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Rhetoric Versus Reality

Why Ethics Training Fails—and How to Fix It

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“What we teach is how we teach”

John McArthur, Harvard University

Berkeley police Chief Michael Meehan was already under intense scrutiny when the *Oakland Tribune* featured a story involving his use of department resources to locate his son’s missing iPhone (Bender, 2012). The incident began on January 11, 2012, when Meehan’s son, a freshman at Berkeley High School, found that his iPhone, equipped with the Find My iPhone tracking software, was missing from his unlocked gym locker. The boy alerted his father, and Meehan pulled out his own cell phone and showed a property crimes detective sergeant the real-time movement of the stolen phone.

Given the active signal of the stolen phone, the detective sergeant took his team to try to locate it. As the signal was moving into the city of Oakland, the detective sergeant called the drug task force to ask for some additional assistance, said Sgt. Mary Kusmiss, a department spokeswoman. However, a police report about the theft of the iPhone was never written, and the Oakland Police Department was never notified that officers on the department’s drug task force were in North Oakland knocking on doors looking for the phone. Three detectives and a sergeant each logged two hours of overtime.

Controversy over the search comes at a time when the city is spending \$20,000 to make sure its police department’s media policies are up to speed

after the chief was widely criticized for sending a sergeant to a reporter's home about 1 a.m. on March 9 to ask for changes to an online story. The Berkeley police union criticized the move, saying Meehan's actions "do not represent the will, spirit or sentiment of the membership of the Berkeley Police Association," and called for an independent investigation.

Chief Meehan's conduct is simply one of myriad examples of poor ethical judgment and decision making found at all levels of law enforcement. Clearly, society demands the highest standards of ethical conduct from its guardians of justice. Poor ethical decisions can damage the public trust, jeopardize investigations, and create unnecessary and, in some cases, costly litigation. Thus, it is imperative that law enforcement officers receive the ethics, critical thinking, and decision-making skills necessary to maintain the highest levels of public trust. However, Scott (2000) observes that both the quantity and quality of formal training in most contemporary policing models is lacking. Hundersmarck (2009) maintains, "Academics should focus on encouraging critical thinking skills using problem-based learning techniques more reflective of the complex nature of police work, such as changing laws, using technology, and responding to crises" (p. 2).

Despite the obvious need for a new model of law enforcement training, Bradford and Pynes (1999) observe that police academy training has changed little in the past several decades, with most agencies still failing to incorporate recent advances in the fields of psychology, education, and learning. In this chapter, the authors outline many of the problems associated with the traditional practices of law enforcement training, including attention, absence of student involvement, lack of emphasis on prior learning, and failure to address the affective dimension of learning. The authors further discuss the philosophy and principles of active learning; how active learning strategies can be used to increase student attention, motivation, and retention; and the components of an effective ethics training program. The chapter concludes with suggestions for aligning ethics training with the tenants of active learning.

Pedagogy and Practices of Law Enforcement Training _____

Law enforcement training has relied traditionally on lecture-based methods of instruction that require recruits to sit passively and take notes while more experienced instructors and subject matter experts lecture on the core curriculum. According to this pedagogical model, learning is assumed to be the product of machine-like processes, similar to those reflected in foundational behavioral learning theory (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004). Teachers disseminate knowledge, while students listen attentively, take copious notes, and demonstrate proficiency by parroting information on multiple-choice exams (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). A rigidity of thinking is reinforced, as learning is reduced to nothing more than a "mimetic" activity, a process that involves students doing little more than repeating, or miming, newly

presented information (Jackson, 1986), while field application for much of the curricula is left up to each recruit or student to discover while on the job. Further, field application is heavily influenced by the experience and guidance of one's training officers.

The didactic model of pedagogy found in law enforcement academies has a long history in education. According to Swanson and Torracco (1994), lecture emerged as a formal teaching process centuries ago that began with a duteous reading of important passages from the text by the master, followed by the master's interpretation of the text. Despite opportunities provided by changing technology and educational research, surveys indicate that the use of lecture as the dominant method of instruction throughout institutions of higher education and beyond has changed very little (Benjamin, 2002; Costin, 1972; Gunzburger, 1993; Karp, 1983), a finding that holds true in law enforcement training as well, where lecture has become the default approach for training with a number of topics, including criminal law, search and seizure, crimes in progress, communication, problem solving, and ethics. The continuing popularity of lecture is not difficult to understand. Lecture offers the advantages of decreased training costs, efficient use of instructor time and talent, judicious use of resources, and standardization of the educational experience (McLeod, 1998). Moreover, many students enjoy the nonthreatening format offered by lecture, while others fear that the use of less traditional methods of instruction will not allow sufficient time to cover the required test materials, negatively impacting their chances for a passing grade (Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Qualters, 2001).

In spite of the continued popularity of lecture, a growing body of evidence suggests that "learning is not just a spectator sport" (Chickering & Gamson, 1987, p. 30). Even the best students are unable to listen effectively for long periods of time, regardless of how motivated or skillful. Human attention requires considerable cognitive resources and energy, with most students unable to focus their attention for periods of longer than about 15 minutes before confusion and boredom begin to set in, significantly decreasing the possibility of meaningful learning and memory (DiCarlo, 2009; Penner, 1984; Solomon & Solomon, 1993; Sousa, 2001). For example, a study at the University of California at Berkeley found that college students only remembered 20% of what they heard from a traditional lecture or demonstration several days after class, ostensibly because the students were too busy taking notes to internalize the information. The results further indicated that, in a large lecture, fewer than 15% of learners are paying attention to what is being presented at any one time, not counting the first eight minutes of class when a much higher percentage of students are following the discourse (Angelo, 1991). Moreover, there appears to be only a weak association between lecture attendance and course grades (Hammen & Kelland, 1994). Thus, the effectiveness of lecture fails to correlate with its popularity, especially for complex cognitive topics, such as critical thinking, decision making, and ethics.

