Chapter 3

Multicultural Representation in Law Enforcement: Recruitment, Retention, and Promotion

OVERVIEW

In this chapter we discuss recruitment trends and the probability that recruitment of women and minorities will be an ongoing challenge for law enforcement agencies. A brief historical perspective of women and minorities in law enforcement is provided, including a profile of their numbers in state, county, and local agencies across the country. We discuss reasons for recruitment difficulties and offer strategies for success. The retention and promotion of minorities and women are addressed in the final section of the chapter.

COMMENTARY

The following quotes draw attention to the recruitment crisis for law enforcement occupations and illustrate the importance of recruitment, hiring, retention, and promotion of women and minorities.

The law enforcement profession needs intelligent, not just educated, officers who can solve problems and accept racial and cultural diversity. In short, agencies prefer smarter over tougher. Law enforcement is moving away from the “big tough cops” in favor of candidates, regardless of size, who possess qualities that mirror the tenets of the COP (Community Oriented Policing) and POP (Problem Oriented Policing) philosophies. Also, more and more, communities want service-oriented people with interpersonal skills as their guardians of justice. (Vest, 2001, p. 13)

Many police chiefs would like to increase the number of sworn women officers in their departments but find that there are few women in the applicant pool. This isn’t surprising, since law enforcement remains a male-dominated profession. Even in the year 2002, most women don’t think of policing as a viable career choice because there are still few female role models in their own communities that they can look to. (Milgram, 2002)

One of the greatest challenges facing law enforcement organizations today is the successful recruitment and retention of highly qualified employees. Community safety can be compromised when substantial experience and training is lost through staff turnover and vacancy. It is imperative, then, to recruit, select
and retain the kind of personnel who will bring to the department and to the community a strong commitment to and talent for the job. (McKeever & Kranda, 2000)

According to Trojanowicz and Carter, “By 2010, more than one third of all American children will be black, Hispanic, or Asian.” The Caucasian majority of today will become a minority within America in less than 100 years. Obviously, this change in society will have a tremendous impact on the recruiting process of the future. (Osborn, 1992, p. 21)

In the harsh battleground over jobs, college education and access to the promotion ladder, the issues of quotas and racial preferences can come to dominate, if not supersede, the national struggle to achieve equity in the workplace and on the college campus. Take, for example, the core of city government: the police and fire departments. In many communities well into the 1960’s, these departments were white male enclaves, controlled by such European ethnic groups as Irish, Italian and Polish Americans. (Edsall, 1991)

INTRODUCTION

Our society is becoming more and more diverse. In California, demographers predict that by 2005 there will be no single racial or ethnic group constituting the majority. That trend is occurring in some major cities in other states as well. Some demographers say that in the future every group will be a minority.

To recruit and retain a representative staff and provide effective services, therefore, law enforcement executives must have a clear understanding of their community and their own workforce. The recruitment and retention of qualified employees, and especially of women, blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and other diverse groups, has become a concern and a priority of law enforcement agencies nationwide. Many agencies are having difficulty finding qualified applicants, resulting in a general recruitment crisis, and it appears this is the case regardless of the economic condition of state or local governments. The recruitment pool of eligible and qualified candidates is diminishing. The crisis is multidimensional and is discussed in detail in this chapter.

RECRUITMENT OF A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

The recruitment of women and members of diverse groups has been a concern and a priority of law enforcement agencies nationwide for a few decades. This is not a new issue in the history of U.S. law enforcement. A President’s Crime Commission Report in 1967 recommended that more minorities be hired and that they receive opportunities for advancement. Soon after the Watts riot in Los Angeles, the 1968 Kerner Commission Report identified the underrepresentation of blacks in law enforcement as a serious problem. The report recommended improved hiring and promoting policies and procedures for minorities. The Warren Christopher Commission report on the Los Angeles Police Department, released soon after the 1992 riots following the first Rodney King trial, cited the problems of racism and bias within the LAPD. The commission recommended, among other things, improved hiring and promotions processes that would benefit all groups.
Profile of Federal Agents, Local Police, and County Sheriffs’ Offices

The U.S. Department of Justice collects information from criminal justice organizations and produces a report every 3 years. One part of the report profiles the demographic makeup of law enforcement agencies in the United States. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics report, as of June 2000:

- **Female officers and deputies:** The percentage of female officers ranged from 16.5 percent in departments serving a population of 500,000 or more to about 4 percent in jurisdictions with fewer than 2,500 residents. The estimated 46,659 female officers represented an increase of about 17,300, or 59 percent, from 1990. Females represented 10.6 percent of local police departments, up from 8.1 percent in 1990. Females comprised 12.5 percent of sheriffs’ offices, down from 15.4 percent in 1990 (see Exhibits 2.1 and 2.2 in Chapter 2).

- **Racial and ethnic minority officers and deputies:** Racial and ethnic minorities in local departments comprised 22.7 percent, up from 17 percent in 1990. They comprised 17.1 percent of sheriffs’ offices, up from 15.5 percent in 1990. From 1990 to 2000, the number of African American local police officers increased by 35 percent and the number of Hispanic officers increased by 93 percent. From 1990 to 2000, the number of African American officers in sheriffs’ departments increased by 12 percent and Hispanic deputies increased by 51 percent (see Exhibits 2.1 and 2.2 in Chapter 2).

- **Federal agents:** Federal agencies (INS, FBI, U.S. Customs, etc.) employed 88,496 full-time agents as of June 2000, of which 14.4 percent were women and 30.5 percent were members of a racial or ethnic minority.

Recruitment Crisis

In 1990, Gordon Bowers, who teaches justice administration courses, said, “There is a crisis developing in recruitment that will change law enforcement as it is known today. For each year over the next decade, the number of new police officers needed and the minimum qualifications will be raised, but both the number and percentage of high school graduates in the normal age range of police applicants will decrease” (Bowers, 1990, p. 64).

