

learning activity packages (LAPs)

- Problem-Based Learning
- Problem-Oriented Policing
- Field Interrogations
- Custodial Interrogations
- Community Policing

problem-based learning

Introduction

Educators often describe problem-based learning (PBL) as a method of teaching and learning that focuses on solving a problem. The foundations of police problem-based learning include a respect for adult learning styles, the need for relevance in what police officers are learning, and the achievement of outcomes from that learning that deal directly with significant issues in the police officer's life.

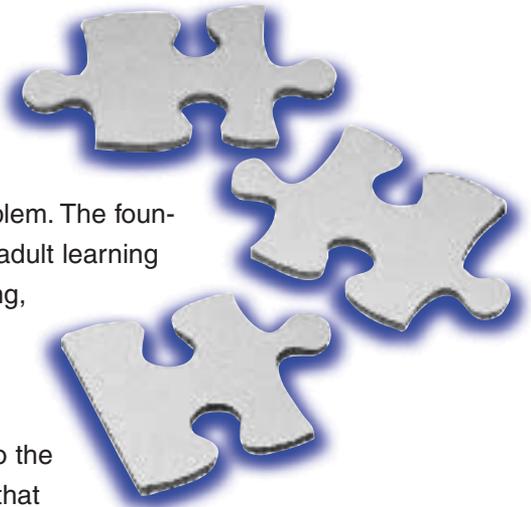
The PBL Method: Instructors begin by presenting a problem to the learner/trainee that has real-life significance. "Real life" means that the problem is one that the trainee would normally encounter during the course of his or her duties. These problems may vary from serious community disorders to an ongoing series of minor disturbances in a parking lot. The problems are "ill-structured," which means that they are not easily solved and they have a number of inherent issues that the learner must address to either solve or lessen the severity of the problem.

Once the trainee has spent some time looking over the problem, he or she presents a number of ideas about possible solutions. These ideas, right or wrong, become an important part of the learning process, so trainers and trainees should record them.

After speculating on possible solutions, the trainee then looks at the problem and considers all the known facts of that problem. This becomes a valuable problem-solving skill for the trainee as he or she learns to think critically and record all of the issues and facts before leaping to any conclusions.

“instructors present a problem the trainee would normally encounter while on duty”

Gathering Information: After listing what he or she knows, the trainee then considers what learning issues he or she must research. The trainer should help during this part of the learning wherever possible, but not by giving answers. Remember, they don't know what they don't know! For example, if a trainee is working on a drug problem in a park, he or she may not have any knowledge regarding the use of local ordinances gov-



erning park closing times or prohibited behaviors. Rather than giving them answers, the trainer simply indicates that this is an area of the law that the trainee may need to consider as part of the problem-solving strategy.

Problem Solving: After the trainee lists what he or she doesn't know and then goes about learning that information, both the trainer and the trainee should look at the trainee's original thoughts on how to solve the problems. Often, they discover that their first impulse or first conclusion was inadequate, insufficient or incorrect.

At this point, armed with new knowledge, the trainee sets out an action plan to solve or lessen the severity of the problem. Following the plan's implementation and after a suitable time, both the trainee and the trainer evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

Outcomes

This Learning Activity Package discusses how police trainers and trainees use the PBL method during training. After completing this LAP, the patrol officer will be able to perform the following:

- Explain the benefits of problem-based learning
- Describe the purpose of learning cohorts
- Analyze ill-structured problems to determine if they are suitable for problem solving
- Evaluate the need for *Emotional Intelligence* in working with learning cohorts and other members of the community

Comprehensive Questions

- How can police trainers and trainees use PBL to work on small, medium or large community projects?
- What problem-solving skills are essential elements of the PBL process?
- To what extent does the *real life* problem involve the "community"?
- What makes an ill-structured problem? Are the problems given to the trainees during training easy to solve or do they require higher order thinking for resolution?
- How does problem-based learning accommodate a variety of learning styles and problem-solving abilities?
- During the "community learning process," what *Emotional Intelligence* skills will a trainee require for successful team behavior?

Application

Pick a chronic community problem and apply the PBL process to help solve that problem. The stages of recording the *ideas, known facts, learning issues, action plan and evaluation* should follow sequentially. Discuss with your trainer how much time you estimate you need to complete each phase of the process and discuss your performance during each phase of the problem solving. Reflect on whether your time estimates were accurate at the end of the PBL process.

