

HOW WILL SUCCESSION PLANNING ENHANCE EMPLOYEE  
DEVELOPMENT IN A MID-SIZED LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY BY 2008?

A project presented to  
The California Commission on  
Peace Officers Standards and Training

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This Command College Project is a FUTURES study of a particular emerging issue in law enforcement. Its purpose is NOT to predict the future, but rather to project a number of possible scenarios for strategic planning consideration.

Defining the future differs from analyzing the past because the future has not happened yet. In this project, useful alternatives have formulated systematically so that the planner can respond to a range of possible future environments.

Managing the future means influencing the future; creating it; considering it; adapting to it. A futures study points the way.

The view and conclusions expressed in the Command College project are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the Commission on Peace Officers Standards and Training (POST).

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## CHAPTER 1

### Introduction

Leadership, training and planning are crucial elements of any successful organization's strategy. Each of these topics has been the subject of a countless number of books. The focus of this project will be the combining of these efforts into what is arguably one of the most crucial responsibilities facing every leader today. The very survival of the organization may hinge upon how well this responsibility is carried out. The responsibility in question is that of preparing personnel to assume positions of leadership within the organization. This effort is typically referred to as succession planning and, as the term implies, involves those measures undertaken to identify, select, promote and train future leaders. The focus of succession planning strategies for this project will be mid-sized California law enforcement agencies employing 50 to 200 sworn peace officers.

Selection of future law enforcement leaders is critically important to the community, the agency, the governing body, as well as the law enforcement profession. Determining what skills, abilities and characteristics will be required for tomorrow's leaders is also an integral part of succession planning. While certain aspects of leadership are perennial, society will demand that future law enforcement leaders be prepared to effectively lead in ways and in areas never experienced before.

## Succession Planning: A Historical Perspective

Succession planning is neither unique to law enforcement nor a recently discovered phenomenon. As far back as the Old Testament, familial lineage was used as the determining factor for succession planning. Whether it was vast empires or mere pittance, kings and paupers alike passed their legacy from one generation to the next.

This birthright practice was the earliest form of succession planning and is still used in many countries throughout the world. Queen Elizabeth II is Great Britain's reigning monarch as a result of birthright. Her predecessors were all destined for the throne from the moment of birth. And, while there is currently some debate about whether her successor will be her son or grandson, there is virtually no doubt the next monarch will hail from the same bloodline as the Queen.

America's forefathers believed that succession planning played so vital a role in a democracy that the blueprint for succession of presidential power was clearly expressed in Article II of the United States Constitution. In 1933, the 20<sup>th</sup> Amendment was enacted to clarify the hierarchy of presidential succession. Subsequent legislation was enacted in 1947 and 1967 that further defined the order and manner in which executive, legislative and cabinet officers would succeed the president should he become unable to serve.<sup>T1</sup>

Succession planning is an issue that also confronts private enterprise. For family-owned businesses, the question of deciding to whom to relinquish control may not be as problematic. As in royal monarchies, many family businesses are

passed from one generation to the next. This assumes, of course, that there are those family members willing and able to take over the reigns of leadership.

Selecting their replacements is often an obstacle many business leaders are unwilling or unable to tackle. Succession planning to some is an admission of their own mortality. As such, many CEO's put it off. But without it, leaders miss out on an opportunity to ensure business continuity and future direction.<sup>2</sup>

One method of staving off the issue of succession planning is to promote the longevity of those currently at the helm of an organization or a specific operation. Don Hewitt, the 80-year-old founder and executive producer of "60 Minutes" has embodied this philosophy ever since creating the popular newsmagazine show 35 years ago. Hewitt is quoted as saying he would only be carried out in a "...wooden box...".<sup>3</sup> All good things, however, must come to an end. Mr. Hewitt has negotiated a deal with CBS to turn over the proverbial keys to the kingdom to a man who was only seven years old when "60 Minutes" first aired. In return, Mr. Hewitt will remain on the payroll of CBS until age 90 as an emeritus news division executive.<sup>4</sup>

Some business leaders, such as General Electric's former CEO Jack Welch, recognize the importance of succession planning and make it an integral part of their business strategy. Welch's successor, long-time General Electric manager Jeffrey Immelt, was named a full year before he was to take over leadership of one of the world's most respected companies.<sup>5</sup>

Government has also recognized the importance of succession planning. Some governmental entities have expended great effort to research the issue

and provide a framework on how to identify, select, promote and train future workforce leaders.

The New York State Department of Civil Service and the New York State Governor's Office of Employee Relations joined forces to study the issue of succession planning. In September 2001 their efforts culminated in the publication of a seminal research project entitled, "Our Workforce Matters: A Guide to Work Force and Succession Planning for New York State Agencies".<sup>6</sup>

The study recommends that the succession planning process be divided into the eight following areas:

1. SCOPE: What issue/organizational unit needs succession planning and how critical is the timeline?
2. CONTEXT: What is the organization's direction?
3. WORK: What functions need to be performed and will that work evolve over time or remain the same?
4. DEMAND: What future staffing levels and skill sets will be needed?
5. SUPPLY: Where will the people come from to staff future positions and what is the timeline?
6. GAPS: Where are the specific shortages in qualified personnel likely to occur?
7. PRIORITY: What is the order of importance for addressing the above shortages?

8. SOLUTIONS: What are the specific priority actions necessary to address the issue of succession planning?<sup>7</sup>

Other facets of succession planning identified in the study were: competencies; knowledge management/transfer; mentoring; recruitment and selection; employee retention; retiree resources; and staff development. Each of these topics was assigned to an interagency workgroup for further research.<sup>8</sup> The workgroups were able to provide a broad framework for various state agencies to consider. The diversity of the agencies represented in each workgroup, however, made department and/or function-specific guidelines more difficult to propose.

Other states have undertaken similar efforts in the area of succession planning. They include:

- Connecticut
- Colorado
- Georgia
- Kansas
- Minnesota
- South Carolina
- Washington State
- Wisconsin

Some cities have recognized the need for succession planning and have taken steps to prepare tomorrow's leaders today. In California, the city of Roseville received special recognition for the program they developed to meet

their anticipated leadership needs. In September 1997, city leaders realized they were facing a potential leadership vacuum when, within four to five years, 11 of 15 department heads would become eligible to retire.<sup>9</sup>

In recognizing their need to address this issue, Roseville leaders asked themselves the following two key questions:

- “Does Roseville have qualified people ready to fill key positions now and grow the organization in the next three to five years?”
- “Will there be a sufficient number of qualified candidates ready to fill key positions in five to ten years?”<sup>10</sup>

The answers to these two questions led to the creation of a program to identify, develop and support Roseville’s future leaders. Through interviews with the city’s department heads, the following eight dimensions were identified as crucial to the success of future city leaders:

- Communication;
- Decisionmaking;
- Interpersonal effectiveness;
- Leadership style;
- Administrative effectiveness;
- Flexibility;
- Planning and organization; and,
- Developmental orientation <sup>11</sup>

The city, working closely with two private firms, developed a program that allowed current employees to undergo an assessment center process designed

to identify strengths and weaknesses. Results from the daylong assessment center process were used as a diagnostic tool for each of the candidates to consider and act upon. The individual results were not revealed to department heads unless the participant chose to do so. Composite results were used by the Human Resources Department to identify which of the above eight critical dimensions needed to be focused on for the further development of the participants.

Follow-up research showed that 85% of the participants thought the program was beneficial; 65% believed the feedback they received was specific enough to be used for their professional development; and, 30% had gone so far as to actually develop a formal plan.<sup>12</sup>

The Department of Defense (DOD) has included succession planning as an integral part of their emergency preparedness plans for the United States Military. The DOD's Continuity Of Operations Policy (COOP) details the steps to be taken to ensure the continuity of government in the event of a national security emergency resulting from natural disaster, military attack, civil unrest or other disruptive condition.<sup>13</sup> The implementation of the succession plans outlined in the COOP would, unfortunately, be under the most dire of circumstances. The fact that succession planning is included in "doomsday" scenarios underscores its importance as an essential tool in planning for the continuation and potentially, the survival of an organization or an entire country.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) has acknowledged the importance of succession planning in the law enforcement

profession and has taken steps to ensure this issue remains high on their priority list. In May 1999, the IACP produced a report entitled, "Police Leadership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Achieving & Sustaining Executive Success".<sup>14</sup>

The report was the culmination of recommendations made by over 50 police chiefs at a two-day conference held in September, 1998. Of the many issues debated, the following represent the most salient in the area of succession planning:

