

The Effect of a Community Policing Management Style on Officers' Attitudes

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Quality management, a form of participatory management modeled on the theories of Edwards Deming, was implemented in the Madison, Wisconsin Police Department as a basis for the implementation of community policing. Personnel surveys conducted in 1987 and 1989 found a significant increase over time in the belief that the organization practiced participatory management. The increase in this belief was positively and significantly related to (a) satisfaction with work, the organization, supervision, and job growth potential; (b) perceived significance of work; (c) task identity; and (d) work autonomy. A composite measure of satisfaction was, in turn, significantly related to officers' receptivity to change.

A MANAGEMENT STYLE TO FACILITATE COMMUNITY POLICING

A number of advocates of community policing hold that an operational approach that depends on expanded decision making by first-line officers cannot exist within the context of a traditional command-and-control style of management. They argue that community policing requires a facilitative approach to management in which managers are viewed as part of the support system for field operations. The perceptions, ideas, and needs of officers are as important to the decision-making process as are those of managers. David Couper, the chief in Madison, Wisconsin from 1972 to 1993, believed the development of a new management approach was the first necessary step to

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the creation of community policing. He was convinced that external service delivery would not improve until the organization more effectively used and served its employees, or "internal customers."

This article reports the implementation of quality leadership and participatory management in the Madison department between 1987 and 1989 and examines the relationship between that management style and officers' levels of satisfaction with work, supervision, and their organization. It also examines the relationship between levels of satisfaction and officers' attitudinal response to organizational change.

QUALITY POLICING IN MADISON

The history of the Madison, Wisconsin Police Department from 1972 to 1993—the tenure of Chief David Couper—is that of an organization moving along a number of paths toward a closer relationship with the community and greater involvement of employees in organizational decision making. These trends were formalized in 1986 and 1987 when the department undertook a quality-productivity (Q-P) project for which the National Institute of Justice funded an evaluation.

In 1985, Mayor Joe Sensenbrenner initiated citywide adoption of Q-P practices and invited departments to develop specific projects that would use and reinforce the Q-P management philosophy, which called for decisions based on data and the input of employees in the decision-making process (Sensenbrenner 1991). The police department proposed to plan and implement the physical and managerial decentralization of one sixth of the organization with the development of the Experimental Police District (EPD). The EPD facility, staffing, operational directives, and managerial approach were to be planned by a team of employees representing all ranks in the organization; sex and ethnicity also were considered in filling slots on the planning team. The entire department was to receive training in Q-P, but it would be in the EPD that the approach would be given greatest emphasis and support while it was adapted for use in a police organization.

The ultimate goal of the internal change in management style was better service to the public. It was believed that Q-P would teach employees to view the citizen as a customer to be satisfied. It also was believed that the internal practice of Q-P would produce more satisfied employees who would, in turn, be more willing to work to satisfy citizens. Having learned to participate in databased internal problem-solving, officers would be both better prepared and more motivated to apply the same approach to problem solving in the community. In Madison, community policing concepts were inextricably

bound with a service philosophy that the department labeled *quality policing*. The label was shorthand for a combined organizational emphasis on quality of service delivery, quality of life in the community, quality of life in the workplace, the quality/productivity leadership processes advocated by Edwards Deming, and quality improvement, the organization's commitment to continual improvement. All of this was condensed into the organization's motto:

"Closer to the People:
Quality From the Inside, Out."

Increased internal quality was to result from the adoption of 12 quality leadership management principles:

1. Believe in, foster, and support teamwork.
2. Be committed to the problem-solving process; use it and let data, not emotions, drive decisions.
3. Seek employees' input before you make decisions.
4. Believe that the best way to improve the quality of work or service is to ask and listen to employees who are doing the work.
5. Strive to develop mutual respect and trust among employees.
6. Have a customer orientation and focus toward employees and citizens.
7. Manage on the behavior of 95% of employees and not on that of the 5% who cause problems.
8. Improve systems and examine processes before blaming people.
9. Avoid "top down," power-oriented decision making whenever possible.
10. Encourage creativity through risk taking and be tolerant of honest mistakes.
11. Be a facilitator and coach. Develop an open atmosphere that encourages providing and accepting feedback.
12. With teamwork, develop with employees agreed-on goals and a plan to achieve them.

EXPERIMENTAL POLICE DISTRICT

The entire department was oriented toward these 12 principles; by January 1988, 31 days of Q-P instruction had been provided to the organization (Couper and Lobitz 1991). It was in the EPD, however, where the commitment to them was expected to be the strongest.