Resources and Additional Reading

University of Delaware Problem-Based Learning home page [Online] Available: www.udel.edu/pbl

Southern Illinois University School of Medicine/Department of Medical Education—Problem-Based Learning Initiative page [Online] Available: www.pbli.org/pbl/pbl.htm

Problem Based Learning Faculty Institute. University of California, Irvine. “What is Problem-Based Learning?” [Online] Available: www.pbl.uci.edu/whatispbl.html

Samford University Center for Problem-Based Learning home page [Online] Available: www.samford.edu/pbl

Classroom of the Future Teacher Pages on Problem-Based Learning [Online] Available: www.cotf.edu/ete/teacher/teacherout.html

National Teaching and Learning Forum home page [Online] Available: www.ntlf.com

Crux Consulting home page [Online] Available: www.cruxconsulting.org

Schools of California Online Resources for Education (SCORE) Internet Classroom—Problem-Based Learning [Online] Available: score.rims.k12.ca.us/problearn.html

Illinois Mathematics and Science Academy Center for Problem-Based Learning home page [Online] Available: www.imsa.edu/team/cpbl/cpbl.html

problem-oriented policing

Introduction

Problem-oriented policing (POP), developed by Herman Goldstein², is a comprehensive framework for improving law enforcement's capacity to perform job functions. POP seeks to shift from a reactive, incident-oriented stance to one that actively addresses problems that continually drain police resources. This framework encourages police to think differently about their purpose, promoting problem resolution as the true work of police. Its premise is that police should actively identify and address the root causes of community problems that lead to repeat calls for service.

A core concept of POP is comprehensive problem analysis. POP looks for the deepest underlying conditions of a problem and targets those conditions that are amenable to intervention. Problem analysis can include fully describing the problem, describing multiple and conflicting interests, describing the nature and costs of harm resulting from the problem, and taking inventory and critiquing current responses. Thorough problem analysis enables police to begin the problem-solving process by determining the level of police responsibility for addressing the problem, identifying and developing problem-solving strategies, and evaluating their solution's effectiveness.



“a core concept of POP is problem analysis”

While there are many measures of problem-solving success, the general objective of POP is to decrease the harm caused by patterns of chronic offensive behavior and to increase the range and effectiveness of police responses to crime and disorder. Comprehensive evaluations of problem-solving solutions are necessary to determine the value of the police response.

Outcomes

This Learning Activity Package discusses the concept of POP and the role of law enforcement in problem-solving in the community. After completing this LAP, the officer will be able to perform the following:

- Discuss key concepts of POP
- Discuss the problem analysis and problem-solving processes
- Identify and thoroughly analyze a problem in the community, and develop a problem-oriented policing strategy to address root causes of the problem
- Develop a plan to measure the success of the strategy
- Determine who should be involved in the problem-solving process

Comprehensive Questions

- What is POP? What are the goals of this policing concept?
- What is the SARA model?
- What are the goals of each of the problem-solving steps?

Application

Identify and analyze a chronic crime problem in your community, carefully addressing each element in the analysis phase. Work through the problem-solving process and develop a strategy for addressing the problem. How would you implement this strategy and measure its effectiveness? Who should you involve in this process?

“what is the **SARA** model?”

Online Resources and Additional Reading

Scott, M. S. (October 2000). Problem-Oriented Policing: Reflections on the First 20 Years. Washington, DC: Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services. [Online] Available: www.cops.usdoj.gov/default.asp?Item=311

Police Executive Research Forum. (2002). Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing: The 2002 Herman Goldstein Award Winners. [Online] Available: www.policeforum.org, see Document File “POP and COP”

Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services. (April 1998). Problem-solving tips: A guide to reducing crime and disorder through problem-solving partnerships. COPS Tips. [Online] Available: www.ncjrs.org

Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services. (2002). Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series (Guides No. 1-19). [Online] Available: www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=248

Reading resources in these LAPs provide practical information and context, and can be easily accessed on-line with no cost. Additional valuable texts on these LAP subjects are available at www.ncjrs.org and www.policeforum.org

field interrogations: stop and frisk

Introduction

Field interrogations are an important responsibility of the patrol officer, especially in high-crime areas. These procedures (often referred to as “stop and frisk” or “Terry stops”) are one tool for evaluating suspicious circumstances or investigating situations where crime may be imminent. While stop and frisk is an important policing tool, the use of these procedures must be balanced with citizens’ rights as afforded by the Fourth Amendment. The Fourth Amendment states that individuals have the right to be protected against unreasonable seizure (stop) and search (frisk).

In *Terry v. Ohio* (1968) the U.S. Supreme Court affirmed that patrol officers have a “*duty to investigate observed suspicious activity*”³ and an “*absolute right to protect themselves*” by frisking for weapons. The Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of stop and frisk under specific guidelines. In general, these guidelines require two levels of suspicion for the officer: 1) to make a stop, and 2) to frisk the suspect.

