



# FOCUSED LEADERSHIP

## Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens

## **U.S. Department of Justice**

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# FOCUSED LEADERSHIP: A Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens

**Second Edition  
2017**

*Jeanne B. Stinchcomb  
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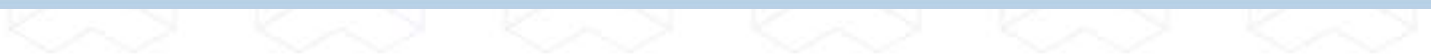
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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This *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens* 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 Institute of Corrections National Survey of Prison Wardens, the topics it contains reflect the most pressing issues faced by today's correctional administrators and embrace their advice for addressing these high-priority challenges. For her work in designing, administering, and analyzing the results of that survey, we are deeply indebted to Dr. Leslie Leip in the School of Public Administration at Florida Atlantic University. Moreover, to the hundreds of wardens who anonymously responded to the survey, along with those who reviewed the final manuscript, we further express our sincere appreciation, since their input and detailed feedback definitively shaped both the format and substance of this guide.

Like the first edition, this update was fully supported by the continued commitment of the National Institute of Corrections toward advancing the professional development of correctional leaders—from prison wardens and superintendents to jail administrators. In that regard, we extend specific thanks to Evelyn Bush and BeLinda Watson for their ongoing support and collaborative efforts throughout the development of this project, and to Shaina Vanek for personally ushering it through to completion.

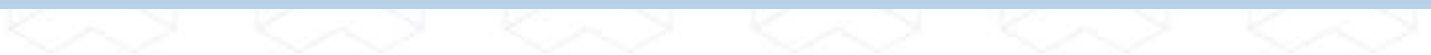
Finally, we wish to express our appreciation to everyone whose far-sighted visions of correctional leadership inspired this guide and contributed to its content.

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## OVERVIEW

With a virtual tsunami of retirements from the “baby boom” generation already depleting the ranks of upper-level correctional executives, a corresponding demand has emerged for well-qualified professionals to step forward to lead the nation’s prisons, jails, and community corrections facilities. Regardless of whether their title is warden, superintendent, director, or administrator, these are the CEOs of what could be considered the “correctional conglomerate.” Like their counterparts in business and industry, they manage multi-million dollar budgets, perform wide-ranging functions, are accountable to outside stakeholders, and oversee a vast array of personnel, facilities, and services. The major difference between corrections and private sector business conglomerates is that we all have a personal stake in the “profits” or “losses” of corrections—it is our tax dollars that support its operations, our citizens who are its “customers,” and our safety that is affected by its successes or failures.<sup>i</sup> It is therefore essential that those selected for positions of such high public trust possess the comprehensive knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to fulfill their key role effectively in ensuring successful outcomes.

Over the long term, preparing this next generation of correctional administrators means providing the visionary leadership needed to guide corrections into a challenging future. From a more pragmatic day-to-day perspective, it means aligning employees and collaborative partners in a united effort directed toward ensuring that today’s facilities make the best use of taxpayer funds, operate safely and securely, and comply with both Constitutional safeguards and professional standards. Moreover, all of this must be accomplished in an environment where salaries are not competitive, stress can be high, and the public’s understanding, appreciation, and support are minimal. In such a setting, correctional leaders face the dilemma of “maintaining a positive outlook in the face of overwhelming odds.”<sup>ii</sup> Yet when the challenges are so intense and the consequences of failure are so high, the rewards for success are equally immeasurable.

### PURPOSE AND SCOPE

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 facility 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, this document provides a wealth of information from survey research, correctional practice, and published materials. Additional references and online resources at the end of each chapter and in the appendices will enable you to drill down for further details on topics of specific interest.



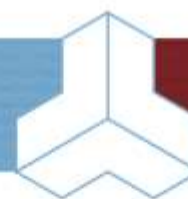
If you are a correctional facility administrator new to the job, think of yourself as a mountain climber—challenged to scale the highest peaks while facing boulders rolling down from above and icy ground beneath you. The information provided here will help you take calculated steps toward the top, though no single document or training program can fully prepare a manager to become an effective leader. This guide should therefore be considered just one of many resources in your mountain-climbing toolkit. Even as you review its contents, keep in mind that no external resource can substitute for the internal insights and capabilities developed through a combination of education, mentoring, and experience. With today's wardens expected to demonstrate everything from articulate public speaking to strategic planning, problem analysis, critical thinking, conflict management, and complex reasoning skills, the value of advanced education, relevant training, and broad-based experience cannot be overstated.

No publication is capable of instilling the personal traits that contribute to becoming a successful warden. Both written materials and training programs are limited in terms of the extent to which they can promote such personal characteristics as creativity, compassion, commitment, integrity, and the insight necessary to grasp “the big picture.” As an example, effective decisionmaking can be objectively reduced to a well-organized process—from gathering information and analyzing the situation to developing alternatives and subsequently assessing the outcome. However, simply understanding these decisionmaking steps conceptually does not ensure that you can implement the process effectively during your first crisis as the new warden. That is because only part of the warden's job can be readily quantified or objectively-structured. A more important part is qualitative and situational. Competence in both is essential, combined with the steadfast, goal-focused perseverance that will enable you to reach your destination.

## TARGET AUDIENCES

In upcoming chapters, those with the authority and responsibility to administer a prison, jail, or community correctional facility are identified as “wardens.” Different states and localities have varying titles for these positions, and use of the term “warden” is not meant to be exclusionary. Rather, it is used herein in a manner designed to embrace all correctional professionals working as facility administrators with key leadership responsibilities. Likewise, the terms “institution” and “facility” refer to prisons, jails, community correctional facilities, juvenile detention centers, or anywhere else that offenders are confined or under onsite supervision.

The information presented here is not limited to meeting the needs of prison wardens. To the contrary, much of the contents are equally applicable to jail and community correctional administrators, as well as deputy wardens. While much of the information is primarily directed toward those who are newly appointed, it may also be helpful as a resource for more experienced correctional executives who are facing some of the specific demands that are addressed here, along with those seeking to advance to such positions.



## CHAPTER CONTENTS

To best determine what challenges are confronting today's wardens, what capabilities are necessary to meet them, and how to achieve success in this position, a national survey of prison wardens/superintendents was conducted by the Center for Innovative Public Policies, Inc. with funding from the National Institute of Corrections.<sup>iii</sup> Feedback from respondents resulted in identifying the chapter topics described below.

### *Chapter 1: Starting Out Right: The Big Picture*

Getting off on the right foot is the first—and arguably the most essential—ingredient for achieving success. This means putting the job into proper perspective and not becoming overwhelmed by the breadth or complexity of your new responsibilities. Moreover, it involves getting to know your workplace—the physical plant, the employees, the inmates, and the community. Becoming familiar with the organization, its history, and its culture is essential before jumping in to make major decisions. Perhaps most importantly, it includes establishing your personal identity and ethical integrity—enabling employees to understand who you are, what you stand for, and where you see the organization headed in the future.

### *Chapter 2: Determining Direction: Inspirational Leadership*

Since many correctional administrators have worked their way up the chain of command, they are likely to be more accustomed to working in day-to-day operations than overseeing long-range strategic planning. Chapter 2, therefore, begins with making the transition from being a manager to becoming a leader. Since farsighted leaders have a vision of where they are headed, it next turns toward developing organizational vision, mission, and value statements. Along the way, advice is provided from experienced colleagues for everything from building support through participatory involvement to identifying key stakeholders, communicating your priorities, obtaining interactive feedback, and making sound decisions that align with and reinforce the vision/mission/values. Overall, it emphasizes recognizing the power of your position and using it wisely to chart your organization's future.

### *Chapter 3: Shaping Organizational Culture: The Warden's Role*

The powerful influences of organizational culture can make or break even the most ambitious agenda of the most capable leader. It is therefore essential not only to recognize the critical significance of your organization's internal culture, but also to understand it accurately, determine its effect on your facility—positive or negative—and change it when necessary. Thus, this chapter presents strategic initiatives for analyzing, assessing, and either altering a negative organizational culture or capitalizing on a positive one. Since a negative culture can be a powerful force in generating employee conflict, tension, and dissatisfaction, Chapter 3 also addresses proactive alternatives for resolving internal conflicts and reducing



organizationally-induced stress, rather than merely coping with its destructive effects. With a positive, upbeat culture, employees are likely to be more satisfied, engaged, and productive. Thus, this chapter emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the culture is in concert with—and committed to—the organization's vision, mission, and values.

#### *Chapter 4: Developing Human Resources: Your Most Important Asset*

It is one thing to establish direction and align the organizational culture with it, but that is not all it takes to achieve success. In fact, it is only through people that plans can be implemented, missions accomplished, and visions fulfilled. Since the success of everything you hope to achieve depends on human capital, nothing could be more important than developing your employees to their full potential. From aligning the right people with the right positions to retaining, motivating, and rewarding them, this is an ongoing process. At times it will also require resolving conflicts and administering corrective discipline, and it always necessitates sensitivity, good communication skills, and an appreciation for the diversity of your facility's human resources.

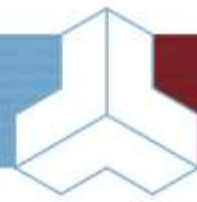
#### *Chapter 5: Aligning the Environment: The Fundamentals of Leadership*

Thus far, we have largely focused on seeing the big picture with a long-range view, but at some point, the warden must also drill down to address the more detailed “nuts and bolts” of leadership. Some of these operational issues are internal, while others involve external relationships. Internally, this includes everything from generating organizational pride and commitment to building an executive team, listening to staff, being visible and approachable, making data-driven decisions, and evaluating results. From an external perspective, it involves working with the media, interacting with related local, state, and federal government agencies, engaging the private sector, and building relationships with community stakeholders.

#### *Chapter 6: Managing Fiscal Resources: The Biggest Investment with the Largest Return*

Along with maximizing human capital, it is managing fiscal resources that represents the other half of the two key ingredients related to the potential effectiveness of any correctional leader. This does not simply mean being able to “wheel and deal” or form political alliances with holders of the purse-strings. Rather, it means rationally justifying fiscal requests by linking your budget to your organizational vision, mission, and goals. To do so, you must also learn how the budget process of your jurisdiction works and how you can potentially engage in it. Then, once the budget is approved, it will be up to you to monitor everything from capital expenditures to physical plant operations and inmate accounts while realizing that all of your fiscal expenditures will be accountable to an objective audit.





### *Chapter 7: Managing Yourself: Keeping Everything in Perspective*

Given the steep “learning curve” that may be necessary to master all of the challenges presented in previous chapters, new wardens may well be tempted to put all of their time, energy, and resources into the job—thus giving their personal life low priority. Yet nothing will derail you faster from reaching your professional goals or fulfilling your organization’s vision. To the contrary, becoming a successful warden demands properly balancing your work and personal life. This means developing an in depth self-awareness of your own strengths and weaknesses, effectively coping with the stressors in your life, and developing the resilience that enables you to avoid taking things personally.

### *Chapter 8: Bring It All Together: Getting Where You Want To Go*

Everything that was addressed previously throughout this guide is brought together in the final chapter. Thus, it provides a brief synopsis of why it is important to start out on the right foot, establish immediate priorities, and determine organizational direction. Additionally, it summarizes advice for shaping the facility culture, aligning the internal environment with your long-range vision, and influencing external stakeholders. Not overlooking your personal stake in all of this, it again emphasizes that you must be able to manage yourself effectively before you can effectively administer a correctional institution.

## **CHAPTER FORMAT**

Throughout this guide, each chapter maintains a consistent overall format, which includes:

- ✦ A brief overview of the topic
- ✦ A detailed discussion of key aspects of the topic and related issues, along with insights and advice from current wardens
- ✦ Checklists of recommended strategies
- ✦ Additional resources that can provide more information on the topics addressed

A number of sidebars are also interspersed throughout each chapter, reflecting insights from experienced wardens or related literature.<sup>iv</sup>

## **STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS**

Every corrections agency has its own unique rules, regulations, policies, and procedures related to each of the topics discussed herein. As a result, this publication is not meant to substitute for the specific directives and operational guidelines applicable to your institution, but rather, it aims to provide fundamental information designed to help you most effectively accommodate to your new administrative role.



Moreover, it is apparent that no toolkit can provide informative advice on all of the topics identified as priority areas for new wardens. Some are simply not feasible to address in this format—for example, there is not much guidance that can be provided in writing about such things as complying with legal mandates, ensuring that employees are trained to do their jobs, or making fiscally sound decisions. Each jurisdiction likewise has its own policies and procedures for addressing such challenges as managing critical incidents, taking disciplinary action, evaluating subordinates, and administering health and safety regulations. Additionally, while inmate management and security operations are obviously among essential competencies for wardens, it is assumed that you have already demonstrated proficiency in these areas before being promoted. In an effort to assist your transition most productively, the contents here are therefore focused on more pertinent topics related to such administrative challenges as visionary leadership, organizational culture, workforce issues, external relationships, and the maintenance of proper work/life balance.

Finally, taking advantage of resources such as this guide is especially important today, because funds for executive training are scarce at the same time that new facilities have been opening, inmate populations have become more challenging, and senior administrators from the “baby boom” generation are being lost to retirement. Under these fiscal, administrative, and workforce pressures, it may at times be necessary to promote new wardens before they are adequately prepared to transition from manager to leader. At least to some extent, this toolkit is designed to help bridge that gap.

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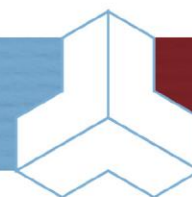
## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, p. 4.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, xxxi.

<sup>iii</sup> See Appendix B for survey implementation details and a link to summary findings.

<sup>iv</sup> Often these reflect feedback from the wardens/superintendents who either responded to the national survey mentioned earlier or participated in the focus groups conducted in conjunction with the first edition of this guide.



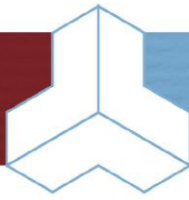
## CHAPTER 1: STARTING OUT RIGHT: THE BIG PICTURE

*The very first day you sit behind the warden's desk, staff throughout the facility are already beginning to form impressions of you and your leadership style—so keep in mind that timely warning about never getting “a second chance to make a first impression.” During your first days on the job, any actions you take will be spotlighted, speculated upon, and subjected to analysis by employees, inmates, those who promoted you, and even outside stakeholders. Regardless of your intentions, hidden agendas may be suspected, stress levels will be high, and everyone will be sizing you up. Because any change in the organizational hierarchy—especially at the top—is so unsettling, your appointment is likely to generate some degree of anxiety, fear, and even resistance. After all, there is almost nothing that is more disruptive to established “comfort zones” than the need to adapt to new facility leadership.*

Stepping into your new position may be a very harrowing or a very gratifying experience, depending in part on the circumstances that created the vacancy. In the best of circumstances, a well-regarded warden of long standing has reached a richly deserved retirement and is leaving behind a smoothly functioning facility and a proud legacy of professional integrity. In the worst case scenario, your predecessor may have been suspended, demoted, or fired, and everyone is outraged by whatever circumstances brought this disgraceful end. Or perhaps the previous leader was not equipped to handle the job and was moved elsewhere to spare the facility further damage.

Most newly appointed wardens likely know what happened to their predecessor, but if you do not, you will need to find out. Knowing the “real story” behind the previous warden's departure is essential—not to satisfy your curiosity but rather for determining the extent of damage left behind, assessing the effect on morale, and prioritizing what must be done promptly to address unresolved undercurrents from scandals or poor leadership. Even if you replace a popular, well-respected warden, making changes might ruffle staff who consider that person's legacy to be unassailable and any modifications a sign of disrespect.

A different kind of challenge awaits wardens who take over a facility where they previously worked, perhaps having spent their whole career there. Suddenly, you are leading people who have been good friends, with whom you have shared after-work activities for years. Now you will need to establish yourself as the warden without your colleagues thinking you got “too big for your britches” or accusing you of “not remembering where you came from.” New boundaries may need to be set, not in a manner that is alienating, but using a delicate approach that familiarizes both old friends and new subordinates with how you will conduct yourself as warden and what you will expect of them.



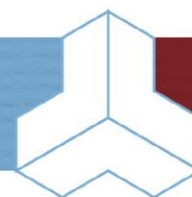
All of these circumstances—replacing the beloved warden, cleaning up after a scandal, or moving up from within—each require sensitivity, integrity, and communication skills. The first steps are acknowledging how you got there, assessing the totality of the environment, and determining how you will proceed. Moreover, at the same time that you are sizing-up your situation, the staff are sizing-up you.

In an effort to show their visible support for the new leader, many of those under your command can be expected to make every effort to put their best foot forward and do their utmost to impress you. On the other hand, those aligning with a negative view of your arrival may place deliberate obstacles in your path to “test” you. Still others may remain neutral, adopting a “wait and see” attitude. At the same time, external stakeholders may also be quietly scrutinizing the new warden, and even the media may be aggressively pressing for a newsworthy story. In essence, whatever you say or do (or avoid saying or doing) and whoever you meet with and listen to (or ignore and tune out) during your first days on the job will have a lasting effect on shaping your image, advancing your mandate, and establishing the legacy that you want to leave.

For new wardens who are not accustomed to being the center of attention, working in such a “fishbowl” can be, at best, disconcerting. At worst, if the ultimate effect of this intense scrutiny is unrecognized, long-lasting mistakes can be made that could have been prevented with more perceptive insights. This chapter is therefore devoted to helping you develop those insights and become aware of the unwritten messages and unstated implications communicated by the actions you take, decisions you make, words you speak, people you trust, and things you avoid. With such awareness, you will be in a better position to minimize the potential pitfalls of becoming a new warden and maximize your long-term effectiveness as a correctional leader. In fact, much of the advice offered here comes directly from wardens and superintendents throughout the country who have “walked in your shoes.”

### **PUTTING THE JOB INTO PROPER PERSPECTIVE**

Anyone embarking on a new position is bound to feel somewhat uncomfortable during their first days on the job. It can be especially overwhelming when the person in that position is responsible for everything from safety and security to the operations and organizational culture of an entire correctional facility. The welfare of hundreds (or even thousands) of inmates, employees, contractors, and volunteers now depends on you. All of them are relying on you and your ability to make effective decisions, resolve interpersonal conflicts, and provide the visionary leadership guiding everyone toward a future that improves on the past. That is a tall order.



*Wardens must learn to leave their comfort zones and become familiar with those areas where they are not as comfortable or experienced. By so doing, we begin to see the bigger picture.*

Bridget P. Gladwin, "Seeing the Big Picture: Managing for Results," in *A View from the Trenches: A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 3-11.

*Don't over-react to incidents.... Don't get overwhelmed with the day-to-day issues.... A leader thinks through problems and does not rush to answers.*

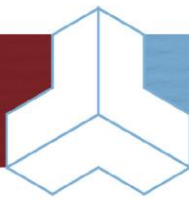
National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly-appointed warden/superintendent.

In these multiple roles, you are expected to have the breadth to comprehend the entire facility's operational and administrative issues as well as the depth to grasp its unique complexities. You are likewise expected to take appropriate actions today, while building the potential for a better tomorrow. Thus, the challenge is to keep the big picture in proper perspective, rise above the "crises" that are relentlessly competing for your attention, and consider what is best for the long-term welfare of everyone involved.

## GETTING TO KNOW YOUR WORKPLACE

First and foremost, this means getting to know your workplace before making key decisions. Even if you have worked in this facility throughout your entire career, your approach should be as if you are the newest employee in the building. Undoubtedly, there will be pressures to make immediate decisions—perhaps those avoided by your predecessor or those you were brought on board to make. But the best decisions are rarely made under pressure without thorough, objective insight into the details involved.<sup>i</sup> This fact is clearly reflected in the responses of over 300 wardens and superintendents throughout the country to a national survey conducted by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in 2013.<sup>ii</sup> When asked what the most important advice was that they would give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent, the most frequent responses by far were numerous variations of "go slow," such as:

- ✦ "Don't rush into decisions"
- ✦ "Suspend judgment as long as possible"
- ✦ "Sit back and learn for a while"
- ✦ "Take it one day at a time"
- ✦ "Be patient and get to know your team"



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*Find someone you can trust, even if not at your facility, who you can bounce ideas off and share problems with.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly-appointed warden/superintendent.

*Do not feel like you have to do the job alone. Use other wardens and mentors for advice; call people who think/problem-solve differently than you.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly-appointed warden/superintendent.

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Especially if you have had years of experience in your institution, it is essential to take a step back, consider your new position from a different lens, and make a concerted effort to view your new job with “fresh eyes.” Even if you are intimately familiar with your organization, it is exactly that intimacy which may be limiting your impartiality or your ability to recognize all possible options. To provide a more objective perspective, it may be helpful to talk to a friend or professional colleague who does not work in the facility to offer some personal insights—enabling you to compare your own viewpoint with the lens through which outsiders might be viewing your organization.

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*Seek out staff who will brief you in a logical and impartial manner with no axe to grind.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly-appointed warden/superintendent.

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For those wardens who are themselves coming into the job as “outsiders,” the advantage of their fresh perspective is somewhat counterbalanced by unfamiliarity with either the organization’s policies and operational practices or the strengths and weaknesses of its employees. Figure 1.1 provides several resources that can enable you to quickly grasp the essence of a new workplace. Regardless of how it is accomplished, your first task is to obtain a broad-based perspective of your facility’s administration, operations, workforce, community connections, historical foundations, and organizational culture.

Whether appointed from outside or within, all new wardens face the fundamental challenge of earning the acceptance, trust, and respect of those who will “make or break” them—i.e., their staff.<sup>iii</sup>

This is therefore the time to begin to get to know your employees—not simply by being accessible, but more proactively by getting out of the office and meeting people, (sworn, civilian, volunteers, and contractors), on all shifts in all areas of the physical plant. The key is to *listen more and talk less*.

Beyond demonstrating that you are a good listener and concerned administrator, connecting with your staff on a personal level provides them with valuable insights into who you are and what you stand for, helping to build ongoing lines of two-way communication with them.

Figure 1.1: “Quick study” sources for developing a broad perspective of your facility’s history, organization, operations, challenges, and culture.

*The following are examples of resources that can enable you to quickly grasp the essence of a new workplace:*

- ✦ Budget submissions and appropriations
- ✦ Expenditures to date
- ✦ Table of organization
- ✦ Staffing plan, shift schedules, shift relief factor, and vacancies
- ✦ Current service contracts
- ✦ Collective bargaining agreements
- ✦ Internal (facility) and external (state) policies, procedures, and relevant laws
- ✦ Minutes of staff meetings
- ✦ Records of employee/inmate grievances, investigative reports, and disciplinary actions
- ✦ Operational reports and data (e.g., inmate assaults, contraband, use of force reports, etc.)
- ✦ Planning, research, inspection, and evaluation reports
- ✦ Recent litigation
- ✦ Media coverage

## CHALLENGES THAT NEW WARDENS FACE

Recognizing the impact of your actions and the necessity to become intimately familiar with both your facility and the people who operate it are fundamental ingredients for becoming a successful warden. By now, however, you may also be asking what the most challenging issues are that you can expect to face.

Although the answers will differ depending on the specifics of your institution, (and even the circumstances that resulted in your selection), it may be helpful to review the priorities identified in the 2013 national survey of wardens and superintendents.<sup>iv</sup> The greatest challenges currently faced by the more than three hundred respondents are listed in Figure 1.2. While “lack of financial resources and balancing the budget” head the list, it is equally apparent that five of the six topics mentioned most frequently relate to either the organization’s culture or its workforce. In fact, over half (52%) of the total



comments concern staff-related issues. Moreover, these findings likewise align with results from the 2013 survey of members of the Association of State Correctional Administrators. When asked to prioritize the current issues they face, ASCA respondents ranked workforce issues (staff recruitment, retention, training, and morale) in second place, following only the increasing inmate population.<sup>y</sup>

Figure 1.2: Responses when wardens were asked: “What is currently the most challenging issue you face?”  
(9% or above of total comments)

- ✦ Lack of financial resources and balancing the budget (21%)
- ✦ Dealing with turnover; retaining employees to maintain adequate staffing (19%)
- ✦ Recruitment of qualified staff (13%)
- ✦ Dealing with poor staff attitudes, misconduct, and other issues—e.g., overtime, sick leave, attendance, new generation of officers, etc. (11%)
- ✦ Managing internal change; changing organizational culture (9%)
- ✦ Maintaining positive staff morale; motivating staff (9%)

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*It is said that we have two ears and one mouth—either because listening is twice as hard or because we should be doing it twice as often as speaking.*

Epictetus, Greek philosopher.

*Showing your staff that you genuinely care for them and their well-being goes a long way in getting them to join you in your journey.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly-appointed warden/superintendent.

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Drilling down further, Figure 1.3 reveals the greatest challenges that recently-appointed wardens, (serving three years or less), were unprepared to handle during their first six months on the job. Again, managing the budget was most often cited—and again, workforce concerns follow immediately thereafter. It is also noteworthy that a background in business administration and financial management was mentioned as most lacking in their own personal experience when focus groups were conducted during preparation of the first edition of this guide. Given the economic downturn of recent years, the resulting emphasis on maximizing scarce resources, and ongoing trends toward fiscal accountability, it is not surprising that this remains a concern today, especially since most wardens are not likely to have had the advantage of finance-related training or experience in their previous positions.

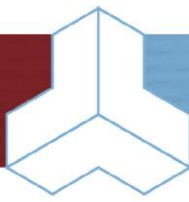


Take another look at the remaining comments reflected in Figure 1.3. About a third of the most challenging issues that new wardens faced during their first six months involved employees—from handling disciplinary matters to maintaining adequate staffing levels. Especially if there is a legacy left over from the previous administration of unresolved problems, unimplemented initiatives, or pending litigation that has been awaiting arrival of the new warden, you can expect to be welcomed by staff competitively scrambling for your attention, each with a seemingly more pressing priority that everyone is anxious to dump on your desk-- while at the same time trying to demonstrate that they are more capable than their peers. Unless the trouble involves an imminent safety or security concern, however, it is unlikely that any such “crisis” is actually sufficiently critical to require your immediate action. As one warden put it, in this job you need to “understand what the real issues are.” Moreover, this is the point at which it is important to begin to encourage managers and supervisors to handle appropriate matters at their level, (or if lacking commensurate authority, at least to develop reasonable alternatives for your consideration). Otherwise, they may abdicate their responsibilities by merely forwarding problematic issues up the chain of command, which may reflect the legacy of your predecessor. Or perhaps they are simply afraid to make decisions because of a past history of punishing those whose judgments were inaccurate or who took initiative without checking first with the boss.

Figure 1.3: Responses when wardens of three years or less were asked: “What was the most challenging issue you faced that you were not prepared to handle in your first six months?” (9% or above of total comments)

- ✦ Managing the budget (19%)
- ✦ Understanding, managing, and dealing with the process for handling staff discipline issues (14%)
- ✦ Delegating and letting others manage their departments; dealing with senior staff (10%)
- ✦ Being responsible/accountable for the entire facility (8%)
- ✦ Maintaining adequate staffing levels (6%)
- ✦ Being prepared (through training, mentorship, experience, etc.) to address challenging issues and manage the decision-making process (9%)

While there may be some comfort in realizing that no one is fully prepared to effectively address all of the fiscal, workforce, and administrative challenges that can be expected to be confronted in those first weeks on the job, their cumulative pressure can weigh heavily on a new warden. That is why it is essential to avoid immediately jumping into the job with both feet, failing to obtain information or gain perspective, and becoming sidetracked or overwhelmed by hot-button issues. While corrections is often



action-oriented, it needs leaders who are deliberate and thoughtful—not just skilled firefighters. The message here is to proceed slowly and keep everything in proper perspective.

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*Do not forget where you came from or you might get lost getting where you are going.*

J.J. Clark. "Don't Forget Where You Came From," in *A View from the Trenches: A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 8-4.

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## PERSONAL CONSIDERATIONS

It can be quite ego-enhancing to suddenly realize that not only are you the center of attention, but you also have a tremendous amount of power and prestige. Everyone is now turning to you for advice, guidance, and decision-making. It is your schedule that takes precedence;.....your dictates that set priorities;..... your views that become policy;..... your actions that are replicated by staff. It is with you that responsibility for the safety, security, and legality of your facility ultimately rests. Especially for those who are not used to life on such a high-profile plane, it is tempting to allow your ego to swell, basking in the glow of staff acquiescence. In reality, you probably do not actually possess as much power and authority as people may think. Nevertheless, the deference accorded to anyone occupying this position has considerable potential for generating the self-absorption and false pride that can produce an exaggerated belief in your own importance (and ultimately, even a fatal sense of infallibility). As more than one seasoned warden has cautioned their successors, "remember where you came from;.....be humble;.... don't let the job go to your head."

This is also the time to commit to assuring that the stress and tension of the job do not "eat you up." Self-improvement habits established early, especially those directed toward maintaining a well-balanced personal life outside of the office, can serve you very effectively, not only as you embark on this new job, but throughout your subsequent career as well.<sup>vi</sup> In that regard, the advice of experienced wardens is well-stated: "Don't let the job manage your life.....try to learn to have a life outside the walls."

## CAPABILITIES NEEDED FOR SUCCESS

To further determine what knowledge, skills, and abilities are needed to effectively lead in the face of such wide-ranging challenges, those responding to the survey mentioned earlier were provided with a list of capabilities and asked to rate the necessity of each for becoming a successful warden/superintendent. Those rated as "completely necessary," (the highest category on a five-point scale), by over half of the respondents are shown in Figure 1.4.

Figure 1.4: Distribution of “completely necessary” ratings when wardens were asked to “Indicate how necessary each is to be a successful warden/superintendent” (50% or above of total responses)

### LEADER-RELATED

- ✦ Make sound decisions (75%)
- ✦ Manage critical incidents (71%)
- ✦ Encourage ethical decision-making (70%)
- ✦ Balance work/personal life (60%)
- ✦ Make fiscally sound decisions (57%)
- ✦ Maintain professional competence (57%)
- ✦ Develop positive community relations (51%)

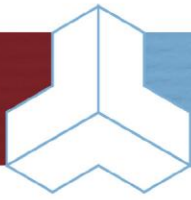
### STAFF-RELATED

- ✦ Take disciplinary action when appropriate (68%)
- ✦ Assure employees are trained to do their jobs (60%)
- ✦ Mentor subordinates (56%)
- ✦ Lead employees to achieve organizational mission (55%)
- ✦ Make staff feel proud to be a part of the organization (54%)
- ✦ Evaluate subordinates (54%)

### FACILITY-RELATED

- ✦ Assure compliance with legal mandates (62%)
- ✦ Assure organizational accountability (56%)
- ✦ Administer safety regulations (54%)
- ✦ Guide organizational change (53%)
- ✦ Align operational practices with administrative priorities (51%)

In terms of demonstrating leadership, these capabilities range from ethical and fiscally sound decision-making to maintaining professional competence and balancing one’s work and personal life. With regard to staff, they embrace the need for disciplinary action, employee training, mentoring, and performance evaluation. Perhaps most significant in this category, however, are the capabilities calling for you to lead employees toward achieving the organizational mission and making them feel proud to work in your facility. Nor is it surprising to find that assuring compliance with legal mandates heads the



facility-related list, closely followed by assuring safety and accountability, guiding organizational change, and aligning operational practices with your priorities. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, once a leader establishes long-range organizational direction, it is essential to generate staff commitment to that vision, align operational practices with it, initiate the organizational changes needed to accomplish it, and establish the accountability measures to assess its impact.

Some of these capabilities may reflect your strengths. Others may reveal your weaknesses. Some may be more applicable to your facility. Others may be less necessary for you to pursue. But wardens throughout the country have identified these core ingredients for achieving success.<sup>vii</sup>

## LEADERSHIP APPROACHES

Just as leaders themselves have widely-varying capabilities, numerous approaches to contemporary leadership have been advocated over the years, each with their own strengths and weaknesses. Since there is no flawless formula for leading that will work in every situation, it benefits you to develop a broad-based leadership “toolkit.” Otherwise, as Abraham Maslow once said, “If the only tool you have is a hammer, it is tempting to treat everything as needing a nail.” While a detailed discussion of the many potential approaches to leadership is well beyond the scope of this guide, several of those that have withstood the test of time are briefly summarized below:

### *Situational leadership*

Developed over 40 years ago by Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard,<sup>viii</sup> as the name implies, this model requires leaders to adjust their style according to demands of both the situation they are facing and the capabilities of their followers to deal with it. Styles range on a continuum—from a high emphasis on “task-related behavior” (such as defining roles, providing guidance, giving direction), to a high emphasis on “relationship-oriented behavior” (such as offering support, facilitating, building confidence). Resulting strategies vary from “telling” and “selling” to “participating” and “delegating.” Which option the leader selects to use depends on how well-prepared the followers are to perform in a given situation. That level of “readiness” is based on both the followers’ ability (that is, their knowledge, skill, and experience) and their willingness (that is, their confidence, motivation, and commitment). In order to maximize the potential for successful outcomes, situational leadership requires matching your approach to your assessment of the capability as well as willingness of your followers to address a particular situation. Thus, it requires keen diagnostic skills, along with a repertoire of styles and the flexibility to alter your style accordingly.