Problems With the Didactic Model

There are a number of factors that appear to contribute to the low rates of attention and learning associated with traditional classroom lecture. To begin with, human attention is restricted by the limitations of working memory, the component of memory most often associated with thinking, recall, and the manipulation of new information into useable concepts and ideas (Willington, 2009). Because space in working memory is limited, the average student can hold no more than five to seven pieces of information at any given time, a finding that lies in stark contrast to the deluge of facts that students are often required to memorize for “test purposes.” DiCarlo (2009) maintains that instructors, rather than concentrating on covering content, should focus on how they teach by reducing the amount of factual information that students are required to memorize, while emphasizing the importance of problem solving and independent learning.

A second problem associated with passive lecture is the lack of student engagement and participation. In traditional lecture, most of the effort is devoted to filling the student’s mind with fact and figures rather than preparing and developing it (DiCarlo, 2009). Teachers are viewed as containers filled with knowledge who actively transmit learning to students; students, on the other hand, are seen as vessels wanting to be filled with information, but who play little more than a passive role in their own learning. Not surprisingly, interaction between the student and teacher, typically in the form of student questions, is characteristically limited in scope and effectiveness (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). In a study of questioning in colleges and universities involving 40 full-time undergraduate faculty instructors at both small and large institutions, Barnes (1983) found that the mean total percent of class time spent with students answering questions was less than 4%. Of those questions, 63% focused on simply memory or recall, while another 19% concerned routine administrative inquiries. Even more disturbing, however, was the fact that nearly 33% of the questions asked failed to generate a student response.

A third complication related to lecture is the lack of emphasis on prior learning. Students do not enter the classroom *tabula rasa*, subject only to the learning conditions offered by their immediate environment (Bruning et al., 2004). Rather, each student brings a rich tapestry of prior experience, learning, interests, attitudes, and goals—factors that significantly influence how students understand, apply, and retain information. The effects of prior learning are especially important in light of the proliferation of law enforcement themes in the media, including television, movies, news, and radio, where reality and fantasy are regularly merged for entertainment value. Thus, trainers must assume that new recruits, and, in some cases, veteran officers, will be filled with preconceived biases and misperceptions from media exposure. Law enforcement ethics training, then, must not only convey new information but also correct faulty thinking and reasoning as well.

In a review of 183 studies, Dochy, Segers, and Buehl (1999) found a strong relationship between prior learning and performance. Almost all the studies investigated (91%) reported a positive effect of prior knowledge on performance, and, in some circumstances, what the learners knew about the topic prior to instruction predicated as much as 60% of the variation in student test scores. Hence, it appears that instruction should provide learners with a collaborative experience in which they have both the means and opportunity to construct new understandings by relating current problems to past learning (Tam, 2000).

A fourth difficulty linked to passive lecture is the failure of many educators to acknowledge the affective dimension of learning. According to Ledoux (1994, 1996), emotions drive attention, enhance retention, and have their own memory pathways. Recent findings in neurophysiology suggest that the limbic brain formations associated with emotion are active during every function of the cerebral cortex and R-complex. When new information from the senses enters the brain, it passes first to the thalamus, where it travels simultaneously on pathways to the higher brain centers of the neocortex, as well as to the limbic formations, where it is processed for emotional content and survival value (Damasio, 1994; Goleman, 1994; Hart, 2002). Because every experience includes an emotional dimension, an affective reaction is a natural part of each student's subjective learning response. Thus, learning and memory of a new experience include not only facts and information but also the feelings and emotions that accompanied the original event. These facts provide evidence for a strong relationship between emotion and learning (McGaugh, 1993; Phelps & Sharot, 2008), a phenomenon that signifies the necessity of emotional engagement during learning to maintain motivation, enhance learning, and increase retention (Ferro, 1993; Wlodkowski, 1985).

The final hurdle within law enforcement training is the overreliance on fear, humiliation, and punishment as tools for learning. In many cases, this is done to observe whether or not recruits can "handle" the stresses of training—often viewed as a proxy for one's ability to handle the stresses an officer is likely to encounter in the field. Research has demonstrated the positive effects of moderate stress on performance (Hardy, 1999; Humara, 1999; Robazza & Bortoli, 2007). For example, stress exposure training, in which individuals are exposed to simulated stressors and forced to perform target skills, can build familiarity with potential stressors, teach individuals strategies to maintain performance under stress, and contribute to task mastery, overlearning, and increased self-confidence (Deikis, 1982; Driskell & Johnston, 1998; Saunders, Driskell, Johnston, & Salas, 1996). However, continuously high levels of stress—or, in some cases, a single highly stressful or emotional event—can lead to emotional exhaustion, lower organizational commitment, and increased turnover intentions (Cropanzano, Rapp, & Bryne, 2003).