The situation in 2000 confirmed Gordon Bowers’s prediction of a shortage of applicants for police departments and a struggle for departments to maintain authorized strength. A number of factors contributed to the reduction of the once-substantial law enforcement applicant pool. One explanation is offered by the futurists Cetron, Rocha, and Luckins (1988). They predicted that “the percentage of the population between 16 and 24 years old [would] shrink from 30 percent of the labor force in 1985 to 16 percent in the year 2000” (p. 64) and that “during the next decade, white men will account for only one in four new workers” (p. 34). Therefore, the field of law enforcement is attempting to recruit from an applicant pool that is not only shrinking but also expected to be dominated by minorities and women. An additional reason that there are fewer applicants within the typical age range eligible for careers as peace officers is that millions of young people between the ages of 15 and 29 are arrested each year for crimes that disqualify them for police work.
For a period of time during the late 1990s and into 2000, the United States experienced the lowest unemployment rate in 30 years (3.9%) because of a robust economy. There were plenty of jobs, but the number of applicants for law enforcement positions was substantially lower than in the past. Due to the employees’ market, those seeking jobs could be very selective. Many jobs in private industry, especially high-tech jobs, came with high salaries, stock options, signing bonuses, company cars, and year-end bonuses. Public-sector employers have difficulty competing with such incentives. Another factor in recruitment difficulties was court decisions (and pretrial settlements) against such companies as Coke, Texaco, and Wall Street’s Smith Barney in race bias lawsuits. U.S. firms scrambled to recruit and promote talented women and minorities. Many large companies, aware that the populations within their recruitment areas were diversifying, knew that their employee demographics had to match those of the world outside or they, too, would be subject to lawsuits and/or criticism. This is particularly true of companies that sell products or services to the public. Their recruitment efforts, therefore, focused on women and members of diverse groups. The wide-open market also made for transitory employees, causing retention problems for employers, especially of trained employees. During this period, smaller law enforcement agencies lost their employees as larger agencies lured experienced officers away with promises of benefits. The effort was compared to the National Football League draft, in which everyone was competing for qualified candidates.

Compounding the law enforcement recruitment problem was the negative impact of highly publicized scandals involving police in major cities—New York, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia, to name a few. These scandals, it is suggested, “tarnished the image” of law enforcement work (“A Law Enforcement Shortage,” 2000, p. A1). At the same time, departments were not fully staffed because many employees who had been hired in the police expansion wave of the 1960s and 1970s were retiring. Other reasons that young people are not applying for careers in law enforcement are related to the paramilitary organizational structure of most agencies. It has been suggested that the independent-minded youth of today are less tolerant of the rigid paramilitary hierarchy to which most police agencies still adhere. In addition, most young people do not like being micro-managed.

Serious budget shortfalls in most states, which started in 2002 and extended into 2003, forced cities and counties to reduce law enforcement personnel through layoffs, attrition, and not increasing department size. Some law enforcement agencies benefited because unemployed people turned to civil service jobs, including law enforcement, but most agencies did not. Whenever there is a recession causing layoffs, it creates a problem because cities and counties must lay off or fire those employees who were hired most recently. Women and people of diverse ethnic and racial groups, therefore, are usually the first to lose their jobs, thereby canceling any gains made in terms of a multicultural workforce, including women.

Recruitment Difficulties

_Cultural Diversity at Work_, a newsletter addressing multicultural issues, presented a list of the 10 most frequent causes of the failure to attract and retain high-level minority and female employees. The following is a brief synopsis, still valid today, of those most pertinent to law enforcement:
1. Senior management is not sending the “diversity message” down the line. Senior management does not always demonstrate commitment in the form of value statements and policies emphasizing the importance of a diverse workforce.

2. Informal networking channels are closed to outsiders. Women and minorities often experience discomfort within the traditional all-white, all-male informal career networks, including extracurricular activities. For example, some women police officers are uncomfortable participating in police association activities that involve recreational gambling, fishing, sports activities, or the roughhousing that can take place at meetings.

3. In-house recruiters are looking in the wrong places. Recruiters must use different methods and resources than those they have traditionally used to find diverse candidates.

4. Differences in life experience are not taken into account. Some applicants, both women and minorities, will have had life experiences that differ from those of the traditional job candidate. For example, the latter has typically had some college experience, with a high grade point average, and is often single (and thus does not have the many responsibilities associated with marriage and children). On the other hand, many minority job candidates have had to work through school and are married and may have children. Therefore, their grade point averages may have suffered.

5. Negative judgments are made based on personality or communications differences. Although not everybody’s style reflects cultural, racial, or gender characteristics, there are distinct differences in communication style and personality between women and minorities and traditional white-male job applicants. Communication style differences are especially apparent when English is the applicant’s second language. Generally speaking, women are not as assertive as men in communication. Sometimes these factors can affect the outcome of a pre-employment interview and become barriers to a job offer.

6. The candidate is not introduced to people who are like him or her. It is important that the candidate or new hire meet people of the same gender, race, or ethnicity within the agency. A mentor or support group may be crucial to a successful transition into the organization.

7. Organizations are not able or willing to take the time to do a thorough search. Recruitment specialists indicate that searches for qualified minority and women candidates take 4 to 6 weeks longer than others. These searches take commitment, resources, and time.

8. Early identification is missing from the recruitment program. Programs that move students into the proper fields of study early on and that provide the education required for the job are essential. Examples of these programs include internships, scholarships, and police programs (e.g., police athletic league) that bring future job candidates into contact with the organization (Micari, 1993).

The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF, 1987) created a nationwide task force to address the issue of decreasing numbers of qualified police applicants. Two of the findings of the task force are as follows:
1. **Identification of recruiting problems.** The problems most frequently reported were a decreasing number of qualified applicants; the inability to offer competitive compensation; and difficulty in recruiting Asians, blacks, Hispanics, and other minorities. Those responding to the survey who perceived a decline in the number of qualified applicants attributed it to a lack of education, the use of drugs, and limited life experience.

2. **Identification of tests on which candidates are likely to fail.** The top three in rank order were the written test, background investigation, and polygraph. To address the latter, departments should perform a statistical analysis of the selection processes and tests they use by gender and ethnic or racial group to determine whether women or minorities are being disproportionately eliminated by these tests. The department should then evaluate whether those screening devices contain outdated or biased questions or questions that are no longer job-related. If the tests contain questions that have an adverse impact on targeted groups, then these obstacles must be studied further to determine if they can be removed.