### *Transformational leadership*

Initially based on the insights of James MacGregor Burns nearly 40 years ago,<sup>ix</sup> this approach is perhaps best understood by comparison to its opposite—transactional leadership. As the term implies,

in the transactional style, something is exchanged for something else (i.e., *quid pro quo*—“this for that”). For example, positive performance evaluations are exchanged for loyalty and good work. This may be influential when the leader has substantial authority to provide incentives—such as private-sector CEOs who can award sizeable financial bonuses. As a warden, however, you may have very little control over the ability to economically reward your followers, (although you do have the ability to provide such intrinsic rewards as recognition, praise, responsibility, and the like). Regardless of your lack of access to many of the financial tools of transactional trades, the transformational approach to leadership has been designated as the more powerful, longer-lasting influence. That is because transformational leaders are inspirational, emphasizing deeper commitment to a greater cause. They have a firm sense of purpose and are passionately dedicated to a better future. Moreover, their confidence and commitment become contagious, inspiring people to rise above their own self-interests and give of themselves to a worthwhile cause. Being unconventional leaders, they stimulate excitement, empower their followers, and persuade everyone to share their dream.<sup>x</sup> As a result, followers of truly transformational leaders work toward achieving the vision because of what it will mean for “us,” rather than what’s in it for “me.” As indicated in the summary of these approaches in Table 1.1, however, they are not “either/or” choices. To the contrary, transactional techniques establish the foundation upon which transformational leadership can build.

Table 1.1: Differences between Transactional and Transformational Leadership

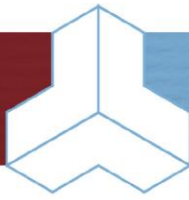
TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP	TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP
Tells followers what to do and what the payoff is for successfully complying with directions.	Delegates to encourage subordinate development.
Identifies goals toward which the leader directs followers to work.	Encourages staff to share the agency’s vision for the future.
Makes sure everyone knows roles, rules, and responsibilities.	Provides persuasive images of what a renewed organization would look like.
Delegates responsibility to subordinates in exchange for their fulfilling an agreement.	Prepares followers to become leaders themselves.
Establishes a base that makes transformational leadership possible.	Builds on transactional leadership, taking it to the next level.

Modified from Nancy Cebula, Elizabeth Craig, John Eggers, Marge Douville Farjardo, James Gray, and Theresa Lantz, “Chapter 4: Leadership that is Transforming,” in *Achieving Performance Excellence: The Influence of Leadership on Organizational Performance*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2012, p. 47.

### *Servant leadership*

Developed several decades ago by Robert Greenleaf,<sup>xi</sup> this model is based on the belief that leaders have lost sight of service. Like the situational approach, it views leadership as incorporating both





concern for productivity (task-oriented) and concern for people (relationship-oriented). Despite their apparent differences, these are not viewed as two separate functions, but rather, as one integrated “servanthood,” with great leaders being, first and foremost, servants to others. In fact, in servant leadership, the desire to lead comes second, *after* the primary desire to serve—to devote your life to a greater cause by uplifting others. The significant question thus becomes not “What service can I render as a leader?,” but rather, “What leadership can I exercise as a servant?” As Greenleaf himself put it, “The best test is: Do those served grow as persons; do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants?”<sup>xii</sup> See Figure 1.5 for a brief description of the specific characteristics of servant leadership; then compare them to Figure 1.6, which contains the best advice that seasoned wardens would give to newcomers. Although the precise terms differ, you will find much conceptual overlap.

Again, these are just a few of the more prominent leadership styles that have sustained consistent support over the years.<sup>xiii</sup> No matter what combination of approaches works best for you, it is important to keep in mind that the knowledge, skills, and abilities that propelled you to this position are not likely to be the same capabilities that will serve you equally well now.

#### Figure 1.5: Characteristics of Servant Leadership

- ✦ Listening receptively, coupled with inner reflection
- ✦ Understanding and empathizing with others
- ✦ Learning to heal broken spirits—of one’s self and others
- ✦ Developing a general sense of awareness toward others, along with self-awareness
- ✦ Relying on persuasion rather than positional authority—seeking to convince rather than coerce
- ✦ Conceptualizing—thinking past day-to-day realities to see the big picture and “dream great dreams”
- ✦ Having the foresight to understand lessons from the past, realities of the present, and consequences of a decision for the future
- ✦ Practicing good “stewardship”—holding your institution “in trust” for the greater good of society and future generations
- ✦ Committing to the growth of people—personal as well as professional
- ✦ Building community—creating a united sense of belonging among those who work with you

Larry C. Spears, “Character and Servant-Leadership: Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders,” *The Journal of Virtues and Leadership* 1, no.1 [2010]: 27–29; [http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jvl/vol1\\_iss1/Spears\\_Final.pdf](http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jvl/vol1_iss1/Spears_Final.pdf)

Figure 1.6: Responses when wardens were asked to give their “best advice for new wardens”  
(5% or above of responses in each category)

### LEADER-RELATED

- ✦ Get out of the office and walk around the facility
- ✦ Be a good listener
- ✦ Network with other wardens and mentors
- ✦ Ask questions and seek out information
- ✦ Work on making good decisions
- ✦ Pursue your own professional development
- ✦ Be fair and consistent
- ✦ Be flexible and open-minded
- ✦ Be sure to balance personal and professional life
- ✦ Be humble, patient, ethical, and trust yourself

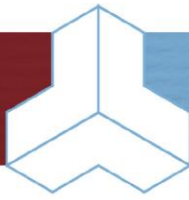
### STAFF-RELATED

- ✦ Create a good management team
- ✦ Get to know staff personally, listen to them, and learn from them
- ✦ Delegate, but know what is going on
- ✦ Empower and mentor staff
- ✦ Develop open communications and be accessible
- ✦ Set expectations and hold staff accountable
- ✦ Learn and assess the organizational culture
- ✦ Care for staff, be sincere and respectful
- ✦ Seek and use feedback and teamwork
- ✦ Recognize good work and reward it

### FACILITY-RELATED

- ✦ Take time to fully understand the systems, operations, procedures, and culture of your facility before making changes
- ✦ Communicate facility information to the central office
- ✦ Ensure compliance with facility policy
- ✦ Be innovative and creative when seeking solutions to facility problems
- ✦ Learn about inmates, be visible to them, listen to their concerns, and treat them fairly





### NEW LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE

You may be very familiar with the mechanics of running an institution—from safety practices and security operations to inmate classification, treatment programs, support services, and the like. But much more is demanded in the position of warden. Within your first few weeks on the job, you may be expected to cope with everything from budget cutbacks to workforce shortages, inmate litigation, legislative mandates, staff morale, and labor relations—all while simultaneously trying to learn how to survive in a politically-charged environment. As one warden put it, “no matter how prepared you think you are, the job is full of surprises and challenges.”

Because it is always helpful to learn from those who have “been there, done that,” Figure 1.6 contains some of the best advice for fulfilling these expectations, as articulated by those who have served in this position before you. It is notable that much of their advice relates to developing good interpersonal communication skills—from making personal contact by walking around the facility to becoming a good listener, networking, asking questions, seeking information, learning from your staff (as well as inmates), using feedback, being respectful, openly communicating both up and down the chain of command, and simply being accessible.

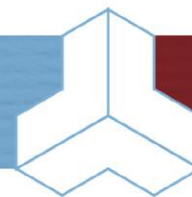
Many of these recommendations will be explored in more detail as we address techniques for undertaking the next steps toward becoming a successful warden—beginning with creating a new vision for your organization and inspiring your staff to embrace this future direction.

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*Working here is like an amusement park. There is excitement. There is challenge....and sometimes it will make you sick!*

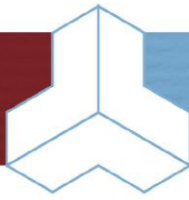
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### **“TO DO” CHECKLIST**

- ☐ Recognize the immediate importance of establishing a positive image and making a good first impression.
- ☐ Listen more, talk less, and ask questions.
- ☐ Be aware of how your conduct (and even casual comments) during the first days on the job will be scrutinized and interpreted.
- ☐ Determine what “unwritten messages” you may inadvertently be communicating.
- ☐ Recognize the influential impact of your actions.
- ☐ Avoid over-reacting, getting overwhelmed, or becoming sidetracked by day to day operational issues.
- ☐ Keep everything in proper perspective, without losing sight of the big picture.
- ☐ Take it slow—be patient, listen, and learn.
- ☐ Avoid making decisions before getting as many of the relevant facts as possible.
- ☐ Develop strategies for viewing your facility through an impartial lens.
- ☐ Identify other wardens and mentors to call upon for advice, solicit their honest feedback on your performance, and take their advice.
- ☐ Use “quick study” resources to become familiar with your facility.
- ☐ Develop techniques for earning the acceptance, trust, and respect of your staff.
- ☐ Proactively connect with your staff and build lines of two-way communication with them.
- ☐ Differentiate between actual problems and symptoms of the problems facing your facility.
- ☐ Encourage managers and supervisors to handle appropriate matters at their level in the chain of command.
- ☐ Keep your ego in check, and do not let the job “go to your head.”
- ☐ Maintain a well-balanced personal life outside of the office.
- ☐ Assess the difference between the skills that brought you to this position and the capabilities that are needed now, and work toward closing that gap.



- ☐ Become familiar with several leadership models, (such as situational, transactional/transformational, and servant leadership), and practice them.
- ☐ Identify strategies for improving your interpersonal communication skills.
- ☐ Build on your strengths and work at overcoming your weaknesses.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Of course, this does not apply to critical incidents or safety/security hazards.

<sup>ii</sup> For details of survey methodology and a link to the findings, see appendix B.

<sup>iii</sup> For more on this topic, see chapter 3 on shaping the organizational culture, as well as chapter 5 on aligning the internal environment with your vision for the future.

<sup>iv</sup> For further information on the survey, see appendix B.

<sup>v</sup> See “ASCA June 2013 Current Issues in Corrections Survey,” Association of State Correctional Administrators. <http://www.asca.net/system/assets/attachments/6468/ASCA%20June%202013%20Current%20Issues%20in%20Corrections%20Surveyfin.pdf?1384359439>

<sup>vi</sup> Techniques for “managing yourself” are discussed more thoroughly in chapter 7.

<sup>vii</sup> For more specific details on these findings, see appendix B. Additionally, core competencies required for jail administrators have been previously identified and can be viewed at [www.leadingjails.com](http://www.leadingjails.com).

<sup>viii</sup> Current edition: Paul Hersey, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and Dewey E. Johnson, *Management of Organizational Behavior: Leading Human Resources*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2008.

<sup>ix</sup> Current edition: James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2010. See also Bruce J. Avolio and Bernard M. Bass, eds., *Developing Potential Across a Full Range of Leadership: Cases on Transactional and Transformational Leadership*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2002.

<sup>x</sup> See, for example, David McGuire and Kate Hutchings, “Portrait of a Transformational Leader: The Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.” *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 28, no. 2 (2007): p. 154-166 and Nancy Cebula, Elizabeth Craig, John Eggers, Marge Douville Farjardo, James Gray, and Theresa Lantz, “Leadership that is Transforming,” Chapter 4 in *Achieving Performance Excellence: The Influence of Leadership on Organizational Performance*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2012.

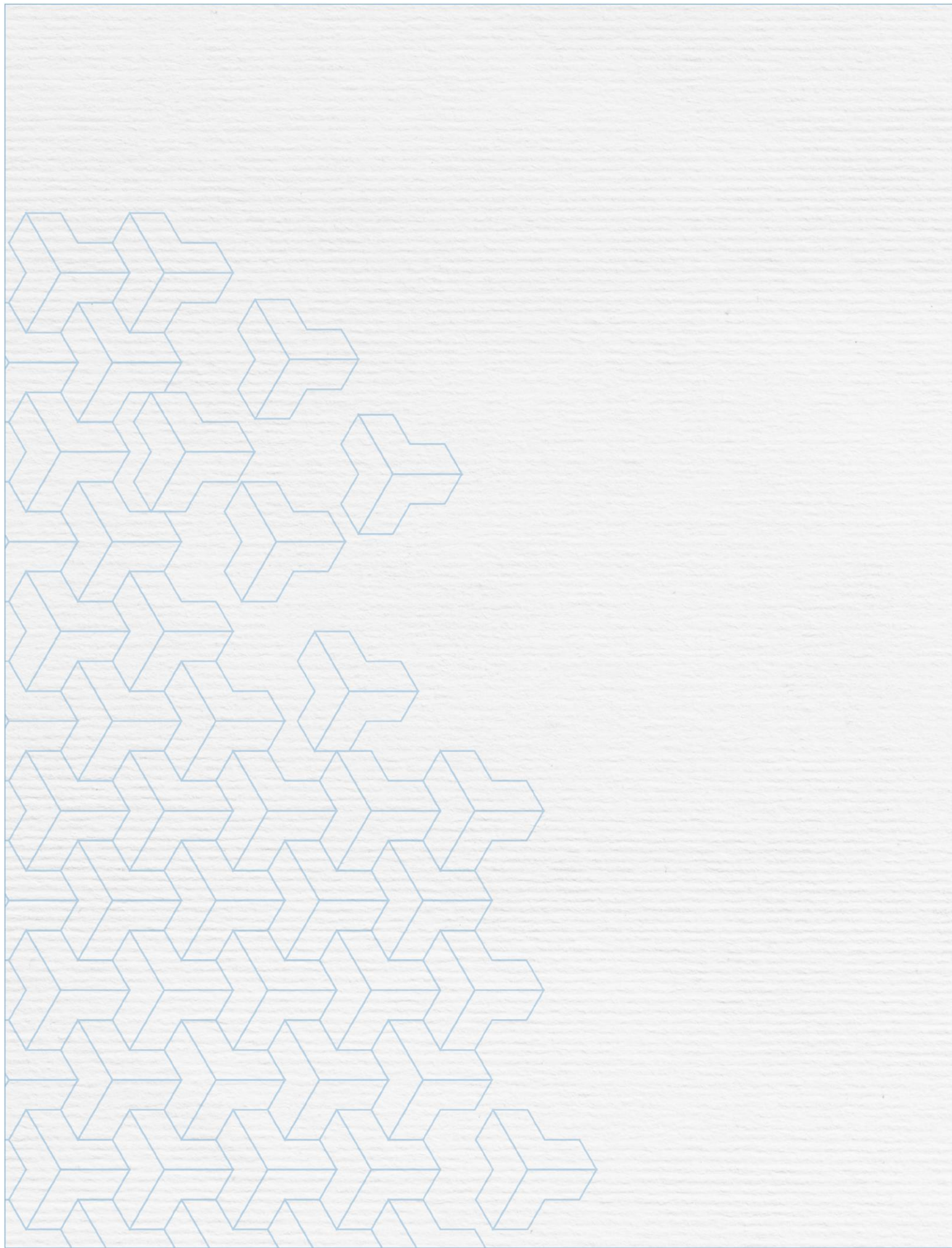
<sup>xi</sup> Current edition: Robert K. Greenleaf, Larry C. Spears, Stephen R. Covey, and Peter M. Senge. *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness*. New York: Paulist Press, 2002. See also Larry C. Spears, “Character and Servant-Leadership: Ten Characteristics of Effective, Caring Leaders,” *The Journal of Virtues & Leadership*, 1, no.1 [2010]: 25–30. [http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jvl/vol1\\_iss1/Spears\\_Final.pdf](http://www.regent.edu/acad/global/publications/jvl/vol1_iss1/Spears_Final.pdf)

<sup>xii</sup> Larry Spears, “Introduction: Servant-leadership and the Greenleaf Legacy,” in *Reflections on Leadership: How Robert K. Greenleaf’s Theory of Servant-Leadership Influenced Today’s Top Management Thinkers*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1995, p. 4. See also Peter Block, *Stewardship*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

<sup>xiii</sup> For a more comprehensive annotated list of leadership-related resources, see National Institute of Corrections. *Leadership: Selected Resources for Criminal Justice Professionals*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2013.









## CHAPTER 2: DETERMINING DIRECTION: INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP

*In the Overview, wardens were described as the CEOs of the “correctional conglomerate.” This means that, like their counterparts in business and industry, correctional leaders are expected to be out in front—with a clear view of the upcoming horizon. They do not sit back in the quiet comfort of complacency. Nor do they reactively respond to each day’s new “crisis.” To the contrary, they must be prepared to multitask—gathering, analyzing, and using information, which makes them well aware of everything from pending threats to upcoming trends.*

In other words, leaders are proactive shapers of their organization’s destiny rather than reactive “adrenaline junkies” bouncing from one staff-decreed crisis to another. They are skillful team-builders, generating the enthusiastic commitment needed to unite everyone around the pursuit of common goals. At the same time, they are aligning operational methods with the overall mission, as well as strategically meeting challenges along the way. Taken together, this means that leaders are skillful visionaries, communicators, and motivators.

Needless to say, all of this describes someone who can effectively make the transition from being a competent manager to becoming a capable leader, which is precisely what this chapter is designed to enable you to do. In it you will find advice for:

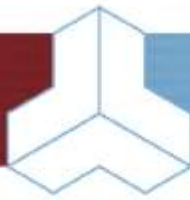
- ✦ Creating vision, mission, and value statements
- ✦ Identifying and getting commitment from relevant stakeholders
- ✦ Developing and implementing strategic plans
- ✦ Inspiring and engaging your staff
- ✦ Obtaining ongoing feedback and making necessary adjustments
- ✦ Using appropriate techniques for making sound and timely decisions
- ✦ Communicating your professional priorities as well as personal values

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*Studies have shown that a common characteristic among successful business entrepreneurs is their keen awareness of what is happening around them—they do not live life with their heads stuck in the sand. That is why they....can adapt so easily to change. They usually have seen it coming.... they were prepared to face the challenge head-on.*

John D. Rees, “How Well We Adapt to Change Is the Sign of a True Winner,” in *A View from the Trenches: A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 9-19.

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*Leaders...establish direction for a working group...gain commitment from these group members....and then motivate them to achieve the direction's outcomes.*

Jay A. Conger, *Learning to Lead: The Art of Transforming Managers into Leaders*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1992, p. 18.

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At this point, you may be asking yourself how you can possibly do all of this with the central office (or your boss) looking over your shoulder with an implicit reminder to maintain the “company line.” Obviously, it is essential to pay attention to the mission and vision determined by those above you in the organization, but within those boundaries, that does not preclude you from establishing your own facility’s direction, especially in terms of its organizational culture. In the words of an old adage, think of it as “blooming where you are planted.” In that regard, although it is not feasible for any guide to cover all aspects of establishing direction and inspiring followers, the information presented in this chapter should give you a good start, and additional resources are provided at the end for you to explore further.

### **DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Transitioning from management to leadership can be a difficult gap to bridge. For many years, you may have been a well-respected manager who ensured that day-to-day operations flowed smoothly, that policies and procedures were followed properly, and that established systems for maintaining safety and security functioned efficiently. Although demonstrated ability to fulfill such managerial functions is what made you a good candidate for promotion, these accomplishments are not synonymous with your new leadership responsibilities. Nor is leadership synonymous with either an individual’s personality or one’s position in the table of organization. In fact, before considering what leadership is, it may be beneficial to determine what it is not. Leadership is not:

#### *A job title*

Leadership is not synonymous with authority. Everyone who is promoted to a CEO-level position does not automatically become a leader by virtue of receiving a new title. Simply achieving the title of “warden,” “superintendent,” or “administrator” does not by default establish you as a leader. To the contrary, leadership reflects demonstrated personal capabilities rather than designated organizational positions. This is, in fact, why informal leaders within organizations are sometimes more powerfully influential than those who hold formal rank above them in the chain of command.



### *A charming personality*

Perhaps as a reflection of the interpersonal attraction of such acknowledged, high-profile leaders as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; John F. Kennedy; or Ronald Reagan, leadership has sometimes become equated with an outgoing, charismatic personality. While being able to connect with people is certainly helpful, it takes far more substantive capabilities to make a true leader (as perhaps best evidenced by such quietly reserved leaders as Mother Teresa). The shortcomings of unqualified leaders who demonstrate little more than interpersonal charm will quickly be revealed.

### *A good manager promoted*

You may already know at least one correctional officer who was promoted to a supervisory position on the basis of an extremely exemplary performance record, but somewhat surprisingly, the officer did not turn out to be a competent supervisor. That is likely because what is required of even the most highly capable officer is not the same combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to become a good supervisor. The same analogy applies to those who are promoted to leadership positions. Simply because someone was quite capable of performing effectively as a manager does not necessarily mean that he or she will be an equally effective leader.

### *A meter maid has authority but not necessarily leadership.*

Lee G. Bolman and Terrence E. Deal, "Reframing Leadership," in Joan V. Gallos, ed., *Business Leadership*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2008, p. 35, quoting John Gardner.

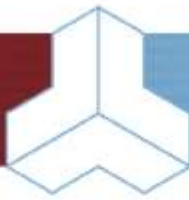
### *Ask "why" things are done, not to be judgmental, just to gather information.*

National Institute of Corrections. *2013 NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly-appointed warden/superintendent.

Table 2.1: Differences Between Leadership and Management

LEADERS	MANAGERS
Innovate	Administer
Develop	Maintain
Ask "what" and "why"	Rely on control
Focus on the horizon	Ask "how" and "when"
Challenge the status quo	Focus on the bottom line
Do the right thing	Do things right

Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1989, p. 45.



As reflected in Table 2.1, there are significant differences between managers and leaders. Perhaps Warren Bennis summed it up best when he stated that “[m]anagers do things right. Leaders do the right things.”<sup>i</sup> In other words, he was making the point that managers focus on the day-to-day *operational outputs*, i.e., ensuring that policies and procedures are being carried out efficiently. Leaders, on the other hand, are more concerned with whether such practices reflect the right things that the organization *should* be doing to maximize its performance and fulfill its mission. As such, they are focused on long-term *organizational outcomes*. They are concerned about effectively serving the ultimate interests of the organization, because doing the right thing does not necessarily mean doing the popular thing.

While managers are oriented toward promptly dealing with whatever the current “crisis” happens to be, leaders are alert to analyzing its underlying causes, related patterns, and contributing factors to prevent reoccurrence in the future. In fact, many critical events may simply be the result of inadequate planning. To use a simple but serious analogy, when faced with a facility fire, managers would take pride in swiftly containing it without loss of life or substantial property damage, whereas leaders would direct their attention toward probing why the fire occurred in the first place, and determining what could be done to prevent a similar outbreak in the future.

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*Management by crisis is not really “managing” anything. It is simply reacting to a situation that is blown out of proportion because of earlier reluctance to be proactive.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, p. 417

*Most U.S. corporations today are overmanaged and underled.*

John P. Kotter, “What Leaders Really Do,” in Joan V. Gallos, ed., *Business Leadership*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2008, p. 5.

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In essence, the innovative, analytical, and developmental nature of leaders prompts them to question the status quo continually to improve organizational performance and meet new challenges on the upcoming horizon. To the leader, “if better is possible, your best is not good enough.” At least to some extent, that is because leaders are more focused on effectiveness than efficiency. To illustrate the difference, consider the safety and security records that need to be maintained to comply with certain accreditation standards. It is the manager’s job to ensure that such records are accurate, timely, and readily accessible. On the other hand, a good leader assumes that the ultimate purpose of such an efficient record-keeping system extends beyond simply meeting bureaucratic reporting requirements. In this example, it is the manager’s job to establish the “right way” to most *efficiently* record institutional

data. But it is the leader's responsibility to determine the "right thing" to do with the resulting information to use it most *effectively* for organizational improvement.

In contrast to the broader perspective of leadership, the detailed, administrative, and maintenance-oriented nature of managerial duties naturally encourages being more accepting of things as they are—often adhering to the old adage, "if it's not broken, don't fix it." Yet, if leaders in business and industry adhered to that advice, it would certainly not be long before their companies would lose their competitive edge. Simply because corrections is not dependent on the competitive profit-making that drives private sector entrepreneurship is no reason for its leaders to function as managers without concern for improving the status quo.

It is, however, important to note that none of this discussion is meant to imply that leadership is "good" and management is "bad." Throughout the literature, there has been so much emphasis on differentiating between these two roles that, unfortunately, a positive/negative dichotomy has seemed to emerge—with leadership inherently viewed as commendable and management as undesirable.<sup>ii</sup> To the contrary, both are absolutely essential for organizations to thrive. Going back to our earlier examples, the facility fire must be extinguished before its causal factors can be examined and addressed. The safety and security records must be captured in an orderly manner before they can yield useful information for making improvements.

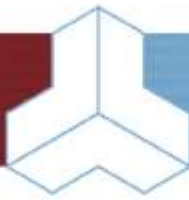
While the required knowledge, skills, and abilities obviously differ for leaders and managers, each actually complements the other. Essentially, no leader's vision can be effectively pursued without managerial attention to implementation details. Likewise, no manager's efforts will be effective in the long term if they are not strategically aligned with an overall organizational vision. It is toward developing such a guiding vision that we turn to next.

## CREATING THE VISION

Americans have always been captivated by the visionary aspirations of its leaders, from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s uplifting "I Have a Dream" speech to John F. Kennedy's uncompromising promise of landing someone on the moon. As a result, some may think that the essential ingredient of a leader's organizational vision is far-reaching thinking, i.e., imagining the unimagined. However, that is not necessarily the essence of establishing long-term organizational direction. Vision statements are, by definition, futuristic. They do not describe current conditions or what the organization has already done. Rather, they focus on a desirable future state—what we, working together, can become.

No matter how farsighted, however, people cannot relate to a leader's vision that is meaningless to them personally. Thus, the indispensable ingredients of an inspirational vision are neither originality nor





creativity. Rather, they are *relevance and reality*. In other words, a vision statement is most likely to be effective if it meets identified needs and can be translated into operational strategies. In that regard, you can test your organizational vision statement against these criteria.<sup>iii</sup>

#### *How easily is it communicated?*

If your organization's vision statement is too long or too complicated, it will be more difficult for people to understand, recall, and relate to it. As a rule of thumb, it should be concise enough for employees to keep in mind easily. For example, Disney's vision is simply to "make people happy." While the vision of a correctional facility would obviously be much more complex, it should still be readily understood and quickly communicated.

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#### *Every organization, every social movement, begins with a dream.*

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, "The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership," in Joan V. Gallos, ed., *Business Leadership*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2008, p. 28.

*Walt Disney had died prior to the opening of Disney World, and his wife was invited to say a few words at the grand opening of the park. "Mrs. Disney, I wish Walt could have seen this," the master of ceremonies said. She responded, "He did or it would never have come into existence."*

Melvin Brown, Jr. and Dan Richard Beto, "Effective Correctional Leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century," *Correctional Management Quarterly*, 3, no. 1 (1999): p. 48.

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#### *How desirable would it be to achieve?*

Here the primary concern is how well the vision statement serves the interests of the organization's constituents. In the case of correctional facilities, these would include both inmates and employees, as well as other criminal justice agencies, policymakers, and the general public. With such a wide-ranging group of stakeholders, their interests may well be incompatible, or even in conflict. In such a case, it may be necessary to determine whose interests are most important to serve.

#### *How feasible is it to implement?*

Although the fulfillment of a vision is certainly never guaranteed, it should at least be attainable. Otherwise, it is simply a fantasy dream that will only frustrate employees. Perhaps the best way to ensure the feasibility of a vision statement is to accompany it with a long-range implementation plan.<sup>iv</sup> Before moving in that direction, however, an important point needs to be made about the *process* of developing vision, mission, or value statements, along with related implementation plans.

## BUILDING COMMITMENT THROUGH INVOLVEMENT

While we have occasionally referred to “your” vision statement, the more appropriate word is “our.” If you expect buy-in, commitment, and support for pursuing a vision, it cannot be created in isolation. Rather, it must be the product of a collaborative team effort in which both management and line staff can take pride. The process should emphasize inclusion, value all input, and work at consensus building. In this way, instead of being “the warden’s” vision, it becomes “ours.” With that sense of personal ownership comes the dedicated commitment to fulfilling it. Ultimately, *how* the vision, mission, and values are developed is as important as the content of these statements themselves.

As the new warden, you may find that these statements were already developed under the previous administration or established statewide by the central office. In that case, you will need to assess how relevant they are in terms of where you want the organization to be headed, as well as how committed employees are to them and how inclusive the process was to create them. All of this needs to be done with considerable caution and sensitivity to avoid alienating those who may have been involved or appearing that you are arbitrarily rejecting previous efforts. Acknowledging the past does not necessarily commit you to continuing it, so if you inherit less-than-desirable vision/mission/value statements, you may wish to establish a process to modify or update them. Of course, when you are administering one facility within a statewide correctional agency, it goes without saying that your institution’s vision must support and align with that of the central office.

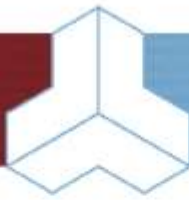
## CREATING MISSION AND VALUE STATEMENTS

Table 2.2: Differences between Vision, Mission, and Value Statements

VISION	MISSION	VALUES
The “what”	The “why”	The “how”
Establishes direction	Clarifies purpose	Maintains integrity
The long term picture of the future that we eventually want to attain	The reason(s) our organization exists today	The guiding principles that will govern our actions along the way

Modified from Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York, NY: Doubleday, 2006, p. 208.

Some agencies use the terms “vision” and “mission” interchangeably. In this guide, however, we will consider the vision to be what the organization is pursuing over the long term, i.e., the picture of a future that everyone will be working over the years to create. As shown in Table 2.2, vision reflects the “what,” and mission is the “why.” The mission will answer the question, “Why does this organization exist?....What is its purpose?” Therefore, a good mission statement will:



- ✦ Be concise—short and to the point
- ✦ State the purpose and identity of the organization
- ✦ Describe what the organization expects to achieve
- ✦ Identify how the organization will serve those affected by its work<sup>v</sup>

Finally, value statements address the “how” part, i.e., identifying the principles that will guide our actions as we fulfill our mission and pursue our vision. An organization’s values form its moral, ethical, and legal foundations. Values should reflect what is regarded most highly by the facility’s culture—i.e., ideal standards—such as fairness, honesty, and respect. They guide how the organization’s mission is implemented, how its vision is pursued, and overall, how business is conducted on a day-to-day basis. Not only do they bind people together within a common frame of reference, but they also can serve as benchmarks against which the qualitative aspects of a facility’s performance can be assessed.

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*Vision and mission without good leadership are going nowhere.*

Ray Hobbs, “Developing Staff Stability,” in *A View from the Trenches: A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 6–3

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## **ALIGNING POLICY AND PRACTICE**

If, however, there is a discrepancy between stated organizational values and actual operational practices, this cohesiveness breaks down, the organization’s integrity may be called into question, and cynicism is likely to replace enthusiasm. That is why you and your management team are expected to serve as role models for operationalizing value statements by “walking the talk” in everything from the decisions you make and the priorities you establish to the manner in which you communicate with others and conduct yourself.

Otherwise, the whole process of creating value statements simply becomes a hypocritical exercise. For example, if respect is a stated organizational value but supervisors permit (and perhaps even encourage) officers to maintain disrespectful behavior toward inmates, then the validity of “respect” as a functional value can be legitimately questioned. It is your responsibility to be aware of how values are reflected in day-to-day practices throughout your facility so that you can guard against such inconsistency and be prepared to take corrective action if preventive efforts are unsuccessful. As we will soon discuss in more detail, one of the most effective ways to ensure that stated policies and associated values are aligned with ongoing practices is to involve those responsible for implementation in various aspects of the policymaking process, including the development of strategic plans.

## DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIC PLANS

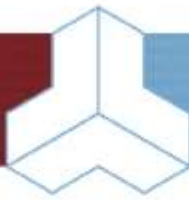
Earlier it was noted that one of the key ingredients of vision/mission statements is feasibility, because even the best ideas become little more than frustrating pipe dreams if they cannot be enacted. Because pursuing a vision is an extensive process spanning many years, it is easy to lose sight of the eventual outcome without plans and benchmarks to guide us along the way. Just as we would not embark on a long-distance driving trip without a clear idea of where we were headed and the best route to get there, embarking on the pursuit of an organizational vision demands similar guidance and direction.

That road map is the facility's strategic plan. It acts as a rudder to steer the organization steadily toward its goals despite the day-to-day distractions of everything from critical incidents to political pressures, front-office interference, or staff resistance. Beyond providing consistent direction, planning also enables the organization to adapt to a changing environment, aligns institutional activities with the facility's vision, and ensures that resources are allocated appropriately. As the leader, you are responsible not only for developing the strategic plan, but also keeping it on course—navigating the organization through sometimes turbulent waters to its desired destination.

The idea of preparing a strategic plan can be daunting. It is a significant undertaking. Unfortunately, the process may also be tainted by negative past experiences, especially if plans were imposed without your input or you participated in a cumbersome, time-consuming process resulting in irrelevant plans that were immediately relegated to obscurity. As these unfortunately shallow endeavors demonstrate, successfully leading a strategic planning process is not an unfocused, half-hearted, or independent endeavor. Nor is it a bureaucratic routine reluctantly undertaken to meet some required mandate. To the contrary, it should be a collaborative, dynamic, and systematic initiative that enlightens, motivates, and invigorates staff with a true sense of purpose.

As the strategic planning checklist in Figure 2.1 illustrates, the process encompasses four sequential stages.<sup>vi</sup> Yet only the last two are actually devoted to developing, implementing, or evaluating the plan. Because the first two focus on the type of preliminary background work that might sound superfluous, it may be tempting to skip them. Don't. Basically, they reflect the "doing your homework" part of planning and are necessary to establish a strong infrastructure upon which to build.