Evidence on the relationship between stress and performance suggests an inverted-U shape (Humara, 1999). Thus, individual performance on a given task will be lower at high and low levels of stress and optimal at moderate

levels of stress. At moderate levels of stress, performance is likely to be improved by the presence of enough stimulation to keep the individual vigilant and alert, but not enough to divert or absorb his energy and focus (Kavanagh, 2005). At low levels of stress, in contrast, activation and alertness may be too low to foster effective performance, while at high levels of stress arousal is too high to be conducive to task performance. These findings suggest that most training is best conducted under conditions of moderate stress, while avoiding the dangers of boredom or excessive emotional arousal.

While the best way to prepare officers for high-stress encounters (e.g., officer-involved shooting, vehicle pursuit, or application of force), in many cases, is to train under high-stress circumstances, law enforcement trainers must be careful in their application of stress. In addition to problems associated with emotional exhaustion and lower organizational commitment, difficulties can arise when students begin to perceive training as a “game.” At this point, training actually does little more than reinforce individual survival—that is, developing strategies to survive the exploits of the most experienced people in the room (instructors). Through this style of training, law enforcement has frequently reinforced that it is important to do the right thing when others are watching, but that is very different than the internalization of values that are fully lived out when no one is watching (Horner, Pannell, & Yates, 2011).

Unfortunately, the pervasive use of lecture and, in some cases, fear has left many recruits ill-prepared to handle dynamic interpersonal situations, apply problem-solving skills, and ensure ethical decisions and conduct in the community (Birzer, 1999; Horner et al., 2011). The changing societal needs and the demand for more democratic management in implementing contemporary models of policing have begun raising the awareness that traditional, lecture-based methods are deficient in serving either officers or the public. The era of producing physically strong, rigid officers to reactively enforce the law has become limiting, less sophisticated, and antiquated. In place of a uniform crisis response approach, there has been a gradual recognition documented in the police literature that officers need to be trained in emotional intelligence skills, such as effective communication, decision making, critical thinking, leadership, creative thinking skills, and ethics (Birzer, 2003; Birzer & Tannehill, 2001; Codish, 1996; Dwyer, & Laufersweiler-Dwyer, 2004; Horner et al., 2011; Marenin, 2004; Vicchio, 1997) in ways consistent with the tenets of active learning.

Active Learning

Lecture-based pedagogy has historically been the method of choice for law enforcement training (Flosi, 2011). This practice was assumed to be applicable to all learners, including adults, at all times. Regrettably, the current lecture-based (and sometimes fear-infused) model offers few opportunities for cognitive or emotional growth, while often downgrading complex

topics, like ethics, to monochromatic issues of right and wrong. Teaching nonmechanistic skills such as critical thinking, decision making, communication, and ethics requires a more active approach to learning—that is, a methodology more consistent with how the brain naturally processes, evaluates, and remembers information (Sousa, 2001). However, the importance of a pedagogical model focused on active learning is not new. The eminent Harvard psychologist B. F. Skinner (1968) argued more than 40 years ago that a learner “does not passively absorb knowledge from the world around him but must play an active role” (p. 5).

Knowles (1984), often cited as a major contributor of modern adult learning theory, or *andragogy*, introduced key assumptions of the learning process that differentiate adults from children, articulating that adults, unlike children, are self-directed, are self-motivated, and take responsibility for learning decisions (Knowles, 1980). Based on his empirical work focused primarily on “middle-class” learners (Merriam & Cafarella, 1999; Tough, 1983), Knowles concluded that adults need to know the purpose of learning specific information, as well as to learn experientially by drawing on personal experiences. Adults, moreover, learn best when information can be applied practically and immediately, such as opportunities to solve contemporary problems similar to those found in real-world settings.

Conducting police academy training using a holistic and collaborative adult learning model not only improves learning and memory, but also better aligns recruit training with public demands for a more community-oriented policing philosophy, enhanced accountability, and improved public safety. This is due, at least in part, to the fact that the andragogical model makes it possible to teach the more sophisticated, softer skills of ethical police work deemed necessary for effective community policing, for example, problem solving, mediation, resource referrals, and communication (Birzer & Tannehill, 2001). The andragogical model also resonates with democratic values (Brown, 2004) and better adheres to the value-based social contract between the public and the police.

Rather than focusing on content, instructors should emphasize learning strategies that stress problem solving, skill development, and higher order thinking, while significantly reducing or, in some cases, eliminating the role of lecture (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; DiCarlo, 2009; Jensen, 2005). If the topic of ethics becomes self-evident to the student in the classroom environment, it is more likely that the student will respond in a socially prescribed and approved manner. Several areas of active learning warrant further discussion, including the roles of the facilitator, the student, content, context, affect, and assessment.

Role of the Facilitator

In the traditional classroom, the roles of teacher and student are clearly defined and understood. Studies, however, suggest that not only do a significant number of individuals have learning styles best served by the tenets

of active learning, but also that students actually prefer strategies that promote active learning to traditional lecture (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). This requires law enforcement instructors to supplant outdated methods of passive lectures with active learning strategies that involve students in doing things and in thinking about what they are doing, while creating a supportive intellectual and emotional environment that encourages risk (Bruning et al., 2004).

In contrast to the teacher-centric approach found in traditional classrooms, instructors who engage their students in active learning serve as facilitators by creating opportunities for discussion, checking periodically for understanding, and challenging learner assumptions by posing contradictions, presenting new information, and asking thought-provoking questions that focus on deep understanding (Barrows, 2000). This focus on reflective thought provides students with the tools necessary not only to comprehend the material but also to become active, motivated, self-regulated, and self-reflective learners capable of effectively regulating their own thoughts and actions (DiCarlo, 2009). However, most importantly, the facilitator acts as an expert learner—that is, someone who is able to model good strategies for learning and thinking (Hmelo-Silver & Barrows, 2006).

