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LEPS 599 – Integrative Capstone
Module 2: Promoting Ethical & Effective Leadership for
Law Enforcement and Public Safety Organizations

In this module I have selected four works for you to review that I feel are the cornerstones for ethical and effective leadership. Donald McGannon said it perfectly when he stated, “Leadership is an action, not a position.” My Army training and experience as a military leader has exposed me to many lessons which instilled in me the ideals that leaders are not positions to be used for selfish gains. Leaders are responsible for the welfare of their subordinates. “Leadership is the process of influencing people by providing purpose, direction, and motivation to accomplish the mission and improve the organization.” (Army Leadership, 2012) Leaders gain the respect of their peers and subordinates through leading by example and having the knowledge to make sound, accurate, and timely decisions.

There are many methods that a leader can use to mentor and influence their followers to accomplish tasks. The first presentation for you to review is a narrated PowerPoint titled “Motivating Followers Toward Optimal Performance.” In this presentation, I discuss John Fleenor’s leadership trait “Intelligence and Action Oriented Judgement.” In order to be an ethical and effective leader, one must be competent, clearly define expectations, and take necessary actions to improve the performance of their followers. In law enforcement, Officers and Deputies must be able to make ethical and lawful decisions on their own accord for the betterment of public safety. As they advance in their careers, they become training officers, Sergeants, and Lieutenants. Each advance in position becomes more complex and demands greater responsibility. A strong ethical and effective leader is necessary to guide the performance of the employees that he or she is responsible for as well as the success of the agency.

Inevitably, complications will exist in the workplace. Whether it is caused by outside factors or through employee behaviors, it is the leader’s responsibility to address issues as they arise. Failing to handle an issue will only negatively affect the team and the organization as a whole. The second work, “Terminate or Retain,” is a case study that reviews how one leader’s failure to address a poorly performing employee deteriorates the effectiveness of the entire office and nearly causes the exceptional employees to quit. The case study ends with a retrospective review of a more corrective course of action. Leaders must make tough decisions. It may not always be the easy or most popular decision, but a leader will set a precedent regarding what is and is not acceptable based on his or her decisions and actions.

Particularly in law enforcement, it has become commonplace to demand the disclosure of unnecessary and private information as well as to make “examples” out of law enforcement. This has come in many forms and was addressed a few different ways

throughout this course, such as the demand for the release of confidential mental health evaluations and the immediate firing of officers involved in controversial situations. I chose the third work, titled, "Ensuring Civil Rights for Civil Servants," because it directly addresses the attempted limitations of a Constitutional right afforded to *all* citizens. All too often in civil service positions, the organization, politicians, as well as the citizens believe they can strip law enforcement of their inalienable rights for the sole reason that they service the public and the government. Law enforcement leaders have the opportunity to cower to the demands of politics or stand up and defend not only their employees, but the profession as a whole.

Lastly, I provided an approach to conflict resolution with "Apply Strategies for Changing Difficult Behaviors." Law enforcement is rife with Type-A personalities. Throughout a law enforcement officer's career he or she will experience personal conflicts with others and must also deal with personal conflicts between co-workers. Failing to handle these conflicts quickly and appropriately can lead to long standing feuds. These difficult behaviors are damaging to team cohesion, organizational progress, and can even threaten careers.

Through the review of these four works, I hope to have conveyed the foundational cornerstones necessary in order to provide quality leadership. A knowledgeable and motivated leader must be able to stand up for what is right and make the necessary decisions to benefit the individuals under their command. An agency may falter over petty disputes and conflict or thrive through ethical and effective leadership.

Reference:

Army Leadership. ADP 6-22. Department of the Army. August 2012.
https://fas.org/irp/doddir/army/adp6_22.pdf