GENERAL WORKFORCE ISSUES

   Commissioned by the American Correctional Association, this is the first part of a three-phase study of the state of the correctional workforce. While the full study ultimately intends to develop a strategic plan and related practices for recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce, this first phase describes current conditions, with particular focus on correctional officers and juvenile caseworkers. Based on a national survey, reasons for recruiting and turnover problems are explored, and projections are included for both the demand and supply side of the correctional labor pool. Several “promising human resources practices” are included in the final section.

   Prepared for the National Institute of Corrections, this report is based on the input of correctional administrators, human resource managers, and academic authorities who participated in four regional meetings to discuss prison workforce issues, with particular emphasis on recruiting and retaining competent staff. Findings are organized into four categories: management issues, the workforce environment, demographic issues, and human resource approaches. Each category contains recommendations, along with promising approaches and ideas.

   Looking at parity not only in terms of compensation, but also differentials in training, assignment opportunities, media representation, and professional recognition, the author reviews the relationship between parity and correctional attrition.

Exploring the delicate balance between maintaining continuity and stimulating change, the extensive research on which this book is based demonstrates that organizations which sustain their success have the ability to preserve a fundamental purpose and core values, while at the same time being able to change their culture, operating practices, and specific strategies in a continual process of renewal. Moving beyond fads that have no anchors in basic ideologies, the authors advocate organizations that are ideologically driven by deep-rooted values and “big hairy audacious goals,” with everything working in total alignment, both ideologically and operationally. As they conclude, “leaders die, products become obsolete, markets change, new technologies emerge, management fads come and go; but core ideology in a great company endures as a source of guidance and inspiration.”


This article describes a management accountability and policy dissemination system used for institutional corrections. Along with indicators of inmate living conditions, it contains measures of the quality of staff work life. Overall, the message of proactive planning, establishing accountability, and effectively responding to problems by monitoring organizational “health” could apply universally to any correctional agency. Perhaps most importantly, rather than judging performance on the basis of such illusive variables as offender recidivism, this system evaluates correctional management on the basis of things they can control.


An overview of the issues being addressed by the American Correctional Association’s Center for the Correctional Workforce of the Future and its associated website (www.aca.org/workforce), designed to enable access to a variety of workforce information and related linkages. Specific strategies to be addressed include helping agencies enhance recruitment efforts, reduce the time needed to hire and train new employees, improve retention rates of existing employees, and upgrade the public image of corrections.


The “Labor and Leadership” chapter in this report points out some of the most prominent workforce-related dilemmas faced by correctional administrators, including an unattractive work environment, stressful conditions, non-competitive salaries, and widely-ranging training standards. Subsequent recommendations for “enhancing the profession” range from promoting a culture of mutual respect to recruiting and retaining a qualified corps of officers, supporting today’s leaders, and cultivating the next generation of leadership.

This GAO report presents a synopsis of forthcoming labor market challenges and opportunities, including changing employment dynamics, demographic trends, the role of government policies, and strategies for addressing adverse market conditions. Although it does not specifically target criminal justice, the broad overview provided has justice-related implications.


The topic of this session of NIC’s Large Jail Network Meeting, “The Future of Our Workforce,” begins with an opening address identifying the megatrends, social changes, and organizational challenges that set the stage today as corrections embraces Generation X employees. Additional presentations and roundtable discussions focus on how this new breed of workers challenges leaders, what motivates them on the job, and what strategies can be implemented to address their job-related needs.


Based on a survey of employees in the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, the author identifies reasons why respondents chose careers in corrections, using this information to suggest policy implications with regard to employee recruitment and retention strategies, especially in terms of improved communication, recognition, mentoring, and job enlargement techniques.


From the 43 state departments of corrections responding to this survey, readers have access to information ranging from average starting salaries and educational requirements, to employee demographics, recruitment practices, fringe benefits, and turnover rates for both sworn and support staff working in state prisons.


Recognizing how much educational levels have escalated in the U.S., this article points out that the challenge for corrections is not as simple as advocating increasingly higher educational credentials. Rather, it maintains that there are much more complex issues involved, related to “projecting future staffing needs, restructuring and enriching existing jobs, targeting appropriate applicants, and developing career ladders.” But the overall message is that none of this can be accomplished in isolation—and in that regard, opportunities are explored for corrections to develop collaborative partnerships with higher education to promote their mutual objectives.
Questioning whether all of the apparent changes that have characterized jails over the past quarter-century reflect deep systematic alterations or a more superficial level of change, this article compares the top jail challenges identified by a 2007 national focus group with the findings of a 1982 national jail survey. The similarity of results reflects both a surprising and disturbing venture “back to the future.”