- "The law enforcement profession is obligated to ensure the continuing presence of an abundant pool of candidates who possess the personal attributes, academic preparation and formal training to meet the demands of a 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership."
- "Competition for chief executive positions will increase among a younger and better-educated generation of professionals."
- "Executive development education and training capacity must multiply to produce this pool."
- "Police executives must become more intensely involved in framing executive development curricula, especially with the premier national training institutions."
- "Forming and constantly reinforcing ethical values and behavior are paramount in leadership preparation and performance."<sup>15</sup>

The report contains other recommendations for agencies to consider when selecting candidates for promotion to leadership roles. Some of these recommendations are very traditional in nature and include the establishment of

minimum levels of experience, education and professional training. Other recommendations take into consideration the changing dynamics of leadership in the law enforcement profession and include the following:

- “Broaden interdisciplinary training opportunities;”
- “Broaden peer exchange opportunities;”
- “Enhance the capacity of leading national leadership training programs, such as the FBI National Academy, National Executive Institute, Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and the network of 18 regional FBI Command College programs.”<sup>16</sup>

#### California Law Enforcement: Is A Leadership Vacuum Emerging?

Members of California’s law enforcement profession have traditionally been considered among the best and brightest the nation has to offer. Nationwide trends, tactics, practices and procedures adopted within the law enforcement field were often pioneered by cutting-edge California law enforcement agencies. California law enforcement officers have also traditionally been among the best compensated compared to their counterparts in other parts of the country.

One area in which California law enforcement officers have enjoyed unparalleled benefits, especially when compared to private sector employees, is in the area of retirement. The “3% @ 50” retirement formula, which has been adopted by 232 California law enforcement agencies, allows for peace officers

employed by CalPERS member agencies to retire at age 50 with a minimum of five years of service.<sup>17</sup>

Officers who meet the minimum age and service length requirements will receive retirement compensation based upon their years of service and final compensation. They may also be eligible to receive up to 90% of their final 12 or 36 months of salary, based upon their agencies' CalPERS contract. An officer hired as a sworn peace officer at age 21 would be eligible to retire at age 51 with 90% of his/her salary!

It is interesting to note that while most California peace officers can now retire with maximum benefits at an earlier age, the opposite is true for workers covered by social security. The original Social Security Act of 1935 established the minimum age of 65 for receiving full retirement benefits. Citing improvements in the health of older people and increases in average life expectancies, Congress enacted amendments in 1983 that phased in a gradual increase in the age for collecting full benefits. Pursuant to these amendments, the minimum retirement age will increase from 65 to 67 over a 22-year period.<sup>18</sup> Workers covered by social security must be at least 62 years of age in order to collect benefits.

The average age of both men and women retiring and collecting social security benefits in 1998 was 64. That same year, nearly 69% of working men and women who had reached the minimum eligibility age of 62, retired prior to their 65<sup>th</sup> birthday, making them eligible for less than their maximum social security retirement benefits.<sup>19</sup>

The ability to retire at an earlier age has contributed to what many have considered an unparalleled drain of law enforcement's most experienced and tenured top-level leaders. Any discussion on law enforcement retirement, however, would be incomplete without also factoring in the expected lifespan of police officers. A 40-year study determined that police officers, on average, have a lifespan of 66 years, a full eight to ten years below the average U.S. male population!<sup>20</sup> The additional physical and emotional stress that often results from management and command responsibilities makes it no wonder that many law enforcement leaders are retiring as soon as they become eligible.

Regardless of rank or position, a person's decision to retire is obviously a very personal one. The decision is often based on a variety of factors that may include health-related issues, financial resources, family commitments or even a desire to relocate, to name just a few. Experienced, top-level police executives have one additional inducement that may entice them to retire from their municipal law enforcement agencies. A person with professional law enforcement leadership experience may find it very lucrative to pursue a post-retirement position in the field of security in either the public or private sector.

Experienced law enforcement executives who have reached minimum retirement age will increasingly be faced with the enviable choice of either staying in municipal law enforcement or retiring and augmenting their retirement income by working for a public or private entity in a security-related field. The sheer dollars and cents decision weighs undeniably in favor of the latter. The ability to retire at the relatively young age of 50 to 52 with a generous package of

benefits and then to “double-dip” by adding secondary full or part-time income will undoubtedly contribute to the exodus of experienced law enforcement leaders.

One method to address top-level vacancies is to hire back those who have retired from the very positions that remain unfilled. It has become increasingly common for police executives to retire on a Friday and return to their same job the following Monday as a retired annuitant. Retirees enrolled in CalPERS agencies, however, may currently only work a maximum of 960 hours within a 12-month period, unless a specific exemption is granted.

Legislation has been introduced that would allow local safety members (sworn peace officers and firefighters) to retire from their agencies and return to work without jeopardizing their retirement benefits. This “Deferred Retirement Option Program” (DROP) would enable local safety members to continue working after retirement for a period of 1 to 5 years. They would continue to accrue retirement allowance payments, Cost of Living Adjustments (COLA), contributions and interest during that time to be paid out at the end of the DROP period in either a lump sum or recurring payments. Although this amendment was vetoed in September 2002, it is anticipated that it will be reintroduced.<sup>21</sup>

Bringing executive-level retirees back to work has become a necessity for many agencies, but does nothing to address the longer-term issue of preparing future law enforcement leaders. Replacing senior-level personnel has always been an issue confronting the law enforcement profession. What has changed, however, is the amount of preparation time that an individual can typically count

on to become ready to take on the challenges of leadership positions within the law enforcement profession. That preparation time, which consists of acquiring experience, training and developing expertise by working various assignments, will become shorter and shorter as the need to move up the ranks takes on an accelerated pace.

Promoting qualified candidates to top-level leadership positions in law enforcement is, by no means, a new practice. All current police leaders ascended through the ranks, learning through experience and acquiring new skills along the way. While this process of gaining experience and insight worked well in the past, the future will require that succession planning take an entirely new approach for identifying, selecting, promoting and training new leaders.

The law enforcement profession has always been able to rely upon a seemingly endless supply of candidates ready, willing and able to join the ranks of small, medium and large law enforcement agencies. Law enforcement has likewise also been able to fill its supervisory and management positions with those either from within or from outside of their organizations. The pool of qualified, existing candidates and those entering the law enforcement profession who want to promote to managerial and executive positions may not be as deep or as inexhaustible as once believed.

Law enforcement agencies are finding themselves competing for qualified applicants and offering inducements such as signing bonuses to those individuals who can pass the screening and hiring process. For those currently employed by law enforcement agencies, the prospect of promoting to command

level positions may not be as attractive for a variety of personal and professional reasons. Recruitment for police chief positions has become ever more challenging and will continue to be so in the future unless significant changes occur.<sup>22</sup>

Current law enforcement officers forego promotion to command and executive level positions for a variety of reasons. These reasons may include increased complexity and demands of top-level positions, desire to focus more time and energy on family commitments, perceived loss of prestige and respect for leadership positions and loss of civil service protection in senior management positions.

Preparation for the unexpected is one of law enforcement's most important roles. In a post-September 11<sup>th</sup> world, succession planning has taken on a new, more ominous importance for law enforcement. As in the military, clear lines of succession need to be established and clearly articulated in advance. All who hold current and future leadership roles are a mere heartbeat away from superior positions. Regardless of whether the need for leadership replenishment is gradual and predictable, or sudden and unexpected, clear and decisive measures must be undertaken in order to ensure law enforcement agencies in California do not face a leadership vacuum.

The causes behind California law enforcement's looming leadership gap are varied and complex. Solutions to address this problem will require a concerted effort on behalf of labor, management and governing bodies. Consensus and concessions will need to be made as possible solutions mandate

that all options be considered. Options that must be considered include new approaches to personnel selection/retention, training, mentoring and promotional testing processes, just to name a few.

The next chapter identifies possible trends and events that may have a substantial impact on the issue of succession planning in a mid-sized California law enforcement agency.

## CHAPTER TWO

### Forecasting of Trends and Possible Events

This chapter is intended as a futures research tool as it provides both a discussion and analysis of what may happen if the identified trends and/or events occur. The method used to conduct this futures forecasting was through a nominal group technique (NGT). An NGT is a structured exercise that brings together individuals from varied disciplines, professions and academic backgrounds in order to solicit their ideas and perspectives on a specific topic or issue being studied. One of the primary benefits of utilizing an NGT process in a future-oriented study is derived from the wide spectrum of personal and professional experiences that each participant brings to bear on a specific issue. In this case, the issue is: "How will succession planning enhance employee development in a mid-sized law enforcement agency by the year 2008?"

