

# **Seminole Police Department Cultural Awareness Development**

**Victor Madrid**

## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this research was to determine whether the Seminole Police Department could provide better services to the Tribal communities within the Seminole Tribe of Florida by making its employees more culturally aware of the traditions and customs of its people. This is a new initiative direction being proposed by its author. Some moderating variables which affected the research were the geographical makeup of the six reservations, its employees, time constraints, and the human factor. The proposition for this study suggests that by developing a "Cultural Awareness Development Strategic Objective" the Seminole Police Department can improve upon the level of services provided to the Tribal members. Developing cultural awareness permits the department to sustain a strategic fit between the organization's vision, mission, and core values.*

## **Background**

The Seminole Tribe of Florida became a federally recognized tribe in 1957 with its own governing constitution. Public Law 280 mandated a transfer of federal law enforcement authority within certain tribal nations to state governments in six states: California, Minnesota (except the Red\_Lake Nation), Nebraska, Oregon (except the Warm Springs Reservation), Wisconsin (except later the Menominee Indian Reservation) and, upon its statehood, Alaska. Other states were allowed to elect similar transfers of power if the Indian tribes affected gave their consent. Since then, Nevada, South Dakota, Washington, Florida, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Arizona, Iowa, and Utah have assumed some jurisdiction over crimes committed by tribal members on tribal lands. The State of Florida passed F.S.S.285.18 which recognized the respective Tribal Government of the Seminole Tribe of Florida in accordance to the United States and organized pursuant to the provisions of the Act of June 18, 1934, 48 Stat. 987, 25 U.S.C. s. 476 shall be the respective governing bodies of the special improvement districts created by s. 285.17. The Tribe elected to adopt Florida law on the Seminole Reservations and use the State of Florida court systems as well as Federal Law and the United States court systems.

The Tribal Government is run by a Tribal Council of elected officials consisting of the Chairman, President, and three Tribal Councilmen. The Hollywood Councilman oversees Hollywood, Coconut Creek and Ft. Pierce. The Big Cypress Councilman oversees Big Cypress and Immokalee. The Brighton Councilman oversees Brighton and Tampa. There are currently 3,671 enrolled Seminole Tribal members.

The Seminole Indians of Florida are a proud people who pride themselves in being an unconquered nation. Their history is rich in culture and diversity. The Seminoles were undefeated in three wars. It is a matriarch society with eight clans. The eldest female in the house is considered the “head of the house” in a traditional family. This is but a snapshot of what encompasses the Seminole Tribe of Florida.

### **Outline/Research Proposal**

This research paper will embrace a new initiative the Seminole Police Department is pursuing to establish. It is titled “Cultural Awareness Development”. The goal is to gauge and establish the aforementioned strategic objective. Once established the strategic objective will constantly be revisited to ensure its functionality.

The Seminole Police Department (SPD) is looking to provide the best law enforcement services possible. With this comes great responsibility. It is the command staff’s duty to provide direction for our three year Strategic Plan. The research question is as follows: Using the Seminole Police Department’s Vision, Mission, and Value statements; what “strategic directive” does the department have to pursue over the next three years to best exemplify these statements as it pertains to Cultural Awareness Development so that it can best satisfy the needs of the Tribal Members and the community?

### **Introduction**

The Seminole Police Department has initiated its three-year strategic plan while mirroring accreditation requirements outlined by CALEA (Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs Law Enforcement. By definition, strategic planning is the process of developing and maintaining a strategic fit between the organization’s goals and the changing social landscape, (STOF, 2009). This plan was designed to be a global outline, predisposed toward action, not implementation. The responsibility of implementation rests on the shoulders of the command staff, using available resources to achieve the goals outlined in this plan. The strategic objective will be a dynamic process that focuses on cultural concerns beyond routine police roles. The strategic objective will concentrate on cultural awareness development.

Since the inception of the Seminole Police Department this is the second of its kind. In this plan, participation will be requested and solicited from Tribal Citizens and those personnel who provide direct services to the Tribal members. This will allow for a more inclusive review for the focus of the direction of the Department as it pertains to cultural awareness development.