**Recruitment Strategies**

To build a diverse workforce, recruitment strategies used in the past will no longer be sufficient and will not provide agencies with high-quality applicants. In fact, a study commissioned by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and completed in 1998, *The Future of Women in Policing: Mandates for Action*, concluded that “unfocused, random recruiting is unlikely to attract diversity. Targeted programs are more likely to do so.” The study determined that approximately one in four departments (26 percent) have had policies and strategies in place to recruit women and that larger departments are about three times more likely to actively recruit female applicants than are smaller ones. According to Kim Lonsway, research director for the National Center for Women and Policing, women really need a special invitation to consider a career in law enforcement. In an article for the Center, she wrote that the message from agencies must be: “Yes, we want you, come apply” (“Woman Recruits Meet High Standard,” 2003, p. A32). Agencies with the most success in recruiting women and minorities have had specific goals, objectives, and timetables in place; these policies must be established at the top level of the organization. At the same time, management must commit to not lowering standards for the sake of numbers and deadlines. The philosophy and procedures required are discussed in the following sections.

**Commitment.** Recruiting minority and women applicants, especially in highly competitive labor markets, requires commitment and effort. Police executives must communicate that commitment to their recruiting staff and devote the resources necessary to achieve recruitment goals. This genuine commitment must be demonstrated both inside and outside the organization. Internally, chief executives should develop policies and procedures that emphasize the importance of a diverse workforce. Affirmative action and/or programs that target certain applicants (where legal) will not work in a vacuum. Chief executives must integrate the values that promote diversity and affirmative action into every aspect of the agency, from its mission statement to its roll-call training. Externally, police executives should publicly delineate the specific hiring and promotion goals of the department to the community through both formal (e.g., media)
and informal (e.g., community-based policing, networking with organizations representing the diverse groups) methods. While chief executives promote the philosophy, policies, and procedures, committed staff who are sensitive to the needs for affirmative hiring and promotions carry them out. Executives should also build partnerships with personnel officials so that decisions clearly reflect the hiring goals of the department. It is recommended that police executives audit the personnel selection process to ensure that neither the sequencing of the testing stages nor the length of the selection process is hindering the objective of hiring women and minorities (Fridell, 2001, p. 76).

Although chiefs may be genuine in their efforts to champion diversity and affirmative action hiring, care must be taken that their policies and procedures do not violate Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Also, agencies in states that have enacted laws prohibiting affirmative action hiring programs and the targeting of “protected classes” (e.g., California’s Proposition 209, passed in 1996, which is discussed later in this chapter) must adhere to these regulations. A knowledgeable personnel department or legal staff should review policies and procedures prior to implementation.

Planning. A recent study by the National Center for Women and Policing (NCWP), published in 2001 by the Bureau of Justice Assistance of the Department of Justice, offers recommendations for greatly increasing the pool of qualified female applicants. Among other suggestions, the study stressed the importance of making an assessment of your department’s current recruitment practices and developing a strategic marketing plan. A strategic marketing plan would include the action steps that commit the objectives, goals, budget, accountability, and timetables for the recruitment campaign to paper. Demographic data should form one of the foundations for the plan, which must also take into account the current political, social, and economic conditions of the department and the community. To avoid losing qualified applicants to other agencies or private industry, the plan should provide for fast tracking the best candidates through the testing and screening processes. Fast tracking is an aggressive recruitment process wherein a preliminary, qualifying check quickly takes place concerning the driving, credit, and criminal history of the applicant before any other screening process occurs. Applicants who do not meet established standards are immediately notified. The remaining applicants are then interviewed by a trained, ranking officer or civilian holding the position for which he or she is applying. Applicants earning a passing score on the personal interview immediately receive a letter advising them that they passed, thereby giving them tangible evidence that the agency is seriously considering hiring them. The letter also informs them that they must pass additional qualifying steps, including a background investigation, which must be commenced immediately. The applicant must complete the final testing within 10 days, or the agency may withdraw the offer. To streamline the process, background investigators have established blocks of time for other testing such as polygraphs and psychological and medical evaluations.

In today’s labor market, the best-qualified candidates are not willing to wait months for your selection process to run its course. Public safety organizations must develop valid selection approaches that are also timely. Otherwise, by the time the selection process has run its course, the best-qualified candidates may have found other jobs. (Hulsey & Goodwin, 2001, p. 5)

The strategic recruitment plan should include an advertising campaign that targets:
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- Colleges and universities
- Military bases and reserve units
- Churches, temples, synagogues, and other places of worship
- Gymnasiums, fitness and martial arts studios, athletic clubs, and the like

Participation of women and minority officers within the department in recruitment efforts is crucial (see “Recruiting Incentives”), as is the involvement of groups and organizations that represent the target groups. If within the community there are high-profile minorities and women, such as athletes and business executives, they should be enlisted to promote police work as a career through media releases and endorsements on flyers and brochures.

The Fulton, New York, Police Department offers one example of how such planning can be accomplished. For them, newspaper advertising proved the most significant medium from which candidates learned about their department’s police test, followed closely by television advertising. The department went a step further, however. They learned that 45 percent of candidates obtained police test packages from the police station and 33 percent from the personnel office, so they made test packages available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at the station because the personnel office is only open 8:00–5:00 Monday through Friday (Spawn, 2003).

Professor Bowers (1990) believes that law enforcement agencies will have to find alternatives to the traditional applicant pool to secure qualified candidates. He suggests that it is possible to develop a recruitment strategy that would target people not usually recruited (where such strategies are legal). Bowers defined the “alternative applicant pool” as those people who are qualified but who have no current intention of pursuing law enforcement as a career. An applicant’s age is one criterion that law enforcement agencies need to reexamine. Older, physically fit applicants looking for a second career can bring wisdom, maturity, and other skills to the occupation, especially because police academies are now emphasizing moral decision making and minimizing physical factors. Also, despite history and tradition, applicants should not always have to start in patrol assignments. Agencies employing community policing could hire well-qualified personnel to perform specific types of police work that do not require them to be “crime fighters.” Veteran police officers, however, may resent and reject this idea, and attitudes would have to change for this concept to be implemented (Bowers, 1990).