For example, note that one of the first steps calls for establishing an overall schedule with benchmarks and time limits—which is essential to stay focused and prevent the process from becoming bogged down or simply being forgotten in the midst of daily "crises." This is one of the preliminary tasks necessary before embarking on actual development of the plan. Just as you would not start building a



house without laying a firm foundation, it is premature to jump into strategic planning without constructing solid underpinnings.

Figure 2.1: Strategic Planning Checklist

### STEP ONE: BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

- ☐ Collaboratively develop (or update) the facility's vision, mission, and value (VMV) statements.
- ☐ Communicate VMV statements throughout the organization and to relevant stakeholders.
- ☐ Identify an all-inclusive, collaborative group to guide the implementation process.
- ☐ Establish a schedule with benchmarks and timelines.
- ☐ Designate someone with responsibility and authority to oversee implementation.

### STEP TWO: GATHERING AND ANALYZING RELATED INFORMATION

- ☐ Collect and analyze sources of information that will affect the ability to achieve VMV.
- ☐ Assess related strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT).
- ☐ Determine how policies and procedures can be better aligned with VMV.
- ☐ Analyze alternative options for moving the organization in the desired direction.

### STEP THREE: DEVELOPING THE ACTION PLAN

- ☐ Prioritize expected outcomes and define them in measurable terms.
- ☐ Establish periodic benchmarks and anticipated completion dates.
- ☐ Determine what changes are needed to achieve specific outcomes.
- ☐ Establish change implementation strategies and timelines.
- ☐ Ensure that all relevant employee groups are represented throughout action plan development.

### STEP FOUR: IMPLEMENTING AND EVALUATING THE PLAN

- ☐ Secure requisite resources.
- ☐ Create supportive partnerships with public and private agencies.
- ☐ Designate someone to compile and report ongoing progress assessments.
- ☐ Keep all employees, partners, and stakeholders informed of progress or setbacks.
- ☐ Use both formal and informal feedback to make adjustments, modifications, or improvements.

Modified from Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Leslie Leip, *The Future Is Now: Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing the 21st Century Jail Workforce*. Hagerstown, MD: American Jail Association, 2009, p. 124.

When the planning process gets to the stages of actual development and implementation, the key guiding concept will be “realistically feasible.” While any number of outcomes may be theoretically desirable, they are not all equally feasible, and even those that are must be prioritized within the constraints of existing assets. On an organizational level, implementing the plan will require the skillful management of fiscal as well as human resources. On an individual level, it will require everyone to stretch toward meeting new goals. Yet resources have limitations, and staff cannot be expected to stretch to the point of breaking down in frustrated defeat. Like the vision statement, the strategic plan therefore cannot be an impractical “pipe dream.” Rather, it must emerge as a pragmatic, workable, and attainable blueprint for building the organization’s future.

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*It is well-known that timely and reliable information guides the formulation of sound policy and initiates reform.*

Carl Nink, “Measuring Success: Improving the Effectiveness of Correctional Facilities,” in *A View from the Trenches: A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2nd ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 3–40.

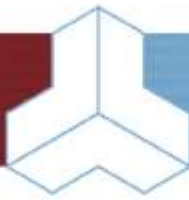
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## **COLLABORATING AND COMMUNICATING**

Throughout all stages of the planning process, the fundamental ingredients for success are collaboration and communication. As warden, you undoubtedly have the power and authority to present your staff with a strategic plan that you alone developed, describing where the institution will be going in the next five years. If you do so, no one, (least of all you), should be surprised when it fails. Strategic planning is a process, not just a document.

Some may view planning as a boring or irrelevant process to be avoided at all costs. To the contrary, with inspirational leadership, strategic planning can actually become a dynamic function that boosts morale, engages untapped resources, inspires skeptics, and promotes team-building, but that is only if the leader enthusiastically embraces the planning function and energetically seeks collaborative input and involvement. Demonstrating such enthusiasm means being an outspoken advocate of the strategic planning process at every opportunity—in staff meetings, public pronouncements, informal get-togethers, official newsletters, and anywhere else that the message to “get on board” can be consistently communicated.





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*Everywhere you go preach, reaffirm, reassert, and remind everyone of your vision.*

Stephan D. Kaftan, "Management is Not Leadership," in *A View from the Trenches: A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 1–7.

*Actively engage the surrounding community as a good neighbor and encourage collaboration on mutually beneficial projects.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Additionally, once the process is under way, specifically targeted methods of formal and informal communication are needed for disseminating draft materials and preliminary ideas to obtain feedback. Communicating with staff about the strategic plan is actually as important as its development. After all, the resulting plans will not be classified, high-security documents to which only a privileged few will have access. Rather, they will be working guidelines for operating the facility not only today but years into the future. That means they will ultimately affect everything from security operations to staffing allocations.

Given this widespread influence of strategic plans on virtually all employees, everyone affected should be kept informed and invited to become part of the process of shaping their future by providing feedback. That means getting the message out to all staff, including all shifts and all components of the facility, for example through email announcements, newsletter articles, administrative briefings, bulletin board postings, and personal visibility. The bottom line is to continuously communicate, communicate, communicate. That is because one of the most powerful forces for generating advocacy for change is widespread communication.

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*Plans that are made by a select few at the top of the organizational hierarchy are likely to encounter resistance—and possibly even active sabotage—as they move down the chain of command toward the point of execution.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, p. 417.

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However, as crucial as it is, communication is only part of the procedural formula for success. From the very beginning, a concerted effort must also be made to engage all staff throughout the institution in the planning and policy-development process. As noted previously, people are most likely to be committed to implementing what they participated in producing. Thus, involving a wide cadre of employees, (even

those who might be inclined not to participate), can advance plans from theory to reality—which, of course, is the ultimate goal.

Yet it is just as important to realize that this is a two-way street with mutual benefits. Not only will plans and their potential for achievement be improved by employee involvement, but the employees themselves will likely be improved as well. Especially when their input is solicited, welcomed, and included, staff can take considerable personal pride in the key role that they played in shaping their destiny. Most will personally appreciate being included in the process, particularly the newer generations in the workplace who feel that they have a lot to contribute. Beyond that, they will also be provided with the professional opportunity to broaden their leadership development horizons by interacting with people holding diverse viewpoints, developing respect for conflicting ideas, and appreciating the importance of compromise. It would take a lot of investment in training programs to accomplish that.

### IDENTIFYING AND COMMITTING RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS

Beyond facility employees, it was noted earlier that other relevant groups should also be involved in developing the facility's vision/mission/value statements. This inclusiveness likewise extends to the strategic plan, as well as significant policies, procedures, and other issues that can be expected to affect either internal or external stakeholders.<sup>vii</sup> Just who are these “stakeholders”? Essentially, they encompass any organization, group, or individual who has a legitimate claim on (or investment in) the organization's attention, resources, or outcomes—or who is likely to be affected by its outcomes.<sup>viii</sup> As such, they can influence prison operations either positively or negatively, depending on how the warden handles their questions, concerns, and expressions of interest.

Today, there are more stakeholders in corrections than ever before. While community organizations and the media might come readily to mind, there are many others who can create potential disruption if ignored. Before reviewing the list in Figure 2.2, think about who they might be. How many were you able to identify?

Because there are so many potential stakeholders in correctional facilities, it is obviously impossible to include representatives of all of them in every decision, policy, or plan that calls for participatory involvement. That is why the term “relevant” stakeholders has been used in this guide, since it is necessary to identify which groups should be involved in various correctional issues. For example, while a range of different stakeholders may come together as members of a prison advisory board, not all would be appropriately involved in providing input regarding specific issues confronting prison administrators.

Figure 2.2: Potential Prison Stakeholders

- ✦ Employees (sworn and civilian) and their families
- ✦ Union members
- ✦ Families and loved ones of inmates
- ✦ Defense attorneys
- ✦ Inmate advocacy groups (local, national and international)
- ✦ Local/state law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, public defenders and elected officials
- ✦ Treatment and other program providers
- ✦ Parole board members
- ✦ Victims and their survivors
- ✦ Advocates of private corrections or other alternative approaches
- ✦ Contractors, vendors and the media

Additionally, it is unproductive to involve so many people that work gets bogged down and it is impossible to reach consensus. Regardless of exactly how their input is solicited, however, developing productive relationships with various stakeholders can be mutually beneficial. In addition to providing a sounding board for concerned groups to express themselves, inclusiveness opens lines of communication, promotes trusting relationships, and enables diverse points of view to be encompassed in the facility's policies, procedures, and practices.

### **OBTAINING FEEDBACK AND MAKING ADJUSTMENTS**

Strategic planning is not a one-time, static event. Rather, it is an ongoing, dynamic process. As such, it must be revisited regularly to assess ongoing application efforts, make any necessary mid-course corrections, and celebrate accomplishments along the way. Even the best-prepared plans are never perfect. They cannot possibly envision all of the possible future challenges faced by the facility, changing conditions that will frustrate their achievement, or potential resistance by staff, stakeholders, or the central office. That is why periodic feedback must be built into the implementation process.

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*Acknowledging that everything did not go as planned, or that changes need to be made based on implementation experience and employee feedback is an administrative strength rather than a weakness.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Leslie Leip, *The Future Is Now: Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jail Workforce*. Hagerstown, MD: American Jail Association, 2009, p.124.

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Typically, we tend to think of evaluation as a lengthy report that is submitted after an initiative has been operating for some time, giving a “thumbs-up” or “thumbs-down” assessment of whether it worked. That is what is known as a final outcome evaluation, and by then it may be too late to make any adjustments. Instead, implementation strategies are better assessed through what are known as ongoing process evaluations,<sup>ix</sup> which periodically “check the pulse,” providing formal and informal feedback. That information is then communicated to stakeholders, and ultimately, it is used as the basis for making any mid-course modifications or improvements.<sup>x</sup> This helps ensure that the plan remains a viable, current, and relevant document that does not lose its usefulness over time.

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*Strategic planning requires....an emphasis on the future implications of present decisions...  
The most important resource for strategic planning is not money; it is the time and attention of key decision makers.*

Bridget P. Gladwin, “Strategic Planning,” in *A View from the Trenches: A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 3–43 and 3–45.

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## **MAKING SOUND AND TIMELY DECISIONS**

Ultimately, plans are translated into actions through day-to-day decisions. Combined with supporting policies and fiscal as well as human resources, strategic plans flowing from the facility’s vision/mission are designed to provide structured decision-making guidance within a value-based frame of reference. This does not refer only to executive decisions, but also to the many more operational and managerial decisions that are made on a daily basis. Just as importantly, effective plans actually reduce the number of decisions that must be made, because proactive planning is, by nature, designed to reduce reliance on the need for making reactive decisions under pressure.

When you as the warden are confronted with an issue that must be resolved by some type of decision, there are several fundamental factors that you should consider:



### *Does this matter really require an executive decision?*

Some wardens clearly indicate a willingness to assume the decision-making responsibilities that may be more appropriately delegated to other staff. In such cases, it is little wonder that more and more problems of lesser and lesser importance will be routinely forwarded up the chain of command for executive resolution. This tendency may reflect an egotistical or overbearing leadership style, a stronghold on unilateral power, and/or the lack of confidence in management. If the warden is not comfortable with risk-taking, this style of leadership may also be promoted by valid concerns among subordinates about the potential negative results of taking too much initiative or making a wrong decision. Whatever the reasons, the point is that leaders “set the climate for decision-making in their organization.”<sup>xi</sup> As such, they function as gatekeepers—determining what decisions are best made at what levels of the organization. This requires matching decision-making authority with the appropriate level on the organizational hierarchy, and empowering (as well as training) subordinates to make such decisions within their area of expertise.

### *What guidance do our vision/mission/value statements provide?*

If it is determined that the issue does, indeed, justify executive intervention, it is imperative that the decision is not made independently, without reference to the framework of guidance provided by the organization’s policies, plans, values, and the like. After all, it would be impossible to convince staff of the warden’s commitment to the facility’s vision/mission/value statements if they are not validly reflected in the decision-making process. For example, it is one thing to state in official documents that integrity, equity, and transparency are highly valued, but quite another to ensure that hiring, promotion, and disciplinary decisions are always made in a manner that reflects these values.

### *Should anyone else be involved in making the decision?*

Throughout this chapter, the mutual benefits of engaging both internal and external stakeholders throughout the planning and policymaking process have been emphasized. In terms of decision-making, however, the necessity for doing so ranges widely, depending on the specific issue to be resolved. It is neither possible nor desirable to involve all groups in the process of making all decisions. To the contrary, there are some determinations that the leader should be comfortable making alone. Especially where time is of the essence, acceptance is not important, or the leader has greater expertise on the topic, a unilateral approach can be employed. Because it is always more time-consuming to attempt to build consensus through participation, anything that must be addressed immediately will demand a top-down decision. But if time pressure is not a factor, if wide-ranging compliance is essential, or if others with more experience or greater expertise are better qualified to make the decision, a consultative approach is likely to be more productive. In either case, there are

trade-offs: Is it more important to make a quick decision that everyone may not like? Or is it better to take longer to make a decision that obtains greater acceptance?

As the answers to these questions clearly demonstrate, the decisions that you as a warden make will have both immediate and long-term implications. Perhaps most importantly, they will demonstrate whether you are truly committed to the overall vision, as well as the extent to which you support the facility's mission. Primarily, they will either reinforce or refute your dedication to core values. As such, each of your decisions sends a loud message throughout the workplace, clearly communicating your personal and professional commitment to the organizational vision, mission, and values. Because it is well-known that actions speak louder than words, this is where you must “walk the talk.”

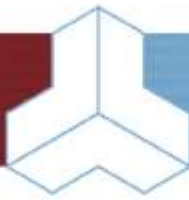
### MANAGING CRITICAL INCIDENTS

While strategic planning and timely decision-making will help reduce the number of critical incidents that you will be confronted with, even the best long-range planning cannot eliminate unanticipated events. Especially in corrections, each day brings challenges, and one must always “expect the unexpected.”

Most prisons have plans to address such emergencies as fires, hostage-taking, severe weather, inmate disturbances, escapes, deaths, utility outages, hazardous material threats, and natural disasters. In addition, today's wardens need to be able to respond to everything from terrorist threats to employee labor actions, community protests, and inmate work stoppages. But although you may have policies for responding to such events, there are two important questions to ask: (1) Are the plans up to date? (2) Are your employees trained properly to put them into action? Answering these questions means determining the status of emergency plans, as well as whether your facility is truly ready to implement them effectively.<sup>xii</sup>

Ideally, of course, the best approach is proactive prevention. This involves far more than just making sure that fire extinguishers are up to date and the response team is properly equipped. As correctional facilities have had to do more with less over recent years, some important infrastructures may have been underfunded that are at the core of prevention efforts—such as cameras, fire detection systems, perimeter security devices, entrance screening equipment, and the resources to engage in inmate intelligence work. Examining what systems are in place and learning whether they are effective is obviously essential, especially in such aspects of the facility as perimeter security, storage of chemicals, fire prevention, and contraband control. Additionally, a critical review of periodic fire safety reports—when compared to what you actually see—can indicate whether staff reporting is accurate or whether they are just “going through the motions.”





For events that are outside of the facility's control (such as natural disasters), it is important to be connected to community resources. In fact, emergencies in correctional institutions are often community events as well, making collaboration beyond the walls essential, regardless of the nature of the incident. The midst of a critical incident is not the time to try to figure out where to get help or build relationships with the first responders in your community. Moreover, if the media has no idea who you are, the middle of a crisis is not the time to try to establish credibility and trust with reporters, or for that matter, with community leaders.<sup>xiii</sup>

Prevention also relies on the training and instincts of your staff. This is why it is so important to get to know the ebb and flow of the institution's functions, learn what is out of the ordinary, and quickly identify what needs to be done to address any warning signs. For example, the effect on the inmate population of seemingly unimportant changes to schedules, commissary, food services, and the like can become flash points for disturbances. As a new warden, you have the opportunity to bring a different perspective to examining proposed operational changes, and to speculate about their potential for generating unintended negative consequences, (whether for employees or inmates).

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*It can be argued that one of the cornerstones of emergency preparedness is found not in specialized programs, but in the everyday work of effective correctional leadership. The most important element of emergency preparedness is using positive and proactive leadership to prevent a critical incident from occurring.*

Doug Dretke and Joe Serio, "The Role of Leadership Style in Emergency Preparedness," *Corrections Today* (October 2011): p. 34.

*The importance of leadership in an emergency or a major crisis cannot be overstated. The actions, decisions, style, presence, and direction of the person in charge will often determine the outcome of a situation.*

Jeffrey Schwartz and Cynthia Barry, *A Guide to Preparing for and Responding to Prison Emergencies*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2005, p. 205.

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While preventing critical incidents is obviously the key ingredient, it is likewise necessary to plan for appropriate responses when the inevitable emergency strikes. With scenario-based training, employees can learn what works best in reaction to unexpected events, as well as what strategies to avoid. Such training helps to instill the confidence that is needed to address the situation quickly in a competent and effective manner. Moreover, ongoing training for emergency response teams not only improves their capability, but also helps to ensure that their actions are within legal guidelines and that inmates get the message that the facility is prepared to respond.

When an unanticipated event does occur, leaders are challenged to provide direction while resisting the urge to get involved in the action personally. During an emergency, questions are coming at you from all directions—from the central office, facility line staff, the media, inmates' families, and employees' families. Having plans in place for managing an emergency of any scale is the key to effective incident management and ensuring the safety of all involved. (Such plans should not only address immediate response strategies, but also the provision of supportive services to staff and inmates during the aftermath.) Throughout the incident itself, you will need to find out what is actually happening and separate fact from hyped-up fiction. As the emergency unfolds, the role of the warden is to find a way to reach a safe conclusion, keep staff calm, and be an example of composed professionalism and inner strength.

Even when the crisis has been terminated, that is not the end of it for the warden. Ensuring that staff are safe, inmates are cared for, reports are completed, and causes are assessed may take more than a few days, depending on the scope of the incident. Additionally, the trauma caused by even a seemingly small incident may weigh heavily on staff. This trauma may go perhaps unsaid because of the tough image that employees may think they need to maintain. Undoubtedly, questions will come from the local community, the warden's boss, and the media. Complete closure is not reached until all reports are filed, questions are answered, employees are cared for, and explanations are provided.

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*Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new.*

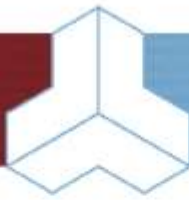
Albert Einstein

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## RECOVERING FROM MISTAKES

Whether in response to a crisis or in making more mundane, day-to-day decisions, everyone at some point makes mistakes. Some are minor mishaps, while others are more visible, and still others can have a widespread effect. The question then is, "What are you to do?" As the downfall of many politicians has clearly demonstrated, what you should *not* do is attempt to lie, cover it up, or walk away without acknowledging the error. Failing to "own up" to personal mistakes can damage your credibility even more than actually making the blunder in the first place. Instead, you would be well-advised to:

- ✦ Take responsibility for your erroneous statements, actions, or written material as soon as you realize what you did wrong. Do not wait for someone else to discover your errors.
- ✦ Apologize to those directly involved (or more widely if the situation dictates). In other words, do not let your ego prevent you from admitting wrong-doing.
- ✦ Tell the boss, subordinates, and peers what you learned from your mistake.



- ✦ Examine for yourself why it happened. For example, perhaps you did not seek or listen to advice, did not have all of the information you needed, or made a decision in a moment of anger or frustration.
- ✦ Learn from your mistakes, and commit to doing better.

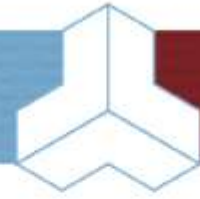
In correctional work, some judgmental errors can significantly threaten safety or security. Yet good bosses recognize less serious mistakes as learning opportunities and realize that a zero-tolerance policy for errors will severely limit innovation and creativity. (In fact, the same is equally true when the tables are turned and you are the supervisor of a staff member who erred.) Ultimately, even if you must sometimes admit that your actions were misguided, ensuring that they are ethical, honorable, and transparent can be both an uplifting experience for you and a valuable lesson to those you are leading and mentoring.

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*According to a story told about Tom Watson, Jr., in the context of IBM's concern for people and management development, a young executive had made some bad decisions that cost the company several million dollars. He was summoned to Watson's office, fully expecting to be dismissed. As he entered the office, the young executive said, "I suppose after that set of mistakes you will be wanting to fire me." Watson replied, "Not at all, young man; we have just spent a couple of million dollars educating you."*

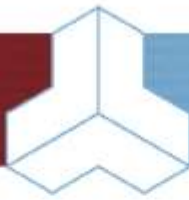
Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1992, p. 238.

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### “TO DO” CHECKLIST

- ☐ Focus on long-term outcomes and being effective rather than short-term outputs and being efficient.
- ☐ Be certain that you are “doing the right thing” rather than simply “doing things right.”
- ☐ Ensure that you are demonstrating leadership skills rather than management-oriented behaviors.
- ☐ Collaboratively develop a relevant vision statement to establish organizational direction.
- ☐ Ensure that the vision statement is easily communicated, desirable to achieve, and feasible to implement.
- ☐ Collaboratively develop a mission statement that clarifies the organization’s purpose.
- ☐ Ensure that the mission statement is a concise statement of the purpose and identity of the organization as well as a message that explains what it expects to achieve and how it will serve constituents.
- ☐ Collaboratively develop a values statement that identifies principles and standards that will guide organizational practice.
- ☐ Align policy and practice with the vision/mission/values statements.
- ☐ Build commitment to the vision/mission/values statements through involvement in the process of creating them.
- ☐ Collaboratively develop a realistic, feasible strategic plan to guide implementation of the organizational vision/mission.
- ☐ Be certain to build the foundation (Step 1) and gather/analyze related information (Step 2) before developing the strategic plan.
- ☐ Communicate progress through every possible venue throughout development of the strategic plan.
- ☐ Identify relevant stakeholders and gain their commitment to the plan.
- ☐ Obtain periodic feedback and make necessary adjustments as the plan is implemented.
- ☐ Assess the issue to determine whether it truly requires executive before you make a decision, and if so, determine whether anyone else should be involved.



- ☐ Ensure that the decisions you make are consistent with the organization's vision, mission, and values.
- ☐ Determine whether your facility's emergency plans are up to date and whether employees are properly trained to execute them.
- ☐ Develop working relationships with both the media and those who will be first responders to an emergency in your facility.
- ☐ Take personal responsibility for any mistakes you make, and use it as a learning opportunity.

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<sup>i</sup> Warren Bennis, *On Becoming a Leader*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1989, p. 45. See also John H. Zenger and Joseph Folkman, *The Extraordinary Leader: Turning Good Managers into Great Leaders*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2002.

<sup>ii</sup> As one author notes, the distinction between leaders and managers is "unnecessarily adversarial"; see Craig R. Hickman, *Mind of a Manager, Soul of a Leader*. New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons, 1990.

<sup>iii</sup> Summarized from John P. Kotter, *Leading Change*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2012. See also Burt Nanus, *Visionary Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 1992.

<sup>iv</sup> In that regard, strategic planning will be discussed later in this chapter.

<sup>v</sup> For sample mission statements, check the websites for several state departments of corrections.

<sup>vi</sup> For a step-by-step illustration of how this planning checklist can be used to design a leadership development initiative, see Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Leslie Leip, *The Future Is Now: Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jail Workforce*. Hagerstown, MD: American Jail Association, 2009, p. 113–124. For more information on the strategic planning process, along with readiness assessment worksheets, see John M. Bryson, *Creating and Implementing Your Strategic Plan: A Workbook for Public and Nonprofit Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2011.

<sup>vii</sup> It may also be helpful to tap into external resources (e.g., wardens from other facilities, central or regional office staff, educators, community leaders, etc.) to serve as facilitators, helping staff to step outside of the "status quo" during the development process.

<sup>viii</sup> Paraphrased from John M. Bryson, *Strategic Planning for Public and Nonprofit Organizations: A Guide to Strengthening and Sustaining Organizational Achievement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995.

<sup>ix</sup> Because they are employed during the formative years of a strategy's implementation, they are also known as formative assessments.

<sup>x</sup> Whenever such changes are made, the plan should be revised and updated as well.

<sup>xi</sup> Nancy Cebula, et al., *Achieving Performance Excellence: The Influence of Leadership on Organizational Performance*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2012, p. 29.

<sup>xii</sup> For guidance in conducting an emergency preparedness audit, see Jeffrey Schwartz and Cynthia Barry, *A Guide to Preparing for and Responding to Prison Emergencies*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, June 2005. <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/020293.pdf>

<sup>xiii</sup> See chapter 5 for more information on establishing relationships with both the media and community leaders.







## CHAPTER 3: SHAPING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE: THE WARDEN'S ROLE

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*Along with visionary foresight, one of the primary skills of a proactive leader is the ability to shape organizational culture. This means identifying the nature of the agency culture, reinforcing its positive elements, and addressing the counter-productive aspects in need of change. A positive, upbeat culture where employees feel respected and empowered is a strong asset in terms of everything from enhancing morale and encouraging creativity to embracing change and improving productivity. By the same token, however, a negative culture characterized by a shoulder-shrugging “who cares” complacency—or even open disrespect and flaunting of rules—can destroy even the most promising initiatives. As one warden phrased it, the culture of the facility ultimately will be “the determining factor of your (and your staff’s) success.”<sup>i</sup>*

While internal culture undoubtedly influences leadership, it is not just a one-way street. Rather, the relationship is reciprocal—with culture and leadership interactively representing “two sides of the same coin.”<sup>ii</sup> In fact, to the extent that leaders are unable to redirect the negative aspects of agency culture, it will likely undermine their entire agenda. In other words, if the culture is not working for you, it is probably working against you.

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### *Do not underestimate culture; it drives everything...*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Before an institutional culture can be changed, of course, it must be clearly recognized, accurately understood, and thoroughly appreciated. Such insights will enable you to better clarify and predict how the culture is likely to support or sabotage the organizational mission and quality of the workplace, as well as your own efforts. Much of this chapter is therefore devoted to developing that insight by exploring the wide-ranging dimensions of culture. Along the way you will also find advice for:

- ✦ Observing and assessing your facility's culture
- ✦ Aligning the culture with your vision, mission, and values
- ✦ Managing the process of redirecting your facility's culture
- ✦ Reducing organizationally induced stress
- ✦ Resolving organizational conflicts





While all of these topics cannot be addressed here in extensive depth or detail, the resources provided at the end of the chapter will enable you to gather further information on anything of special interest. Before proceeding, however, a cautionary note is directed to those promoted from within. To wardens who have spent their career progressing through ranks of the organization that they now lead, their agency's culture may appear to be perfectly "normal." That is largely because they are unfamiliar with other work settings that may differ significantly in terms of everything from morale, accountability, and job satisfaction to the degree of mutually supportive relationships between employees and leadership.

As a result, it is difficult for "insiders" to view their own agency's culture objectively. To combat this difficulty, new wardens promoted from within need to step back, critically appraise the situation, and objectively challenge their own beliefs—perhaps in part by soliciting cultural assessment feedback from outsiders. Otherwise, they will be left continually wondering why employees are not embracing change, why they are resisting new initiatives, or why overall progress is not being made.

### DEFINING AND DESCRIBING ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

An agency's rules, regulations, and policies describe formal standards and official relationships. It is the culture, however, that shapes the interaction between policy and practice—that is, the extent to which rules and regulations actually influence operational practices. Thus, culture establishes the informal system that guides how communications occur, information is shared, policies are interpreted, and the work of the agency is accomplished.

As shown in Figure 3.1, there are a number of features that tightly bind the members of an organizational culture to each other. Together, they form a pattern of *shared basic assumptions* that the group has learned over time, that have worked well for them in the past, and that are therefore taught to new members as the "correct way" to think, feel, and act.<sup>iii</sup> These patterns are developed over many years, having been reinforced (or ignored) by previous administrations. The core beliefs they reflect can be positive or negative, resisting change or embracing it, enabling you to move forward or fiercely maintaining the status quo.

Perhaps the greatest strength of culture is its ability to give us a clear framework for viewing the world. As such, it provides meaning, stability, and predictability in an environment that may often be unclear, unstable, or chaotic. To do so, it communicates (subtly or overtly) inherent behavioral prescriptions for its members—with rewards or punishments for conforming to or resisting what the culture dictates. To deviate from these established dictates is to risk being informally censured or even ostracized from the group—which can be a far greater punishment than formal disciplinary action.



Figure 3.1: Things Held in Common by an Organization's Culture

*There are a number of features that tightly bind the members of an organizational culture to each other:*

- ✦ *Behavioral regularities*—language, customs, traditions, rituals
- ✦ *Group norms*—implicit standards and values
- ✦ *Espoused values*—principles that the group is trying to achieve
- ✦ *Formal philosophy*—broad policies that guide actions
- ✦ *Rules of the game*—implicit rules for getting along
- ✦ *Climate*—physical layout and the way people interact
- ✦ *Embedded skills*—special competencies that are passed from generation to generation
- ✦ *Habits of thinking*—shared cognitive frames
- ✦ *Shared meanings*—understandings created as the group interacts, which become unquestioned assumptions

Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2004, p. 12–13.

For you as a new warden, the value of understanding your organization's culture is that it helps explain behavior that might otherwise seem illogical, inappropriate, or even unprofessional. When we can see the world through a group's "cultural lens," more of what they do begins to make sense. That is not to say that we concur with their actions, but at least we are better able to understand what motivates them. In that regard, the most effective leaders are able to step outside of their own agency's culture and view it as a newcomer—appreciating its strengths, identifying its weaknesses, and understanding its limitations.

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*Even simply permitting employees to report for work in wrinkled, unkempt uniforms or letting trash accumulate on facility floors sends clear messages about what is or is not acceptable, whether staff are proud to be working there, and other positive or negative indicators of the organizational culture.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, p. 418.

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Figure 3.2: Focus of NIC's Prison Culture Assessment Protocol

*The prison culture assessment protocol developed by the National Institute of Corrections focuses on the following elements:*

- ✦ Central values and assumptions held by members throughout the organization
- ✦ Activities to ensure that the values and assumptions of organizational members are similar to the organization's core
- ✦ Practices used to foster and renew commitment among organizational members
- ✦ Recognition and rewards for compliance with core values
- ✦ Competing interests within the staff and how those competing interests are reconciled
- ✦ Disparity between espoused values and actual practice and what is done to reduce that disparity
- ✦ Cultural leadership throughout all levels of the organization

National Institute of Corrections, *Training on Assessment of Institutional Culture*, presented by Criminal Justice Institute, Inc., 2004.

## OBSERVING AND ASSESSING INSTITUTIONAL CULTURE

To develop such insight, it is essential to view everything in your facility with a fresh, impartial perspective—examining all parts of the operation, and taking nothing for granted. Because it is so difficult for someone who was socialized into a culture to do that, there are instruments that can help you measure the culture more objectively.<sup>iv</sup> The prison culture assessment protocol developed by the National Institute of Corrections, for example, focuses on the seven elements of prison culture shown in Figure 3.2. There are also some informal things you can do to get a quick overview, such as:

- ✦ Personally observe daily operations with a critical eye, e.g., verbal communications, body language, dress, demeanor, and behavior. *What unwritten messages are they sending?*
- ✦ Assess whether operational practices are following written policies. *If not, why not? Is it the policies or the practices that need to change?*
- ✦ Become familiar with the history of the institution by reviewing documents, listening to employees as well as inmates, and talking with community representatives. *How has the institutional history shaped the way things are currently done?*
- ✦ Get to know both the staff (sworn as well as civilian) and the inmate population. *What are their interests, concerns, and needs? Are they generally supportive or suspicious of administrative efforts?*

- ✦ Identify the informal power structures for both staff and inmates. *Who are the informal leaders with positive or negative influence? How can they be brought “on board”?*
- ✦ Review the outcomes of past efforts to initiate reform or organizational change. *Why did these efforts either succeed or fail?*
- ✦ Examine the communication process. *Are supervisors and managers sharing information with line staff? Are employees consulted before major decisions affecting them are made?*
- ✦ If possible, talk to your predecessor. *What “institutional knowledge” can you gain that might help you avoid any mistakes that he or she made?*
- ✦ Above all else, *always listen with an open mind.*

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#### *Does your facility’s culture:*

- *Value initiative and creativity? Or expect employees to keep a “low profile” and “not make waves”?*
- *Nourish proactive thinking and risk-taking? Or believe that “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it”?*
- *Make staff proud to be part of the organization? Or foster a collection of “woe-is-me” self-anointed victims?*
- *Encourage excellence? Or settle for complacency?*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *FutureForce: A Guide to Building the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Corrections Workforce*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 17.

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With these insights into your facility’s culture, you will be in a better position to identify its positive features that should be reinforced, along with any negative features that must be addressed.<sup>v</sup>

### **RECOGNIZING CULTURAL ROOTS AND THEIR EFFECT**

Before attempting to change a facility’s culture, it is important to recognize how deeply rooted it is. Your agency’s culture did not develop overnight. To the contrary, it encompasses the far-reaching influence of the institution’s entire past history, including its former leaders, staff, and inmates, along with surviving myths, traditions, rituals, practices, and norms. Such historical roots are deeply embedded. As a result, any effort to implement revised vision, mission, or values without taking the time and effort to understand the culture is almost doomed to fail.

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*Culture is the sum total of the institution’s history, staff, inmates, community, and past leadership.*

Susan W. McCampbell, “Making Successful New Wardens,” *Corrections Today*, 64, no. 6 (October 2002): p. 130.