While targeted toward probation and parole agencies, FutureForce is equally applicable to institutional corrections. Beginning with a rationale for taking workforce issues seriously, it encompasses information on fundamental workforce challenges (i.e., creating a positive organizational culture), successful recruitment strategies (i.e., looking in the right places for the right people), effective retention approaches (i.e., keeping the right people in the right places), and strategies for achieving successful outcomes. Each chapter concludes with a “to do” checklist, and appendices include an agency culture diagnostic instrument, along with sample questions for employee retention, engagement, and exit interview surveys.

Charged with examining the impact and implications of the aging population in government service, this report is both descriptive and prescriptive. Comparing public to private-sector employment, clear documentation is provided describing why government agencies need to be concerned about impending workforce attrition. From a prescriptive standpoint, both monetary and nonmonetary strategies are presented, (along with transitional retirement options), for more effectively attracting and retaining public sector employees.

This section of the Department of Labor website contains information such as an employee benefits survey, occupational wage estimates, and a national compensation survey that can illustrate how any agency compares with the average in that area.
   Maintaining that the future of correctional employment, as well as that of the private sector, will be significantly affected by increasing diversity of the U.S. workforce, this article addresses the topic of workforce diversity from perspectives ranging from community relations and victim sensitivity to officer safety.

   Based on the premise that there are not enough Generation Y and Z employees with the requisite skills to fill the shoes of retiring Baby Boomers and Veterans, this book offers strategies for reigniting the enthusiasm and organizational engagement of aging workers and retaining them (at least part-time) in the workplace. After reviewing the causes of employee disengagement and the barriers to full engagement, the author focuses on establishing the foundations for innovation, creativity, and full engagement.

   Based on the premise that core values shape our behavior, a significant portion of this book is devoted to tracing how values are influenced by a developmental process that occurs during our formative years. Historical events unique to each decade are described, and each chapter includes a brief demographic/economic portrait of that decade (e.g., life expectancy, cost of living, average annual salary, etc.), along with key events, fads/trends, and new inventions/technology. With that background, the authors explore how these social, political, and economic events defined the values of each succeeding generation. A value assessment instrument is provided through which you can obtain greater insight into your own values, as well as compare them with the values of others. The book ends with strategies for resolving inter-generational differences, primarily through understanding and awareness.

   An in-depth analysis from the perspective of the social environment in which they were raised, this book compares trends that have influenced Generation X with those of their parents. The author explores the role of everything from two-income families and divorce to the fast pace and high stress of modern society, dwindling educational standards, and economic downturns. Filled with numerous real-life examples and easy-reading statistics, this book traces the factors that shaped a generation often characterized as indifferent, apathetic, cynical, and self-focused. After reading it, the reasons underlying their distinctive behavioral characteristics become much more apparent.
   Although it begins with traditional background information on stereotypical differences between Xers and boomers, this book quickly establishes its uniqueness. In that regard, it is one of the few works on this topic that is anchored more in empirical evidence than anecdotal assumptions. In the course of conducting their research into generational conditions at the workplace of six organizations, the authors discovered one company where differences between boomers and Xers “virtually disappeared.” What they learned from further investigation became the basis for reconceptualizing the entire concept of “teamwork.” Thus, much of the book is devoted to describing a four-step process for creating “authentic” teams that capitalize on the unique values of each member, while at the same time effectively integrating them into a collaborative work group.

   Concerned about both the resentment between generations and the inaccurate stereotypes that often shape our perception of them, this book makes an effort to set the record straight. It includes numerous examples of “clash points”—i.e., “trouble spots where generational conflicts are most likely to explode.” The authors maintain that the basis for such conflicts can be found in the defining view of work maintained by each of these generations. On the job, Traditionalists are classified as coming of age in a “chain of command” environment, whereas for Boomers it was “change of command,” for Xers, “self-command,” and for Millennials (Generation Y), “don’t command–collaborate!” (pp. 30-31). It is the modern-day repercussions of these differences that are explored throughout the book. Practical advice is also offered in terms of how to recruit, retain, motivate and manage across generational gaps.