Resources. Adequate resources, including money, personnel, and equipment, must be made available to the recruitment effort. Financial constraints challenge almost every organization’s recruitment campaign. The size or financial circumstances of an agency may necessitate less expensive—and perhaps more innovative—approaches. For example, many small law enforcement jurisdictions can combine to implement regional testing. One large county on the West Coast successfully formed a consortium of agencies and implemented regional testing three times per month for law enforcement candidates. To participate, each agency pays into an account based on the population of its jurisdiction. Alternatively, each agency can pay according to how many applicants it hired from the list. The pooled money is then used for recruitment advertising (e.g., billboards, radio, television, newspapers) and the initial testing processes (e.g., reading, writing, and agility tests, including proctors). The eligibility list is then provided to each of the participating agencies, which continue the screening process for applicants.
in whom they have an interest. Police agencies should not see other agencies as competitors with respect to recruiting. By combining their efforts, they may be able to:

- Save money (consolidate resources)
- Develop a larger pool of applicants
- Become more competitive with private industry and other public agencies
- Test more often
- Reduce the time it takes from application to hire

In terms of recruiting a diverse workforce, the second benefit listed—developing a larger pool of applicants—is central to reaching beyond the traditional applicant pool. Law enforcement agencies, in taking advantage of the Internet’s global coverage, can post position openings in the effort to recruit individuals with a wide variety of backgrounds and skills. Agencies should also create their own websites describing their departments and offering information on recruitment and on how to obtain applications. Department websites have been found to be valuable recruiting tools when used to highlight the work of women and minorities within an agency.

**Selection and Training of Recruiters.** A recruiter is an ambassador for the department and must be selected carefully. Police recruiters should reflect the diversity within the community and include women. Full-time recruiters are a luxury most often found only in large agencies. The benefit of a full-time recruiter program is that usually the employees in this assignment have received some training in marketing techniques. They have no other responsibilities or assignments and can, therefore, focus on what they do and do it well. They develop the contacts, resources, and skills to be effective. Whether full-time, part-time, or assigned on an as-needed basis, however, the following criteria should be considered when selecting recruiters:

- Commitment to the goal of recruiting
- Belief in a philosophy that values diversity
- Ability to work well in a community policing environment
- Belief in and ability to market a product: law enforcement as a career
- Comfort with people of all backgrounds and ability to communicate this comfort
- Ability to discuss the importance of entire community representation in police work and the advantages to the department without sounding patronizing

Recruiters must be given resources (e.g., budget and equipment) and must have established guidelines. They must be highly trained with respect to their role, market research methods, public relations, and cultural awareness. They must also understand, appreciate, and be dedicated to organizational values and ethics. They must be aware and in control of any biases they might have toward individuals or groups of people who might be different from themselves.

The California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST) developed a 24-hour course entitled “Techniques and Methods of Recruitment.” For information about this course, contact California POST at (916) 227-4820. Other state POST commissions have also developed such courses. Large, progressive agencies (or a consortium of agencies) could develop an in-house program patterned after these
model courses. The Institute for Women in Trades, Technology and Science (IWITTS) is an organization with resources and training programs on recruiting and retaining women. The organization conducts national workshops and also provides technical assistance to departments via personal contact or via the Internet. Their materials include an environmental assessment tool (LEEAT) involving institutional checklists and data collection methods to help determine the best recruiting strategies for a particular law enforcement agency.

**Recruiting incentives.** It is recommended that police executives consider using financial and other incentives to recruit women and minorities where such programs are lawful (monetary incentive programs may be adversely affected by Fair Labor Standards Act considerations). Financial and other incentive programs are especially useful to agencies that cannot afford the luxury of full-time recruiters. They are used to encourage officers to recruit bilingual whites, women, and ethnically and racially diverse candidates, informally, while on or off duty. One possible program would give officers overtime credit for each person they recruit in those categories who makes the eligibility list, additional credit if the same applicant is hired, and additional credit for each stage the new officer passes until the probation period ends. There are departments that offer officers (not assigned to recruiting) up to 20 hours compensatory time for recruiting a lateral police officer. Department members can also receive an additional 40 hours of compensatory time for recruiting a lateral who is bilingual or from a protected class. The department defines a member of a protected class as African American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, Filipino, or female. The time is awarded in increments at a straight-time rate based on phases of employment (San Jose, California, Police Department).

Another agency awards $250 to employees who recruit applicants (of any racial or ethnic group) who are hired, complete all phases of the background process, and start the academy. The same department awards $250 to employees who recruit lateral police officer candidates once they complete all phases of the background process, are hired, and report for duty. When these recruits make it through probation, the employee who recruited them receives $250 as an additional incentive. The Boise, Idaho, Police Department developed a unique incentive program that rewards officers for bringing in a recruit who is qualified to perform the duties of a community law enforcement officer. Encouraging all department members to be involved in the recruitment effort, including the promotion of law enforcement as a career, is usually effective. To be competitive in recruiting employees, especially minorities and women, agencies must offer incentives just as corporations do.

**Community Involvement.** A pluralistic community must have some involvement early in the recruitment effort of candidates for police work. Representatives from different ethnic and racial backgrounds should be involved in initial meetings to plan a recruitment campaign. They can assist in determining the best marketing methods for the groups they represent and can help by personally contacting potential candidates. They should be provided with recruitment information (e.g., brochures and posters) that they can disseminate at religious institutions, civic and social organizations, schools, and cultural events. Community-based policing also offers the best opportunity for officers to put messages out regarding agency recruiting.
Community leaders representing the diversity of the community should also be involved in the selection process, including sitting on oral boards for applicants. The San Francisco Police Department utilizes community leaders in all the processes mentioned. Many progressive agencies have encouraged their officers to join community-based organizations, in which they interact with community members and are able to involve the group in recruitment efforts for the department.

