

**How Would the Use of 360° Feedback Affect
Employee Performance in a Values-Based
Community Policing Environment by the Year 2004?**

A Project Presented to
State of California
Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training

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Table of Contents

	Introduction	1
Chapter I	Recognizing the Relationship of 360° Feedback to Community-Based Policing • What is 360° Feedback? • How does Performance Assessment Work Using 360° Feedback? • What is the Philosophy of Community-Based Policing? • Law Enforcement and Community Service • The 360° Feedback/Community-Based Policing Connection	3
Chapter II	Focusing on the Future • Nominal Group Exercise • Scenarios	11
Chapter III	Strategic Planning for 360° Feedback • Overview • Current Business Definition • External Assessment • Internal Assessment • Stakeholder Identification and Analysis • Implementation Plan	22
Chapter IV	360° Feedback Transition Management • Critical Mass • Transition Management Structure	36
Chapter V	Conclusion	39
	Endnotes	40
	Appendix	43
	List of Tables and Figures	45
	Bibliography	46

Introduction

In 1997, the Leadership Development Course that is now being presented through the California Peace Officers' Association (CPOA) was created. The course is designed to introduce officers to supervision and leadership issues experienced by sergeants. During the first two course offerings, approximately fifty officers from CPOA Region VII (San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, and Ventura Counties) were questioned about the performance appraisal processes at their departments. There was unanimous agreement that significant changes are needed because the expectations and requirements of the job have changed so much in just the last few years.¹ While these were informal surveys, the uniformly negative responses underscore concerns about the ability of law enforcement to match organizational performance assessment to community expectations. If current appraisal systems are not accurate or effective, it is especially critical to examine the problem and relate possible solutions to the future of law enforcement. John DeRohan, Bob Leppert, and Dave Livingston recently completed a Command College project entitled, "Future Methods of Evaluating Patrol Officer Performance in a Changing Community Policing Environment by the Year 2003". The authors suggested that adding an element of 360° feedback to performance appraisals may provide a key to more effective law enforcement performance.² Bruce Barsi, a Captain with the Millbrae, California Police Department, authored a project entitled, "Suburbia Police Department: Performance Appraisal and Recognition Program".³ Barsi pointed out that, "...it is essential that the performance appraisal system reflect the goals set by the agency for community policing."⁴ Both projects offer models for agencies desiring to change their performance evaluation processes to meet the needs of the future. Much has been written about the concept of utilizing 360° feedback for employee development and evaluation. The issues can be complex, and are worthy of additional research relative to future

use of the process by law enforcement. The primary purpose of this research is to complement and expand upon the work completed by Bruce Barsi and DeRohan, Leppert, and Livingston.

Chapter I

Recognizing the Relationship of 360° Feedback to Community-Based Policing

What is 360° Feedback?

As the words suggest, 360° feedback, or multi-source assessment, is a process of receiving performance information from multiple raters within a person's circle of influence. Typically, the process is established to solicit input from supervisors, peers, subordinates, and even customers. Experts on 360° feedback argue about whether the feedback survey results should remain confidential and be used only for professional development, or if they should also be incorporated into the organization's performance evaluation process.⁵ Multi-source assessment can be used effectively either way, and it is up to each organization to determine how the process is implemented. Whether or not that information is actually used for purposes of formal performance evaluation, the resulting professional development of an employee would presumably be reflected in performance evaluations. In any case, the process represents a departure from the traditional top → down, single-source methods of communicating performance information. Supervisor-only performance evaluation is considered inferior to multi-source assessment because it generally fails to differentiate levels of performance and it does not motivate employees to improve.⁶ These are some reasons for the deficiency of single-perspective performance assessment:⁷

- They may reflect self-serving and other individual biases
- Politics, favoritism, and friendship may enter into the assessment
- The supervisor may have had an insufficient opportunity or motivation to observe employee performance
- The supervisor may be unwilling to confront poor performance
- Different supervisors have degrees of rigor in making evaluation decisions

These are common themes and are consistent with the feelings expressed in the previously referenced informal surveys of CPOA Leadership Development Course participants.

When the element of 360° feedback is introduced, a more balanced picture emerges. Not only does multi-source input simply provide more information, it offers insights and perspectives that a single supervisor may not have, even if (s)he consults with other supervisors regarding the performance assessment.

How does Performance Assessment Work Using 360° Feedback?

A 360° feedback process works like this: An organization identifies a number of behaviors that contribute significantly to its success and that are observable to others. Employees then rate themselves, and are also rated by peers, subordinates, customers, and supervisors according to how well they model the critical behaviors. The specific ratings are often received anonymously, or the information from each rating category is summarized for the employee. Multi-source assessment can be customized to the needs of each organization. According to authors Mark Edwards and Ann Ewen, “Three hundred and sixty degree feedback has been aptly described as an *in-situ*, or in-place, assessment center because the process provides high credibility and valid assessments in the actual job setting. In contrast to the assessment center, assessors in the 360° feedback process have firsthand knowledge of how each person responds at work because they work together.”⁸ Perhaps the credibility of 360° feedback is one reason that its use is becoming so widespread. In the U.S., more than ninety percent of Fortune 1000 companies use some form of multi-source assessment.⁹ The Arizona Department of Public Safety uses 360° feedback to assess its supervisors and managers. Other major companies that utilize the process include AT&T, Bank of America, Federal Express Corp., and IBM.¹⁰

As law enforcement seeks to be recognized for high professional standards, the following reasons for implementing a system of 360° feedback are well worth considering:¹¹

- Leadership alignment: The 360° feedback program establishes a list of desired behaviors and actions against which individual performance can be evaluated.
- Team building: Identification of commonly agreed upon team leadership behaviors that, when performed well by each member, result in successful team performance.
- Promotion and succession planning: 360° feedback can help employees develop their weaker areas into strengths.
- Shared responsibility: 360° feedback can foster shared responsibility for an organization's success. It clarifies roles and performance expectations and more clearly connect them to overall business objectives.

What is the Philosophy of Community-Based Policing?

Ed Barlow, Jr., president of Creating the Future, Inc., provided insight into this question in a lecture entitled, "Scanning, Forecasting, and Nominal Group Practice". He was not trying to address the specific issue of community-based policing, but he **was** speaking to the issue of what will be necessary to make our organizations successful in the future. Mr. Barlow asked the question, "What business are we in?" Answer: Creating and supporting the lifestyle choices of our communities is really our business. Enforcement of laws is only one aspect of that responsibility. We must continually match the services we provide with community expectations. We must rebuild and rethink the role of the law enforcement officer in the community. Changing the image of an officer's role may attract excellent people to the occupation who would not consider it at the present time. We must show the public that law enforcement has more value than they can presently see.¹² This way of thinking about the relationship between a law enforcement organization and the community it serves is the root of the community-based policing philosophy.