#### Nominal Group Technique Panel

In December 2002, an NGT panel was convened at the Alhambra Police Department. The panel consisted of three sworn peace officers and four civilians. The sworn members were employed by two different police departments and included, a police chief, a police captain and a police sergeant who was also a Marine Corp Reserve Captain. The four civilian NGT panel members included a retired fire chief from the Alhambra Fire Department, an assistant city manager from the city of Covina, a real estate broker who held the office of mayor and a retired Alhambra School District administrator (Appendix A).

## Trend Analysis

Prior to the formal NGT exercise, each participant was asked to formulate some thoughts and ideas on the issue and identify trends and events that may impact it. A trend is defined as something that has social, technological, economic, environmental and/or political characteristics and may be measured or estimated over a period of time. Trends are those occurrences that are gradual and long-term. An event, on the other hand, occurs at a specific time and date. Events may be positive or negative in nature and are unambiguous, confirmable and make the future different. Events are different than trends, as events are singular incidents and do not recur.

The panel identified twenty trends (Appendix B) during the brainstorming phase of the NGT process. Panel members were given an opportunity to further discuss and clarify each of the trends offered. From those initial twenty, six were agreed upon as the most salient. The panel members were asked to evaluate the direction of each trend five years from today and ten years from today by assigning a number that was either higher or lower than the baseline. An arbitrary number of 100 was utilized as a baseline number to indicate where the individual trend was today in relationship to the issue being studied. If a panelist believed that a trend would increase in five years, a correlating number higher than 100 would be assigned at the five-year mark. Similarly, if a trend was perceived as decreasing at the five-year timeline, a correlating number lower than 100 would be assigned.

The panel was then asked to provide their perspective on the level of concern each individual trend might have on the issue being researched. A scale of 1 to 10 was utilized to represent the attendant level of concern. The number “1” represented low concern with ascending numbers signifying an increasing level of concern.

The panel identified six trends that they believed represented the most significant potential impact on the issue of succession planning. These individual trends are identified as “T-1” through “T-6” on the table below. The number in each box represents the median value ascribed for each. A synopsis on each of the six trends follows the table.

Trend Summary Table

Trend	-5 Years	Today	+5 Years	+10 Years	Concern (1 – 10)
T- 1: Society’s confidence level & trust of leaders	55	100	45	60	6.3
T- 2: Leadership complexities	77	100	151	180	7.9
T- 3: Political power of organized labor	110	100	154	140	8.4
T- 4: Law enforcement retirement benefits	50	100	186	173	9.9
T- 5: Outside promotional recruitment	89	100	146	160	8.4
T- 6: Number of qualified candidates seeking career advancement	86	100	60	75	8.7

Trend 1: Society’s confidence level & trust of leaders. The panel collectively believed that Americans have developed a cynical and suspicious perception of people holding leadership positions. They believed this negative perception has been fueled by scandals in the public and private sectors

involving political, religious and business leaders. They believed this trend can be measured through various opinion polls, voter apathy and media reports. The panel determined that ascending scores represented a corresponding increase in negative perceptions. This trend has resulted from a seemingly never-ending series of scandals reaching from the oval office to the corner office. High-profile scandals involving law enforcement executives have further negatively impacted society's perspective on law enforcement and its leadership.

The panel believed that a significant number of otherwise qualified current and future law enforcement personnel might be inclined to avoid leadership positions due to this multi-generational negative perception of leaders. This negative stereotyping would result in fewer people wanting to step forward to take on additional responsibility and accountability inherent in leadership positions. The panel believed that the net result would be a shrinking pool of candidates seeking promotion to command and executive positions within the law enforcement profession.

One panel member, however, rated the concern posed by this trend as a "3", while another panelist rated it as a "9". The individual with the lower ranking believed there would always be a sufficient number of candidates seeking promotion to higher ranks within the law enforcement profession. He held this opinion based upon his belief that a certain number of people would always seek promotional opportunities. He indicated that their motivation for promotion might

be self-serving, such as a desire to make more money or to acquire other material perks they believe might be forthcoming with leadership roles.

The panel member who ranked his level of concern at “9” indicated that he did so because of many of the same reasons cited by the panelist with the lowest concern. He explained that his high-level of concern stemmed from the fact that people who are primarily motivated to seek leadership positions because of material gain are doing so for the wrong reasons. He believed that the drive to become a leader should be based upon a sense of altruism, not self-aggrandizement. His concern with this trend resulted from his fear that law enforcement’s best and brightest would shy away from leadership roles because of their ingrained mistrust of leaders whom they have encountered in their lives.

Trend 2: Leadership complexities. The panel defined this trend as those tangible and intangible things that may dissuade people from seeking leadership positions. The panel felt that over the course of the last one to two decades, leadership positions within the law enforcement profession have become increasingly more difficult and complex. These complexities stem from a multitude of different reasons. Some of the more pronounced causes originate from attempts by elected officials to wield greater political influence and control over law enforcement leaders. Additional reasons cited for this added complexity have to do with a changing workforce that places less importance on the value of career and profession. This paradigm shift, according to the panel, has resulted

in people re-evaluating the amount of time, effort and energy they are willing to expend in pursuit of their careers, wealth and so-called success. This trend shares similarities with Trend 6, but the panel believed sufficient differences existed between the two to categorize them separately.

All participants were in agreement that this trend posed a significant concern for the issue of succession planning with one participant ranking it a “10”.

Trend 3: Political power of organized labor. This trend addressed the relationship between management and labor. The group identified this issue as a trend due to what they perceived as an increase in the amount of political power being wielded by law enforcement labor groups throughout the state. The panel believed that this trend was dynamic in nature as labor unions’ political power ebbed and flowed based, in great measure, upon who is currently occupying the Governor’s office and which party controlled the legislature. With California being a predominantly Democratic state, it was the group’s consensus that labor unions would probably always wield some amount of power and influence in Sacramento. Panel members believed this trend had bearing on the issue of succession planning through organized labor’s potential influence on topics ranging from promotional testing to executive recruitment and retention.

The panel believed that this political power was tempered by current statewide budget woes but that the trend would increase five years out then

decrease somewhat in ten years due to what they perceived as a potential shift in political power in Sacramento.

Trend 4: Law enforcement retirement benefits. Panel members believed, on average, that due to improvements in CalPERS public safety retirement benefits (3% @ 50 plan) peace officers were retiring at increasingly younger ages. The scores reflected in the trend summary table refer to the panel's perception of peace officer vacancies resulting from service retirements. They further believed that the 3% @ 50 retirement formula had a direct impact on the issue of succession planning and that the vacancies created in executive ranks of law enforcement agencies were going to become more significant 5 years out. A gradual tapering off of retirements would occur five years later as more agencies developed incentives for experienced, senior management personnel to remain employed longer.

The panel rated this trend as a 9.9 out of a possible 10 reflecting their belief that retirement trends were fueled primarily by the type of retirement benefits offered to public safety officers.

Trend 5: Outside promotional recruitment. Panel members believed this trend involved the recruitment of top-level police executives from outside of the organization. Outside promotional recruitment often occurs when an organization lacks a sufficient number of qualified candidates for promotion to supervisory, management or command level positions. The panel discussed the fact that

other reasons may cause decision-makers to want to seek outside candidates for these positions. Those reasons may include the desire to bring in fresh, new perspectives and practices from individuals outside of the organization. Other reasons include wanting to validate that the quality and caliber of internal competitors equals or exceeds that of their contemporaries from other agencies. Another reason for outside promotional recruitment may be to overcome problems or scandals that have occurred within the law enforcement agency. Bringing in qualified professionals from outside of a scandal-ridden agency to fill top-level positions may be one of the quickest and surest ways to overcome negative public perception. One of the panelists believed this “cleaning house” strategy is often employed as a last resort in agencies, both large and small.

Four panel members believed this trend had significant bearing on the issue of succession planning, while two panelists believed it had only limited significance. Those who believed the impact tended to be less noteworthy believed so because the same number of promotional opportunities would exist within the profession regardless of whether testing for those positions was limited to only inside candidates or opened up to the outside.

Trend 6: Number of qualified candidates seeking career advancement. Panel members believed this trend emanates from changes in the way younger workforce members (21 to 28 years of age) view the importance of work and career compared to members of the Baby Boom generation. Panelists believed that the majority of employees fitting into this age demographic, so-called Gen-

X'ers, did not place the same level of importance on their careers as did previous generations. This shift has manifested itself in several ways. Panel members believed Gen-X'ers were less likely to seek promotion to higher ranks within the law enforcement profession due to the commensurate increase in responsibility and commitment. They believed that research has shown that, compared to previous generations, typical Gen-X'ers are more likely to demonstrate less commitment to their employer, have multiple careers within their lifetime and place a greater emphasis on family and recreational pursuits. Panelists did not place value judgments on Gen-X'er priorities, but merely believed that the change in workforce age demographics would impact the issue of succession planning. Panel members agreed that this trend had the second greatest potential impact on succession planning efforts, rating it at 8.7.

