

A PRIMER FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT PROFESSIONALS WHO TRANSITION TO  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

By

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Community College Leadership Program

## ABSTRACT

In communities across the country, law enforcement officials are retiring and entering a second career in academia. Community colleges are looking to law enforcement veterans to teach and lead their criminal justice programs. Unfortunately, colleges and universities do not have a designated handbook or protocol to assist criminal justice professionals with the transition into academia as department or program coordinators. New coordinators may struggle in adjusting to new terminology, protocols, processes, and challenges as part of their transition into a second career.

Transitioning into academia from law enforcement can be a difficult and complicated process. As a result of this dissertation, a Primer was created that can be used by law enforcement professionals, as well as community college institutions interested in making the transition smoother and shortening the adjustment period. The Primer originated from the need to develop a system that makes it easier for new educators to understand and become more proficient in leadership, recruiting, academic processes, politics, and pitfalls of the position. This Primer will help coordinators reduce their adjustment time and lead the next generation of criminal justice practitioners into the 21st-century workforce.

## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother, Victoria Baber, who, without a doubt, has made me into the man I am today. Though you have passed on, I still feel your spirit guiding me through this process. I thank you for your love, encouragement, and belief in me. I thank God for the time we had together; you were definitely my best friend. I love you for all the sacrifices made for me, and I would not be where I am today without you.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
Abstract.....	i
Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	iv
Chapter 1: Introduction .....	1
Statement of the Problem for Criminal Justice Practitioners .....	1
Leadership in Criminal Justice Programs .....	1
Structure of Criminal Justice Curriculum .....	3
Associate Degrees and Certificates.....	3
General Education Requirements.....	4
Academic Advising .....	5
Making the Transition: Different Perspectives .....	6
Conclusion.....	7
Chapter 2: Literature Review .....	8
Introduction .....	8
Developing Leadership Skills.....	8
Understanding the New Leadership Environment .....	9
Building Relationships.....	11
Practicing Effective Communication Skills .....	13
Being a Visionary and Leading by Example.....	14
Growing and Developing as a Leader .....	15
Maintaining Mental and Emotional Health .....	16
Dealing with Stress.....	17
Facing Failure .....	18
Understanding the Academic Environment.....	19
Working with Faculty .....	19
Conclusion.....	21
Chapter 3: Methodology For Creating The Primer .....	22
Why a Primer?.....	22
The Foundations of this Primer.....	23
What’s Included in this Primer.....	23
Primer Organization .....	25

Conclusion.....	26
Chapter 4: A Primer For Criminal Justice Professionals Who Transition to Community College Leadership.....	27
Welcome to Academia.....	27
Changing Conditions of Employment and Identity.....	28
From Shift Work to Always in the Office.....	28
No Longer Authority of Law.....	30
Decision Making: On Your Own Versus Needing Approvals.....	33
From Single Manager to Consensus Builder.....	35
The Politics of Your New Position.....	36
Use Your Natural Leadership Style.....	37
Focus on the Program.....	38
Focus on the Students.....	40
Show Compassion.....	40
Building New Relationships.....	41
Effective Internal Relationships at the College.....	41
Working with Advisory Committees.....	42
Importance of Advisory Committee Input.....	43
Evaluating Your Staff.....	44
Developing Your Staff.....	46
Understanding State and National Trends.....	47
Trends and Patterns in CJ Curricula.....	48
Current Trend: Law Enforcement Ethics.....	49
Being Responsible for Your Professional Development.....	50
Professional Memberships.....	50
Conducting Research.....	51
Organizational Memberships.....	52
Professional Publications.....	52
Guidelines for Program Transformation and Program Change.....	54
Components of a Criminal Justice Program.....	56
Theory and Practical Courses.....	56
Critical Thinking Scenarios.....	58
Prerequisites and Course Sequencing.....	59
Developing New Specialties and Programming.....	59
Articulation Agreements.....	60
Dual Credit Programs.....	61
Student Criminal Justice Clubs and Alumni Associations.....	62

The Academic Curriculum Process.....	63
Overview to the Curricular Process .....	64
Starting the Process .....	64
Writing Course Descriptions .....	65
Course Requirements.....	66
Developing Course Outcomes.....	66
Transferability of Courses and Credits.....	67
Eliminating and Substituting Courses .....	69
Developing New Courses .....	70
General Education Proficiency.....	70
Relying on Internal Resources During Curricular Revision .....	71
Curricular Processes and Procedures .....	73
Division Approval .....	74
College-Level Approval .....	75
Curriculum Subcommittees .....	76
Implementation .....	77
Conclusion on the Curricula Process.....	78
Conclusion.....	78
Chapter 5: Conclusions and Implications.....	80
Introduction .....	80
Leadership.....	81
Vision.....	82
Networking.....	83
Professional Development.....	83
Implications.....	84
How Colleges Can Prepare Coordinators for the Transition.....	86
Lack of Resources for Coordinators .....	88
Opportunities for Coordinators .....	90
Support of Other Coordinators.....	92
Mentoring Program .....	93
Coordinator Handbook .....	94
Adapting to the New Career .....	94
Showing Compassion .....	95
Conclusion.....	95
REFERENCES.....	97

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### **Statement of the Problem for Criminal Justice Practitioners**

Every year in community colleges around the country, public safety professionals are making the transition from law enforcement and corrections to academia. The career change requires an orientation to a new working environment that is not always easy to understand. There is a new language and vocabulary, plus new processes, procedures, and practices. It is not always clear where or how to find information, and people at the college may be too busy to spend much time helping new personnel find their way. The transition can be a difficult one if one does not have direction and guidance at the institutional level. Criminal justice practitioners need a set of guidelines to help with the transition.

The purpose of this information is to serve as a guide in assisting law enforcement leaders with their transition to educational leadership. The guide will be beneficial for practitioners who are becoming coordinators, department chairs, or leading criminal justice programs at the college and university levels of academia.

### **Leadership in Criminal Justice Programs**

Criminal justice programs throughout the country are similar to the one at Mott Community College. The Mott criminal justice program, which began in the 1960s, was

oriented to police administration and did not have full-time coordination until the 1970s. Today, most programs have a coordinator or chair to lead their criminal justice programs. The job of the coordinator is to guide, schedule, advise students, and lead the overall criminal justice program at the institution.

The leadership of the coordinator is crucial to the success of the program. Criminal justice programs need adequate leadership to grow and be successful. The success of the program is a team effort, and everyone associated with the program plays an important part in building and maintaining the program.

Leadership requires trust and the ability to bring people together. The workplace can be and frequently is a political one, and often the coordinator faces barriers to success when a program changes hands and one must deal with the politics involved. Another issue of leadership is the change in identity from the authority of law to the world of academia.

Criminal justice professionals in the college setting will likely experience major changes in the conditions of their employment. Coordinators will leave the rigors of shift work and move to the life of office work and working extended hours beyond the classroom. The role of coordinator also requires learning a new set of policy and procedures, which require the coordinator to get approvals prior to making decisions. The work environment is quite different from law enforcement, as the process slows down for those making the transition.

Last, but not least, new criminal justice coordinators need to understand the value and importance of consensus-building and how it benefits the coordinator making the transition from being a single manager to one who includes a multitude of stakeholders. These issues are crucial to the success of any organization.

### **Structure of Criminal Justice Curriculum**

One of the major changes for a criminal justice professional is in the language and vocabulary of higher education. Criminal justice programs at the community college level usually have two-year degree and certificate programs. For a new coordinator of a program, the specifics of the academic programs can be confusing. Criminal justice is an occupational field in which the degree is developed and centered on a specific profession. In this case, criminal justice and corrections are two associate degrees usually available in community colleges nationwide.

#### **Associate Degrees and Certificates**

Most associate degrees can be completed in two years and, upon graduation, the student will receive an associate of Science degree. In addition to associate degrees for criminal justice and corrections, most colleges usually offer certificate programs. The requirement for a corrections officer is typically not an associate degree in corrections or criminal justice; local and state corrections departments often require the completion of a corrections certificate. Every state has different requirements for employment, but most students can earn certificates of completion. The certificate programs generally do not require as many credits as associate degree programs for completion.

Students who complete their two-year degree can qualify for a career such as a police officer, or they continue on to a four-year institution. An associate degree will require a combination of specialty courses, general electives, and general education courses. Specialty courses are specific to the degree. For example, courses such as Introduction to Criminal Justice or Criminal Investigation are considered specific to the field of criminal justice.

### General Education Requirements

General electives are courses students can select, which may be from a related field, such as psychology, sociology, or political science. The elective courses are included in the degree program because they are closely related to the criminal justice field, and they are also disciplines applicable to the job. For example, psychology can be useful when dealing with an irate inmate or mentally disturbed person on the street. Another example is political science; criminal justice (CJ) students must know their amendments and the rights of citizens. Sociology is another example of a course offered in a related discipline. CJ graduates will encounter people from all walks of life and need to be able to deal with those in various social and economic situations. Prisoners, criminals, and victims come from different backgrounds, and officers do not get to choose whom they may serve.

Most general education courses are set by the college and are required for degree completion and graduation. Courses such as math, social studies, and sciences are required in all programs of study across the nation. General education courses are

beneficial in the field of criminal justice. Courses such as algebra are needed for police officers who become accident reconstructionists. Business courses are needed to understand how to track people who embezzle money or commit fraud. Foreign language skills are needed if there is a person who does not speak English, especially in federal-level jobs such as border patrol. The degree requirements are in place to benefit the student and facilitate student success. Some students who want to become correction officers may elect to pursue an associate degree in corrections. In some states, like Michigan, for example, police departments require a minimum of a two-year associate degree to be eligible for employment.

#### Academic Advising

Because of these options and alternatives in criminal justice education, new coordinators need to understand in what ways they can use their discretion when advising students. Coordinators often recommend social science courses as electives because they can help the student have a better understanding of people and society. College certificate programs tend to be compressed and focus almost entirely on a specific topic. The certificate programs give students the flexibility to pick and choose what classes to take in hopes of mastering the subject (learn.org). Certificate programs do not require general education courses and other courses that are required for an associate degree. Coordinators should explain to the student the differences between earning an associate degree and a certificate.

New coordinators also need to understand that in some areas of the curriculum they do not have discretion. Each college criminal justice program may have different curriculum components. For instance, the criminal justice program at Mott Community College has two degrees and two certificates: one for the criminal justice program and one for the corrections program.

In Michigan, the criminal justice associate degree is required by most police departments. New coordinators need to understand that they will be responsible for program areas beyond law enforcement. For instance, for someone in the area of corrections in Michigan, the academic requirements are different than they are for a police officer. The corrections certificate was created for students who wanted to work in county jails and prisons in Michigan. In addition to associate degrees, new coordinators also need to understand certificate programs.

### **Making the Transition: Different Perspectives**

New coordinators need to make the transition from criminal justice professional to educator. Merging two different disciplines can be difficult, and the two areas of criminal justice and education are no exception. In many respects, the two are very different from each other in terminology, deadlines, meetings, and leadership approaches. The focus of both is also different. One is concerned with public safety and the other is concerned with educating future professionals. Police or criminal justice professionals deal with issues of the moment, making split-second decisions that could possibly have huge consequences. Educators have a bit more time to make decisions,

and although they still may have grave consequences, they are not likely to be life-and-death decisions. The thought process is also different and can clash, depending on the focus of each discipline. But there are some similarities between the two; for example, they both want people to be well trained and successful.

### **Conclusion**

Former criminal justice professionals who become coordinators of criminal justice programs in community colleges will experience a cultural shock, regardless of the college. First, there are the different kinds of leadership issues because the occupations are very different. Criminal justice occupations are structured as paramilitary organizations with top-down management; higher education is the opposite, with attention to consensus-building and decision-making.

Second, the vocabulary and language is new. The intricate nature of the component parts of an academic criminal justice program is possibly unlike anything criminal justice professionals have seen. But with an appropriate orientation and set guidelines, this transition can be less difficult and more effective.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

### **Introduction**

The transition from the workforce to academia for law enforcement professionals involves application and, more importantly, research into topics related to changing professions. One of the disappointments for new law enforcement professionals making the transition is that there is limited research directly correlated to the challenges that this transition entails.

Despite the limited information available to a newly hired coordinator, there are other professions that have valuable information and advice important for success. The other professions, besides law enforcement, include business management and leadership. The information included in this chapter centers around literature related to developing leadership skills, maintaining health and mental well-being, and understanding the academic environment. This literature review reflects the categories of information contained in the Primer that follows in Chapter 4.

### **Developing Leadership Skills**

The professional literature related to leadership skills in general is extensive. While very little of it focuses on transitioning from one professional field to another —

as our criminal justice professional-now-academic leader experiences — many experts have researched leadership skills that are essential to these new professionals.

