstat meetings produces a culture of employees who may comply out of fear of reprisal but generally wither, becoming less productive and more recalcitrant, and may sabotage the work product. In effect, the agency is brought into a state of complete submission to the executive’s authority, and the result is poor agency performance.
3. A series of papers, reports and guides on police performance management has been published by the Home Office (see <http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/performance-and-measurement/>; accessed April 1, 2009).
4. *Escobedo v. Illinois*, 378 US 478 (1964).
5. *Mapp v. Ohio*, 367 US 643 (1961).
6. *Miranda v. Arizona* (consolidated with *Westover v. United States*, *Vignera v. New York*, and *California v. Stewart*), 384 US 436 (1966)
7. *Alvarado v. Texas Rangers, Texas Department of Public Safety* (492 F.3d 605, July 16, 2007).
8. Obligations are embedded in laws or other public policy, whereas willingness is embedded in the oath of office. Policing is a voluntary endeavor; officers are not drafted, they choose law enforcement as a career. Consequently, they freely consent to subject themselves, through a solemn appeal to the governing body (i.e. the citizens of the jurisdiction), to speak the truth, to keep a promise or to uphold a legal obligation when called to do so (i.e. the oath of office).

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