That is because once employees are socialized into the culture, it is extremely difficult for them to step outside of it conceptually. After all, consider the first four letters of the word “culture,” especially in terms of the brainwashing power of cults. The hidden strength of culture actually lies in its quiet unobtrusiveness. Like the air we breathe, it is something that is frequently taken for granted. It is simply the way we “do business” here. It is how people are expected to behave, no questions asked. Such a powerful but intangible controlling force presents quite a challenge to change.

### **ALIGNING CULTURE WITH VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES**

Why should a new warden even attempt the labor-intensive, time-consuming process of trying to change the organizational culture? The key consideration is “control.” In other words, the directional compass guiding your facility can either default to the existing organizational culture or be redirected toward pursuit of a new vision, a new mission, and a new set of values. It is essentially a matter of whether the leadership or the culture is in charge.

The previous chapter discussed how to develop your vision through long-term strategic planning. Now it is time to determine how to translate those documented plans into daily practices. Changing written policies and procedures is not enough, since they simply describe how things are *supposed* to operate. It is the culture that shapes how things really *are* working.

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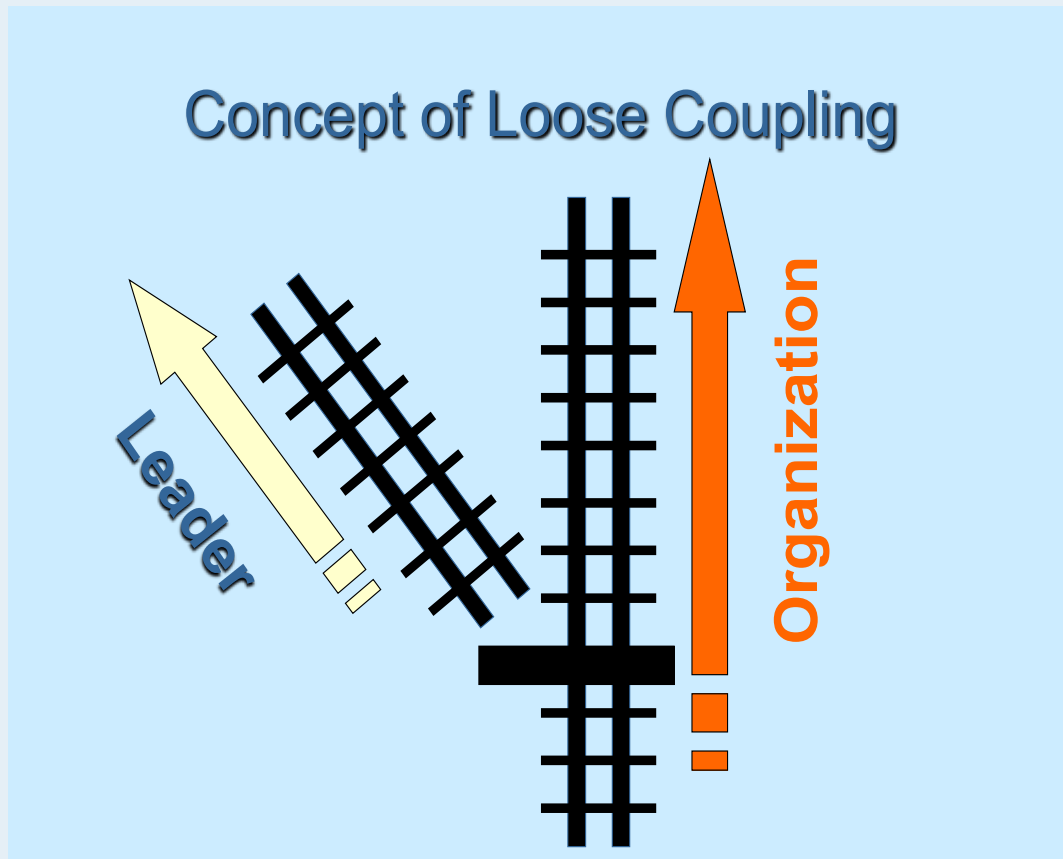
*Mission and values statements are declarations of the ideals of an organization, not descriptions of the realities of daily behavior.*

Nancy Cebula, Elizabeth Craig, Christopher Innes, Theresa Lantz, Tanya Rhone, and Tom Ward. *Culture and Change Management: Using APEX To Facilitate Organizational Change*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2012, p. 2.

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For the culture to reinforce the strategic plan and work toward achieving organizational goals, both must be mutually supportive. Otherwise, you will have what is known as “loose coupling.”<sup>vi</sup> As illustrated in Figure 3.3, this concept is similar to a railroad engineer who switches to another track, thinking that the train is dutifully chugging along right behind, only to discover eventually that the rest of the train never made the turn and is still headed down the original track.<sup>vii</sup> If your organization’s culture and your plans for the future are not jointly aligned—moving down the same track and headed together in the same direction—you are no more likely to reach your destination than a train running loose without a guiding engine.

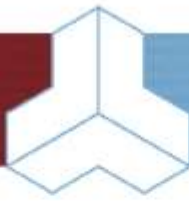
Figure 3.3: Is Your Organization Loosely Coupled?



National Institute of Corrections, *National Sheriffs' Institute Curriculum*. Longmont, CO: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2005.

### REDIRECTING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Earlier it was noted that just as culture affects organizational leadership, the best leaders are likewise able to influence the organizational culture. Notice the terms “redirect” and “influence.” Although we will discuss strategies for organizational change, it is both less threatening and more realistic to talk about redirecting the culture than completely changing it. It is also unlikely that the organization’s entire culture needs to be altered fundamentally, but rather that there are some parts of it that need to be aligned more closely with the leader’s vision. It is the warden’s job to identify what those areas are, separating the symptoms of negative culture from the causes.



Because culture is so resistant to change, however, it may inaccurately be viewed as a static condition. To the contrary, an agency's cultural development is a dynamic process that continuously evolves as interactions take place throughout the workplace. As Figure 3.4 indicates, you can shape this ongoing cultural transformation by everything from how you react to critical incidents to what you choose to reward, punish, measure, and pay attention to. In terms of effect, it almost goes without saying that it is the leader's actions rather than official policies in this regard that will be most influential.

While such long-term influence can eventually yield productive results, more immediate measures may well be needed to bring the culture into closer alignment with the organization's vision. In that regard, the following process has been suggested for implementing cultural change:<sup>viii</sup>

#### *Separate symptom from cause*

Often we jump into fixing a "problem" that has not been fully identified. Take the time to critically consider whether the change you have in mind will actually affect the underlying cause, rather than just address the symptom. For example, if an agency is plagued by low morale, throwing parties or implementing other initiatives designed to "cheer people up" is unlikely to be successful without addressing the reasons that morale is so poor.

#### *Target the change*

This means specifically determining, rationally justifying, and effectively communicating what will be altered (as well as what will remain stable).

#### *Envision a positive outcome*

Here the leader uses real incidents, events, or stories to help employees capture a sense of what things will be like when the new culture is in place, addressing questions and establishing a sense of excitement about what the new culture will be like.



Figure 3.4: Primary Mechanisms for Shaping Culture

*An agency's cultural development is a dynamic process that continuously evolves as interactions take place throughout the workplace, such as:*

- ✦ How leaders communicate
- ✦ What leaders pay attention to and react to
- ✦ What leaders elect to measure
- ✦ How leaders respond to crises
- ✦ What nonverbal messages leaders send by their role modeling
- ✦ What criteria leaders use to allocate rewards and status
- ✦ What criteria leaders use to recruit, select, and terminate employees

Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2004, p. 246.

### *Establish a supportive coalition*

It goes without saying that the leader must be an active advocate for change, but having a core group of people throughout the facility who are equally enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the new ideas will help to spread momentum while also providing stability during implementation.

### *Initiate action*

As the driving force behind the change, this step involves molding the new culture by promoting alternative behaviors and encouraging employees toward the transition in small increments. Whenever people venture into unknown territory, some degree of fear and resistance can be anticipated. Plans should therefore include strategies for preventing, and if necessary, overcoming this natural tendency. In that regard, participatory involvement of staff throughout the process can go a long way toward creating the sense of shared ownership that was encouraged during development of strategic plans in the previous chapter.

### *Plan for “small wins”*

Because people often do not have the patience to wait long for deferred gratification, it is important to celebrate small victories by finding something that is easy to change, changing it, and then publicizing the resulting success—thus encouraging staff to maintain their interest and their belief in the potential for positive outcomes.



### *Define and measure success*

Inasmuch as short-term victories are only abbreviated measures of success, it is essential to establish longer timetables with reachable milestones along the way. This not only provides continued encouragement as sequential milestones are reached but also makes periodic adjustments when interim results do not meet expectations.

### *Communicate the change process*

Throughout the transition, the importance of continuous communication, explanation, and clarification cannot be overstated, especially with regard to its role in overcoming the natural resistance to change and generating staff commitment.

Depending on the nature of the initiative, this could be a somewhat lengthy process demanding patience and perseverance from the leader. That is because any effective change process must proceed sequentially through a series of stages—from proactive planning to structured implementation with ongoing feedback and supportive functions along the way. Each of these steps contributes to a successful outcome, and while skipping any of them may create the “illusion of speed,” in the end, it “never produces a satisfactory result.”<sup>ix</sup>

Beyond trying to push the process through too quickly, when failed change efforts are analyzed more closely, it appears that a number of common errors were made, such as:<sup>x</sup>

### *Not establishing a great enough sense of urgency*

Everyone obviously is not going to share the leader’s compelling desire for change, and the difficulty of getting people out of their comfort zones is often underestimated. In that regard, the leader’s challenge is to “make the status quo seem more dangerous than launching into the unknown.”<sup>xi</sup>

### *Not creating a powerful enough guiding coalition*

In physics, “critical mass” refers to the amount of material needed to produce a nuclear reaction. While cultural transformation in your facility may not quite equate to nuclear fusion, it does require a critical mass *of people* rallying behind it to produce change. Otherwise, it may seem that progress is being made for a while, but eventually the opposition gathers enough force to obstruct the change.

### *Lacking a vision*

People need to know that their efforts are part of a bigger picture, with their individual contributions ultimately fitting together to achieve a meaningful, overriding vision. With a clear sense of overall direction, it is easier to bind everyone together and keep them on course. Moreover, it is this unifying vision that motivates employees to plug on despite obstacles, because they can see where all of their hard work is eventually headed.

*Undercommunicating the vision by a factor of ten*

Without the stimulation of ongoing communication, it is easy for people to either lose sight of the vision or become disenchanted with it. In both words and deeds, the leader needs to consistently “walk the talk,” becoming the “living symbol” of the new culture. This means continuously reinforcing the vision—not just in official communications, newsletters, meetings, and emails, but in everything from how employees are trained, supervised, and evaluated to how executive decisions are made.

*Not removing obstacles to the new vision*

Even those who are fully committed to the vision cannot be expected to persevere in the face of overwhelming obstacles. At times, these may be psychological, but often they are quite real, and it is the leader’s job to ensure that employees have the authority, resources, and incentive to continue to remain engaged.

*Not systematically creating short-term wins*

As the leader steadfastly dedicated to the vision, it may be difficult for you to appreciate the need for ongoing encouragement to maintain enthusiasm among your staff. Especially because major change takes so long to accomplish, people can easily grow weary and become apathetic without planned victory celebrations to keep them inspired along the way.

*Declaring victory too soon*

Planning to celebrate short-term wins does not, however, mean prematurely announcing successful completion. It may well take a number of years before the change actually penetrates deeply into the culture, and unless that occurs, the new approaches are likely to be short-lived.

*Not anchoring change in the culture*

Change is not fully institutionalized until it replaces the existing culture, becoming the accepted, unquestioning “way we do business here.” Moreover, to ensure its long-term survival, the new vision and related values must be embedded in succession planning for the next generation of agency supervisors, managers, and leaders.

Realistically, it is not feasible for any leader—no matter how firmly dedicated—to overcome all of the typical mistakes that can thwart even the best-intentioned initiatives. Simply becoming aware of the potential pitfalls, however, is a beginning step, and the more of them that can be avoided, the greater the chance for successfully implementing change. Throughout the process, the key is to remain focused, committed, and willing to modify your course if the feedback so dictates. Realize that adjustments may have to be made along the way. Stay open, flexible, and confident. Take steps to



make changes appear to be less threatening, and be sure to recognize and acknowledge those who assist in moving the process forward.<sup>xii</sup>

Staff will need some time to adjust and considerably more time to realize potential benefits of the transformation. However, even when less ambitious change efforts are undertaken, the importance of considering the organizational culture cannot be overstated. Since culture can be either a positive or a negative force, promoting or thwarting the process of change, it becomes your greatest asset or your worst liability.<sup>xiii</sup>

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*Organizational culture is widely considered to be one of the most significant factors in bringing about organizational change...*

Tobias Jung, et al., "Instruments for Exploring Organizational Culture: A Review of the Literature," *Public Administration Review*, November/December (2009): p. 1087.

*If one misreads or ignores the culture, one may never recover.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 20.

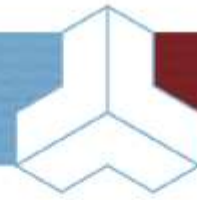
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As a warden or superintendent, you may well have the formal authority to order change unilaterally, but your success will be short-lived, having won the battle but lost the war. Change that is deeply rooted in the facility's culture cannot be rushed, declared, or imposed. While short-term compliance can be forced, long-term commitment comes only gradually and voluntarily. As one experienced warden said, "Changing the institution's culture is like navigating a large ship. You can only turn the ship a few degrees at a time." A similar incremental approach was suggested by another, who recommends bringing about change "slowly, one issue at a time," much like "peeling an onion."

### **REDUCING ORGANIZATIONAL STRESS**

Ultimately, attempts to change the culture can be expected to have both adverse and advantageous effects. Among the potential downside effects is organizationally induced stress. Working in corrections can be stressful enough without the added pressures of new leadership and organizational change demanding that things long taken for granted are now to be done differently.

Anything that we cannot avoid, alter, or control is likely to become a stressor for us—from being trapped in an unhappy marriage to being thrust out of our comfort zone at work. In fact, "the less control we have over a situation, the more stressful it will be."<sup>xiv</sup> That is why it is so important throughout the change process to involve those who will be affected by it, thereby giving them a greater sense of control over their work-related destiny. Even if change is positive, adjusting to it can be stressful.



Over time, continued exposure to stressors on the job drains employees of their energy and wears them down, possibly to the point of burnout. That is when they assume a shoulder-shrugging, “who cares?” cynical attitude that can become as infectious as a virus spreading through the facility’s culture. Like a chronic cough, such chronic stress is a slow, continual erosion that depletes the motivation, initiative, and enthusiasm of those exposed to it. Moreover, it does not take the introduction of widespread change to generate chronic organizational stress. To the contrary, it is a feature of stressors that employees routinely encounter on a day-to-day basis—from uncooperative inmates to unsupportive managers and unhappy coworkers. There may not be much that you can do to change the nature of your inmate population, but as the warden, you have direct control over both your managers and the work-related conditions that can affect job satisfaction among line staff by reducing organizational stress.

In some agencies, stress is simply considered part of the job, and complaining about it could well earn the employee a label of being too weak to handle it or “not cut out for this kind of work.” Often the outcome of this head-in-the-sand unwillingness to address the issue is that employees simply quit, leaving heavier workloads and mandatory overtime for their already overworked colleagues.

Even when correctional agencies do elect to take action, the response is typically to send stressed-out staff either to employee assistance programs for counseling or to training programs for help with developing coping techniques (such as exercise or meditation). Both of these traditional approaches put the primary burden on the employees to “get well,” but where do they go after completing their counseling sessions or training programs? Unfortunately, they are headed right back to the same stress-provoking workplace—perhaps better able to cope, but would it not be more effective to eliminate their stressors?

In contrast, more proactive approaches focus on preventing stress by addressing its underlying organizational causes. As described in Figure 3.5, this means stepping up to the plate and taking administrative responsibility for organizational stress by determining how you and other executive staff may be generating stress for line officers in the workplace. This can be as sophisticated as conducting an anonymous survey or as simple as walking around the facility with your antennae up for signs of tension, pressure, or frustration among employees. Exit interviews (as well as “staying interviews”—that is, finding out why those who are not leaving choose to stay) can also yield valuable information.<sup>xv</sup>

Once you have identified some of the primary sources of stress, you can begin to take remedial action. It will not, of course, be possible to eliminate all chronic stressors in the correctional workplace, but

even making employees aware that you are undertaking such efforts on their behalf demonstrates your appreciation for the stressfulness of their work and concern for their personal well-being.

Additionally, you will find that there is a strong link between organizational culture and chronic organizational stress. That is because stressed-out employees join in nurturing a negative culture as well as vice versa. The more negative the culture, the more stressful the work environment will be. Thus, pursuing the steps toward developing a positive agency culture that are outlined in Figure 3.6 is likely to have a beneficial secondary effect on reducing organizationally induced stress, which can

#### Figure 3.5: Administrative Strategies for Reducing Organizational Stress

*The following comprehensive approaches can be used to reduce organizational stress:*

- ✦ Make a commitment to a proactive approach – to doing something about preventing stress by eliminating its causes.
- ✦ Develop a participatory change process – strengthening commitment through participation, and beginning to replace supervisory control by self-control.
- ✦ Take the necessary followup actions – such as establishing clear expectations, communicating openly and honestly, giving positive feedback, trusting staff, and valuing their input.

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, p. 407.

produce further results in terms of everything from minimizing sick leave abuse to reducing turnover. While the very nature of correctional work involves “insufficient resources, uncooperative clients, and an unsupportive public,” these drawbacks will be considerably less frustrating “in a supportive administrative environment with a positive organizational culture.” <sup>xvi</sup>

#### Figure 3.6: Organizational Development Strategies to Improve Agency Culture

*The following initiatives can create a higher-performing organizational culture:*

- ✦ Creating a positive tone in the organizational climate
- ✦ Promoting positive interpersonal relationships with and between staff
- ✦ Stressing positive communications at all levels of the organization
- ✦ Infusing purpose and meaning into the work life of all staff

Kim Cameron, *Positive Leadership: Strategies for Extraordinary Performance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2008, p. 14.



## MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICTS

Regardless of how committed you are to reducing organizational stress, improving your facility's culture, and aligning staff with your long-term vision, there will inevitably be conflicts to be faced along the way. Yet this does not mean that all conflict is necessarily bad and should be avoided. To the contrary, a certain amount of *constructive* conflict is actually healthy for an organization. After all, if there is no conflict, then there must be no diversity of opinions, and without differing points of view, there is little potential for creativity, innovation, or change. In some organizations that have been led by dictatorial, "old time" wardens, employees may well be fearful of raising an alternative point of view, because they have often witnessed "messengers being shot" in the past. In such cases, the new warden will have to coach subordinates, especially managers, about their role and responsibility in terms of speaking out professionally and then ensure that they model the behavior.

However, if conflict gets personal, hypercritical, or misdirected, it has become destructive. The adverse effect of destructive conflict can be far-reaching, generating stress, destroying morale, damaging relationships, reducing productivity, undermining leadership, and generally creating misery throughout the workplace. Moreover, if employees get distracted by internal work conflicts, inattention to security issues can be a serious side effect.

When employees are constantly bickering and their rounds of attacks and counter-attacks get increasingly personal, intense, and negative, it is essential for you to intervene. Every intervention, of course, is not equally effective. All of the following strategies have been used to manage conflict, and each is appropriate in certain situations:<sup>xvii</sup>

### *Avoiding—Leave well enough alone*

Avoidance may not sound like much of a strategic initiative, but even not doing anything is a conscious decision. Here the leader simply lets things play out, "leaving the solution to fate or chance."<sup>xviii</sup> While this may at first seem like abdicating responsibility, there are times when it may be appropriate, such as when the issue is trivial, the conflict has not escalated and intervention would be premature, or the leader needs to buy time to think about a more effective long-term solution. The key to using this strategy is properly diagnosing the situation, as what may on the surface appear to be 'trivial' could be symptomatic of a much more serious underlying problem that will continue to fester if left unaddressed.

### *Smoothing—Hey, don't worry! Everything is OK*

The "smoothing" approach attempts to minimize differences, glossing over the seriousness of the dissent. Often expressed as "agreeing to disagree," it may work (at least temporarily) in situations where there is still the possibility of preserving harmony, but of course, it does not resolve the conflict.



### *Compromising—Let's split the difference*

In an effort to find a solution that will be at least partly acceptable to both parties, compromise is a popular conflict management strategy. Certainly, it is better than an all-out, fight-to-the-end struggle where one party clearly wins and the other clearly loses. It is also useful when time is of the essence. However, the major drawback of compromising is that because those involved have to settle for what they can haggle out of the deal, both parties are left feeling somewhat frustrated and dissatisfied.

### *Forcing—It will be done my way*

In hierarchical, para-military organizations like correctional agencies, it should not be surprising to find a tendency toward top-down reliance on power-based pressure to manage conflict. After all, you are the warden, and you have the official authority to compel your employees to comply with your decisions without concern for their acceptance. Like the unilateral decision-making that we discussed earlier, however, this approach is fraught with weaknesses, not the least of which is that it puts you in opposition to those whose position you did not support. Nevertheless, there are times when this may be a useful technique, such as in emergency situations or when the central office mandates something that you know will be unpopular with employees.

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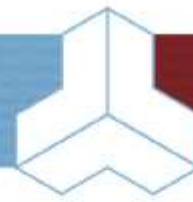
*While leaders shape the organizational culture...they may misperceive its actual nature, being "above it," both literally and figuratively.*

Mary K. Stohr et al., "Assessing the Organizational Culture in a Jail Setting," *The Prison Journal*, 92, no. 3 (2012): p. 359.

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### *Collaborating—Using group synergy to develop a win/win resolution*

As may be evident by now, the major overall weakness of all of the strategies listed above is that none of them addresses the source of the conflict. Much like the limitations of training and counseling strategies for dealing with employee stress that were discussed previously, they may enable you to cope with the situation better, but they do not actually resolve the conflict itself. In contrast, collaboration builds consensus by facilitating a systematic, step-by-step resolution of the conflict. First, each side's positions are clarified, and areas of agreement as well as disagreement are determined. Then an integrative solution is collaboratively developed through a process designed to achieve consensus on a win/win outcome.<sup>xix</sup> While this requires more time, commitment, energy, and skill than other options, it is also more likely to be effective over the long term. Because it is so time-consuming and labor-intensive, however, all conflicts are not necessarily worth the effort to pursue a collaborative solution.



Like conflict management strategies, it is apparent that “quick fix” approaches to organizational culture will not yield long-term results. Culture is a powerful controlling force in your institution; it will determine the success or failure of virtually any reform efforts that you undertake. Yet because it is also an unseen feature that everyone takes for granted, it is easy to overlook, especially by someone isolated at the very top of the chain of command.

Without paying careful attention to addressing the culture, however, new leaders can easily overlook its pervasive effect, assuming that issuing mandatory edicts will be sufficient to orchestrate change or resolve disagreements. To the contrary, not only is a negative culture likely to stifle any change in the status quo, but it also can have damaging repercussions throughout the facility on everything from generating chronic stress to promoting destructive conflict. Obviously, no one enjoys working in a stressful, conflict-ridden, or discouraging climate. When negative features of the culture trump positive intentions of the leader, it can promote staff turnover, deplete energy, drain resources, reduce productivity, and possibly even contribute to the potential for liability and unsafe working conditions.

Such organizations not only reflect poor management, but also lack of leadership. Leaders are proactive, visionary problem solvers who are able to establish a culture that works for them rather than in opposition. Admittedly, there are few challenges that you as a leader will face that will demand more of your time, energy, skill, and dedicated commitment than shaping the organizational culture in a positive, supportive, and forward-moving direction. It is a long-term process that demands patient persistence. Nevertheless, it is an extremely worthwhile challenge to undertake. In fact, there would otherwise be no need for leadership. After all, if a facility is not in need of organizational change, it can simply be managed rather than led.

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*It is essential that correctional agencies...learn how to create climates that produce positive outcomes leading to safe and productive institutions.*

Mark Fleisher, “Creating a Positive Climate in a New Federal Prison,” *Corrections Compendium*, 25, no. 1, (January, 2000): p. 1.

*The best leaders are those who identify culture and then develop strategic plans to overcome or change culture by working hard to gain staff support and buy-in.*

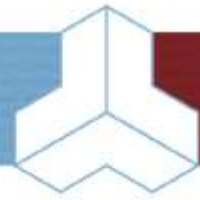
Susan W. McCampbell, “So You Want to be the Boss: Tips for Becoming a Jail Administrator,” *American Jails*, September/October (2002): p. 19.

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### “TO DO” CHECKLIST

- ☐ Recognize what shared beliefs are binding your facility’s culture together.
- ☐ Make an effort to mentally step outside of your organization’s culture and view it objectively as a newcomer (with outside help if needed).
- ☐ Get an overview of the culture at your workplace by observing day-to-day operations with an impartial, critical eye.
- ☐ Determine whether operational practices are following written policies.
- ☐ Learn the history of your institution, including the results of past efforts to initiate reforms.
- ☐ Get to know your staff and the inmate population, especially the informal leaders.
- ☐ Ensure that your facility is not experiencing “loose coupling.”
- ☐ Identify the primary means you have for shaping organizational culture.
- ☐ Develop a systematic plan for implementing cultural change that begins with separating symptoms from problems, then targeting the change and envisioning a positive outcome.
- ☐ Continue your plan by continuously communicating the change process and establishing a supportive coalition.
- ☐ Once action is initiated for implementing cultural change, establish a feedback system to measure success and plan to celebrate “small wins” along the way.
- ☐ Throughout the cultural change process, be certain to communicate a sense of urgency, reinforce the vision, keep people motivated, and remove obstacles blocking the way to success.
- ☐ Before “declaring victory,” ensure that the change is firmly anchored in your facility’s culture.
- ☐ Remain focused, committed, and patient through the change process, keeping in mind that it is likely going to take years to accomplish fully.
- ☐ Recognize how lack of control may be contributing to organizational stress in your facility.
- ☐ Commit to a proactive approach to organizational stress by identifying and addressing its causes.
- ☐ Employ organizational development strategies designed to create a more positive culture.
- ☐ Recognize the difference between constructive and destructive conflict in your facility.



- ☐ Identify which conflict management approach is most appropriate for which organizational disputes that you face.
- ☐ Determine the advantages of using a collaborative approach to conflict resolution, along with its drawbacks.
- ☐ Fulfill your role as a leader in terms of shaping organizational culture in a positive direction.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

<sup>ii</sup> Edgar H. Schein, *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2004, p. 10.

<sup>iii</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>iv</sup> See Nancy Cebula, Elizabeth Craig, Christopher Innes, Theresa Lantz, Tanya Rhone, and Tom Ward, *Culture and Change Management: Using APEX to Facilitate Organizational Change*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2012, and Tobias Jung, Tim Scott, Huw Davies, Peter Bower, Diane Whalley, Rosaline McNally, and Russell Mannion, "Instruments for Exploring Organizational Culture," *Public Administration Review*, November/December (2009): p. 1087–1096.

<sup>v</sup> It should be noted that cultural assessment instruments do not necessarily prescribe what needs to be changed, but rather, they establish a clearer picture of the current culture to help the leader determine what changes, if any, may be required.

<sup>vi</sup> John W. Meyer and Brian Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology*, 38 (1977): p. 430–463.

<sup>vii</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *FutureForce: A Guide to Building the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Corrections Workforce*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 19–20.

<sup>viii</sup> With the exception of the first bullet, modified from Kim S. Cameron and Robert E. Quinn, *Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2011.

<sup>ix</sup> John P. Kotter, *What Leaders Really Do*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Book, 1999, p. 76.

<sup>x</sup> *Ibid.*, 76–91.

<sup>xi</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>xii</sup> For additional suggestions, see Ken Miller, *The Change Agent's Guide to Radical Improvement*. Milwaukee, WI: ASQ Quality Press, 2002; and Harvard Business Fundamentals, *Managing Change and Transition*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2003.

<sup>xiii</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *FutureForce: A Guide to Building the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Corrections Workforce*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 16.

<sup>xiv</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, "Searching for Stress in All the Wrong Places: Combating Chronic Organizational Stressors in Policing," *Police Practice and Research*, 5, no. 3 (July 2004), p. 261.

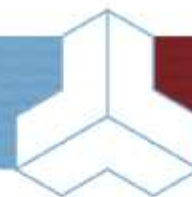
<sup>xv</sup> See Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Elizabeth P. Layman (2006). *FutureForce: A Guide to Building the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Corrections Workforce*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 66–68.

<sup>xvi</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, p. 419–420.

<sup>xvii</sup> Thomas A. Kayser, "Conflict Management: Facilitating Five Steps to Collaborative Conflict Resolution," in *Team Power: How to Unleash the Collaborative Genius of Work Teams*. New York, NY: Irwin/McGraw-Hill, 1994, p. 138–140.

<sup>xviii</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>xix</sup> For a detailed description of the collaborative process, see Kayser, pp. 143–163. See also Nancy Cebula, Elizabeth Craig, John Eggers, Marge Douville Farjardo, James Gray, and Theresa Lantz, "Case Study - Collaboration Shifts a Dysfunctional Culture," Chapter 5 in *Achieving Performance Excellence: The Influence of Leadership on Organizational Performance*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2012, p. 51–53.



## CHAPTER 4: DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES

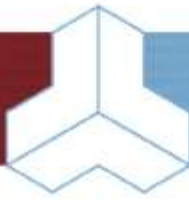
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*Just as the organization's culture is shaped by interactions among employees, it is likewise those same employees who will account for much of your effectiveness as a warden. Human capital is the most essential, as well as most expensive, asset that you have. It takes only one quick glance at the budget to determine where the vast majority of your facility's fiscal resources are being spent—clearly, it is on employee salaries and benefits. Then take a look at your calendar—chances are that personnel issues consume a sizeable portion of your time as well. Moreover, it is the competence, capability, and commitment of those same staff members that, on a day-to-day basis, will either promote or derail plans for achieving the organizational vision. Employees are your most valuable resource—not just because of what they cost, but more importantly, because of what they can accomplish.*

Verifying this, the competency profile compiled for the National Institute of Corrections in 2008 ranked human resource management as one of the top two most essential duties of a prison warden.<sup>i</sup> In fact, during the focus group discussions used to compose the competency list, participants reported that much of their time was consumed by various aspects of human resource management, ranging from “monitoring employee evaluations” to “providing incentives for staff, facilitating labor relationships, managing grievance systems, and monitoring/implementing corrective actions.”<sup>ii</sup>

Yet the term “managing human resources” is at the same time both meaningful and misleading. On the one hand, it is insightful to recognize that employees are not mere names on an organizational chart, but rather, expensive assets to whom valuable fiscal resources are committed. On the other hand, however, it is somewhat misleading to view the warden's job as managing people. To the contrary, it is your job to manage the *environment* within which people work. Given the right organizational climate, qualified employees can maximize their strengths, reach their full potential, and ultimately attain the satisfaction of managing themselves—all of which empowers them as team members united with you toward achieving desired results.

This assumes that the right people are placed in the right positions, that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to do the job, and that they are continually encouraged to sustain their initial organizational commitment. After all, no one starts a new job feeling discouraged or uncommitted. To the contrary, new recruits are inevitably upbeat. The challenge is maintaining that level of enthusiasm throughout their career, which starts with getting the right people matched with the right jobs.



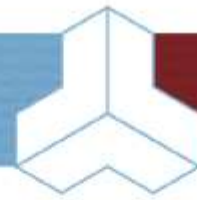
### GETTING THE RIGHT PEOPLE IN THE RIGHT POSITIONS

Most of the responsibility for employee recruitment and selection likely rests with your state's central or regional personnel office.<sup>iii</sup> Even if your hiring authority is limited, however, once people are employed, they may be able to transfer among various institutions throughout the state. Especially if several prisons are within close proximity, the one with a reputation as “a good place to work”—where employees are valued, where they are treated fairly, where there is mutual respect between line staff and supervisors/managers—will be in a better position to fill staff vacancies quickly with well-qualified candidates.

A broader pool to select from also makes it easier to match a candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities to the specific capabilities needed to function effectively in various positions throughout the facility. In that regard, knowing the requirements of collective bargaining agreements, along with any limits on your ability to assign employees to posts or job duties, is essential. It goes without saying that staff who are well-matched with jobs in a facility with a positive, upbeat organizational culture are likely to be much more reluctant to leave such a desirable workplace, thus reducing attrition and the subsequent pressure to fill unanticipated vacancies.

### KEEPING THE WORKERS YOU WORKED SO HARD TO FIND

When asked to identify their most challenging current issue, wardens responding to the 2013 NIC National Survey of Prison Wardens (which served as the basis for this guide) mentioned various aspects of “retaining employees” second most frequently, (following only comments related to “balancing the budget”). That is not surprising, because the two may well be intricately related. In the current economic climate, it is unlikely that the central office will be able to fill any but the most critical facility vacancies. In fact, it is always possible that vacant positions can be lost permanently. Thus, whenever someone quits, it not only costs thousands of dollars to replace the employee, but the lapse between the resignation and refilling the position can be as expensive. This puts pressure on remaining employees to fill the workload gap, which creates stress and strain for them and overtime worries for their supervisors, potentially affecting morale throughout the facility. Therefore, it is to everyone's advantage to do your utmost to reduce turnover by retaining your talented, capable employees.