## **Statement of the Problem(s):**

- What strategic direction to follow regarding the department's cultural awareness considering the department's vision, mission, and value statements (at the micro level).
- The police department's stance is that we are in a non-profit customer service oriented business.
- Everyone we engage is a customer whom we provide a service to.
- Understanding the customer is paramount for us to succeed in providing the best quality of law enforcement services applicable.

## **Purpose**

- The purpose is to determine what the citizenry needs of the Seminole Tribe of Florida tribal members are.

## **Significance of Study**

- To determine how to initiate and carry out the strategic objective that best exemplifies the Seminole Police Department employee's cultural awareness development and the communities that comprise them.

## **Literature Review**

Strategic Planning is the foundation for the future of any organization. For the Davis Police Department, their strategic plan not only serves as the foundation for how they will provide police services in the future but also serves as the department's vehicle for accomplishing needed change according to (Casidy, 2007). The way in which they deliver services is founded in their belief in Community Policing. The critical aspects of community oriented policing are problem solving, a focus on service delivery at the neighborhood level, and community partnerships. Below is their creed! "Attaining the highest quality of life and security for all who live, work, learn, and visit in the city of Davis by working with the community promoting safety and reducing crime."(Casidy, 2007).

According to (Moffitt, 2008), in the fall of 2006, Chief Tom Casady tasked Captain Joy Citta, of the Management Services unit, with updating the Lincoln Police Department's Strategic Plan. Sergeant Don Scheinost was designated to serve as co-chair of the committee. Twenty five people were selected to examine several categories to develop the new five year plan. The individuals that participated in the development of the new plan were department staff, city employees, students and citizens of the community. These are the critical issues initially developed as items that needed to be addressed in this five year plan. The items were identified by the police Command Staff, as a starting point for the Strategic Planning Committee:

- Decentralized Team Stations
- New or upgraded police facilities
- Support services for decentralized facilities
- Forensic Lab needs
- Our workforce
- Support staff issues
- Plan for succession of supervision and command
- Staffing the various shifts

In developing a 5-year strategic plan for the Brewer Police Department, they have identified a number of different challenges facing them now, and in the future. To effectively meet these challenges, they have developed a "plan" of action to help guide them through the next five years. The "plan" identifies those challenges they are facing and identifies specific objectives they can work towards to meet the challenges. By having a strategy in place to guide them through the coming years, they will be better able to remain the dynamic and flexible department that they are which allows them to meet the changing needs of their community. All of their challenges and objectives were developed in a way that they can be modified as the needs of the community change in the coming years. The "plan" is just that, only a plan, and not a document that does not allow for flexibility. History has shown them that no matter how well they plan for the future, changes that occur in the community are driven by concerns that were unforeseen or unpredicted. The impact of the events of 9/11 is an example of how such an unforeseen event can shape the direction of law enforcement priorities and services, (Moffitt, J. 2008).

Illustrated below are the Seminole Police Department's Vision, Mission, and Core Value statements.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The Seminole Police Department will be recognized as the standard of excellence in policing.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

WE, THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE SEMINOLE POLICE DEPARTMENT ARE COMMITTED TO GIVING EXCELLENT SERVICE THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS THAT BUILD RESPECT, TRUST, REDUCE CRIME AND CREATE A SAFE ENVIRONMENT TO ALL COMMUNITIES OF THE SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA.

## **CORE VALUES**

- **Integrity** – Our actions and relationship with the community are guided by an internal sense of honesty and morality.

- **Professionalism** – Our conduct and demeanor display the highest standard of personal and organizational excellence.
- **Diversity** – Our members recognized the differences as a strength in our organization and community.
- **Accountability** – Our duty is to promote public trust by upholding our obligations to the department and community.
- **Vigilance** – Our responsibility is to be alert to issues and activities impacting our tribal communities.

Premise:

- The strategic objective “Cultural Awareness Development” will hone in on and specifically target what the cultural awareness needs of the Seminole Police Department’s employees are. This will determine whether cultural awareness of SPD personnel converts to providing better services to the “Tribal” community, as opposed to its business community.