The EPD was formed in 1987 to serve as a laboratory for organizational innovations and Q-P was to be the first innovation implemented, evaluated, and adapted for use by the rest of the department. The EPD served an area that was approximately one sixth of the physical area of the city, containing one sixth of the population and accounting for about one sixth of the

department's calls for service. The 41 personnel assigned to the EPD worked out of a small, specially designed building that was the department's only decentralized service facility. Staffing included 22 patrol officers, 3 neighborhood officers, 6 detectives, 3 parking monitors, 4 sergeants, 1 lieutenant, and 1 captain. The lieutenant and captain applied for the EPD positions and were selected by vote of the other employees who were to work there. The selection criteria included the commitment of the candidates to the 12 principles of quality leadership.

As the EPD went into operation in the spring of 1988, daily efforts were made to translate the principles into operational practices. Managers and officers worked together to determine the types of decisions that were to be group decisions and those that were to be reserved to management with input sought from officers. With no organizational directives to begin with, EPD employees had the challenge of working their way to a shared understanding of the parameters of the new management approach. The result, after 2 years, was a notable sense of a collegial team at the EPD and the belief among employees there that implementation of the principles of quality leadership had been accomplished.

EVALUATION PROJECT

With funding from the National Institute of Justice, the Police Foundation documented the implementation process at the EPD and evaluated the impact of the changes on officers' attitudes and citizens' perceptions about safety and quality of police service.¹ Three surveys of all sworn personnel were conducted annually in 1987, 1988, and 1989. A random sample survey of citizens was conducted in 1988, and the same citizens were surveyed again in 1990. Analyses were based on panels of officers and citizens. The officer panel, on which the analyses in this article are based, included 79% of the original participants. The citizen panel consisted of 56% of the 1988 respondents. In addition to the surveys, the evaluation included repeated observations and interviews conducted by the research staff.

MEASURES OF PARTICIPATION AND WORK-RELATED ATTITUDES

Participation. The 12 principles of quality leadership had not been enumerated when the first officer survey was conducted. During the final survey, respondents were asked the extent to which they believed their supervisors or leaders were guided by each of the principles. Respondents outside the

EPD tended neither to agree nor disagree that their supervisors implemented the principles. EPD respondents at least moderately agreed that their supervisors adhered to the principles and were significantly more likely to report this than were the non-EPD respondents. As planned, quality leadership had been most strongly fostered in the EPD.

At each survey period, a scale consisting of four items was used to measure officers' beliefs that they were participating in the management of their jobs (Vroom 1959). One item in this scale is *In general I have much say and influence over what goes on in regard to my job.*² Because it was used in each survey, this is the measure of participation used for analysis in this article. In 1988 (Survey Wave 3), the relationship between the scale score for the 12 principles and the scale score for the four participatory management items was $r = .74$, an extremely high correlation for survey data.

Four different aspects of job-related satisfaction were measured.

Satisfaction With Kind of Work. A six-item scale (Dunham, Smith, and Blackburn 1977) assessed the extent to which officers like the type of work they do. A characteristic item in this scale is *I enjoy nearly all the things I do in my job assignment.*

Satisfaction With Organization. Another six items (Dunham et al. 1977) measured officers' satisfaction with the department as a place to work. *MPD is a good organization to work for* is part of the scale.

Satisfaction With Supervision. This was also measured by six items (Dunham et al. 1977), among them, *I am satisfied with the supervision and/or leadership I receive.*

Satisfaction With Job Growth Potential. The extent to which employees feel the job offers the potential for personal growth was captured. Four items (Hackman and Oldham 1975) included *I am satisfied with the amount of personal growth and development I obtain performing my job.*

Somewhat distinct from elements of satisfaction, three other job-related attitudes or perceptions also were measured. It was hypothesized that the new management style and its emphasis on the use of discretion by officers in solving problems in their areas of assignment would be positively associated with the Perceived Significance of Work, Strength of Task Identity, and Perceived Initiative/Autonomy.