### Events

The next part of the NGT process involved the forecasting of events that could have bearing upon the issue of succession planning. Events differ from trends in that an event is a specific, singular occurrence that is both unambiguous and confirmable. An event, if it were to occur, would alter the future in some way. The panel initially identified 14 events (Appendix C) that would bear some level of impact on the issue being studied. The number in each box represents the median value ascribed for each.

For each of the events identified, panel members were asked to do the following:

- Identify the first year they believed the event had even a 1% possibility of occurrence;
- Identify the event’s possibility of occurrence as a percentage, ranging from 0% (unlikely to occur) to 100% (virtually certain to occur) in five years and ten years:
- Utilizing a scale of -10 (minimal impact) to +10 (greatest impact), assign a number to each event that panel members believed represented the potential impact each event would have on the issue of succession planning.

Event Summary Table

Event	Year > 0	+5 Years	+10 Years	Impact –10 to +10
E-1: P.O.S.T funding for all management training ends	4	42%	44%	-7
E-2: Consent decree rules all promotions be based on race and gender	9	0%	29%	-4
E-3: “3% @ 50” PERS retirement plan repealed	4	20%	29%	+3
E-4: Retirement age lowered	11	0%	14%	-7
E-5: Police executives’ “Bill of Rights” enacted into law	10	0%	21%	+2
E-6: Federal government begins funding police management training	4	78%	91%	+9

Event 1: POST funding for all management training ends. Economic uncertainties prompted the panel to believe that there was a definite possibility

that POST would no longer have funds available to continue reimbursing police agencies for management-level training. Panelists believed that some departments may be able to provide their own in-house management training, but that most agencies, including those that fall within the mid-sized range (50 to 200 sworn), would find it difficult - if not impossible, to offer training opportunities. The group felt that it had a 44% chance of occurrence in ten years, but that if it were to occur it would have a significantly negative impact on succession planning, rating it at a -7.

Event 2: Consent decree rules all promotions be based on race and gender. Panel members rated the probability of this event occurring relatively low. There was a lot of lively discussion concerning this event as some panel members did not believe there was any possibility of this occurring. The fact that consent decrees currently exist and have been entered into by large and small law enforcement agencies convinced the group that this was a slight possibility at 29% and not until ten or more years.

Event 3: 3% @ 50 PERS retirement plan repealed. Panelists rated the possibility of this event occurring as relatively low but felt that if it did occur, it would help to slow the number of senior law enforcement retirements. The panel made the assumption that the retirement formula that replaced the "3% @ 50" plan would require law enforcement personnel to work longer before they became eligible for retirement. This assumption was the basis for their rating this event as positively impacting succession planning at a +3.

Event 4: Retirement age lowered. This event was rated as having the lowest possibility of occurrence and was tied with Event #1 for having the most negative impact (-7). The panel collectively agreed that a variety of reasons precluded the likelihood of this event occurring. Those reasons stemmed from the current and anticipated future of the economy as well as the belief that the general public would refuse to grant even better retirement benefits than already exist for public safety members.

Event 5: Police executives' bill of rights enacted into law. The panel discussed the fact that many qualified candidates are dissuaded from applying for chief executive positions within law enforcement agencies because of the at-will status that accompanies those positions. The panel believed that substantially more qualified candidates would be drawn to apply for top-level positions if certain employee protections were afforded to those who often fall prey to political terminations and other similar job hazards. They believed, however, that enactment of such legislation, similar to the protections afforded under the Peace Officers' Bill of Rights (POBR), had relatively little chance of occurring within the next 10 years (21%).

Event 6: Federal government begins funding police management training. The panel was the most optimistic about the possibility of this event occurring within the next five to ten years (78% and 91%, respectively). They likewise believed this event would have the single most positive impact on the issue of succession planning (+9). The panel cited the federal government's role in homeland security and domestic terrorism protection as their primary reason

for believing that funding for local law enforcement was going to become a reality in the very near future. They believed that federal law enforcement officials would have to undoubtedly rely upon local police and sheriffs departments to assist in providing frontline homeland security protection. This need would drive federal funding to assist local law enforcement agencies in providing the necessary training for all levels within their respective organizations.

### Cross Impact Analysis

The last phase in the NGT process is the cross impact analysis. Two members of the NGT panel were asked to assist in providing input for this analysis through discussion and by ultimately assigning a numeric value to the cross impact of each event on each trend. The number in each box represents the median value ascribed for each.

The cross impact analysis table graphically illustrates how selected events may affect the trends identified by the NGT panel. The analysis consists of assigning a number that represents the potential impact each of the events may have on each of the trends. A numeric value of "0" signifies that an event would have no impact upon a trend. A score in the range of 1 to 5 would signify that an event would have a positive impact on a trend. A score in the -1 to -5 range would signify that an event would have a negative impact on a specific trend. The following table depicts the cross impact analysis of each of the foregoing trends and events.

Cross Impact Analysis Table

	T-1	T-2	T-3	T-4	T-5	T-6
E-1	0	-3	-2	0	-1	-3
E-2	2	0	-2	-2	0	-2
E-3	2	-2	-2	0	1	-2
E-4	3	2	0	-2	2	1
E-5	3	3	-1	2	3	4
E-6	0	2	3	3	4	4

TRENDS

EVENTS

T1: Society's confidence level & trust of leaders

E1: POST funding for all management training ends

T-2: Leadership complexities

E2: Consent decree rules all promotions be based on race & gender

T-3: Political power of organized labor

E3: 3% @ 50 PERS retirement plan repealed

T-4: Law enforcement retirement benefits

E4: Retirement age lowered

T-5: Outside promotional recruitment

E5: Police executives' bill of rights enacted into law

T-6: Number of qualified candidates seeking career advancement

E6: Federal government begins funding police management training

The cross impact analysis determined that there were five instances which would have the most significant impact resulting in a score of "-3" or "4". Those scenarios are detailed below.

Trend 2/Event 1: This was rated as a -3 because it was felt that the trend concerning leadership complexities, combined with the cessation of POST

funding would result in fewer peace officers seeking advanced training and education on their own. Panelists felt that a significant portion of training and preparation for top level positions within the law enforcement profession was accomplished through POST funding provided to local law enforcement agencies. With leadership complexities on the increase, formal education and training are needed more than ever. Panel members, however, perceived that a significant reduction in training and education would occur if agencies were no longer able to afford to send their future leaders to POST-funded training. This reduction in qualified, trained candidates would make it more difficult to select and promote future police executives, thereby negatively impacting succession planning efforts.

Trend 5/Event 6: Panelists believed that increased federal funding opportunities for police management training would lead to an overall increase in the number of qualified police executive candidates. The increased competition for top level law enforcement positions resulting from a larger pool of qualified candidates will help to ensure that only the best and brightest move up to leadership positions. They did not believe that the trend toward increased outside promotional recruitment would be adversely impacted by the influx of federal training dollars.

Trend 6/Event 1: Panel members arrived at their rating of “-3” based upon concerns similar to those expressed about Trend 2/Event 1, above.

Trend 6/Event 5: The increased job protections afforded to law enforcement leaders through the passage of a “Police Executives’ Bill of Rights”

was viewed as having a positive impact by the panel. They believed that the passage of such a law would eliminate many of the reasons that qualified individuals would hesitate seeking promotion to executive level positions within law enforcement agencies.

Trend 6/Event 6: The group believed that the impact of Trend 6 would be positively impacted if the federal government were to begin providing funds for local police management training. Panel members felt that Gen X members of the law enforcement workforce would take advantage of training opportunities provided by their employers and made possible through federal funding.

#### Alternative Future Scenarios

The NGT process is designed to elicit trends and events that bear directly upon possible future scenarios. The cross impact analysis serves to further assist in forecasting the future by considering how identified trends impact possible events. To provide even greater focus on the possible futures that these trends and events may create, three alternative scenarios have been developed on the subject matter. The scenarios depict futures that are normative, pessimistic and optimistic.

Normative Scenario:

May 25, 2008

As he climbed into the back seat of the Ford dealership's brand new convertible, Charlie Backwater found it difficult to believe this was going to be the last Memorial Day parade he would ride in as the chief of the Grifton Police

Department. He let his city manager know about his plans to retire on June 30<sup>th</sup>, but he was dreading having to break the news to his department when he returned to work on Tuesday after the long holiday weekend.