   Based on “best practices” from throughout the country that have demonstrated success in encouraging the advancement of women and people of color, this book provides a step-by-step action plan for creating diversity initiatives that achieve “measurable results.” Using strategies grounded in leadership principles and organizational change, it offers detailed guidelines for everything from assessing an agency’s diversity needs to designing tailor-made interventions, making diversity part of the organizational culture, and measuring resulting outcomes.

Based on the premise that voluntary turnover is one of the most costly and significant challenges facing employers today, this book responds to the growing labor crisis with practical solutions to the common sources of job dissatisfaction among Generation Xers. Beginning with an overview of their work-related attributes, the author identifies labels, stereotypes, and common complaints about Generation Xers. Then the tables are turned and questions are posed for “managers to ponder” with regard to their relationships with this new breed in the workforce. Three generations (Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, and Generation Xers) are compared in terms of their differential outlook, work ethic, view of authority, leadership style, self-other relationships, and overall perspective. The remainder of the book is largely a collection of creative, “outside-the-box” techniques for building bridges between them.


This book builds on case studies collected by the authors from throughout the world of work. It is interspersed with anecdotes, quotes about stereotypical characteristics of Xers and boomers, and historical events that shaped them. Each chapter is structured around on-the-job stories designed to create both an awareness of generation-typical behavior and a stimulus to make adaptive changes. The stories are analyzed on the basis of twelve core “delineators,” which the authors use to juxtapose Xers and boomers–ranging from their varying perspectives on work and the work ethic to how their values differ in terms of communication, authority, technology, entitlement, and approaching the future. These delineators provide the foundation for exploring the unique world view of these generations. Each chapter ends with practical tips for accommodating inter-generational differences when providing services, building teams, dealing with conflict, managing performance problems, and handling similar work-related challenges.


Written primarily for human resources managers, this article suggests non-traditional approaches to coping with the dual impact of a rapidly aging workforce and a dramatically changing workplace. Citing such organizational trends as downsizing, outsourcing, and technological restructuring, the author examines accompanying challenges in terms of linking older workers with employer needs and redesigning everything from compensation and benefit packages to work schedules and training programs. With older employees now becoming an ever-accelerating proportion of the U.S. population, the author’s advice for retaining their job-related capabilities past traditional retirement age provides a timely message as this talent pool becomes a critical source of productive workers.

For those who want a quick overview of everything from recruiting and orienting Generation Xers to training, mentoring, managing, and retaining them, this pocket-sized paperback quickly zeros-in on the essentials. Each brief section focuses on four key elements or features of the chapter’s topic, although accompanying narrative is sparse, with each one described in a sentence or two. Interspersed throughout are brainstorming exercises, self-assessment questionnaires, pitfalls to avoid, and even “awareness-raising reality checks”—short self-tests designed to determine the reader’s knowledge of Generation Xers. In an effort to encourage learning from real-life successes and failures at the workplace, the book ends with 50 case studies describing both positive and negative management scenarios.


Determined to debunk popular misperceptions about Xers being slackers with short attention spans who seek instant gratification, the author’s observations are based on interviews with hundreds of employees who were asked about how their employer’s management style affects their work. Thus, the book’s foundation rests on stories told by Xers themselves—from which four job-related needs emerged: i.e., to belong to an enterprise where one can make a meaningful contribution, continually grow and learn, exercise entrepreneurial ownership, and feel secure in terms of work-related status. But because most respondents did not believe that they enjoyed these attributes in their current jobs, the book is primarily designed to help organizational administrators avoid “squandering one of their most valuable resources” by rising to the challenge of more effectively managing this new generation of workers.


An overview of the younger siblings of Generation X, this book is designed to bring out the best of these employees in the workplace. A small, short, and engaging paperback, it paints a positive portrait of Generation Y as confident, education-minded, tolerant, upbeat, and even altruistic. Empowered by technology and brimming with self-esteem, they are portrayed as being primarily driven by a desire for meaningful work. Fiercely independent, they are described as self-reliant, outside-the-box thinkers who want increasing responsibility, exciting challenges, and want it all *right now!* With that in mind, the book addresses how not to manage Generation Y employees, concluding with tips for meeting fourteen fundamental expectations of these workers—ranging from balancing tasks with freedom and flexibility to providing on-going feedback and learning opportunities.