Perceived Significance of Work is a three-item scale used to determine the extent to which officers view the work they do as significant, that is, the extent to which the job is viewed as having an impact on the lives and well-being

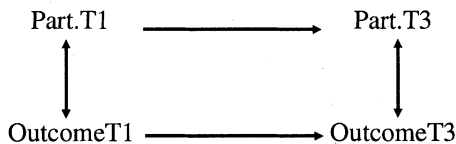
of other people (Hackman and Oldham 1975). An item in this scale is *My job is one where other people could be affected by how well the work was done.*

Strength of Task Identity is a three-item scale that assesses officers' opportunity to see both the beginning and the end of an effort or to see their work as a whole (Hackman and Oldham 1975). Another way to think of the concept is as task integrity. One of the scale items is *My job provides me the chance to completely finish the pieces of work I begin.*

Perceived Initiative/Autonomy is a three-item scale used to gauge the extent to which officers feel their work allows them to exercise initiative and autonomy (Hackman and Oldham 1975).

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERCEIVED PARTICIPATION AND JOB-RELATED ATTITUDES

The analysis of the relationship between Perceived Participation (independent variable) and the various job-related attitudes (outcome variables) can be represented by the following graphic:



Part. stands for Perceived Participation and T1 and T3 represent the two surveys, the first and third, used for this analysis. The data used are panel data, meaning that the same officers were surveyed at each time period. The number of non-EPD officers in the panel was usually 140; the number of EPD officers was usually 25. (The numbers may vary slightly from variable to variable if an officer failed to respond to a particular set of items.)

Table 1 indicates that, for all of the variables of interest in this study, there was an increase in the scale score from the first survey to the third one. Data are presented for both non-EPD and EPD officers.

The increase in Perceived Participation was statistically significant for both non-EPD and EPD officers. Increases on five of the seven outcome variables were statistically significant for EPD officers; on only one of the outcomes was the increase significant for non-EPD officers.

The relationship between Perceived Participation and each of the outcome variables was determined using regression analyses in which the Time 3 Perceived Participation score was regressed on the Time 3 outcome score

TABLE 1: Work-Related Attitudes of Madison Officers (scale score means)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Time 1</i>	<i>Time 3</i>
Perceived Participation		
Non-EPD	11.9	12.7*
EPD	11.5	14.9*
Satisfaction With Kind of Work		
Non-EPD	18.1	18.4
EPD	17.2	18.7*
Satisfaction With Organization		
Non-EPD	17.8	18.1
EPD	19.4	21.1*
Satisfaction With Supervision		
Non-EPD	16.9	17.7
EPD	17.6	19.4*
Satisfaction With Job Growth		
Non-EPD	14.0	14.3
EPD	12.7	14.5*
Perceived Significance of Work		
Non-EPD	11.8	12.2*
EPD	11.2	12.0
Strength of Task Identity		
Non-EPD	9.5	9.7
EPD	8.6	10.6*
Perceived Initiative/Autonomy		
Non-EPD	12.1	12.3
EPD	12.2	13.1

NOTE: EDP = Experimental Police District.

*Significance $\leq .05$.

with controls for Time 1 outcome score, Time 1 Perceived Participation score, four officer background variables (education level, time on the department, rank, sex), and whether the officer was in the EPD. The Time 1 data are preimplementation measures; the Time 3 data were collected 20 months into the implementation process. The regression analysis, therefore, captures the relationship between pre- and postimplementation changes in both the independent variable and the outcome variable. The results of these analyses are summarized in Table 2.

In the case of each of the seven outcome variables, there was a statistically significant relationship with the Time 3 score on the Participatory Management scale, controlling for the other variables listed above. This is strong evidence that officers' sense of participating in organizational decisions that affect their work life has a positive effect on their satisfaction with work, organization, supervision, potential for personal growth; on sense that work

TABLE 2: Relationship Between Perceived Participation And Other Work-Related Attitudes (standardized regression scores and significance)

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Beta</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Satisfaction With Kind of Work	.37	.00*
Satisfaction With Organization	.35	.00*
Satisfaction With Supervision	.60	.00*
Satisfaction With Job Growth	.48	.00*
Perceived Significance of Work	.30	.00*
Strength of Task Identity	.37	.00*
Perceived Initiative/Autonomy	.52	.00*

NOTE: Analysis controls for Time 1 participation; Time 1 attitude; officers' gender, education, rank and time on job; and whether the officer was assigned to Experimental Police District.

*Significance $\leq .05$.

is important; on their feeling that they are permitted to do a whole task; and on their sense of initiative and autonomy in the workplace. The implementation of quality leadership in the Madison department did have the desired effect of increasing the satisfaction levels of officers who felt they were participating in organizational decision making.

VALUE OF SATISFACTION

Does it matter that officers have higher satisfaction levels as a result of their roles as decision makers?