As an armed services veteran and a resident of this quiet Northern California community, Chief Backwater knew he would always be welcome to participate in next year's parade as a member of the VFW, Local 454. He was proud of his four years in the Marine Corps, but he was even prouder of the fact that after 32 years of service with the Grifton Police Department, the last ten as chief, he could still fit into his Marine Corps uniform. Somehow, he knew it wouldn't be the same though.

At only 54 years old, Chief Backwater wasn't planning on retiring for another three years. His recent physical, however, determined that his high blood pressure was going to change those plans. Fortunately, as a PERS public safety member, Charlie knew his 3% at 50 retirement was secure.

What Chief Backwater could not have known as he sat there ready for the parade to begin, was that three of his six lieutenants and four of his ten sergeants, all whom joined the force within two years of him, were all planning on retiring at the end of the year.

Chief Backwater had no doubt that the Grifton Police Department would certainly be able to carry on without him. He often joked with his three captains that the department may even run smoother without him. Whenever he was away from the station on business or vacation, he knew he could always count on his captains to take care of business. He rotated acting chief duties between the

three, giving each a brief taste of the corner office and all of the headaches and responsibilities that came with it. The three captains, all in their early forties had worked hard to earn their current positions. One of the captains had recently given birth to her third child and had just returned to work after her maternity leave. During her absence, her two colleagues divided up her duties and areas of responsibilities. The extra effort and time at work caused some strain on both of their home lives since each had teenage children involved in sports, music lessons and church activities.

Chief Backwater knew retirement was inevitable, but he always believed he had plenty of time to help prepare his replacement. As chief executive of this 95-officer department, he knew one of his most important responsibilities was to help groom those coming up through the ranks. He recalled how early on in his career he had relied upon senior officers to help him prepare for promotional examinations. The POST classes he attended helped provide a solid foundation for future success and the Master's Degree he earned along the way certainly helped him achieve his lifelong dream of being Chief of Police. It was unfortunate that POST funding had dried up years earlier and had never been fully restored to its previous levels.

On his return to work Tuesday, Chief Backwater called the three captains into his office and announced he had six weeks left to work before his retirement. Like the chief, the captains each knew that this day was inevitable. They just didn't believe it was going to be this soon. Despite over 100 years of collective police experience sitting in the room, none of the four could immediately offer a

plan on how to fill the police chief's vacancy they knew was going to occur in six short weeks.

The ringing of the telephone broke the uneasy silence. It was Grifton's personnel director. He was calling to let the chief know he had just received a stack of retirement papers from the three lieutenants and four sergeants. The seven of them were all close friends and they each wanted to share the excitement of filing their papers at the same time.

Finally, Chief Backwater spoke: "We have lots of talented people in this organization. Just think of the upward mobility that these openings will create. This department is ready for some fresh, new thinking in the supervisory and management ranks." The most senior captain responded, "I agree, Boss, but the last two sergeants' promotional examinations resulted in nobody passing the written portion of the test. We already have two sergeant vacancies and none of our sergeants have the education or experience to meet the current minimum requirements to take the lieutenant's test."

"Okay, we'll cross that bridge when we get to it," replied the Chief. He continued, "I have to make a recommendation to the City Manager in a week on whether to stay inside for my replacement or open it up to outside candidates. The three of you are qualified and capable and the C.M. has a lot of faith in each of you. I'm pretty sure I can convince him to select one of you, if you're interested in the job." After a long silence, the captains each expressed their gratitude for the chief's trust and confidence, but each replied they were not interested in the at-will chief's position.

Each captain was confident in his/her own ability to be a police chief, but none felt they could risk their families' welfare by accepting an at-will position in a city as politically unstable as Grifton. Perhaps if the recently introduced job protection legislation for police executives had not been defeated, they would each be interested in becoming Chief Backwater's replacement.

Within the next two weeks, the chief and captains met with the members of the Grifton Peace Officers' Association to work on revamping the entire promotional examination process. The command staff explained the upcoming sergeants' and lieutenants' openings and sought their assistance in avoiding a pending leadership vacuum.

Working with Grifton's Human Resources Department, they agreed upon several approaches to ensure that future leaders were identified early in their careers and provided with the necessary training, mentoring and hands-on experience necessary to help them lead the Grifton Police Department into the mid-twenty first century.

As for Chief Backwater, he did retire on June 30<sup>th</sup> as planned, but what he didn't plan on was returning to his old job on July 1<sup>st</sup> as a PERS retired annuitant. The city hired an executive recruitment firm at a cost of \$35,000 to assist in the search for a new police chief, but provided no guarantees that a qualified, willing replacement would be found any time soon.

## Optimistic Scenario

June 20, 2008

Twenty-three-year-old Frank Baker hardly slept at all last night. He didn't want to risk oversleeping and being late to the police academy on his first day as an Alta Loma Police Department recruit. Frank knew the academy was going to be rigorous, but he was certain he was prepared to move on with this next phase of law enforcement training. He recently earned his Master's Degree in Criminal Justice Leadership from the California State University at Los Angeles (CSULA), where the academic curriculum and practical experience prepared him to excel in the year-long academy.

The Law Enforcement Service Training (LEST) program at CSULA has only been in existence four years and Frank was a member of its first graduating class. The LEST program was developed through a partnership between Southern California law enforcement agencies and CSULA and was federally funded. The program was borne out of a need to provide specialized training for those individuals seeking a career in the law enforcement profession. The LEST program was modeled after the military's service academies and was designed to provide students with the skills, training and experiences necessary to enable them to be future law enforcement officers.

Law enforcement professionals working in partnership with CSULA continually evaluate training received by students through the LEST program. The curriculum is POST-approved and is fully integrated into the policies and practices of those agencies utilizing the LEST program for the training and

preparation of their personnel. In addition to the basic preparatory training, the LEST program also allows students to specialize in certain aspects of the law enforcement profession, such as investigations, traffic enforcement, and other related areas. The education students receive augments the formal field training they will receive once they join their respective police agencies.

For those who aspire to leadership and command positions, there is an additional two years of training, similar to the military's Officer Candidate School. Frank's scores in the Leadership Aptitude and Desire (LAD) test earned him admittance to the leadership training program at CSULA. During his two years of leadership training, he had an opportunity to lay a solid foundation he knew was going to be built upon once he began his career at the Alta Loma Police Department.

Prior to beginning the academy, Frank was assigned a career mentor at the Alta Loma Police Department. His mentor, Jack Smart, was a seasoned veteran who played an integral role in the development of the LEST Program. Jack knew firsthand the importance of having an insider who could help new employees matriculate into the organization.

Jack has been with the department for over fifteen years and has seen a tremendous amount of change within that time. From very early on in his career, Jack had his sights set on advancing through the ranks at ALPD. It wasn't easy at first, but Jack was fortunate to work at a department that recognized the importance of succession planning. Chief Goforth, ALPD's chief, was committed to ensuring that his department always had personnel ready, willing and able to

step up into management and command positions. Chief Goforth was proud of the fact that six current police chiefs began their careers at ALPD and moved on to assume command of other agencies.

The chief believed he had a responsibility to the law enforcement profession to prepare future leaders. He also knew his succession planning efforts would benefit him by ensuring that his department would never have to be concerned about finding a qualified replacement once it came time for him or one of his commanders to move on.

He knew that the creation of the LEST Program was the first step in ensuring future generations of law enforcement professionals were thoroughly and properly trained. He also knew firsthand that the complexities of leadership required the recruitment, selection, preparation and training of future law enforcement leaders be more deliberate and focused. In order to enhance the preparation of future leaders within his Department, Chief Goforth created and implemented a succession plan.

The plan laid out in specific detail the skills, attributes and character necessary for aspiring leaders to possess. These leadership dimensions were formulated through collaborative efforts between management, community members, academic professionals and employee groups and are continually reviewed and updated. The next part of the plan documents the training necessary to qualify for leadership consideration. This part of the plan expanded and enhanced the department's existing, albeit outdated, "Master Training Plan." This portion of the plan articulated the department's philosophy and commitment

to employee training. The employee's responsibility and commitment to training were also clearly expressed and formalized.

Employee groups played an integral role in the chief's succession plan by agreeing to revision of the existing, traditional civil service promotional testing process. They agreed that the decades-old method of selecting individuals for promotion was not always fair, nor did it ensure that the most qualified person always came out on top of the promotional process.

Frank Baker knew the path he wanted to pursue after graduating from the academy. He believed that the path would lead him straight to the top of the Alta Loma Police Department. Chief Goforth retired later that year, before Frank finished the academy. He was confident, however, that Frank and all those who followed him would have a clearer roadmap to the top through his succession planning efforts.