## **Methodology**

Using the department’s vision, mission, and core value statements ten questions were developed to gauge the knowledge base of those employees who provide direct services to the Tribal members. These questions have been attached to this document as appendix 1. The questions used were developed courtesy of Survey monkey (2012).

The questions to measure the officer’s knowledge of Cultural Awareness were developed from a five page document that in the past was a part of SPD’s promotional process. This document is titled Seminole Police Department Cultural Training 101. This is a workbook and answer key that provided personnel a snapshot of the Seminole Tribe of Florida culture. The document is broken down into six categories. The first section is titled a “brief history of the Tribe”. The second section is titled some of the “Tribes traditions and customs”. The third section is titled “practices in death and family”. The fourth section is titled the “Florida Tribes”. The fifth section is titled the “languages and demographics”. The sixth section is titled “myth busters”. The booklet was provided to all of those who wanted to test for sergeant and lieutenant within the police department. The booklet was developed by the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum’s education/outreach program. Ten questions were taken from all sections in random order to produce a viable survey.

The second survey consists of four questions which are meant to gauge those individuals that SPD personnel provide services to, to determine if there is a need for a “Cultural Awareness Objective”. These questions have been attached to this document as appendix 2. The questions used were developed courtesy of Survey monkey (2012). The questions were developed by polling four tribal members who wished to remain

anonymous. These individuals provided new questions and answers to the six categories of the above mentioned booklet, along with gauging questions. A total of 86 questions were collected but only four were used. The four questions were picked in random order to maintain the validity of the survey.

## **Population and Sampling**

### **Population**

Brighton: **36,000** acres with approximately **600** Tribal Member residents

Ft. Pierce: **60** acres has approximately **50** Tribal Member residents

Tampa: **42** acres consisting of Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino  
No Tribal Member residents

Big Cypress: **52,377** acres of property (42,738 acres of land mass)  
Approximately **557** Tribal Member residents

Immokalee: **600** acres of land with approximately **200** Tribal Member residents

Hollywood: **500** acres with approximately **300** Tribal Member residents

Non-residents Spread out throughout the state and country; 1,975 plus the 1,707 reservation specific equal a total of 3,682 members.

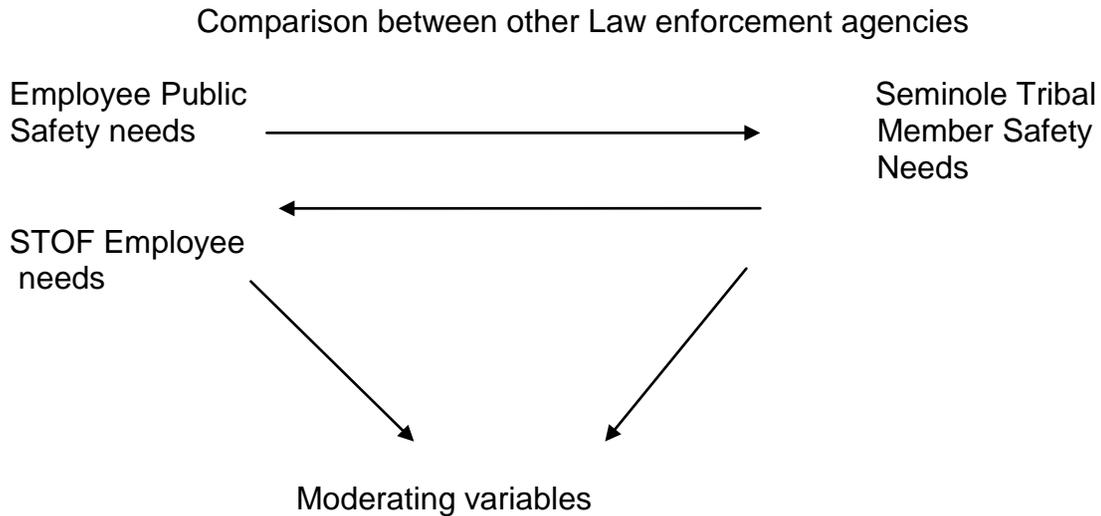
- Sample Population: 151 sworn officers, divided into 7 divisions.

