PLANNING FOR THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERSHIP -

FOR THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

DIVISION OF LAW ENFORCEMENT

Captain George La Mont

Abstract

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Division of Law Enforcement and many other law enforcement agencies across the nation are faced with generational issues that will soon result in the retirement of a significant percentage of their leadership. Along with the vacancies created there is the inherent loss of institutional knowledge. Surveys conducted of sworn DEP officers and supervisors together with records from the training cents indicate a significant retirement possibility (my estimate of 50%) within the next five to six years. This retirement is not just at the supervisor level but also the senior level throughout the patrol and investigation bureaus. If the current DEP leadership does not prepare for the next generation of leadership they will have failed in their responsibility to the organization, the people of the State of Florida , and the environment that is our heritage for many generations to come.

Introduction

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Law Enforcement (Division) has traditionally recruited and hired law enforcement officers based on criteria for entry level position, without any systemic or continuous consideration of potential leadership qualities or abilities. During the years 2007 through 2009 the Division experienced a significant turnover in supervisory positions due in large to retirements. In the near future the Division will again experience a significant turnover when the current leadership retires. The Division must develop and enhance procedures to value, recognize, and promote excellence in leadership ability, intellect, and high ethical standards beginning with the recruitment of new officers.

The Division's General Order number 2-13 is titled "Selection and Promotion Process." Nowhere within the general order is there any reference to or suggestion of desired or required qualities for a supervisory position. The general order provides for the process of hiring and promotion. The Division's promotion process generally follows the path of an announcement seeking voluntary application of candidates. Those candidates that meet the mandatory basic requirements (with no supervisory criteria) such as certified law enforcement officer, or no criminal history, etc. will be offered an opportunity to interview. The interview process consists of a thirty minute written exercise that is graded for content and grammar, and an interview by a panel of three. Other factors considered in the promotional process include years of experience, level

of education and training, history of disciplinary action, and military preference. The top candidate is then offered the position and promoted. This process is very similar to the historic process of other law enforcement agencies across the nation. It is ripe for failure as previously experienced by the Division when former supervisors were detrimental to promoting the vision and mission of the Division. Officers are promoted to supervisory positions without consideration, evaluation, or testing of their supervisory, management, leadership, or even "people skills". Modern organizations utilize a variety of techniques and philosophies for the development of future and existing leaders. It is imperative that law enforcement organizations and particularly the Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Division of Law Enforcement adopt appropriate and meaningful methodology to prepare the future generations of line supervisors and management.

Literature Review

There are numerous manuscripts and books relating to leadership and supervision. Many are redundant and provide theory that has not been significantly applied nor validated in law enforcement organizations. It is easy to opine that a process that is successful in one organization will be successful in others. The reality does not necessarily follow the assumption of success. Law enforcement organizations are different mostly because of the nature of the work but also the adherence to historical and conservative policies and procedures. The Division, like some other law enforcement organizations, operates under a union or labor contract for the line personnel. The contractual agreement is weighed in favor of the majority of the membership and provides guidelines which the Division leadership must adhere to; such as the promotional process described above. The contract may be amended through mutual agreement or more commonly by negotiation.

In 1998, The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) sponsored a conference on Achieving and Sustaining Executive Success (Moody, 1999). The IACP has long focused on leadership development. The 1998 conference deliberations resulted in a clearly concise message that today's leaders are obligated and responsible for the success of the next generation. The IACP and many other organizations provide leadership development programs designed to be one of the elements in the preparation of law enforcement leaders. No organization can rely on another to identify and prepare current or future leaders, but should utilize such offerings as a portion of the totality of leadership preparation and development. Each organization must recognize their unique strengths and weaknesses in the process of developing and preparing organizational leadership. By recruiting, hiring, and developing officers with the same qualities that are desired of leaders the Division will have a pool of candidates ready to embrace the challenge of developing into the next generation of Division leadership.