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*Just as an individual's personality is shaped during their early formative years, an employee's approach to work is influenced by early experiences on the job. This is not the time to let them fend for themselves, drifting in uncertainty. New hires are looking for guidance, direction, support, and reassurance. Whether those needs are met will help to determine if they make it past those first critical months.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Leslie Leip, *The Future Is Now: Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jail Workforce*. Hagerstown, MD: American Jail Association, 2009, p. 64.

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It has been said that planning for inmates' release should begin the day they enter the facility. Likewise, strategies for staff retention should begin the day the recruit is hired. Getting new employees off to a good start can go far toward creating a "bond" with their new workplace. Most of us probably remember how vulnerable and out of place we've felt during our first day on a new job and how much we would have appreciated a warm, open-hearted welcome. Offering one-on-one constructive advice, non-judgmental feedback, and personal assistance through a mentor during those first few weeks on the job can substantially ease the transition of new recruits into the unfamiliar world of a correctional institution. Additionally, it is important to:

- ✦ Ensure that they know where everything is and especially where to go for help.
- ✦ Be certain that they are not placed in positions that they are not yet prepared to handle.
- ✦ Provide opportunities for frequent debriefings to address any issues, concerns, or uncertainties and, most importantly, whether they might be thinking about leaving.<sup>iv</sup>

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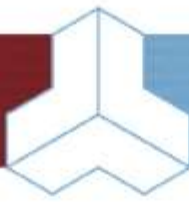
*The most important retention variables that an administrator can control include communication of genuine interest, realistic promotion opportunities, and the full use of employee skills.*

William H. Price, Richard Kiebusch, and John Thesis, "Causes of Employee Turnover in Sheriff Operated Jails," *Public Personnel Management*, 36, no. 1, (Spring, 2007): p. 51.

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Ultimately, it all comes down to affirming the newcomer's importance to the work team, making each new recruit feel that he or she is a valuable addition to your "facility family." After all, people are much more likely to leave an impersonal job than to walk away from the intimacy of their family.





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*Imagine that you arrive at work one morning to find...a brand new desktop computer has disappeared. You call the building security office and the police. Then you launch your own investigation. You are determined to find out how this happened and who is responsible...You will not rest until the case is solved...no more property will be lost! Now think about the last time one of your most talented employees...just walked out your door. What kind of investigation did you launch? What measures were implemented to prevent it from happening again?*

Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan-Evans, *Love 'em or Lose 'em: Getting Good People to Stay*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1999, p. 111.

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As with any long-term relationship, the challenge then shifts to keeping the flame burning - i.e., maintaining their successful integration and positive outlook as subsequent years on the job begin to take their toll on the commitment and enthusiasm that they displayed as recruits during their first days on the job. The key is to prevent the dissatisfaction, disenchantment, and disengagement that can settle in over the years - often resulting from a negative culture, causing workers to think seriously about quitting. Throughout this guide, we have discussed a number of strategies for enhancing employee engagement and job satisfaction - from involving them in organizational decision-making to expressing appreciation for their service and listening to their concerns. That means doing whatever you can to make people feel that they are valued and appreciated colleagues whose aspirations and apprehensions matter as much to you as their performance and productivity.

More specifically, if you are hiring the right people for the job in the first place, reducing attrition involves determining two things: why some are leaving and why others are staying. It is not uncommon for correctional agencies to conduct exit interviews to address the first question, but it becomes a meaningless exercise if findings are not analyzed to uncover common themes or no changes are made on the basis of the results. Careful analysis of the possible reasons for a high attrition rate might indicate the need for anything from improving pre-employment orientation to more extensive selection screening, additional in-service training, reducing organizationally induced stress, changing supervisory or managerial practices, enhancing communications, or providing greater recognition, support, and appreciation. In fact, studies in both corrections and the private sector indicate that agencies concerned about retention recognize the importance of:

- ✦ Close alignment between the agency's mission/vision and its management practices
- ✦ Consistent, two-way communication between management and line staff

- ✦ Fair, value-driven policies, procedures, and decision-making practices
- ✦ Clear expectations and objective performance measures
- ✦ Opportunities for growth and development
- ✦ Employee integration through participatory management
- ✦ Personalized, sincere, publicly expressed recognition and appreciation
- ✦ Quality-oriented, caring supervisors
- ✦ An organizational culture that values mutually supportive teamwork, inspiring a sense of “family” as well as professional pride <sup>v</sup>

Moreover, it can also be useful to conduct “staying” surveys to find out what makes people think about leaving and why, nevertheless, some stay. Is it simply because they have no better options? Or are there things drawing them to your facility that you can capitalize on and maximize? In any event, keep in mind that research in the private sector indicates that people are more likely to quit as a result of internal organizational factors that are “pushing” them out, such as lack of respect from management, rather than external factors that are “pulling them” toward something else, such as higher salaries. As one observer put it, “Employees don’t quit their companies, they quit their bosses.” <sup>vi</sup>

Again, it is noteworthy to repeat that people are less likely to leave a family than a boss. However, this does not necessarily mean that a compassionate, caring workplace is consistently harmonious. Just as parents and their children do not always get along, generational differences within your workforce can create and foster misunderstanding and conflict, especially among workers who do not understand where those outside of their own generation are “coming from.”

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*While some of my management team may be frustrated by “Generation Xers,” we all need to remember what our bosses thought about us...*

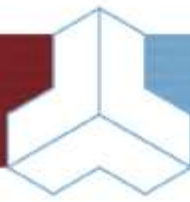
Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 54.

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## USING GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY TO YOUR FACILITY’S ADVANTAGE

Successful leadership today means overseeing a widely diverse workforce. Yet the contemporary concept of “diversity” is not limited to differences in race, gender, age, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or similar traditional distinctions. Today, diversity also encompasses generational differences.

In contrast to our own generation, most of us believe that subsequent generations are not as competent, can be difficult to manage, and basically, will never amount to much. By the same token,



the newer generations in the workplace tend to view their predecessors as inflexibly anchored in an outdated time. Such inter-generational conflict is nothing new. It arises from contrasting values among the three generations of workers who are employed in the contemporary labor force:

*Baby boomers (born between 1943 and 1964)*

Coming of age during the social unrest of the tumultuous 1960s, baby boomers have continued their lifelong search for self-fulfillment, personal gratification, civic involvement, and meaningful lives. As part of the largest birth cohort that has ever influenced this country, they are now soon destined to retire *en mass*.<sup>vii</sup> In the meantime, they are energetic, optimistic team-players who are sensitive to feedback, as well as somewhat judgmental, and self-centered. Boomers tend to stereotype Generation Xers as impatient, self-serving, cynical, and “technologically over-dependent people who lack social skills [and] want to do everything their own way.”<sup>viii</sup>

*Generation Xers (born between 1965 and 1980)*

Often the children of working parents, single-parent households, or nontraditional family arrangements, Gen-Xers realized early in life that they would need to take care of themselves; thus, they are often referred to as “latch-key kids.”<sup>ix</sup> As a result, they tend to be self-reliant “survivors” who view work more as a job than a career, seek greater balance between their personal and professional lives, and are more mobile, flexible, and technologically savvy than any of their predecessors.<sup>x</sup> They are value-programmed to continually ask why, they need frequent feedback, and they tend to view boomers as technologically challenged, overly serious workaholics who are “set in their ways.”<sup>xi</sup> It is from this cohort that your facility’s next generation of leadership will come.

*Millennials (also known as Generation Y, born between 1981 and 2000)*

These newest entrants into the workforce grew up in an era characterized by both the worst and the best social milestones, including everything from the 9/11 disaster to the instant accessibility provided by text messaging and social networking. As a result, they are marching into the workplace to the tune of a different drummer.<sup>xii</sup> Not only are they physically distinct by virtue of personalized tattoos and piercings, but “when it comes to loyalty, the place they work for is last on the list, behind their families, friends, coworkers, and of course, themselves.”<sup>xiii</sup> They likely reflect the bulk of your line staff, and their numbers will soon grow to exceed other generational cohorts in the workplace. However, within the paramilitary structure of correctional agencies, it may be difficult to attract and retain Millennials. As a result, you will need to look for creative ways to maintain their interest and motivation, because their willingness to remain committed to your organization will have a substantial influence on its future.

*Traditionalists [born before 1943] 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 “don’t command—collaborate!”*

Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, *When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash, How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work*. New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2002, p. 30–31.

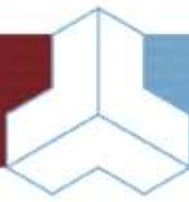
Effectively integrating generational cohorts into the workplace also involves making their supervisors aware of how to take advantage of their attributes and what techniques will work best to motivate them and keep them engaged. For example, a supervisor who explains to “Xers” *why* a certain assignment needs to be done a certain way and provides frequent feedback throughout the process is likely to obtain better results than one who is insensitive to what “Xers” are looking for. As the details presented in table 4.1 indicate, with greater knowledge about what values motivate the various generations of employees in your facility, you will be in a better position to develop motivational techniques, retention initiatives, and even disciplinary actions that are directly relevant to each group.

Table 4.1: Motivation across the Great Generational Divide

WORK RELATED FACTORS	BABY BOOMERS (born between 1943-1964)	GENERATION XERS (Born between 1965-1980)	MILLENNIALS (born between 1981-2000)
Showing appreciation	Thank them with a hand-written note	Thank them with an email that also asks for their input on another issue	Thank them personally or by email, but treat them as an equal
Engaging employees	Engage them and focus on their future career development	Empower them, and then let them alone to do their work	Encourage and use their techno-knowledge
Management practices	Expect them to question you (management)	Avoid the strong management approach; be honest and give them independence	Be a role model for them, and lead with sincerity
Retention initiatives	Ask them to be mentors; consider employing them part-time or under contract	Allow flexibility for family and work balance	Allow flexibility, but provide a mentor

Source: Modified from Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *FutureForce: A Guide to Building the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Corrections Workforce*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2006, p. 83.

Nevertheless, there are certain universal principles that generally apply to people regardless of the generational cohort that they represent. After a seven-year study, the Center for Creative Leadership questioned some traditional thinking about generational differences and offered the following advice for leading employees of all generations:

*Generations have similar values*

Across all generations, “family” is the value of choice, and other shared values include integrity, achievement, love, competence, happiness, self-respect, and responsibility.

*Everyone wants respect*

We often hear that younger people are disrespectful of older employees and people in authority...and that older people show no respect for younger talent and ideas. The reality is that everyone wants respect. They just do not define it in the same way.

*Trust and credibility matter*

People of all generations want their leaders to be credible, to be trusted, to listen well, to be farsighted, and to be encouraging.

*No one really likes change*

The stereotype is that older people hate change and younger generations thrive on it, but these are inaccurate assumptions. In general, people from all generations are uncomfortable with change. Resistance has nothing to do with age; it is all about how much one has to gain or lose with the change.

*Loyalty depends on the context*

The perception that older workers are more loyal is, in fact, associated with context, not age. For example, people who are closer to retirement are more likely to want to stay with the same organization, and people higher in the chain of command work more hours than people lower in the organization.

*It's as easy to retain a young person as an older one—if you do the right things*

Just about everyone feels overworked and underpaid. People of all generations have the same ideas about what their organization can do to retain them—room to advance, respect and recognition, better quality of life, and fair compensation.

*Everyone wants to learn*

Learning and development were among the issues most frequently mentioned by all generations surveyed. Everyone wants the training necessary to do their current job well, and they are also interested in what they need to learn to get ahead.

*Almost everyone wants a coach*

We have heard that younger people are constantly asking for feedback, but that older employees do not want any at all. Everyone wants to know how he or she is doing and wants to learn how to do better.<sup>xiv</sup>



In essence, the more each cohort knows about the others, the less likely everyone is to unfairly stereotype those from different generations, and the more likely they are to discover that they probably have more in common than they may have realized. With such insights, they are able to capitalize on each other's strengths better, blending together as a team.

### MAINTAINING EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION

That is not, however, to say that everyone is motivated by the same things. Nor are the same disciplinary approaches equally punishing to everyone. Quite simply, one size does not fit all. Perhaps, then, it is not surprising to find that when the 2013 NIC National Survey of Prison Wardens (cited throughout this guide) asked what their greatest current challenge is, dealing with staff issues ranked third (just behind balancing the budget and retaining employees). The specific issues cited ranged from maintaining morale and motivating staff to dealing with poor attitudes and misconduct. If you are like most administrators, you are unfortunately spending considerably more time on the latter than the former. Obviously, the ratio should be reversed.

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*When managers treat employees as an “expendable resource,” they should not be surprised when employees treat work as an “expendable relationship.”*

Bruce Tulgan, *Managing Generation X: How to Bring Out the Best in Young Talent*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton and Company, 2000, p. 176.

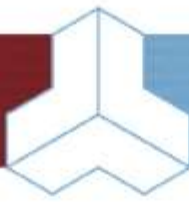
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Problem employees often demand a disproportionate amount of time, which does not go without notice by the undemanding employees who are performing well. These are the people who faithfully come to work every day right on time, put in a full day's work with few complaints, and often go well above and beyond what is expected of them. As the “silent majority” with a clean disciplinary record, they never command your attention. Without positive feedback, however, some may find it difficult to continue to maintain their dedicated service. Quite simply, “when hard workers blend into the organizational woodwork with hardly any notice, it is almost inevitable that their morale will suffer and turnover will increase.”<sup>xv</sup>

### PRAISING AND REWARDING EMPLOYEES

In that regard, it is an unfortunate fact of life that most government personnel systems maintain considerably fewer procedures for rewarding or praising staff than for disciplining or punishing them. Moreover, even when employee award initiatives are developed, often they are not generationally relevant or valued by employees. Many of the types of recognition that were popular in the past—such as service pins, employee-of-the-month awards, and attendance plaques—have outlived their





usefulness to today's generations. That is not just because they are less meaningful for newer generations, but perhaps more importantly, because they "have become so routine that their value is diminished." <sup>xvi</sup> Moreover, such initiatives often tend to be superficial pat-them-all-on-the-back programs that can leave people wondering how everyone who simply "hangs in there" could possibly be so uniformly meritorious. As one writer on this topic noted, instead of "rewarding endurance," our focus should be on "rewarding performance." <sup>xvii</sup>

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*Showing your staff that you genuinely care for them and their well-being goes a long way in getting them to join you in your journey.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Thus, correctional administrators need to seek not just new criteria for what will be rewarded, but also more creative ways to acknowledge and express appreciation for a job well-done. Again, just as with generational considerations, staff ideas of what might be rewarding are not necessarily the same as those of "baby boom" administrators who may be out of touch with what is important to newer members of the workforce. Only with employee input can you determine what is most important to them.

Keep in mind, however, that good ideas do not need to be costly. In fact, they do not need to cost much of anything. Examples might include use of a premium parking space for a week or so, a free on-duty meal, enabling the employee to select a special assignment of their choice for a designated period of time, posting a picture of the employee and a description of the celebrated accomplishment on the facility bulletin board or in the department newsletter, and the like. Sometimes just a hand-written note or personal phone call from the warden can go far to brighten an employee's day and to communicate that you care. Even more simply, make it a point to notice positive staff behavior and comment on it when touring the institution. Especially if used judiciously, praise and reinforcement can go far toward keeping motivated employees performing well and redirecting even some of the more difficult employees. If an official reward program has been established at your institution, here are a few safeguards to maximize its effectiveness:

*Make sure that the behavior being recognized reflects the core values, mission, and vision of the organization*

If, for example, you are in the process of implementing evidence-based practices, the "employee of the month" should not be someone who openly criticizes this initiative as "just a lot more paperwork."

*Get staff input in terms of what types of performance will be rewarded and what selection criteria will be used*

To be meaningful and well-respected, the process needs to be as transparent, equitable, and objective as possible, which also guards against perceptions that you are selecting the “warden’s pets” for recognition.

*Match the reward criteria to the behavior, but the award itself to the individual*

In other words, the standards for presenting recognition should be performance-based, but what is presented should be something meaningful to the recipient.

*Make the reward proportionate to the achievement*

That is, do not attach an extremely valuable award to a modest achievement, such as on-time arrival, or vice versa. If someone has saved the organization tens of thousands of dollars, a \$10 appreciative plaque would likely be viewed as insufficient recognition.

*Be certain that the criteria selected do not backfire*

For instance, it may sound like a good idea to offer incentives for perfect attendance, but if sick people struggle to work during flu season, spreading infection throughout the facility, you may regret having established the “perfect attendance” award.

*Exclude incentives that promote competition between employees or work units*

While the competition may start out as “friendly,” it can quickly deteriorate into back-stabbing conflict, actually inhibiting the mutual cooperation that would make the organization more productive.

*Avoid phoniness and over-use of rewards*

Especially if rewards start taking on a tone of being “contrived gimmicks” that all but a few of the very least deserving have at some point received, they become meaningless gestures.

*Focus on genuine, personal appreciation, while de-emphasizing the manipulative, institutional nature of rewards*

In fact, some would go so far as to argue that “rewards and punishments are not opposites at all,” but rather, that they are “two sides of the same coin,” with both ultimately trying to manage behavior.<sup>xviii</sup>

## **CORRECTING AND DISCIPLINING EMPLOYEES**

Given the negative, punitive nature of most disciplinary actions, it is easy to forget that according to the dictionary, the word “discipline” itself comes from the Latin *disciplina*, which means “teaching” or “learning” (and *discipulus*, meaning “pupil”). In fact, the word “disciple”—a follower learning from a great teacher—shares the same origins. Yet it is unlikely that very many current correctional staff or administrators view the disciplinary process primarily as a teaching or learning opportunity. Although a



major goal of discipline is to correct future behavior, punishment is usually retroactive (that is, focused on what has already happened), rather than proactive, looking toward changing behavior in the future. Moreover, the immediate effect is usually negative, provoking the types of resistance and resentment that can promote everything from an adversarial workplace atmosphere to actual worker sabotage. Even worse is when official action follows long drawn-out disciplinary processes. By the time the punishment is implemented, no one may even remember the event that triggered it.

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*When we punish someone, we teach only what he is not supposed to do and offer insufficient guidance on what he should do....*

Alfie Kohn, *Punished by Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise, and Other Bribes*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1999, p. 166.

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As a result of the arbitrary and capricious manner in which punishment has at times been administered in the past, the disciplinary process is now governed by legal regulations at the federal, state, and local levels of government, as well as contractual rights in collective bargaining agreements. Because they vary from state to state, it is your responsibility to become familiar with the rights and regulations within your jurisdiction. Additionally, it is not uncommon for staff to perceive disciplinary actions as unfair in the absence of knowledge about the details and actual circumstances involved. Although you may not be able to share such information, you should be aware of the potential for widespread misperception and do what is possible in terms of “damage control.”

Regardless of the specific parameters of your disciplinary authority, all systems have a progressive range of sanctions except, of course, for the most serious infractions. While that is also generally true of disciplinary practices in business and industry, there is a difference here. Unlike mistakes or misconduct in the private sector, the consequences of such shortcomings in correctional institutions can be catastrophic—potentially costing lives, inflicting serious injury, endangering the public, and/or creating political backlash, as well as generating expensive litigation and agency liability.

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*Always remember that the process of discipline is to correct the problem, not to discourage the employee. People make mistakes, and if they learn from them, everyone wins!*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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In that regard, your facility supervisors, managers, and administrators can become vulnerable to incurring “vicarious liability”—i.e., payment to victims resulting from a litigious situation in which those in

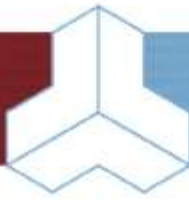
charge knew (or should have known) that inappropriate employee behavior was occurring yet did nothing to prevent or stop it. In other words, they themselves did not directly engage in the wrongful actions that resulted in harmful consequences, but they hired, trained, supervised, or otherwise held administrative responsibility over those who did engage in the harmful behavior. They are, therefore, vicariously (i.e., indirectly) responsible.

Nevertheless, that does not mean addressing everyone's infractions in the same manner. Assuming that an employee's initial misconduct is not of a very serious nature, the disciplinary process moves forward on a progressively upward path. Thus, over-reaction to a relatively minor, first-time incident is hopefully avoided, while at the same time ensuring that cumulatively mounting infractions are dealt with more severely. Such progressive discipline is based on the concept that inappropriate behavior should not be overlooked and that intervention is needed to help employees learn from their mistakes. Note that although new learning and behavioral change are the outcomes that you hope to achieve, the disciplinary penalty itself is always aimed at the behavior, not the employee. Of course, if the behavior (or other form of misconduct) continues, the associated penalties progressively increase in severity.

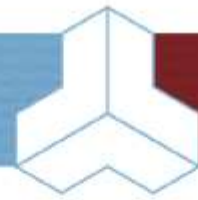
Perhaps most important in this regard is your role in making certain that your managers understand the need for continual documentation of the employee's unsatisfactory behavior as well as any interventions, such as informal counseling. Not only is proper documentation essential before you or the central office can take formal disciplinary action, but it can also protect against everything from accusations of unfairness to potential liability lawsuits from inmates, the general public, or the employees involved. Essentially, if it isn't documented, it didn't happen.

It has often been said that discipline must be "firm, fair, and consistent" to be effective, and to that "timely" should be added. Disciplinary action that is far removed from the time that the infraction occurred loses much of its impact. Ultimately, the purpose is to correct behavior and prevent future mistakes or misconduct. To do so, it is your responsibility to ensure that its purpose is being achieved by moving the process along as expeditiously as possible without violating state law, department policy, or union contract provisions.

As warden, you will probably not be handling very much disciplinary action directly. All but the most serious forms of misconduct will likely be addressed by your managers and supervisors. However, it is essential that they understand not only how the process works from an administrative perspective, but most importantly, how it fits within and supports the vision, mission, and values of the organization. From the standpoint of frontline staff, you should also make it a point to learn about the history of staff discipline in the institution, especially in terms of how employees perceive the process. If they do not



view it as equitable, or if it has created ongoing conflict between line staff and management, it could be generating organizational stress, low morale, and even turnover. Moreover, it makes little difference whether the perceptions of employees are inaccurate in this regard. Because perception *is* reality in the eye of the beholder, it will be up to you to apply your communication skills to the challenge of correcting any erroneous misunderstandings.



### **“TO DO” CHECKLIST**

- ☐ Recognize your responsibility to manage and improve the environment within which people work.
- ☐ To the extent feasible, place employees in your facility in positions compatible with their knowledge, skills, and capabilities.
- ☐ Start from their first day of employment to create a bond between new hires and your facility.
- ☐ Create and maintain a positive atmosphere in your institution.
- ☐ Take steps to make your employees feel valued.
- ☐ Reduce attrition by finding out why people are staying and why others are leaving, and initiate strategies to address the primary concerns.
- ☐ Search for ways to use generational diversity to your facility's advantage.
- ☐ Ensure that your facility's practices are generationally relevant.
- ☐ Express appreciation to your staff in creative, meaningful ways.
- ☐ Use the disciplinary process as a learning tool to provide guidance to staff in terms of what is expected of them.
- ☐ Make certain that your managers and supervisors understand how to limit their potential for vicarious liability.



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## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Rick Ruddell and Tommy Norris, "The Changing Role of Wardens: A Focus on Safety and Security," *Corrections Today*, (December 2008): 37.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>iii</sup> If, however, you are directly responsible for recruitment and selection at your facility, you may want to consult "Chapter Two: Recruitment and Selection—Bringing the Best and the Brightest on Board," in Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Leslie Leip, *The Future Is Now: Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jail Workforce*. Hagerstown, MD: American Jail Association, 2009.

<sup>iv</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, Susan W. McCampbell, and Leslie Leip, *The Future Is Now: Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Jail Workforce*. Hagerstown, MD: American Jail Association, 2009, p. 66.

<sup>v</sup> *Ibid.*, 77–78.

<sup>vi</sup> Gregory P. Smith, *Here Today, Here Tomorrow: Transforming Your Workforce from High-Turnover to High-Retention*. Chicago, IL: Dearborn Trade Publishing, 2001, p. 14.

<sup>vii</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb and Leslie Ann Leip, "Turning Off Jail Turnover: Do Generational Differences Matter?" *Criminal Justice Studies*, 26, no. 1 (2013): p. 70.

<sup>viii</sup> Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 54-55.

<sup>ix</sup> Ron Zemke, Claire Raines, and Bob Flipczak, *Generations at Work: Managing the Clash of Veterans, Boomers, Xers, and Nexters in Your Workplace*. New York, NY: American Management Association, 2000, p. 94.

<sup>x</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb and Leslie Leip, "Turning Off Jail Turnover: Do Generational Differences Matter?" *Criminal Justice Studies*, 26 issue 1 (2013): p. 70.

<sup>xi</sup> Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 55.



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<sup>xii</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb and Leslie Leip, "Turning Off Jail Turnover: Do Generational Differences Matter?" *Criminal Justice Studies*, 26 issue 1 (2013): 70.

<sup>xiii</sup> N.A. Hira, "You Raised Them, Now Manage Them," *Fortune* (May 28, 2007): p. 38.

<sup>xiv</sup> Jennifer J. Deal, "10 Principles for Working across Generations." Greensboro, NC: Center for Creative Leadership, 1999. <http://www.ccl.org/Leadership/podcast/transcript10principlesgenerations.aspx>

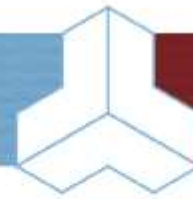
<sup>xv</sup> Stinchcomb, McCampbell, and Leip, *The Future Is Now: Recruiting, Retaining, and Developing the 21st Century Jail Workforce*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Dept of Justice, 2009, p. 67.

<sup>xvi</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>xvii</sup> Leigh Branham, *Keeping the People Who Keep You in Business: 24 Ways to Hang Onto Your Most Valuable Talent*. New York, NY: American Management Association 2001, p. 136.

<sup>xviii</sup> Alfie Kohn, *Punished by Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise, and Other Bribes*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1999, p. 50.





## CHAPTER 5: ALIGNING THE ENVIRONMENT: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF LEADERSHIP

*Thus far, we have addressed how to get started as a new warden—by becoming a visionary leader who provides direction for your facility and plans strategically while shaping the culture, reducing the stress, making the changes, managing the conflicts, developing the employees, and generating the commitments that are essential to achieving long-range goals. That is quite a hefty agenda. Nevertheless, all of this reflects just the beginning. Like the frame of a house, it is only the fundamental infrastructure. Now it is time to begin to focus on designing the interior details.*

That brings us to the “nuts and bolts” of leadership, which are organized here into two broad categories—one internal and one external:

1. *Internal leadership strategies* — inspiring engagement, commitment and organizational pride, building your executive management team, establishing expectations, communicating and listening to your staff, making data-driven decisions, and using evidence-based practices.
2. *External leadership strategies* — interacting with elected and appointed officials (at the state, local, and federal level), dealing with bureaucracy, building positive relationships with your community, and working with the media to tell your facility’s story.

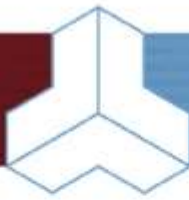
When effectively aligned with your organization’s overall vision, mission, and values, each of these leadership dimensions contributes to developing and maintaining the positive, proactive organizational culture that was discussed previously. Moreover, in light of their direct impact on day-to-day operational practices, this is where “the rubber meets the road.” As a result, your ability to address these hands-on challenges will ultimately go far toward promoting the fulfillment of your long-term vision.

### **INSPIRING ENGAGEMENT, COMMITMENT, AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRIDE**

As leader, you set the example for your staff by modeling the way, inspiring others, and building commitment to an organization where people can be proud to work. Employees may defer to you simply because you hold the title of “warden,” but they will come to respect you only if you truly live the principles and values that you believe in, which are reflected in each of the decisions you make and the actions you take. Especially among those from the youngest generation in the workplace, it is your competence that they will respect, not your rank.

Respect, of course, is a two-way street—you cannot expect employees to maintain respect for someone who does not extend the same regard to them. In fact, in many ways your staff will emulate your behavior—sometimes deliberately, but often subconsciously. First and foremost, it is therefore





essential to serve as an exemplary role model for others to follow, which means retaining high standards while still remaining humble, keeping focused on your vision, never compromising your values, and maintaining consistency between your words and your deeds. No one respects leaders who are hypocrites, holding others to standards that they do not embrace.

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*Many people are working in unhealthy settings with others who have become disenchanted and actively disengaged. These employees are not just unhappy at work. They act out their discontent and sow seeds of negativity at every opportunity... They are not just indifferent to agency goals and mission, they express mistrust and outright animosity.*

L. Scott Kimball and Carl E. Nink, "How to Improve Employee Motivation, Commitment, Productivity, Well-Being and Safety," *Corrections Today* (June 2006): p. 74.

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When employees begin to appreciate you as having greater depth, insight, and character than the faceless new warden that someone in the front office appointed for reasons unknown to them, they can begin to gravitate from merely "obeying" the new warden's "orders" to collaboratively engaging with you in pursuit of the organization's future. For even with the most impressive official vision, mission, and value statements, in the end, "people first follow the person, then the plan."<sup>i</sup>

Generating commitment to your plan means combating the lack of enthusiasm and shoulder-shrugging disengagement that describes much of today's workforce in many organizations. Feeling disenfranchised and undervalued, disengaged employees tend to do the minimum to survive on the job.<sup>ii</sup> They are also more likely to experience both physical and psychological health problems, resulting in greater use of sick leave.<sup>iii</sup> Their low productivity, excessive absenteeism, and high turnover are costing your agency economically, but even worse, they are also psychologically undermining your initiatives as well as their co-workers' efforts and generally making everyone miserable.

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*Studies have consistently found that almost all workers are engaged when they begin a job, but the proportion of engaged employees decreases dramatically thereafter... The longer employees work in an organization, the more engagement decreases until only 20 percent are engaged after 10 years of service. Too many leaders are not taking the actions needed to sustain the initial enthusiasm and commitment of employees and, worse, many leaders do not recognize that they play a significant role in destroying employee engagement.*

Keith Ayers, "Are Leaders Destroying Employee Engagement?" *MWorld: The Journal of the American Management Association*, 6, no. 3 (2007): p. 38—39.

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Yet it is doubtful that these employees were always so negative. Like the fresh recruits coming on board today, they, too, were probably once full of the excitement, commitment, and enthusiastic energy of a newcomer. Somewhere along the way, however, their bright light dimmed and eventually burned out, not just because the novelty of a new job wore off or reality set in. More likely, it was at least in part because that initial passion was not nurtured by the organization's management and leadership over the ensuing years. Just as two people in a personal relationship must work to sustain their commitment, maintain their initial passion, and avoid the natural tendency to drift apart over time, the same is true of the relationship between employees and their employer.

#### How do you know when employees are disengaged?

- ✦ Engaged employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their workplace. They drive innovation and move the organization forward.
- ✦ Non-engaged employees are essentially “checked out.” They are sleepwalking through the workday, putting time – but not energy or passion – into their work.
- ✦ Actively disengaged employees aren't just unhappy at work; they are busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish.

Steve Crabtree, “Engagement Keeps the Doctor Away: A Happy Employee Is a Healthy Employee,” *Gallup Business Journal* (January 13, 2005): p. 2.

The question then turns to how leaders can strengthen ties between followers and their workplace in a manner that generates greater personal engagement and organizational commitment. The answers largely focus on improving interpersonal communications and relationships with those employees, assigning them whenever possible to what they do best, helping them to excel, providing developmental opportunities, and clearly reinforcing their value to the organization.

For example, research by the Gallup organization indicates that employees are more likely to be engaged when they:

- ✦ Know what is expected of them
- ✦ Have the right materials and equipment for their job, as well as the opportunity to do what they do best every day
- ✦ Are recognized for good job performance
- ✦ Can rely on someone at work to care about them as a person and encourage their development
- ✦ Have opportunities to learn and grow
- ✦ Believe that their opinions count, their work is important, and their co-workers are committed to quality <sup>iv</sup>

Steve Crabtree, “Engagement Keeps the Doctor Away: A Happy Employee Is a Healthy Employee,” *Gallup Business Journal* (January 13, 2005): p. 2.



These are just a few avenues for stimulating engagement by building on individual enthusiasm, capturing personal commitment, and connecting each employee with the organizational vision. Note the words “individual,” “personal,” and “each,” all of which indicate the necessity for wardens to leave their office and interact in a genuine, warm-hearted way with their employees. More specifically, research indicates that executives can build organizational commitment and pride by:

- ✦ Using employee input to identify agency strengths and weaknesses, then developing and implementing action plans based on the results.
- ✦ Promoting employee trust and confidence through frequent communications, which makes it possible for executives to receive open and honest feedback from staff, creating connections through the face-to-face exchange of ideas.
- ✦ Closely linking recognition and rewards to performance—looking beyond monetary incentives for intrinsic rewards that are not constrained by available funding.
- ✦ Selecting supervisors who will effectively manage performance by providing employees with objective assessments, ensuring accountability, and giving honest feedback. <sup>v</sup>

The bottom line is that the more you take into consideration the personal needs, capabilities, and desires of your staff, the more you can obtain their honest feedback.<sup>vi</sup> The more you communicate with them, the more likely they are to reciprocate by committing to you as the leader and to your strategic plans. Ultimately, that means creating a united purpose whereby the organization is just as firmly committed to enhancing the well-being of its employees as each employee is to achieving the welfare of the organization. That is because, like respect and marital success, engagement is a two-way street. Just as personal partners derive strength and pride from their mutual commitment, the participants in a reciprocal workplace relationship can likewise take pride in their organizational commitment.