#### Understanding the New Leadership Environment

A text from the field of law enforcement that focuses on the importance of sound leadership skills, *Police Chief 101*, by Gerald Garner (2010), was written by a police chief and provides advice for the challenges and topics leaders will face on a daily basis in their new role. The strengths of the book start from the beginning, with the professional's selection as the new leader. According to Garner, "As a law enforcement manager you already know how to do research" (p. 4). Garner emphasizes the importance of doing research on the job, prior to starting the position. The author also stresses that the new leader should assess his or her staff and have knowledge of what happened to the last individual who occupied the position. Another strength of the Garner text is that it would benefit new leaders by guiding them through challenges they may encounter in a leadership position. According to Garner, "No doubt you assemble a lot of data in preparing to compete for the Chief's position" (p. 4). Garner states the new leader should size up the department, assess the staff, and take time to observe and evaluate, in the early days on the job. The author also suggests that major changes should not be made and leaders should examine the high-risk areas first.

In their text *The Truth about Leadership*, Kouzes and Posner (2010) also stress that leaders must find a fit and learn about their employees to build a mutual understanding between one another. According to the authors, "You cannot fully

commit to something that isn't important to you — no one can" (p. 31). The authors suggest that leaders must be able to commit to the vision of the work environment and also receive commitment from employees they are leading.

New leaders must understand the first 90 days of a new position are critical to their success. Several sources, including Brock (2011), Edmonds (2011), Lavinsky (2013), and Watkins (2013), emphasize the importance of the leader's first 90 days as a coordinator. Brock notes, for example, that leaders are very disciplined when they are appointed to a new position and take their time in changing and making big decisions. Brock explained, "What you accomplish in your first 90 days sets the pattern for you and the organization over a much longer period" (p. 1).

Edmonds (2011) supports Brock by stressing alignment and clarification for new leaders before making any sudden changes. Edmonds stresses the leader must learn about the employees and the organization. According to Edmonds, "The leader needs to learn about their players, staff, skills, and social styles" (p. 2).

Watkins (2013) believes part of preparing leaders for the position of coordinator is by doing homework and research, prior to accepting the position. Watkins also supports Edmonds' viewpoint by advocating for the leader to develop a strategy before and during the first 90 days. According to Watkins, "Different types of situations require you to make significant adjustments in how you plan for and execute your transition" (p. 2).

Lavinsky (2013) takes Brock's, Edmonds', and Watkins' advice a step forward and believes it is important for a leader to have a step-by-step program in the development of a leader's first 90 days at the helm. During the 90-day period, leaders should stress the importance of building effective relationships during that time of new leadership.

### Building Relationships

One of the first steps to building an effective relationship and trust is to establish relationships on all levels within the organization.

According to Reynolds (2012) in his book, *Why People Fail*, "Peak performers expand their own knowledge base by bringing others into their world — as counselors, idea generators, or critics of their concepts" (p. 166). In addition, the leader needs to understand he or she needs people to be successful and stay successful. Reynolds also focuses on the importance of expanding of the leader's circle, colleagues, and friends. It is critical for leaders to surround themselves with people they can trust if they are expecting to grow in a leadership position.

The book *The First-Time Manager*, by Belker, McCormick, and Topchik (2012), addresses building trust and confidence with employees. According to the authors, "You can share the vision of the organization and the department with your team members" (p. 19). Also, according to the authors, leaders must give clear directions that keep everyone on the same page and build confidence by involving their staff in some of the decision-making processes.

In his best-selling book, *It Worked for Me: In Life and Leadership*, Colin Powell (2012) argues points about trusting your employees and taking care of them. According to Powell, “I believe when you take over a new outfit, start out trusting the people there unless you have real evidence not to. If you trust them, they will trust you, and those bonds will strengthen over time” (p. 75). Powell also believes in building mutual respect between employees and leaders: “Respect for leaders by followers can’t be mandated; it must be earned. It has to be given to leaders by their followers” (p. 78).

Daniel Goleman’s (2002) book, *Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence*, adds to Colin Powell’s advice about leading and earning the respect of your followers by discussing the importance of self-awareness in building relationships with staff and colleagues. According to Goleman, “When leaders are able to grasp other people’s feelings and perspectives, they access a potent emotional guidance system that keeps what they say and do on track” (p. 50). Goleman also suggests that leaders should develop others and show genuine interest in helping them develop their personal strengths and weaknesses. He stresses that teamwork and collaboration are important for leadership in any organization: “When leaders are being affiliative, they focus on the emotional needs of employees even over work goals” (p. 65). Goleman believes the collective effort brings teams together and cements close relationships. The three most important skills that a leader can use in building strong relationships with staff and colleagues are empathy, organizational awareness, and service. He also asserts, “Empathy, which includes listening and taking other people’s

perspectives, allows leaders to tune in to the emotional channels between people that create resonance” (p. 31). Goleman also believes leaders who are attuned to social networks and understand political forces at work can operate more effectively with their staff.

### Practicing Effective Communication Skills

At the foundation of a leader’s ability to develop strong, trusting relationships with staff and colleagues are effective communication skills. According to Belker, McCormick, and Topchik (2012), “New managers should be concerned about their ability to communicate and listen actively” (p. 24). The authors suggest that new managers do too much talking and not enough listening to their employees: “If you want to be a brilliant manager, be an active listener” (p. 25). Along with pointing out listening skills, the authors also give solid advice about building a team dynamic founded on clear communication: “The six essential factors to building a dynamic team are Open communication, Empowerment, Clear roles and responsibilities, Goal clarity, An effective leader, and A reward and accountability system for both individual team members and the entire team” (p. 45).

Additional sources, including Heathfield (2016), Nordmeyer and Media (2016), Tardanico (2012), and Craemer (2011), stress the importance of clear communication for leaders. Heathfield notes, for example, that communication has to be delivered with enough detail that the receiver shares the meaning with the sender of the message. Heathfield also states that non-verbal communication, such as body language, facial

expressions, and tone of voice, is important in sending clear and effective messages. Nordmeyer and Media support the Heathfield article by emphasizing that complete, clear, and concise messages convey information correctly in the workplace. Tardanico agrees with the other two sources, but focuses on habits of effective communicators. Tardanico believes eye contact and listening with one's eyes as well as ears can ensure clear, effective, communication. According to Tardanico, "Good leaders know how to ask good questions, and listen with both their eyes and ears" (p. 4).

#### Being a Visionary and Leading by Example

According to Kouzes and Posner (2010) in their book *The Truth about Leadership*, "People become cynical, disenchanted, and downright weary when leaders back away from or don't do what they are asking of others" (p. 112). The authors make it clear that leaders need to have vision and think about the future of their organization. They also emphasize that leaders must let employees know where they are going and what the future plans are for the organization. They stress, "Actions speak louder than words is wise counsel to live by" (p. 107). Kouzes and Posner believe that a leader leads by example or not at all.

Wolf's (2015) book, *Seven Disciplines of a Leader* also discuss the importance of leading by example, stressing that "Effective leadership is about getting things done" (p. 25). Wolf insists that highly effective leaders are built on a foundation of honesty and integrity: "Success requires a whatever-it-takes attitude whatever it takes to get the job done, within ethical business constraints" (p. 26). Wolf is very animated when it comes

to potential pitfalls of leadership, such as being a complainer or having too much pride and envy. According to Wolf, “The minute you’re dishonest and bend the truth, the minute you fail to tell it like it is, you lose your credibility” (p. 29). The author covers pitfalls in his book, along with what is needed to be a highly effective leader. Wolf uses scenarios to make his points throughout each chapter. The scenarios used are from different disciplines and can be used by leaders across different professions.

According to Belker, McCormick, and Topchik (2012), “Motivation is getting people to want to do what needs to be done, willingly and not by force” (p. 109). The authors encourage leaders to describe the impact of their work, and not to overdo it by going to extremes of too much positive feedback.

John C. Maxwell’s (1995) book, *Developing the Leader Within You*, focuses on a variety of skill sets that a leader needs, stressing that leaders should be character-driven, instead of emotionally driven. According to Maxwell, “The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership” (p. 319). Maxwell, like Belker et al. (2012), emphasize that leaders must lead by example and complete tasks, even if they are not in the mood to take care of the more difficult or less attractive tasks.

#### Growing and Developing as a Leader

Many leadership skills resources focus on professional development and ongoing leadership development. According to Kouzes & Posner (2010), “Leadership can be learned. It is an observable pattern of practices and behaviors, and a definable set of skills and abilities” (p.120) In addition, the authors believe the best leaders are the best

learners: “The potential to lead exists in you” (p. 119). Growth for leaders includes self-reflection as well as professional development activities. Several sources, including Ambler (2013), Amey (2006), Kouzes and Posner (2010), and Hall (2007), emphasize that ongoing development keeps a leader fresh and focused. Ambler notes, that leaders learn from challenging assignments. For example, dealing with change and diversity is important in leadership. Amey supports this point, emphasizing that leaders learn by doing and need to understand leadership roles and the organization culture in which they serve in order to make decisions for all students who represent the institution. Two key resources, books by Kouzes and Posner and Hall, focus on the importance of leadership development through continuous learning and growing by working on strengths and weaknesses. Also, Kouzes and Posner emphasize that leaders must make a consistent personal investment to learn leadership. Kouzes and Posner’s book, *The Truth about Leadership*, emphasizes the importance of continuous development by the leader to involve other people along the journey and the inability of leaders to do it alone.

### **Maintaining Mental and Emotional Health**

Another area of concern for leaders is the importance of surviving the job. Tom Rath’s (2015) book *Are You Fully Charged?* addresses ways for professionals of any discipline to stay healthy. According to Rath, “There is no better use of your financial resources than to spend them on meaningful experiences with other people” (p. 99). The author, who is an expert on human behavior, believes that the spending of financial

resources is better for the mental health of leaders and will be more beneficial than spending money on material things. Rath states that experiences have a lasting benefit for people and will elicit excitement when they have something to look forward to outside of work. The weakness of the Rath book is that it is general to all people and levels of the organization and not just leaders. The techniques in the book focus on keeping energy up and dealing with stress. The text is broken into three areas: meaning, interactions, and energy.

### Dealing with Stress

Coordinators have experienced stress in their prior career of law enforcement. The position of coordinator will be met with deadlines, meetings, classroom lesson plans, and other coordinator duties. The ability to deal with stress is important for a leader's health and decision-making skills. Several sources, such as Goudreau (2013), Tobak (2016), Kirschman (2006), and Swanson, Territo, and Taylor (2012), emphasize that dealing with stress in a healthy manner is important to the leader's health. Tobak notes that high stress breeds the best leaders and should be viewed from a positive perspective. Tobak ultimately focuses on the importance of dealing with stress for success and embracing stress. Goudreau takes Tobak's perspective a step further and focuses on ways to eliminate stress in the work environment. Goudreau also points out eating and sleeping well can contribute to handling stress. Two key resources include books by Kirschman and Swanson, Territo, and Taylor. Kirschman's book, *I Love a Cop*, talks about dealing with stress from a law enforcement perspective and includes family

advice on how to deal with stress. In addition, Kirschman discusses what stress looks like and how it can affect the others, including leaders. Also, ways to seek professional help are also included. Swanson et al. also support the point of diet and sleep being critical in handling stress. In addition, the authors emphasize the importance of seeking counseling if needed.

### Facing Failure

In *Why People Fail?* Simon Reynolds (2012) points out 16 different obstacles that explain why people fail in the workplace. The strengths of the book include areas where new coordinators can benefit. Also, the book focuses overall on individual accomplishments and self-improvement. The first obstacle addressed is destructive thinking. According to Reynolds, “The killer is invisible, yet its deadly work can be seen everywhere: in careers, life, relationships, in people’s health, and certainly in their minds” (p. 13). The author stresses that destructive thinking affects a person’s health in negative ways. Reynolds cites numerous studies about the body’s response to negative thinking and stresses that positive thinking can greatly improve mental health.

There are other sources, including Jenkins (2014) and Anjana (2011), that emphasize ways of maintaining mental and emotional health. For example, Anjana states that individuals should take it easy and not beat themselves up for making mistakes. According to Anjana, “Remember that disappointments will lead to depression” (p. 2). Jenkins supports this point by recommending exercising, watching television, or listening to music. Another key resource is Hereford (2016), whose focus is

on diet and sleep. Also, Hereford points out leaders should maintain healthy relationships and have fun, participating in sports or hobbies.

### **Understanding the Academic Environment**

For many new academic leaders, especially those entering academia from a business or government sector, adjusting to the academic environment can be similar to traveling to a foreign country with a new culture, new language, and new daily procedures and practices.

#### **Working with Faculty**

One of the key differences that new academic leaders encounter is their relationship with faculty. In the business or government sectors, leadership is based on a hierarchical system of boss-to-employee. In the academic sector, faculty and administrators are seen as co-existing and operating in an often-adversarial relationship, with the focus and needs of one group being in direct opposition to those of the other group. This relationship is discussed in several key sources, including Brookins and Media (2016), Heathfield (2016), and Rick (2011). Brookins and Media suggest that poor communication, feeling excluded, and a lack of trust may lead to employees not being included in the decision-making process, making it difficult for employees to accept organizational change. In a later publication, Heathfield states that poor communication and a lack of trust are two important barriers to effective communication. Heathfield also stresses that leaders should listen deeply and be empathetic to employees when change is implemented. In addition, Rick reflected on these differences in benefits and

rewards in making the change by employees. Also, Rick points out that employees do not like change and are connected to the old procedures.