The IACP leadership conference also identified duties and responsibilities of police organizations to include: developing future leaders, creating career opportunities, developing talent and skill capacities, providing a career concept, leading by example, providing guiding principles and values, and mentoring new leadership early in the officer's career in order to promote career advancement and a future vision.

"Strategic Planning" has been a term in frequent and common use but not universally understood, especially in the law enforcement community; the more individuals queried on a definition of strategic planning the more diverse the definition is likely to become. Strategic planning is a concept drawn from the business world and easily adapted to any organization or individual (Barishansky, 2009). Following a process of strategic planning an organization may develop a plan "…that determines the needs of an organization that will enable it to realize its vision and mission" (Barishansky, 2009).

In "Succession Planning and the Aging Workforce" (Holden, 2009) reference is made to the impending retirement of the baby boomers or those born during the period of 1946 to 1964 and the need to fill the vacancies they create. Holden notes that there are significantly fewer people in the next generation (born between 1965 and 1980) to fill the gap created by the retirement of the boomers. Without a process to develop the next generation of leaders there will be not only fewer candidates, but also a knowledge gap caused by the retirement of so much historical and institutional knowledge.

Dr. Jean Twenge provides generic and generalized insight into the personality characteristics of those she identifies as the "Generation Me" or born since the 1970's. Her book is titled "Generation Me" (Twenge, 2006). Although Dr. Twenge does not reference the need for development of future leadership, her insight into the personality traits of the generation are important when evaluating candidates for development of the next generation of leaders. Many organizations, and law enforcement in particular have long valued service to the community and service to the ideals of the profession but Dr. Twenge identifies a significant personality trait of the generation as being self-serving and narcissist.

Method

The methodology utilized for this project involved several techniques: anonymous written survey of sworn line and supervisory personnel within the Division, random review of promotional and leadership development policies of various state, county, and municipal police agencies in Florida, and the review of law enforcement supervisory training and leadership development programs.

The purpose of this project is to recommend a strategy that will lead to the implementation of a process to identify, foster, and provide for the next and future generations of leadership for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Law Enforcement. Surveys were utilized to gather data that identifies: the time-line for the next generation of supervision and leadership; the qualities and abilities needed for successful supervision and leadership; what level of personal preparation versus the level of organizational preparation is appropriate or required; and process development that will succeed within a historically quasi-military type organization that is union organized at the line level.

Personnel and training records were researched to identify: level of initial employment within the division, time in grade between entry level and various levels of promotion, training opportunities offered versus completed for supervision and leadership; length of service; and probable retirement date.

An anonymous survey was offered to all line personnel in both the patrol and investigations bureau. The survey sought quantifiable information to provide data that

identifies: the amount of law enforcement experience, the level of formal education, the level of supervisory training and/or experience, the desire for promotion to the next level in the chain-of-command, the long-term goals of the individual within the organization, and the opinion of whether the responsibility for supervisory preparation is personal or organizational.

Sworn supervisors (line to executive level) were anonymously surveyed to determine quantifiable data to identify: anticipated retirement date; the readiness to promote to the next level of leadership; the readiness of subordinates to promote to their position; whether the responsibility to prepare for promotion to the next level is personal or organizational; how to best prepare subordinates for promotion to their position, and what qualities and skills are necessary for success in their position.

General orders, policies, procedures, leadership programs, and training classes were reviewed from several state, county and local law enforcement agencies throughout the State of Florida to include: DEP, FDLE Executive Studies, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, Tallahassee Police Department, Polk County Sheriff, Panama City Police Department, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Florida Highway Patrol, Pinellas County Sheriff, Hernando County SO, Sunrise PD, Miami-Dade Corrections and Rehabilitation Department, Orange County SO, Florida Department of Transportation, Motor Carrier Compliance Office, Okaloosa County Sheriff, Brevard County SO,

A significant weakness in this method is that survey participants may feel a personal internal pressure to answer in accordance with what they believe is the desired answer rather than according to their true beliefs and opinions. This weakness was reduced by explaining the importance for validity from the answers and the potential long term impact their answers may have for the Division.