Satisfaction and change. One of us observed an organizational change effort 20 years ago in another department, in which a "command and control" style manager was put in charge of overseeing the process. In an interview one day he shouted, "I don't care if officers like what they are doing. All I care about is whether they do what they are told!" The failure of that change effort is recounted elsewhere (Wycoff and Kelling 1978). The problems in that tumultuous setting were numerous and the unwillingness to consider the feelings of employees may not have been a primary reason why good ideas could not be implemented. However, many organizational theorists have posited a relationship between employee participation in the planning process and tolerance for, or receptivity to, change (Coch and French 1948; Dunham 1984; Hersey and Blanchard 1972; Kanter 1983; Watson 1966, cited in Bennis, Benne, and Chin 1969), and the Madison data support this idea. We constructed a composite measure of satisfaction (Super Satisfaction) by

adding the scale scores of the four elements of job satisfaction analyzed above and constructed a summary measure of three components of Receptivity to Change (Dunham, Grube, Gardner, and Pierce 1989). A regression analysis was done in which the Time 3 Composite Receptivity score was the outcome variable; the independent variable was the Time 3 Super Satisfaction measure with controls for the Time 1 Composite Receptivity score, the Time 1 Super Satisfaction measure, four officer background variables, and assignment to EPD. The beta is .23 and is statistically significant ($p = .0001$). The changes then in levels of satisfaction are related significantly to changes in the levels of Receptivity to Change. In Madison, it would appear that officers who are more highly satisfied do adapt more comfortably to change.

Satisfaction and community policing. Were higher levels of satisfaction related to the willingness of officers to accept the philosophies of community policing and problem solving? A three-item scale measured officers' attitudes toward these approaches. One of the items was *Problem-solving should not be part of an officer's responsibility*. Because of the way in which this particular scale was scored, a decrease in the score over time actually means that officers became more receptive to the ideas, and this happened across the department. Madison officers expressed essentially neutral attitudes about community policing at Time 1 but were significantly more supportive at Time 3. Satisfaction was only weakly and insignificantly related to the Time 3 scores for Belief in Community Policing ($r = -.16$). Despite the sign, this is a positive relationship because of the reverse scoring of the community policing scale.

One would like to know how satisfaction might have affected acceptance of a new philosophy or organizational practice under conditions in which managers pushed a change that was not readily accepted. The idea of community policing was not pushed; in many ways, the organization had been moving toward the philosophy for 20 years, and the Time 1 measures indicated no resistance to it. In the EPD, the managers did not request officers to perform any particular community policing or problem-solving activities, nor were officers held accountable on paper or in evaluations for such actions. The early attitude, as managers learned to practice quality leadership, was that officers would do the "right" things if they were simply given an agreeable and supportive environment in which to do them. It was assumed that community policing and problem solving were understood to be the right things, and the managers reinforced these ideas more by example than by edict. For perhaps a third of the officers in the EPD, this passive approach to management was effective. Given the opportunity, they actively sought ways of delivering better service and solving problems in the community.

After the EPD had been open for several months, the evaluators asked the EPD captain and lieutenant if they could rate the EPD officers in terms of their commitment to community policing. They found that this was not difficult to do, and independent of each other, they produced highly similar lists on which about a third of the officers were those described above; they were both attitudinally and behaviorally committed to the approach. Another third were rated as being attitudinally committed but less likely to initiate activities that reflected the philosophy. The final third were considered to be very good but somewhat more traditional officers who would do well whatever they were instructed to do. It was at this point that the EPD managers realized that the passive managerial approach might not be the most appropriate for all employees. They felt that they could actively encourage the second third of the officers to work on projects with the third who were the initiators, and they could request the more traditional officers to perform community-oriented activities.

Despite what we have labeled an initially *passive* approach to quality leadership, the community served by the EPD did notice the difference in the police service they received. Over the 2-year period of the study, residents in the EPD who were in the survey panel registered a pattern of improved attitudes and perceptions about policing, although many of these failed to reach statistical significance. There was a statistically significant reduction in the number of reported burglaries in the EPD area. EPD residents recorded a significant decrease in their tendency to view either robbery or burglary as big problems in their area, and they were significantly more likely to report in the postimplementation survey that the police were doing a good job at preventing crime. They also showed a statistically significant increase in the belief that officers in their area were paying attention to the "important" problems in the neighborhood (Wycoff and Skogan 1993). From this, it might be argued that the increased satisfaction of officers was reflected in the increased satisfaction of citizens, but the evidence can be linked only indirectly across the two different surveys, and there were other aspects of the EPD implementation that also may have affected citizen perceptions. We have no independent measures of whether more-satisfied officers were treating citizens differently or doing their jobs more effectively.