As Brookins and Media (2016) note, one of the obstacles for many faculty is their resistance to change. While resistance to change is not unique to the academic environment, good leaders understand where the resistance is coming from and then work to help their staff adjust. According to an article by Rosabeth Kanter (2012), "Ten Reasons People Resist Change," change interferes with autonomy and can make people feel that they have lost control over their territory. Academic leaders can help alleviate this feeling by giving faculty choices in the planning and ownership of the implementation. Understanding the reasons people resist change is beneficial for all leaders, especially when faced with colleagues and employees who resist change. Academic leaders need to know the reasons for their faculty's resistance to change because employees will not tell them or admit they are fearful. The more knowledge a leader has of the reason for resistance, the less time he or she will be frustrated in trying to figure it out. The focus can be on the solution and moving the change forward.

Resistance to change may also result from change that is sudden or drastic. When leaders are in a hurry to make changes, employees become uncomfortable. The new initiatives become overwhelming and stressful for employees. According to Kotter (2011) in "Leading Change: Why Transformation Efforts Fail," evolutionary change, by contrast, is gentle, incremental, and decentralized, and over time produces a broad and lasting shift with less upheaval. Leaders must understand change and make it as painless

as possible. Kotter believes overwhelming employees with change can result in more resistance and a slower process in developing new programs and changes.

### **Conclusion**

While the amount of literature directly addressing the transitioning of law enforcement professionals to academia is sparse, a new leader can find sound advice in the research from related fields. The overall resources can assist anyone who wants to learn leadership, avoid pitfalls, and develop themselves and others. Academic leaders have the autonomy to use what is available to them and adopt what fits their style of leadership. Academic leaders, specifically program coordinators, should also be aware, from the information in this manual, that they must continuously learn and train to be a highly effective leader. The need for continuous training should be nothing new to law enforcement officers coming out of the field who have been training throughout their careers.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY FOR CREATING THE PRIMER

### **Why a Primer?**

As the previous chapter demonstrated, while the resources available for new leaders are extensive, few resources address the day-to-day processes and issues that face leaders transitioning from “the field” to academia. The vocabulary and processes are clearly different, as are the pitfalls for new leaders who do not understand some of the nuances of their new roles. Having faced a similar transition, this researcher had to rely on trial and error in navigating through the world of academia. Also, this researcher benefited from the prior coordinator who was willing to help me with learning the institutional process. Experience is said to be the best teacher; however, having something to refer to would be beneficial.

The daily routine of law enforcement holds the expectation that officers know criminal law, civil law, policy, and procedures. Most officers know if they are proficient in these areas; they will not get themselves into trouble. However, the transition to academia will be much different than following guidelines. Academic leaders are on the “other side of the desk,” developing and creating changes to an academic program. In many ways, the program coordinator will be responsible for faculty, students, and staff members. Thus, the transition to academia may be difficult for those with a background in law enforcement.

New academic coordinators will want to create change to better their programs; however, change in education can be slow and gradual but necessary to protect, promote, and advance an academic program. Garner (2010) stated that an industrious, energetic leader with many good ideas will want to see his or her agency transform overnight, but it will not happen that way.

### **The Foundations of this Primer**

A new criminal justice coordinator transitioning from the field needs to learn many things, both curricular and otherwise. To determine what to include in the Primer, this researcher used his own experience and conducted informal interviews with others who experienced a similar transition. Those interviewed included colleagues from across the state of Michigan, where the researcher serves as coordinator of the Mott Community College Criminal Justice program, as well as colleagues from similar programs in community colleges across the Midwest. These colleagues responded to informal requests for information about what they wish they had known when they started in their new academic roles.

### **What's Included in this Primer**

This Primer covers important issues such as politics, personnel, advice from current coordinators, curriculum revision, and dealing with change. For those who are brought in to change the curriculum, knowing how and what to revise often represents

the greatest challenge. Thus, the Primer provides extensive detail on the specifics of curricular changes.

In most cases, law enforcement personnel are used to giving and following orders in the world of police work; changes can come from administration, law, technology, and precedence of case law. The policy and procedures are also revised or updated to keep up with the changes in crime, techniques, and tactics. Law enforcement practitioners rarely have much say or influence on policy changes or directives. Too often, the only possible influence officers can have comes from mistakes made in the field. For academic program coordinators, influence can be extensive — and positive. It is the hope of this researcher that the Primer that follows can help new criminal justice coordinators make a smooth transition into their roles and be more effective, more quickly.

Interviews with Dr. Jon Mandrell and Dr. Dustin Heuerman, both former coordinators who made the transition from law enforcement into academia, were invaluable. Dr. Mandrell was a police officer in Illinois for 10 years before leaving the force to pursue education. Dr. Mandrell had no intentions of leaving the police department but pursued teaching after an opening became available at his institution and he completed his master's degree.

Dr. Mandrell was interviewed because of his knowledge of the subject matter and his experiences during the transition from law enforcement to the classroom. Dr. Mandrell has left the classroom and is currently a vice president at his institution.

Dr. Heuerman was also a police officer in Illinois but worked part-time for five years before working for the sheriff's department drug task force team. Dr. Heuerman then went to a larger sheriff's department before making the transition into education. Dr. Heuerman was encouraged by his training officer to pursue teaching. Dr. Heuerman was interviewed because of his knowledge of the two professions, the CJ curriculum, and his experiences during the transition process.

The interviews centered on career change and transition, including how they arrived in academia, their experiences as a change agent, the barriers they faced in changing careers, their use of advisory boards, and the changing CJ curriculum. The goal of the interviews was to gather information useful to other professionals making the change. The interviews were conducted separately, via telephone with both individuals. The information contributed to the rich descriptions contained in the Primer that follows.

### **Primer Organization**

The Primer is organized to give step-by-step guidance to new coordinators. The Primer is also organized to advise new coordinators from the day they accept the position on what to expect as they are transitioning from law enforcement to academia. In many ways, the chapter starts with a mindset that is different from law enforcement, in order to set the tone for what is to come. The identity of law enforcement is vastly different than the field of academia and the new coordinator needs to be aware of the new identity to be successful in his or her new career.

In addition to the mindset, the Primer walks the reader through important information regarding being a new coordinator. It includes administration, curriculum, and instructional issues the new coordinator will confront. The Primer assists the new coordinator with challenges of politics, the need to build relationships, and getting involved with other divisions of the college. The Primer also prepares the coordinator for what is needed to have and lead a successful program. The need to understand institutional process is addressed, including enhancing or changing the curriculum. The need to invest in growth, through professional development, of the coordinator, faculty, and staff is discussed.

### **Conclusion**

While the amount of literature directly addressing the transitioning of law enforcement professionals to academia is sparse, a new leader can find sound advice in the research from related fields. The overall resources can assist anyone who wants to learn leadership, avoid pitfalls, and develop themselves and others. Academic leaders have the autonomy to use what is available to them and adopt what fits their style of leadership. Academic leaders, specifically program coordinators, should also be aware from the information provided in this manual that they must continuously learn and train to be a highly effective leader. The need for continuous training should be nothing new to law enforcement officers coming out of the field, who have been training throughout their careers.

## CHAPTER 4: A PRIMER FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROFESSIONALS WHO TRANSITION TO COMMUNITY COLLEGE LEADERSHIP

### **Welcome to Academia**

In the daily routine of law enforcement, officers are expected to know criminal law, civil law, policy, and procedures. Officers know that, if they are adept in these areas, they will not get themselves into trouble. However, for a professional with law enforcement experience who is moving into a position in academia, the job encompasses much more and is much different than following guidelines and pre-set rules. The transition to academia is not an uncomplicated or easy one.

In the role of coordinator, you will be on the “other side of the desk,” maintaining, developing, and creating changes to the program. As coordinator, you will be responsible for faculty, students, and staff members, and you will be responsible for changes and updates to the program. Your experience as a law enforcement leader will aid you in the process and will be useful in many areas. As you transition, you must prepare for new responsibilities and new challenges that await you. The attention to detail you followed in a paramilitary organization is the same detail you will need in the position of coordinator when it comes to changes in your program.

One of the biggest changes is becoming more detailed than you were in your law enforcement career. The focus is different, and it pertains to creating change. In your

law enforcement career, you were given tasks to complete, detailed reports to write, and the responsibility to ensure that your uniform and equipment were in the proper order. In academia, you need to understand the processes for making changes you want to implement and the rationale beneficial to the program and institution.

As coordinator, you want to create change to better your program. The change comes many different forms and comes through many ideas. The change in education can be slow and gradual but necessary to protect, promote, and advance the program in the foreseeable future.

### **Changing Conditions of Employment and Identity**

From Shift Work to Always in the Office

When working in the field of criminal justice, the days of shift work can have advantages and disadvantages. One advantage is working with a consistent schedule and having the same days off each week. Some schedules were rotating, and other shifts came with mandatory overtime, court time, and training exercises. However, the consistent could become inconsistent at any given time. Days off were usually during the week, and having a weekend off was a bonus.

Another advantage to shift work was the ability to leave the job within the department at the end of the shift. Before leaving, you would finish any needed reports and daily logs; then when the shift ended, you could go home without taking work with you. In many ways it was a luxury to leave work and not have to worry that work would accumulate while you were gone.

In the world of academia, this is not the norm. The job may require less time in the classroom, but more hours outside the office and classroom are needed for preparation. In the world of police work, your office was the patrol vehicle. The change of scenery and call volume dictated your day. In academia, you will find yourself in your campus office more and will have less interaction with people than you had on a daily basis as a police officer. Police work provided change and unknown activities each day during a work shift. You faced a greater danger each day in law enforcement than you will experience in the daily setting of higher education.

In higher education, you will have long hours of planning, prepping, and scheduling. You will trade the physical demands of police work for mental exhaustion and paperwork. Your experience in report writing and procedural paperwork will serve you well as you make the transition to academia. Most of your time will be spent handling problems and completing paperwork. The change from shift work to being stationary in an office can be a transition for individuals who like to be physically active and interact with people.

As you transition from shift work to academia, it may be helpful to take breaks during your day and adjust to your new normal. If you are accustomed to working second or third shift, you may require a bit more time to adjust. Working in an office means you work traditional hours and finish in the early evening. Most likely you will be able to be home for dinner with your family. Having additional time at home will

improve family relationships, allow you to attend more events, and create more memories.

Over the course of your career in law enforcement, you may have missed out on family activities, recitals, picnics, and other important events. Your years of shift work meant your schedule was not flexible. In a paramilitary organization such as police work, there are strict rules regarding the use of time during the shift. Leaving your jurisdiction or area of patrol was strictly prohibited. You could not be certain of when the shift would end, because the calls for service were unpredictable. Your top priority was the citizens who relied on you to assist them. On the other hand, in academia your schedule is flexible and can be adjusted for important activities, and the ability to attend family events will help you create some great memories.

#### No Longer Authority of Law

When you were in the field of police work, your situation was very different than it is in higher education. The 8-, 10-, or 12-hour shifts were filled with down time and situations could escalate from 0 to 60 in a matter of seconds. The expectations of the public were many, and you bore a great deal of responsibility in the field. The identity of a police officer required you to balance several responsibilities on and off duty. Your actions were covered under the color of law, which protected you as you performed your job on a daily basis.

Everyone, including family and friends, viewed you as a law enforcement officer. From barbecue picnics to sporting events, people who knew you identified you as a

police officer. The image of what you stood for influenced you on a professional and personal level. The personal level made you think about safety, and you were careful to read people and situations that could pose a dangerous threat to you or the people around you.

As you performed your job as an officer on a daily basis, you became used to it. The ability to turn your instincts on and off was ingrained in your personality. The responsibility of personal conduct on and off duty also was on your mind when it came to drinking, carrying your firearm off duty, and engaging in behaviors that could expose you in the media or lead to job termination. In this profession, you were held to a higher standard, and you saw others' careers end due to their poor judgment and decisions they made.

The transition from law enforcement to academia will change your life on a daily basis, but your perceptive skills will not go away. For the law enforcement professional, the way you analyze people will be different for you in a classroom setting, as opposed to being on the street handling violent crimes. In the field, you are a trained observer and your actions reflect your training in reacting to the level of threat that is in front of you. The only threat in the classroom is the information and answers students seek to become more knowledgeable.

When you were in the field, you had the power of the law and the authority to take a life, as well as the freedom necessary to protect life or property. In many respects you had the authority to ask people to do what you wanted them to, or you could use

the necessary force to complete the task. The law and strength in numbers could help you effect an arrest, serve a warrant, resolve a problem, or keep the peace.

In the field of education, you can no longer use force to get students to learn, take their job seriously, or return to class. Your identity has changed. The law is no longer on your side when it comes to getting the results you want or need in academia. Students in the classroom have free will to get up and leave or to come to class on time. There are stipulations you can enforce regarding classroom etiquette and behavior, but gone are the days of physical force to achieve the desired effect of policing.

Now the art of persuasion has to be used to keep students interested in learning more about the fascinating field of criminal justice. Teaching is a balancing act of different instructional methods used to keep students' interest. According to professionals who made the change, you have to keep students coming back for more. Students will view you as a role model and want to know about your career. Students will also ask you questions about sensitive topics, such as ethical behavior, police stereotypes, and other preconceived ideas garnered from the media.