A GenXer writing to educate others about her generation, the author provides provocative and insightful commentary about why Xers are the way they are and how other generations can better cope with them. A somewhat disturbing in-depth look into this generation, the book embraces everything from how they were raised to their approach to life in general and the workplace in particular, providing at least some answers to why there is generational conflict in the workplace.


Viewing today’s generational gap as a “four-way divide,” this book begins with descriptive profiles of the four generational groups in the workforce–Veterans, Baby Boomers, Generation Xers, and Generation Nexters. It then explores problems, pressures, and opportunities resulting from their interaction. Case studies are provided in which the practices of exemplary companies are highlighted as models for their ability to effectively integrate generational diversity on the job. A panel of experts provides further advice to a hypothetical manager in a generationally-divided department. The book concludes with a question-and-answer section in which the authors respond to 21 “most frequently-asked generation-based questions.” One of the most valuable resources is the appendix, which provides an inventory to assess the generational “friendliness” of an organization, along with a listing of Internet resources that can promote better understanding of generational differences.
APPLICANT RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

   Formed as part of a statewide workforce development initiative, the pre-service certification program described in this article operates in seven community colleges throughout Connecticut. It is a school-to-work program that integrates students (i.e., potential employees) into the correctional workplace through coursework, internships, and a streamlined hiring process.

   Beginning with a national profile of how the labor force is changing, this book goes on to tackle issues ranging from attracting top performers to techniques for retaining them once employed. Along the way, it addresses such topics as traditional and nontraditional recruitment sources, electronic recruiting, competency-based approaches to recruiting and interviewing, developing a contingent work force, partnering with educational institutions, and establishing a workplace that provides rewards, recognition, opportunities, and a balance between work and personal life.

   While this book is primarily written to help businesses compete for personnel in the corporate marketplace, it contains tactics that could be applied to the public sector as well—most importantly, moving from a process that is interviewer-dominated to one that is client-centered. Additionally, it addresses what top candidates want in a job and why critical applicants are lost, along with how to develop a “competitive edge,” use interviews to build partnerships, negotiate “win/win” packages, and integrate hiring with performance evaluation systems.

   Based on national statistics, this article presents existing realities and projected trends for the correctional labor force. As a result, the authors recommend four “effective, low-cost” approaches to enhance correctional recruitment.

   From offering staff recruitment bonuses to streamlining the application process and providing post-employment mentoring, these articles describe the techniques used by these two large states to meet their sizeable correctional recruitment demands.
Moving beyond the temptation to hire candidates who are “just like you” or who give you a “warm fuzzy feeling,” this book explores hiring traps that managers fall prey to and techniques for combating them, along with how to conduct a quick needs assessment and develop interviewing skills designed to discover the candidate’s peak performance. A how-to guide filled with creative ideas, this book addresses many topics that are relevant to corrections, perhaps especially the sections on “nontraditional recruiting pools,” “hiring from a position of weakness,” and “creating the culture of retention.”

In an effort to assist police departments with attracting new officers and subsequently reducing their attrition rates, this article provides guidance on appealing to the values and interests of members of Generation X through such strategies as hands-on experiences, immediate and personal feedback, input solicitation, mentoring, and coaching. Potentially effective marketing approaches include highlighting the variety of jobs available, offering a cafeteria-style benefits package, and emphasizing computer technology as well as career development.

As indicated by the title, this article presents techniques for recruiting correctional personnel—from establishing a distinct organizational identity to pursuing a diverse labor pool, marketing career opportunities, using information from exit interviews, and developing a public relations strategy.

Based on surveys and interviews with jail administrators throughout the country, the reported findings cover topics ranging from recruitment, screening, and hiring strategies to successful tools used to retain job incumbents. In addition, appendices provide sample materials from local jails related to each of these topics.