For a Stop: An officer may stop someone on the street when there is *reasonable suspicion* to believe that the individual may be engaged in criminal activity. A stop requires the officer to 1) identify himself or herself as a police officer, and 2) make a reasonable inquiry as to the person’s identity. **A stop does not automatically justify a frisk.**

For a Frisk: If after stopping the suspect, 1) nothing in the initial stages of the encounter dispels the officer’s reasonable fear for his or her own or others’ safety, and 2) the officer has reasonable suspicion to believe the person is armed and presently dangerous, then the officer may conduct a search (frisk) for weapons only over the outer clothing of the suspect. The officer can seize any weapons that are detected.

Plain Feel Doctrine: In 1993, the U.S. Supreme Court expanded stop and frisk procedures to include the “plain feel” doctrine, meaning police officers can seize items detected during a frisk for weapons, as long as “plain feel” makes it “immediately apparent” that the item is contraband. Otherwise, objects other than weapons may not be removed from a suspect’s clothing during a frisk.

“the officer can seize any weapons that are detected”

Outcomes

This Learning Activity Package will enable the officer to identify circumstances in which field interrogations or “stop and frisks” are appropriate and constitutionally permissible. After completing this LAP, the officer will be able to perform the following:

- Discuss the balance between the Fourth Amendment’s protection against unreasonable search and seizure and an officer’s duty to ensure the safety of himself and others

- Cite the requirements for stop and frisk as outlined in *Terry v. Ohio* (1968) and provide examples of circumstances that do and do not meet the requirements for a stop and frisk
- Explain the “plain feel” doctrine and guidelines for seizing contraband during a frisk, and provide examples of situations in which items may or may not be seized from a suspect during a frisk
- Determine when a frisk becomes a search incident to arrest

Comprehensive Questions

- What level of suspicion is necessary for a field interrogation or stop? When should a stop be concluded?
- What level of suspicion is necessary for a frisk? How would you test the circumstances to ensure the situation meets the correct level of suspicion?
- What did the U.S. Supreme Court determine permissible under the “plain feel” doctrine?
- When does a frisk become a search incident to arrest?
- Why is “stop and frisk” important to a police officer’s responsibility to ensure public safety?
- What rights does the Fourth Amendment guarantee and why is it important to ensure these rights?
- How does “stop and frisk” impact police–citizen relations?

Application

Create a scenario in which you would stop and frisk a suspect. Articulate the reasons for your stop, what you would do during the stop, and what circumstances would require you to end the stop, and frisk the suspect. According to the plain feel doctrine, what items may and may not be removed from the suspect’s clothing during the frisk?

Resources and Additional Reading

FindLaw: U.S. Constitution: Fourth Amendment. [Online] Available: caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/data/constitution/amendment04/index.html

FindLaw: Cases and Codes: *Terry v. Ohio*. [Online] Available: caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/cgi-bin/getcase.pl?navby=case&court=us&vol=392&invol=1

Stop and Frisk. [Online] Available: members.tripod.com/~Methos_5000/stopfrisk.html

custodial interrogations: miranda warnings

Introduction

Custodial interrogations refer to the “questioning initiated by law enforcement officers after a person has been taken into custody.” Due to the “inherently coercive environment”⁴ of these interrogations, the U.S. legal system has continually promoted protections to minimize coerced confessions. To preserve the integrity of the justice system, citizens must be advised of their rights as guaranteed by the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Fourteenth Amendments.



In *Miranda v. Arizona* (1966), the U.S. Supreme Court set standards for ensuring suspects are aware of these rights and that the rights are not violated during interrogation. The holding in *Miranda v. Arizona* requires “prior to interrogation, the person must be warned that he has a right to remain silent, that any statement he does make may be used as evidence against him, and that he has the right to an attorney, either retained or appointed”.⁵

For a suspect's confession to be admissible in court, the confession must be made knowingly, voluntarily and intelligently. Initially, a suspect may waive these rights, but can choose to invoke them at any time during interrogation to stop the questioning. Requiring police officers to read rights or “Miranda warnings” provides a procedural safeguard that tries to ensure that suspects are afforded every right guaranteed to them as citizens, and that the integrity of a confession made in a custodial interrogation can be maintained during court proceedings.

Individual state or department policies may guide when and how Miranda warnings are issued. Most often, Miranda warnings are issued after taking a suspect into custody and before formal questioning. Signed waivers may be required once a suspect has chosen to relinquish these rights. As a general rule, when questioning a suspect in custody about an incident that may result in inculpatory statements, the police officer should inform the suspect of his or her rights.