Consistent with the idea of teacher as facilitator, research has identified the quality of discourse as one of the most critical elements in effective learning (e.g., Calfee, Dunlap, & Wat, 1994; Chinn, Anderson, & Waggoner, 2001; Kuhn, Shaw, & Felton, 1997; Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991; Wienczek & O’Flahavan, 1994). As participants strive to understand and participate in discussions, they are forced to relate, reorganize, and reevaluate what they know (Bruning et al., 2004). A good discussion, however, requires considerable preparation, thoughtful implementation, and a supportive environment. Among other duties, the facilitator is responsible for selecting suitable topics for discussion; designing appropriate queries; managing the physical environment, including group size and composition; establishing suitable norms; and monitoring group progress (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

Much of this lies in contrast to the “military model” of instruction found in many law enforcement training sessions, especially basic academy training, where the emphasis is on respect and discipline, rather than on higher order thinking and decision-making skills. While law enforcement’s mission is very different from that of the military, it is not difficult to understand the attraction of the discipline and respect honed through military service. Nonetheless, the myth of the military model is just that—a myth (Cowper, 2000). Military instructors do not simply apply arbitrary stressors; the military services have had decades to research and perfect their training models with every exercise and assignment precisely arranged to achieve a particular set of learning objectives. Therefore, to be effective, facilitators must learn to separate their role as drill instructor from their role as facilitator, where their primary responsibility is teaching the decision-making and critical thinking skills necessary to make sound, ethical decisions.

Role of the Student

A clear understanding of students' beliefs and motivation is critical to effective facilitation and meaningful learning. Every student enters the classroom with a wealth of information, education, and life experiences that have led the student to presume certain truths about the world (Bruning et al., 2004). While some of these presumptions can be said to reflect reality accurately, others do not. Understanding these assumptions is critical because what students already know has a profound influence on subsequent learning, memory, and performance (DiCarlo, 2009). Teachers who operate without awareness of their students' prior points of view often doom learners to dull, irrelevant experiences, and, in some cases, even failure (Brooks & Brooks, 1999; Hunt & Sullivan, 1974). Unfortunately, the didactic lecture-based methods found in traditional classrooms often fail to provide the tools necessary to uncover many of these assumptions.

Achieving an appreciation of students' prior learning, as well as how these assumptions impact current performance, requires opportunities for learners to share their experiences in a safe, supportive, and structured environment (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Students are continuously searching for how the materials being learned in the classroom are applicable in their daily lives, a fact that is especially important for adult learners. By offering students opportunities to apply prior knowledge, facilitators not only maximize attention and learning, but also provide the opportunity for students to assume responsibility for their own learning (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

Despite the advantages of adult learning methods, students learn very quickly what to expect and how to behave in a class filled with traditional lectures. Thus, students being exposed to facilitated discussion, small-group learning activities, and other active learning methods may be initially uncomfortable (Bonwill & Eison, 1991). Preference for a particular method of instruction should not be confused with the actual learning and application of material—the ultimate goals of any training session. Therefore, facilitators will need to role model the kinds of interactive learning strategies they are attempting to foster in students while remaining patient with the initial discomfort that many students will doubtless experience. While some students may be satisfied with just the “facts,” memory and retention are significantly facilitated when students are able to connect new learning to real-world future events (Sousa, 2001). Thus, the facilitator needs to monitor continuously students' energy levels and interest to assess the best learning strategies to reinforce the usefulness of material at any given time.

Role of Content

Knowles (1984) advises that training should rely primarily on interactive and relevant methods, such as case studies, role-plays, and real-world contextualized simulations. Examples and case studies can be pulled from the

personal experiences of recruits, current events, or the media, including movies, magazines and radio. The examples provided can be either negative or positive, but it should be made clear that exemplary performance, not perfection, is the goal (Robinson, 2008). The application of new knowledge in the context of problems is critical because it helps foster the transfer of such concepts in ways that allow students to identify, understand, and solve similar problems in the future (Bradford & Pynes, 1999).

If students are going to be expected to perform well in the field with ethical challenges, then ethical training (e.g., ethical dilemmas) should be woven in to the design of other topics and resources (Bradford & Pynes, 1999). Ethical training should be fully integrated throughout the course content, rather than merely waiting until the final days of a recruit's basic academy training, as though ethics is merely a suggestion. Doing so implies that ethics is somehow less important than other "real" law enforcement topics, such as tactics, fitness, survival skills, and firearms. To be effective, training must emphasize the critical thinking, decision making, and ethical reasoning necessary to protect an officer, the agency, and public from the start.

In support of Knowles's recommended methods, Hundersmarck (2009) found in his study with academy recruits that lecture-based classes were viewed as less relevant and less valuable when contrasted with more real-life police scenarios or hands-on training. Similarly, White (2007) contended that the realities of police encounters need to be incorporated into the academy through critical discussions, role-plays, and interactions between the recruits and instructors. Johnson, Johnson, and White (2005) echo similar beliefs, suggesting that trainees need to work with practical ethical experiences to comprehend the concepts and to transfer learning to the real world. It is not enough for students to acknowledge that something is wrong. Discussions need to be conducted to elicit the answers to why something is wrong and the consequences of the unethical behavior (DiCarlo, 2009). Facilitators who press for critical thinking and emphasize self-reflection will better equip officers to make ethical decisions in any situation they may encounter in the future.