In the words of one community policing expert, Community Oriented Policing requires that the law enforcement agency has an organizational culture which reflects the following:¹³

- A policing agency is a service organization with its primary function being to provide public safety related services that meet the needs and/or desires of the community;
- The policing agency views itself as an integral part of the community;
- The policing agency has formed a true partnership with the community's various stakeholders in order to provide a better quality of life for those who live, work, and/or visit the community; and
- The policing agency's organizational operations are strategy-based – anticipating and solving problems before they erupt into major issues – as opposed to the traditional command and control style, which is simply based upon reacting to and confronting individual incidents.

A critical point about community-based policing that cannot be overemphasized is the fact that it is a way of thinking not a program. For that reason, it can only be successful with the adoption of an organizational philosophy that is quite different from traditional high-control, legalistic policing styles. It requires a willingness to form true partnerships with the community – in ways that are not typically considered to be the role of a police officer – to identify problems and risks and develop lasting solutions. A successful transition to a community-based policing philosophy requires a change in the culture of the organization.

Several significant examples of the evolving law enforcement mindset were cited by James Bueermann, Chief of the Redlands, CA Police Department, in his study entitled, "Transforming Crime Prevention for the 21st Century: Risk and Protective-Focused Prevention".¹⁴ In 1993, the City of Turlock, CA combined its Police and Recreation Departments. The merger blended the responsibilities of law enforcement, recreational programs, code enforcement, animal control, and crime prevention. In 1996, the City of Redlands, CA formed a task force composed of representatives from the Police, Human Services, Fire, Community Development, and Utilities Departments. Such a consolidated effort allows for more effective, more timely resolution of problems that each of the departments shares in common.

It is important to note that adoption of a community-based policing philosophy does not eliminate the need for traditional “hook ‘em and book ‘em” (arrest and incarceration) techniques. The fact remains that such approaches often present the only reasonable short term remedies to criminal behavior. The leadership challenge is to create organizations that fulfill their traditional law enforcement roles and, at the same time, make solid connections with the people in the communities they serve. Only by so doing can law enforcement leaders hope to develop long term solutions to crime-related problems, as opposed to simply reacting to situations as they occur.

Law Enforcement and Community Service

Law enforcement is a business of service. How do service providers know if their product is being delivered to the satisfaction of customers? As an example, Toyota Motor Sales, U.S.A., Inc. sends extensive surveys to buyers of their vehicles and to customers of their dealership service departments. The surveys examine every aspect of the customer experience and they solicit information about each employee contact. Furthermore, Toyota provides consumers with a toll-free telephone number, regional customer assistance centers, and an Internet address¹⁵, all to ensure easy access for customers to the company’s products and services. In this way, Toyota stays in touch with customer needs and preferences.

How do law enforcement agencies evaluate whether or not they are doing the right things for the communities they serve? In 1992, Scott Jordan conducted a CA Commission on POST Command College study police officer performance evaluation systems. Seventy California municipal law enforcement agencies were surveyed, and Jordan reported that fifty-six of them identified themselves as community-based policing agencies. Seventy-three percent of those departments expressed their service-oriented philosophy in their mission or values statements.

Seventy-three percent also said that performance expectations for officers changed with the adoption of that philosophy. Seventy-five percent of the departments listed unique skills and abilities required to implement the philosophy. Of the fifty-six community-based policing agencies, only nine percent made any changes in their methods of evaluating officer performance, and only eleven percent allowed for any citizen input into the evaluation process.¹⁶ In a similar study in 1998, thirteen California municipal police agencies were surveyed. All but one identified themselves as community-based policing agencies. Only fifty-four percent said that the community-based policing philosophy is expressed in their mission or values statements. Forty-six percent of the agencies had made changes reflective of that philosophy in their performance evaluation processes, and thirty-one percent allowed community input.¹⁷

While some improvement can be seen in the results of the second study over the first, it reflects slow progress over the intervening six year period in matching stated organizational philosophies to performance expectations. In his 1992 study, Scott Jordan looked 10 years into the future (3 years from now) and predicted that officers would no longer be evaluated based primarily on factors that indicate the law enforcement response to crime. “Quantitative data such as the number of arrests made, citations issued, or calls for service handled will be de-emphasized as performance measurements, in favor of qualitative performance assessments that support Community Policing.”¹⁸

Mr. Jordan’s vision of the future does not appear to be developing as rapidly as he predicted. Law enforcement needs to shake some of the mire of tradition from its feet and pick up the pace, but it is still headed in the right direction. In its Strategic Plan, the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) noted that the last job/task analysis for police officers was completed 20 years ago, and it is time to “raise the bar” on

competency standards.¹⁹ In a January 1999 lecture, strategic planning consultant Tom Esensten discussed “bottom line” performance measures for law enforcement. He noted that traditional measures like numbers of arrests, citations, complaints, etc. actually show almost nothing about an organization’s effectiveness. They are simply a measure of activity. They are internally oriented and have little to do with how people feel. On the other hand, emerging measures for the future must deal with customer needs and satisfaction, community safety, and quality of life. These are externally oriented and have to do with how customers feel about law enforcement. These things are, in many ways, anecdotal and are difficult or impossible to count.²⁰

The 360° Feedback / Community-Based Policing Connection

A great deal of research indicates that people do not evaluate themselves accurately, at least not in terms of the way they are viewed by others.²¹ There is a normal human tendency to withhold negative information from people when talking to them about themselves. In fact, this is one criticism commonly heard about the accuracy of supervisor-only evaluations. Additionally, there is the tendency for a subject to rationalize negative information when it is provided. Many people are not open to new ideas about themselves, or they have a “crystallized view of themselves and interpret others’ behaviors and reactions as consistent with that self-view.”²² Research also shows that feedback can cause people to modify their self-evaluations. This, in turn, can result in the following organizational benefits:²³

1. Enhanced organizational involvement of those asked to provide the feedback;
2. Positive reinforcement for employees’ good performances;
3. Greater interest in feedback on the part of leaders
4. Better communication between leaders and their followers, peers, customers, and superiors;
5. Improvement in employee behaviors
6. Change in organizational culture toward more participation and openness; and
7. Additional sources of input into the formal performance appraisal process.