The job now consists of guiding students, becoming more understanding and aware of student needs, and being cognizant of the gray area of decision-making. In the past, the law required you to have a black-and-white view of lawbreakers. Though you had a great deal of discretion, some situations took that choice out of your hands. Some crimes, such as domestic violence and drinking under the influence, gave you no choice but to arrest someone. The lives of students you serve are busy and fragile. Most

students attend part-time, are single parents, and have two or more jobs. Some students are barely surviving, and you are the glue that may hold them in place to finish their degree. You must take a balanced approach with your students to accommodate and help them succeed in pursuing their education and achieving their dreams. Your former role and identity are gone in one respect, but the goal of helping people still remains. To be successful in academia, coordinators must develop the ability to adapt and change.

#### Decision Making: On Your Own Versus Needing Approvals

The days of police work could be filled with life-or-death decisions. The training and years of experience helped with resolving problems every day. Some calls were routine, such as traffic accidents, domestic violence, and civil infractions. Decisions were made on a daily basis and usually were up to you alone. This required no other approval, with the exception of a complex case or one needing supervisor approval. You were expected to follow procedures and enforce laws.

In fact, laws, procedures, and experience were the foundation of your decision-making. Discretion was not needed or encouraged in law enforcement. As a police officer, you knew which incidents required reports to be completed, and which could be settled verbally. Supervisors and other command officers were there for advice or direction, if needed. You were responsible for making decisions — and living with the consequences if things went in the wrong direction.

Approval from the chief usually covered vacation days, overtime, time sheets, and schedules. Changes in policy and procedures also came from the top. In your professional career, no one had more contact with citizens than the first-line police officer. The reputation of a police department is based on first-line officers. So, decision-making is critical for the success of the department and the officer.

In the world of academia, decisions may require approval from your immediate supervisor or by someone further up the chain of command. The process of approval can be quite slow and unfamiliar from your previous role as a police officer. As a police officer, you could have a great deal of down time, but circumstances could change in the blink of an eye to a highly stressful situation. For those making the transition to higher education, this can be quite frustrating. Everything — from purchases, budgeting, and scheduling — will require approval and assistance from others. Procedures are the foundation in education, just as in police work, and they are expected to be followed. The need to comply with procedures will not be new to you, but how they are to be followed may require a new way of thinking about them. Classroom field trips, including taking a class to the library, will need prior approval. Although you are dealing with adults, the college has procedures in place to protect the institution.

One of the quickest ways to ruin a relationship — or disrupt a new job — is to ignore the rules and not follow procedures. Disregard for proper protocol can result in discipline for you as an employee. However, this should not be a problem for you, since

you come from a paramilitary organization. Your experience as a police officer will serve you well in following procedures.

#### From Single Manager to Consensus Builder

The role of an entry-level police officer has clear connections to your new position as coordinator, but there are even more connections with the role of a supervisor in a police department. Prior to transitioning to the role of a coordinator, you may have served as a command officer. The role of a supervisor requires many decisions to be made on a daily basis. Many police officers looked to you for guidance or advice as a manager or command officer. Command officers must manage people, institute policy changes, and make sure people are doing their job in the correct manner. The command officer's job can be entirely administrative, or it may include road patrol as part of the duties. Many times you are the one who has the last word in making decisions regarding particular situations in the field.

In academia, however, you will have to lean on other people within your department, college, and community. The decisions made for the program will often require approval and teamwork.

The best way to build relationships is to get people within your department involved. Ultimately the decision will depend on you in many, but not all, instances. You will need to meet with others and share information about needed changes to the program. Including people in your decision-making process will build trust and help

them to become emotionally invested in the program. In most instances, those who have been there for a long time are already invested.

When you are assuming the leadership of a program, an emphasis on investing in the students and program will go a long way in team building. The role of coordinator requires you to transition from being a single manager to building relationships and getting everyone involved. No longer will you be making all the decisions on your own. Involving people can and will enhance your program with new ideas and fresh perspectives. As a new coordinator, there is much you will not know, so this may be an adjustment from your role as a law enforcement officer to coordinator of the criminal justice program.

### **The Politics of Your New Position**

As you transition into your new position, you may find the change in leadership can be smooth or difficult, depending on the situation and type of leadership that existed before you took over. In any organization, there will be a period of adjustment when it comes to change in the leadership position. The position of coordinator is no different. In addition, the politics in the organization can play a part before, during, and after leadership change has taken place.

It is important to know what took place during the tenure of the preceding leader, and under what conditions that leader left the position. You will want to avoid making the same mistakes and know what you need to do to build relationships or resolve problems that already exist. It is helpful to have a clear understanding of your

predecessor's legacy and to know and respect what he or she accomplished. When taking over a program, you should not speak disparagingly about the previous leader or discuss weaknesses or mistakes. You may not be in agreement with his or her leadership style, but you can start fresh and turn your attention to other potential problems that exist within the department.

### Use Your Natural Leadership Style

Every leader has a different leadership style. Your predecessor may not have exhibited your particular leadership style, but you will need to lead the only way you know how. Some employees will be supporters of the former coordinator, and some will not have appreciated his or her leadership. The biggest hurdle to overcome is to get everyone on the same page. Do not be overly concerned about getting people to like you. Although we all would like that, it is impossible to please everyone.

When it comes to internal politics, some people may not like you or even give you a chance. Those who are loyal to the previous leader may see you as the enemy. With these individuals, you must give them time and let them adjust to your leadership style. The best way to win over people is not to give in to their demands, but to lead by example and do what is best for the program and students. Some people may not like you, but they will still respect you for doing the right thing.

Some new leaders make the mistake of attempting to change things immediately or force their leadership style on employees with whom they work. This can be a huge mistake that will only set you back more, especially when you are trying to implement

change. Attempting to rule with an iron fist will not only stall change but also gain you more enemies. In the law enforcement field, you relied on other officers and sometimes yourself to be successful. In the role of coordinator, however, you need other people to support you. Most of your staff will probably consist of former officers and others in the field. They can identify with you and understand the difficulties of transitioning. They also have been in higher education longer than you have and can help you avoid pitfalls and mistakes.

#### Focus on the Program

One of the first things you need to do is assess the program and its needs. Some aspects already in place will not need to be changed. The first areas to assess are those that could potentially hurt the program. This includes procedures of field trips and potential liability with student activities. The next important area to be assessed is the program curriculum, which is the largest part of the program.

The curriculum must be up-to-date, covering the latest trends and topics related to the field of criminal justice. As a criminal justice professional, you experienced laws and procedures that changed over the course of your career. The curriculum must be current with other colleges and universities in the area and across the state and nation. Failure to have an updated program can result in loss of students and reputation. Students will apply to other institutions if they feel your program is not up-to-date. Pay particular attention to adding new courses and updating course descriptions.

Making such changes can create potential problems with long-time faculty. As alluded to earlier, change can be difficult for some people. Coordinators will undoubtedly deal with the mindset of “but it’s always been done this way.” Do not let employees discourage you from doing what you think is best for the program. Remember that you were hired to lead the program, and this includes making tough decisions that may encounter resistance within the department.

In the field you were taught to “sell” the citation when you wrote a ticket. The ability to sell and motivate people will serve you well in the position of coordinator. People will open up and want to improve, not only to please you or to keep their job, but because they sense the value to the students. This demonstrates team building and relationship building, which is important in the role of leadership.

In the beginning, you will need to reassure employees regarding what you see as your mission as leader and what your vision is for the department. As leader, you must also follow through with your action plan. You will be closely watched and criticized, no matter what you do. Your actions must match your words, or people will not follow you. One outcome could ultimately be losing good people to other institutions. Good quality instructors are difficult to find. Some will come and go, but the core faculty will be invested in the program and will not be looking to leave. The last thing you want is to create such a negative environment that valued employees resign to work elsewhere.

Politics will no doubt be part of the job, but how professionally you handle it will determine your level of success. Sometimes politics will cause situations to work to your

benefit, but sometimes they may go against the program. Change happens, inevitably, and you will have to deal with the ups and downs of the politics of the situation. In the end, you can control only so much; learn to deal with whatever comes your way. Politics exists in every organization and profession, and there is no way to avoid dealing with it.

#### Focus on the Students

As coordinator you will need to take time and adapt to your new career. In the classroom, you will have to develop an effective style for teaching and keep students coming back for more. In law enforcement, many times officers had the law on their side and could make people do what they wanted them to do. In education, the power is in effectively communicating and keeping the interest of the student.

In addition, every student that you have in the classroom will not want to be a police officer. Be aware of the wide range of careers that are available and pique student interest. Your passion for the field will be obvious. Some students will want to go to law school, go into social work, or enter other disciplines. Other students will be fans of criminal television shows and require you to debunk myths of the criminal justice system. As a coordinator and instructor, you will work with a variety of different professionals in hopes of promoting the program and preparing students for the workforce.

#### Show Compassion

During the course of a law enforcement career, you have experienced highs and lows. Also during your career, you have grown accustomed to people not being totally

truthful and have observed heinous acts. In the field of academia, you will have students who will need support and understanding. The support and understanding will require you to accommodate and be understanding of the hardships students face going to school. Some of your students will be single parents, first-generation students, and long-time professionals who return to college to advance their careers.

New coordinators should understand and accept they are role models. Many students will look up to you as a former law enforcement professional and instructor. Some students may want to build a rapport with you and even request a recommendation for employment or graduate school.

### **Building New Relationships**

#### Effective Internal Relationships at the College

Coordinators should take the time to build relationships throughout the college. For professionals in the college setting, it is important to reach out to coordinators and professors from other disciplines. Coordinators should be used to building relationships, as this is also important in police work. However, building relationships in law enforcement is different from doing so in academia.

Law enforcement relationships are usually limited to those individuals encountered on calls for service and others that one comes into contact with in the community. Law enforcement is a tightly knit community, and most relationships are with other officers, dispatchers, and people of service. Coordinators must understand that it is important to build relationships with many others who may not be part of their

department. These relationships can be helpful in partnering and during the approval process. In the field of academia, partnering and working together are necessary to accomplish many policy and program improvements.

Typically, in the community college setting, there is hierarchy within departments and across disciplines. New educators should be used to this as they were familiar with hierarchy in law enforcement. Coordinators are department heads for their specific program, and they report to their dean. The dean usually is in charge of several different disciplines within the department. The dean reports to the vice president and they report directly to the president of the college. There are several coordinators over their programs and they all report to the dean. Most law enforcement veterans should be knowledgeable in this area and have no issues with this area of transition.

#### Working with Advisory Committees

New coordinators need to understand the role of their advisory committee and find ways to enhance its use. Advisory committees are a structured way for individuals to share their opinions and perspectives, study issues, and develop recommendations in a focused small-group setting. Advisory committees assist in the development of program growth and direction. Advisory committees or boards are made up of law enforcement professionals, students, and leaders in the field of criminal justice. Many of the law enforcement leaders come from federal, state, and local agencies.

Many boards conduct research, give advice, approve changes, and make suggestions. Advisory board members are up-to-date on the latest changes in the field.

Changes taking place in the field of criminal justice are frequent. A well-put-together advisory board can help with course revision and other changes needed for the program. Another benefit of having an advisory committee is the opportunity for students to be hired by criminal justice agencies on the local, state, and national levels. Often graduating students will become candidates for employment in the agencies represented by the committee. When it comes to changes or implementation, advisory boards are needed to see things from a different perspective for the leaders in law enforcement. They are a vital part of any organization and college institution.

#### Importance of Advisory Committee Input

New criminal justice coordinators may not realize they have an advisory committee at their disposal or know how best to utilize it. The advisory board looks at course revisions and the proposed additions of courses to the curriculum. All colleges have their own procedures when it comes to using the board. The creation of a new course and proposed program revisions should be introduced to the criminal justice advisory board for suggestions and approval.

The role of the advisory board is to offer advice and any other additions or changes needed for the program, such as class updates or removal. The advisory board will offer a different perspective on any proposed changes. Leaders in the field who serve on advisory boards are currently in charge of departments on the federal, state, and local levels. The advisory board looks at the changes from the viewpoint of a criminal justice professional and considers the skill set needed for students to be

employable. The coordinator should consult the advisory board for suggestions and direction, and the board should be part of the decision-making process and offer expert advice. If this first step in the approval process is rejected, then changes need to be made and brought before the board again for approval. Coordinators should not proceed without using the advisory board as a resource.

Typically, advisory boards are not utilized to the extent they should be. Advisory boards can help the coordinator analyze the proposed changes and make better decisions. Dialogue between a coordinator and advisory board also increases communication, cooperation, and coordination between different sectors of the criminal justice system.

#### Evaluating Your Staff

After new staff members go through the hiring process, they will be required to be evaluated for a period of three years. During this time they are on probation. The evaluation will be in the classroom and will be conducted in Fall or Winter semesters of the school year. New staff are evaluate by the dean, coordinator, and two committee members of their choosing. The classroom evaluation will take place during a classroom lecture, one time during the year.