## Pessimistic Scenario

July 1, 2008

"Did you hear the latest news?," asked Captain White as he leaned back in his office at the Crooked Creek Police Department. "No," replied his colleague Captain Jones. "Chief Elmhurst has accepted the job as Police Chief at the Alta Loma Police Department." "What are we going to do now?" asked Captain Jones in a voice fraught with panic. "Simple," replied Captain White, "retire." "Sounds good to me," was Captain Jones' response.

Chief Elmhurst left the Crooked Creek Police Department later that month. His last day on the job coincided with the first day of his former Captains' retirement. Sergeant Smith was appointed the Acting Police Chief of the Crooked Creek Police Department since all four of the department's lieutenants refused the position. Two of the lieutenants did not even meet the minimum requirements to be a captain, let alone police chief. The other two lieutenants were each within two months of retirement and both told the City Manager they wanted no part of the headaches involved in being even an acting police chief.

Sergeant Smith soon found himself embroiled in one controversy after another. "I sure wish I would have had at least some amount of training and preparation for this job. I had no idea what I was getting myself into, nor do I know how to get myself out of this situation." Sergeant Smith filed his stress-related disability claim within two months of taking over the acting chief's position.

Having nobody prepared to take over the reins of leadership, the Crooked Creek Police Department was disbanded. Most of the CCPD personnel were laid off. Law enforcement services were taken over by the neighboring Alta Loma Police Department. ALPD Chief Elmhurst incorporated the police services contract into his succession plan, allowing each of his captains an opportunity to serve as commanding officer of the Crooked Creek sub-station. What an excellent opportunity to groom my replacement, thought Chief Elmhurst!

The nominal group technique (NGT) detailed in this chapter identified significant events that would greatly impact already occurring trends within the

law enforcement profession. The trends and events identified by the NGT panel and the discussion that ensued provided the basis for the completion of the three scenarios depicted. At the end of the NGT exercise, each panel member was asked if the implementation of succession planning would be an effective method of positively impacting the trends and events identified. Without exception, each panel member agreed that it would.

The next chapter will provide a strategic plan to incorporate succession planning within a mid-sized California law enforcement agency.

## CHAPTER THREE

### Strategic Planning

It is apparent that the future forecast provided by the optimistic scenario is more advantageous and desirable than those futures offered in the normative and pessimistic scenarios. The method for designing a strategic plan to implement succession planning in a mid-sized law enforcement agency will require that a deliberate, methodical approach be undertaken. The ultimate goal of any succession planning effort is to provide a framework designed to enhance employee development. The following steps comprise elements of the strategic planning process.

#### Situational Analysis

Law enforcement agencies are hierarchical organizations that typically have rank structures similar to that of the military. As in almost all public and private sector organizations, the hierarchy of command within a law enforcement agency resembles a pyramid. As a person ascends in any organization, he is expected to have a commensurately greater breadth of knowledge, skill, ability, experience and training. The manner in which a person acquires these requisite skills and attributes varies tremendously between different industries and occupations.

Management training programs in the private sector were created in response to the perpetual need to replace individuals who move up the corporate ladder or who leave the organization. This management training approach has

not been incorporated in the public sector to the same degree as in private enterprise. More specifically, management-training programs within the law enforcement profession are virtually unheard of. A well designed, comprehensive succession plan would integrate formal and experiential management training opportunities with a fair and objective promotional selection process.

The traditional promotional selection process utilized by most law enforcement agencies seems to be a constant source of discussion, debate, disagreement and occasional court action. Most seriously interested participants in any debate about promotional selection processes want the same outcome: simply to select the best prepared, most deserving and qualified individual whose past superior performance provides reasonable assurance of future success in the higher ranking position.

One of the reasons for the apparent lack of preparatory management training in the public sector may be traced back to the very creation of the civil service system. The use of competitive examinations to select government officials originated in China, dating back to the Han Dynasty (206 BC to 220 AD). In the United States, civil service procedures were not established until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and were done so in response to what was widely considered a spoils system. The passage of the Pendleton Act in 1883 established the federal government's Civil Service Commission.<sup>23</sup>

Complete and absolute objectivity is often cited as the civil service system's mantra. Anything that may unfairly provide an advantage to one candidate over another is often strictly prohibited by civil service rules and

regulations. This strident quest to ensure objectivity may preclude the creation of any system that seeks to prepare an individual for advancement and promotion to a higher position.

### Organizational Assessment

The fictitious Alta Loma Police Department highlighted in the previous chapter's optimistic scenario will be utilized as the model agency for the purposes of this study. The Alta Loma Police Department is a mid-sized municipal police agency employing 95 sworn peace officers and 50 civilian employees. The department prides itself as a modern full-service agency providing all of the essential law enforcement services to a community of 120,000 residents located close to the foothills in western San Bernardino County.

The city of Alta Loma recently adopted the 3% @ 50 retirement plan for its sworn police and fire personnel. The police chief, Jim Goforth, is 53 years of age and is eligible to retire at 90% of his current salary. He is in relatively good health and has expressed a desire to remain in his current position for another six to twelve months after which he plans to retire. He has told the city manager he would be willing to remain serving as police chief on a contractual basis once he retires. The city manager has indicated his willingness to consider this option, but only if faced with no other options for filling the chief's position.

The department has three captains all in their mid to late forties, seven lieutenants ranging in age from thirty-three to forty-nine years of age. There are

currently thirteen sergeants all with less than two years experience at their current rank.

Chief Goforth always understood and acknowledged the need to prepare future leaders within his organization, but other pressing priorities always seemed to take precedent. He had implemented a department-wide training master plan for sworn and civilian employees that identified recommended training for each position and rank, but he always believed it did not adequately prepare future lieutenants, captains and chiefs.

The chief knew the time was at hand to take decisive action on the issue of succession planning. He could not in good conscience leave the department without a method and means to prepare future leaders. He knew he was faced with several alternative strategies to address the issue of succession planning. He could simply hope that individuals within his department would seek the necessary formal education and training necessary to prepare them for supervisory, management, command and executive positions. After all, that's what he had to do to earn his way to the top.

Chief Goforth knew, however, that the men and women of the Alta Loma Police Department expected and deserved more than leaving the selection of their future leaders to chance. He also knew the only viable strategy was to utilize a team-oriented approach in the creation and implementation of a succession plan within the Alta Loma Police Department. He enjoyed strong support from line-level sworn and civilian employees and his supervisory and

management personnel had always been extremely loyal and supportive of the department and his administration.

The chief brought in his three captains and explained to them how he wanted to use a cross-section of personnel within the department to assist in the development of a succession plan. He made each captain responsible for a specific element of the plan. The chief believed that by doing so, each captain would receive invaluable experience that would assist in their development. In essence, the creation and implementation of the succession plan would be an integral part of succession planning efforts for the three captains.

Chief Goforth believed one of the first steps necessary would be to identify what strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats existed both internally and externally that may positively or negatively impact the efforts to implement a succession plan within the Alta Loma Police Department. This task was assigned to Captain Green, the most senior captain.

Captain Green assembled a group of sworn and civilian supervisory and management employees to assist him with this task. The group utilized a SWOT (strength, weakness, opportunity, and threat) technique to identify and compile a list of issues that fell into one of these four categories. Strengths that were identified included a cooperative working relationship between city management staff and the police department, a high level of mutual trust between the department's labor groups and department administration, highly motivated and well-educated employees and strong support from the city's elected officials. Weaknesses identified by the group were a relatively low experience level

among sergeants, a hiring freeze recently implemented due to budget constraints and the high number of vacant sworn and civilian positions.

The group believed several opportunities existed which included the relatively frequent promotional opportunities resulting from the department's 3% @ 50 retirement benefits and the previous collaborative formal training and educational programs conducted at the neighboring state university. Threats that were perceived by the group included current and anticipated budget cutbacks and potential layoffs.

### Stakeholder Identification

Chief Goforth knew that any strategic plan to implement succession planning would be incomplete without the identification of those individuals, commonly referred to as stakeholders, who may be impacted by the implementation of succession planning efforts. The identification of stakeholders provides invaluable insight for a variety of reasons. One reason is that it provides a list of individuals who clearly have a vested interest in the outcome of any succession planning efforts. Those individuals may have varying levels of interest and commitment to the concept and may be for or against its successful implementation. Knowing whom those individuals are also provides the ability to solicit input from those who are likely to know the most about an organization and can assist in forecasting the likely outcome of succession planning efforts.