One problem with cultivating critical thinking and ethical decision-making skills in law enforcement is the self-evident nature of the content. Many students understand clearly what is expected of them during an "ethics" course—and answer the questions and scenarios appropriately. It is probably safe to conclude that few recruits lack a complete social understanding of law enforcement responsibility. Thus, facilitators should not be surprised when a student can provide the right answers. As a result, training tends to occur at the lowest levels of Bloom's taxonomy (Atherton, 2011; Bloom, 1956), simple knowledge and comprehension—as opposed to the higher levels of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation associated with improved levels of retention and learning. Moreover, this approach fails to replicate the complicated and challenging environments where real ethical decisions occur.

To maximize learning, teachers need to present complex problems, ask relevant questions, and pose ethical dilemmas that require students to apply what they have learned in real world contextualized scenarios (Pollack & Becker, 1996). During this process, constructive feedback and reinforcements should be used to deepen understanding. Recruits should be asked to integrate past experiences into classroom activities to build intrinsic meaning and motivation. This model when applied correctly should generate a collaborative, open environment where communication, consultation, leadership, and human relation skills can be practiced with both classmates and instructors to maximize the retention and transfer of learning (Barrows, 2002).

Role of Context

Effective educators recognize that context influences both the form and quality of learning, and that the social activities that occur in the classroom are fundamental to the cognitive development necessary to identify, evaluate, and solve the kinds of problems that students are likely to encounter in the real world (Bruning et al., 2004). Therefore, facilitators encourage students to engage in dialogue—both with the instructor and with one another—by providing opportunities to share personal knowledge, fostering multiple viewpoints, emphasizing relevant problems, and checking for understanding (Slavin, 1990).

A meta-analysis of 500 experimental studies on the teaching of writing found that structured classes with clear objectives and interaction that focused on specific problems that students were likely to encounter in the real world were more effective than classes dominated by teacher talk in which students played little more than a passive role (Lewis, Woodward, & Bell, 1988). Similarly, in a study comparing student learning in four small lecture classes with one large class characterized by active learning, the greater the number of higher order questions posed by the facilitator, the higher the student scores on the posttest, leading the researchers to conclude that it is the instructional method, rather than the size of the class, that seems to influence learning (Lewis & Woodward, 1984). Therefore, training that relies on a philosophical and structural design that reflects the foundation of the adult learning model can benefit the learning outcome.

Facilitators must also consider the important roles played by practice and feedback. Certainly, no recruit would be deemed ready for field operations after a simple lecture on firearms. Proficiency with a firearm requires continuous practice and feedback. The same finding holds true for training in ethics, critical thinking, and decision making—they all require continuous practice and feedback. One does not learn to recognize, assess, and act in ethical situations without the practice and feedback necessary to develop the requisite skills set (Bruning et al., 2004). Thus, the challenge for police trainers is to integrate ethical training throughout the law enforcement curriculum, including ample opportunities for practice and feedback involving

real-life scenarios that imitate what an officer is most likely to encounter in the field. Absent the necessary application, it is highly unlikely that classroom conversations on ethics will be able to translate to desired results in the field.

Role of Affect

In basic police training, emotions are often dismissed or devalued. Reece and Walker (2005) argue that since thoughts, feelings, and actions are interconnected, people respond holistically and not in parts. Therefore, individuals should be trained as "total organisms." Vodde (2008) argues that the affective component of learning is as important, if not more important, than the cognitive component when instilling the ethical philosophy and corresponding soft skills necessary for effective policing. To deliver effectively a more holistic approach, academy training should induce emotions with ethical scenarios or simulations that include realistic factors, such as accurate language and supervisor presence. Ethical training can fail when it fails to simulate affective experience, that is, "the pit in the stomach" that comes with an actual ethical dilemma. If students have to struggle, identify, and overcome ethical dilemmas during training, they are more likely to replicate those responses in the field.

Kasher (2008) asserts that emotions play an important role in ethics training, and that ethics education needs to appeal to the emotional brain, as well as the rational brain. The ethos of an ethical police organization can be emotionally transmitted through pervasive and seductive traditions that include distinctive uniforms, rank, ceremonial rituals, insignia, customs, etiquette, repetitive drills, police language, and the familiar grounds of police headquarters. Recruits who are exposed to this dominant cultural force eventually begin to identify emotionally with these symbols. As they resonate more and more with these symbols, their loyalty, obedience, and group conformity can be expected to increase (Haslam, Reicher, & Platow, 2011). This powerful transformation can positively shape attitudes and behaviors if the organization consistently links law enforcement with ethics and professionalism. Hundersmarck (2004) remarked that identity is closely associated with many aspects of learning, particularly for police officers. In this way, constant symbolic reminders and rituals that imbue ethics will help officers maintain congruent attitudes that reflect the pride felt from belonging to a value-based organization.

In addition to identity, Goleman (1994) maintains that individuals with emotional intelligence have well-formed social skills and use this emotional awareness to direct their actions. Exposing recruits to real-world scenarios, naturally impacts their total self (i.e., thoughts, emotions, and behavior), guiding emotional reactions and evaluations of their performance. Holistic training offers officers a greater range of emotional intelligence tools accessible for use when addressing suspects, witnesses, community relations,

ethical dilemmas, crises, critical incidents, and supervisors, as well as one's spouse and family. The longer-term benefit of a holistic approach is its ability to address the unrealistic image of a super masculine warrior who views emotions as a hindrance, both to himself and to others. It helps law enforcement professionals better understand the importance of emotions when making decisions (Damasio, 1994), while giving officers permission to stop being emotionally detached. Consequently, instructors can teach recruits to access their wise emotions and cognitions to help navigate the dangers of policing.