The perception of many California law enforcement agencies is they are doing a fine job for their respective communities based upon statistical information related to arrests, citations, and the crime rate. It is clear from the data presented previously in this chapter that organizations are not relying heavily upon feedback from the community and other sources to determine their effectiveness. Developing 360° feedback processes for individual performance assessment and development can provide an avenue for seeking new levels of openness and learning, both inside and outside the organization.

Chapter II

Focusing on the Future

Nominal Group Exercise

To facilitate the creation of futures scenarios relative to the issue of 360° feedback, a Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was used. The NGT panel was composed of individuals with broad professional experience. The panel consisted of an environmental planner/city council member; a construction contractor/police sergeant; a personnel analyst; a public school administrator; a technology business owner/police detective; a community development employee; a municipal parks and recreation department director; and a police lieutenant who is also assigned as a neighborhoods/police liaison. NGT panel members were sent information summarizing how the formal brainstorming process works. They were told that the focus of the session would be to identify and prioritize trends and events that relate to the issue, and they were provided with examples of pertinent trends and events. The issue and its background were presented to the participants as shown in Table 2.1.

Issue

How would the use of 360° feedback affect employee performance in a values-based community policing environment by the year 2004?

Background

Research indicates that significant changes are needed in police performance appraisal procedures because the expectations and requirements of the job have changed so much in just the last few years. Looking at my own Department's evaluation procedures, I completely agree with those findings. If *current* appraisal systems are not accurate or effective, it is especially critical to examine the problem and relate possible solutions to the future of law enforcement.

Three members of Command College Class #26 collaborated on a project entitled, *Future Methods of Evaluating Patrol Officer Performance in a Changing Community Policing Environment by the Year 2003*. That project included a recommendation that an element of 360° feedback (also called Multi-Source Assessment) be added to performance appraisals. It appears reasonable that developing a formal process to determine how a person's coworkers, direct reporters, etc. view that person would provide a more accurate performance picture. This is an issue worthy of further study.

Figure 2.1
Issue and Background Statement
Presented to NGT Panel

When the NGT panel met, the members brainstormed a list of trends impacting the issue. The panel then identified the seven highest priority trends. It was then assumed that, at the present, each of those trends has an importance level of 100 points. Starting from that assumption, level of importance values were assigned to each trend spanning the time period from 1994 to 2008. Additionally, a value was assigned to each trend which indicated the panel's level of concern about the impact of each trend on the issue. The results of the trend prioritization are displayed in Table 2.2.

TOP 7 TRENDS	5 Years Ago	TODAY	5 Years from Now	10 Years from Now	Concern Level (1-10)
Trend 1 – Changing demographics	85	100	120	140	7
Trend 2 – Level of demands on criminal justice system	95	100	120	150	8
Trend 3 – Technological changes	50	100	150	200	8
Trend 4 – Changing social values and work ethics	90	100	110	120	6
Trend 5 – Level of public expectations of law enforcement	80	100	120	140	8
Trend 6 – Changing risk management issues	80	100	125	150	9
Trend 7 – Level of law enforcement funding	90	100	115	130	9

Table 2.2
Trends Impacting How the Use of 360° Feedback Would Affect Employee Performance
in a Values-Based Community Policing Environment by the Year 2004

Trend 1 – Changing Demographics: Demographics are in a constant state of change. Those changes are evident in the ethnic, age, and socioeconomic makeup of communities. In order to maintain credibility and effectiveness, law enforcement must be closely attuned to the changes. Only by doing so can agencies make sure that they are representative of the communities they serve. Likewise, effectiveness depends heavily upon awareness of the specific service needs and desires of various community factions. Agencies must have efficient methods for receiving and integrating demographic information into daily operations.

Trend 2 – Level of Demands on the Criminal Justice System: The panel felt that this trend impacts all components of the criminal justice system. This trend includes such things as changes in the very definition of what constitutes a crime (certain sex laws, drug laws, etc.), as well as the increasing sophistication of certain criminals. This highlights the need for individuals and organizations to remain flexible and adaptable, because the job is not the same today as it was yesterday, and it will become much different in the years to come. This trend is also one reason why law enforcement must recruit and retain employees with talents and education that are much different than what was sought in the past. In order to accomplish that, accurate

analysis of service needs is necessary. Furthermore, accurate performance appraisal and effective employee development planning is required.

Trend 3 – Technological Changes: This is obviously a different trend than Trend 2, but technological advances inside and outside of law enforcement once again underscore the necessity of hiring and retaining people who are prepared for these challenges.

Trend 4 – Changes in Social Values and Work Ethics: When new generations enter the workforce, so do new attitudes and perspectives about the job. A common misconception is that changing work ethics are automatically bad for an organization. Law enforcement agencies need performance appraisal and employee development systems with educational components. These enhance understanding of varying perspectives. It is also important to have a system that periodically checks the alignment between personal and organizational values.

Trend 5 – Level of Public Expectations: Every community has its own personality and its own priority list about what is required of law enforcement. In a problem-solving, community-based policing environment, many duties are expected of officers that are not thought of as being traditional roles of the police. Rather than displaying a “that’s not my job” type of attitude, law enforcement employees must be responsive to the expectations of their communities. Again, effective performance appraisal and development processes are very helpful.

Trend 6 – Changing Risk Management Issues: This includes civil liability concerns, sexual harassment, issues of public trust, etc. It is more important than it has ever been to employ people with proper sensitivity for the personal rights of others and a solid understanding of liability issues. Receiving feedback from coworkers, community members, etc. on how each person is doing can help employees and organizations manage the risks.

Trend 7 – Level of Law Enforcement Funding: When the performance of law enforcement is assessed based upon factors like the crime rate, arrest rate, etc., funding justification becomes a game of numbers. Funding acquisition methods are also often decided by how the numbers look. While things that can be counted will likely always be part of the picture, much more information could be available for funding considerations if organizations could provide reliable feedback from their community alliances. Such feedback may also be more credible than simple numbers.

After the NGT panel identified a list of trends, it brainstormed events that, if they occurred, would impact the issue positively or negatively. Panel members identified the highest priority events. The final prioritized list consisted of three events. The NGT participants then predicted how many years from the present it might be before each event first occurs (Table 2.3 – Year > 0). They then assigned percentage probabilities of each event occurring in five years, and then in ten years. The participants weighted the impact that each event would have on the issue, and they predicted whether the impact would be positive or negative. The results of this event analysis are depicted in Table 2.3.