Satisfaction and physical decentralization. There was one change that was pushed as part of the EPD implementation, and it was one that was not as readily accepted by the organization as was the community policing approach. Physical decentralization was a key element of the implementation plan, and the department's first decentralized facility was designed to house

the EPD personnel. Not surprisingly, the officers who volunteered for assignment to the EPD already were more supportive of decentralization at Time 1 than were non-EPD personnel. EPD patrol officers became more supportive of decentralization over time, whereas non-EDP patrol personnel became less supportive. Although there were operational concerns about decentralization and there were a number of adjustments that had to be made to accommodate the new arrangement, there also was a powerful emotional element involved in the change. In the first several months, non-EPD personnel could frequently be heard to comment about the breakup of the family. Detectives, perhaps the most tightly knit group in the organization, were very threatened by the change. Those who transferred to the EPD were much more likely than those who remained centralized to support decentralization at Time 1; those who went to the EPD moderately agreed with the change whereas decentralized detectives moderately to strongly disagreed with it, and some tended to treat the decentralized detectives as organizational outcasts. It was not an easy experience for EPD detectives who remained dependent on support from downtown; by Time 3 they were somewhat less positive about, although still supportive of, decentralization.

Were satisfied employees more supportive of this controversial change than those who were less satisfied? The beta for the regression of the Time 3 Super Satisfaction composite measure on the Time 3 measure of officers' belief in decentralization was only .09 and was not statistically significant. Even for those employees whose levels of satisfaction increased, decentralization was not an easy change.

Employee satisfaction as its own value. There are many managers, probably a majority of those in the Madison Police Department, who would argue that employee satisfaction that is a function of good management practice is a valuable outcome in its own right. Employees deserve a psychologically healthy workplace, and job satisfaction is a reflection of such an environment. From an empirical perspective, we can report that the Madison Police Department is a very pleasant organization in which to do research and associate with police officers. There is a general sense of intelligent, alert people doing good work in good spirits.

The EPD (now the south district of Madison) is a particularly comfortable environment. The core work space is more like a family room than a police briefing room. In fact, a detective commented about missing the EPD family while on vacation. Managers, detectives, and patrol officers all have frequent, informal contact partly as a result of the physical design of the space. At least during the evaluation period, it was a space to which officers tended to

gravitate before the shift began and in which they often lingered afterwards, thus facilitating communication across shifts. The shared decision making seemed to foster supervision by peers; rather than depending on sergeants to handle problems among them, EPD officers frequently handled issues through group discussion at shift meetings and briefings. They might, for example, make scheduling arrangements among themselves that they would present to supervisors for approval. Although there were too few sergeants in the study to permit analysis, it appeared that the sergeant's lot at the EPD was also more satisfying.

Apart from the fact that an environment characterized by satisfaction is an attractive and comfortable one, it would be valuable to know more about the relationship between satisfaction and a number of outcomes, including the impact on officers' health, on the nature of their interactions with citizens, and on the quality of their personal lives.

FIT BETWEEN PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY POLICING

The change process in the Madison Police Department was designed deliberately to be a two-stage process; internal improvement was considered a necessary condition for external improvement. We cannot tell from this one research project, which essentially was a case study of change, whether the Madison managers were correct in believing that the inside work had to be done first. Nor can we say with certainty that the participative management approach is the one most compatible with community policing. However, the fit sounds logical and appeared sound in practice.

Participatory management seems to "model" for officers the type of concern and respect that is to be given to the needs of customers, whether they be internal or external customers, and it encourages the type of databased decision making that problem-solving policing requires. It encourages the input of employees, who need to learn to view themselves as managers if they are to assume more responsibility for the welfare of the areas they police. The fit looks logical. What can be said from survey data and from repeated observation is that the change process was one of the least tumultuous ones we have witnessed; it is one that appears to have fostered a continuing search for organizational improvement; and it yielded—2 years into implementation—evidence that citizens were experiencing benefits from the changes even before concerted attention had been given to the external changes.

NOTES

1. The final report from this evaluation is available from the National Institute of Justice Reference Service (Wycoff and Skogan 1993).
2. Items in the scales used for this article were scored with values that ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*.

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