Role of Assessment

In the traditional classroom, learning is predominately assessed through multiple-choice or short-answer tests. Such examinations focus on what students can remember and repeat, with students often committing information to memory just long enough to pass the assessment (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Thus, both the content and the method of instruction found in traditional classrooms nullify the chances of students developing the higher order thinking and problem-solving skills necessary to successfully apply what they have learned to the challenges they are likely to encounter in the real world. In contrast, active learning focuses on what students can demonstrate, generate, and exhibit, not what they can repeat (Bonwell & Eison, 1991).

Traditional instructional methods break wholes into parts and then focus independently on each segment. While this greatly simplifies the construction of lesson plans and assessment, it makes it difficult for students to understand how the parts work together to form an integrated whole—in other words, the “big picture” (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Imagine attempting to teach a student to drive an automobile by lecturing on the “design and development of the steering wheel.” This could be followed by similar lectures on “the history of the rear-view mirror,” and so forth. Each lecture would be accompanied by a multiple-choice examination. What are the chances that a student who received a passing grade on every test would be able to drive? Why, then, do law enforcement instructors continue to evaluate topics like ethics, communication, and decision making using multiple-choice examinations when such topics are best assessed through demonstration?

In an active classroom, facilitators assess student learning in the context of daily instruction. This is based on the idea that learning is not simply about committing a set of facts to rote memory, but the ability to use resources to locate, evaluate, and apply information to genuine problems (DiCarlo, 2009). Active assessment begins with building lesson plans and learning activities around “big ideas,” as opposed to more traditional clusters of small, seemingly disconnected units. Students work together in small groups to define and evaluate problems, share knowledge, and construct solutions that reflect their understanding (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Rather than evaluating student understanding as a separate activity, the memorization of information

is subordinated to student problem-solving activities and discussions. Accordingly, ethics instruction would focus less on traditional lecture, while replacing it with discussions centered on the identification, evaluation, and solution of problems, including the affective learning domain and its impact on student values, attitudes, and beliefs.

The Need for a New Model of Training

According to Birzer and Tannehill (2001), the need for more and improved law enforcement training is gathering increasing momentum as we enter the 21st century. It is through training that change, protocol, and philosophies are first introduced to law enforcement personnel. Thus, the application of the andragogical model is theorized to better facilitate the learning, educative, and training goals for police officers. Vodde (2008) believes that the application of the andragogical model will, in turn, influence the police agency, its mission, and the delivery of services. Kennedy (2003), also in favor of implementing the adult learning model in police training, states,

The field of adult education has been emerging steadily as a discrete field of social practice in the United States since the founding of the American Association for Adult Education in 1926. Since that time, research has produced many new concepts about the learning processes of adults and the motives that direct and influence an adult's ability to acquire new knowledge and skills. Recognition and application of these concepts are the keys to more effective law enforcement training programs. (p. 1)

Massey (1993) stresses a similar argument, believing that it is insufficient to train officers based strictly on a code of conduct. Although many police agencies have a code of conduct written for their officers, it is not necessarily a code that lives and breathes in daily operations. He further advocates for a model of ethics training that emphasizes the theoretical basis of moral decisions in ways that allows officers to apply independently their ethical reasoning to any situation in the field. Developing this specific skill would likely be a hedge against an overreliance on situational ethics and police corruption. However, the creation of such a prototype requires a realignment of ethics training in ways that are consistent with the tenets of adult learning, including the development and delivery of curricula.

Realigning Law Enforcement Ethics Training With Active Learning

According to a report by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Ad Hoc Committee on Police Image and Ethics (1997), police

academies, in general, offer ethics programs that are isolated, instead of being incorporated into the context of a larger training curriculum. In 2005, a decade after the Ad Hoc Committee convened, Trautman and Prevost (2005) observed that there has been little change in the state of affairs on ethics, while underscoring the need for agencies to do more. He believed that law enforcement's greatest training need was in ethics. The IACP committee reported that the majority of departments (70.5%) conducted ethics training for four hours or less, a finding that is complicated by the fact that most ethics training consists of little more than a lecture or sermon, often presented in a threatening or offensive tone. And while there has been consensus among law enforcement administrators, academicians, and member of the general public that ethics is important, there has not been enough change in providing adequate training in this area.

Despite the fact that morality has consistently been identified as integral to police work (Delattre, 1996; Miller, Blackler, & Alexandra, 1997) and among police agencies (IACP, 1997), the patchy, haphazard implementation of ethics training remains little more than a knee-jerk reaction to police abuse or corruption that has been publicly exposed. Addressing quality ethics in democratic policing must begin in the academy, when recruits are first introduced to their professional identity, as well as the cultural philosophy of the organization. Building moral consciousness and moral reasoning skills in impressionable recruits requires a significant cultural shift in the design and curricula used to deliver ethics training. Instead of imposing predominantly militaristic control in the pedagogical delivery of training, law enforcement academies should employ the adult learning philosophy and corresponding training curricula that emphasize the critical thinking, decision making, emotional intelligence, and other soft skills necessary to empower officers to behave ethically (Kennedy, 2003).