**High School Police Academy.** Another innovative recruitment tool (or grow-your-own-cop program) was launched in San Jose, California, in 2002. Called the San Jose, California, High School Police Academy, it is a year-long academy program that helps both students and law enforcement by preparing students for careers and giving recruiters a larger pool of candidates. The program is offered to about 60 students at a time from six school districts in Santa Clara County, California. The students spend half of each day at the academy and the other half at their own schools. Students, who wear uniforms, learn all the steps of policing, from identifying evidence and collecting clues at crime scenes to arresting suspects and writing reports. They learn defensive moves, simulate weapons handling, and learn how to make traffic stops. The class also focuses on lessons for sheriff’s deputies, corrections officers, and dispatchers (“High School Police Academy,” 2003, p. A37). For more information about career academies, contact the National Career Academy Coalition, Bakersfield, California, at (661) 664-7667 or see their e-mail and website addresses at the end of this chapter.

**Adopt-a-Cop Program.** In the city of Clever, Missouri, the community, schools, and businesses can adopt an officer in training. They help the officer with training and equipment costs, making it possible for the trainee and/or the department to afford the costs involved (Newton, 2002, p. 12).

### SELECTION PROCESSES

Prior to initiating any selection processes, law enforcement agencies must assess the satisfaction level of current employees and the workplace environment of the department.

**Satisfaction Level for Employees**

The first step before outreach recruitment can take place is for the department to look inward. Are any members, sworn or nonsworn, experiencing emotional pain or suffering because of their race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, or sexual orientation? A department seeking to hire applicants from these groups cannot have internal problems, either real or perceived, related to racism, discrimination, or hostility toward female or gay or lesbian officers. A department with a high turnover rate or a reputation for not promoting women, minorities, or gays and lesbians will also deter good people from applying. The department must resolve any internal problems before meaningful recruitment can occur. To determine the nature and extent of any such problems, law enforcement agencies can perform an assessment of all their employees through anonymous surveys about their work environment. There should be a review of policies and procedures (especially those related to sexual harassment) and an examination of statistical information, such as the number of officers leaving the department and their reasons for doing so, and which employees are promoted. The goal is not only to
evaluate the workplace environment for women and minorities, but also to determine what steps need to be taken to dissolve barriers confronting them. See Appendix A for a sample survey that can be used for this purpose.

Supervisors and managers must talk with all members of their workforce on a regular basis to find out if any issues are disturbing them. They must then demonstrate that they are taking steps to alleviate the source of discomfort, whether this involves modifying practices or simply discussing behavior with other employees.

The field-training program for new recruits should also be reviewed and evaluated to ensure that new officers are not being arbitrarily eliminated or subjected to prejudice or discrimination. By the time a recruit has reached this stage of training, much has been invested in the new officer; every effort should be made to see that he or she completes the program successfully. Negligent retention, however, is a liability to an organization. When it is well documented that a trainee is not suitable for retention, release from employment is usually the best recourse regardless of race, ethnicity, lifestyle, or gender.

Role models and mentoring programs should be established to give recruits and junior officers the opportunity to receive support and important information from senior officers of the same race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation. However, many successful programs include role models of different backgrounds than the recruits.

Applicant Screening

Law enforcement agencies must assess applicants along a range of dimensions that include, but are not limited to:

- Basic qualifications such as education, requisite licenses, and citizenship
- Intelligence and problem-solving capacity
- Psychological fitness
- Physical fitness and ability
- Current and past illegal drug use
- Character as revealed by criminal record, driving record, work history, military record, credit history, reputation, and polygraph examination
- Aptitude and ability to serve others
- Racial, ethnic, gender, sexual orientation, and cultural biases

The last dimension, testing for biases, deserves particular attention. An agency whose hiring procedures screen for unacceptable biases demonstrates to the community that it seeks police officers who will carry out their duties with fairness, integrity, diligence, and impartiality, officers who will respect the civil rights and dignity of the people they serve and work with. Such screening should include not only the use of psychometric testing instruments developed to measure attitudes and bias, but also careful background investigation of the candidate by personnel staff. The investigation should consider the applicant’s own statements about racial issues, as well as interviews with references who provide clues about how the applicant feels about and treats members of other racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual-orientation groups. These interviews would include questions on:
• How the applicant has interacted with other groups
• What people of diverse groups say about the applicant
• Whether the applicant has ever experienced conflict or tension with members of diverse groups or individuals and how he or she handled the experience

Because of the emphasis on community-oriented policing, law enforcement recruiters must also seek applicants who demonstrate the mentality and ability to serve others (not just fight crime). Recruiters therefore are looking for candidates who are adaptable, analytical, communicative, compassionate, courageous (both physically and morally), culturally sensitive, decisive, disciplined, ethical, goal-oriented, incorruptible, mature, responsible, and self-motivated. Agencies also expect officers to have good interpersonal and communication skills, as well as sales and marketing abilities, so applicants should be screened for these attributes, and for their desire for continued learning and ability to work in a rapidly evolving environment.

As communities face the transient issues of globalization, immigration, and language barriers, law enforcement officers increasingly will see more diverse opinions from within the community as this globalization spreads. Language and generation barriers continue to challenge law enforcement. Agencies must develop methods of bridging trust among the diverse groups that they will serve in the future. Law enforcement agencies may need to employ bilingual officers, interpreters, and computer translation programs to communicate along with recruiting immigrants. Officers also must learn about cultural issues, such as ethnic holidays, traditions, and customs. (Vest, 2001)

The search for recruits should focus on those who demonstrate an ability to take ownership of problems and work with others toward solutions. These potential officers must remain open to people who disagree or have different opinions from themselves. Law enforcement agencies should make their goals and their expectations clear to candidates for employment, recognizing that some will not match the department’s vision, mission, and values and therefore should be screened out at the beginning of the process.

Robert Jones, professor of psychology at Southwest Missouri State University, says that recruiters can get a clear appraisal of applicants in service-related jobs, such as law enforcement, by applying the five basic traits of human behavior. The traits are: (1) emotional stability, (2) extroversion versus introversion, (3) openness to experience, (4) agreeableness versus toughness, and (5) conscientiousness. Today, effective law enforcement agents work closely with neighborhood groups, social welfare agencies, housing code officials, and a host of others in partnerships to control crime and improve quality of life. Law enforcement agents must be eager to understand a task, draw up a plan, and follow it through to completion in concert with others. Without an agreeable nature, officers and deputies faced with today’s changing attitude toward crime fighting would not have a chance (Newton, 2003, p. 7).

