

Industrial Psychology Approaches to Improve Police Officer Supervision and Performance Evaluation

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Floyd Incident News Reports

- Several videos
 - Multiple police vehicles
 - Multiple Police Officers (POs)
- What was missing from all the videos?

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Missing from Floyd Incident

- 3 police vehicles present
- 6 POs present
- **No Sergeant present**

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Why No Sergeant Present?

- One sergeant supervises 5 to 15 POs
- Each PO covers a different neighborhood
- Sergeants go to the most serious incidents
 - Passing a fake \$20 is not a major incident
 - PO do most of their work unsupervised

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POs Work Mostly Unsupervised

- Hard for a Sergeant to direct the work
- Hard for a Sergeant to evaluate the work
- What can we do about this?

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Cams are Pervasive

- BWC: Body Worn Camera (bodycam)
- Cruiser Video System
 - Patrol vehicle mounted video camera
- Police crime cameras
 - Mounted in neighborhoods

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When are Bodycams Reviewed?

- After the fact, usually serious incidents
- Live streaming of bodycams is very rare

A Suggestion

- There is a missed opportunity
- Change bodycams to live feed
- Give Sergeant a video display for each PO
- Transmit bodycams to the police station
- Transmit bodycams to Sergeant's phone

Floyd Incident Real Time Video

- **What if** there was live streamed video?
- Sergeant notices knee on neck for a minute
- Sergeant might say to Officer Chauvin:
"Get him up, he is not resisting."
Or,
"Officer, what is your plan?"
- Outcome would have been very different!

Industrial Psychology View

- Autonomous Jobs
- Definition: work done w/ little supervision
- Implications: POs must be well trained

Industrial Psychology Findings

- "improving performance ... requires ... **timely feedback about performance**" (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011, pg 48)
- "Change can ... be effected [by] **close supervision**" (Cascio & Aguinis, 2011, pg 344)

Cascio, W. F. & Aguinis, H. (2011) *Applied Psychology in Human Resource Management* (7th ed.) Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

What Sergeants Do Not See

- Non-critical policing incidents
- Attempts to de-escalate a situation
- Everyday interactions with civilians
- Attempts to improve community relations

Conversation with SMEs

- “Police officers know the bad apples long before a sergeant does”
 - POs see other POs’ job performance every day
 - POs see all aspects of job performance

(Personal communication, two police supervisors)

The Technology Exists Now

- Vendors offer bodycams in real time
 - Since at least 2019
- Term used by vendors: Live streaming
- At least several vendors offer live streaming
 - Search the web for live streaming and police

Cities Doing Live Streaming

- Cincinnati (for about 2 years)
 - 1,000 bodycams with live streaming capability
 - 15 page section in the CPD Procedure Manual
 - <https://www.cincinnati-oh.gov/police/departments-references/police-department-procedure-manual/12540/>
- One vendor claimed 3 smaller PDs using live streaming

Why is Live Streaming So Rare?

- New technology
 - Little known
 - No evaluative studies
- Inertia
- Cost (may not be a big issue)

Bodycams & Job Performance

- Performance management – continual
- Performance evaluation – periodic/annual

(Cascio & Aguinis, 2011, pg 73 and chapter 5)

Performance Management

- A continuous process
- Measure and develop individuals and teams
- Align job performance with the strategic goals of the organization.

(Cascio & Aguinis, 2011, page 73)

Performance Management

- Supervise more incidents
- See incidents earlier
- Give POs timely feedback on performance
- Coach/train PO on recent job performance
- Better evaluate ongoing incidents remotely

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Performance Evaluation AKA Performance Appraisal

- Periodic/Annual
- A systematic description of job-relevant strengths and weaknesses
- Key component of any performance management system.
- Consists of observation and judgment

(Cascio & Aguinis, 2011, page 73)

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Sergeants May Miss Observations

- Non-critical policing incidents
- Everyday interactions with civilians
- Attempts to improve community relations
- Attempts to de-escalate a situation

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Documentation of PO Work

- Observe and document important areas
 - De-escalation
 - Interactions with the community

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Practical Issues

- Time to Review
 - Sergeant lacks time to review videos of each subordinate POs
 - Too many subordinates for each Sergeant!
- Fairness
 - Avoid biased sample of videos
 - Fairness is crucial for acceptance (e.g., unions)
 - Which videos will be reviewed?

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Possible Sampling Solutions

- Daily: PO identifies video times
 - PO self-nominates videos for review
 - PO fills out a form reporting highlights of video
- Weekly: Sergeant randomly samples videos
- Artificial Intelligence aid for Sergeant
 - Identify interactions of more than X seconds
 - Identify interactions with non POs

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Benefits of Using Bodycams

- Performance evaluations more accurate
 - Better sample of actual job performance

Other (Unresolved) Issues

- Privacy concerns
- How to describe levels of job performance
 - Developing adequate performance criteria is a persistent and critical problem in the field of personnel psychology

(Cascio & Aguinis, 2011, page 11)

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