The evaluation team will collect information on strengths and weaknesses and will suggest improvements needed for the following semester. The information will be sent to the dean and at the end of the winter semester, the dean will meet with staff. The staff member will have an evaluation at the end of Winter term and will also meet

with the vice president. The information collected from the evaluation team, along with assessment from the dean, will be forwarded to the vice president's office for review. The vice president will make the decision to continue probation for the next three years. At any time, the vice president can terminate the leader's employment. After three successful years, the new staff member is removed from probation and is subject to evaluation at the discretion of the dean or vice president.

Because it is easy for faculty members to become comfortable with their courses and not develop new methods or materials, the coordinator should encourage them to improve their instruction for the sake of the program and students. Some instructors may have been removed from the field for quite some time. If they have been teaching for a long time, they may feel threatened when the leader enters their classroom, especially to critique their instruction. An important skill for leaders to develop is to help employees sense the benefit in making a change, so they do not feel singled out or threatened.

Another area to evaluate as a coordinator is the course syllabi of all professors. The language used must be current with college policies and course content, and all course syllabi should include language with Americans with Disabilities Act compliance procedures. This is standard among all college institutions nationwide. Coordinators should also look at the content described for each course in the syllabus and should be aware that some professors may use the same syllabus over most of their teaching careers, so the language may need updating.

## Developing Your Staff

The need to develop your staff is an investment in the program, the institution, the community, and especially the stakeholders, the students. As in any part of life, things change, and criminal justice is no different. When staff members are removed from the everyday grind of law enforcement, they can lose their knowledge of new trends, techniques, and laws pertaining to the field. The purpose of developing staff is to provide students with the most up-to-date information related to the field and to assist them in becoming workforce-ready.

Coordinators who do not invest in their staff will ultimately have an outdated program and graduates who will be behind in knowledge compared to other students who are graduating from similar programs at other institutions. One of the most important factors in having a criminal justice program is a well-developed staff that continuously participates in professional development.

Training and professional development opportunities are typically supported by the institution. Mott Community College has a division called the CTL, the Center for Teaching and Learning. The center has events every week and invites outside guest speakers for seminars and other presentations. The internal presentations are usually presented by Mott faculty and offer a variety of topics, including Blackboard and PowerPoint, how to create a better syllabus, and overall improvement of one's self and teaching knowledge.

Coordinators should offer training and professional development opportunities to adjunct professors as well. One example would be training instructors to teach an online section of Introduction to Criminal Justice. Professors who teach an online course will need advanced training if they have never taught online. Professors must acquire a skill set needed to meet the demands of technology and to keep up with the changes and delivery methods in the field of education. Program managers should remember to assist others in their efforts to continue to develop as individuals.

### **Understanding State and National Trends**

In addition to working within the academic “chain of command,” coordinators should learn to value research. Research is required and is vital to the success of any program and tenure of the coordinator. Research allows the discovery of trends and new information, valuable to any criminal justice and academic professional, and is expected in any field, especially education. To begin their research, coordinators need to first look at similar colleges and universities. Researching the competition is a vital part in observing what is missing from one’s current curriculum and program practices. In researching other colleges, the coordinator must look for recurring themes in courses at other institutions.

It is important to research programs at other institutions and other external resources to maintain a program that is up-to-date; it is also crucial to be aware of other changes in the field. Not only must coordinators look at classes in a curriculum, but also

they need to look at individual course descriptions. Researching colleges and curricula has multiple aspects that should be investigated.

In many ways, this research is similar to conducting a law enforcement investigation. In most investigations, the professional will look at a crime from every possible angle to discover motive and intent. Coordinators need to be aware of various research measurements and be able to use them in the field.

There are many sources of information when doing research. In academia, there are scholarly journals and research conducted by academic professionals. For the coordinator, it is important not only to research other colleges, but also to look at other areas in the profession for guidance and assistance with decision-making. In the field, changes in crime definitions, policy changes, law, and training are important factors to understand. The curriculum in any program must focus on the same principles to develop the best program possible, using the resources available. All programs must be up-to-date for students and the institution to demonstrate success.

#### Trends and Patterns in CJ Curricula

Coordinators should look for trends or a pattern in criminal justice program curricula at other institutions. A trend occurs when something is developing or changing. It is important for coordinators to keep up on the current trends and changes. Coordinators who do not stay up-to-date with new trends will have an outdated program. The students will suffer the most and will not be current with the new and most recent information.

Criminal justice professionals making the transition to academia must look at curriculum trends in the field. Administrators in law enforcement already know the importance of revising policy and procedure in their departments. The transition from law enforcement to academia is no different. In the field, decisions are made due to the changes in crime, civil liability, training tactics, and education of the officers and department. Changes in curriculum can be based on these outside influences as well.

#### Current Trend: Law Enforcement Ethics

One recent trend that illustrates the previous point is the lack of ethics in the field of law enforcement. Bad decisions by law enforcement have reflected negatively on police and other law enforcement officials. In light of recent events in cities such as Ferguson (MO), New York City, and Baltimore (MD), the criminal justice system has been under siege due to betrayal of community trust. Officers all over the country are making poor, unethical decisions, and there is a need for better leadership in the field. These current events led many criminal justice programs to add courses in ethics and leadership. Part of the process for maintaining and updating the curriculum is to research and develop courses that would assist students facing these current issues. An Ethics and Leadership course would help students be better law enforcement officers, able to make the right ethical decision in a high-pressure situation.

## **Being Responsible for Your Professional Development**

### Professional Memberships

The coordinator of the program must also consider external factors when dealing with curriculum. As noted, research is a big part of a coordinator's job — to find the best practices and new ways to improve the program. Program coordinators have a variety of external resources to choose from to keep current on information and to remain current as an academic professional. Coordinators should attend conferences, investigate research trends, and join organizations in the fields of both education and criminal justice. In addition, the coordinator should read and explore publications as informative sources.

Coordinators must keep in mind that they are responsible for two disciplines, not just one. Being versed in the fields of education and criminal justice will serve the coordinator well. It takes more than just expertise in criminal justice and relying on experience in the field. One of the biggest hurdles for professionals transitioning to academia is the expansion of responsibility and knowledge. In the field, it is dealing with routine calls and situations. The job can become repetitive in many ways, but new things often would come into play. In the world of academia, the coordinator has the responsibility of gaining knowledge in both education and criminal justice. The constant pursuit to improve is necessary to be effective in the role of coordinator.

## Conducting Research

Doing research may become a challenge for some coordinators, especially in the field of education. The amount of work required to research is not as simple as looking something up online and Googling information. The sources need to be from journals and valid resources that provide empirical evidence. For individuals making the transition, it could be challenging to adjust to this type of requirement. Research is vital to a coordinator's position and allows him or her to find supporting evidence for curriculum proposals.

Research in both criminal justice and education is needed. The coordinator will have the task of combining both disciplines to meet the requirements of individuals in both fields. The thinking and goals are different for both disciplines, but both are needed to prove the need for a proposed revision or new course offering. Criminal justice professionals in the field have to present evidence to mayors, board members, and other stakeholders to help them understand the reasoning behind certain proposals or actions.

Researching other colleges and universities is a must for coordinators. Such research can offer valuable insight into new courses and best practices of other institutions. Researching curriculum of other institutions is crucial before proposing new courses and curriculum revision. Research also should involve not only criminal justice curriculum but also pathways to education. Pathways give students a direct path to graduation, which is something coordinators must be familiar with. It is critical to know

and understand the pitfalls and concerns in both disciplines. Learning a new field, unknown terminology, and unfamiliar processes are all part of making the transition to academia. Research is a core concept in the education system, just as Miranda Rights are to a police officer.

### Organizational Memberships

Coordinators should become members of law enforcement organizations such as Michigan Association Chiefs of Police (MACP) and Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS). Coordinators will find benefits in belonging to any organization that promotes education of the field and changes in practices.

The role of the coordinator includes participating in continuing education and being knowledgeable of changes in the field. If coordinators do not keep their finger on the pulse of education and criminal justice, they will not remain current in the field, which creates a ripple effect.

### Professional Publications

Coordinators should also invest in periodicals and other education and criminal justice publications. Criminal justice publications are important sources of information about trends, challenges, and changes in the field. Publications should be viewed as research sources to help in conducting research and locating information. The cost of subscribing to publications is usually covered by the college. Research articles in journals are often found on websites, or print copies are received monthly. Information found in research articles may lead to changes in curriculum or creation of a new course. This

information can also be shared with other faculty and incorporated into classroom instruction.

As the coordinator, you have to remember you are not alone. There are hundreds of people just like you in colleges across the country who are facing some of the same problems you are facing in leading a program. When you are not connected to others in your role, it can be difficult to keep that in mind. When you have the opportunity to attend conferences and other engagements, you must be sure to reach out and form relationships for support.

Using publications in the field can help solve problems and provide new ideas that can advance the program. Coordinators must stay in touch with the field they serve and continue to integrate new information into classes and the program. Reading various publications ensures you will not be left behind with an out-of-date program.

If students are behind in workforce practices, the program will also become outdated; this will affect the college and possibly its reputation in the community. The benefits of training, newsletters, and conferences help in the development and education of coordinators. In addition, many online journals and websites present the research of others in the field on a vast amount of topics. The ability to have access to and be informed of changes can keep the college's students and program up-to-date on the latest trends, techniques, and changes.

## **Guidelines for Program Transformation and Program Change**

Coordinators play an active and key role in all program transformation activities. For the program to become successful, a coordinator must keep in mind the many resources available. These resources should be thoroughly researched in order to be used to their fullest extent. The failure to follow through with available resources can result in poor planning, outdated curriculum, and limited growth. Coordinators should take the time to explore the kinds of resources available, in addition to monetary subsidies, to grow the program.

Every coordinator should know the internal and external processes involved in his or her particular institution. The coordinator should be certain of what is available and what the process entails for making changes to or incorporating new classes in the curriculum. It is also important for the coordinator to follow the chain of command when making decisions.

Coordinators should take time to build a strong relationship with their direct supervisor. Relationship building that includes an open line of communication should begin with one's supervisor. As a coordinator, you must keep in mind that your supervisor may not understand the field of criminal justice as well as you do. It will be up to you to educate and explain reasons for change. The more you keep the supervisor informed, the easier it may become to work together and build understanding. However, this does not mean that you will not be denied a request for equipment or changes. The request could be denied because of a lack of course outcomes, not enough

substance to the course description, or questions about the course that were not included in the first presentation concerning the course. This is part of the process you need to be aware of and identifies some of the reasons your class request could be denied by the college approval committee. You should not be discouraged, but you should instead become better at doing the necessary research.

The power of research can be beneficial to any coordinator when dealing with someone who does not understand the criminal justice field, similar to being a chief of police and dealing with a mayor or city council. As the coordinator, you cannot rely on past knowledge and training to prove the need for change. The process will require you to produce research or some sort of evidence to present to your supervisor, as well as during all the steps in the process. The more evidence you have, the stronger the case for the request.

As a coordinator, you must also be ready for questions regarding the evidence you bring to support your proposal. A coordinator should be very informed about the program. When someone asks about credits, graduation, core classes, or changes, you must be able to provide a solid answer. You may not know every detail, but you should have knowledge of your program. Remember, you are representing the college, the faculty, and the program. It is important that you do your homework and be well versed in the program you are leading.

## **Components of a Criminal Justice Program**

Each criminal justice credential is made up of parts related to foundational and technical knowledge. For coordinators, the curriculum is more than taking classes and earning credits toward graduation. A new coordinator must look deeper into the credential and understand the different parts and their distinctions.

### **Theory and Practical Courses**

Theory courses are the foundational courses in all disciplines, but none are more important than criminal justice theory courses. Most law enforcement professionals have attended and graduated from police academy, but they may not know in-depth criminal justice theory. Most courses are based on or have an element of law from our United States Constitution. Theory courses are valuable in teaching the rights of citizens and the responsibility of actors in the criminal justice system. For criminal justice students, it is important to learn the rights of citizens and what authority is given to the professionals working in the field.

For example, students who want to become investigators must know the law and the rights of citizens so they can gather information to eliminate the innocent and build a solid case against the guilty. Students in the field need to know when they can arrest people and must be cognizant of the rights of citizens with whom they come into contact on a daily basis. Students learn what they can do and what they cannot do, but they also need to apply the information. The Constitution has a checks-and-balances system and limits the power of the government and police. Police enforce laws, which

gives them power, but, above all, the procedure in how the law is enforced is the basis for theory courses.

The courses in the criminal justice and corrections program combine theory and practical-based learning for students: the theory of the discipline of criminal justice, but practical application to various jobs in the career field. For example, amendments are part of our Constitution, and the first 10 constitute the Bill of Rights. Amendments protect our rights as U.S. citizens and they are not to be violated. For example, the 4<sup>th</sup> Amendment regarding searches and seizures dictates when police can search and when it is a violation that could result in negative consequences. It is very important for criminal justice students to understand the theory behind the amendments and their importance, but they also need to learn that failure to apply them can result in embarrassment, dismissal, and civil liability for their agency and themselves in the workforce.