It is in the best interest of law enforcement agencies, before implementing tests, to complete a job analysis. Although a time-consuming process, the final result is a clear description of the job for which applicants are applying and being screened. Utilizing the job analysis data, tests and job performance criteria can be developed and become part of the screening process. Applicants, when provided a copy of the job analysis, can decide in advance if they fit the criteria.
A study by the National Center for Women and Policing (NCWP) produced a self-assessment guide to assist agencies seeking to recruit and retain more women in sworn law enforcement positions. The resulting publication, Recruiting and Retaining Women: A Self-Assessment Guide for Law Enforcement, provides assistance to federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies on examining their policies and procedures to identify and remove obstacles to hiring and retaining women at all levels of the organization. The guide also provides a list of resources for agencies to use when they plan or implement changes to their current policies and procedures. “The guide promotes increasing the number of women at all ranks of law enforcement as a strategy to strengthen community policing, reduce police use of force, enhance police response to domestic violence, and provide balance to the workforce” (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2001). It is also recommended that chiefs of police, police recruiters, and city and county personnel department employees review Recruitment and Retention of Qualified Police Personnel—A Best Practices Guide, published by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (McKeever & Kranda, 2000).

Examples of Successful Recruiting Programs

Successful recruitment programs vary by community. If recruitment efforts result in a large enough pool of qualified applicants, the pool will contain individuals of all backgrounds. The following agencies have had success in recruiting female and minority applicants, and might be contacted to determine the strategies they used:

- **Portland, Oregon**: The department had hired a professional recruiter from outside the department for a period of time, and this yielded some positive results. A reduced budget, however, eliminated the position. As of November 2003, the department consisted of 161 women (16 percent of the agency) and a total sworn workforce of 994. The percentage of women is higher than many other agencies its size nationwide. Portland requires entry-level candidates with no previous law enforcement experience to have a 2-year college degree. Lateral applicants are required to have an associate of arts degree or its equivalent number of units. In 2003, the department had 46 Asian, 37 African American, 23 Hispanic, 8 Native American, and 880 Caucasian officers.

- **Madison, Wisconsin**: As of September 2003, the department had 382 sworn personnel of whom 116 were female, or 30 percent, well above the national averages for agencies their size. The race/ethnicity breakdown of the sworn workforce was 36 African American (9 percent), 21 Hispanic (5.5 percent), 7 Asian (1.8 percent), 6 Native American (1.6 percent), and the balance Caucasian officers.

- **Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania**: One of the nation’s most diverse police departments, with women making up 25 percent of the force.

- **Albuquerque, New Mexico**: Police executives point to Albuquerque as a potential model for other departments regarding recruitment. Between 1995 and 2002, female recruits increased from 8 percent in academy classes to 33 percent. Also, women are retained at rates comparable to those for men.
• **Tucson, Arizona:** Tucson had a population of 490,000 and police department with 1,000 sworn in 2003. Due to a New Workplace for Women Project and its recommendations, the department was able to recruit many more women. The number of women recruits increased from 10 to 29 percent in two classes and minority recruits increased to 47 percent of the first class following the project.

The Albuquerque and Tucson police departments held career fairs and obtained free publicity about them in major newspapers and on television and radio. The departments designed flyers and posters advertising the career fairs and posted them in places where physically fit women were likely to be, such as gyms, martial arts schools, and outdoor sporting stores. Notices were also placed at supermarkets, laundromats, and shopping malls. The first career fair held by the Tucson Police Department drew 450 women. Career fairs feature panels of female role models who describe their jobs and talk about working in a male-dominated occupation. The fairs include information about the job, the academy, the application process, the physical conditioning designed for women, and organizations for women in policing (Polisar & Milgram, 1998).

To assist law enforcement agencies that wish to increase the number of women employees in their workforce, the National Center for Women and Policing offers the following services:

• A regional training seminar on recruiting and retaining women. This two-day seminar helps law enforcement agencies develop effective recruiting programs to increase the number of female employees.

• Online updates to the self-assessment guide. New programs in law enforcement agencies across the country are described on the website, where readers can gain access to the latest research about women in policing and other critical issues. See “Website Resources” at the end of this chapter.

• Onsite consulting by a team of professional law enforcement experts to help agencies identify and remove obstacles to recruiting and retaining women.

For additional information on these services, contact the National Center for Women and Policing at (323) 651-2532, or see their e-mail address at the end of this chapter.

**Legal Issues and Affirmative Action**

The authors acknowledge that there may be some controversial and even legal aspects, in some states or jurisdictions, to recruitment efforts that target women, as well as ethically and racially diverse candidates for law enforcement jobs. Federal law prohibits programs that require meeting specific hiring goals for any particular group except when necessary to remedy discrimination.

In California, Proposition 209, which outlawed governmental discrimination and preferences based on race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin, was passed in 1996. In September 2000 justices of the California Supreme Court affirmed that the proposition was legal. The justices, in their decision, placed strict limits on employers regarding the types of outreach programs they can legally use to recruit employees; any outreach program that gives minorities and women a competitive advantage is a violation of Proposition 209. Many other states followed California’s example by enacting
similar legislation. Agencies need to research what strategies are legal and appropriate within their state and jurisdiction.

In 2003, however, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled that the University of Michigan’s Law School admissions policy, which uses race as a factor, was not in violation of the Constitution’s 14th Amendment. The court actually issued two rulings. One, a 5-4 decision, was that race can be considered in the admissions process to the School of Law. The other, a 6-3 decision, was that the University of Michigan’s undergraduate admissions policy, which used a point system to give minority students a considerable edge, was unconstitutional. The court ruled that the University could not use “rigid systems that seem like quotas, and must adopt race-neutral admissions policies as soon as practical.” Only time will tell what impact, if any, this decision will have nationwide and, therefore, what impact it will have upon the recruitment of a diverse law enforcement workforce.

The practice of tracking race, ethnicity, and gender via questionnaires is considered controversial. Ward Connerly, an African American who championed the end of affirmative action in California, argues that the practice is divisive, especially in California where no single race holds a majority and where people increasingly consider themselves multiracial (“Connerly Starts Push,” 2001, pp. A1, A12). Opponents of this view contend that collecting such data is crucial to preventing discrimination and allocating state resources. “Racial and ethnic data are essential to health care, law enforcement and criminal justice policy, social scientists said discussing a ballot initiative that would bar California from collecting such information” (“Sociologists oppose ballot measure,” 2003, p. C3).

