Avoiding the High Cost of Turnover

COPS – Annual Conference
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Merle Switzer
Management Fellow
Switzer Associates…Leadership Solutions

This project was funded by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training
Project Overview

- Establish R & R Advisory Council
- Survey of Literature
- Survey of Academy Recruits
- Survey of Recruiters
- Survey of Symposium 2001 Attendees
- Focus Groups – Subject Matter Experts
- National Conferences & Training
- 2005 Recruitment and Retention Symposium
- 2006 Recruiter Seminar

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Satisfied Expectations = Retention
Unmet Expectations = Attrition
22.4% of CA peace officers have changed agencies at least once.
Since 2000, 3-4% of all peace officers change agencies each year.
1st agency change:
- 25% within 1.5 years
- 50% by 3.2 years
- 75% by 8.5 years
Officers Who Leave Profession

- All officers in POST database in 1979 or later
- Left employment as an officer
  - 5,140 less than 1 year
  - 4,788 left between 1 and 3 years – 1,626
  - 4,715 left between 4-6 years – 1,572
  - 6,325 left between 7-10 years – 1,581
  - 7,244 left between 11-15 years – 1,449
### Sources of Officer Attrition*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Size</th>
<th>Retirement</th>
<th>Disability/Medical</th>
<th>Dismissal</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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Reasons Employees Leave

- Poor or ineffective supervision or management
- Unmet job expectations
- Employees not feeling valued
- Lack of coaching and feedback on performance
- No opportunity for advancement…upward or laterally
- Stress due to job demands/work-life balance
- Compensation

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Growing Trend of Workforce Planning

Considers:
- Full employment cycle
- Recruitment
- Hiring
- Training
- Retention
- Succession Planning

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1 - Develop **Effective** Supervisors & Managers

- MBWA
- Use coaching model of interaction
- Recognize good performance
- Treat people with dignity & respect
- Avoid micro-managing
- Help others see their value to org.
- Use good listening skills

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2 – Develop an Employee Friendly Culture and Policies

- Provide flexibility
- Allow input & keep employees informed
- Developing a sense of camaraderie/team building
- Clear performance expectations (especially for new employees)
- Provide performance feedback
- Equal access to promotional processes
- Casual dress
3 – Develop a **Retention** Plan

- Assigning responsibility for developing the plan
- Include executive level support
- Conduct research
  - What do employees appreciate?
  - What causes them to think about leaving?
  - What would cause them to delay retiring
- Prepare people for promotion
- Military Retention Specialist
4 – Engage Employees

- Ask for meaningful input
- Listen to their input and act when appropriate
- Encourage ownership
- See them as key stakeholder
- Involve them in problem-solving
- People support what they help to create!

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5 – Improve Communication

- Communicate often
- Communicate in different ways
- Be accessible
- Listen…don’t just talk
- Be proactive with negative issues
- Admit mistakes
- Increase information during times of change
● Look for ways lateral and upward growth
● Help them see the “BIG” picture
● Allow learning opportunities
Employees want challenging work & a rational/enriched environment.
Allow them to fill-in behind supervisors and others.
7 – Improve Operations

- **Challenge** tradition
- Improved operations can lift morale
- Develop a sense of pride
- Benchmark best practices
- Use a peer review of selected areas
- Organizational Improvement Committee
- Close the gap

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8 – Address Cost of Housing Issues

- Strive to keep officers in jurisdiction
- Coastal Housing Partnership
- Creative financing
  - City paid down payment
  - Low interest rates
- Bunk Rooms in Stations

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Contact Information

Merlin E. Switzer
(916) 788-1094
www.SwitzerOnLeadership.com

NOTE: Replication of this material must include reference that this material was based on work funded by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

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