### **Instrumentation**

- The survey population parameters are Seminole Police Staff who provide direct services to the Seminole Tribal members. This was done through a census of all mentioned individuals within the sampling population. The information is validated the confidence level is accurate.

This entire study required research from four areas. First line of research was to find out what knowledge SPD employees base of Cultural Awareness was. This was done through a survey of those employees who provide direct services to the Seminole Tribe of Florida Tribal members. The second area was via rendering a random sample survey of ten percent of the Seminole Tribe of Florida citizens to determine if there was a need for a "Cultural Awareness Development" objective. Next to determine was, what is acceptable for knowledge sharing to our employees from the Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF) Tribal members. This was followed by a comparison and contrasting of additional strategic plans from various law enforcement agencies. This was done

through a comparison model and then focused to fulfill the department's vision, mission, and value statements.



Focus on:

- What is the Seminole Culture knowledge of SPD employees?
- Is there a need for a “Cultural Awareness Development” strategic objective?
- What is acceptable knowledge sharing for STOF members to SPD personnel?
- What is the expectation from STOF members of SPD employees?

At the Macro level, how does the Seminole Police Department provide better services for the Seminole Tribe of Florida and its citizens? This was established by looking at each survey and compiling all of the input and the formation of a strategic objective. The owner assigned this strategic plan will be charged as the vessel to filter this information adequately and accurately. At the micro level, Seminole Police employees and Seminole tribal citizens were surveyed on what Cultural Awareness needs were required moving forward into the future. A random sample survey was given to ten percent of the Seminole Tribal citizenry.

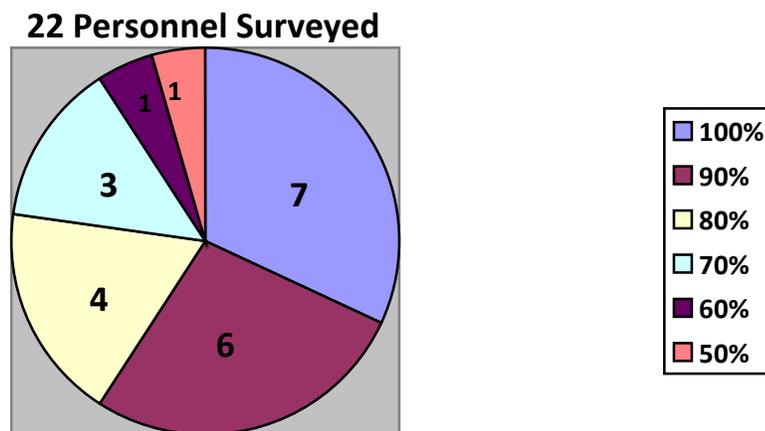
At the macro level, the work load was challenging to produce because this was the first of its kind. Trending patterns from the previous years could not be used. The analysis will be geared towards the Cultural Awareness as opposed to calls for service “CFS” as is the customary tradition in law enforcement.

The measurement of the strategy will give the owner a gauge for progress. The strategies are guidelines to achieve the objective. The plan will be monitored and evaluated continuously. Independent & Dependent Variables- There will be dependent variables because there is no control in this experiment. It is a basic research testing of “Cultural Awareness” needs for the Seminole Tribe of Florida and the communities that comprise them. There is a human element that needs to be taken into account. This is

partially due to the fluidness of the strategic plan.