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*Employee engagement has a strong, positive impact on organizational outcomes...including reduced use of sick leave, fewer EEO complaints, fewer cases of lost time due to work-related illness and injury, and lower rates of employee intention to leave the agency.*

Managing for Engagement: Communication, Connection, and Courage. Washington, DC: U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 2007, p. ii.

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## **BUILDING YOUR EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM**

Beyond enjoying each other's company, people unite together in everything from marriage to clubs, unions, and other social organizations for the very practical reason of creating the “synergistic energy” that enables them to accomplish far more together than they could ever achieve alone.<sup>vii</sup> It is the added



value that propels them to a level beyond the bounds of their own individual capabilities, and it is precisely what organizational teamwork is all about. No matter how well-qualified and experienced you may be as a leader, you are only one person. There are limits to your time, energy, talents, insights, skills, and creative ideas. To supplement your capabilities, it is necessary to build a supportive, competent executive team. In fact, the 2013 NIC National Survey of Prison Wardens identified “creating a good management/administrative team” and “using teamwork” as the most important staff-related advice that they would give to newly appointed wardens or superintendents.

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*Employer-employee reciprocity (quid pro quo) refers to developing a two-way interactive relationship that is mutually rewarding...with each offering something that the other needs and each obtaining something of value from the other.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb and Francisco Ordaz, “The Integration of Two ‘Brotherhoods’ into One Organizational Culture: A Psycho-social Perspective on Merging Police and Fire Services,” *Public Organization Review*, 7 (2007): p. 154.

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Because it is natural to gravitate toward people who are similar to ourselves, it is tempting to appoint an executive team whose perspectives, interests, opinions, and talents are consistent with yours. There is no reason whatsoever to surround yourself with others who simply mirror you. Rather, you should be looking for executive team members who can offset your weaknesses and bring different perspectives and ideas to the table.

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*When people are collaborating, they work together, sharing their knowledge, skills, and experience to achieve a common goal.*

L. Scott Kimball and Carl E. Nink, “How to Improve Employee Motivation, Commitment, Productivity, Well-being and Safety,” *Corrections Today* (June, 2006): p. 67.

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In this respect, prisons are not unlike sports teams that aggressively recruit a talented athlete with the specific expertise to perform well in a particular position where the team is deficient. If, for example, you are a “hands-on” person who hates being tied to a desk, look for someone who is a good “office paperwork” person. If you tend to be a somewhat conservative decisionmaker, identify a more unconventional person with more innovative thinking who will challenge your choices. If you are reserved, solicit someone who is outgoing. If your skills are more qualitative than quantitative, find someone who is a good “numbers-cruncher.”

The point is to surround yourself with staff whose strengths can counterbalance your weaknesses, thus creating a multifaceted team that has powerful players in all of the key positions needed to win. Much



like a good coach, you will be responsible as their leader to ensure that these divergent players are empowered to work collaboratively with you toward achieving the organizational vision, mission, and goals.

While it is generally true that all team members should have equal status and be jointly involved in decision-making, this does not mean that each person's contributions are necessarily "equal" in all situations—or that everyone's input should even be solicited in all situations. In that regard, the following guidelines may be helpful:

*Everyone does not necessarily deserve an equal vote on all issues*

Some team members will have more knowledge and/or expertise than others regarding the issue at hand.

*Teamwork is most productive when the task involves implementing a clear vision*

Once the leader has identified a long-term direction, team input can help to determine how best to pursue the vision through operational practices.

*Teamwork is most beneficial when it is specifically guided by core values*

Otherwise, disagreements can descend into time-wasting meetings, decision-making that is continually postponed, or even personal agendas. Such counterproductive interactions can be averted by establishing a value-based foundation reflecting honesty and commitment, requiring everyone to present a clear-cut rationale for their opinions and stressing that while professional disagreement is acceptable and even encouraged, personal attacks or hidden agendas are not.<sup>viii</sup>

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*No one will follow unless you know where you are going. Articulate your goals and expectations clearly, setting reasonable time lines for accomplishing those goals, and making sure staff are indeed following the path established.*

Kathleen Hawk Sawyer, quoted in Clemens Bartollas, *Becoming a Model Warden: Striving for Excellence*. Alexandria, VA: American Correctional Association, 2004, p. 99.

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To harness their synergistic energy and collaborative capabilities, you must empower team members. While a warden can never delegate responsibility, you can and should delegate your power and share your authority. Ultimately, the "buck stops" at the warden's desk, but that is not justification for reluctance to delegate sufficient power and authority to enable your team to do their job. If you have chosen well-qualified, self-starters upon whom you can depend, at some point you must step back and trust them to do what you appointed them to do. That does not mean dropping them alone in the deep end of the pool to see if they can swim, but rather, providing the nurturing guidance that will gradually

enable them to determine when it is appropriate to take well-calculated risks, and then accept responsibility for their decisions. Keep in mind throughout this process that “sharing” power does not mean “relinquishing” it. In other words, you are delegating, not abdicating.

### ESTABLISHING EXPECTATIONS, COMMUNICATING, AND LISTENING

Sharing power and authority goes hand-in-hand with clearly establishing expectations, because you will naturally feel more comfortable delegating decision-making to your team if you are confident that they know what is expected. Obviously, this goes well beyond simply being familiar with the institution’s policies and procedures. To collaboratively work toward achieving effective outcomes, team members must understand and embrace:

- ✧ Their essential role in fulfilling the organizational mission
- ✧ The core values upon which all of their decision-making should be based
- ✧ The criteria that will be used to assess their performance

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*Leaders work to make people feel strong, capable, and committed. Leaders enable others to act not by hoarding the power they have, but by giving it away.*

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner, “The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership,” in Joan V. Gallos, ed., *Business Leadership*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2008, p. 31.

*The foundation of effective performance management is:*

- *Communicating openly and honestly with employees*
- *Connecting with them as people to build strong working relationships*
- *Demonstrating the courage to address and resolve problems*

*Managing for Engagement: Communication, Connection, and Courage*. Washington, DC: U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 2007, p. ii.

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Previous administrators may not have recognized the importance of individually communicating these messages, or they may have done so in a negative, threatening, or punitive manner that was counterproductive. Certainly, wardens have the power to compel compliance with their expectations and to formally or informally punish any resisters, but the *forced compliance* of reluctant employees is never as productive as the *voluntary commitment* of supportive allies.

As a new warden, you also need to recognize that the way in which the members of your team accomplish an assigned task may not be how you would have done it, but as long as their methods are





productive—as well as consistent with the mission, vision, and values of the organization—allow staff to exercise their own judgment in terms of how to get the job done.

As described earlier in chapter 2, it is through the inclusive process of establishing the overall vision, mission, and values that you and your management team can collectively develop long-range plans, determine what is needed to implement them, and identify measurable benchmarks to guide the process. Participation, buy-in, and accountability can be facilitated through strategic planning sessions that bring key staff members together in a collaborative environment that establishes step-by-step implementation initiatives. As a result, not only are collective efforts targeted toward the overall institutional mission, but each step along the way is quantified and measured, thus more likely ensuring the achievement of desired outcomes.

However, even with a clear understanding of their role and complete dedication, all team members may not be equally capable of fulfilling organizational expectations. Some may simply lack the skills or the particular knowledge needed to become an integral part of the vision for change. Others may feel uncomfortable with handling greater authority or may be reluctant to embrace a more decentralized, participatory approach to leadership, especially if demonstrating innovation or creativity resulted in negative repercussions for them under past command-and-control-oriented administrations. As you assess their individual strengths, talents, knowledge, capabilities, and commitment, you may decide to make changes such as rotating assignments, emphasizing mentoring or coaching, providing frequent feedback, or scheduling additional training. In some cases, you may even need to make the hard choice to remove or demote a non-performing team member. Whatever specific strategies you pursue, your overall challenge is to propel everyone toward achieving their full potential in a united effort toward fulfilling the long-term vision.

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*Listen while suspending judgment. You will have a chance to talk later. Listen for content, not eloquence. Sophisticated articulation makes great speeches, but [it] doesn't necessarily solve problems.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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*Both the public and the professionals are demanding accountability and outcome-based management... Prison administrators must be accountable for monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of operations to ensure that tax dollars are spent wisely.*

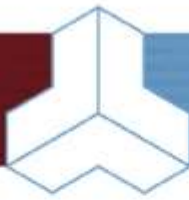
Carl Nink, "Measuring Success: Improving the Effectiveness of Correctional Facilities," in *A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 3–37.

As noted throughout previous chapters, communication is once again the key ingredient. Open lines of communication will not only give you more information about how you can enable and empower your employees, but if you are paying attention, it will also provide meaningful insights into yourself, your leadership style, and the progress your institution is achieving. In that regard, keep in mind that communication must be a two-way endeavor. This means developing your skills as a listener. As one respondent to the 2013 NIC National Survey of Prison Wardens put it, "Remember, the most important part of communicating is listening!" In fact, "listening to staff" and "developing open communications" represented the second most frequently-cited, personnel-related advice that survey participants indicated they would give to new wardens.<sup>ix</sup>

### **MAKING DATA-DRIVEN DECISIONS AND USING EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES**

Of course, no matter how empowered your employees are, there will always be executive decisions that cannot be delegated. This does not mean that input cannot be requested and incorporated, for the best decisions are obviously not made in a vacuum. But neither does it mean making decisions merely on the basis of majority votes. Aside from the fact that everyone's input might not be equally valuable or essential, as the warden, you have been appointed to make decisions on the basis of your insights, experience, and expertise. In fact, the 2013 NIC National Survey of Prison Wardens found that the ability to make sound decisions was one of the highest-ranked competencies, with nearly everyone rating it either "completely necessary" (75%) or "very necessary" (24%). Likewise, being able to ensure organizational accountability was rated "very" or "completely necessary" by over 96% of responding wardens. Especially in light of the economically challenging times that states have been facing with dwindling tax revenues, demands for government accountability have been increasing, and the need to make fiscally sound decisions has become an essential survival strategy for prison administrators.

Ideally, demands for immediate decisions can be limited by engaging in long-range planning. As noted in an earlier chapter, the foresight involved in strategic planning can actually reduce the number of decisions that need to be made later. That is because planning is designed to anticipate conditions that would otherwise arise unexpectedly and continue to fester unresolved until reaching a crisis point that



would then require an imminent decision under extreme pressure. Depending on what the warden learned from working under previous administrations, it may be that self-induced, adrenaline-fueled “crises” are more the norm than thoughtful decisions lacking in drama. After all, planning is typically viewed as dull, tedious work in contrast to the ego-enhancing image of reacting to a crisis.

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*To be considered evidence-based, a program, treatment modality, or practice must be:*

- *Previously implemented and delivered*
- *Scientifically evaluated and found to be effective*
- *Successfully replicated*

*An evidence-based culture not only redefines priorities around data analysis to gauge performance; it also provides an objective and justifiable rationale for implementing programs that might otherwise be deemed too progressive or innovative.*

Joseph P. Lynch, J. Mitchell Miller, Holly Ventura Miller, Tina L. Heindel, and Andrea Wood, “Embracing Evidence-based Practices,” *American Jails*, (September/October 2012); p. 14.

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More objective, data-driven decisions avoid such a reactive crisis management scenario. Based on facts, they do not rely on subjective emotions, trial-and-error guesses, political pressures, or past practices. With evidence-based decision-making, wardens can begin to direct their operations purposefully, thus shifting the long-term destiny of their facility from “a result of chance to a reflection of choice.” x

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*An evidence-based organization consistently demonstrates the ability to achieve outcomes through effective problem-solving and decision-making. As the name implies, such an organization uses evidence to achieve its outcomes...and uses data to drive decisions and develop innovative approaches to delivering services.*

Christine A. Ameen and Jennifer Loeffler-Cobia, *Evidence-Based Practices: Skills Assessment for Criminal Justice Organizations*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 2010, p. 5. <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/024397.pdf>

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We cannot change the future. We can, however, reduce its unanticipated consequences by gathering better information today that will arm us with the facts needed to make more informed decisions tomorrow. That is essentially what data-driven decision-making involves. Because it promotes aligning operational practices with empirical evidence, it is widely known as “evidence-based practice.”



Fundamentally, this means ensuring that your facility's operational practices, policies, and procedures reflect established, credible research findings. For example, if a review of boot camp evaluations clearly indicates that their ability to change behavior largely suffers from lack of followup services upon release, evidence-based practice would call for your boot camp to include a step-down program gradually easing participants back into the community with the help of supportive services. This does not, however, mean that empirical data should serve as the sole basis for decision-making. Although research must inform practice, it cannot single-handedly shape policy. Realistically, everything from fiscal resources to community sentiments and prevailing politics must also be taken into consideration.<sup>xi</sup> Beyond including prior evaluation information as a decision-making tool, you will need to implement an ongoing assessment of your own facility's practices, especially in light of ever-increasing demands for organizational accountability. While prisons are awash in data and statistics, that does not mean that the information they provide is either credible or useful. For example, is information collected the same way on all shifts? What does it really tell you about your facility? If it is not consistent, take steps to revise the data collection process. If it has no utility, determine why, and make necessary changes. Ultimately, it is your job to verify the accuracy of the information you receive, and then use it to analyze trends, spot problems, use resources wisely, and generally manage the facility.

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*Measurement is the first step that leads to control, and eventually to improvement. If you can't measure something, you can't understand it. If you can't understand it, you can't control it. If you can't control it, you can't improve it.*

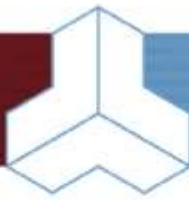
H. James Harrington, cited in Nancy Cebula, Theresa Lantz, and Tom Ward, *Understanding Corrections through the APEX Lens*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 2012, p. 45.

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Not only will the data gathered internally enable you to spot shortcomings, improve productivity, and allocate resources more efficiently, but such information will also indicate to what extent your organization is actually achieving desired results. The question then becomes just what such an internal assessment should measure. While your organization may already have a sophisticated data-gathering process in place, the following criteria have been proposed as measurable indicators of a successful facility:

#### *Staff and inmate safety and security*

Keeping staff and offenders out of danger, eliminating risk of escape as well as contraband.



### *Inmate quality of life*

Providing for the medical, dental, mental health, shelter, nutritional, and clothing needs of inmates.

### *Preparation for reentry*

Offering proven programs that can move inmates to a point where they can successfully reenter society upon release.

### *Staff training, retention, and satisfaction*

Providing a stable, well-trained staff that is held accountable for operating the facility fairly based on established rules.<sup>xii</sup>

More specifically, effectiveness can only be measured if there is a clear, objective statement of what the program, initiative, or project being assessed is designed to accomplish, with measurable benchmarks along the way. In fact, one of the most challenging parts of implementing any new initiative is obtaining consensus on its desired outcomes and what would be considered criteria for success (or at least encouraging results). Then it is necessary to identify the data that need to be gathered throughout the implementation process and to control as much as possible for other possible explanations of the results. For example, see the sidebar labeled “Measuring Effectiveness.”

#### **Measuring Effectiveness**

***Whenever a new initiative is developed, thinking about how to measure its effectiveness should be built into the early discussions. For example, a revised health care policy might be aimed at reducing inmate medical grievances by 30% in six months. To determine whether that benchmark is met, it is necessary not only to collect comparable before-and-after baseline data, but also to ensure that inmates are familiar with the grievance process, staff are not discouraging the filing of claims, and that the medical unit is responding to grievances. There are many other influences that can also affect outcomes in this example, such as a fluctuation in the number of health care personnel, staffing patterns or employee training. As much as possible, relevant conditions should be similar before and after implementation of the new initiative to rule out alternative explanations of the results.***

Focusing on evidence-based outcome measures enables you to demonstrate the strengths, as well as determine the deficiencies, of your facility. While it is tempting to report only strengths, keep in mind that candidly revealing weaknesses may support your case for additional funding. The bottom line is that valid empirical evidence enables you to make informed decisions and the most effective use of resources. On the other hand, if your decisions are based on evidence that is weak, faulty, anecdotal,

or non-existent, your decisions will likewise be questionable and probably difficult to defend. Moreover, in addition to using data to guide internal decision-making and resource allocation, if your program measures are valid and your data are properly collected and analyzed, they can likewise contribute to the growing documentation of evidence-based practices throughout the country.<sup>xiii</sup>

## INFLUENCING THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

To the outside observer, prisons appear to be closed, isolated institutions that discourage interaction with anyone beyond their walls. If that ever was the case, it no longer is today. Contemporary wardens realize that developing collaborative external relationships is as essential as performing effectively internally. As shown in figure 5.1, however, collaboration is not the same as networking, coordinating, or cooperating—all of which may be appropriate strategies to pursue, depending on the circumstances.

Figure 5.1: Dimensions of Partnerships

- ✦ **Networking** is simply exchanging information—such as informing other agencies of your procedures, restrictions, resources, guidelines, etc.
- ✦ **Coordinating** involves making some changes to accommodate another agency—such as altering intake procedures to accommodate jails transporting offenders to prison.
- ✦ **Cooperating** entails sharing resources—such as giving the community access to room space for meetings during unused time.
- ✦ **Collaborating** is joining together to achieve what could not be accomplished alone, reaching consensual goals that would not be possible without each member of the team working toward the same end.

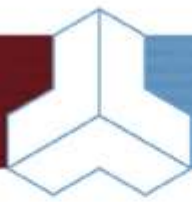
Chris Huxom, *Creating Collaborative Advantage*. London: Sage Publications, 1996.

While there are countless opportunities for corrections to develop such partnerships with external groups or other public agencies, there are a few key components of the external environment that no successful warden can overlook. These include the legislature, state government, the local community, and the media.

## INTERACTING WITH THE LEGISLATURE AND STATE/LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Ultimately, your institution operates within the fiscal constraints and legal requirements established by political action. Because of such dependence, it is essential to ensure that elected decisionmakers and fiscal administrators understand the institution's needs and priorities. Much of this work may likely be handled through the central office, and to ensure that the department speaks with "one voice," there





may, in fact, be restrictions regulating the extent to which individual wardens can officially interact with lawmakers for the purpose of influencing their budget. Nevertheless, there are some things that you can do, such as:

- ✦ Meet with the person in your central office who is the liaison for legislative affairs
- ✦ Know who is responsible for correctional issues on the governor's staff
- ✦ Become familiar with your department's legislative agenda, and if feasible, offer to assist with position papers, testimony, and implementation
- ✦ Track the status of corrections-related bills during the legislative session
- ✦ Know your state's fiscal cycle and the process for budgetary approval
- ✦ Keep posted on key legislative calendar dates (e.g., when the legislative session begins and ends, when committees begin meeting, and so on)
- ✦ Maintain the names and contact information of the legislators who sit on the committees overseeing corrections, as well as those representing the area in which your facility is located
- ✦ Stay in touch with the national scene and develop a perspective about what is happening in corrections throughout the country

If they have not been involved with legislative issues, new wardens may not be familiar with the inner workings of state government. However, if you understand the legislative process and how state government interacts with it, you will be in a better position to benefit your department in general and your institution in particular. For example, knowing the history of past legislative actions regarding correctional issues is a key to determining future trends. This history includes who sponsored what bills, how the committees voted, and what the final outcomes were. Even if a bill was defeated, these insights potentially indicate trends for the following year. Often the department's legislative liaison has this information readily available. It may likewise be helpful to understand the backgrounds and voting records of politicians representing constituents near the prison to predict concerns that will be reflected on the legislative agenda. Such a proactive approach may prevent you from being blindsided by something that you did not anticipate.

Needless to say, requests for information from legislative and gubernatorial offices should be assigned the highest response priority. You may, for example, be contacted by state officials concerning an inmate whose family has been in touch with their legislative representative. If you are prepared to respond promptly, and in accord with your department's protocol, you will begin to nurture a cooperative working relationship that can be beneficial in the future.



Wardens can also be a significant source of information for legislators and state officials by educating them on prison functions and the requirements for operating a safe and secure facility that meets constitutional standards. Department policy will determine how active your role in this process can be. If possible, legislators and state officials can be invited to tour your institution, thus providing them with firsthand information on operational needs and concerns, which can have a significant effect on the entire department. In this regard, however, note that educating legislators is different from lobbying. Even when their input is solicited, wardens must be careful to maintain their role as neutral providers of information, not straying into becoming partisan lobbyists.

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*Be clear on how your department defines the difference between “educating” and “lobbying” government officials, and then seek to educate.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 2002, p. 87.

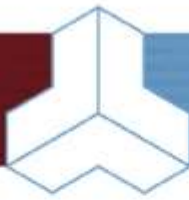
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In addition to legislators, governors and other chief executives likewise need input to make informed decisions. For that, they primarily depend on their staff to brief and advise them. As with legislators, gubernatorial staff members are usually the first point of contact, and eventually, they are the ones who review, analyze, and summarize information to be presented to the governor. Again, in the interest of departmental unity, you may not be able to present your individual case directly to the staff member responsible for correctional issues, but you should at least be familiar with the process for doing so through your department liaison to ensure that your concerns are included on the representative's agenda.

Overall, keep in mind that the correctional system is just one of many state agencies whose concerns and related fiscal requests must be prioritized by the governor and the legislature. The better informed you are about these competing priorities, the better prepared you will be to appreciate and function effectively within the realities of budgeting and policymaking. In other words, understand your state's legislative structure, find ways to coexist peacefully when corrections is not the top funding priority, and explore ways to support the correctional mission through collaboration with other agencies, ranging from education and transportation to victim services and public health. Ultimately, we are all in this together.

## **BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR COMMUNITY**

Although the legislature and state officials are obviously quite influential, your local government and surrounding community often have an even greater direct and immediate effect on the operations of



your facility. Moreover, this is a two-way street. Not only does the community affect your institution, but your institution contributes to the community's economic well-being by providing substantial employment opportunities, purchasing goods and services, using public utilities, and so on. Not all of this interaction is beneficial. For example, traffic along certain roadways may become congested with staff commuting to and from their work shifts. Essentially, you need to gain an appreciation for how everything done at the institution generates a positive or negative impact on the surrounding community.

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*When I realized the amount of money the prison's payroll introduced into the surrounding community, I clearly understood how important and influential the prison is to the community.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 2002, p. 91.

*Public disapproval assaults the self-esteem of corrections professionals and limits the ability of corrections to attract the best and the brightest to the field.*

R.M. Freeman, "Here There Be Monsters: Public Perception of Corrections," *Corrections Today*, 63, no. 3 (2001): p. 109.

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To ensure that such mutual interaction results in a positive outcome for both parties, it is important to become aware of local community concerns, needs, and priorities. That means being available to listen, as well as providing assistance with resolving emerging issues. Not only are you now an official member of this community, but you are also likely to be viewed as a powerful public administrator whose influence extends well beyond the institution's walls, which in fact, it does. Additionally, as the primary source of information about the prison, you are also a community educator.<sup>xiv</sup>

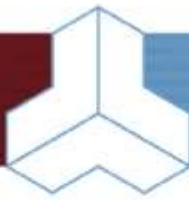
The previous section discussed how you can best work within the framework of state government and the legislative process to accomplish your objectives. Similarly, cultivating productive interactive relationships with local officials and community members can go far toward enhancing the image of your institution, especially if the prison and its leaders have been viewed with suspicion, disrespect, or animosity in the past. Because you can be so influential in addressing unreasonable and unrealistic fears and concerns, it is essential to take a proactive approach. In that regard, you may want to:

- ✦ Learn the names and contact information for locally elected officials and prominent community leaders.
- ✦ Become familiar with community perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs relating to how the prison affects the community.
- ✦ Create an informal process for local officials to express their concerns directly to you.
- ✦ Ensure that the prison's website is current and informative.

- ✦ Maintain an up-to-date information package with materials about the institution that can be distributed to visitors in response to inquiries.
- ✦ In the emergency plan, include instructions for disseminating information to the local community.
- ✦ Become familiar with local ordinances and requirements that apply to the institution.
- ✦ Be the “prison ambassador” by meeting with local officials, attending community events, and taking advantage of every opportunity to educate the public about corrections.
- ✦ Determine how local agencies can collaboratively contribute to institutional operations and vice versa (i.e., how the prison can contribute to meeting local needs; for example, by assigning inmates to public works projects).
- ✦ Develop a relationship with your local college or university, through which you may be able to obtain student interns, research assistance, or even onsite classes for staff and/or inmates.
- ✦ Encourage community participation in prison activities (such as through volunteer services).
- ✦ Make concerted efforts to educate the community about prison realities and dispel myths, including, but not limited to, facility tours.
- ✦ Conduct an “open house” (security clearances permitting) that focuses on the prison’s mission, highlights the staff, and addresses citizen concerns or misperceptions.
- ✦ Keep the community informed of your recruitment process for paid staff as well as your need for volunteers.
- ✦ Encourage staff to participate in local activities, clubs, civic organizations, and other services that enrich both employees and their community.

You may also want to consider creating a formal prison advisory board to align the prison’s mission more closely with the local community. Board members can help to identify issues, gather community input, build trust, and establish working partnerships. As key citizens in the community, they can offer suggestions in terms of how the prison can become a better local partner, tap into resources that the prison can use, and possibly even recruit new employees. Needless to say, an active advisory board can also help to demystify corrections in the eyes of the public.

Regardless of precisely what strategies are used, it is important for you—and through you, the many other people who work in the facility—to become known in the community. Because your office is located behind intimidating layers of concertina wire and multiple security checkpoints, you cannot expect people to come to you, nor can you hide behind prison security forever. Inevitably, you will need to face the community in response to a crisis. How well you are received will be a reflection of how well



you are trusted and respected, and people cannot be expected to trust or respect someone they do not even know.

### WORKING WITH THE MEDIA TO TELL YOUR FACILITY'S STORY

Just as prisons can no longer expect to function outside of public awareness and support, they are no longer shielded from scrutiny by the media. It is an unavoidable fact that media attention will at some point become attracted to the prison, but the aftermath will at least to some extent depend on you. Wardens who are committed to being proactive, maintaining ongoing ties with the community, and educating the media before incidents occur are more likely to achieve a more positive influence on the results.

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*Too often, an agency's first contact with the media is reactionary and after the fact. When the media contacts an agency concerning various situations and circumstances, individuals often find themselves on the defensive, facing a barrage of questions....*

Making the Media Work for You in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Aurora, CO: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections Academy, 2006; n.p.  
<http://nicic.gov/Library/020869>

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Unfortunately, involvement of the media in corrections is often viewed by wardens as a problematic situation to be avoided whenever possible. That assessment is not surprising, as investigative reports and headline stories usually tend to spotlight some form of inappropriate behavior, security breach, corrupt practice, or similar negative incident. When such headline stories break, it is natural to feel like a frustrated “victim,” because—at least from your perspective—the media appears to portray limited information that may distort the story without presenting “your side.” However, there does not need to be an adversarial relationship between your office and the media.

To the contrary, the media can also work in your favor to highlight the exemplary work of employees, promote public understanding, broaden local support, attract qualified job applicants, and earn respect for corrections in the community. However, that is possible only if you proactively develop relationships with the media, using such strategies as:

- ✦ Maintaining the names and phone numbers of the reporters who cover your institution for newspapers, radio, and television
- ✦ Reviewing the information package distributed to the media and the community to ensure that it is current, accurate, and effectively communicating your vision

- ✦ Ascertaining that your facility's public information officer is well-connected to local media outlets and is proactively communicating the messages you want to send
- ✦ Reviewing your facility's written procedures in terms of media coverage of both routine practices and emergency situations
- ✦ Analyzing news stories about your facility for the past several years, especially in terms of what could have been done to prevent negative publicity
- ✦ Developing a list of stakeholders and media representatives who can help you get your message out

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*A warden needs to appreciate the interrelationship among the five "P's": (1) press, (2) politicians, (3) public, (4) prisoners, and (5) personnel.*

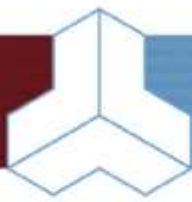
Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 2002, p. 77.

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Wardens who understand the importance of gaining support from both the local community and the local press are better equipped to cultivate the media to their benefit. This does not mean fruitlessly trying to repress legitimate stories that reflect poorly on your facility. Rather, it means counter-balancing the unavoidable bad news with occasional good news stories by proactively developing a working relationship with your local media representatives. Wardens who know the reporters who cover the institution have an opportunity to educate them and influence their reporting in a manner that is better at promoting objective, unbiased coverage. It might also be useful to ask to be included in an editorial board meeting to learn what the newspaper's officials think about the prison, to provide information that might correct any misperceptions, and most importantly, to forge ongoing relationships. Additionally, some wardens have found it useful to:

- ✦ Invite local news outlets to a media day that highlights the positive aspects of the facility
- ✦ Provide an opportunity for TV stations to take file footage under your guidance that can be used to accompany future stories (thus avoiding time-sensitive demands for taping during an emergency)
- ✦ Use community newsletters to communicate with the public
- ✦ Offer to appear on local talk shows to address correctional issues
- ✦ Initiate a rumor control hotline to correct misunderstandings and build trust with both the media and the public

These are but a few creative suggestions for developing positive relationships with representatives of the media.<sup>xv</sup> Whatever strategies you employ, the point is that by the time an emergency develops, it is

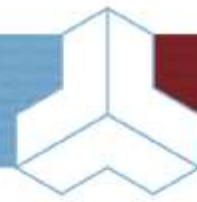


too late for such proactive approaches. As with everything else discussed throughout this guide—from strategically planning your vision to enlisting support from the external environment—farsighted, visionary wardens are, by definition, the proactive leaders who are most likely to be most effective.

### **“TO DO” CHECKLIST**

- ☐ Set the example for your staff by “modeling the way.”
- ☐ Retain high standards, remain humble, keep focused on your vision, never compromise your values, and maintain consistency between your words and deeds.
- ☐ Strengthen ties between workers and their workplace by generating greater personal engagement and organizational commitment.
- ☐ Improve interpersonal communications and relationships with your employees and reinforce their value to the organization.
- ☐ Promote staff engagement, trust, and confidence by building on enthusiasm, capturing commitment, communicating frequently, and connecting with each employee.
- ☐ Recognize that organizational engagement is a two-way, mutual commitment between employees and their employer.
- ☐ Appoint and empower an executive management team that counterbalances your strengths and weaknesses.
- ☐ Capture the synergistic energy of your executive team by encouraging them to take risks and make appropriate decisions.
- ☐ Clearly communicate expectations directed toward fulfilling the organization’s vision and mission.
- ☐ Use open, interactive communications, as well as evidence-based practices, to guide your actions and decisions.
- ☐ Avoid crisis management by engaging in objective, evidence-based, long-range planning.
- ☐ Be certain that key elected and appointed officials in state government are aware of your facility’s fiscal needs.
- ☐ Stay in touch with the national scene, keep up-to-date on current issues, and develop an overall perspective of corrections throughout the country.





- ☐ Be careful to limit your role to educating (rather than lobbying) legislators.
- ☐ Build and maintain partnerships with locally elected officials and community leaders.
- ☐ Determine how your facility can help to meet community needs.
- ☐ Undertake efforts to educate the community about your facility.
- ☐ Consider creating an advisory board.
- ☐ Proactively develop a supportive working relationship with local media representatives.
- ☐ Take advantage of every opportunity to highlight the positive aspects of your facility and its staff through both print and broadcast media.

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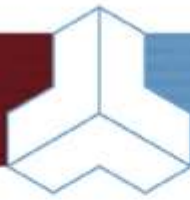
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<sup>ii</sup> Nancy Cebula, Elizabeth Craig, John Eggers, Marge Douville Fajardo, James Gray, and Theresa Lantz, *Achieving Performance Excellence: The Influence of Leadership on Organizational Performance*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2012, p. 27.

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<sup>iv</sup> L. Scott Kimball and Carl E. Nink, "How to Improve Employee Motivation, Commitment, Productivity, Well-Being and Safety," *Corrections Today* (June 2006), p. 67. See also Barry Silverstein, *Motivating Employees: Bringing out the Best in Your People*. New York: Harper Collins, 2007.

<sup>v</sup> *Managing for Engagement: Communication, Connection, and Courage*. Washington, DC: U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board, 2007, p. vii.

<sup>vi</sup> Examples might include simply walking and talking with staff around the compound, addressing them by name, knowing their birthdays, etc.

<sup>vii</sup> See Thomas A. Kayser, *Building Team Power: How to Unleash the Collaborative Genius of Teams for Increased Engagement, Productivity, and Results*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2011. See also Jon R. Katzenbach and Douglas K. Smith, *The Discipline of Teams: A Mindbook-Workbook for Delivering Small Group Performance*. New York: John Wiley and Sons, 2001.

<sup>viii</sup> Edwin A. Locke, "Leadership: Starting at the Top," in Craig L. Pearce and Jay A. Conger, *Shared Leadership: Reframing the Hows and Whys of Leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2003, p. 271–284. See also Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002.

<sup>ix</sup> Only “creating a good management team” was mentioned more often. For a guide to expanding your communication capabilities, see Terry Pearce, *Leading Out Loud*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

<sup>x</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 496. For one example of how data can be used to drive correctional reform, see “Data-Driven Decisionmaking for Strategic Justice Reinvestment,” Washington, DC: Justice Policy Center, Urban Institute, May 2012. <http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/412543-Data-Driven-Decisionmaking-for-Strategic-Justice-Reinvestment.pdf>

<sup>xi</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, “Envisioning the Future: Proactive Leadership through Data-Driven Decision-Making,” *Corrections Today* (August 2006): p. 80.