Excellent national, state and private training opportunities focused on leadership and supervisory skills have long been available to organizations and individuals some of which are: FBI National Academy, Southern Police Institute, Northwestern University, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, and the Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute. The curriculum and reputation of several of these programs and offerings were reviewed in order to provide recommendations for a tiered educational and training approach to leadership development for the Division.

Results

Surveys were electronically distributed to ninety-two officers and agents of the Bureau of Park Police and Criminal Investigations Bureau. Twenty-two of those surveyed responded for a return rate of 24% (Note all percentages rounded to the nearest whole number). The results of the survey questions follow:

- Question 1 of the survey asked who should be responsible for leadership development. 41% (9) responded the agency; 22% (5) responded the individual, 32% (7) responded both are responsible; and 1 did not answer.
- Question # 2 of the survey asked if a college education should be an important factor for promotional consideration: 9% (2) were undecided; while 45% (10) responded yes; and 45% (10) responded no.
- Questions 3, 4 and 5 were designed to determine if there was a pattern to other answers that related to the amount of law enforcement experience, DEP law

- Question 6 inquired as to whether or not the respondent had law enforcement supervisory experience prior to joining DEP: 14% (3) responded yes but only 1 provided additional to indicated prior experience as a corporal; 86 (19) responded that they did not have prior law enforcement supervisory experience.
- Question 8 asked if the respondent would apply for promotion within DEP: 9% (2) did not know; 55% (12) indicated yes; and 36% (8) said no.
- Question 9 asked for an explanation if the respondent would not seek promotion. 4 of the 8 who responded that they would not seek promotion provided an answer. 2 of the respondents indicated that they would not seek promotion due to being close to their retirement date, and the other 2 indicated contentment at their current position.
- Question 10 asked if the respondent felt they were ready for promotion: 55% (12) answered yes; 5% (1) said no; 18% (4) were unsure; 18% (4) provided narrative answers; and 5% (1) did not answer. The narrative answers all referenced training and experience needs; one respondent wrote: "*Get more work experience, specific training, and leadership education. I would like to find out if there are any study books or preparation to assist me in this process, or I will speak to my Lieutenant to see if he can assist me in preparing for promotion."*
- Question 11 asked if the respondent intended to complete their career with DEP. 73% (16) answered yes while 27% (6) were undecided.
- Question #12 asked for an opinion of the DEP promotional process. 2 respondents did not answer, 2 had no opinion, and the remaining 18 provided narrative answers. 50% of the survey respondents or 11 of the narrative answers indicated the process to be fair with no negative comment. The comments provided by the 6 that were not favorable did not provide substantive insight into what they perceived as needing improvement. There were general statements such as: "…too much emphasis on a degree and not enough on experience"; "The process needs to have a set of guidelines that outlines an officers path to promotion…"
- Question 13 asked for input on how to improve the promotional process. 82% (18) provided comments, 9% (2) had no opinion and 9% (2) did not provide an answer. There was some significant commonality in the comments to include: education and technical expertise as a requirement; recognition of prior supervisory experience from military or private sector; and inclusion of a written test on leadership, supervisory, and management knowledge with a list of references for the candidate's preparation. Some of the other comments suggested that the interview panel be comprise only of those with a law enforcement background; and that knowledge of General Orders is more important that process knowledge such as budget.
- Question 14 asked for comments on leadership development within DEP. 68% (15) responded with 32% (7) having no answer. Excerpts from the comments include: "*I have taken the Florida Leadership Academy and found it to be very helpful in my future promotional opportunities. If our agency was to develop a course like that, I think it will benefit anyone who would like to promote in their*

<u>BOTH</u> current supervisors and their subordinates!"; "Leadership development seems to be only available to/attended by those already in a supervisory position."; "Too little development, a subject is chosen then promoted. Should be given time and experience to develop into a confidant and mature supervisor not just good at reports"

Surveys were electronically distributed to thirty-five supervisory and command level personnel of the Bureau of Park Police and Criminal Investigations Bureau. Fifteen of those surveyed responded for a return rate of 43%. The results of the survey questions follow:

- Question 1 asked who is responsible for leadership development. 73% (11) answered both the individual and the agency with 27% (4) identifying the agency as being responsible.
- Question 2 asked if a college education is an important factor for promotional consideration. 60% (9) said yes, 13% (2) no, and 27% (4) were undecided; 3 of the respondents provided additional comments to include: "*College education does provide a great basis for learning and understanding and usually assists with basic skill sets and theories, but should not be used as an end to all means. College educations have not proven 100% value for the country, state or local governments as many sadly negative or failed situations are born out of a person or group of people with very high degree's of education. I believe at some point there is no better teacher than experience. Most of the great leadership we now enjoy at the DEP was born out of experience, the willingness to learn and to correct daily situations and the ability to listen and lead. Granted most of these individuals have college degree's, but that's isn't what's driving their success. Success or promotional opportunity should be decided on ones current success, past success and possibilities for future success. College only being used as a tie breaker for two or more equal promotional candidates. From a liability stand point, it's probably even safer to promote a leader with documented positive merits of experience and success over time than to just say they attended college so they should have been able to be successful.*"
- Questions 3, 4 and 5 were designed to determine if there was a pattern to the other answers that related to the amount of law enforcement and supervisory experience. There was no discernable pattern detected.

- Question 6 asked when the respondent intended to retire. 40% (6) of the respondents will retire within the next 5 years: 53% (8) within the next 6 years; and 1 is undecided.
- Question 7 asked the respondent's current rank. 2 are Major or above; 6 are Captains, and 7 hold the rank of Lieutenant. Rank did not indicate any discernable difference or pattern based on rank.
- Question 8 asked if the respondent had law enforcement supervisory experience prior to their employment with DEP. 33% (5) answered yes with 67% (10) answering no.
- Question 9 asked for the respondent to describe their prior law enforcement supervisory experience. 27% (4) provided comments to this question. The most common position held was that of patrol sergeant with two of the respondents having also served as Lieutenant, Captain, or Chief prior to employment with DEP.
- Question 10 asked if the respondent will apply for promotion. 73% (11) answered yes and 27% (4) said no.
- Question 11 asked why the respondent will not seek promotion. The common reason is that a promotion would require a move to Tallahassee which is not desirable or practical for the respondents.
- Question 12 asked if the respondents felt they are prepared for promotion to the nest rank. 53% (8) answered yes, 40% (6) said no, and 1 was unsure. Comments provided to this question identified additional experience and training needed before promotion to include: incident command, administrative, and leadership classes being essential for better preparation.
- Question 13 asked if any of the respondent's subordinates are ready for promotion. 4 answered no, 1 did not answer, 1 has no subordinate, and 9 answered yes. Of the 9 affirmative answers 7 indicated there was 1 subordinate ready for promotion, with 1 indicating 4, and 1 indicating 6 subordinates prepared for promotion.
- Question 14 asked if the respondents felt they were prepared when they promoted to their current rank. All but one reported that they felt they were.
- Question 15 asked if the respondent intended to complete their career with DEP. All but 2 answered yes with the 2 indicating they were not sure.
- Question 16 asked for the respondent's opinion of the DEP promotion process. There was 100% response to this with some of the comments quoted here: *"The process does not necessarily identify the best candidate merely who does best in the interview process."; "I think the process has definitely improved in my years with DEP. As with anything there is always room for improvement…"; "I believe it is a fair and well arranged promotional process. The most important factor being the matrix of hiring first by lateral, second from within, thirdly from the outside"; "From what I have read and seen, I believe the current process is good and creates a fair and impartial selection process."; "I would like to see some details for the process of promoting to a Captain or above. The current policy only refers to bargaining unit members, which brings me to believe it is only referring to agents or first line supervisors."; "The guidelines should be the same, but not required to have someone from the bargaining unit on the interview panel. It*