Affirmative action and consent decrees have been only moderately successful in achieving parity in the hiring of women and individuals from ethnically diverse backgrounds. There has been even less success with promotions of these groups to command ranks. In fact, studies have found that affirmative action has produced uneven results by race, gender, and occupation across the nation.

An unfortunate problem that can be associated with the promotion of women and nonwhites is that doubts are raised about their qualifications: “Are they qualified for the job or are they products of affirmative action?” Peers may subtly or even explicitly express to each other that the promotion was not the result of competence, and the promoted candidate may feel that his or her success is not based entirely on qualifications. Consequently, employees may experience strained relationships and lowered morale. There is no denying the potential for a strong negative internal reaction in an organization when court orders have mandated promotions. Some white employees feel anger or frustration with consent decrees or affirmative action-based promotions. Clearly, preventive work must be done to avoid these problems.

**Mini-Case Study: What Would You Do?**

You are the new personnel sergeant responsible for a department with 50 sworn officers. The department has one African American man, two Hispanic men, and two women officers. There has never been a large number of minority or women candidates applying for sworn positions in the department, and your agency does
not reflect the demographics of the city. Your city has an affirmative action pro-
gram, but to date, no outreach programs have been initiated to recruit women and
minorities. Your chief has asked that you provide a proposal on what strategies you
would suggest to recruit women and minorities. Develop a list of what you would
propose. Make a list of what other departmental processes should take place prior
to applicant testing.

RETENTION AND PROMOTION OF A DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Recruiting officers who reflect the gender, racial, ethnic, and sexual orientation demo-
grraphics of the community is one important challenge of law enforcement agencies.
Retention and promotion are equally important. Retention of any employee is usually
the result of good work on the part of the employee and a positive environment
wherein all employees are treated with dignity and respect. A high rate of retention is
most likely in organizations that meet the basic needs of employees and offer reason-
able opportunities for career development. In fact, once an agency earns a reputation
for fairness, talented men and women of all ethnicities and races will seek out that
agency and will remain longer.

The lack of promotions of protected classes and women to supervisor and com-
mand ranks has been cited as a severe problem in policing for at least three decades by
scholars and police researchers. Authors and advocates for the promotion of women
have used the term “glass ceiling” to describe an unacknowledged barrier that inhibits
those officers from reaching ranks above entry level. The Glass Ceiling Commission, a
federal bipartisan group studying diversity in the workplace (1994–1995), discovered
that the glass ceiling has not been broken to any significant extent in most organiza-
tions, including law enforcement agencies.

Within organizations, women and others of diverse backgrounds are frustrated
when promotional opportunities seem more available to white males than to them. The
disenchantment that often accompanies frustration frequently leads to low productivity
and morale, early burnout, and resignation because opportunities appear better else-
where. Lack of attention to equal opportunity promoting practices at some law enforce-
ment agencies has resulted in court-ordered promotions. These have a negative impact
on a department’s operations and relationships, both internally and externally, and
often lead to distrust and dissatisfaction.

In 1998, the International Association of Chiefs of Police published a comprehen-
sive analysis of women in policing. The study, which involved surveys of 800 police
departments, highlighted the following major points regarding promotions: first, that
women remain grossly underrepresented in the ranks; and second, that they have
largely been unable to punch through a virtually “bulletproof glass ceiling.” The study
also found that:

- Approximately 91 percent of departments reported having no women in poli-
cymaking positions.
- Of the nation’s 17,000 police departments, only 123 had female police chiefs
  or top executives.
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- Nearly 10 percent of the departments listed gender bias among the reasons that women were not promoted.

A 2001 report by the National Center for Women and Policing established the following:

- In departments with over 100 sworn officers, women hold 7.3 percent of top command positions and 9.6 percent of supervisory positions. Women of color hold 1.6 percent of top command positions and 3.1 percent of supervisory positions.
- In departments with under 100 sworn officers, women hold 3.4 percent of top command positions and 4.6 percent of supervisory positions. Women of color hold fewer than 1 percent of top command positions and 0.4 percent of supervisory positions. (Moore, 2003)

Although women are making gains, they still constitute only a small proportion of police supervisors and managers. Police executives and city or county managers cannot afford to minimize the consequences of poor retention and inadequate promotional opportunities for women and diverse groups within their organizations. Some departments have done very well in recruiting and hiring women, but, for reasons that have yet to be studied, women have left departments more quickly than men. “You can imagine that there is a level of frustration here,” says Susan Riseling, president of the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives. “Until we figure out what drives women away from this business, we’re not going to see any progress” (“Female Cops,” 1998). A 1998 study by the International Association of Chiefs of Police found that about 60 percent of the women who leave law enforcement occupations do so between their second and fifth year on the job. The reasons vary, but family pressures are the most frequently cited cause. The report recommended fairer screening procedures, tougher sexual harassment policies, and sustained drives designed to attract women and keep them on the job.

Chief executives need to determine if female officers are applying for promotions in numbers that are proportional to their numbers in the department. If not, perhaps female officers need encouragement from their supervisors. It is also possible that the promotional process disproportionately screens out female officers. Research shows that the more subjective the process is, the less likely women are to pass it. Some safeguards against bias include weighting the process toward “hands-on” tasks (e.g., assessment center testing), conducting structured interviews, selecting board members who represent different races and both sexes, and training the board members on interviewing techniques.

Failure to promote qualified candidates representative of the diverse populations agencies serve, including women, can result in continued distrust of the police by the communities. Underrepresentation within police departments also aggravates tensions between the police and the community. Some scholars and criminal justice experts argue that underrepresentation at all levels within law enforcement agencies hurts the image of the department in the eyes of the community (Walker, 1989).