<sup>xii</sup> Carl Nink, “Measuring Success: Improving the Effectiveness of Correctional Facilities,” in *A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 3–39.

<sup>xiii</sup> *Annotated Bibliography: Evidence-based Practices in Corrections*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. [www.nicic.gov/library/026917](http://www.nicic.gov/library/026917)

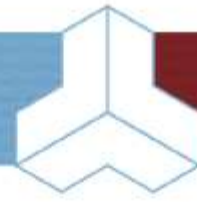
<sup>xiv</sup> In larger institutions, there is probably a full- or part-time PIO (public information officer), but in smaller facilities, the warden maintains this function. Nor does designating a PIO relieve you of the responsibility to promote the mission of the institution throughout the community.

<sup>xv</sup> For additional information on dealing with both the media and the political climate, see Kenneth Ashworth, *Caught between the Dog and the Fireplug, or How to Survive Public Service*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2001.









## CHAPTER 6: MANAGING FISCAL RESOURCES: THE BIGGEST INVESTMENT WITH THE LARGEST RETURN

*Human resources are fundamental to achieving your facility's mission and vision, but just as essential is how skillful you are at acquiring and managing fiscal resources. In fact, the relationship between fiscal and human resources was perhaps best expressed by the person who stated, "The most challenging issue I face as warden is keeping staff motivated to do more with less."*<sup>i</sup>

Although 97% of those responding to the 2013 NIC National Survey of Prison Wardens rated themselves as "very" or "completely" capable of making fiscally sound decisions, they also identified managing the budget as the single most challenging issue for them during their first six months on the job.<sup>ii</sup> No doubt this reflects the economic reality of diminishing resources during recent years, when "doing more with less" has become the enduring mantra of public sector work. Ultimately, the budget affects virtually everything in the facility, from the staff you can hire to the programs you can offer, the food you can serve, the health care you can provide, and even the cleanliness you can maintain. As a result, it deserves your highest priority.

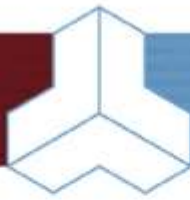
*If a warden manages the budget by always turning to the business manager and saying "find the money," then the business manager is in charge of the facility, not the warden.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 47.

However, because wardens do not typically have a strong fiscal background, it is often tempting to delegate fiscal responsibility. You may well have a budget "guru" who knows all about where the money is, how to move funds from one account to another, and how to squeeze the most out of the facility's appropriation. While that person may be a valuable resource, the budget is now your responsibility, and thus, you must carefully balance reliance on the fiscal expertise of others with your own knowledge, capability, and ultimate accountability.<sup>iii</sup>

To assist you with some of the fundamentals of fiscal administration, this chapter will address:

- ✦ Linking fiscal resources to the organizational mission, vision, and goals
- ✦ Learning what you need to know about your facility's budget
- ✦ Understanding how the budget process works, from initial preparation to executive and legislative review
- ✦ Overseeing procurement, purchasing, and subsequently the monitoring of expenditures (e.g., personnel, contracts, materials, and supplies)



- ✦ Overseeing capital expenditures and the physical plant, along with inmate welfare, trust funds, and commissary
- ✦ Preparing for audits

### LINKING THE BUDGET TO VISION, MISSION, AND GOALS

Even the most far-sighted vision, the most meaningful mission, and the most promising goals are only potential promises in the absence of the fiscal capability to actually achieve them. As a result, they are inextricably linked to the budget. If, for example, one of your team's goals is to compete for new hires more effectively, anything from salary increases to marketing initiatives and recruitment drives may be needed, all of which demand fiscal resources. If the organizational vision is to improve post-release outcomes for inmates, funds may be needed for substance abuse counseling, pre-release assistance, and followup monitoring. Asking for such things as higher staff salaries or substance abuse programming in isolation may very likely be met with rejection. However, if these requests can be causally connected to the facility's fundamental mission, long-range vision, and short-term goals, a powerful link is provided that promotes greater potential for justifying funding requests. Moreover, if the requisite allocations are not forthcoming, the warden has a substantial case for not being held accountable for undesirable outcomes.

### LEARNING WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR BUDGET

Earlier chapters have provided basic information for you to read and research as you assume the responsibilities of your new position. As you drill-down into fiscal management, you will need to:

- ✦ Become familiar with the facility's approved budget and up-to-date itemized expenditures, obligations, and available balances.
- ✦ Learn the fiscal processes governing your agency, e.g., when budgets are due, necessary justifications, fiscal year deadlines, and how funds can be moved legally from one account to another.
- ✦ Meet with your fiscal officer to review the facility's budget history and recognize significant ongoing issues.
- ✦ Begin working on next year's budget, even if it is not due for several months.
- ✦ Determine who has the authority to authorize expenditures, issue and amend contracts, and otherwise alter your facility's budget.
- ✦ Review all contracts, know current balances, check financial reporting requirements, and meet with contract monitors.
- ✦ Analyze personnel costs (which represent the majority of expenditures), especially in terms of funded positions, overtime allocations, and how vacancies affect the budget.
- ✦ Obtain the last physical plant assessment, review the capital budget, and determine the status of all capital projects.
- ✦ Examine your facility's preventive maintenance plan and related fiscal allocations.
- ✦ Know what it is costing to operate your facility each day, per inmate.
- ✦ Consider requesting an audit of the institution's budget, including inmate commissary and inmate funds, so that you are not surprised by, or held accountable for, any past errors or mistakes.

- ✦ Analyze the facility's most recent fiscal audit (along with any response), assess whether needed changes were made, and prepare for the next scheduled audit.

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*My most challenging issue is the management of a budget that I do not make and have no say in.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Every new warden inherits a budget prepared by someone else. Even after you come into office, your facility budget may be prepared by the central or regional office. Moreover, you may receive specific guidelines from the central or regional office to use in budget preparation. No matter what your level of involvement, however, you are ultimately accountable for how funds are spent. In that regard, your job is to gain as much knowledge as possible about the budget, and thereby control the fiscal allocations within your facility to meet prioritized needs effectively.

## UNDERSTANDING HOW THE BUDGET PROCESS WORKS

In the public sector, the budget process is often controlled by a confusing array of laws, administrative rules, state regulations, and deadlines. Implementation details vary from state to state, but as described below, the overall process can usually be divided into the following phases: budget preparation; executive, legislative, and constituent review; procurement, purchasing, and monitoring fiscal expenditures.

### 1. Budget preparation

Specific directions on budget preparation are usually provided by the central or regional office, which in some states may actually prepare a draft budget for the warden's review. These same offices also may be where you can find the history of your facility's expenditures, if paying invoices is not handled internally.

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*We have more to manage with no increase in resources. It is necessary to constantly review process[es] and procedures to ensure the facility is operating in the most efficient way possible.*

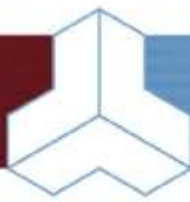
National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked what the current most challenging issue is that you face as a warden.

*Specific cost-cutting strategies can focus on five main cost areas: physical plant, operations, programs and services, personnel, and population management.*

Connie Clem, "69 Ways to Save Millions," *American Jails*, (November/December 2009): p. 10.

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Generally, during the budget preparation phase, you will be expected to:

- ✦ Analyze expenditures by category in the current year (and recent years past).
- ✦ Identify any significant organizational changes in such things as facility mission, responsibilities, number or composition of inmates, etc. (for example, a change in the classification distribution of inmates, an increase/decrease in the total population, the admission of more/fewer inmates with physical or mental health issues, etc.).
- ✦ Become familiar with the internal control systems that track expenditures, project costs, and generate related reports.
- ✦ Review authorized staffing, mandatory posts, vacancies, pending retirements, attrition, and anticipated hiring.
- ✦ Assess the condition of equipment, facilities, and related operational requirements.
- ✦ Document the need for any upgrading of equipment or security hardware, physical plant repairs, and/or other necessary operational improvements.
- ✦ Identify ways to manage and control costs more effectively, or even reduce some expenditures.<sup>iv</sup>
- ✦ Project upcoming funding requirements.

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*[My most challenging issue is] managing the facility with greater expectations for results and data, all while the budget continues to either stay the same or shrink...*

National Institute of Corrections. NIC Survey of Prison Wardens. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Given the complexities involved in budget preparation, it is no doubt tempting simply to take last year's appropriation and just add 5% to 10% or reduce it in a similar across-the-board manner during tight economic times. That is certainly the easy way out, but how can a warden maintain responsibility for meeting facility needs with such cursory attention to the budget? To the contrary, challenging how things are done so you can identify areas for improvement is a key feature of the budgetary process, as well as your role in it.<sup>v</sup> You may believe strongly that additional funding is needed to support your facility's operation adequately, but how are you able to ask for an increased allocation with credibility if you are lacking in-depth knowledge of how funds are currently being spent? Without such insight, you have no facts upon which to base a response when your figures are questioned.

## *2. Executive, legislative, and constituent review*

After the budget is prepared, it will be the subject of extensive internal review before it is combined with the agency's total fiscal request, forwarded to the governor, and then submitted to the legislature. During the executive-level review or legislative hearings, you may be asked to justify the request, develop alternatives, or determine how to manage the institution if budget cuts are imposed.

Effectively negotiating here demands that you fully grasp the intricacies of the fiscal process, as well as the constituencies and stakeholders of your jurisdiction. As a leader, this means that you must identify and reach out to the elected officials, community leaders, and agency administrators who are

potentially influential, either in terms of initially supporting your requests or ultimately endorsing your allocations.

### *3. Procurement, purchasing, and monitoring fiscal expenditures*

Once the budget is approved, your real work begins. This involves everything from the purchasing and procurement of newly authorized items to ongoing oversight, dealing with unexpected costs, and addressing out-of-control expenditures. Most government agencies have strict rules about how to procure, purchase, or otherwise obtain services, such as the need to solicit and review requests for proposals or to obtain competitive bids for supplies before making purchases. Beyond becoming personally familiar with these regulations, the warden's tasks include ensuring that those responsible for making purchasing decisions likewise understand the rules and are aware that a compliance audit will be conducted periodically.

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*The competitive nature of resource allocation requires correctional professionals to be clear about intentions—measuring and understanding results—and to make adjustments, where necessary, to assure taxpayers that their money is being spent wisely.*

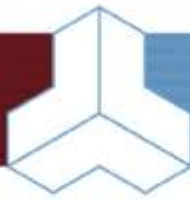
Carl Nink, "Measuring Success: Improving the Effectiveness of Correctional Facilities," in *A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007, p. 3–37.

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Overall budget management is not, however, a function of monthly reviews or semi-annual audits, but rather, it is an everyday task. That means establishing an ongoing oversight process to ensure that expenditures are continually monitored by appropriate personnel. Thus you reduce the possibility that a crisis will emerge at the end of the fiscal year that could have been prevented with better fiscal management.

As part of fiscal accountability, some states include compliance with performance-based outcomes. If so, be sure that the data and information demonstrating compliance are properly maintained, documented, and reported. In other states, budget monitoring may involve a simple straight-line method whereby maximum expenses are assumed to equate with a certain percentage of the budget. Or, it may reflect more advanced calculations that take into consideration factors influencing the revenue/expenditure stream, such as seasonal increases in utility costs. In any event, you may consider placing spending controls on the budget or requiring managers to monitor their own expenditures. In the end, however, the responsibility for fiscal management rests with the warden. You simply cannot delegate it.





More specifically, when monitoring the budget, it is especially important to focus on personnel, contracts, and materials/supplies. Suggestions for dealing with each of these components are described below.

### *Personnel*

Personnel costs include wages, benefits, insurance, overtime, and anything else related to the recruitment, selection, training, employment, and retention of facility staff. These expenditures typically represent the largest share of the total budget, generally in the neighborhood of 75% or more. As a result, controlling personnel costs will significantly affect operating expenses. Effectively doing so involves becoming aware of collective bargaining agreements, state personnel board provisions, and such regulations as the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Family Medical Leave Act.<sup>vi</sup>

More specifically, evaluating personnel-related expenditures can be accomplished through roster management,<sup>vii</sup> staffing analysis, and investigations into overtime, turnover, and absenteeism. For example, absenteeism may well be costing your facility even more than overtime, not just in terms of dollars, but also in terms of how it undermines employee morale and diverts the organization from its mission. Overtime is more readily apparent, and its fiscal effect is much more easily documented as a line-item in the budget than the somewhat more hidden costs of absenteeism.<sup>viii</sup>

Some maintain that absenteeism is generationally linked, that today's younger workers do not have the same "work ethic" as their predecessors. This is not only a somewhat simplistic view of the situation, but it does nothing to resolve it. Moreover, for many organizations, the internal culture unofficially condones absenteeism, and the general view of employees is that if they are given 12 days of sick leave each year, they are going to use them. Especially if managers and supervisors as well as operational staff fall into this mindset, it points to the need for revised expectations and a cultural change.

If you do decide to tackle this issue, be prepared. You will not win any popularity contests. In that regard, the support of your regional or central office is vital, as well as having the data required to make the case for implementing initiatives designed to encourage people to come to work as scheduled. Without sufficient documentation, proper notification, and early counseling, there will be a natural reluctance of organizational officials to discipline chronic violators of attendance rules.

As with other challenges confronting wardens, the best way to manage absenteeism is to understand it better by maintaining and analyzing relevant data. In addition to targeting problem employees, such analysis can also reveal whether there are specific shifts or supervisors who appear to have a higher

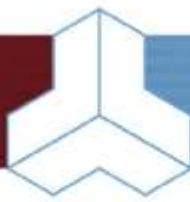
(or lower) than average leave usage. After collecting data and clarifying agency policies and procedures, additional strategies for managing absenteeism might include:

- ✦ Training for supervisors and managers that not only reviews the rules, but also addresses how to apply them uniformly in terms of identifying “excessive” absenteeism and taking progressive disciplinary counseling steps to deal with it.
- ✦ Following up after training to ensure that classroom learning has been applied on the job.
- ✦ Appointing a committee to develop incentives to reduce the use of sick leave, (while being careful, as noted earlier, to prevent them from backfiring).
- ✦ Establishing health education and fitness options, such as formal or informal wellness programs that promote healthy lifestyles, dedicated space for exercise, and more nutritious food choices in vending machines and the staff cafeteria.
- ✦ Gathering anonymous, candid feedback about issues related to absenteeism.
- ✦ Eliminating the organizational conditions that contribute to poor employee morale so that, by improving the workplace, attendance will improve.<sup>ix</sup>
- ✦ Understanding collective bargaining provisions that affect attendance, examining related grievances or complaints, and meeting with bargaining unit representatives.
- ✦ Determining to what extent agency policy can require employees to be subject to a “fitness for duty” evaluation based on their physical or mental health.

These are but a few suggestions for new wardens who may have inherited a facility where people need to be coaxed or disciplined to ensure that they come to work. Such situations are generally symptomatic of deeper issues, requiring a more detailed analysis of organizational causes and their cultural support.<sup>x</sup> As with other fiscal challenges, looking beneath the surface, asking questions, collecting data, and analyzing trends can help to begin the process of mending what is broken. Because personnel expenditures represent the largest item in your operating budget, anything you can do to reduce turnover, overtime, or absenteeism will help to balance the budget without having to plead for additional revenues in tight economic times.

### *Contracts and contractors*

Many correctional systems contract with outside vendors to perform tasks ranging from filling soft drink machines to providing commissary services, inmate health care, food services, facility maintenance, inmate programming, and the installation and maintenance of computer systems. Regardless of the type of service being rendered, you are ultimately responsible for making sure that vendors are performing up to the specifications of their contractual obligations and filing required reports. You must also be certain that monitoring is ongoing, that real time problem identification and problem-solving measures are in place, and that vendors are trained as required by your facility’s policies and procedures.<sup>xi</sup> Being ultimately accountable, however, does not mean doing it alone. Identify those on your staff, or at the regional/central office, who are responsible for contract management and oversight.



If there is no such process in place, set up your own system for ensuring that contractors and vendors are meeting your facility's needs as well as their legal obligations.

### *Materials and supplies*

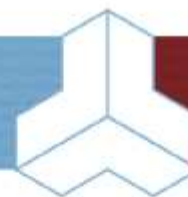
Materials required to operate the facility include such expenses as electricity, gas, water, telephones, food, medical services, office supplies, training materials, employee uniforms and equipment, inmate clothing, insurance, transportation, and so on. Controlling these costs includes analyzing usage patterns, expenditures, controls, and contractual provisions. Beware of falling into the trap of waiting until the end of the fiscal year to order a majority of supplies and materials. That may tell the budget watchers that you either really did not need those things or that you are a poor fiscal manager.

## **INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY**

As we all know from experience with our own computers, cellphones, and other technological devices, nothing changes faster than technology. In the correctional setting, there are numerous opportunities to use technology to your advantage—from radio frequency fence lines to staff scheduling software—but it can be costly, confusing, and even intimidating. Nevertheless, recruits from the Millennial generation should not report to their workstation only to find that they are saddled with technology that is older than they are.

It is apparent that modern corrections is applying an overwhelming array of technological innovations, including video visitations, tracking inmates via computer chips, replacing locks with biometrics, airport-type scanners to screen both staff and visitors, body scanners that replace traditional pat-down or strip searches, and telemedicine to bring medical specialists into the prison instead of transporting inmates to their offices. All of these innovations are available right now. The only question is: Are they appropriate and fiscally feasible for your facility?

As noted earlier, staff represent the largest component of the budget. Thus, you have a financial interest in determining whether technological equipment can, at least to some extent, reduce your facility's reliance on people. Companies marketing the "latest and greatest" gizmos often try to convince administrators that their product will enable them to obtain staff reductions or other resource savings, but that is not always the case. Especially if contracts are not well-written, administrators are unclear about the details, staff do not understand how to use the equipment, or ongoing maintenance is not provided for, investments in technology can have a long-term negative fiscal impact. To avoid such disastrous consequences of engaging in technology, the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center (NLECTC) can be helpful to anyone who wants to explore technological applications or learn more about whether a specific application under consideration has been previously evaluated before engaging in contract negotiations with potential vendors.<sup>xii</sup>



## OVERSEEING CAPITAL EXPENDITURES

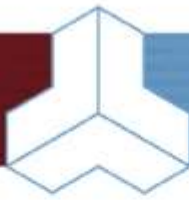
The sizeable cost and long-term implications of technological expenditures are much the same for capital expenditures. They both require extensive review, analysis, and comparative pricing before purchase. Facility expenditures include such items as vehicles, computers, technological infrastructure, furniture, kitchen equipment, security systems, and major mechanical items (e.g., air conditioners, boilers, elevators, gates, fences, pumps, and so on). Capital projects may also include building renovations, new construction, or demolition. Aging physical plants are especially challenging. Years of neglect resulting from lack of attention or pushing needed repairs into another fiscal year may provide justification for expenditures that are necessary for facility safety and security. Additionally, you will need to be aware of the length and coverage of equipment warranties and to ensure that the budget includes allocations for long-term preventive maintenance.

Regardless of the age or condition of your facility, it is your job to become familiar with the status of the entire physical plant and to make relevant fiscal provisions. Inasmuch as you are not a structural engineer, it is helpful to request a capital plant assessment. That is, you can request a formal review of buildings, systems, and infrastructure (including aging water pipes and sewer lines) by a qualified engineer. The resulting written report of conditions will give you a documented blueprint to justify necessary expenditures (or perhaps even the closing or re-purposing of buildings). If your subsequent request is denied, at least you will have documentation of having asked. On the other hand, if you are fortunate enough to already have a capital plant assessment for your facility, be sure that it is updated and linked to the budget process.

While capital projects and physical plant improvements require fiscal outlay, some inmate programs and services may represent a potential source of revenue in many states (e.g., commissary expenditures, long-distance telephone calls, and health care fees). Most of these revenues have strings attached specifying how they can be spent, which require accurate documentation and record keeping. Again, it is essential to become familiar with the rules in your state to make certain that everyone is following the requirements and to oversee related expenditures in anticipation of an audit.

## PREPARING FOR FINANCIAL AUDITS

Your facility's financial operations may be audited by the central or regional office, the inspector general, or a legislatively established entity. Regardless of the source, however, it is imperative to be prepared. Audits might encompass an overall review of the adequacy of your fiscal record keeping, related controls, and accounting procedures. More in depth examinations may further analyze the integrity of your facility's financial information, the efficiency of its operations, the effectiveness of its programs, and/or its administrative compliance with fiscal policies, procedures, and regulations.



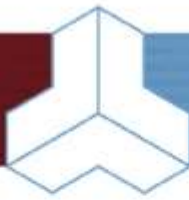
If you have been a good steward of your facility's financial resources, you should have nothing to fear from such audits. Nevertheless, maintain copies of previous audits, identify what needed to be fixed, and ensure that either those remedies have been implemented or that documentation exists for why they have been forestalled. In that regard, it is helpful to obtain advice from those who routinely conduct audits and inspections. Proactively, you may even want to consider requesting a voluntary audit of such functions as commissary or inmate funds, just to be certain that you are not caught off guard by the official audit that will eventually be forthcoming.

Like everything else about managing the facility's budget, audits are often the greatest fear for new wardens or superintendents, and often their concerns may be well-placed. In that regard, it may feel comforting simply to deflect your responsibilities for fiscal management to the person in your facility who has handled it all in the past, but that could be a serious mistake. A better strategy would be to involve this person and tap into his/her knowledge to learn all you can about directing and overseeing the budget. For when it comes to fiscal management, wardens cannot be spectators. They must be active participants.

**“TO DO” CHECKLIST**

- ☐ Resist the temptation to delegate budgetary responsibilities to someone with greater fiscal expertise.
- ☐ Link fiscal requests directly to the facility’s vision, mission, and goals.
- ☐ Become familiar with the fiscal processes governing your agency.
- ☐ Meet with your fiscal officer to get an overview of the budget, identify significant ongoing issues, and analyze your most recent audit.
- ☐ Review vendor contracts, capital expenditures, and preventive maintenance plans.
- ☐ Understand what will be expected of you during the budget preparation process.
- ☐ Challenge where money is currently being spent, as well as how things are being done, to identify potential areas for cost savings.
- ☐ Determine what your role will be during the budget review process.
- ☐ Maintain ongoing oversight and monitoring of the approved budget.
- ☐ Become familiar with the purchase and procurement regulations governing your agency.
- ☐ Analyze personnel-related expenditures with a view toward how they could be streamlined.
- ☐ Look beneath the surface to determine how to reduce costs related to absenteeism, overtime, and turnover by asking questions, collecting data, and analyzing trends.
- ☐ Understand how such regulations as collective bargaining agreements and the Family Medical Leave Act affect the facility’s roster management and personnel costs.
- ☐ Ensure that vendors receive appropriate training and are performing according to contractual obligations.
- ☐ Determine whether innovative and allegedly cost-saving technological devices are appropriate and fiscally feasible for your facility.
- ☐ Become aware of the status of your physical plant and related infrastructure.





- ☐ Be certain that accurate records are kept of revenue-generating activities and that resulting funds are spent appropriately.
- ☐ Maintain proper documentation and accounting procedures to be prepared for an audit.
- ☐ Play an active role in directing and overseeing the budget.

## RESOURCES

American Association for Budget and Program Analysis (AABPA). [www.aabpa.org](http://www.aabpa.org)

*Balancing Fiscal Challenges, Performance-based Budgeting, and Public Safety: A Compilation of Panel Testimonies*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections Advisory Board Hearing (August 2012): 22–23.

Camp, Camille Graham, Patricia L. Hardyman, Robert May, and George M. Camp. *Prison Staffing Analysis: A Training Manual with Staffing Considerations for Special Populations*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U. S. Department of Justice, December 2008.  
<http://static.nicic.gov/Library/022667.pdf>

Clem, Connie. “69 Ways to Save Millions,” *American Jails* (November/December 2009): p. 9–18.  
<http://cleminfostrategies.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/FeatureArticleAJANov-Dec2009.pdf>

Liebert, Dennis R. and Rob Miller. *Staffing Analysis Workbook for Jails*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2003.  
<http://static.nicic.gov/Library/016827.pdf>

Martin, Mark D. *Budget Guide for Jail Administrators: Developing the Budget*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002.  
<http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017626.pdf>

Martin, Mark D. *Budget Guide for Jail Administrators: Managing the Budget*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002. <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/017628.pdf>

Martin, Mark D. *Budget Guide for Jail Administrators: Beyond Budget Allocation – Sources of Funding and Services*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002.

Martin, Mark D. and Thomas A. Rosazza. *Resource Guide for Jail Administrators*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2004.  
<http://static.nicic.gov/Library/020030.pdf>

McBeth, Cody. “Financial Growth in Tough Times,” *Corrections Today*, 73, no. 3 (June/July 2011): p. 29.

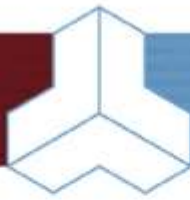
McCampbell, Susan W., Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman. *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002.

National Association of State Budget Officers. [www.nasbo.org](http://www.nasbo.org)

Nink, Carl. “Measuring Success: Improving the Effectiveness of Correctional Facilities,” in *A Manual for Wardens by Wardens*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Annapolis Junction, MD: North American Association of Wardens and Superintendents, 2007.

Scott-Hayward, Christine S. *The Fiscal Crisis in Corrections: Rethinking Policies and Practices*. New York: Vera Institute of Justice, July 2009.

Seiter, Richard P. *Correctional Administration: Integrating Theory and Practice*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2012.



Sheldon, Paul M. *et al.* "Save \$1,000 per Inmate: Seven Steps to More Sustainable Correctional Facilities and Programs," *Corrections Today*, 73, no. 2 (April/May 2011): p. 52–55.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Open-ended response of one warden to the question "What is currently the most challenging issue you face?" in the 2013 NIC Prison Wardens Survey.

<sup>ii</sup> See figure 1.3 in chapter 1.

<sup>iii</sup> Although it is set in an earlier era when prison administrators assigned trustees to much more sensitive duties than is likely today, *The Shawshank Redemption* movie clearly illustrates the dangers of a warden depending too much on someone else to manage the budget.

<sup>iv</sup> For example, see Paul M. Sheldon *et al.*, "Save \$1,000 per Inmate: Seven Steps to More Sustainable Correctional Facilities and Programs," *Corrections Today*, 73, no. 2 (April/May 2011): p. 52-55, and Connie Clem, "69 Ways to Save Millions," *American Jails* (November/December 2009): p. 9–18. <http://cleminfostrategies.com/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/FeatureArticleAJANov-Dec2009.pdf>

<sup>v</sup> For a discussion of options for reducing the cost of correctional operations, along with their risks and unintended consequences, as well as suggestions for potential revenue sources, see Richard P. Seiter, *Correctional Administration: Integrating Theory and Practice*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2012, p. 245–50.

<sup>vi</sup> For more information on the Family Medical Leave Act, see appendix C of this document, as well as this website: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>

<sup>vii</sup> Roster management involves how staff resources are scheduled—by shift, day of week, and post. The shift relief factor is a data-driven exercise to determine how many people have to be on the roster to fill posts 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For more information about shift activity analysis, post analysis and determining a shift relief factor, see: Dennis R. Liebert and Rod Miller, *Staffing Analysis Workbook for Jails*, Second Edition, National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, March 2003. <http://static.nicic.gov/Library/016827.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> Here "absenteeism" refers to everything from sick leave abuse to authorized leave and the effect of vacation days, mandatory training, family medical leave, and the like.

<sup>ix</sup> For more details on this topic, along with initiatives such as "staying interviews," see chapter 4.

<sup>x</sup> For example, the Federal Bureau of Prisons addressed the challenge of cost-containment at one of its facilities by confronting long-standing features of the organizational culture that had spiraled overtime out of control; see C. Allan Turner, "Organizational Culture and Cost-Containment in Corrections: The Leadership Dimension," *Public Administration and Management: An Interactive Journal*, 3, Issue 3 (1995): p. 1–9.

<sup>xi</sup> For example, a mandatory orientation for vendors, contractors, and volunteers is required by the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003.

<sup>xii</sup> See the NLECTC website at <https://justnet.org/index.html>.



## CHAPTER 7: MANAGING YOURSELF: KEEPING EVERYTHING IN PERSPECTIVE

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*Thus far, everything discussed in this guide has addressed some aspect of your responsibility for other people—from inspiring, developing, and motivating your employees to building your executive team, influencing external stakeholders, and effectively communicating with everyone both inside and outside of the facility. However, we have not yet focused on meeting the needs of the most important person in all of this—you!*

It is easy to become so overwhelmed with the magnitude of your position that it consumes your personal life or to become so frustrated with the inevitable roadblocks and setbacks on the job that you lose the passion for it and begin to spiral downward toward burnout. That is why it is so essential to keep your position in perspective, without losing sight of either your personal needs or those of your family. Quite simply, you cannot be a productive warden without being a well-rounded person.

### **BALANCING YOUR WORK AND PERSONAL LIFE**

When your life is well-balanced, all of its personal and professional dimensions work together to promote your overall well-being, and right now, your life might well benefit from being better balanced. Upon being appointed to the lofty position of warden, you may find it easy to become so thoroughly immersed in the job, overwhelmed by its responsibilities, and impressed with your importance that you soon lose sight of everything else. After all, this is what you worked so hard to achieve throughout the years. Now that you've reached the highlight of your career, it obviously deserves your full, undivided attention and all of your energy, for every minute of every day, until you collapse into bed totally exhausted, right? Wrong!

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*A good friend told me that you are a mother first, then a warden. Your daughter should remember and know you as her mother, not as “warden.”*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p.107.

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Even if you could work 24/7, everything on your agenda would still not get done. Accept this as a fact of life. It is always tempting to “throw more hours” into resolving a difficult dilemma or checking things off of your “to do” list, but the question is whether the outcome was worth the sacrifice. Was the added time really productive? If so, was it worth taking the time from your family responsibilities or personal enjoyments? If not, the answer is clear. After all, at the end of our lives, few of us are likely to regret

that we did not work longer hours, but many may well wish that we had spent more time enjoying family and friends. Keep in mind that work determines how to earn a living, not how to live your life.

Keeping your life in balance is essential to your professional success as well as your personal satisfaction, and it is difficult to achieve the former without the latter. After all, no matter how accomplished a person is professionally, what is life worth if there is no personal satisfaction in it? Ultimately, this means determining what is important to you, and making a firm commitment to fulfilling your priorities.

In that regard, there are any number of recommendations that can help you to bring your personal and professional lives into better equilibrium, just a few of which are listed below:

- ✦ Clearly understand what is important in your life, and make sure that your actions are consistent with your priorities
- ✦ Remember that correctional work is always an “unfinished business”
- ✦ Maintain regular work hours (and encourage your staff to do the same)
- ✦ Review how you are using your time and determine if you need to make adjustments
- ✦ Schedule personal time for yourself
- ✦ Schedule personal time with your family/friends and honor the commitment
- ✦ Do not socialize exclusively with people in corrections. Cultivate friendships outside of the field
- ✦ Keep promises to yourself and your family. If you commit to something, do it (no excuses)
- ✦ Be careful to avoid becoming addicted to the power of leadership
- ✦ Watch for the danger signs of work/life imbalance, such as spending too many hours on the job, thinking about the office during “off” time, or investing too much ego in your position

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*Balancing my professional life and personal life was a challenge. I became a workaholic overnight and my personal life suffered for a while. It took some time to bring the two back into balance. You need to disconnect from your facility and take care of yourself to be effective in this position.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. (Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013) Response when asked what the most challenging issue is that you faced in your first six months that you were not prepared to handle.

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For new wardens, work may easily become all-encompassing. There is simply nothing else, Your long-term success, however, depends on maintaining a balanced perspective. Experienced wardens report

that the absence of a well-rounded life is not only hazardous to family relations, but also hazardous to the warden's success, both personally and professionally.<sup>i</sup>

Nevertheless, as much as you may attempt to balance competing demands, being appointed to your position will undoubtedly change your life, along with that of your family. Regardless of whether that change is positive or negative, it will be stressful.

### **COPING WITH STRESS**

Everyone has a stressful day once in a while. Moreover, a moderate amount of stress can actually be somewhat beneficial, keeping you from becoming bored or too complacent. It is a matter of finding the right balance between the boredom of “underload” and the excessive stimulation of “overload.”

When we think of stress, we usually envision what is known as “episodic stress”—the institutional riot, hostage-taking situation, or some other type of crisis—but it is the less visible, everyday variety of “chronic stress” that is having the greatest long-term effect on our health and well-being. Moreover, when an episodic stress event does occur, it is immediately known throughout the facility, everyone pulls together to offer support, and we fully recognize the stress-inducing nature of the situation. In contrast, chronic stress occurs unobtrusively, through an ongoing process of slow erosion as the wear-and-tear of the job gradually takes its toll over the years.

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*Chronic stress: the long-term, debilitating effect of ongoing pressures and problems in the daily work setting.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York: Routledge, 2011, p. 405.

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The long-term outcomes of such stress can be extremely debilitating physically as well as psychologically and emotionally. Physiologically, stress has been cited as a causal factor in everything from headaches and backaches to heart attacks, ulcers, strokes, digestive problems and muscle tension. Even weight gain and some forms of cancer have been linked with stress. Psychologically, the negative results of stress can wreak havoc not only your life, but also those closest to you if it is making you more irritable, prone to over-reacting, intensely angry, excessively anxious, unable to relax, depressed, or simply too exhausted to enjoy the company of others. Worse yet, the negative coping choices that many people make, such as smoking, drinking, or over-eating, add further to the destructive power of stress.



