ORGANIZATIONAL SURVEY: AN OVERVIEW

THE NATIONAL CENTER FOR COMMUNITY POLICING
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Strategic planning is a critical component of a police organization's transition to community policing. An important step done up front in the planning process is the use of the Organizational Survey that focuses on personnel perceptions of key issues relevant to the move to community policing. The survey is administered to all employees, sworn and non-sworn, within the Department and consists of 20 dimensions that are assessed to examine the systems, processes and outcomes relevant to the delivery of police services. Some of these 20 dimensions are: strategic direction, top management, union, rewards, first-line supervisors, problem solving, effectiveness, role clarity, job satisfaction and views of the Department and community.

The Organizational Survey is useful in three ways:

- First, the move to community policing can generate both positive and negative responses on the part of personnel at all levels within the organization. Therefore, it is important to capture these perceptions early in the transition process. The results of the survey can then be examined to uncover areas of concern that must be considered as a part of the strategic planning process for developing and implementing a community oriented policing delivery system.

- Second, the survey or personnel perceptions provides a baseline measure of what the key issues and concerns are early in the process of moving towards community policing. The baseline can then be compared to changes in perceptions one or two years into the implementation process when the survey is re-administered. Thus the Organizational Survey can examine changes in personnel perceptions over time.

- Third, the survey results can be analyzed for differences in perceptions between civilians, officers, sergeants, and management. The results can then be disseminated to the department and can open dialogue between management and other work groups regarding the change to community policing. Thus, responses to the Organizational Survey can lead to a problem solving approach between management and the rest of the department as the strategic planning and implementation processes are pursued.

The completed survey is analyzed by the team at the NCCP and results in scores for each dimension. A full written report/analysis is returned to the Executive where it is best utilized by having the management team and supervisors disseminate the information down the organizational hierarchy. At
every level of the organization personnel can be involved in interpreting the data and developing plans to make constructive changes that will make the shift to community policing smoother and more effective.

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