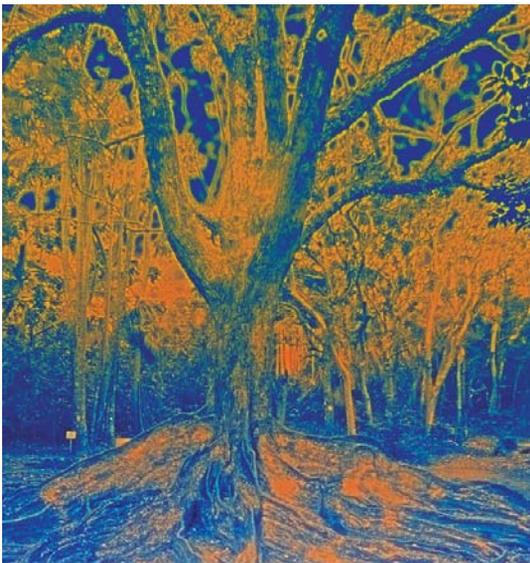


Community-Oriented Policing and Problem Solving (COPPS) is quickly becoming the philosophy and daily practice of progressive police agencies around the world. COPPS lies at the heart of contemporary policing. The problem-solving process, which is the core of COPPS, strikes at the roots of crime rather than hacks at its branches. It provides officers with a more comprehensive understanding of problems through in-depth analysis and guides them in the development of tailored and collaborative response strategies.



Police administrators have long recognized the ineffectiveness of incident-driven policing, as well as the economic insensitivity of random patrol, rapid response and post-crime investigation. Racing from call to call, in spite of its appeal on television, does not promote effective policing. Responding to the same domestic dispute nightly or citing the same disorderly youths gathering in a park are ineffective strategies for resolving community problems.

This manual presents a Police Training Officer (PTO) program for new officers, which incorporates contemporary adult educational methods and a version of problem-based learning (PBL) adapted for police. This approach to training provides a foundation for life-long learning that prepares the new officer for the complexities of policing today and in the future.

“COPPS lies at the heart
of contemporary
policing”

¹ The term “police” is meant to refer to all law enforcement practitioners at municipal, county and state agencies.

PBL is well grounded in the fields of medicine and education, where it facilitates the transfer of knowledge. Similarly, in policing, trainees need to learn much more than just laws and police procedures. They must also understand how to apply their academy knowledge effectively when dealing with individuals and issues within a community.

This manual is not based on developing mechanical training or rote skills commonly found in traditional field training officer (FTO) programs. While static skills are a necessity in police work and are integral to any training program, they constitute only one set of many skills needed in contemporary policing. This manual focuses on the officer's learning capacity and problem-solving skills as opposed to his or her rote performance capabilities. This manual offers trainees an invaluable tool for learning to perform their duties and responsibilities in a more efficient, effective and equitable manner.

As demands on police continue to increase, agencies must provide officers with the resources and the training to fulfill their expanded role. It also makes good sense to have police trainees thinking about their roles and responsibilities as they approach specific problems in their daily work. Problem solving is an integral part of police work and requires a creative and flexible method of thinking - thinking that the PTO model encourages.



“**static skills** constitute **only one** set of **many skills** needed in **contemporary policing**”

TERMS REFERENCED IN THE TEXT

BOE Board of Evaluators

COPPS Community-Oriented Policing and Problem Solving

CPTED Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

CTR Coaching and Training Report

FTO Field Training Officer

LAP Learning Activity Package

NPE Neighborhood Portfolio Exercise

PBL Problem-Based Learning

PBLE Problem-Based Learning Exercise

PTE Police Training Evaluator

PTO Police Training Officer

PTS Police Training Supervisor

SARA Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment

SOP Standard Operating Procedure

frequently asked questions

about the pto model

What's in a name?

This model uses the term Police Training Officer (PTO). This change of language away from the military terminology of *field training* reflects the movement towards community-oriented policing and problem solving.

“so how does it work?”

So how does it work on a day-to-day basis?

The trainee and trainer answer calls, patrol their beat, and work with the community much as they have always done. In this model, the trainees use those experiences to solve various problems assigned by the trainer. Those assigned problems, called Problem-Based Learning Exercises, train the recruit to think critically and develop partnerships within the community.

How will I be evaluated?

Good question! Evaluation takes place in a number of ways, including:

- Informal assessment of daily activities through completing daily journal entries and dialogue
- Weekly Coaching and Training Reports (CTRs)
- Problem-Based Learning Exercises (PBLEs) in each of the four phases
- Neighborhood Portfolio Exercise (NPE)
- Week-long Mid-Term Evaluation
- Week-long Final Evaluation
- Board of Evaluators' (BOE) assessment of trainee, if recommended by departmental policy

This manual presents the PTO program to police trainees, and is intended for use in their classroom instruction and as a resource when training. It begins with an introduction of problem-based learning, which underlies the PTO program. Chapter 2 outlines the composition of the PTO program, including its phase structure and evaluation elements. Chapters 3, 4, 6, and 7 detail the four phases of training in the model. These chapters include trainee copies of three necessary evaluation and teaching tools used in the program: the Neighborhood Portfolio Exercise, the Problem-Based Learning Exercise, and the weekly Coaching and Training Report. Chapters 5 and 8 guide the trainee through the Mid-Term and Final Evaluation components of the model. The manual concludes with appendices containing evaluation forms and Learning Activity Packages.

OBJECTIVES OF THE PROGRAM

- To formulate learning opportunities for new officers that meet or exceed the training needs of both the community and the policing agency
- To develop and enhance the trainee's learning from the academy within the community environment through a series of *real-life* problem-solving activities
- To foster a growing independence from the Police Training Officer over the course of the program
- To produce graduates of the training program who are capable of providing responsible, community-focused police services
- To prepare trainees to use a problem-solving approach throughout their careers by employing problem-based learning training
- To promote the practice of using community members as partners in problem solving
- To design fair and consistent evaluations that address a trainee's skills, knowledge, application, and ability to problem solve effectively

THIS MODEL MUST INCLUDE THESE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS:

- Trainees must apply the learning matrix in each element of the program
- Trainees must journal on a daily basis
- Trainees must complete weekly Coaching and Training Reports (CTRs)
- Trainees must perform a Problem-Based Learning Exercise (PBLE) throughout each phase of the training
- Trainees must perform a Neighborhood Portfolio Exercise (NPE) throughout the PTO program