Process of Facilitating Self-Assessment of Community Policing

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

FACILITATED SELF-ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY POLICING

As a part of Michigan State University’s National Center for Community Policing’s (NCCP) efforts to support police agency’s enhancement of community policing, an innovative approach called the Facilitated Self Assessment was created. This process is initiated when the Executive of the Agency requests assistance to totally implement the principles of community policing throughout their Department.

- The Facilitation is a half-day encounter centered upon drawing out the insight and experiences of members of the police organization. The goals are to:
  - Show the need for organizational change.
  - Uncover the management team’s own experience, insight and capacity to analyze and generate local strategies: and
  - Provide the team from the NCCP opportunities to analyze the organizational dynamics that impede or support change.

- The Executive selects eight to twelve people from within the organization to participate in the closed-door session. Those chosen are usually members of the management team, representatives from supervision investigations, civilians, patrol officers, or anyone the Chief chooses.

- A facilitator leads the group through a series of questions based on the principles of community policing which are a customer based organizational transformation, unlimited partnerships and a capacity to utilize data in order to successfully problem solve. The facilitator is a neutral party who synthesizes and articulates what the individuals are saying by collecting the information on a series of boards and flip charts.

- A structured discussion occurs that defines a victory of the most successful outcomes to the community policing initiative.

- Participants are then asked the key question based on all of the information gathered within the session, “what must the Department
do to achieve the victory?”. This becomes very specific information that articulates goals and specific tasks.

- An extensive written report is prepared and returned to the Executive that includes an action plan that is “user friendly” because it is based on the Department’s own experiences and understanding of the issues involved in changing the delivery of police services.
- The Facilitation Self-Assessment is a successful planning tool that has been utilized by countless police agencies and even community groups that demonstrates to local executives their own expertise in identifying and meeting the challenges of community policing implementation.

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