It is crucial for graduates of the program to have more than just knowledge of theory. In the classroom, the theory is important, but the practical application is of equal importance. For students to be workforce-ready, they need to apply their knowledge and critically think in their jobs. The instruction in the classroom is centered on practical exercises and application. Students learn by doing, and it is critical for them not just to remember terms or amendments, but to be able to apply them. These also assist in reduction of lawsuits, incompetence, and inexperience.

## Critical Thinking Scenarios

New coordinators must understand how acquired knowledge is applied in the classroom. While they may have considerable law enforcement experience, transferring their street experiences to the students requires much thought. Practical exercises can be administered in the classroom in a variety of ways. First, critical thinking scenarios and exercises can improve students' writing skills. For students to be prepared, they have to be able to perform in situations that require critical thinking. Scenarios are helpful in critiquing students as to what they did wrong and in determining how to correct the mistake. It is much easier to correct the mistake in the classroom than in the field.

Another example involves hands-on practical training. Students in the criminal investigation class process a crime scene to reinforce concepts learned in class. Students actually look for evidence, secure evidence, and learn about contamination of a scene. Report writing is also a big component of the practical exercises. Scholarly writing is different from report writing, and many parties will see the report. Students learn that if the information is not in the report, then it's as if it never happened. The lack of information and detail could lead to dismissal of charges, ruin reputations, and bring about civil litigation. Practical exercises and assignments help prepare students for some of the challenges they will face in their careers.

## Prerequisites and Course Sequencing

New coordinators need to give thought to the sequencing of courses so that students are exposed first to beginning knowledge and then advanced knowledge. Students must understand terminology and the overview of the criminal justice system. Because the student makeup at community colleges is very diverse and consists of different skill levels, prerequisites play an important role in student success. Prerequisites are needed so the student can complete a particular class before taking another at a higher level. The student should understand the basics before advancing to another level. Without prerequisites, the student could do poorly or fail in a course, creating frustration and hindering, rather than helping, the student's academic success. Prerequisites operate like a foundation of a house: without the foundation, one cannot build a quality house. Prerequisites protect students and help them build from the ground up. New coordinators need to enforce prerequisites.

## Developing New Specialties and Programming

Law enforcement includes a variety of areas such as Juvenile, Security, and Corrections, among others. Coordinators need to embrace all careers in law enforcement. The focus should be on the criminal justice system overall and should include all avenues for students. Failure to encompass and remain open to all workforce needs may hurt the program and limit the retention of students who want to pursue other opportunities.

Incorporating new programs can serve your students and meet workforce needs. Awarding a corrections certificate and/or degree can help students who do not want to be police officers. Being a corrections officer in the state of Michigan requires a certificate to apply to the Department of Corrections. The implementation of corrections programs helps to replace retiring officers and fill the openings in prison staff positions.

The conversation should begin with an idea and continue by working on a plan and proposal. The process will need a variety of stakeholders from within the institution to seek approval. The next step is to secure approval of the program or certificate from the state corrections certification board for graduates to be employable. The Advisory Board is necessary for approval of the certificate and as part of the external process. There is also the need to purchase equipment and maintain proper facilities to train new recruits.

#### Articulation Agreements

Criminal justice professionals may have no familiarity with the concept of articulation. A new coordinator will be expected to review these policies and find ways to implement them. An articulation agreement is a formal agreement or partnership between two or more colleges and universities documenting the transfer policies for a specific academic program or degree (CollegeTransfer.net). Articulation agreements are needed and serve multiple purposes for community colleges and universities. The agreement helps stimulate the local economy by keeping students in the area. It also

helps prepare students for the workforce and sustains the local economy by employing graduates. Articulation agreements allow students to satisfy requirements at the community college level and at the same time transfer credits to the university. Articulation agreements offer a great benefit for students, universities, and community colleges. Community colleges need to promote low tuition and credibility of transfer credit for students. They also must help develop students and prepare them for a four-year college. Keeping educated and well-prepared students in the community helps the community grow.

#### Dual Credit Programs

Dual credit is probably a foreign idea to most criminal justice professionals. New coordinators must understand this concept as an important recruitment mechanism. Dual-credit programs are an agreement between community colleges and high schools, and many criminal justice programs have dual-credit programs with local high schools in the area. The purpose of dual credit is to allow high school students, mostly junior and seniors, to obtain college credit while still in high school. The dual programs serve as a partnership between colleges and high schools. The partnership is a win for all parties involved and benefits students in several ways. First, students have the opportunity to earn college credit. Another benefit is they can pursue or explore a field or career they may be interested in. In addition, being dual-enrolled can help high school students overcome their fears of going to college and become comfortable with college-level work. This builds confidence in a high school student and will help the student adjust in

a college course. The ability to complete a college course can help students decide to attend college without anxiety or concern.

#### Student Criminal Justice Clubs and Alumni Associations

Every criminal justice program should develop a student organization for its program. The LERN club at Mott Community College serves as the student organization. *LERN* stands for Law Enforcement Resource Network — a club that provides students with opportunities to serve their community. The LERN club serves at soup kitchens, does spring cleanup for the elderly, helps Big Brothers Big Sisters, and assists with Secret Santa at Christmastime. The criminal justice club helps the coordinator and college in many ways. First, it gives students hands-on training in the field of service. Criminal justice is a field of service and students experience the practical aspect of training. Second, the criminal justice club promotes the mission of the college by providing students with service learning and a chance to give back to the community.

Another advantage is that students have an opportunity to network with other criminal justice agencies. It also gives students the chance to build relationships with other agencies within the community. LERN club members can network with other law enforcement professionals and help build a great reputation for the program.

LERN is committed to developing leaders in the field of criminal justice. The club provides students with occasions to apply leadership skills in the field and work with other organizations. This type of exposure helps students gain confidence.

Lastly, those students who graduate become leaders who will give back to the college. Alumni of community colleges are an underappreciated resource, but they can offer great dividends to the program coordinator. Alumni become chiefs, directors, professors, and other valuable assets to the organization. Colleges can benefit from their alumni and should invest in their graduates beyond graduation.

### **The Academic Curriculum Process**

In every institution, there are procedures and protocol that come with any new curriculum change. Change within the institution has several steps of checks and balances. Approval of change will be a team effort, as the process must be followed for curriculum to be changed. The process is unique to higher education, due to the responsibility of the institution to follow guidelines and ensure the best interest of the college and students in preparing them for the workforce. The process makes sure the change or addition is a benefit to stakeholders; if there is any doubt during the process, a revision, addition, or removal will be requested for the proposed change to proceed. Each committee, depending on the process, must give its approval before the next step can proceed.

The process can be short or long, depending on the requirements and paperwork needed to complete the change. Many steps are necessary to complete course revisions and additions to the current curriculum. Criminal justice coordinators face a variety of changes, but learning the course revision process is much different than policy change

and new directives as a command officer. The procedure involves many people, and knowing each required step can help speed up the process.

#### Overview to the Curricular Process

The process must ensure that the changes and additions are going to be aligned with the college mission, integrity, and the best interest of the students. The focus should be on the benefit to the student. However, change is never easy and can be accompanied by many challenges. Faculty and staff are not always open to change, which can create strained relationships within a department. The key for coordinators is to remind the faculty of the goal and to be able to weather the storm. In the long run, people will adapt to the new changes and the program will be stronger for it.

#### Starting the Process

The process should start with the coordinator and his or her immediate supervisor. It is important for the coordinator to work with the supervisor and for them to collaborate with one another on changes and revision. Working together can help educate the supervisor and lead to some fresh ideas and perspectives. Coordinators should tap into the expertise of someone who has been in education and knows the process. It is a learning process for coordinators, but it also involves many more stakeholders in the process.

For example, the process for course revision and the introduction of a new course, Ethics and Leadership, began in the summer of 2014. The team of a coordinator and dean sat down and began to discuss the course revision and need for the Ethics and

Leadership course. All community colleges in the surrounding area were researched first to find consistencies and differences in curriculum. The programs of other colleges were analyzed for current trends, and focus was on the criminal justice curriculum and courses that were absent from our curriculum and needed to be added. Coordinators should beware of trends and what other colleges are doing. There is nothing wrong with taking an idea from another college and incorporating it.

### Writing Course Descriptions

A course description is needed to inform people involved in the approval process what the course is all about and what students should expect to learn. In most cases, the course description will trigger many questions if the description is not clear. Coordinators should write the course description in detail and to the point. Failure to do so may result in the coordinator making changes and resubmitting proper documentation.

The process at Mott includes the approval of the Criminal Justice Advisory Board. In addition, a sample syllabus is required for approval in all phases of the process. Both the approval and syllabus are presented separately during the process. The forms for revisions to or addition of courses are submitted throughout the process for approval. It is important to have the proper paperwork completed accurately, or it could hamper the implementation of the course revision or new course approval. Failure to complete the proper forms can slow down the process of change.

## Course Requirements

Course requirements, set by the professor, outline for the student what course materials and resources he or she will need to be successful in the class. When developing a new course, coordinators must keep in mind to include a description of all course materials that students may need to purchase, such as books and online access cards.

Coordinators should also remember that choosing a textbook through a representative from a book company is standard for most courses. Students should be able to afford and use the required text. Coordinators and professors should never sacrifice quality for quantity when it comes to course materials. Many new technological and learning aids are available today for students in education. However, coordinators should not overload students with too many course materials that may not be used or that will not contribute to student learning and success. Course requirements should be basic and straightforward, and the materials chosen should benefit the student.

## Developing Course Outcomes

In any process of new courses or revision, course outcomes must be presented for stakeholders to see. The course outcomes require coordinators to give clear and concise expectations of what the students will be taught and learn. In many ways, these are the competencies the students will meet. The expectations are required for approval, but the outcomes also make it clear to students, when they are given the

syllabus on the first day, what will be presented in the course and what they are expected to learn and demonstrate upon completion.

Course outcomes give a clear picture to all the governing bodies of what the course is about. The coordinator must define the course outcomes, and he or she must be able to answer any questions during the process. For example, a sample syllabus that represents an actual syllabus must be submitted during the process. The syllabus will include course outcomes, course description, book requirement, grading scale, and week-to-week tentative schedule.

#### Transferability of Courses and Credits

Coordinators should obtain accurate information if the class being proposed will transfer to another college. Coordinators can work with personnel at other colleges to obtain transfer agreements. The transfer agreement must be agreed upon and updated when a new class is added to the curriculum. Coordinators should contact universities and colleges prior to starting the approval process. It is important to know whether a course will be transferable to other institutions when proposing the addition of a new course. For example, the new Ethics and Leadership course discussed previously was accepted by multiple colleges prior to the submission of approval in the process at Mott College. The accepting colleges were listed on Form 1A, which was required to be completed before starting the approval process. Courses will be viewed more favorably if they are accepted by four-year institutions.

Transferability of a course will help students who are looking to have their credits accepted at a four-year institution. Students will be more likely to take a new course if they know it has been accepted and approved by the four-year college of their choice. This gives the new course credibility and may help in the approval process. Of course, transferability plays only a small role in the process, but any positive benefit is a step in the right direction.

Coordinators need to reach out to four-year universities in order to establish transfer agreements. The best way to accomplish this is to research the institution and contact the department chair to request a meeting. The purpose of the initial meeting should not be to discuss details about classes and course descriptions but should be an attempt to introduce oneself and gauge interest in a possible agreement. The coordinator should prepare by laying the groundwork before attempting to add a new course to an existing agreement or setting up a new agreement with colleges and universities. The groundwork includes meetings and submitting the necessary documents for a new course. It is up to the receiving institution to accept the course as transfer credit. Sometime an agreement will not be reached and coordinators should not take the rejection personally.

Coordinators can ask for direction in advance regarding what it will take for a course to be accepted at another institution. If the college will not accept the credits for a new course, there is always the possibility of reworking the proposal and resubmitting it at a later time. Coordinators should not terminate any relationships or feel angry if the

proposal is rejected. Every college has policies and standards that it must follow.

Negotiations can be revisited at a later date, and there are always other colleges to work with. It is important to never burn bridges or speak poorly about other institutions. Such negativity will only reflect poorly on you and your reputation.

### Eliminating and Substituting Courses

In many criminal justice programs across the country, course elimination or updates must be made if the research warrants the change. The current trend of implementing streamlined Career Pathways suggests reducing the number of choices for students and creating a direct path to graduation. Attention on low graduation rates increases the pressure on all members of the academic community. The need to eliminate courses is part of the course revision process. Coordinators need to be able to remove outdated courses that no longer serve the students' best interest. For example, at Mott Community College, the former law enforcement curriculum included several electives that were hindering student success, such as scuba diving, golf, and rock climbing. Substituting new key electives for students to take is critical to the curriculum.

The purpose of course revision is to have the best program possible, and this includes courses applicable to the field and ones that will help students succeed. The courses in the revised curriculum were designed to prepare students for the workforce. These courses will give students tools to use in a variety of professional capacities in the field of criminal justice. The courses chosen were based on what would most benefit the student in the workforce upon graduation. Courses were selected from the areas of

political science, communications, psychology, and sociology, and fitness courses were included to educate students on the importance of health and fitness.

#### Developing New Courses

In the process of researching and considering course revisions, it may be necessary to include additional courses in the curriculum. Coordinators should look at course development and keep in touch with new trends and changes in the field.