Based on the premise that turnover among new hires is best reduced by developing a valid perspective of the job, this article describes the “Realistic Job Preview” that is specifically designed to give applicants a truly down-to-earth picture of the “cold realities” of a profession or position. It provides as much information as possible about everything from salary and benefits to shift work, on-the-job working conditions, types of people they will be expected to deal with, and the need for such attributes as self-control, empathy, sensitivity, and ability to handle frustration. The idea is to create an atmosphere of honesty and enable recruits to make a well-educated decision about their fitness for the job, as well as provide them with “antibodies” (i.e., coping strategies) that can assist in dealing with disagreeable aspects of the job upon employment.
42. Hagen, Katie S. *Strategic Marketing Plan for the Peace Officer Recruitment Section* (Sacramento, CA: California Department of Corrections, 2002), 36 pages (NCJ #196821)

This strategic marketing plan for the recruitment of correctional staff outlines three key strategies: a coordinated statewide recruitment effort, the use of current employees as "recruiters-at-large," and the establishment of a community base of qualified applicants. Using performance measures to test the effectiveness of these strategies and supporting tactics, findings indicated that the number of applicants increased 30-40%. As a result of the success of applicants with college degrees in the selection process, additional ongoing recruitment efforts are focusing on community colleges and universities.


This article discusses the implications of the characteristics of the millennial generation (those born between 1982 and 2002) for law enforcement recruitment and leadership, including the potential conflict between traditional bureaucratic structures in this field and the attraction of millennials to employment in more flexible and innovative organizational environments where they have more discretionary control. Recommendations for dealing with this mismatch are included, along with the need for mentoring relationships and sufficient progress in computer technology to appeal to millennials.


Acknowledging the declining number of qualified police applicants in recent years, particularly among smaller departments, (especially as background checks have become more stringent), the author maintains that it has become essential for agencies to engage in marketing by identifying more specifically the type of applicants desired and marketing the department to that audience.


Based on a national survey of police agencies, as well as analysis of employment data and related literature, this report presents a brief synopsis of findings in such areas as locating qualified applicants and keeping officers on the job. The general implications for policy and practice that are included appear to be equally applicable to jails.


A detailed overview of the issues involved and operational responses to recruitment, retention, and succession planning concerns faced by public safety agencies, this comprehensive guide encompasses research, survey-based information, and best-practice examples, as well as results from focus groups of subject matter experts. Along with effective practices for recruiting, marketing strategies, and hiring new personnel, chapters are included on improving supervision, management, organizational communication, retention planning, and employee engagement, along with creating worker-friendly policies.
   Contains descriptions of and links to a variety of resources related to police recruiting, hiring, and retention, including innovative practices, police integrity, recruiting women, and mentoring.

   In response to the shortage of teachers, these researchers urge schools to think differently about how to attract job applicants. Their review of the literature on effective recruitment practices suggests five strategies that are discussed throughout this white paper—i.e., actively expand the applicant pool, regularly evaluate recruitment practices, use a variety of incentives, select high quality recruitment media, and establish a streamlined hiring process.

   Based on the high volume of Internet use today, this article discusses using Websites as a vehicle for communicating directly with the public in general and potential applicants in particular. Various ways of using Websites are explored, and while many of them are specifically related to police departments, others have more generic application, especially in terms of creating the types of neighborhood partnerships, targeted recruitment efforts, and stakeholder subscription services that can enhance agency outreach, productivity, recruitment, and information-sharing.

   Findings are presented from the federally-funded “Hiring in the Spirit of Service” project, designed to engage citizens from five target communities in creating new recruiting methods and marketing initiatives to attract service-oriented law enforcement personnel to police departments. Using focus groups to engage community support, lessons learned are described, along with service-oriented selection procedures as well as accomplishments and challenges at each specific site.

   Designed to counteract the pressures of resource limitations with opportunities to foster employee development, this article describes a strategic planning process ranging from formulation to development, implementation, and evaluation. Moving beyond a narrow fiscal focus, it takes a more flexible, broad-based approach to employee rewards that is more intrinsically-oriented, and incorporates such components as recognition, work environment, and personal development.

These authors present research-based techniques for job analysis, as well as test development and validation for employing state correctional officers. Many of the approaches and concepts that they discuss, (such as person-environment fit), have potentially equal application to local jails.


To meet the increasing challenge of filling vacancies, police departments (like their private sector counterparts) have turned to such strategies as higher compensation, attracting lateral applicants from other agencies, signing bonuses, and lowering standards. But this article points out that other ingredients are equally important, such as assuring that applicants do not lose interest by reducing the time they spend waiting for processing and feedback.


By applying the “theory of constraints” to police applicant processing, this article presents a five-step method for analyzing stopgaps in the screening process and developing logical solutions. The systematic problem-solving method employed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this agency's hiring process could likewise be adapted to address similar issues in corrections.