Captain White, Alta Loma Police Department's junior captain was given the assignment of identifying stakeholders. He determined the following individuals fit into this category:

1. Members of the Alta Loma city council
2. Alta Loma city manager
3. Alta Loma civil service commissioners
4. Alta Loma residents
5. Alta Loma business community members
6. Alta Loma personnel director
7. Alta Loma police chief
8. Alta Loma police department command staff members
9. Alta Loma police department sworn labor group representatives
10. Alta Loma civilian labor group representatives
11. Alta Loma police department employees

### Implementation Strategies

Identifying and understanding the potential problems associated with implementing a succession plan within the Alta Loma police department will assist in forecasting where special attention may need to be directed. Likewise, having a clear vision of what the end result looks like will assist in bringing succession planning goals into sharper focus. Chief Goforth assigned Captain Black to develop the department's implementation strategies. To assist in his accomplishment of this, Captain Black established a list of anticipated individual

and organizational benefits that would be derived from the implementation of a succession plan. They included:

- Recruitment: Potential employees deciding upon which law enforcement agencies to apply with would be drawn to those that have a clearly stated succession plan and demonstrated commitment in assisting employees acquire the necessary skills, training and promotional opportunities to move up through the organization.
- Retention: Law enforcement personnel who feel their organization is committed to assisting them achieve their career goals of moving up through the ranks are less likely to move on to other agencies or professions. Long-term, satisfied and productive employees are essential elements of any successful organization. Succession planning efforts could help achieve a win-win situation for both employee and employer.
- Improved Service to the Community: The goal of every law enforcement leader should be to provide the best possible service to the community. That service commitment and dedication begins and ends with personnel up and down the chain of command. It is imperative that future qualified, dedicated leaders are sought, trained, and promoted in order to ensure the highest possible level of law enforcement service.
- Emergency Management/Preparedness: The September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks highlighted America's vulnerabilities to acts of unspeakable violence and hatred. Law enforcement plays a vital role in homeland security and in the protection of a free, democratic society. Planning and

preparation for any emergency, natural or man-made, requires that clear lines of succession be established prior to the occurrence of a significant event. Succession planning efforts would ensure that personnel have the necessary leadership and technical training to enable them to assume higher levels of authority regardless of whether that need arises out of a slow, predictable progression or a sudden, unplanned disaster.

- **Future Fiscal and Budgetary Implications:** One of the most fundamental reasons for the existence of government is for the protection of its people. That does not imply, however, that funding for law enforcement is limitless or abundant. Budgetary constraints will remain a future reality requiring that limited funds be utilized in the most cost-effective manner possible. A clear, focused framework for the training and selection of future law enforcement leaders will benefit the “bottom line” by enhancing employee development and ensuring the preparation of qualified leaders.
- **Elimination of Glass Ceiling:** Many argue about the existence of a glass ceiling limiting women’s and minority member’s ability to attain top-level positions within the law enforcement profession. Whether real or perceived, succession planning would render any such debate moot by allowing all qualified individuals the ability to receive the training, mentoring and practical experience necessary to successfully attain leadership positions. Race, gender, national origin and any factor other than merit, ability and past performance are completely eliminated from any equation concerning promotion.

- Greater Law Enforcement Collaboration: Succession planning efforts could lead to increased cooperation and enhanced collaboration between civilian law enforcement authorities on the local, state and federal levels and their military counterparts. While the Constitution precludes the military's involvement in civilian law enforcement, except in very limited circumstances, no prohibition exists for the sharing of most resources, including training. The nation's military academies provide their personnel with the finest leadership training and experience in the entire world. Although a stark difference exists between military and civilian law enforcement tactics and strategies, the leadership skills and training taught at West Point and the other service academies would be directly applicable to future leaders in the civilian law enforcement profession. The sharing of resources, intelligence and training between local, state and federal law enforcement will continue to expand in the fight against domestic terrorism.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Transition Management

A transition management plan is intended to provide the Alta Loma Police Department with an overview of how to move the issue of succession planning from the present to the future. A transition management plan serves to mitigate or eliminate any potential negative impact that the implementation of succession planning would have on the Alta Loma Police Department and its personnel.

Chief Goforth understood that, to a great degree, the success of this endeavor hinged upon effective transition management. He knew that for transition management to be successful, it was important to consider the following factors:

- Support of a strong leader.
- The creation of a sense of urgency to make the change.
- A distinct separation from the past.
- The involvement of a wide array of stakeholders.
- The fostering of political sponsorship of the change.
- The creation of a shared vision and common direction.

Chief Goforth brought together a cross-section of department personnel who had volunteered to take an active role in the creation and implementation of a succession plan at the Alta Loma Police Department. Committees were formed to address specific tasks that were identified. A captain was placed in charge of one or more committees and monthly meetings were scheduled.

## Responsibility Charting

Chief Goforth soon realized he would need a method to chart responsibility in order to identify and track who was responsible for what activity or endeavor. The chief brought in the three captains and explained how he wanted them to do responsibility charting . He explained that whenever someone was identified as having a role in the implementation of succession planning, he or she would be placed into one of four categories, depending upon their role.

The categories were listed as:

- Responsibility: The person is responsible for seeing that decisions or actions occur.
- Approval: The person is responsible for approving or disapproving of decisions or actions.
- Support: The person is responsible for providing the resources necessary for decisions or actions to occur.
- Informed: The person is responsible for knowing of the decisions or actions but cannot approve or disapprove of them.

The following committees were formed to address the specific topics or areas that would impact the implementation of succession planning at the Alta Loma Police Department.

- Organizational Commitment: This committee was tasked with evaluating the organization's current level of commitment to employee development, training and career advancement. This was accomplished through the review of training files, focus groups,

anonymous surveys and one on one interviews with all department employees. The purpose of this effort was to determine the current level of employee training, gauge supervisory and management perception about the importance of employee training and development and to identify any best practices that may currently be occurring within any unit or section within the department. The committee also conducted surveys to gauge the level of interest employees had in succession planning. The committee determined that the majority of employees felt management provided little assistance and support in the area of career advancement, professional training, leadership opportunities and mentoring. The committee was tasked with revising the department's current training master plan to address the areas of concern expressed by department personnel. The committee was also tasked with reviewing the department's mission statement, core values and policies and procedures to ensure that each clearly conveyed the importance placed by the department on employee development and succession planning.

- Pre-employment: This committee was responsible for addressing the measures that could be undertaken by the Alta Loma Police Department to assist those individuals preparing for a career in law enforcement leadership. As a result of their collaborative effort, the Law Enforcement Service Training (LEST) program was established at

California State University, Los Angeles and federally funded. The LEST program was modeled after the military's service academies and was designed to provide students with the skills, training and experience necessary to become future law enforcement leaders.

- **Employment Selection:** This committee reviewed current selection methods to determine if they adequately tested for the requisite skills necessary to predict success as a law enforcement officer and future leader.
- **Field Training Officer Program:** This committee reviewed the department's current FTO program to determine if sufficient emphasis was placed on leadership exposure, training, and mentoring opportunities for those beginning their law enforcement careers.
- **Leadership Mentoring:** This committee was established to create and implement a mentoring program as an integral part of succession planning efforts. A formal mentoring program was adopted that established that mentoring was a responsibility of those holding supervisory, management and command positions within the department.
- **Promotional Selection Process:** This committee worked with the chief, the department's employee groups, the city personnel director and the civil service commission to revise the promotional examination process. The revised selection process increased the required

minimum level of education and experience and established a leadership training program.

### Readiness Assessment of Stakeholders

Adhering to a specific, detailed succession plan that lays out the steps necessary for promotion to higher ranking (and paying) positions may not be readily accepted within certain organizations. If succession planning is going to be successfully implemented at the Alta Loma Police Department, it is imperative that an assessment be done on the readiness level of stakeholders. Failing to identify and take into consideration organizational obstacles, roadblocks and past history may doom any implementation efforts. Obstacles may stem from a variety of reasons, but typically involve all or some of the following reasons:

- Institutional Stagnation: The organization and individual stakeholders have experienced so little change for such a long time, that any new idea, process or procedure is greeted with skepticism, reluctance and possible sabotage. There are several methods to address this resistance to change. They range from a “shock and awe” campaign, which involves a scorched earth policy of wholesale changes beginning at the top. This approach is typically only reserved for those instances where problems are so rampant within an organization that immediate, drastic measures may be the only way for the organization to survive. A more advisable strategy to overcome institutional stagnation involves a slower, more methodical approach to change.

- **Timing:** The introduction of a succession plan within an organization should be well thought out and planned in advance. Many worthwhile efforts are destined for failure simply because decision makers did not adequately consider the issue of timing. Timing simply involves taking into consideration what internal and external factors are currently occurring, or may be occurring in the foreseeable future that could positively or negatively impact stakeholders' willingness to accept the introduction of succession planning into their organization.
- **Organizational Distrust:** Decision makers also need to honestly and accurately assess stakeholders' level of trust in the leadership of the organization. Stakeholders who lack trust in their leaders are likely to be suspicious and skeptical of succession planning efforts. Decision makers can work towards overcoming stakeholder trust issues once their basis is understood and acknowledged.