Van Slyke (2007) states, "It is essential that police ethics training utilize teaching modes that complement the adult learning process" (p. 1). Rather than teaching only a code of conduct, law, and department policies to address ethics in policing, it would be more substantive to build additional skills that address the daily ethical dilemmas faced by officers (e.g., being able to recognize and reflect on the crossroads of loyalty and immorality, and problem solving the social psychological behavior such as conformity). Applying the adult learning model to draw out these additional ethical tools would better prepare recruits for working in the community and in the police culture. Covey (1991) asserts that the challenge facing today's leaders has less to do with how to manage and control their people and more to do with ways to develop value-centered leaders who resonate the character that the police field demands. One way of accomplishing this is to challenge students with ethical scenarios that can only be solved with higher order ethical thinking (Kohlberg, 1981). As students struggle to identify, understand, and solve these complex dilemmas, their critical thinking and moral reasoning skills will grow accordingly, effectively enhancing retention, learning, and application.

Kleinig (2002) states that “morally responsible decision-making is more than a matter of ‘following the rules’” (p. 287). As a result, ethical behavior requires more than the rote memorization of rules and policies. Ethics training in the academy must interactively comprehend the purpose of each society having a police agency. Empirical research has, in fact, demonstrated that transfer from the classroom to the field is most likely to occur when a person understands the underlying principles (Brown, 2004). Moll (2007) suggests the need for recruits to understand the framework of policing in terms of social contract theory. According to this theory, the authority and legitimacy exercised by law enforcement professionals are derived from the people via a social contract. The government’s noble duty, then, is to further protect the natural rights possessed by the people—those of life, liberty, and property. As part of this agreement, citizens agree to relinquish the power to protect their own rights to the police and trust that the police will use its powers to protect the welfare of the public (Kappeler, Sluder, & Alpert, 1998). If the government agency fails to meet its obligation, citizens are no longer bound by the terms of the contract. Integrating the social contract theory using the interactive andragogical learning model can help provide officers with a deeper understanding of their responsibility to the citizenry, while better equipping officers to make ethical decisions across different dilemmas.

Benchmarks of Ethical Policing ---

Josephson (1995) describes ethics as being a code of values that helps guide our decisions and actions that paves the course for our future. Rather than describing ethics as a written code, he argues that ethics are best represented by an individual’s choices and actions. Ethics is not simply about what someone believes but also about how their values translate to behaviors.

According to Kooken (1947), the benchmarks that signify ethical policing include due process, justice, equal protection of the laws, checks and balances, separation of power, right to bear arms, freedom of speech, religion, press, protection against unreasonable searches and seizures, protection against self-incrimination, right to a lawyer, and right to a speedy trial. Ethics training should help recruits accept the operating social contract system and use it to guide them in their work. In fact, more than 160 years ago, Sir Robert Peel (cited in Reith, 1948), generally recognized as the father of modern police work, stated that the police are the public and the public are the police; thus, an us-versus-them, or the strong-versus-weak, mentality poisons the reality that we are all citizens of the same republic. Imbuing recruits with a humanistic approach that emphasizes the importance of a social contract better reflects the democratic ideals that officers are supposed to embody within a just, equitable, and democratic society (Marenin, 2004).

While many scholars agree on the importance of ethics training, they often disagree about its content. Moll (2007), for example, believes that

comprehensive ethics training needs to include information on what is right and what is wrong. Expecting recruits to navigate the ethically complex pressures and temptations of police work by drawing exclusively on their personal values, religious principles, or common sense only increases their vulnerability in misjudging situations. Pollack and Becker (1996), however, disagree with the implementation of abstract theoretical training. They believe that the application of ethical principles should be taught by drawing from practical examples that are common to police work.

Kasher (2008) believes that individuals need to be taught what is required of them to properly meet the ethical standards established by their professional identity. Therefore, recruits require training on what it means to be law enforcement professionals in a democratic republic. Bushway (2004) goes a step further by proposing that every officer should be challenged to strive to be the same individual in both private and public life. Officers should be encouraged to carry their solidified morality from their personal lives into their professional lives to avoid moving ethical lines, as is often the case with situational ethics. Academy instructors can help recruits better align their personal and professional lives by drawing examples from students that demonstrate adherence to moral virtues, while introducing common themes and ethical dilemmas in policing that challenge their belief systems and future behaviors.

Davis (1991) expands the discussion of police ethics by going beyond the self. He addresses the content of ethics training by proposing the use of a code of conduct to teach officers that being a professional means being moral, as well as being responsible for helping one's fellow officers do the right thing. Swope (1998) makes a similar argument, asserting that officers must be taught that ethical behavior is in their personal best interest, while policing their own is the only reasonable option for maintaining the ethical standards required of law enforcement by the public they are entrusted to serve. This internal standard of checks and balances creates a double layer of protection—the individual and partners looking after one another by applying appropriate peer pressure—that ensures appropriate standards of ethical conduct are continuously communicated and honored throughout the agency. Ideally, immediate supervisors would offer a third layer of protection to correct any ethical drift.

Summary

Law enforcement training has been traditionally dominated by lecture. Instructors disseminate knowledge, while learners focus their resources on replicating what they have learned. Regrettably, the traditional didactic model discourages student cooperation, requires students to work in relative isolation, and focuses on low-level skills, rather than on higher order reasoning and problem solving (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). Teaching the higher

order thinking and reasoning skills necessary to police effectively in today's complex, multicultural societies requires a more active and holistic approach—more specifically, a methodology that is consistent with how the brain naturally processes, evaluates, and remembers information (Sousa, 2001). Training in law enforcement ethics, decision making, problem solving, and critical thinking requires facilitators who understand the importance of prior learning, appropriate questions, checking for key assumptions, and involving students in the learning process.

Considering the growing body of research linking active learning with improved retention, memory, and performance, the chapter concludes with suggestions for improving current ethics training.

Reduce or Eliminate Lecture

This chapter has outlined a number of problems associated with traditional lecture, including the limits of human attention (Willington, 2009), lack of student involvement (DiCarlo, 2009), effects of prior learning (Bruning et al., 2004), failure to acknowledge the affective dimension of learning (Ledoux, 1994, 1996), and the debilitating effects of chronic stress (Kavanagh, 2005). Considering these problems, law enforcement facilitators would be well served to minimize or, whenever possible, eliminate the role of lecture altogether. Instead, facilitators should focus on learning exercises that engage students in critical thinking and problem-solving exercises. Learning should center on exercises that prompt students to identify, diagnose, and solve real ethical dilemmas in a collaborative, supportive learning environment that encourages risks.

Incorporate Active Learning Strategies

Active learning strategies are teaching methods that engage students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing (Brooks & Brooks, 1999). The human mind is limited in the amount of information that can be retained or processed in short-term memory at a given time, a finding exacerbated by stress or other strong emotions. Rather than focusing on content, facilitators should emphasize learning strategies that stress problem solving, skill development, and higher order thinking (DiCarlo, 2009). This includes small-group learning activities, facilitated discussions, case studies, role-plays, and other activities intended to inquire about learner understanding, encourage student dialogue, test assumptions, and stimulate critical thinking.

Emphasize Prior Learning

All students enters the classroom with a wealth of information, education, and life experience that have led them to believe certain truths about the world (Bruning et al., 2004). Many of these assumptions have a significant

impact on how students understand, process, and remember new information. Students are continuously searching for how the materials being taught in the classroom connect to prior experiences and learning. By offering students opportunities to apply what they already know, test assumptions, and assimilate new knowledge into existing belief systems, facilitators maximize attention, learning, and retention in important ways (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). Nonetheless, many students may be initially uncomfortable with facilitated models of learning. As a result, facilitators must continuously monitor student attention levels, energy, and interest to ensure the best learning experience possible.

Connect With the “Real World”

Adults are self-directed, self-motivated, and take responsibility for their own learning (Knowles, 1980). Moreover, most adults are busy, thus their time is valuable. As a result, adults need to know the purpose of the training—and, more specifically, how they can apply what they are learning in the classroom to become more effective in the real world. Facilitators can best demonstrate the applicability of classroom learning by engaging students in problem-solving activities, facilitated discussions, and case studies that best represent the kinds of problems that students are most likely to encounter while on the job (DiCarlo, 2009). Thus, the ethical problems and scenario used to instruct ethics must be relevant, that is, they should simulate the types of real-world ethical dilemmas that officers can expect to face in the performance of their daily activities.

Serve as Facilitator

Rather than lecturing while students sit passively, law enforcement ethics instructors should assume the role of facilitators by creating opportunities for discussion, checking periodically for understanding, challenging learner assumptions, and asking thought-provoking questions designed to stimulate higher order problem solving and critical thinking (Barrows, 2000). Unlike traditional teacher-centric methods that focus almost exclusively on content, the facilitator’s job is to create a supportive learning environment. Thus, the facilitator stimulates learning by selecting suitable topics for discussion, designing appropriate questions, managing the physical environment, establishing suitable norms, and monitoring group progress (Bonwell & Eison, 1991), while students solve problems and engage in meaningful dialogue.

Integrate Affect

Emotions drive attention, enhance retention, and have their own memory pathways (LeDoux, 1994, 1996). When new stimuli from the senses

enters the brain, it is processed for emotional and survival significance, as well as information value. As every experience includes an emotional dimension, affective reactions are part of each student's subjective learning experience. As Sousa (2001) suggests, the learning and memory of new information includes not only facts and information but also feeling and emotions that accompany the event. Therefore, student role-plays, case studies, and other exercises should be designed to include an affective component—that is, learning activities that stimulate the emotional brain, as well as the rational brain.

Model Behavior

Finally, facilitators should model the kinds of learning strategies they are attempting to impart on their students. In other words, facilitators should act as expert learners in the classroom and in the field. They should deliberately and purposely model good strategies for thinking and learning that include asking open-ended questions, remaining open-minded, exploring alternative theories, checking for understanding, examining key assumptions, and working collectively with students toward solutions (Hmelo-Silver & Barrows, 2006).

Ethics, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills are critical to the success of today's law enforcement professionals. Unlike traditional didactic models of instruction, active learning activities involve students in the learning process and impart important learning strategies, while enhancing learning, retention, and memory (DiCarlo, 2009; Sousa, 2001). The use of active learning also makes students responsible for their learning, as well as allowing them to better understand the purpose of learning by connecting new knowledge with prior experience (Knowles, 1980). By adopting these recommendations, law enforcement trainers should be better suited to assist students in meeting the demands imposed by our increasingly complex societies—including a realization of the high standards of ethical conduct expected by the citizenry. Moreover, improving ethics training in ways that focus on real-world problem solving may help tomorrow's law enforcement professionals avoid the flawed decision-making process that led a police chief to assign valuable resources to search for a stolen iPhone without so much as a police report.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the roles of the teacher and student in traditional lecture-based classroom?
2. Describe three problems associated with lecture-based methods of instruction.

3. What is active learning?
4. How does the role of facilitator differ from the role of lecturer?
5. Explain the relationship between stress and learning.
6. What should be included in the content of ethical instruction?

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