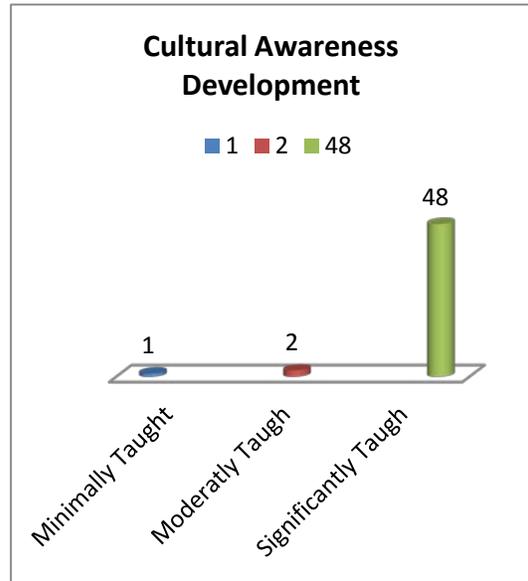
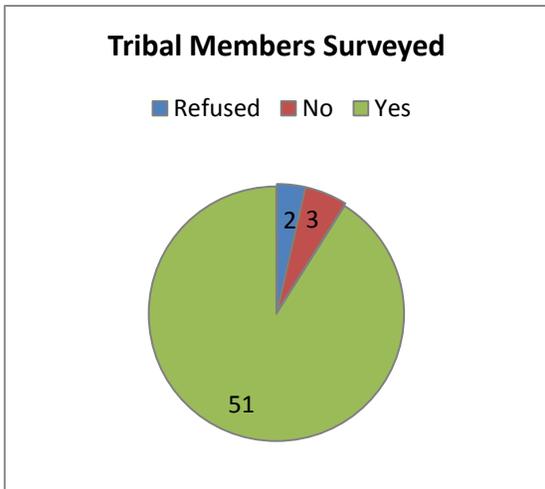
## Results

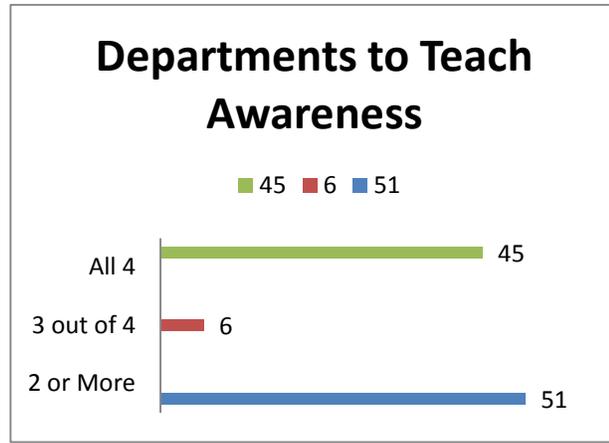
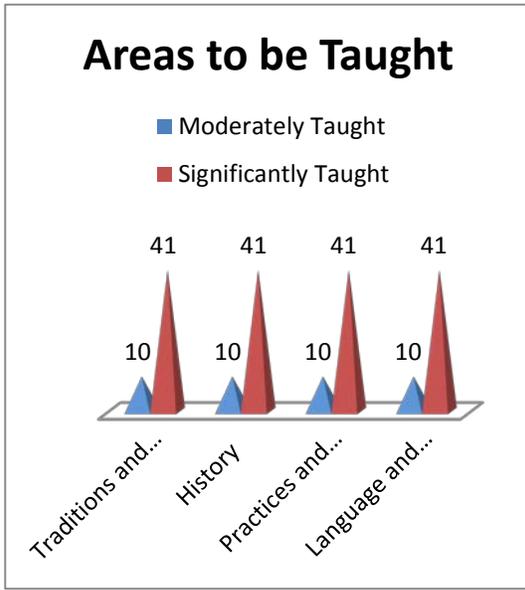
The first instrument was the survey results for sample survey number one. A total of twenty two people from the Big Cypress Reservation who provide direct services to the Seminole Tribal Members were surveyed. Of the twenty two people seven scored 100%, six scored 90%, four scored 80%, three scored 70%, one scored 60%, and one scored 50%. In law enforcement 80% has been the standard for success. Using the score of 80% as the least acceptable denominator to receive a successful score, 17 people received this rating. The response rate was 100% of the surveys were responded to. There are a total of twenty five people from the Big Cypress Reservation who provide direct services to the Seminole Tribal Members however; one was on military leave, the second one was on sick leave, the third one is a vacant position. 22 or 88% of 25 of personnel were surveyed in Big Cypress command. Of the 22 personnel that were surveyed, 17 or 77% of the 22 maintained a successful passing rate. The remaining 5 or 22% failed the basic cultural awareness knowledge base. The below graph illustrates the results.