- Question 17 asked how to improve the promotional process. 87% (13) provided comments, 1 was undecided, and 1 did not answer. Some of the comments follow: "*A written exam that addresses LEO leadership/supervisory potential followed by an assessment exercise, then an interview will better serve the agency. The process should result in an eligibility list with the top candidates being selected for leadership training and development prior to promotion."; "A written GO knowledge test could be added."; "Consider a mentoring program for new first line supervisors. The jump from an officer to a supervisor is tremendous in organization skills, responsibilities and how you are viewed from your subordinates."; "I do not think we should interview candidates from outside agencies for supervisory positions (Lt. and above). If they wish to work for this agency, they should start at an entry level position and work their way up. I think that the oral interview should carry more weight than it does. The interview is where you get a true feel of what type of leadership qualities the individual possesses. Our current process (color chart) gives equal weight to all of the categories. I think 50 to 75% of the applicants final score should be based on the oral interview."; "From my experience, I am not sure weights allotted to the various subjects in the ranking system are entirely appropriate. I think more weight should be given to the interview board recommendation as long as the board members are proven to be impartial.";* and *"Once again, the promotional process needs to be adhered to. It is unfair to make certain persons go through a promotional process then just appoint someone to the same rank a short time later. Also, residency needs to stay the same across the board. I am not allowed to live in one of the counties that I cover however there is a captain that lives outside of his district that was promoted after me."*

In February 2010 the DEP/DLE Training Center conducted a review of the years of credited state law enforcement service for the sworn division members. The review indicated that 125 of 147 full-time sworn law enforcement officers reported a total of one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two (1882) years of credited State of Florida law enforcement experience for an average of 15 years (rounded to nearest whole number) service per member. It is not know why the remaining 22 sworn members were not included in this review other than a portion of the 22 reflects vacant positions.

Several state, county, and municipal agency policies and general orders were reviewed to compare process and review leadership development. These policies were randomly obtained by requesting class members to submit their respective agency policies and by a request through the Florida Police Accreditation Coalition. Some of the policies submitted were rejected for inclusion in this paper due to not being applicable to promotion or leadership development. The following is a synopsis of the policy review presented in alphabetical order.

- The Brevard County Sheriff's Office conducts interval promotional testing and maintains an eligibility list for 24 months rather than conducting a promotional process based on a vacancy. A promotional process must be initiated within 1 year of the expiration of the eligibility list. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.
- The Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Division of Law Enforcement
- The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLA) conducts an annual written examination for promotion to Special Agent Supervisor (SAS). Those who pass the written examination are placed on an eligibility list for two years. When a vacancy occurs interviews are conducted. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.
- The Florida Department of Transportation – Motor Carrier Compliance Office general orders provide for promotional testing for a vacancy. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.
- The Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) promotional policy provides for a written examination and assessment process. FHP conducts an annual promotion process and maintains an annual eligibility list from which the Director may promote based on vacancy. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.
- The Hernando County Sheriff's Office maintains a two year eligibility list of those who have successfully completed one of three promotional processes. Additional points are provided for factors such as time in grade and education. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.
- The Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office conducts annual promotional testing for the positions of Corporal and Sergeant. Promotions or assignment to the rank of lieutenant and above are at the discretion of the Sheriff. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development but there is a "Career Development" program for deputies and investigators to provide career paths without promotion to a supervisory position.
- The Orange County Sheriff's Office maintains a biannual eligibility list from which promotions are selected when vacancies occur. The promotional process may be comprised of any of the following segments: written test, written essay, assessment, oral interview. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.
- The Panama City Police Department provides for a multi-phase promotional process. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.

- The Pinellas County Sheriff's Office requires that candidates for promotion successfully complete the agency's Introduction to Leadership/Supervision Course prior to testing for promotion to a line-supervision position; and the Advanced Leadership course prior to testing for a mid-level supervisory position. The promotion process consists of an annual written examination (open book), assessment phase. Those who successfully completion of the initial promotional process will be placed on the eligibility list for the nest year. Other than the Leadership/Supervision and Advanced Leadership courses there is not any provision for leadership development.
- The Polk County Sheriff's Office requires successful completion of the agency's Certified Public Manager Course to qualify for appointment to the rank of Captain or above. A promotional examination is administered annually with successful candidates being identified in a promotional eligibility list for two years. Although there is not an official leadership development program the Sheriff's office does provide a promotional profile to each candidate and that candidate's supervisor. The candidate and supervisor are encouraged to review the developmental needs and formulate a plan to provide for those needs through training courses, educational classes, seminars, and developmental exercises. The candidate is responsible to implement and follow through on the development plan.
- The Sunrise Police Department does not initiate a promotional process until such time as a vacancy exists. The Chief of Police determines the nature and type of the promotional process. Their general order does not contain any provision for leadership development.
- The Tallahassee Police Department conducts annual promotional examinations and maintains a promotional eligibility list.

Only the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) and the Tallahassee Police Department provided a leadership development plan. The FWC program is designed to provide a one year mentoring period available through application for those interested in preparing for the next level of supervision i.e. officer to lieutenant, or captain to major. FWC has published a manual to proscribe many of the details and responsibilities of both the mentor and mentee. In discussion with FWC personnel, the mentor program is not currently being utilized due to having fallen by the wayside mostly because of budgetary constraints. FWC personnel report favorably on their experience with the mentoring program. The only negative comment is that it has been less beneficial to officers preparing for promotion to lieutenant than to those already holding rank and seeking promotion to the next level. Their was not any reason provided for this other than speculation that the officer may not really know what is expected of a lieutenant and lieutenants not having sufficient experience to help prepare an officer. The Tallahassee Police Department (TPD) leadership development program is supported by a general order entitled "Professional Development." The TPD policy addresses rotation of assignments to provided well rounded and experienced personnel. The policy also provides for training classes and a voluntary mentoring program. The policy sets general guidelines for the mentoring plan but provides little specifics as to what are the elements and specific learning objectives.

Various training programs and efforts were reviewed. The review is not all inclusive as many universities, colleges, private organizations, and professional associations offer a wide variety of programs. The review of the many diversified programs is beyond the scope of this project. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Law Enforcement Training Center (Training Center) not only provides internal training opportunities but facilitates training for division members at external sources such as Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Training Academy and the other organizations. A recent offering of the Training Center is entitled "Building and Maintaining a Sound Behavioral Climate." This program will be initially offered to current division lieutenants, captains, and non-sworn emergency response managers. The program is a Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission approved advance training program designed to acquaint the student with behavioral concepts, management techniques, motivational techniques, and communication. The Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute provides several programs for the law enforcement leadership and management ranging from line supervision to chief executive. Continuing leadership development and advanced studies classes such as budgeting and officer discipline are also offered at various locations throughout the state. The Certified Public Manager (CPM) program offered through the Florida Center for Public Management at Florida State University is a well recognized and established program to develop public sector managers and supervisors. The University of Florida offers the Process Management Certification Program and the Experienced Leader Certificate Program each focused on developing leaders and executives by providing sound training through short sessions. National Seminars Training, Skill Path, Steven Covey, and The Ken Blanchard Companies are a few of the many private training organizations that offer leadership development programs that although are not focused on law enforcement, provide training in sound and proven principles that cross professional boundaries. There are also many online courses covering a wide variety of topics essential to leadership development such as project management, time organization and management, six-sigma process, and many others. Element K Learning Solutions is but one of the organizations offering these on-line programs. In addition to the many organized curriculum for leadership the serious students can avail themselves to many hundreds of books of leadership ranging from serious text book format to the simplistic.