EVENTS	Year > 0	5 Years from Now	10 Years from Now	Impact (±10)	Positive or Negative
EVENT 1 – Highly Publicized Use of Force by Law Enforcement	4	60%	80%	6	minus
EVENT 2 – Serious Economic Recession	1	60%	80%	6	minus
EVENT 3 – Large Scale, Nearly Simultaneous Turnover of Law Enforcement Staff Level Positions Statewide	4	70%	95%	6	plus

Table 2.3
 Events Impacting How the Use of 360° Feedback Would Affect Employee Performance in a Values-Based Community Policing Environment by the Year 2004

Following the meeting of the entire NGT panel, several of the participants considered the cross-impacts of the trends and events. Positive or negative designations were assigned, on a scale of 1 to 5, based upon the strength of each cross-impact relative to the issue, and whether the

issue would be affected positively or negatively. The results of the cross-impact analysis are depicted in Table 2.4.

EVENTS	TRENDS						
	Trend 1 Demographics	Trend 2 C.J. Demands	Trend 3 Tech. Change	Trend 4 Values/Ethics	Trend 5 Expectations	Trend 6 Risk Mgmt.	Trend 7 L.E. Funding
EVENT 1- Use of Force	-1	0	+1	+2	+2	-3	+2
EVENT 2- Economic Recession	-2	-2	-3	+2	-2	-2	-3
EVENT 3- Turnover of L.E. Staff	0	0	+3	+2	+1	0	0

Table 2.4

Analysis of Trends and Events Relative to the Strength of Their Cross-Impacts on the Issue of How the Use of 360° Feedback Would Affect Employee Performance in a Values-Based Community Policing Environment by the Year 2004

Based upon the ideas, trends, events, and the cross-impact analysis developed by the NGT panel members, the following futures scenarios were created:

Scenario Overview

The City of Los Padres, California is located in the Central Coast area and has a population of approximately 45,000 people. Adjacent to the City is a state university with a student population of about 17,000. Los Padres is the largest city in the county and has a daytime population that is nearly double the permanent population. The area is a popular tourism destination and the City relies on tourist dollars for much of its financial stability. The Los Padres Police Department normally has 57 sworn officers and 23 full-time civilian support positions.

Worst Case Scenario

The predictions of some economists that Y2K would bring with it a recession proved to be accurate. Technological problems resulted in global business disruptions, seriously impacting every industrialized nation. Since then, minor earthquakes along the offshore Hosgri Fault have caused some environmental groups to predict serious damage to the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, should the minor tremors be a prelude to a significant quake. Such predictions

further hampered tourism in the area. Now, in the year 2004, the Los Padres Police Department is still working to recover from the damage caused to the local economy. In 2001, the department budget was cut, resulting in the loss of positions for one lieutenant, one sergeant, one police officer, one records clerk, and one crime prevention coordinator. At about the same time, the organization lost six sworn staff officers to retirement – a phenomenon that also occurred on a statewide basis. As a result, there were actually some promotions made during the budget crisis. Nevertheless, the net result was a dramatic drop in morale at Los Padres P.D. At the same time, a great deal of knowledge and experience that might have been called upon to “weather the storm” was suddenly absent.

In 2003, a jail riot in southern California spread to communities in the Los Angeles area. Officers had taken a suspect into custody, when they were fired upon from behind. In the ensuing gun battle, the handcuffed Hispanic prisoner was accidentally shot and killed by an officer. Allegations of racism and brutality once again echoed throughout the country and the state. Although no violent incidents occurred in Los Padres, local Mexican-American advocacy groups picketed the Los Padres Police Station to express general feelings of racial oppression. This fueled animosity on the part of department critics and served to further diminish organizational morale.

In 1999, when the future appeared brighter to some, there was great interest among Los Padres P.D. personnel to improve the entire system of performance evaluation. Members of the organization wanted to clearly identify the purposes for which evaluations would be used, in order to make them useful, meaningful documents. Many wanted to explore the inclusion of “360 degree feedback” to provide a better performance picture than what can be achieved through “supervisor-only” evaluations. Now, in 2004, the enthusiasm to improve performance

evaluations is merely a faded memory. Personnel are still evaluated on old-fashioned criteria that do not reflect values-based expectations that are critical in a community policing environment. If the evaluations do not contain too many negative comments, employees just sign them that they can be filed and forgotten.

Best Case Scenario

Economists' doomsday recession predictions never became reality at the dawning of the 21st Century. Now, in 2004, the City of Los Padres economy remains strong. This is due, in part, to an upswing in tourism and an enrollment increase of nearly 3,000 students over the last five years at nearby Cal Padres State University. The solid economy and increased work load made it a relatively easy task to justify adding personnel to the Los Padres Police Department. Since 1999, the organization has added six sworn positions and five support personnel. Beginning in 2001, a group of six staff-level officers retired almost simultaneously, creating a number of promotional opportunities. The net result was a significant generational profile change within the department. The average age in the organization dropped, while the average education level increased. It appears that what the new officers and supervisors lack in overall life experience, they make up in energy and enthusiasm. The city's financial situation allowed the purchase of computer terminals for all of the patrol cars, laptop computers for each officer, and a variety of other technologies that have improved service to the community. A lot of exciting ideas are being discussed at Los Padres P.D. and morale is at an all-time high.

The last five years have also been good to law enforcement statewide. The media has been unable to focus on any significant incidents-similar to those that have tarnished the badge in the past.

In 1999, the Los Padres Police Department formed a committee to improve the performance appraisal process. As a result, the schedules of all of the work units within the organization were structured to emphasize the concept of teamwork. Doing so had the logical outcome of enhancing everyone's sense of responsibility to the team and, ultimately, to the goals of the department. Consistent with the Department's community-based policing philosophy, personnel of all ranks take active roles working with community members and groups in a variety of ways. The effect has been greatly improved police/community relations, and the development of some really creative long term crime solutions. A clear definition was developed for how evaluations are to be used for self-improvement, salary increases, promotions, etc. A performance evaluation system was constructed that assesses how well employees reflect organizational values and serve the community. Under the old system, statistical output seemed to be the primary gauge of performance. The new program includes an element of "360 degree feedback" that provides each employee with a genuine picture of how (s)he is viewed professionally. For the first time in departmental history, employees feel that their performance is accurately appraised. A number of citizens have also reported feeling much greater two-way involvement between themselves and their police department. The new process made a large contribution to the high morale of department employees.

Most Likely Scenario

The City of Los Padres entered the new millennium with minimal economic disruption. Internationally, some businesses had not been prepared for Y2K and the result was a minor economic recession. Tourism was rather flat and the City was cautious with its budget expenditures in 2001 and 2002. Beginning in 2001, a group of six staff-level officers retired almost simultaneously. The City was slow to make promotions to fill the vacancies because of

the economic uncertainty, but by late 2002, the police department was back up to full staffing in all areas. Now, in 2004, two additional patrol officers have been hired. During the last couple of years, computer terminals and video cameras have been purchased for all of the patrol cars. The department is even considering issuing each officer a laptop computer. The younger officers who were promoted into the six vacancies have brought new ideas and have helped to heighten enthusiasm within the organization. Morale is high at Los Padres P.D.

Shortly after the turn of the century, officers in the Los Angeles area accidentally shot and killed a handcuffed Hispanic prisoner when they were fired upon during the arrest. Initially, there were loud allegations of police racism and brutality. The involved agency did an excellent job meeting with Mexican-American advocacy groups and dealing with the media about the issue. As a result, the image of that department did not suffer significantly. The Los Padres Police Department already enjoyed a fairly positive relationship with the Hispanic community. The shooting incident sparked some discussion at meetings, and actually had the positive effect of improving police/community interaction and understanding.

In 1999, nearly every member of the Los Padres Police Department agreed that their evaluation system used antiquated performance measurements and, in fact, most people weren't even clear on the actual purpose of the evaluations. In 2000, the department formed a committee to work on improving the performance appraisal process. First, the purposes for which evaluations would be used were clearly defined. A number of union and management concerns had to be addressed and the process moved rather slowly. Over the next 1 ½ years, a system was developed that was based upon how employees performed relative to the stated values of the organization. Teamwork was emphasized and adjustments had to be made to some of the work unit schedules. The concepts of values and teamwork obviously included service to the

community, so a method of acquiring 360 degree feedback on performance was discussed. Again, there were many concerns at all organizational levels about who would have input into evaluations. Most of those concerns were adequately addressed and there was general agreement that performance appraisals should include more information than just one supervisor could provide. Consistent with the Department's community-based policing philosophy, personnel of all ranks are encouraged to work with community members and groups in a variety of ways. The effect has been visible improvement in police/community relations, and the development of some creative long term crime solutions. By 2004, a formal system of acquiring 360° feedback for use in employee development has been implemented. Many people are still skeptical about the prospect of using the feedback in performance evaluations. That may or may not ever materialize, but employees have found multi-source feedback extremely useful for their professional development. Even though the results are not directly incorporated into performance appraisals, in many cases feedback has allowed employees to improve their performance, which was reflected in their evaluations. The employees of the Los Padres Police Department and the citizens of Los Padres generally feel that the new system is a great improvement over the old one.

Chapter III

Strategic Planning for 360° Feedback

Overview

Workplace performance author Phillip Blackerby defines strategic planning as “a continuous and systematic process where people make decisions about intended future outcomes, how outcomes are to be accomplished, and how success is measured and evaluated.”²⁴ Formal strategic planning began in the 1920’s at the Harvard Business School, and the process was formulated for private business. It remained a private sector undertaking until the mid-1980’s, when there came a push to run government agencies more like businesses. Now, as we approach the new millennium, strategic planning is very much alive in the public sector. A case-in-point is the passage of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA, P.L. 103-62). The act required that, beginning in 1997, all federal agencies write strategic plans that include the following elements: a mission statement, outcome-based goals and objectives, descriptions of how the goals will be achieved, resource needs and a linking of objective to performance plans, a list of external influences on goals, and a program evaluation schedule.²⁵ Those elements should be included in all strategic plans. To be certain that they are, it might be helpful to focus on the following questions: What is our mission?; What are our assumptions about the future?; How should we be organized?; and, How should we allocate resources to our programs and services? By seeking answers to such questions, an organization can work to create a desired future for itself.²⁶ To begin the process of defining the future, strategic planning consultant Tom Esensten recommends defining the current business definition for the organization; and making external, internal, and stakeholder assessments relative to the organization.²⁷

The introductory information presented in Chapter I of this research indicates that the primary purpose is to complement and expand upon the work of several other law enforcement

professionals. The first project was prepared for Session 191 of the FBI National Academy, and is entitled, "Suburbia Police Department: Performance Appraisal and Recognition Program".²⁸ The second is a 1998 Command College project entitled, "Future Methods of Evaluating Patrol Officer Performance in a Changing Community Policing Environment by the Year 2003".²⁹ It is highly recommended that the research be reviewed in total by law enforcement agencies considering changing their performance evaluation systems and/or using 360° feedback for employee development and/or evaluation.

Current Business Definition

As previously established, community-based policing is about creating and supporting the lifestyle choices of individual communities.³⁰ Of course, since most people choose to be safe and protected, this includes enforcement of laws. However, it also includes providing a wide variety of other protection and social services, since this policing philosophy also takes into consideration issues that are particularly important or specific to the individual community. For that reason, community-based policing might also be referred to as values-based policing. A community-based policing department, makes certain that its organizational values are aligned with those of the community. Its mission is founded on those values, and it seeks to promote partnerships and enhanced communication between the law enforcement agency and the citizens it serves.³¹

It has become common for departments to create their own mission and/or values statements. Organizations that espouse community-based policing concepts should clearly identify their values and how they relate to their service environment. It should be evident to anyone who reads the statement that the agency strives to accomplish its mission through community collaboration.

External Assessment

The external assessment considerations for including 360° feedback in performance appraisal are similar, if not identical, to the factors to be considered when developing a new evaluation system. Using a “STEEP” model, one can identify factors (**S**ocial, **T**echnological, **E**nvironmental, **E**conomic, and **P**olitical) that will effect forecasting the future of the issue. Trends and events identified by the Nominal Group Technique panel provide information to be considered during external assessment. The factors appearing in this “STEEP” model are also reflective of those identified by authors DeRohan, Leppert, and Livingston.³²

Social

- Changing social values and work ethics
- Changing demographics
- Effects of a highly publicized use of force by law enforcement

Technological

- Changing technology and public access to electronic information
- Potential for Y2K technological problems

Environmental

- Changes in land use (annexations, sprawl, rural growth)
- Effects of major natural disaster in California

Economic

- Effects of a major recession
- Levels of law enforcement funding
- Volunteerism / Civilianization / Privatization

Political

- Level of demands on the criminal justice system
- Relationships between various levels of government
- Training for law enforcement

Complete lists of trends and events identified by the Nominal Group Technique panel can be found in the Appendix (Tables 1a. and 2a.).

Internal Assessment

If an organization is considering **adding** 360° feedback to its employee development and/or evaluation system to enhance performance in a values-based community policing environment, the agency must first be certain that its basic evaluation process is in alignment with the values-based policing philosophy. Ideally, when a department makes a decision to modernize its evaluation system, it will simultaneously consider incorporating multi-source assessment. Some agencies may feel that their performance appraisal processes are essentially up-to-date, but want to determine how they will fit with a process of multi-source assessment. In either case, the “WOTS UP” assessment model can be beneficial in analyzing the organization’s Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, and Strengths Underlying Planning. The Command College project, “Future Methods of Evaluating Patrol Officer Performance in a Changing Community Policing Environment by the Year 2003” contains a “WOTS UP” assessment

process that is applicable in its entirety to both performance appraisals and multi-source assessment.³³

A survey of current performance appraisal processes is also a useful tool in assessing the internal environment as to readiness for change. In *360° Feedback: The Powerful New Model for Employee Assessment and Performance Improvement*, the authors offer an instrument that can be used to rate the current system on a ten point scale. Raters are asked to respond to the following statements:³⁴

	Don't Know	Strongly Disagree		Disagree			Agree			Strongly Agree	
	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Current system is useful for development	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. Is it useful for appraisal	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. Motivates me	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. Is valuable for me	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
5. Is fair to me	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6. Is fair to others	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
7. Is a complete assessment	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
8. Is an accurate assessment	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
9. Provides safeguards for fairness	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10. Overall, I am satisfied with the current Process	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11. Comments:											

Figure 3.1
Evaluation for Current Appraisal Process

This evaluation survey can also be used later to test satisfaction with new performance appraisal systems.

Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

The importance of “stakeholder” identification and consultation was initially addressed early in this research, with the selection of Nominal Group Technique panel members. Recognition was given to the fact that diverse perspectives on an issue are critical to its successful implementation. Stakeholders in this case are those individuals or groups who would **be impacted** by the implementation of 360° feedback in an organization, those who would **have an impact** on the implementation, and those who simply have a legitimate interest in the issue.

The following figure identifies typical stakeholders in the implementation of multi-source assessment, and is similar to one created by DeRohan, Leppert, and Livingston in their research on performance appraisal development.³⁵ It identifies the typical involvements of the stakeholders relative to the issue (*inclusion* in the process, *recognition* of contributions, need to be kept *informed*, *leadership* to complete project, need to be provided detailed *data*). DeRohan, Leppert, and Livingston assumed that the Chief of Police would be the catalyst for the transition, so he was not identified as a stakeholder. Figure 3.2 includes the Chief as a stakeholder. While (s)he is critically important to allowing any transition to move forward, in a team-based environment that would typically embrace 360° feedback, the change impetus could come from a level other than the top.

Stakeholder	Inclusion	Recognition	Information	Leadership	Data
City Council			X		X
City Manager		X	X		X
Risk Manager	X		X		X
Chief of Police	X	X	X	X	X
Police Management	X	X	X	X	X
Police Supervisors	X	X	X	X	X
Police Labor Groups	X	X	X		X
Police Officers	X		X		
Police support personnel	X		X		
Community Members	X				

Figure 3.2
Typical Involvements of Stakeholders in 360° Feedback Implementation

Implementation Plan

When 360° feedback surveys are developed for an individual organization, they should be based upon competencies particular to that agency. Therefore, for the multi-source assessment program to be effective, it is critical that a community-based policing department clearly identify competencies that are aligned with its values-based philosophy. A 360° feedback process can enhance the performance appraisal system, either directly or indirectly. Agencies considering 360° feedback implementation should first develop and/or update their employee evaluation procedures to ensure that they are complementary and consistent with organizational values.

Only after this is accomplished should the agency move to Phase One of multi-source assessment implementation.

In their research on performance appraisal development, DeRohan, Leppert, and Livingston proposed forming a committee to access creativity and expertise from all levels of the department.³⁶ Due to the obvious connectivity, agencies should consider using the same committee to formulate a program of 360° feedback.

Phase One – Readiness Assessment for 360° Feedback

The first step in the implementation of multi-source assessment is determining whether an agency is actually ready for the change. This can be done by taking an honest look at the culture and policies of the organization and candidly answering a number of questions. The authors of *Maximizing the Value of 360-Degree Feedback* offer a list of questions that can help to assess readiness:³⁷

1. Do the Organization's hiring criteria and reward systems reflect that it values active learners?
2. Does the organization encourage employees to work outside their comfort zones, experiment, and take risks?
3. Do employees value feedback to the extent that they will seek it on their own?
4. Does the organization have a technology infrastructure to support on-line feedback systems?
5. Is there enough trust in the organization for people to share their views openly and to take a non-defensive stance toward feedback?
6. Are open dialogues about issues and conflicts within the organization encouraged?
7. Do groups in the organization see themselves as having interdependent relationships with other groups?
8. Does the organization value outside perspectives?
9. Is the organization willing to point out its development needs?
10. Are individuals and groups willing to align their development needs with those of the organization?

Figure 3.3

Questions to Assess Organizational Readiness for 360-Degree Feedback Processes that Support a Learning Culture

Most of these questions could also be used to do an internal assessment of whether or not an organization is truly practicing community-based policing, or to analyze certain aspects of organizational leadership. When considered within these contexts, they may actually cause some discomfort in traditional policing environments. Most modern law enforcement leaders would likely take pride in being able to answer all of the questions affirmatively. If that is possible, the organization is prepared to enhance its community-based policing with improved employee development, through multi-source assessment. Stated simply, in a values-based environment, if the answers are not “yes”, they ought to be. The extent to which it is not possible to answer the questions affirmatively presents a future law enforcement leadership challenge. When an organization is ready for 360° feedback, it is time to move to implementation phase two.

Phase Two – Establish How 360° Feedback Will be Used

As indicated in Chapter I, there is considerable controversy among experts about whether multi-source assessment should be used only for employee development, or should be included in the performance appraisal process. When 360° feedback is used in performance evaluation, it has a direct effect upon pay, promotion, and demotion decisions. Therefore, a number of legal and other issues must be addressed. Many of the companies that use multi-source assessment have successfully addressed those concerns and 360° feedback now makes their performance appraisal systems more effective. However, it is recommended that law enforcement agencies begin with development-only multi-source assessment. Research has shown that this is a key to early acceptance of the process.³⁸ The Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology has debated the development versus evaluation issue. It is believed that, as organizations become familiar with the use of 360° feedback for development, self-initiated pressure is created to include aspects of the process in evaluations.³⁹ In any event, positive employee development will logically have an indirect impact on employees' performance appraisals.

Phase Three – Generate Enthusiasm Among Stakeholders

Communication is critical to the success of multi-source assessment. Stakeholders will want to know, "What's in it for me?" A process must be established to communicate the answers to the following questions, among others:⁴⁰

1. Why is the organization adopting this process?
2. What is the purpose of the process?
3. What are the connections with other initiatives, such as community-based policing, employee development, etc.?
4. Who will participate as feedback receivers and as feedback providers?
5. How have issues such as fairness and accuracy been addressed?
6. How will the information be used?

Figure 3.4
Stakeholder Questions about 360° Feedback

Presumably, the committee members assembled to review and revise the department's performance appraisal process will, in part, be selected because they have already established a high level of credibility within the organization. Successful completion of that task should further enhance their credibility, particularly inside the agency. That is largely the reason why it is recommended that the same committee be involved in the implementation of 360° feedback. Through informal discussions and more formal meetings (department assemblies, unit briefings, etc.) those individuals can build support for the process by anticipating objections and by providing open, honest information about multi-source assessment. It is important to stress the benefits to employee development and how the process is linked to values-based community policing.

Phase Four – Developing a Competency-Based Survey Instrument

Again, whether or not multi-source assessment is to be directly incorporated into performance appraisals, it is critical to identify the core competencies relative to which employee performance will be evaluated. When feedback is received, whether purely for developmental purposes or also for evaluations, employees will need to know how they are doing based upon clearly identified organizational competencies. In *Phase Four* of the implementation of a 360° feedback process, the committee will help to select or create a survey instrument that effectively relates feedback parameters to established competencies. One of the first considerations for the

committee is to decide whether to utilize a standardized instrument or to develop a customized survey.

Standardized Instruments

Standardized survey instruments are available that allow employees to collect valuable feedback **for development purposes only**. The reason that the feedback should not be used for performance appraisal is the fact that the survey questions are not based specifically on established organizational competencies. An additional drawback to using these surveys is that there is generally a cost assessed by the vendor for each use and analysis of results. However, such surveys can still be quite useful, as they are constructed based upon leadership roles and issues that are common to most organizations. A case in point is the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), created by leadership experts James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner.⁴¹ Standardized surveys may be especially useful to organizations desiring to implement 360° feedback on a trial basis while minimizing the amount of internal work required. Even if an organization believes that a customized instrument would be most appropriate, it may be helpful to first experiment with standardized surveys.

Customized Instruments

As previously stated, one of the most significant advantages to using customized survey instruments is the fact that they can be created to reflect specific job-related competencies. Because of that, they are useful for both development and performance evaluation. After development, there is generally no cost for using the instruments or analyzing the information. Additionally, since the instruments are created within an organization, there is often greater acceptance of the validity of the questions. For organizations lacking experience with 360° feedback implementation, some assistance is essential. Much has been written on the topic that

would help the process development committee accomplish their task. For example, Chapter 4 of *360° Feedback: The Powerful New Model for Employee Assessment and Performance Improvement* is devoted to designing a process.⁴² Professional assistance is also available to assist with the process. The authors of this book, Mark Edwards, Ph.D. and Ann Ewen, Ph.D. are the CEO and president, respectively, of TEAMS, Inc., a consulting firm that specializes in helping organizations implement 360° feedback. Many additional development resources can be found on-line through the Internet.

Phase Five – Implement the 360° Feedback Process

The first step in this phase is to select feedback teams of at least six individuals, to provide survey information to each employee (supervisor, peers, direct reports, key community members, etc.). According to Mark Edwards and Ann Ewen, the process design committee generally helps to develop a policy on who will provide feedback for each person.⁴³

After feedback teams have been established, additional communication and training should take place throughout the organization. Employees will likely have questions about the process that were not addressed in the initial enthusiasm-building meetings. In any case, at this point in the process, thorough explanations can be given about the survey instrument, rating system, assessor roles and responsibilities, anonymity, etc. When this training is accomplished, the organization should be prepared to conduct multi-source assessment.

Scoring

Informal scoring simply compiles the survey responses for each employee and provides a summary report. It can be done with a calculator or a spreadsheet program. Informal scoring is acceptable when feedback results are used for development only, but it provides no reliable method for identifying data errors. *Formal* scoring systems, on the other hand, “correct

predictable sources of bias, such as invalid respondents, and identify data errors like respondent collusion.”⁴⁴ Software for formal scoring can be purchased commercially, or it can be internally produced if the organization has sufficient technological resources.

Employee Development Based on 360° Feedback Results

Some computer-generated multi-source assessment scoring programs also provide development recommendations based upon the feedback results. It is important to internally evaluate the validity and usefulness of those recommendations within the organization. Authors Mark Edwards and Ann Ewen offer alternatives to the computerized recommendations:⁴⁵

- Train supervisors on coaching skills using behavior feedback
- Train employees in peer coaching
- Have available books or other resources with development recommendations
- Use internal groups to help with the creation of developmental actions
- Create a development resource guide based on resources available within the organization

Figure 3.5
Alternatives to Computer-Generated Development Recommendations

Phase Six – Process Evaluation

On-going evaluation is key to continued acceptance and effectiveness of the 360° feedback process. It is important to ensure that the process is perceived as being fair and having value. On-going evaluation is also necessary to make certain that survey questions remain consistent with organizational values and changes in job-related competencies.

Chapter IV

360° Feedback Transition Management

Transition management should not be viewed as a process entirely separate from strategic planning. In fact, the two must occur simultaneously for a transition to be successful. In strategic planning, the stakeholders were identified who would be affected by the implementation of a system of 360° feedback. Some of those same stakeholders play very significant roles in the transition process. Communicating large amounts of information to the stakeholders is important to generate enthusiasm for the issue, as indicated in the strategic planning discussion. High levels of communication are equally important to managing the transition, in order to build commitment among those who can influence the change. Those individuals and groups comprise what is called, “critical mass”.