The second instrument was the survey results for sample survey number two. The four question survey was to gauge whether Tribal members felt there was a need to provide SPD personnel "Cultural Awareness Development". It is important to note that factors such as attitudes, emotions, health status, quality of life, and moral values are difficult to measure. A truly satisfactory survey of health, quality of life, and human emotions, and preferences require a large-scale and truly scientific experimental study. In order to maintain reliability and as much validity as possible taking into account the human factor, the survey was given in random to a total of fifty six Tribal members. This equates to ten percent of the Big Cypress Reservation population. The survey was administered at the bi-weekly dividend disbursement. It was given to every third person. Two of the fifty six or 3.5 % of Tribal members surveyed refused to take the survey.

Three of fifty six or 5.3 % of the Tribal members answered no. The other fifty one or 91 % answered yes, they wanted SPD personnel to be more developed in their cultural awareness of the Seminole people. Out of the fifty one Tribal members who indicated SPD personnel should receive cultural awareness development one or 1.9% answered SPD personnel should be minimally taught cultural awareness, two or 3.9% stated moderately, the other forty eight or 94.1% stated significantly. When asked who should teach SPD personnel cultural awareness, all of them stated a combination of two or more 51 or 100% of the departments within the Seminole Tribe of Florida. The remaining ranking was as follows: Six of them stated three or 5.8% of the four choices should teach cultural awareness to SPD. The other forty five or 88.2% stated all four entities should teach cultural awareness to SPD personnel. When asked what area should SPD personnel be taught, the survey results indicated all four choices given, traditions and customs, history, practices and death in the family, and language and demographics. The ranking was as follows: Ten or 19.6% of fifty one selected moderately, the remaining forty one or 80.3% chose significantly. The below graphs illustrate the results.





## Discussion

For purposes of this document and due to time constraints and approval of this document it became impossible to conduct a full sample survey of all of the people who provide direct services to the Seminole Tribal Members. The focus became narrowed to one of the five Seminole Tribe Reservation's Police Department to measure, interpret, and provide the data for purposes of this research.

The surveys were conducted in a controlled environment by the strategic objective owner. All individuals were provided the survey in person and face to face. No clarifying questions were answered so the individual instrument wasn't skewed in the results.

The first survey results clearly indicate Big Cypress SPD personnel have a good working knowledge of the Seminole Culture. It is the strategic owner's belief that Big Cypress SPD personnel have a high working knowledge of the culture because they are extremely immersed in the day to day activities of the community. Furthermore, it is believed by the strategic objective owner that SPD personnel who provide direct services to the Seminole Tribal members in more urbanized reservations will have less Seminole Culture knowledge. This is based on the fact that there is less interaction with the community and more interaction with the business components of the reservation.

It is unsure on whether this test will measure what it was set to accomplish; which is to determine how the Seminole Police Department can provide better services to Tribal members within of its communities. This is partially due to time constraints, and the human factor.

The second survey results clearly indicate Tribal members in Big Cypress want SPD personnel to be more cultural aware of their customs and traditions, language and demographics, history, and their practices. Furthermore, it is believed that all Seminole

reservation Tribal members will answer similarly.

Face Validity- It is difficult to gauge face validity for either instrument, because there is no pre-existing surveys of its kind to use or measure up against. This study is a paradigm to the Seminole Police Department and the community it serves.

As the researcher, the assumption is that all survey participants will be truthful in their responses because they want to provide and receive better services. The sample of surveying all of the Seminole Police Department employees who provide direct services to the Seminole Tribal members, along with a random sampling of ten percent of the Seminole Tribe of Florida Tribal Members accurately represent the population we are testing. Due to the fact this is only a nine month course, it was difficult to be able to fully examine all variables that affected the outcome. The only bias for the Big Cypress Tribal members is the human element. No other bias is believed to exist.