“individual **state** or department policies may **guide** when and how **Miranda** warnings are issued”

Outcomes

This Learning Activity Package reviews the history of *Miranda v. Arizona* and subsequent U.S. Supreme Court case decisions relevant to custodial interrogations and confessions. After completing this LAP, officers will be able to perform the following:

- Describe the importance of Miranda warnings in maintaining the integrity of a suspect's confession and ensuring a suspect's rights are not violated
- Properly read Miranda warnings to a suspect
- Identify how and when Miranda warnings should be issued, as outlined by the U.S. Supreme Court in *Miranda v. Arizona* and according to state statutes and/or department policy
- Know what to do if a suspect invokes his or her rights
- Be able to determine when statements should be obtained in writing and when a signed waiver of rights should be obtained

Comprehensive Questions

- What was the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Miranda v. Arizona*?
- What is the importance of reading a suspect his or her rights?
- Why is the Miranda decision important to you as a law enforcement officer? How does this affect your carrying out your job responsibilities?
- What are your state/department guidelines regarding when Miranda warnings should be read?
- What should you do when a suspect invokes his or her rights? Waives his or her rights?
- When should you obtain a signed waiver of rights? Written statements or confessions?

Application

Obtain a copy of your state/department's guidelines for when and how a suspect should be read their rights and commit this to memory. Practice reading the Miranda warnings. Create a scenario in which the suspect waives his or her rights. What should you do? Create a scenario in which the suspect invokes his or her rights. What should you do?

Resources and Additional Reading

FindLaw: Cases and Codes: *Miranda v. Arizona* [Online] Available: caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/cgi-bin/get-case.pl?court=us&vol=384&invol=436

FindLaw: U.S. Constitution: Fifth Amendment: Annotations. [Online] Available: supreme.lp.findlaw.com/constitution/amendment05/#annotations

community policing

Introduction

Community-oriented policing is a policing philosophy based on collaborative partnerships between police and the community. While community-oriented policing strategies vary according to the needs and responses of the community involved, there are certain basic principles common to all community policing efforts. These basic principles include both community partnerships and problem solving.

Community Partnerships: To develop the collaborative relationships necessary for community policing, police must establish and maintain mutual trust with the community. The idea behind this principle is that trust is built by increasing the positive daily interactions with community members. As patrol officers provide the majority of service needs for their community and become familiar with the daily workings of the community and its members, trusting relationships will develop and enable collaborative problem-solving efforts to more effectively address crime and disorder.

“community **policing** includes
community partnerships and
problem solving”

Problem Solving: Problem solving is a valid and important policing function in the community. As police become familiar with community members, concerns, crime problems and available resources, they will be more capable of identifying the root causes of community problems and applying effective solutions. As trusting relationships are developed, the community will want to take an active role in helping the police identify the causes of crime problems, prioritize their concerns, and help develop solutions. Community trust will also facilitate cooperation among community members to provide information necessary for crime solving in the area.



In general, community policing requires the active participation of all facets of the community and seeks to involve the community in sharing the responsibility for preventing crime with the police. Using problem-solving techniques, this approach facilitates a process for identifying community concerns and developing potential solutions to improve police effectiveness and community relationships. Central to this philosophy is working with the community to identify and address their crime and disorder priorities, rather than the priorities of the department or jurisdiction at-large.

Outcomes

This Learning Activity Package discusses the community-oriented policing approach and how this approach improves community relationships and police crime-solving ability. After completing this LAP, the officer will be able to perform the following:

- Explain the philosophy of community-oriented policing and describe the core elements of this approach
- Discuss the benefits of community policing and cite successful applications of the community policing approach
- Discuss how community-oriented policing activities build the relationships necessary to facilitate effective problem solving
- Identify community crime and disorder issues in his or her community that may be reduced by increasing community-policing activities
- Develop a plan to incorporate community-oriented policing activities into daily policing and patrol routines

Comprehensive Questions

- Discuss the trends toward community policing over the past decade. Why was this approach necessary and why has this approach helped to reduce street crime?
- Discuss the philosophy of community-oriented policing. Specifically, why are community partnerships beneficial? What are the law enforcement benefits of participating in community-oriented policing activities and developing these partnerships? What are the community's benefits?
- How does community-oriented policing impact police crime solving and crime prevention efforts in the community?

Application

Identify and list opportunities for community-oriented policing activities in your community. Include both opportunities for relationship building and problem-solving activities. Develop a plan to use the opportunities to incorporate community-oriented policing activities in your daily policing/patrol activities. Describe how you would identify key community concerns and initiate a problem-solving effort with your community members during these activities and interactions.

Resources and Additional Reading

Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) (1994). *Understanding Community Policing: A Framework for Action*. (NCJ No. 148457). [Online] Available: www.communitypolicing.org/chap1fw.html

Community Policing Consortium (CPC) (2001). *About Community Policing* [Online] Available: www.communitypolicing.org/about2.html

National Institute of Justice (NIJ) (July 1996). Law enforcement in a time of community policing NIJ Research in Brief. [Online] Available: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/pubs-sum/184389.htm

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). [Online] Available: www.cops.usdoj.gov