Coordinators are required to add new courses to the curriculum, especially as changes occur in criminal justice. The addition of new courses can help improve teaching and instruction by keeping students interested and getting them ready for the workforce.

Preparing students requires that the overall curriculum and program be relevant, which means the certificate and degree programs must be up-to-date.

The curriculum of the Ethics and Leadership course is based on actual cases from the field. Students in the class will be put in uncomfortable positions, as they will need to be able to think critically and ethically. The scenarios used will help students recognize the pitfalls and fallout from unethical decision making. This course is an example of incorporating practical exercises into theory-based courses. Having students think about real-life experiences should help prepare them for situations in the field.

#### General Education Proficiency

In every college curriculum there are general education proficiency requirements that must be aligned with program requirements. Coordinators must understand the general education requirements are the responsibility of the program coordinators and

the college. The learning outcomes can be overall expectations established by the college, such as Citizenship, Global Awareness, and Critical Thinking. Each course that is developed on campus as and part of a program curriculum must meet the institution's essential learning outcomes within the content of the course. Coordinators and the college share responsibility in ensuring that students are prepared for academic and professional success. College institutions must prepare their students for participation as productive members of a global society and their own community.

The process at Mott requires general education outcomes to be included on the form being submitted for a new course. The general education proficiencies must be aligned with the college's overall preparedness and program standards. Coordinators should be aware that they cannot create classes and change courses without sharing in the responsibility of guiding the student to be proficient in general education courses, or other courses taken throughout the college. The course may not meet all the essential learning outcomes, but should meet the content within the course that is expected for college graduates.

#### Relying on Internal Resources During Curricular Revision

Using internal resources starts with your immediate supervisor and builds from there. The internal process at Mott Community College begins by working with your supervisor to create new courses or revise existing ones. The process continues with the Advisory Board, which helps you make better decisions and gives a fresh perspective from the field. The diversity of board members will offer many viewpoints to consider

and may help you add or subtract information to improve the proposed revision. Before moving forward and presenting any proposals to the board, as coordinator, you should feel comfortable with board members and the expertise they provide. Transparency on the board can be beneficial, particularly when members are honest in supporting or questioning your revision or course proposal. It is important to trust your board by giving them the opportunity to make suggestions or offer guiding advice.

There may be advisory committee members who do not agree with the changes you propose. This could be for political reasons, or loyalty to your predecessor. In any event, it is important to find out the reason why and attempt to address the issues that may slow down the process of approval of the changes you wish to implement. You should never dismiss a board member's concerns or become at odds in a verbal exchange. You can resolve stonewalling by attempting to work through the concerns. For coordinators, this may happen from time to time, but there is no need to panic; finding a solution may take a bit of work, but the impasse can be resolved.

Another resource is guidance from your colleagues in different disciplines. Whether you are new to the position or a seasoned veteran, it is important to use others' help to reach your goals. Other faculty members in your same position can give you advice to improve your proposals. Do not rely only on those with expertise in your subject area; make sure you are not working in a silo. Coordinators need to approach other faculty members with courses in the program and inform them of the suggested changes in advance. This serves two purposes: you do not surprise them before the

changes occur, and you show your respect by making sure any concerns they may have are addressed.

You can gain a great deal of knowledge and wisdom from others who may have more knowledge and skills in other areas. As coordinator, you should be open to new ideas and learn from the successes of other people you work alongside. You are in this together, and you should be able to learn from each other. After all, someday you may need their help in approving your classes and revisions for the division. It is advantageous as the coordinator to seek advice, especially when you have a program that involves several different disciplines, such as Criminal Justice.

#### Curricular Processes and Procedures

In most institutions, the process of getting policies changed or approved takes a great deal of time. The process can be frustrating and can delay progress. The procedures are very slow and depend on many people. Coming from a field where there are often instant results, new coordinators may experience a period of adjustment. Coordinators must be prepared for the long process and must be patient when it comes to dealing with this aspect of education.

In most institutions across the nation, submitting forms is part of the process in seeking approval and change. Coming from the field of law enforcement, coordinators are accustomed to paperwork and procedures. Filing the proper forms can help expedite the process, and filling them out completely and correctly can also help speed things up. Filing the proper documents is important for coordinators to get through the

process. Coordinators need to become familiar with each step in the process and know what is needed to have changes approved. Mott College is no different, and all course revisions and course proposals are required to be presented on the proper forms. For instance, at Mott, Form 1A is for new courses, and Form 1AP is for course revisions. The forms, which are part of the process to implement new courses and program revisions, are very detailed and require the necessary information about the revision or the course proposal.

Many forms are similar in asking for information when requesting changes. The forms should include vital information such as class size, course description, outcomes, transferability, general education proficiency, and requirements. Class size is very important, because union contracts can cap class sizes at a certain number of students, so the course cannot exceed that number. The coordinator needs to know cap size to be sure the course does not exceed capacity and violate the union contract.

#### Division Approval

Every college has a different process in the approval and revision of curriculum. Colleges are usually divided into divisions and disciplines. For the most part, faculty members do not have contact with other faculty in other areas, with the exception of major meetings or board meetings. Coordinators should always seek approval from their colleagues. The approval should be presented at a division meeting, rather than on a one-to-one basis. Coordinators should expect questions and concerns from colleagues, but they need to remember that the feedback they receive is not a personal attack, but

is given out of respect for the coordinator and the students. This is the first step in the process.

Criminal Justice is part of the social sciences, which includes disciplines such as Early Childhood, Music, Political Science, and Art. Both division and department approval are part of the approval process. At Mott College, for example, after the course revision and new course development, the approval process starts with securing the approval of the division. At the division level, the faculty have an opportunity to ask about changes, reasons for change, and curriculum questions. The Fine Arts and Social Science division is made up of several different disciplines; every professor within the division has to approve the course revision and new course. This is the first step in the approval process. Once all faculty have approved the new course and curriculum revision, it is passed on to CPSC (College Professional Study Committee), which is the second step in the approval process.

#### College-Level Approval

The process of adding courses or revising curriculum differs at each college. Depending on the process, the requirements may be more or less difficult. The steps in the process may depend on the size of the student population enrolled at the institution. Coordinators should become familiar with committees and subcommittees, as the process at some point will involve some type of committee. Committees are usually made up of several administrators and faculty. The goal is to maintain the

integrity and high standards of programs, classes, and instruction. The process is to be in line with the mission statement and learning outcomes of the institution.

At Mott, the coordinator should attend the College Professional Committee meeting to answer any questions about the course revision or new course proposal. If there is an error or questions about the curriculum or course, the coordinator should be able to clarify the issue and provide needed information to the committee. Mott has currently 45 committee members comprised of administrators and faculty. Members serve for a period of one year. With the approval of the CPSC committee, the proposal will move on to the Curriculum Subcommittee.

#### Curriculum Subcommittees

At any particular college, the process may very well involve more than one committee. A subcommittee can be one step in the process. The purpose of the subcommittee usually is to study, discuss, and make recommendations of curricular changes. Depending on the demand and frequency of meeting times, most committees may meet once or twice a month. Coordinators should know deadlines for submissions to be added to the agenda. Prior to submitting the proposal, it would be beneficial for other coordinators or colleagues familiar with the process to review the paperwork.

The third step at Mott is the approval of the Curriculum Subcommittee. After the approval of CPSC, the Curriculum Subcommittee will be required to review the submitted proposals. Once the Curriculum Subcommittee approves the proposal, it is sent back to CPSC for final approval. Generally speaking, if the subcommittee has any

recommendations, it will provide those recommendations with approval, or will make the recommendations it feels are needed to gain approval.

### Implementation

At the conclusion of the process, the course and revision are officially changed and you can celebrate the success with members of your department. Depending on the institution, this approval process can be rather lengthy. The key for any coordinator is to be patient and open-minded. He or she should make sure that all of the steps are in place to ensure the proposal is correct and in line with the professional standards of the community college. The changes are usually added to the curriculum and can go into effect two semesters after approval.

When you adopt a course, you should be open to changing a few things in the classroom. When instructors teach in the classroom, they find out what works by experience. The ability to adapt and change should be in your mind as a coordinator and also as a professor. If you are not teaching in the classroom, these ideas should be conveyed or suggested to other faculty.

The ability to change in the everyday workforce has equipped you with the skills to do the same in academia. In the field, it is life-and-death decision making. In academia, it could mean your career as well. It is important to listen to your students and other members of your department. Ultimately, it is your decision to make. You should always remember why you are there and prepare the students as best you can for the career they have chosen.

## Conclusion on the Curricula Process

The process for coordinators can be a bit overwhelming and slow, but coordinators must learn the procedure and be patient. They will experience a step-by-step process during this part of curriculum revision. Once coordinators have been through the process, they will be more comfortable with future changes and additions. Many differences exist between law enforcement and education; one is the process of change. Criminal justice professionals coming from the field may be used to an expedited process when trying to implement change, but they need to take their time to research and learn the processes of their institutions.

## Conclusion

The transition for coordinators will vary, but, most importantly, the new coordinator needs to learn and understand the process. The more the coordinator goes through the process, the more he or she will become comfortable with it. Keep in mind that speed is not the goal, but learning the overall process of how the college works is. The processes can be long and time-consuming but will be worth it in the end. A detailed process is required in every institution in order to implement changes to classes, programs, etc.

Coordinators will need to make an adjustment from being a criminal justice professional to an educator. They also must not become frustrated or upset, realizing that sometimes the process cannot be completed in an efficient manner. Patience is key when learning something new; it will work out in the long term for the leader. The more

knowledge learned overtime, the more comfortable one becomes in that area of change.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

### Introduction

The journey of transitioning from one career to another is never easy, but it can be done. In Chapters 1 through 4, several points were offered to help make the transition smoother for coordinators and give them more opportunity to be successful. The topics discussed are important and relevant to their position as new coordinators.

Transitioning from law enforcement to academia can be a challenging process, but with proper assistance, coordinators can efficiently adapt to their new role. Most coordinators who enter academia have a steep learning curve when settling into their new profession. In most cases, making the transition from law enforcement can be intimidating when confronted with overwhelming terminology, procedures, and policy. Coordinators will find their roles may be similar to law enforcement in having to balance several different roles and responsibilities.

Coordinators will need patience, as adapting to a new role will take time. In law enforcement, there is a sense of urgency, and people must make decisions that impact others' lives. Coordinators must be able to adapt to the slower pace of education and the decision-making process. In education, coordinators will need to attend more meetings, wait on longer approval processes, and manage various political influences.

When considering a move from law enforcement, coordinators should not be concerned with the challenge of change. In moving forward, coordinators should be confident that they will succeed in their new career. They should be aware of resources that will assist them with the transition. Although new coordinators may believe they are alone during the transitional period, they should remember that others have made the change and have proven to be successful. New coordinators will need support on an individual and organizational level in order to be successful. They should have tools in place that will help with their transition into academia.

There is a great deal to learn, but success as a new coordinator can be achieved by following this guide. This chapter will touch on some key points and will include other resources that can help coordinators be successful in their new career.

### **Leadership**

The position of coordinator is best filled by one who is a quality leader. Coordinators must bear in mind that they are starting over and will need to learn a new discipline in the field of education. A new leader will experience challenges, and new coordinators must be prepared for change and resistance. Another challenge for new coordinators is to learn how best to work with other professors and earn their trust. Leadership is about trust: gaining others' confidence that you are leading them in the right direction. Leaders should never promise anything, but should come into the position with an open mind.

Also, new coordinators should take time to observe the process and embrace learning. Coordinators will have much to learn, particularly in regard to new processes and the discipline of education. Changes within a program should not happen quickly, but rather after careful thought and consideration. Several conversations with supervisors should take place before any changes are made. It is very important to carefully research and plan prior to making changes. Coordinators are responsible for the quality of the program and its faculty and students. The service being provided is different in nature than that of law enforcement, but it is similar at the core level of helping others succeed.

In addition to gaining trust, a new coordinator may need to address the obstacle of employees who feel they should be leading the program. New coordinators will undoubtedly deal with many political aspects of the position. In most cases, some will be happy for you, and others will believe they should have been promoted over you. It is important to maintain professionalism and promote a vision for growth of the program. New coordinators must not let distractions from others come into play and hinder the plan.

### **Vision**

Every coordinator should have a plan and vision for the program. Coordinators who inherit a good program should not rest on past and current successes. The duty of the coordinator is to develop and improve and not just maintain the current program. Many people depend on the coordinator to make this happen. In many respects,

students and staff in the field of criminal justice and in the college as a whole are relying on the coordinator to lead.

The vision should project the direction the coordinator has for the program in both the short-term and long-term future. Both the growth of the program and the plans to improve it are equally important. Leaders in all fields should have a vision and should implement plans to help achieve the goal and vision of their field.

### **Networking**

The ability to build relationships and to network is critical to the success of a coordinator. One must pursue relationships within the college and in the community. All coordinators should establish relationships with different disciplines and work collaboratively with those at other colleges and universities. Another relationship crucial to the program is the Criminal Justice Advisory Board. The advisory board consists of experts in the field. The board members are the pulse of the workforce. As changes happen in the field, the board will help the coordinator to keep up with trends and changes.