Chief Goforth is aware of potential roadblocks that may hamper his efforts to implement succession planning within the Alta Loma Police Department. He knows that stakeholders can help or hinder his efforts. The chief believes if he can secure the support of certain stakeholders, the chances of his efforts being successful will be greatly enhanced.

### Critical Mass

Critical mass, for the purposes of this study refers to those stakeholders whose support the chief believes is necessary for the successful implementation

of succession planning. To achieve critical mass, the chief believes he must garner the support of the following stakeholders:

- Members of the Alta Loma city council
- Alta Loma city manager
- Alta Loma personnel director
- Alta Loma police department sworn labor group representatives
- Alta Loma civilian employee labor group representatives
- Alta Loma police department employees

This chapter examined the transition management plan undertaken by the Alta Loma Police Department to create and successfully implement succession planning. The transition management plan was designed to anticipate the potential roadblocks and to prevent them from hindering progress. The next chapter will strive to summarize the information presented in this research project and highlight further implications to consider such as budgetary and evaluative processes.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Conclusions and Recommendations

Succession planning will provide significant implications for leadership. Those implications should be overwhelmingly positive in nature, but may have some potentially negative aspects for certain leaders. The positive implications originate from the very heart of succession planning's intended purpose, which is to prepare future law enforcement leaders! Current leaders should feel relieved knowing that succession planning will enhance employee development thereby ensuring a smoother and more efficient leadership transition. Other positive leadership implications stem from the fact that succession planning efforts will be more directed and focused and will allow for current leaders' input and involvement in the shaping and development of future leaders.

Additional positive leadership implications will emerge from the fact that leaders will be able to mentor and nurture the individuals destined to replace them in leadership roles. Leaders may even be able to expand their own extracurricular activities through knowing that their absence from the workplace will allow opportunities for upcoming leaders to fill in their positions.

Potential negative implications stem from the fact that some leaders may feel threatened by the development of their replacements through succession planning programs. Leaders not confident in their own talents and abilities may be reluctant to assist in the further development of subordinates destined to replace them. Individuals in leadership positions who harbor those concerns and

fears do a great disservice to themselves, their subordinates, their organization and to the law enforcement profession.

#### Funding/Budgetary Implications

Funding the development, implementation and continued support of an organizational succession plan should not be a major concern for most mid-sized California law enforcement agencies. No major expenditure of capital would be required to establish a succession planning program. The only equipment expenditure that may be required would be the purchase of a software program designed to track employee training courses. Many existing database programs could be adapted for such a purpose.

Some limited personnel costs for salary and benefits would be incurred for employees assigned to the implementation team. Training budgets would likely need to be increased as more personnel are sent to outside training courses in accordance with the succession plan. The expenditure for outside training would likely decrease within two years of the implementation of a succession plan due to more personnel being able to provide in-house training.

Implementation of a succession plan would lead to enhanced risk management through improved training of future supervisory and management personnel. Improved training of personnel is frequently cited as one of the most cost-effective means to reduce liability exposure.

## Evaluation Activities

Evaluation is crucial in determining what elements of the succession plan may need to be fine-tuned, revised or completely eliminated. Evaluation protocol should include a combination of specific written questions to be answered by those individuals impacted by the succession planning program. Those include employees participating in the program, as well as supervisory, management and command level personnel within the Alta Loma Police Department. Other stakeholders whose evaluations would be pertinent include the personnel director, civil service commission members and sworn and civilian labor group representatives.

The answers would be compiled and reviewed by an evaluation committee comprised of stakeholders who were not members of the implementation team. The evaluation team would conduct follow-up interviews to ascertain further evaluative specifics. Questions to be included in the participant survey include the following:

- Has the implementation of the succession plan provided you a clearer understanding of what skills, abilities and attributes are expected in everyone holding a formal leadership position within this organization?
- Would you have been able to acquire an understanding of organizational leadership expectations without a succession plan in place? If so, how?
- Has the succession plan provided you a clear, succinct roadmap for acquiring those requisite skills, abilities and attributes? If so, how?

- Would you have been able to acquire an understanding of the above roadmap without a succession plan in place? If so, how?
- Has the succession plan assisted you in achieving the requisite leadership skills, abilities and attributes? Why or why not?
- Do you feel better prepared to assume positions of leadership within the organization as a result of the succession plan? Why or why not?
- How does the leadership training and preparation of employees participating in the succession plan compare to other employees who did not participate? Which are better trained/prepared and why?

### Conclusion

Time stands still for no person - or law enforcement agency. Each moment that passes brings an organization closer to the inevitable dilemma of having to find qualified, trained and willing replacements for executive, command, management and supervisory personnel. Some organizations are in the enviable position of having a seemingly inexhaustible pool of candidates to draw from. For these agencies, leadership replenishment is not an issue. For the vast majority of California law enforcement organizations, however, identifying, selecting, promoting and training future leaders is an investment in the future that is often overlooked or never pursued to the fullest extent possible.

Succession planning is a strategy organizations can utilize to ensure that future leaders are prepared to take over the reins of leadership. Whether those leadership opportunities arise through time's endless march forward or occur

more suddenly courtesy of a terrorist's violent action, the need for future leaders remains assured and never-ending. Succession planning is a method organizations can utilize to enhance employee development. The plan can be tailored to fit any agency's size and unique requirements.

The succession planning model utilized for this research project focused on the Alta Loma Police department, a hypothetical mid-sized California law enforcement agency, employing approximately 150 sworn and civilian personnel. The development of the plan begins with the listing of specific leadership skills, abilities and attributes that the organization believes are essential for every future leader to possess. The plan then articulates the organizational commitment and allocation of resources that will be provided to the plan and to those individuals pursuing leadership positions. The plan likewise clearly states what responsibilities and expectations are placed on each and every aspiring leader.

The creation and implementation of succession planning within a mid-sized California law enforcement agency will enhance employee development by providing a clear, methodical roadmap for prospective, future leaders to follow. The very act of creating a succession plan will force an agency to examine and identify the skills, abilities and attributes that it deems critical for future leaders to possess. The traits identified should be incorporated into the agency's set of core values and incorporated into day to day operations throughout the department. By identifying in advance and clearly articulating what a future leader must be like and then working backwards, both the agency and the individual employee can work together to achieve their stated goal.

An agency's succession plan can establish target goals for expenditure of its limited training budget. During difficult fiscal times, an organization that has clearly and unequivocally acknowledged its role and responsibility for employee training and development may be able to prioritize and safeguard its training budget.

Employee development is further enhanced through the regular, ongoing evaluation and review of the agency's succession plan. In order to remain a viable and relevant outline for future leaders, a succession plan must be a living breathing instrument.

Succession planning efforts, while a formidable task for any law enforcement agency to undertake, will pay significant dividends in the area of employee development and in assuring the ongoing replenishment of qualified, prepared future leaders.

## APPENDIX A

### Nominal Group Technique Panel

Chief Larry Lewis	Alhambra Police Department
Chief Jim Ballard (Retired)	Alhambra Fire Department
Captain Jim Henchey	Alhambra Police Department
Mr. David Weakley (Retired)	Alhambra School District
Sergeant Jack Ewell	Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Assistant City Manager Karen Gallivan	City of Covina
Mayor Mark Paulson	City of Alhambra

## APPENDIX B

### Trends

1. Multiple mid-career changes
2. Early retirements
3. Number of qualified candidates seeking career advancement
4. Society's level of confidence level & trust of leaders
5. Leadership complexities
6. Political power of organized labor
7. Law enforcement benefits
8. Organizational loyalties
9. Outside promotional recruitment
10. Political instability
11. Executive level job security
12. Federal mandates (public scrutiny of police)
13. Management/leadership skill level
14. Employee retention
15. Promotional incentives/disincentives
16. Marketing of managers/leaders
17. Aversion to responsibility
18. Influence/change
19. Term limits of law enforcement officials
20. Mentoring programs

## APPENDIX C

### Events

1. Consent decree rules all Promotions be based on race & gender
2. POST funding for all management training ends
3. "3% at 50" PERS retirement plan repealed
4. Retirement age lowered
5. Police executives' bill of rights enacted into law
6. Federal government begins funding police management training
7. Additional terrorist attacks occur
8. Military conscription returns
9. Consolidation of police departments occur
10. Civil service protections eliminated
11. Term limits for police chief/executives enacted into law
12. Citizen review boards created
13. DROP program enacted into law
14. Highly publicized negative police action occurs

## END NOTES

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