DISCUSSION

The DEP Division of Law Enforcement (Division) is a unique law enforcement agency serving the citizens and visitors of Florida today and for future generations by protecting the environment which provides basic life support such as clean water and air, and quality of life such as the many natural areas in the State. The Division has garnered respect and recognition from a myriad of municipal, county, state, and federal agencies and is nationally recognized as a leader in environmental protection. In order to continue to provide its unique services and to be in position to respond to unknown future challenges the Division must focus on developing leadership that will carry forward. The Division, like many other law enforcement agencies, struggles with recruitment to fill entry-level positions. Florida law enforcement does an outstanding job of preparing recruits through the basic recruit courses offered at regional training academies to provide for statutorily required law enforcement certification. Following

the academy additional training is required to include a well-defined and closely-supervised field training program. Upon successful completion of a field training program officers may avail themselves of many training opportunities to enhance their skills and capabilities as a law enforcement officer. Of the many training opportunities only a very few are dedicated to leadership development. When a supervisory position within the division becomes available it is announced for voluntary application. The process includes: the review of a candidate's performance record, amount of experience, training and education, disciplinary issues, and resume. A written essay is required followed by a brief interview consisting of ten to twenty generic questions. The written exercise and interview seek to determine the applicant's communication skill, thought organization, and composure under the inherent stress of the process but does not adequately measure the applicant's capability, understanding, or probability of success as a supervisor. Following promotion the new supervisor (lieutenant) is assigned as the first-line supervisor and expected to perform the required duties. Absent a dedicated and professional captain and the new lieutenant's peers it is mostly up to the lieutenant to read the job description and learn on the go.

The officers and agents who responded to the survey indicate that 14% had law enforcement supervisory experience prior to joining DEP and 55% of the respondents felt that they were prepared for promotion. In comparison 68% of the respondents opined on leadership development with a common theme of a need for training and understanding of organizational behavior as well as internal process and procedures supervisors are required to follow. Another common comment suggested that a written examination of general orders and leadership capabilities would better serve the promotion process. 43% of the sworn supervisors responded to a survey. One of the alarming results is that 40% of the respondents intend to retire in the next five years and 53% in the next 6 years. Most of the respondents had only one or two subordinates that may be ready for promotion. A significant comment from many of the supervisors suggested the need for additional experience and leadership training was needed prior to promotion.

The question remains how to prepare for the next generation of leadership without the significant expense incurred for some of the very best training. My recommendation regardless of vacancy or anticipated vacancy is to conduct an annual written examination of policy, procedure, and leadership theory for all below the rank of captain who express a desire for promotion. Prior to the examination advance notice will be provided to include references for the candidate's use in preparation. Those that score in a certain (to be determined) high percentile will have their personnel, discipline, performance, and training records reviewed to determine performance based suitability for promotion. Those high scoring candidates will be offered the opportunity to attend an annual DEP training course "Building and Maintaining a Sound Behavioral Climate." Upon successful completion of the course the individual will be offered the opportunity to participate in a mentoring program. The mentor program should be time specific and upon conclusion the mentee may apply for another to participate again with another mentor. The mentor should review the mentee's profile and work with the mentee to develop a plan to better prepare for promotion. The mentee and mentor should meet at least monthly with the mentor providing insight to the daily duties and responsibilities

along with the mentee assisting on projects and participating as a co-worker of the mentor.

At such time that a promotional vacancy occurs the promotional process will be open to all division candidates and not restricted to those that tested for leadership development. To improve the promotion process a recurring comment in the surveys was to provide a written examination that tests the candidate knowledge of general orders and process required for the specific position. Adopting this suggestion can be accomplished in house with little cost to the division. In addition I suggest that the interview questions be less generic and more focused on identifying those individuals who understand the goals and principles of the division's mission and how to accomplish that mission.

Today's law enforcement leaders have experienced significant influences and challenges such as terrorism, economic hardships, and natural disasters. We have adapted and overcome but being prepared for such occurrences will provide for a far more efficient and effective response. The most important step is to plan and prepare for the next generation of leadership. Do not make them have to adapt rather help them be far more successful than our generation.

George La Mont has 31 years of law enforcement experience at the municipal, state and international levels. He has served in a variety of positions ranging from patrol officer to chief of internal affairs/public corruption unit. He is currently employed by The Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Law Enforcement, Criminal Investigations Bureau where he holds the rank of Captain serving as Commander for the northern half of Florida. George has a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from LaSalle University and a Master's Degree in Criminal Justice from FAMU.

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