Written on the premise that professional recruitment and selection practices are most effective when based on specifically-identified competencies, this is a “how-to” guide for everything from establishing relevant criteria to attracting, screening, and assessing candidates. Given the current emphasis on evidence-based practices, incorporating competency-based procedures throughout the recruitment and selection process is both timely and practical.


One of a series of publications examining workforce issues among North Carolina's public safety agencies, this report is based on a survey exploring strategies, processes, and techniques for recruiting and retaining detention officers. Resulting recommendations included more intense and non-traditional recruitment techniques, and the use of alternative retention techniques, (beyond increasing salaries).
EMPLOYEE RETENTION

Subtitled “24 ways to hang on to your most valuable talent,” this book is divided into 24 retention practices that are organized in four overall categories—i.e., be a company people want to work for, select the right people in the first place, get them off to a great start, and coach and reward to sustain commitment. Within each category is a checklist designed to address the reasons that good performers leave, for which the author strongly maintains that money is not the answer.

After analyzing the disengagement process that precedes employee departures, the author reviews what research says about why employees leave, with the remainder of the book devoted to seven chapters discussing the hidden, elusive motivations that cause capable people to leave. These include mismatch between the job (or workplace) and employee expectations, mismatch between the job and the employee, insufficient coaching and feedback, few growth and advancement opportunities, feeling devalued and unrecognized, work-related stress, and loss of trust and confidence in senior leaders. Each chapter ends with an “employer-of-choice” engagement practices checklist, and the final chapter concludes with action planning to operationalize employee engagement strategies.

In an effort to predict what factors most influence the job satisfaction of jail officers, this study surveyed staff in one Northeast state. Dividing the potential predictors into those that are individual (e.g., race, age, gender, education) and those that are organizational (e.g., peer/supervisory support, role problems, work-related stress), findings indicate that a lower level of education, greater supervisory support, and lower job stress were significant predictors of higher job satisfaction.

With the labor market changing to a seller's market characterized by a more mobile workforce, companies are throwing money at the problem of employee retention. Instead of salary increases and retention bonuses, the authors argue that the real solution may relate to the organization’s ability to promote employee trust, respect, cooperation, and open communication.

Based on research into high-producing companies that have stood the test of time, this book enables others to benefit from the practices that propelled “good” companies to “greatness,” (as measured by indicators that extend well beyond profit margins). The major premise of the book is that truly great companies do not exist merely to achieve a profit, but rather, have a higher purpose. As a result, the principles it promotes are equally applicable to the public sector--especially in terms of the capacity to build something that “is larger and more lasting” than the leaders themselves. Ultimately, it is based on the premise that the bottom line is getting the “right people on the bus (and the wrong people off the bus), and then figuring out where to drive it,” which is contradictory to those who maintain that vision/mission must precede hiring. A significant message of the book is to hire self-motivated people and then use management techniques that will not de-motivate them.


Based on a study of workplace factors affecting correctional staff in a midwestern state, this article analyzes how certain practices affect recruitment, retention, and job satisfaction of line employees. Designed primarily to determine why staff leave and to develop related retention strategies, it includes a review of relevant policies and procedures, annual reports, exit interviews, and additional turnover-related data. The plan of action presented on the basis of its findings includes a discussion of supervisory responsibility, training, career development, image, compensation, and work environment issues.


Based on a study of factors that influence job satisfaction in prison work, the most significant relationship uncovered was the direct impact of empowerment on job satisfaction. The more empowered employees felt, the higher their level of job satisfaction, the stronger their organizational commitment, and the lower their level of stress. Implications for improving managerial practices are discussed, along with specific initiatives designed to promote a culture of employee empowerment.


Prepared in conjunction with the semi-annual meeting of large jail administrators throughout the country, this article describes how one county corrections department addressed recruitment and retention issues, reducing their turnover rate from 15% to 10% per year through the implementation of creative initiatives.
   Written with the belief that high turnover is not a fact of life, this book offers "proven strategies" that the author maintains will work "regardless of the industry, employees' position, pay status, or seniority." Based on interviews with successful executives, chapters are organized into short, easy-reading strategies—for example, the chapter on "Making Good Hiring Decisions" includes sections on planning for retention, forecasting staffing needs, developing recruitment sources, knowing what you're looking for, etc. One topic that is somewhat unique to this book is the chapter on "managing difficult people."