Penny Harrington, a former Portland, Oregon, police chief and past executive director of the National Center for Women and Policing in Los Angeles, said, however, “I don’t think things are getting worse, I think they’re getting better.” She also
commented, “This younger generation is more apt to speak out about it than the first
groups of women who were just interested in surviving” (“Bias Still Handcuffing,”
1998, p. A1). Unfortunately, too often when they do speak out, and especially if they
sue the department, women face retaliation. Women who have complained or sued
have reported retaliatory verbal abuse, petty reprimands from supervisors and man-
gers, dead-end assignments, and, in some cases, no backup on patrol.

Mini-Case Study: How Would You Handle It?
You are a male lieutenant in charge of the special weapons and tactics unit. The
first female officer will be assigned to your specialized unit shortly. The special
weapons and tactics team members are voicing negative opinions about a female
officer being assigned to the unit. They are complaining that there will be a lower-
ing of standards in the unit because women are not as physically fit as men for this
assignment. When you have overheard these conversations, or when they have
been addressed to you directly, you have refuted them by pointing to the women
in the department who are in outstanding physical shape. This strategy has not
been effective, as the squad members continue to complain that women officers
can’t do the job and that their personal safety might be in jeopardy.

SUMMARY
Recruiting, hiring, retaining, and promoting a diverse workforce will remain important
issues in law enforcement for a long time. Too many of the issues of equity and diver-
sity have not been resolved in the law enforcement workplace, by the courts, or even in
the legislative and executive branches of the U.S. government. The number of people
available and qualified for entry-level jobs will continue to decrease; more employers,
both public and private, will be vying for the best candidates. This seems to be true re-
gardless of the economic condition of federal, state, or local government.

Hiring and promoting women and minorities for law enforcement careers are
achievable goals when agencies use strategies outlined in this chapter. As more and
more departments move toward community policing, the need to recruit and retain fe-
male and minority officers is becoming critical.

With changes in the hiring, screening, and promotional policies and practices of
law enforcement agencies comes an unprecedented opportunity to build a future in
which differences are valued and respected in our communities and our workforces.
Progressive law enforcement executives must strive to secure the most qualified em-
ployees to serve the public. To do so, they must not only be committed to the chal-
lenges of affirmative hiring (where legal) but also be capable of educating and selling
their workforce on the legitimate reasons, both legal and ethical, for such efforts. Law
enforcement agencies, to be competitive in the market for qualified employees, must
develop new ways to recruit targeted people or risk losing highly skilled potential em-
ployees to other occupations.

In this chapter we presented effective strategies and successful programs for im-
plementing changes in recruitment and promotion of a diverse workforce. Law
enforcement will have to use innovative and sophisticated marketing techniques and advertising campaigns to reach the population of desired potential applicants, and must develop fast-track processes for hiring these candidates.

A transition is taking place as police continue to move from the aggressive, male-dominated (and predominantly white) police departments and culture of the past. Most law enforcement observers agree that with the shift to community policing, women can thrive. Law enforcement agencies must overcome the common perception that policing is a male-oriented profession that requires only physical strength. Departments are looking for people who are community-oriented and who have good interpersonal skills, and they are finding increasingly that women meet these qualifications. Law enforcement executives should seek minority employees for the same reasons.

Although it contributes to better police–community relations, improvement in protected class representation in law enforcement and other criminal justice professions will not alone resolve misunderstandings. Increased numbers of diverse staff members provide only the potential for improved dialogue, cooperation, and problem solving within both the organization and the community the organization serves. Community and law enforcement officials should remember that serving multicultural and multiracial neighborhoods can never be the sole responsibility of workforce members from diverse ethnic and racial groups. In most jurisdictions, their limited numbers make this level of responsibility unrealistic. All staff should be prepared to understand and relate to diverse groups in a professional and sensitive manner, whether the people contacted are perpetrators, victims, or witnesses.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ISSUES**

1. **Institutional Racism in Law Enforcement.** Law enforcement agencies typically operate under the pretense that all their members are one color and that the uniform or job makes everyone brothers or sisters. Many members of diverse ethnic and racial groups, particularly African American, do not agree that they are consistently treated with respect and believe that there is institutional racism in law enforcement. Caucasians clearly dominate the command ranks of law enforcement agencies. Discuss with other students in your class whether you believe that this disparity is the result of subtle forms of institutional racism or actual conscious efforts on the part of the persons empowered to make decisions. Consider whether tests and promotional processes give unfair advantage to white applicants and whether they discriminate against department employees of other races and ethnicities. Do officers from diverse groups discriminate against members of other, different cultures?

2. **Employment of a Diverse Workforce and Police Practices.** How has the employment of a diverse workforce affected police practices in your city or county? Is there evidence that significant changes in the ethnic or racial composition of the department alter official police policy? Can the same be said of gay and lesbian employment? Does employment of protected classes have any

*See the Instructor’s Manual accompanying this text for additional activities, role-play activities, questionnaires, and projects related to the content of this chapter.*
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significant effect on the informal police subculture and, in turn, police performance? Provide examples to support your conclusions.

WEBSITE RESOURCES

Visit these websites for additional information about recruitment and related issues:

Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS): http://www.ojp.us.doj.bjs
A resource of crime statistics collected and analyzed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation

International Association of Chiefs of Police: http://www.theiacp.org
An online resource for law enforcement issues and publications including “Recruitment/Retention of Qualified Police Personnel: A Best Practices Guide.”

International Association of Women Police (IAWP): http://www.iawp.org
A website for information about training conferences, careers, jobs, publications, and research pertinent to women in law enforcement.

Institute for Women in Trades, Technology and Science (IWITTS): http://www.womenpolice.com
This website features fact sheets, news articles, and publications for departments on women and policing, including a free women-in-policing e-newsletter, which provides best practice information.

National Career Academy Coalition (NCAC): http://www.ncacinc.org
A website for information concerning career academies.

National Center for Women and Policing (NCWP): http://www.feminist.org
This website provides information concerning regional training seminars on recruiting and retaining women. It also is a resource for the latest research about women in policing and other critical issues. The organization has consultants to help agencies identify and remove obstacles to recruiting and retaining women.

National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives (NAWLEE):
http://www.nawlee.com
The website contains resources, news, member directory, conference and training information, seminars, and an information exchange for women executives in law enforcement.

REFERENCES

Part 1: Impact of Cultural Diversity on Law Enforcement


