

MEMORANDUM

To: Richard Stokes
From: Rex Barton
Date: March 5, 2002
Re: Compensation plan for police officers

After much thought I have re-written this with the following content:

Non-certified versus Certified

Most cities offer some pay increase for previously certified (experienced) officers. The increase in pay is often minuscule, while the value to the organization is significant. If the city is interested in attracting and retaining highly qualified employees, offering a significant difference in pay for certification and experience would be advantageous. For example, build a 10% - 20% increase into the pay scales for a certified officer with two or three years experience. The city would be more attractive to experienced, certified officers, and newly hired, inexperienced officers would have an incentive to stay with the city.

Master Patrolman Program

The Master Patrolman program would compensate an officer for attaining a certain level of achievement. It is not a promotion or a part of the organization's chain of command. The program is designed around three primary components: Experience, training, and performance appraisal.

Experience

The first component recognizes that most officers become more valuable to the organization as they gain experience. A city can set a minimum standard of three to five years experience as a qualification for Master Patrolman. Depending on the city's history of hiring experienced, certified officers versus hiring non-certified, rookie officers, the city may grant credit for previous experience with another department for some or all of the experience requirement.

Training

Training is probably the most critical component of the program. It is essential that the training be valuable to the particular organization. Some examples of training requirements include:

Basic Accident Investigation (80 hours. This class is taught a few times each year in-state by instructors from Northwestern University or the University of North Florida. The tuition is subsidized by federal grants.)

Radar Certification. (Radar certification is not required to run radar, but certification training, perhaps certification as an instructor, would be valuable to the organization.)

Basic Criminal Investigation (In many small towns, the street level officers actually work criminal investigations. Including this item as a requirement for Master Patrolman should only occur when the city needs criminal investigation capabilities in the *patrol* division.

Basic Narcotics Investigation

Domestic Violence Investigation

Cultural Diversity

Second Language Skills

The city should identify which of these specific training issues are important to the city and identify any other specific training issues are important. The city should avoid making training programs that are Apopular® with police officers, but of limited value to the organization, a part of the requirements.

Performance Appraisal

Obviously, all the training and experience in the world do not necessarily make a police officer valuable to the organization. Objective performance appraisals are the tool that ensures that the base level of training and experience do enhance the employee-s value.

Supervisory Officers

For supervisory officers or officers with many years experience, the city could offer longevity pay, but pure longevity pay does not differentiate between valuable employees and employees who merely report for work each day.

The city could establish an officer-s (supervisor-s) pay upon completion of a mid-level or command level supervisory training program.

The city could offer incentives for positive Agoal oriented® performance appraisals.