   Although this collection of eight readings is directed toward business and industry, public sector administrators will also find some unique "tips of the trade" that can be implemented in government agencies; (see, for example, the chapters on "A Market-Driven Approach to Retaining Talent," "Toward a Career-Resilient Workforce," and "Job Sculpting: The Art of Retaining Your Best People").

   After discussing what good employees want in the workplace and why they leave, the remainder of the book is organized into specific, action-oriented strategies that managers can use to address issues related to the work environment, on-the-job relationships, providing support, encouraging growth, and addressing compensation. While all of the strategies featured may not be directly applicable to the public sector, many are just as relevant to government. The final section concludes with tactics for implementing the strategies presented.

   Literally an “A to Z” guide to employee retention, the authors cover everything from "Ask" (What keeps you?), "Buck" (It stops here), and "Careers" (Support Growth) to “X-ers” (Handle with care), "Yield" (Power down), and "Zenith" (Go for it). Each chapter is brief, reader-friendly, and filled with real-world examples from the authors' research. Additionally, chapters include concise “to do” checklists, "alas" stories written from the perspective of good employees who “got away,”and even some self-diagnostic quizzes.

   Based on an extensive review of the literature, the author builds a potential causal model of correctional staff turnover, which includes factors related to personal characteristics, work environment, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment.
   Building on the concept that high attrition is related to dissatisfaction with the workplace, this article explores how any agency can become an exemplary employer. Applying information from the private sector to corrections, the author concludes that the main factor involved is the attitude and behavior of management. In that regard, he presents managerial techniques for creating a “great place to work,” ranging from sharing information to being accessible, answering hard questions, delivering on promises, showing appreciation, and demonstrating personal concern.

   Based on a study conducted by the American Correctional Association in conjunction with its “correctional workforce for the 21st century” initiative, turnover is documented as a major problem “plaguing correctional agencies nationwide.” In addition to low compensation, other reasons for high turnover are discussed, along with related implications and potential solutions.

   Both of these books present simple techniques, activities, and suggestions to recognize, reward, and energize employees. Noting that spontaneous, informal forms of recognition are actually more valued and effective than formally structured programs, the “reward” book is designed to help managers tap into the potential power of a wide variety of positive reinforcements. Organized in similar fashion, the “energize” book focuses on energizing techniques that can be used to enhance the effectiveness of individuals as well as teams and entire organizations. Throughout both books, readers will find research highlights, quotes from business leaders, case studies, and “suggestion boxes.”

   Reflecting the findings of a survey of five county jails, turnover predictors are categorized as under the control of the sheriff, the government, or the economy. Among the most important factors controlled by the sheriff are “communication of genuine interest, realistic promotion opportunities, and the full use of employee skills.” Moreover, the study concludes that “it is sound management practice and not just salaries and benefits” that tend to reduce intent to leave the job.

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With the market for well-qualified staff becoming extremely competitive, the author sees an ideal opportunity for employers to think creatively about unique approaches to “attract, retain, and motivate the best and the brightest.” To initiate such “outside the box” thinking, he offers unique approaches for recruiting, retaining, and training employees, changing organizational culture, providing recognition, and enhancing organizational image. While some are better suited to business and industry, many are equally applicable to government--from tailoring ads to suit your audience to changing the way the workplace smells.


Based on the premise that the unmet needs of an increasingly diverse workforce substantially contribute to high turnover, this book pursues strategies for “retentionship,” in order to increase productivity and return on investment. Such strategic initiatives include providing a clear sense of direction, demonstrating that leaders care about employees, keeping communication open, creating an energetic and engaging work environment, transforming workers into winners through performance management, establishing effective reward and recognition programs, and helping people move up in the organization.


While this article addresses stress in police agencies, much of the content is equally applicable to corrections, particularly in terms of the role of organizational culture in promoting and reinforcing organizationally-induced stress. As such, it deviates from traditional approaches to stress-provoking traumatic incidents by viewing both sources and solutions from different perspectives. Looking at the impact of daily, routine stressors on the long-term health and well-being of employees, the article explores the stress-reducing impact of changes in organizational features ranging from communication and decision-making to managerial practices and disciplinary actions.


Using both exit surveys and organizational data from six new generation jails, this study estimates the extent of turnover, identifies causes, and provides recommendations for its reduction, particularly in terms of enhancing the “fit” between employees and their specific job, as well as the organization overall.
   As a sort of “succession planning” guide, this book attempts to bridge the gap between management and leadership by familiarizing the former with what is needed to become the latter. By synthesizing various contemporary leadership perspectives, the author seeks to integrate the best available knowledge into a model that readers can use to make a difference in their world. But the feature that perhaps most clearly distinguishes this book from others is its assortment of self-assessment inventories, followed by guidelines for making improvements in weak areas.

   Once a succession plan has been developed, this article answers the question “what now?” In addition, the author identifies a number of pitfalls and offers advice for avoiding them.

   Based on the premise that good executive leadership development starts at the beginning of a staff member’s career, rather than when they reach mid-management ranks, this article presents a five-step process for developing line staff into functional leaders.

   Featuring contributions from noted authorities, this book of readings forecasts the nature of future organizations (boundaryless networks, staffed by multi-generations of knowledge workers), as well as what types of leaders are most suited to guide such organizations (e.g., those with self-insight, flexibility, and resiliency, who engage in self-development, servant leadership, organizational capacity-building, and sense-making rather than decision-making). Despite many notable features, however, in the inexorable view of hindsight, this work may become best-known for its lavish praise of the leadership style of Enron’s CEO.

   Based on the premise that the most successful CEOs are those who “are developed inside the company, but manage to retain an outside perspective,” the author offers tips for becoming an “inside-outside” leader. Additionally, he argues that succession should be envisioned as an ongoing process rather than a singular event, with tomorrow’s leaders identified by the time they are thirty.

As determined through research examining “best performers,” these documents identify the core competencies for effectively developing correctional managers/supervisors as well as executives/senior leaders. Chapters detailing each of the core competencies for these positions include definitions, knowledge base, key skills and behaviors, focus matrix, and resources, along with insights into what elements could comprise an organization’s succession planning and leadership development initiatives.


This article discusses the Core Competency Model Project initiated by the National Institute of Corrections, which offers a framework by which correctional leaders and trainers can determine the efficacy of existing training programs or develop new leadership and management training. The profiles presented in the project can also be used to determine if job incumbents are receiving education and training appropriate to their needs.


Based on the necessity of government to embrace succession planning in order to meet critical employment needs, the authors use a municipal case study to suggest methods for preparing public organizations to build an effectively functioning talent pipeline.


A step-by-step guide to implementing career development in an organization, the author takes readers through a six-stage process, including preparation (analysis and planning), profiling (identifying and reality-testing the employee’s capacity), targeting (exploring and specifying career goals), strategizing (understanding the system), execution (acquiring resources and demonstrating ability), and integration (evaluation and rewards). Designed to incorporate all key players in the process, each stage is integrated with the one before and after it in seamless progression toward an effective outcome for everyone involved.


Although addressed to a CPA audience, the author’s “tips for a successful transition” and “internal succession checklist” are equally applicable to succession planning in the public sector workplace.


Written for those who are serious about enhancing the career development prospects
of their employees, this comprehensive guide addresses virtually every aspect of the topic, beginning with needs assessment, visioning, and planning, continuing through the implementation stage, and concluding with ongoing maintenance and assessing effectiveness. Several model career development systems are described, and although prepared with the private sector in mind, much of the content is likewise applicable to public sector work.

89. Mentoring in the Corrections Workplace: A Self-paced Workbook (Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2002; access #018196); 31 pages.
   A self-paced course on how to become an effective mentor, this workbook identifies benefits, tasks, and responsibilities of mentors, mentees, and their supervisor, along with the rules of mentoring, effective listening skills, establishing expectations, goal-setting, eliciting feedback, exploring options, and becoming aware of potential pitfalls. Additionally, it includes a mentor’s checklist, action planning guide, and mentor/mentee relationship review.

   Based on her experience managing succession at the New York City Department of Juvenile Justice, the author identifies four strategies that public sector leaders committed to a strategic approach to succession planning can use, ranging from techniques for getting a supportive candidate appointed to assuring that successful innovations are maintained after the leader’s departure.

   This toolkit provides practical guidance, checklists, and strategies to enable the reader to clarify what “talent management” and “succession planning” actually are, identify specific organizational needs, establish talent management and succession planning processes, (including managing, developing, and retaining qualified employees), and evaluate policies to measure their success.