Critical Mass

“Critical mass” is the smallest number of stakeholders whose support is necessary for successful transition to occur, and whose opposition will likely result in failure. The “Commitment Chart” illustration identifies stakeholders who are critical to the 360° feedback transition management. It is intended to show the necessity of determining the commitment level of each individual or group at the beginning of the change process, versus the desired level of commitment. Although each organization is different, this illustration is likely typical of a California law enforcement agency considering multi-source assessment:

Critical Mass Actors	Block the Change	Let Change Happen	Help Change Happen	Make Change Happen
City Council		X/O		
City Manager		X/O		
Risk Manager		X →	O	
Chief of Police			X →	O
Police Management		X →	→	O
Police Supervisors		X →	→	O
Police Labor Groups	X →	O		
Police Officers	X →	→	O	

Figure 4.1
Critical Mass Commitment Chart

* "X" designates the stakeholder's current level of commitment, and "O" designates level of commitment necessary for success of plan. Arrows indicate direction of commitment change to be brought about through transition management

Transition Management Structure

The Chief of Police can generally be considered to be the transition manager. (S)he may appoint someone to manage the project on his/her behalf, but a full transition can only occur if the Chief ultimately makes it happen. In the case of multi-source assessment development, the transition manager should initially assemble a committee to review and, if necessary, redesign the organization's performance appraisal system to be consistent with the agency's values and with community-based policing job competencies. That same committee would then be well prepared to develop and implement a process of 360° feedback.

In Chapter III, the discussion of phase three of the implementation plan was about generating enthusiasm for 360° feedback among stakeholders. It was emphasized that the

committee members selected for the project should represent all levels of the organization and should bring well-established credibility with them to the meeting table. The key to generating enthusiasm, **and** the key to building commitment for the transition, is honest and continuous communication.

Chapter V Conclusion

Developing a formal process of 360° feedback is not a simple undertaking. A law enforcement agency that subscribes to a community-based policing philosophy must first be certain that the performance of its employees is being evaluated according to values and competencies that are in alignment with that philosophy. In many cases, that will require completely redesigning the performance appraisal process. That is no small task, and only then should the development of a multi-source assessment process begin. Many departments will not see the need to initiate such a project. Mike Kramer recognized this, as well as the need to act, when he said the following in an article he wrote for *The Police Chief*:⁴⁶

Police agencies are notoriously conservative bureaucracies that have great resistance to change. The future of policing, however, requires that change be accepted and even initiated by progressive police agencies. New dimensions and responsibilities will be undertaken by law enforcement as the concepts of community policing and problem-oriented policing gain prominence...Performance evaluations will be part of the internal change, as well.

Multi-source assessment can greatly enhance employee performance in a values-based community policing environment. James Kouzes and Barry Posner explain why:⁴⁷

Studies show that people's motivation to improve their productivity on a task increases only when they have a challenging goal and receive feedback on their progress. ...goals without feedback...have little effect on motivation. With detailed feedback...people can become self-corrective and can more easily understand their interconnectedness with the big picture. With feedback, they can also determine what help they need from others and who might be able to benefit from their assistance.

Clearly, the future success of California law enforcement requires that its leadership challenge employees to maximize productivity and service in partnership with our communities. Implementation of formal 360° feedback processes will provide organizations with a valuable tool to help organizations rise to the challenge.

Endnotes

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²² Walter W. Tornow, Manuel London, and CCL Associates, *Maximizing the Value of 360° Feedback*, (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998), 21

²³ Waldman and Atwater, 6-8

²⁴ Phillip Blackerby, "Overview of Strategic Planning" [article on-line] (Performance Strategies, Inc., 1997, accessed 2 March 1999), <http://www2.outer.net/perstrat/articles/overview.htm>, p. 2 of 12

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²⁸ Barsi

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³⁸ Waldman and Atwater, 42

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⁴² Edwards and Ewan, 69-100

⁴³ Ibid., 101

⁴⁴ Ibid., 109

⁴⁵ Ibid., 124

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Table 1a
Entire List of Trends
Identified by NGT Panel

1. Litigation: Trust issues, civil rights, sexual harassment
2. Public confidence / support
3. Changing work ethics and social values
4. Changing performance standards
5. Changing technology and public access to electronic information
6. Changing service demands
7. Changing hiring standards
8. Changes in crime definitions
9. Volunteerism / civilianization
10. College student population and characteristics
11. Education level of police officers
12. Relationship of law enforcement funding to crime rate
13. Demographics
14. Revenue acquisition
15. Demands on the criminal justice system
16. "Haves" vs. "Have-Nots"
17. Changing public expectations of law enforcement
18. Land use (annexations, sprawl, rural growth)
19. Training for law enforcement
20. Privatization
21. Arming of the public
22. Criminal sophistication
23. Criminal mobility
24. Availability of social services
25. Relationships between various levels of government

Table 2.a
Entire List of Potential Events
Identified by NGT Panel

1. Highly publicized use of force
2. Major natural disaster
3. End to long-term welfare
4. Major recession
5. Y2K / Leap year
6. Switch to year-round university system schedule
7. Legalization of marijuana
8. Major annexation on local level
9. Major terrorist strike in CA
10. Multi-casualty firearms incident at a school
11. Significant medical incident
12. Large scale, nearly simultaneous turnover of L.E. staff level positions statewide
13. POST establishes college requirement of entry level police officers
14. National identification system established
15. Major incident of civil unrest

List of Tables and Figures

2.1	Issue and Background Statement Presented to NGT Panel	12
2.2	Trends Impacting How the Use of 360° Feedback Would Affect Employee Performance in a Values-Based Community Policing Environment by the Year 2004	13
2.3	Events Impacting How the Use of 360° Feedback Would Affect Employee Performance in a Values-Based Community Policing Environment by the Year 2004	15
2.4	Analysis of Trends and Events Relative to the Strength of Their Cross-Impacts on the Issue of How the Use of 360° Feedback Would Affect Employee Performance in a Values-Based Community Policing Environment by the Year 2004	16
3.1	Evaluation for Current Appraisal Process	26
3.2	Typical Involvements of Stakeholders in 360° Feedback Implementation	28
3.3	Questions to Assess Organizational Readiness for 360-Degree Feedback Processes that Support a Learning Culture	30
3.4	Stakeholder Questions about 360° Feedback	32
3.5	Alternatives to Computer-Generated Development Recommendations	35
4.1	Critical Mass Commitment Chart	37

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