### **Professional Development**

Professional development is a critical part of learning more about the field of education and criminal justice. For new coordinators to learn about the college in which they are working, they need to be open to new ideas and attend conferences and workshops. These conferences and workshops should include areas outside the

discipline of criminal justice. There will be many opportunities for professional development within the college as well, as most community colleges and universities present opportunities for educational training.

Coordinators should pursue professional development opportunities. Participation in these activities will enable the coordinator to gather needed information and will help with educational development.

### **Implications**

The transition to academia made by law enforcement professionals is critical in promoting growth of the criminal justice program. In most community colleges, the criminal justice program is one of the largest occupational programs. Good leadership is vital for continued success of the program. Poor leadership or a weak transition can lead to deficiencies in the program, which could result in an inferior education for its graduates.

As in most businesses and successful ventures, good leadership is needed to maintain the quality of a program. Criminal justice professionals who make the transition must remember that leading others in the field of education is different than leading a law enforcement agency. Failure to build relationships and work with others within and outside the program will result in failed leadership. In law enforcement, one's reliance on other officers was the main source of trust. In the educational field, it takes many more people to make the college and program successful.

If a potential new coordinator is not a person who can delegate or share control, then academic leadership is not a career for him or her. For law enforcement professionals making the transition, the primary goal is to be able to work with others for the benefit of the student. The position of coordinator is not about power, ego, or professional accolades. Coordinators who have made the transition to education were likely accustomed to experiencing this as law enforcement professionals. However, law enforcement can be a bit territorial when it comes to jurisdictional boundaries and high profile cases.

Essentially the coordinators' job is to build, promote, and grow the program they are leading. Over time, this will challenge them to become creative and to research changes involving the law enforcement field. Coordinators should also remain open-minded to new ideas and development philosophies such as technology and research. The job is an important one and the students, college, workforce, and criminal justice profession are depending on them to help develop future leaders and professionals in the field.

Coordinators will need to think harder than they ever did in the field of the law enforcement, which can lead to fatigue. The days of police work, standing on their feet for hours in all kinds of inclement weather, are over, but the challenge now is to keep the program up-to-date and relevant with trends in education and criminal justice. A personal challenge is to be able to make the transition and learn the system of

education. New coordinators need to understand they cannot survive on an island — working alone and not engaging with other people and activities within the college.

There will be opportunities for the program to flourish by working with other programs in the college. Coordinators have a budget to follow, and there will be costs associated with obtaining resources for colleagues and students. Coordinators can benefit by joining forces with other campus coordinators to promote programs and also to participate in community service for the college. Coordinators should attend other programs' events throughout the college community. Doing so can provide ideas that may work in the program and can help to build trust among colleagues. Each opportunity has the potential to build the program and expose colleagues to different learning experiences that they would not otherwise not have.

### **How Colleges Can Prepare Coordinators for the Transition**

In the field of law enforcement, all officers and command staff have a policy and procedure manual to follow and help them with a protocol to handle various situations. Policy and procedure is the “bible” for officers in handling calls. Failure to follow protocol could result in discipline of some form. In police work, policy and procedures, along with contracts, help the officer know what is expected.

In education, there are similarities; however, the procedures are in the form of contracts, in particular, the collective bargaining contract. Coordinators coming into the job do not have a policy and procedure manual to refer to. In some colleges, there may not even be a job description to follow. This is because the coordinator position is

viewed as an overload pay position (“overtime” in police terms) and is not a fully administrative position.

After the coordinator has accepted the position and begins working, he or she learns about the college — the acronyms, mission, expectations, and what the college is all about. The coordinator also becomes acquainted with the collective bargaining contract and what is expected. Coordinators receive individual training from the dean or their direct supervisor.

The new coordinator may also be trained by the previous coordinator. In some cases, contention between administration and the former coordinator can pose a problem in training the new leader. Any friction between these entities can lead to lack of or improper training of the new coordinator.

The best scenario for new coordinators coming into the job is to be trained by the dean or supervisor and to be given a policy and procedure manual. Policy and procedures for coordinators are important because they give an overall picture of what is expected. A policy and procedure manual can help make the transition smoother for someone coming from the law enforcement field.

Such a manual can include not only the responsibilities but also the process of what is expected when it comes to budgeting, program reporting, coordinating a job fair, adding classes, revising courses, or eliminating classes from the curriculum. New coordinators may find it overwhelming to learn new processes; having written policies, procedures, and processes available can allow them to study processes on their own,

without having to rely on different individuals in the college for information. This helps to eliminate confusion and misinformation regarding what is required.

A job manual, or policy and procedures, would be welcomed by any person making the transition. The lack of such a resource could contribute to the failure of the coordinator and program. Clarification of procedures presented within a manual would save the coordinator time and prevent errors in following protocols. Another benefit of having a manual that clearly defines expectations is that supervisors would need to spend less time answering questions for coordinators. The manual should be created by the dean, along with the present coordinator, for future coordinators who are making the transition. Coordinators who find themselves without a manual should meet with a supervisor and discuss the development of a manual to help future coordinators. Creating a manual needs approval from higher-ranked administrators and should be a team effort in establishing a document that explains the proper protocol and expectations for this position.

### **Lack of Resources for Coordinators**

Before creating such a manual for coordinators making the transition, one should review the research. In this case, there was a lack of empirical research regarding coordinators who have made a transition from law enforcement to education. One area of research that needs to be addressed involves job expectations. These expectations should be clearly identified and defined by researching other coordinators who have made this transition. Identifying expectations will set the tone and future expectations

for coordinators. It would be beneficial for coordinators to have a foundation upon which to build their second career.

Another area that needs to be addressed is the challenges faced by new coordinators. Identifying these challenges, such as dealing with politics, acronyms, and stress, would help prepare them for the job. The research also needs to address differences between the role played in law enforcement and that of the college coordinator. The knowledge gained from such research would help coordinators understand what they are transitioning into and whether the position is right for them to pursue.

Also, research needs to address the percentages of law enforcement officers who made the transition into the role of coordinator, the number of coordinators in the United States, and the success rates of coordinators. Another key element to identify is the failure rate of coordinators and the top contributors to the failure. This information can be used to assist coordinators in avoiding the pitfalls that lead to failure in this position.

Lastly, research needs to address how to survive and flourish in the position. One recommendation is to understand the importance of diet and balance between work and home life. In many cases, most coordinators have been successful over a 20- to 30-year period in law enforcement; however, the role of coordinator requires balance in the proper way to handle the stress of learning and adapting to a new environment.

Essentially, coordinators are starting over in a new career and need tools to handle the challenges of balance in their lives.

### **Opportunities for Coordinators**

Coordinators should always be open to serving on committees and participating in college events to represent the college and the program. In most cases, leaders will be able to learn about the college and being active in the college community can lead to promotion for the program and other opportunities. In addition, leaders will be able to learn about the college, create opportunities to collaborate with other disciplines, and gain valuable experience by being active in the college. In working with others, you will be viewed as a team player and dependable.

The benefit of being active can lead to promotions, as well as other opportunities for students. Once others in the college become familiar with the program and coordinator, opportunities will come that will develop relationships and resources.

Many opportunities are available for coordinators to learn and understand community college leadership and the processes that are followed both within and outside the college. Many colleges have some type of probationary period for new employees, who will be required to attend professional development and to learn more about the college. In most cases, the professional development will include new methods and trends of teaching and technology. Also, the mission and expectations of the college will be addressed.

In most colleges, participation on committees is encouraged, and coordinators should not hesitate to participate. Coordinators will be asked to take part in hiring faculty in different disciplines, talking to new staff members, and promoting the college. In some cases, coordinators will need to step out of their comfort zones to learn about new disciplines and processes. This also serves as an opportunity to meet new colleagues from different disciplines. Coordinators should also attend conferences in education and in the field of criminal justice. They will learn a great deal about the field of education at conferences. In most cases, educational conferences offer a variety of different subject matter. Presentations may include teaching methods, brain-based learning, or bringing the criminal justice component into teaching. The job of a coordinator brings two disciplines together, and engaging in professional opportunities can be quite educational for a new coordinator.

Conferences are encouraged in most institutions, and coordinators should take full advantage of the opportunity to learn and network with other professionals in education and with criminal justice coordinators. When a coordinator attends an educational conference, it is not likely that he or she will meet many criminal justice coordinators. The number of coordinators around the country is not known, nor is the number that attend conferences. Coordinators should venture out and explore options in education, rather than focusing on criminal justice alone. There are many ways to learn about education within the college, and conferences provide additional

opportunities outside the college. Thus, there is no reason or excuse for coordinators not to learn about the field of education.

### **Support of Other Coordinators**

In most institutions, administration will be supportive of professional development. The need for coordinators to continue to grow academically extends beyond the discipline of criminal justice. In addition, coordinators need to attend conferences in education and technology. Leaders who fail to grow professionally and personally will limit their potential and program. Educators understand the commitment to lifelong learning and leaders have to accept this concept. There is no exception to learning and trying new trends that may benefit the program or students. Also, the belief in the importance of professional development must be shared with members of the department. Lack of resources or budgets should not inhibit growth, and leaders must find ways for members of the department and for themselves to participate.

Faculty members and employees are only as good as the knowledge they have and can pass on to stakeholders, such as students.

Networking among coordinators usually begins after meeting at conferences. Coordinators should give their business card to others while on campus or attending conferences. Gaining the support of other coordinators is important and is highly encouraged. Although there is not an organization for criminal justice coordinators, networking with others can help with the frustrations and challenges of the job. Coordinators will find that making contact with other coordinators is comparable to

police work; in police work, no one understands the challenges as well as other officers. In the role of coordinator, it is the same.

As part of their job, coordinators should seek out other coordinators, on both the community college and university levels, and attempt to network with them. Coordinators who are in close proximity to several colleges and universities should make contact with other colleagues serving in a similar leadership role. Making new friends can be a great help in seeking advice and learning about new opportunities and partnerships that will benefit the program and institution. Coordinators should make an effort to meet at least twice a year, if possible, to talk about new ideas, trends, and challenges in leading a program.

### **Mentoring Program**

New coordinators would benefit from a mentoring program, which would help them “learn the ropes” at a faster pace. A mentoring program could also help existing coordinators keep their skills sharp. Coordinators could benefit from a mentoring program on a national level and possibly a state level. A mentoring program would also bring coordinators together and help them avoid mistakes.

Mentoring is vital in any organization. For coordinators, the help and support of others would not only make the job easier, but would also help the transition to be less stressful. Coordinators would feel more like opening up to others in the same position. Trust will develop relatively quickly, especially when dialogue about former careers takes place.

## **Coordinator Handbook**

The job of coordinator is both challenging and rewarding. Coordinators will have a learning curve during the transition, but they can navigate their way and become very successful. Coordinators must also be patient and open-minded to differences that will appear in transitioning to a new career.

Colleges can do several things to help with the transition from law enforcement to education. A manual or policy and procedure book is essential for coordinators to review college policies. For those reading the manual, the process may seem overwhelming, but in actuality, it can be a challenging and rewarding experience.

The focus in police work is to help people and serve the community. In education, the focus is to serve students and the community on behalf of the college. The jobs are different, but the end result is the same. Coordinators should be reminded that they play an important role in educating future law enforcement and criminal justice professionals. Coordinators should take the initiative to learn more about the college, community, and relationship building. Coordinators should also venture out of their comfort zone and be open to change and networking; this is vital for success as a coordinator.

## **Adapting to the New Career**

Coordinators must realize that adapting to their new career will take time. In the classroom, coordinators will have to develop an effective style for teaching to keep students coming back for more. In law enforcement, many times officers have the law

on their side and are able to make people do what they want them to do. In education, however, the power is in effectively communicating with and keeping the interest of the student.

In addition, not every student in the classroom will want to be a police officer. The wide range of careers that are available can pique student interest. Some students will want to study law, social work, or other disciplines. Other students will be fans of criminal television shows and will ask the coordinator to debunk myths of the criminal justice system. Being a coordinator will require the individual to work with a variety of different professionals to promote the program and prepare students for the workforce.

### **Showing Compassion**

New coordinators should understand and accept they are role models. Many students will look up to the new coordinator as a former law enforcement professional and instructor. Some students may want to build a rapport and may even request a recommendation for employment or graduate school.

### **Conclusion**

The progression that new coordinators experience occurs on college campuses across the country. The goal for new coordinators is to transition into academia and to develop as an educational leader. Coordinators should be aware of opportunities to grow and should take advantage of them. The first hurdle is to build relationships outside of the law enforcement community. Coordinators should also lean on the advice

of other coordinators and colleagues to help them in transitioning into their new career. In most college institutions, there will be overwhelming support from other instructors and staff within the college.

The support system is in place to help them succeed. The coordinator's new journey will be filled with positive and negative experiences. The academic area offers several avenues that lead to growth and learning. In addition, coordinators may want to pursue a doctoral degree in education that will open doors to moving into positions such as dean, provost, vice president, or president. Coordinators will find education rewarding, exciting, and challenging.

In law enforcement, the focus is to help people and serve the community. That remains the same in education. The difference, however, is that you have the opportunity to influence the future, one student at a time, through knowledge and preparedness.

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