At the macro level the bias was the group tested is not similar in makeup. The demographics in all the reservations share a distinct mixture of the Seminole culture with another culture. Once this research has been completed it is believed that it will satisfactorily test the hypothesis to make a fairly accurate response and solution to the research questions and problems.

It was difficult to demonstrate concurrent validity in either survey instrument because there were no surveys of its kind to compare them, nor the human factor of emotions or biases. The survey instrument proved to be too difficult to validate.

## **Recommendations**

The strategic plan is by design a fluid document. It is recommended that a monthly, quarterly, semi-annual, and annual review of the work plan be conducted. This will be completed by the owner to insure the success of the strategic objective as a whole. The owner will report a review of the work plan and, if needed a re-evaluation of the strategies and objective. Based on the work plan assessment results the strategic objective will be modified accordingly. In addition, a mechanism will need to be implemented that will gauge the strategic objective and its success or failure. A post survey must be conducted annually to gauge success. The Police Chief will hold the owner accountable for the achievements in the overall plan.

## **Conclusion**

As outlined at the beginning of this document, by implementing measurements for this strategic objective this will give the owner a gauge for the progress. The strategies are guidelines to achieve the objective and not meant to be all inclusive. No plan can be successful without a well-designed process for monitoring and evaluation. To that end, the methods of several policing philosophies and management theories are integrated to insure optimum results.

Community Problem Oriented Policing (CPOP) will be used by the owner in two ways. First, input was sought by community members for this specific strategy and objective for the community. Tailoring the objective to meet specific needs of the

community is paramount to customer satisfaction and obtaining ideal results. Second, the Tribal member's feedback and opinions on whether the desired result has been achieved will shape the future of the strategy.

Dovetailing with CPOP is the use of the SARA model of problem solving. Scanning, Analyzing, Response, and Assessment are the tools used to measure each phase of the problem, or objective, at hand. Constant reassessment of each facet will insure accurate reporting on the effectiveness of the objective.

The owner will be held accountable by the Police Chief for each component assigned. Annual updates in the strategic objective plan progress report will function as the quality control aspect of the plan and allow for an exchange of ideas on what works and what does not. It is difficult to gauge whether the research of the work product associated to this paper serves as a true gauge to determine whether the strategic objective "Cultural Awareness" will translate to providing better services to the "Tribal" community.

Lieutenant Victor Madrid has been in law enforcement for over 16 years. He started his law enforcement career with the Hendry County Sheriff's Office in 1996. He spent his first 10 years working in corrections, community policing and road patrol. He began serving the Seminole Police Department in 2003. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2006. Since his promotion he has graduated from Class 12 of the Florida Leadership Academy and 62<sup>nd</sup> Command Officer's Development Course. Victor was promoted to Lieutenant in 2009 and currently serves as the commander of the Big Cypress Reservation with the Seminole Police Department. He attained his Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration and Master's Degree in Administration from Barry University.

## References

- Brewer Police Department strategic plan retrieved on April, 2012, from <http://www.brewerpolice.org/plans.htm>.
- Casidy, T. (2007, January 1). Lincoln Police Department Strategic Plan: *Lincoln Police Department Strategic Plan review 2007-2012*. Retrieved on April 2012 from <http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/police/pdf/stratplan.pdf>
- Davis Police Department Strategic Plan: (2009-2011). Davis Police Department Strategic Plan. Retrieved on April 2012 from <http://cityofdavis.org/police/pdfs/Strategic%20Plan%202009-2011.pdf>
- Moffitt, J. (2008). *Brewer Police Department 2008 strategic plan review*. Retrieved from *Brewer Police Department 2008 strategic plan review*. Retrieved in April 2012 from <http://www.brewerpolice.org/plans.htm>.
- Monkey, S. (2006, January 1). *Survey*. Retrieved May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012, from Survey Monkey.com Web site: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=619472931768>
- Seminole Police Department Strategic Objective Cultural Awareness (1st ed.). (2012). Hollywood, FL: STOF.
- Zikmund, W. G., Babin, B. J., Carr, J. C., & Griffin, M. (2010). *Business research methods* (8th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning.