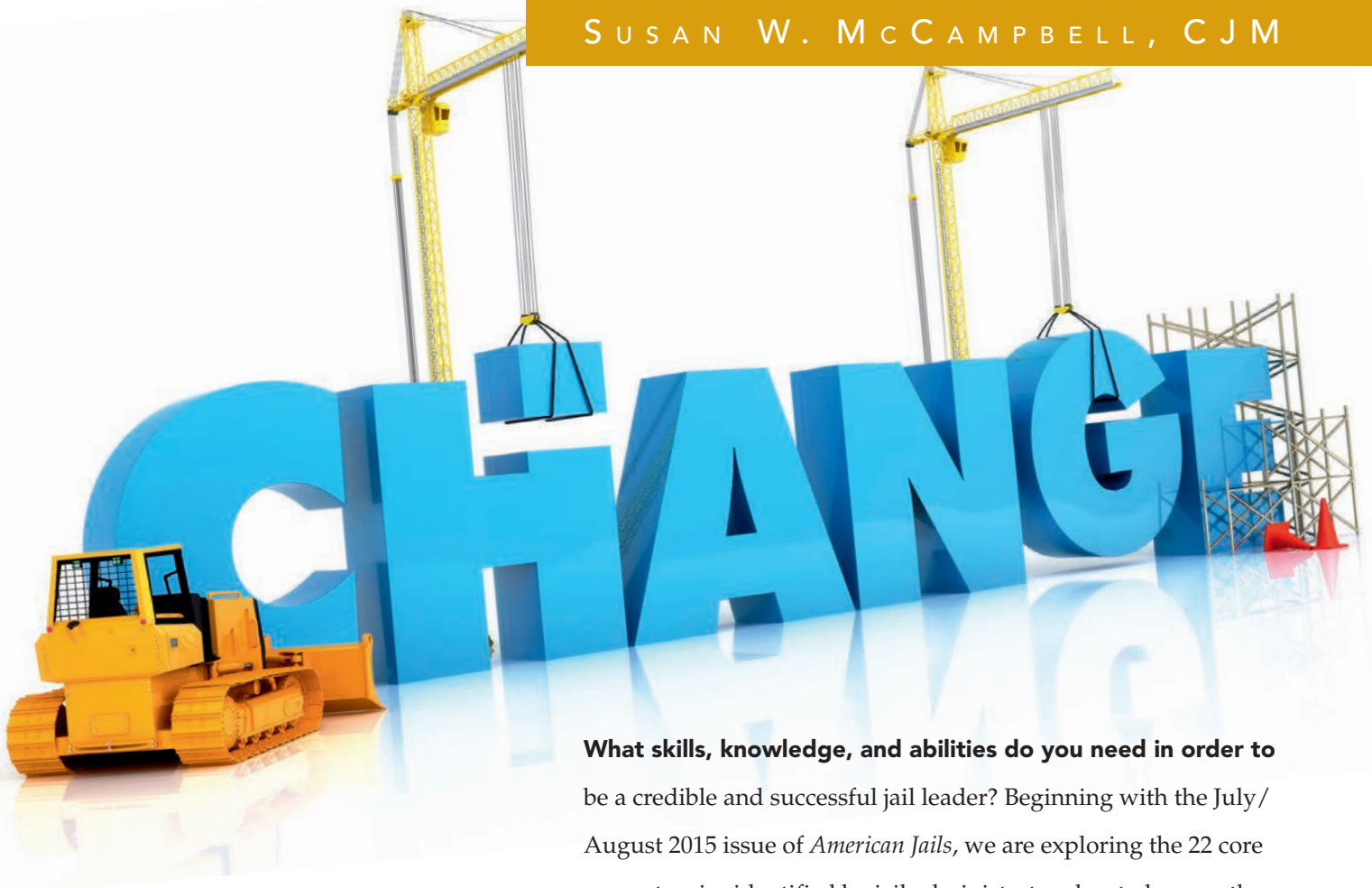


# Core Competencies **AND** Jail Leadership

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**What skills, knowledge, and abilities do you need in order to** be a credible and successful jail leader? Beginning with the July/August 2015 issue of *American Jails*, we are exploring the 22 core competencies identified by jail administrators located across the country. Welcome to the second installment on core competencies and jail leadership.

A multifaceted approach was used to determine these core competencies. This approach incorporated a comprehensive literature review, input and feedback from a national advisory committee, and several focus group sessions conducted at national conferences. Integrating these various components ensured that all perspectives were accommodated. The knowledge, skills, and abilities associated with these competencies were also enumerated. Not surprisingly, representatives from small, large, rural, tribal, and mega-jails easily arrived at the same conclusions (Stinchcomb, Smith, McCampbell, & Mancini, 2011).

These core competencies now provide the basis of the curriculum for the National Jail Leadership Command Academy ([www.nationaljailacademy.org](http://www.nationaljailacademy.org)) and the Southwest Florida Jail Leadership Initiative (2013). In addition, the Jail Executive Development Program (JEDP), which plans to hold its inaugural class in 2016, will also be anchored in the core competencies. For more information about JEDP, visit [aja.org](http://aja.org).)

In this issue of *American Jails*, we take a closer look at the core competency identified as “Manage Change” and recommend several valuable resources related to leadership.

**Core Competency: Manage Change**

**Description.** Progressively implement change through strategies that encompass relevant stakeholders.

**Rationale.** Because change is so discomfoting, it is often feared and resisted. Therefore, effectively implementing change involves awareness of how change impacts organizational and human dynamics, including understanding the change process itself, as well as how to implement change in a manner designed to ensure sustainability.

President Woodrow Wilson is quoted as saying, “If you want to make enemies, try to change something.”

Whether you are getting a better parking space at work or implementing a new work schedule for your team, change can add stress to you and those you supervise. As an up-and-coming leader in your organization, nothing will be as constant in your world as change. You will be asked to consider options for change, you will be asked to implement change, and you will be asked to “fix it” when the change does not go as expected. In your career, you’ve most likely worked for individuals who embrace change and welcome new ideas as well as with people who go out of their way to avoid change and actively work to defeat it. Which is the best path for you?

Managing change requires knowledge of the indicators that change may be needed, the stakeholders who will be affected by the change, and the techniques for implementing and evaluating the change process. In addition, managing change requires the skills to:

- Process information from various sources.
- Assess current operations.
- Obtain valid feedback.

**22 Core Competencies for Jail Leaders**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anticipate, analyze, and resolve organizational challenges and conflicts.</li> <li>• Assure organizational accountability.</li> <li>• Build and maintain positive relationships with external stakeholders.</li> <li>• Build and maintain teamwork; mentor and coach others.</li> <li>• Communicate effectively, internally and externally.</li> <li>• Comprehend, obtain, and manage fiscal resources.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and maintain a positive organizational culture that promotes respect for diverse staff.</li> <li>• Develop and sustain organizational vision/mission.</li> <li>• Engage in strategic planning.</li> <li>• Enhance self-awareness; maintain proactive professional commitment.</li> <li>• Establish organizational authority, roles, and responsibilities.</li> <li>• Leverage the role of the jail in the criminal justice system.</li> <li>• Make sound decisions.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Manage change.</b></li> <li>• Manage labor relations.</li> <li>• Manage power and influence.</li> <li>• Manage time.</li> <li>• Obtain and manage human resources.</li> <li>• Oversee inmate and facility management.</li> <li>• Oversee physical plant management.</li> <li>• Reduce jail-related liability risks.</li> <li>• Understand and manage emerging technology.</li> </ul> |
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- Develop and analyze alternatives.
- Think analytically.
- Anticipate reactions.
- Generate momentum for the change (selling the idea).
- Build support (secure “buy-in” from those who will be most affected).
- Encourage people to relinquish old habits.
- Select the most appropriate strategy for the situation.
- Assure that the change is sustained over time.
- Analyze effects and objectively evaluating outcomes.

### **For Your Leadership Library**

Watch upcoming issues of *American Jails* for recommendations to add to your leadership library. If you can recommend a publication that helped you become a better leader, e-mail Susan McCampbell at [susanmccampbell@cipp.org](mailto:susanmccampbell@cipp.org).

### **Leading Change**

John P. Kotter, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, Massachusetts, 1996.

*This book provides down-to-earth advice about how to create change in an organization. Jail leaders can take from the examples concrete strategies to make effective changes and make those changes stick.*

### **Culture and Change Management: Using the APEX To Facilitate Organizational Change**

Nancy Cebula, Elizabeth Craig, Christopher Innes, Theresa Lantz, Tanya Rhone, and Tom Ward; U.S. Department of Justice; Bureau of Prisons; National Institute of Corrections; April 2012; <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/025300.pdf>.

*This publication introduces “the fundamentals of organizational culture and provides guidance and assessment tools to help agencies develop strategies to improve organizational performance.”*

### **Who Moved My Cheese?**

Spencer Johnson, G. P. Putnam’s Sons, New York, 2002.

*A fable about two mice in a maze dealing with change. This book provides one resource for staff to read and discuss as a group.*

### **The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization**

Peter M. Senge, A Currency Book, New York, 1990.

*This book is often included in classroom work and describes how organizations can learn to adapt to the changing world.*

# As an up-and-coming leader in your organization, nothing will be as constant in your world as change.

Managing change also requires the ability to:

- Proactively anticipate the need for change.
- Make appropriate conclusions from a wide array of information.
- Analyze information.
- Demonstrate empathy.
- Build teams.
- Generate consensus.
- Listen.
- Maintain energetic passion.
- Be tenacious.
- Use feedback to make modifications.
- Persevere.

As with other challenges facing leaders—change is a process. It is successful if:

- A vision is created as to how the organization will improve.
- Ambassadors are recruited to help lead the reform.
- The path to change is clear for both the organization and the individual.
- Continual reinforcement of the change message is communicated.

The legacy of successes or failures of new initiatives in your organization influences how change can happen. You need to overcome the mistakes made by your colleagues and encourage those who were burned by those failed initiatives to support you in your vision of the future. You will also need to convert those who say,

## New Publication for Jail Leaders

### Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens, Second Edition

Getting a successful start as a corrections leader just became more focused with the publication of the second edition of the *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. This publication encompasses the combined knowledge, advice, expertise, and experience of hundreds of wardens working in correctional facilities throughout the country. Based on input from the National Survey of Prison Wardens conducted in 2013, its topics reflect the most pressing issues faced by today's correctional administrators and their advice for addressing these high-priority challenges.

Overall, this guide is designed to provide evidence-based insights into maximizing your potential for successfully embracing the wide-ranging roles and diverse responsibilities of correctional administrators. More specifically, it is designed to encourage you to plan for your own professional

development through a better understanding of what the job demands in comparison to your current strengths and weaknesses. Along with insightful perspectives and advice from experienced correctional leaders, a wealth of information from survey research, correctional practice, and published materials is provided. Additional references and online resources at the end of each chapter and the appendices enable you to drill-down for further details on topics of specific interest. Chapters include:

- Starting Out Right—The Big Picture
- Determining Direction—Inspirational Leadership
- Sharing Organizational Culture—The Warden's Role
- Developing Human Resources—Your Most Important Asset

- Aligning the Environment—The Nuts and Bolts of Leadership
- Managing Fiscal Resources—The Biggest Bang for the Buck
- Managing Yourself—Keeping Everything in Perspective
- Bringing It Together—Getting Where You Want To Go

Although prison wardens and jail directors have similar but not identical job responsibilities, this resource guide is beneficial to anyone working in prisons or jails.

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"We tried that—it didn't work," or those who maintain, "Why fix what [to them] isn't broken."

From Harvard Business School, John Kotter breaks down this change process into simple steps. In his very readable book, *Leading Change*, he provides eight basic steps to creating change—change that will stick. When reviewing these eight steps, think of a particular change initiative in your facility that worked and think of one that crashed and burned. Consider if any of the steps were missed. No doubt you remember more initiatives that failed rather than "worked."

Some change examples to consider as you review the following eight steps are: altering the configuration of shifts, implementing a field training program, implementing an inmate reentry program, and/or opening a new direct supervision jail.

**Step 1: Establish a Sense of Urgency**—Determine the reasons for the change. Perhaps your facility faces a 10 percent budget cut, or there has been successful litigation that transforms routine tasks. Chances are

that if you cannot generate a sense of urgency regarding these issues, then staff were not informed. Do they understand that massive overtime costs do not reflect a well-run organization and are not sustainable without consequences? Or perhaps you are "fixing" the wrong issue, having identified the symptoms but not the real problem? Does your staff know the extent of the crisis? Consideration of these few questions should inform your next steps.

**Step 2: Create a Guiding Coalition**—You need the right people onboard as the core driving force to make a change. Even those in the organization with whom you may routinely clash can bring value to a coalition. Who among your staff knows the intricacies of what is being changed, who has credibility among their peers, who are the natural leaders? A coalition is not smoke and mirrors—it is a group dedicated to a mission and a vision, and who is acting in the best informed interests of the organization. They see the end result as a positive and worth the work.



**Step 3: Develop a Vision and Strategy**—You and the coalition need to create a *picture* of how the change will improve the jail and how that will happen. Are line staff willing to get behind the vague “it will get better” when a field training program is implemented, or do they need more information about how the program will improve their work life and their jobs? As Kotter suggests, the vision should be imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and communicable (Kotter, 1996). For example, when the field training program is implemented, the jail’s staff retention rate will increase 15 percent and there will be 25 percent fewer incidents attributable to poor training and supervision.

**Step 4: Communicate the Change Vision**—With as much talk and gossip as there is around a jail, little of it is focused on the facility’s future direction and how anticipated changes would hit home. In the change process, however, there is almost no way to “over-communicate” the vision. Communication has to be simple and repetitious, and the leadership must walk the talk. Getting feedback from line staff about their concerns, understanding their suggestions, and airing differences are part of this step. Allow the creativity of the guiding coalition to use a campaign of slogans, posters, newsletter articles, roll call presentations, and intranet communication to get the message across, and keep the picture of the future in front of the staff.

**Step 5: Empower Employees for Broad-Based Action**—The hardest thing for Baby Boomer leaders (those born between 1943 and 1964) is to step back and allow the newer generations in the workplace to take action on the change vision. While accountability and structure are important to the change process, so is the work that staff can accomplish without constantly asking for permission from leadership. Examining whether the jail’s management structure even encourages and supports others to act is an important step. If the organization is top heavy with managers who believe that only they know the real answers, do not be surprised when staff become frustrated and withdraw.

**Step 6: Generate Short-Term Wins**—No real and sustainable change occurs quickly. The risk to the organization and staff is that the long-term vision by itself will not sustain them through the twists and turns of the change process. The guiding coalition needs to create milestones that can be celebrated along the way, which as Kotter (1996) points out, will help undermine opponents and build momentum. Using the previous example of implementing a field training program, short-term celebrations can be held when the curriculum is developed, when the first FTOs are named, when the first FTO class graduates, and finally when the first recruits complete field training.

## Some Leadership Failures

Colleagues in the field have been kind enough to share some of their failures as leaders, in addition to their insights as to why they failed. The intention is not to highlight what did not work, but rather highlight what was learned. Thanks to all those who admitted they could have done better. More advice from your colleagues will follow in your next edition of *American Jails*.

- I have not listened enough at times. I need to continue to work on shutting my mouth more often and conversely on opening my ears more often.
- Underestimating change. I failed to foresee challenges in some areas. I was involved in the institutional changes but sometimes failed to prepare for the personal impact that change has on individuals. I learned that people take their role in our jails seriously and personally. If we fail to account for the personal component then we are at risk of failing.
- Backing off from an effort to obtain the same pay for our jail staff as those on patrol. Not having enough support from other leaders and staff members. I learned that without “buy-in” from the sheriff on this issue you are pretty much defeated.
- My biggest mistake occurred when I assumed that my peer group was as committed as me regarding some significant policy changes. I assumed that they had solicited input or had at least offered our staff the opportunity to comment on the upcoming changes, particularly a shift schedule change. I was wrong! We had a huge push-back from the rank and file over the changes. When I got to the bottom of it... the primary concern wasn't necessarily the schedule itself, as much as the lack of communication and faith that the line staff could offer some valuable input. I learned to include everyone in decisions of this magnitude and too not assume that everyone is thinking as I do.
- Not focusing on the needs of my staff. They are what make any section, at any job—no matter what field you are employed in. If you do not take care of them, they will not take care of you, and that can end up being your biggest failure ever!
- When I first became a supervisor, I had a hard time trusting my employees to do things right. I tended to hover and check up on them too often. In turn they believed I had no faith in them nor did I trust their ability to get the job done. I had to step back and look at how I liked to be managed and what I did and did not like in a supervisor. This helped me to step back and trust them more.
- My biggest failure was attempting to “do everything” by myself because I had the mentality that “if I wanted it done right, I had to do it myself.” I made my work much harder and much more stressful, in addition to my staff not trusting me because I was conveying the message that I didn't trust them. I learned that you cannot “do it all” and that you have to trust your staff to do their jobs... yes, people are going to make mistakes, but as a leader we should be able to use that as a teaching moment.



### Step 7: Consolidate Gains and Producing More

**Change**—It is true that the more acclimated people become to anticipating change, the more they are willing to embrace it (or at least not actively oppose it). Even the most cynical opponent upon seeing the graduates of a field training program performing well above other staff may at the least be less vocal in their disagreement. People not only want to be part of the winning team, they also want to belong to an agency that has the public's esteem and support. If that means adjusting to change, they will do it.

**Step 8: Anchor New Approaches in Culture**—One issue most jail leaders understand is internal agency culture. An ignored or unacknowledged internal jail culture will derail many a change initiative if not addressed, accommodated, and involved. Pretending that there are no factions in the jail, ignoring the silent staff, or attempting to divert opponents not only damages the organization but will stop the change process and probably any future initiatives. Culture is a powerful force.

In addition to his eight steps for leading management change, Kotter (1996) notes that changes can fail by:

- Allowing too much complacency.
- Failing to create a sufficiently powerful guiding coalition.
- Underestimating the power of vision.
- Failing to fully communicate the vision.
- Permitting obstacles to block the new vision.
- Failing to create short-term wins.
- Declaring victory too soon.
- Neglecting to anchor the changes firmly in the internal culture.

Change is upon jail leaders every day. Consider employing Kotter's eight steps the next time you seek success. Introduce your staff to these steps and get their

buy-in to the process as a prelude to the next opportunity for change in your facility.

I am very much interested in how you implement and manage change in your facility. Please write to me at [susanmccampbell@cipp.org](mailto:susanmccampbell@cipp.org) about your experiences with managing change.■

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