The first step toward effectively addressing any problem is simply to become aware of it, and stress is no exception. Take a look at the upcoming chart and see if you are experiencing any of the physical, psychological, or behavioral symptoms listed. Even if you can honestly give yourself a “clean bill of health” in terms of stress-related symptoms, there is little doubt that the job you have taken on will at times be stressful. In that regard, the best approach is a proactive one that avoids long-term debilitating effects by engaging in such stress-prevention practices as:

- ✦ Taking care of yourself:
  - Eat healthy, well-balanced meals
  - Exercise on a regular basis
  - Get plenty of sleep
  - Give yourself a break if you feel stressed out
- ✦ Talking to someone. Share your problems, your feelings, and how you are coping.
- ✦ Avoiding drugs and alcohol. They may seem to help with the stress, but in the long run, they create additional problems and increase the stress you are already feeling.
- ✦ Taking a break. Acknowledge that work is not all there is to life, and find recreational hobbies.
- ✦ Recognizing when you need more professional help. Do not be afraid to reach out for it. <sup>ii</sup>

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*Athletes have long understood that pushing oneself hard at 100 percent capacity, 100 percent of the time results in little or no long-term gains in performance. Make sure that throughout the day you are allowing yourself frequent breaks. At the very least, make sure you are taking a 10-minute break every 90 minutes and that you allow yourself a vacation after an extended push on a project or assignment.*

Michael Campbell, Jessica Baltes Innis, Andre Martin, and Kyle Meddings, *The Stress of Leadership*. Center for Creative Leadership, 2007, p. 14.  
<http://www.ccl.org/leadership/pdf/research/StressofLeadership.pdf>

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Additionally, other wardens have also recommended that it is beneficial to:

- ✦ Get comfortable with not being in control of everything.
- ✦ Build supportive relationships. Find a network of peers who will give you feedback and advice and let you blow off steam.
- ✦ Watch how you react to bad news. Don't “kill the messenger.”
- ✦ Do not take yourself too seriously. The organization would actually be able to survive without you.<sup>iii</sup>

Table 7.1: Common Effects of Stress

...ON YOUR BODY	...ON YOUR MOOD	...ON YOUR BEHAVIOR
Headache	Anxiety	Overeating or undereating
Muscle tension or pain	Restlessness	Angry outburst
Chest pain	Lack of motivation or focus	Drug or alcohol abuse
Fatigue	Irritability or anger	Tobacco use
Change in sex drive	Sadness or depression	Social withdrawal
Upset stomach		
Sleep problems		

Mayo Clinic Staff, "Stress Symptoms: Effects on Your Body and Behavior," available at <http://www.mayoclinic.org/stress-symptoms/art-20050987..>

*"I've had a great career... Along the way, I developed a lot of confidence in my ability, to the point that I pretty much thought I always knew what needed to be done. So I didn't delegate very well, didn't rely much on the other members of the team. Then I had a heart attack. It was like running into a brick wall. I realized that I was finite, that I couldn't do it all. It was a humbling experience. I've been a different kind of leader since then, not so much of a one-man band."*

*By his own account, "Jim" had become arrogant. What's the best antidote for arrogance? Often it is a hardship. After his heart attack, "Jim" learned to balance self-confidence with humility. In the process, he became a more well-rounded leader.*

Russ S. Moxley, "Hardships," in *The Center for Creative Leadership Handbook of Leadership Development*, eds. Cynthia D. McCauley, Russ S. Moxley, and Ellen Van Velsor. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998, p. 194–195.

Like other leaders in business and industry, prison wardens and superintendents are vulnerable to what cardiologists have diagnosed as a constant sense of "time urgency."<sup>iv</sup> Not only do such hard-driving people impose unrealistic deadlines on themselves, but when something interferes with their course of action, it becomes extremely annoying. Essentially, they are always pressing to do "more and more in less and less time," so anything that disrupts their single-minded mission can become a source of extreme anxiety, anger, and stress.<sup>v</sup> The suggestions listed below have been offered for more effectively dealing with this exaggerated sense of urgency:

- ✦ Remind yourself several times a day that life is always "unfinished." It is not necessary to complete everything by the end of the day.



- ✦ Practice listening quietly to what other people are saying, without interrupting, finishing their sentences, or hurrying them along.
- ✦ Stop thinking about several things at once. Concentrate on one thing and relax.
- ✦ Remember that nothing ever failed because it was done too slowly or too well.
- ✦ Bring something to read wherever you go so that when you are delayed, you will not feel as frustrated.
- ✦ Avoid setting absolute deadlines, slow down your pace, and allow some flexibility in your schedule.
- ✦ Set aside time for yourself and your family.<sup>vi</sup>

These are just a few of many suggestions that could be offered for developing the personal resilience to enable you to better manage the work-related stress that is an inevitable part of a warden's job.

Whatever strategies you pursue, the point is to become well-aware of the stress-inducing nature of your position, watch for stress-related warning signs, and proactively pursue measures that will minimize the potential negative outcomes for you, your family, and your facility.

### DEVELOPING SELF-AWARENESS

One of the fundamental ingredients for enabling you to recognize how stressful your life is and bringing it into better balance is developing greater self-awareness. If you are like many people in leadership positions, you are probably good at assessing the strengths and weaknesses of others; however, you may not have a similar level of insight into yourself. Naturally, it is also much easier to analyze other people objectively. After all, we can view them more impartially. In contrast, it is quite difficult to accurately determine how others view you, both personally and professionally.

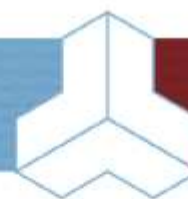
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*Surround yourself with folks who hold a different viewpoint than yours. And consider what they say—you might learn something you didn't know. Don't mistake age for wisdom. Many folks with lots of experience may still lack insight. Conversely, many younger people have greater understanding and insight than you might imagine.*

National Institute of Corrections. NIC Survey of Prison Wardens. Washington, D.C.: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Yet every leader needs constructive feedback about how they are performing and being perceived by others. Critical self-assessment is the process of gathering information about yourself, and then using it to make meaningful decisions about your life and your career. With greater personal insights, you can become more alert to weaknesses that you were not aware of or, on the other hand, strengths that you



had not recognized. There are any number of ways that you can find out more about yourself, ranging from formal 360-degree evaluation instruments (completed by your peers, as well as those above and below your position in the chain of command), to soliciting anonymous informal input from your management team, asking family or friends for an honest appraisal, or completing a variety of standardized self-assessment tools and personality tests.<sup>vii</sup> If you are rigorously honest in responding to self-assessments or processing feedback from others, such information will tell you who you really are, not who you want to be or think you are. Beyond such appraisals, here are just a few things that you can also do on a day-to-day basis to gain greater self-awareness right now:

- ✦ Listen carefully when you get feedback from your boss, staff, inmates, family, or the community, even if you do not necessarily want to hear it.
- ✦ Categorize what people are telling you. Look for patterns, trends, and overall messages, especially when it comes from differing sources.
- ✦ Learn to recognize when you are becoming so overly stressed that it is interfering with your professional decision making or personal responsibilities (see stress symptoms discussed earlier).
- ✦ Think about the best boss you ever had, analyze his or her traits, determine how you match up, and try to emulate those behaviors.
- ✦ Frequently re-assess your motivations for wanting to become a warden. Stay focused on your personal and professional goals and how to reach them.

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*We are more likely to remember the negative rather than the positive things that other people say about us. You may have difficulty recalling when someone praised you. But any criticism you received may still be fresh in your mind, no matter how long ago it occurred.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Managing Stress: Performing under Pressure, Correspondence Course, Book Two*. Alexandria, VA: American Correctional Association, 1995, p. 149.

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Throughout this process, keep in mind that not all of the input that you receive will be accurate. Sometimes you will need to consider whether the source of the information is completely objective and unbiased. Moreover, especially if feedback is solicited from many different directions, you might begin to feel somewhat disheartened by what may seem like a tidal wave of negativity. In that regard, you must be ready to do two things. First, accept and confront what you may not want to hear about yourself. Secondly, maintain a balanced perspective about constructive feedback, not allowing it to overwhelm you. In that regard, remember what such input is intended to accomplish. The point is not to



drag you down, but to lift you up by identifying and defeating your weaknesses while capitalizing on your strengths.

### MAINTAINING YOUR INTEGRITY

Achieving the type of inner balance that we have been referring to throughout this chapter can be a considerable challenge because of the substantial position power that comes with being a warden, and power is well-known to be addictive. It is essential to guard against getting usurped by such power and becoming autocratic or egotistical.<sup>viii</sup> This challenge is even more difficult in light of the fact that both staff and inmates tend to view the warden as “omnipotent,” completely controlling every aspect of the facility. You may be well aware that this is untrue, but you may not be as cognizant of the unintentional effect that this “aura of power” has on others. For example, what you innocently propose as a suggestion might be misinterpreted as an order.

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*On my first tour of the facility, I asked a subordinate why a wall was a particular color. By the next day, the wall was painted another color. It was the last time I asked a question that way.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2002, p. 111.

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With everyone deferring to you and rushing to appear supportive, it is easy to be lured into basking in the glory of your power. Like an invisible bubble, it may even begin to feel as if your power has formed a protective shield around you, making you immune to the accountability for your actions that would be demanded of lower-ranking people. In this context, is it any wonder that powerful leaders from politicians to pastors, police officers, and, yes, prison wardens have succumbed to illegal or immoral temptations? Power can be a strong corrupting influence for leaders who are unable to put it into proper perspective and avoid becoming overwhelmed by their own sense of importance.

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*It's no accident that a word we use almost synonymously with ethics—integrity—comes from the Latin word integer, meaning entire, whole, unbroken...*

Rushworth M. Kidder, *Moral Courage*. New York: William Morrow Publishers, 2006, p. 68.

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Yet maintaining one's integrity is one of the most fundamental attributes of an effective leader. For without integrity, what else really matters? If we cannot trust our leaders to demonstrate integrity, it makes no difference whatsoever if they have any number of other admirable traits. In fact, the true test of integrity is the ability to maintain commitment to core values in the face of pressure or strong temptation to compromise your principles. Sharing a common origin with the word “integrate,” integrity



means just that—being able to integrate competing pressures into a well-balanced approach based on a bedrock of solid values.

At times, leaders may be faced with a situation where they feel pressured to compromise their principles for a seemingly “good cause.” For example, a large campaign contributor to the governor may expect preferential treatment on a new facility construction bid in exchange for ensuring that the governor gives priority to your next budget request. Because such wrongdoing promises a beneficial outcome that appears to rise above the corrupt practice to achieve a “greater good,” it is also known as “noble cause” corruption. Regardless of the potential organizational benefit, however, noble cause corruption nevertheless involves the abuse of power that is an integral ingredient of unethical practices. When you are confronted with truly conflicting ethical principles—that is, when two opposing choices seem as if they might be equally right—it may be helpful to apply “the bell, the book, and the candle” decisionmaking test:

*The bell: Is there a problem here?*

Be alert to warning bells going off in the back of your mind alerting you to an ethical issue.

*The book: Is it legal?*

Check to confirm that your contemplated conduct is not governed or restricted by any laws, policies, rules, or regulations.

*The candle: Is it right?*

Even if it is legal, the next question is how your conduct would look when held up to the light. Would you be proud to find a description of what you did on the front page of tomorrow’s newspaper or to see your videotaped actions featured on the evening news? Choices that look good only if no one knows about them or that subject your agency to potential criticism, are almost always inappropriate.<sup>ix</sup>

Another assessment technique that you can use is the “role model test,” which asks you to think of the person whose judgment and character you most respect (your role model). Then ask yourself, “What would that person do?”<sup>x</sup>

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*When making a hard ethical decision, ask yourself “What if everybody did that?” Would the world be better or worse off?*

Michael J. Sandel, (citing Immanuel Kant), *Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do?* New York, NY: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2009, p. 121.

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## BECOMING AN INSPIRATIONAL ROLE MODEL

Of course, just as you have role models yourself, as a warden, you have now become a model for others. Role modeling involves emulating the behavior of another individual. In fact, that is one of the reasons why integrity is so essential to good leadership. Even if leaders are not always aware of it, staff members tend to imitate their behavior. Whether consciously or subconsciously, you are always teaching and mentoring employees throughout the facility. Your conduct is continually scrutinized, and staff learn from your deeds as well as your words. Essentially, your influence on both the management team and operational staff is immeasurable. Your actions set the tone, establish the values, and lead the way.

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*Staff will watch you closely, so be a good role model.*

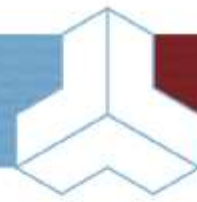
National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Whether positive or negative, your actions and decisions are always being observed, critiqued, and imitated by others. How you dress, speak, write, and act are all likely to be copied, because you are the day-to-day, visible symbol of what it takes to achieve organizational success. Thus, it is important to model the values and behaviors that you expect of others. Respect for staff and inmates, thoughtful problem-solving, cool responses during emergencies, and public praise for employees who have excelled (along with private discussions with those who have not met expectations) are but a few examples. More specifically, here are some tips for polishing your role modeling skills:

- ✦ Be generous in sharing your knowledge and work experiences, just as someone was once generous with you.
- ✦ Be alert to opportunities for staff to learn.
- ✦ Check your body language, eye movements, facial expressions, and hand gestures. Your body language may be speaking louder than your words.
- ✦ Be aware of the power of your position and the ability of your words to damage or hurt, as well as encourage and uplift.
- ✦ Avoid criticism of peers and predecessors. Learn from their mistakes.
- ✦ Remember that you meet the same people on the way up as on the way down.

Ultimately, the test of a good role model is to ask yourself whether you would be uplifted, inspired, and motivated by someone who was sending the same verbal and nonverbal messages that you are communicating to your staff. This is yet another aspect of your job where the self-insight discussed earlier becomes so important.



## MENTORING AND BEING MENTORED

While your responsibility as a role model inherently comes “with the turf” of being a warden, the same is not true of mentoring, which is a more specific one-on-one relationship between a seasoned veteran and a protégé. The primary purpose of mentorship is to provide an unthreatening environment in which those being mentored can grow, expand, be nurtured, and become assimilated into the organization by a well-respected person with greater experience and expertise. Because singling-out certain employees for you to mentor personally may well be perceived as “favoritism,” it would likely be more beneficial to establish a facilitywide mentoring program so that everyone on your management team can coach and develop the next generation of leaders.<sup>xi</sup>

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*Mentoring is a reciprocal and collaborative learning relationship between expert and novice that is based on clearly defined goals and mutual responsibility to enhance professional growth and development.*

Frank A. Colaprete, *Mentoring in the Criminal Justice Professions: Conveyance of the Craft*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas Publishers, 2009, p. 8.

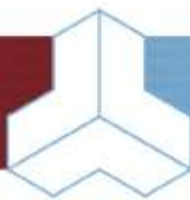
### *Develop those behind you—mentor, mentor, mentor!*

National Institute of Corrections. NIC Survey of Prison Wardens. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice. 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Unlike the formal, judgmental role of immediate supervisors, no one gets “graded” during mentoring. Rather, mentors maintain a more informal, impartial role. In contrast to the supervisor’s emphasis on rating the employee’s performance today, mentors are predominately focused on providing the guidance, assistance, advice, and nurturing reassurance needed to move ahead tomorrow. In that regard, care must be taken when establishing a formal mentoring program to ensure that it does not inadvertently evolve into another official evaluation mechanism that focuses on determining the employee’s progress (or lack thereof). Rather, mentoring should provide a non-judgmental atmosphere where questions can be safely asked, controversial opinions can be expressed, and future leaders can confidently reveal their personal doubts, concerns, and shortcomings. Essentially, in contrast to supervision, the mentor is there to assist rather than assess.

Moreover, mentoring is conducted in the form of an interpersonal relationship. As in any relationship, there are potential advantages for both parties. Obviously, the person being mentored benefits from the insights and advice of a more experienced veteran. In fact, many people in executive positions today credit much of their career enhancement to mentors they have worked with on their way to success. But while the primary idea behind mentoring is to extend a helping hand to new employees or those on

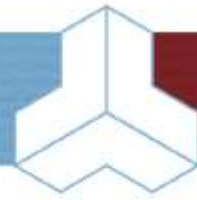


their way up the career ladder, it actually provides positive benefits for both parties. Beyond advancing the careers of subordinates, becoming a respected mentor can likewise help seasoned employees avoid boredom and burnout, enabling them to remain engaged and committed during their years before retirement, as they pass their knowledge, skills, and observations on to the next generation. Reflecting back on their career, they can take pride in their accomplishments as well as enable others to learn from their mistakes. Moreover, mentoring may also produce benefits for your facility, as research indicates that it positively influences organizational commitment and can reduce turnover intentions.<sup>xii</sup>

Because there are many models for mentoring programs,<sup>xiii</sup> you will need to decide what approach best fits the facility's culture. Formal mentoring is a structured program that often involves mentor training, regular meeting times, goal-setting, and documentation of progress. A number of correctional agencies adopted such initiatives when they first became popular several decades ago, but it appears that many of them were not long-lasting, as the process of documenting progress often took priority over developing relationships. Thus, when implementing formal mentoring, care must be taken to be sure that it focuses on nurturing a relationship where confidences can be shared and mistakes can safely be made.

Informal mentoring is less structured, taking advantage of learning opportunities as they arise to share knowledge or experience. Mentors can be matched with mentees, who agree to meet periodically, or the process can be even more flexible, with senior administrators simply taking the time to talk with subordinates about their own careers and goal achievements, mistakes they made along the way, and the like. They can also listen to the plans and concerns of subordinate staff, offering advice and pitfalls to avoid. For example, informal mentoring might simply take the form of discussions with staff about how to interpret signs from the central office, keep work and home life in balance, or deal with a problem employee.

Certainly, it is admirable to establish mentoring options for employees throughout your facility, but where does the boss turn for such guidance? While one new warden remarked that you should “prepare to be lonely,”<sup>xiv</sup> there are resources available for you to turn to, in good times as well as bad times. Look around and determine who in the department, the community, or even another state might be a good mentor for you. Sometimes contacts made and relationships forged at national conferences or training programs might provide good candidates. Although this person does not have to be in the field of corrections, he or she does have to be someone you trust and respect. Even if you are in an informal mentoring arrangement, however, make a commitment to keep in touch at regular intervals. In other words, do not limit your contact to those desperate times when things are going from bad to



worse. In fact, having a mentor should be just one component of a personal development plan that uses multiple strategies to keep you focused, guided, well-informed, and up-to-date.

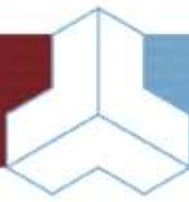
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*When in doubt, seek the guidance of a trusted mentor.*

National Institute of Corrections. NIC Survey of Prison Wardens. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice. 2013. Response when asked what the most important advice is that you would give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Ultimately, the best legacy you can leave behind is a facility that continues to grow and strive for excellence long after your departure. By engaging in succession planning and nurturing the next generation of leaders through initiatives such as mentoring, the impact of your leadership can far outlast your tenure as warden.



### “TO DO” CHECKLIST

- ☐ Ensure that your personal life and professional responsibilities are well-balanced.
- ☐ Establish your priorities and keep your actions consistent with them.
- ☐ Be sure to schedule some personal time for yourself.
- ☐ Avoid becoming addicted to the power of leadership.
- ☐ Honestly assess whether you are experiencing any of the physical, psychological, or behavioral symptoms of stress.
- ☐ Engage in such stress-prevention practices as eating right, exercising, getting enough sleep, and talking to someone about your problems.
- ☐ Avoid negative coping strategies for dealing with stress, such as alcohol, tobacco, and drugs.
- ☐ Take breaks and find personal hobbies.
- ☐ Build supportive relationships with a network of peers.
- ☐ Practice techniques for avoiding an exaggerated sense of time urgency.
- ☐ Conduct a critical self-assessment to gain greater insight and awareness about who you really are and how you come across to others.
- ☐ Avoid abusing the power of your office.
- ☐ Recognize the pitfalls of “noble cause” corruption.
- ☐ When in doubt about the right course to take, use the “bell, book, candle” test to determine the integrity of your actions.
- ☐ Be aware that you are continually serving as a role model for all of your staff.
- ☐ Consider establishing either a formal or informal mentoring process in your facility.
- ☐ Maintain a relationship with someone who can be a mentor for you.
- ☐ Establish a personal development plan that uses multiple strategies to keep you focused, guided, well-informed, and up-to-date.

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<sup>i</sup> Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 106.

<sup>ii</sup> Paraphrased from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Coping with Stress." [http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/coping\\_with\\_stress\\_tips.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/coping_with_stress_tips.html)

<sup>iii</sup> Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 107–108, 110.

<sup>iv</sup> Meyer Friedman and Ray H. Rosenman, *Type A Behavior and Your Heart*. New York, NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1983.

<sup>v</sup> Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Managing Stress: Performing under Pressure, Correspondence Course, Book Two*. Alexandria, VA: American Correctional Association, 1995, p. 113.

<sup>vi</sup> *Ibid.*, 114, paraphrased from Friedman and Rosenman, 1983.

<sup>vii</sup> For more information on self-awareness assessment instruments, see Nancy M. Campbell, *Correctional Leadership Competencies for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Executives and Senior-Level Leaders*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2005. <https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.nicic.gov/Library/020474.pdf>

<sup>viii</sup> See Bill George, *Authentic Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2003.

<sup>ix</sup> Michael Josephson, "When Ethical Principles Conflict," *Business Ethics and Leadership*, The Josephson Institute (November 18, 2010). <http://josephsoninstitute.org/business/blog/2010/11/when-ethical-principles-conflict/>

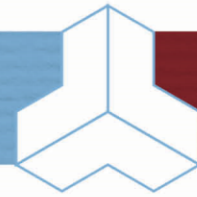
<sup>x</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>xi</sup> More information about establishing mentoring programs is available at [www.leadingjails.com](http://www.leadingjails.com).

<sup>xii</sup> Therese A. Joiner, Timothy Bartram, and Terese Garraffa, "The Effects of Mentoring on Perceived Career Success, Commitment and Turnover," *Journal of the American Academy of Business*, 5, no. 1 (September, 2004): p. 164. See also Chip R. Bell, *Managers as Mentors: Building Partnerships for Learning*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2002.

<sup>xiii</sup> See, for example, *Mentoring in the Corrections Workplace: A Self-Paced Workbook*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2002, as well as the Jail Leadership and Succession Planning Resource Center at [www.leadingjails.com](http://www.leadingjails.com). Although originally designed for mentoring employees with leadership potential in jails, the guidelines, forms, and procedures described on this website (under the mentoring tab) are equally applicable to prisons.

<sup>xiv</sup> Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 115.



## CHAPTER 8: BRINGING IT ALL TOGETHER: GETTING WHERE YOU WANT TO GO

*Taking over the duties of a new warden is an exciting time. Eagerly assuming this new challenge, you anticipate doing things better than others have in the past, making a lasting, long-term impact upon your institution; releasing inmates back into the community who are better prepared to reintegrate effectively; and perhaps even achieving national influence on the entire field of corrections.*

At the same time, you realize that even “the longest journey begins with a single step.” Because getting off on the right foot is so important, making a positive impression on your staff as well as the inmate population is your most immediate priority. It helps that you are likely enjoying at least a brief “honeymoon period.” Maximize it. Use it to develop relationships, gather information, learn “the lay of the land,” and establish the groundwork for getting where you want to go. The demanding reality of the pressures of your job will sink in soon enough.

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*New wardens sometimes have tunnel vision. They do not understand the agency’s overall mission. They do not see how parts of the organization fit together.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 33.

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How you forge ahead during these first few months is critical to both your success and the future of your institution. As is undoubtedly apparent by now, there is no one way to proceed or direction to pursue that is better than any other, but neither does that mean flailing around aimlessly, plunging this way and that with no meaningful purpose, agenda, or focus. While much of what you do during your first few weeks on the job may well be more symbolic than substantive, it nevertheless must be carefully planned. In that regard, the attempt throughout this guide has been to provide you with advice from experienced wardens who have walked in your shoes, along with information from the leadership literature and related resources that you can draw upon for further insights and assistance as you chart your course. In this final section, we will summarize key points from previous chapters and add some additional insights to inspire you as you embark on your way toward a successful career, not just as a prison warden or superintendent, but as an influential leader of the correctional conglomerate.



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*Taking over a prison is like jumping on a moving train. It takes a while to get your balance.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 112.

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## STARTING OUT RIGHT

Before you can influence the field, you must be able to make your influence felt within your own facility. That means plunging into the job with both feet planted firmly at the same time that the ground below you seems to be in constant motion. When everything around you is spinning in confusion, the best approach is patient perseverance. Earlier chapters in this guide emphasized the importance of making a positive first impression on everyone from staff and inmates to external stakeholders and the media. Suggestions for doing so included strategies for gathering input, developing interpersonal communications, building one-on-one relationships, earning trust and respect, modeling core values, keeping things in perspective, remaining objective, soliciting honest feedback, and keeping your ego in check, among many others.

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*Be patient with yourself. There is a lot to learn.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Yet there is someone else in your organization whose ongoing support can be even more essential than anyone discussed thus far, i.e., the boss. While the job of warden tends to carry considerable discretion, it is certainly not completely autonomous. All wardens and superintendents report to someone at the regional or central office. Because this administrator has an effect on everything from performance evaluations to budget allocations, it is imperative to understand what “the boss” wants. When asked to cite the qualities they envision in successful wardens, such administrators reported that they want their wardens to:

- ✦ Be visible in the facility
- ✦ Listen to staff and inmates
- ✦ Set clear expectations
- ✦ Invite staff participation
- ✦ Provide opportunities for team problem-solving
- ✦ Hold staff accountable for quality performance
- ✦ Exhibit common sense<sup>i</sup>



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*Don't change who you are. Who you are got you to where you are. Somebody somewhere saw something in you and put their trust in you to lead others and manage a facility.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Additionally, state directors indicated that they are looking for wardens with integrity, empathy, and creativity—leaders who understand how to use power and authority, to think rather than react, to make unpopular decisions when necessary, to demonstrate a commitment to the profession, and to view the big picture well beyond their own facility.<sup>ii</sup> At the same time, of course, the warden must ensure that the facility is running smoothly on a day-to-day basis, that decisions are being made in a timely manner, and that practice is aligned with policy. While paying attention to such operational features is essential, it is equally important to guard against becoming subsumed by them. For ultimately, the most effective leadership style is a well-balanced blend of both breadth and depth.

### **ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES**

Especially in light of the countless pressures that will be competing for your immediate attention during those first weeks on the job, the skill you will need first and foremost is the ability to prioritize the blizzard of issues that will be raining down on you. When faced with multiple competing demands that all at first glance seem to be equally imperative, it is always tempting to be lured into jumping head-first into the fray, sorting things out as you muddle along. That is because time always seems to be of the essence in terms of things that reach your desk. Even if the actual urgency of the situation is vastly over-inflated, stepping back to gather information and analyze options more objectively is naturally time-consuming. Moreover, some wardens may fear that any delay in the resolution of pressing issues will reflect poorly on them as being weak or indecisive. However, the best long-term measure will be how well the situation was resolved. In the end, few are likely to remember how long the warden took to review the matter and determine a solution, but everyone will be an ongoing witness to the ultimate outcome and how well it worked.

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*You are paid for conundrums. Embrace them and appreciate the opportunity to bring them to some sort of resolution.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Establishing a system for prioritizing requires impartially sorting out and ranking competing pressures according to objective criteria, several of which are described below:

*Criticality: Consider the implications of delaying action*

The most urgent situations are naturally emergencies involving the potential for loss of life, serious injury, or substantial property damage. Any time that the safety or security of the facility is in immediate danger, the serious consequences of delayed action propel the issue to a top priority. After that, however, the question becomes what actual repercussions a delay in resolving the situation can realistically be expected to have. There is no doubt that delays inevitably create inconveniences and frustrations, but these irritants rarely rise to the level of having serious implications. In contrast, the warden's highest priorities must be dealing with situations that would result in serious negative consequences if response was delayed, which demands an objective assessment independent of staff pressure for convenient closure.

*Consequences: Consider the result of making a bad decision*

As noted above, urgent issues demand immediate priority. The best decisions, however, are not usually made under extreme pressure. Time is the tradeoff for greater analytic insight, and with better insight, better outcomes tend to result. Here the question is just how much it matters whether the decision made is a good one that successfully resolves the issue. It is one thing to respond inappropriately to something that does not have significant repercussions, but quite another to blunder into an inadequate resolution of something that has more serious long-term implications.

*Ownership: Consider who is best able to address this situation*

It is easy to let staff dump controversial issues or unpopular decisions onto your lap. What is harder is to determine which ones truly deserve your attention and which should be delegated to a more appropriate point elsewhere in the chain of command. It may be tempting to allow your ego to be fed by assurances that everything arriving at your desk is sufficiently important to demand the warden's attention, but without the ability to prioritize and delegate, you will soon become paralyzed by the paperwork.

*Organization: Rate and categorize the demands you are confronted with*

After removing what can be delegated from the list, assign ratings for criticality and consequences to the remaining items. Then review the list again in terms of time and energy required, dividing it into things that can be accomplished relatively quickly in small blocks of time, and those that will require more in-depth analysis and a longer time frame. To ensure that the long-term items do not get lost in the midst of more immediate priorities, assign anticipated completion dates.





*Realistic reorganization: Consider what is feasible, as well as what may be missing from your list*

The entire purpose of prioritizing is to enable you to better manage your time, balance competing demands, and reduce your work-related stress. If, however, you establish unrealistic deadlines, crowd too many competing items at the top of your list, or do not allow time for yourself, the entire exercise can become self-defeating. As emphasized in earlier chapters, your highest continual priority is maintaining your own physical, mental, and emotional health through a well-balanced lifestyle, which means actually adding time for yourself and your family to your list of priorities. That may seem implicitly evident, but in the highly-regulated workplace of a prison warden, if something is not scheduled on the list of priorities, it is easily overlooked. By establishing personal self-improvement habits early, it is more likely that they will be maintained over time, keeping you well-grounded throughout your career.

During this process of prioritizing, keep in mind the frequent advice offered by the hundreds of wardens responding to the national survey discussed in chapter 1—“go slow”—avoid blindly jumping in with both feet or getting sidetracked by hot-button issues. Use this honeymoon period as an opportunity to gain the perspective that will serve as a solid building block for your future efforts. Get a feel for your facility, understand its culture, and learn its history. At the same time, get to know your employees. Listen to your staff, build lines of communication, establish networks, and develop mutually beneficial relationships with them. After all, your very first mission when taking over as a new warden is to earn the acceptance, trust, and respect of those who can either support or subvert your long-range vision.

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*You don't have to make decisions immediately, and you aren't expected to know all the answers.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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## **DETERMINING DIRECTION**

Transitioning from a newly appointed warden to a well-respected leader demands visionary foresight. In contrast to a managerial emphasis on efficiently maintaining existing practices, leaders by definition challenge the status quo, plunging into the unknown to reshape their organization's destiny. No longer are you directly concerned with day-to-day operational outputs. Now your focus must be on long-term organizational outcomes. That means looking ahead to the distant horizon to create a guiding vision.





The best vision statements are easily communicated, as well as both relevant and realistic. In other words, they are desirable from the viewpoint of the organization's stakeholders and are feasible to achieve. Of course, "feasibly" achieved is not the same as "easily." Pursuing the vision takes place over long years of dedicated commitment, and the likelihood of success in the end is directly related to the extent of support that it enjoys. In that regard, a collaborative process of developing the vision statement is an absolute necessity. Otherwise, it becomes "the warden's" vision rather than "ours," lacking the supportive buy-in needed to promote its fulfillment. In fact, the process used to create the organization's vision, mission, and values statements is as important as their contents. Ultimately, success is considerably more likely with an inclusive, participatory process than a unilateral approach from the warden's office.

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*It is the visionary foresight involved in long-range planning and proactive decision-making that largely sets leaders apart from managers.*

Jeanne B. Stinchcomb, *Corrections: Foundations for the Future*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2011, p. 416.

*Listen to your staff and realize that it is through their efforts that you will get things done.*

National Institute of Corrections. NIC Survey of Prison Wardens. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Even the best vision, mission, and values statements are, however, only that, i.e., statements of intent. They are not descriptions of what exists today, but rather what is potentially possible tomorrow. To make that future dream a reality, policy and practice must be consistently aligned with vision, mission, and values. That is accomplished through the development of strategic plans, i.e., the roadmap navigating day-to-day organizational efforts toward long-term aspirations. Such plans not only provide the overall direction that keeps the facility on course, but also help to maintain focus when distractions, obstacles, or resistance threaten to derail the momentum.

The emphasis here is on "planning" rather than "plans." That is because strategic planning is an ongoing process rather than a static document. To maximize their support, strategic plans are likewise most productively pursued as a collaborative initiative, followed by the skillful management of both fiscal and human resources in pursuit of the plan. Because such plans will affect everything from security operations to staffing allocations, ongoing communication will be the key ingredient. By keeping all employees informed, engaging them in the process, and inviting them to share their feedback along the way, a powerful advocacy for change can be generated. Ultimately, the strategic



planning process should serve as a blueprint pointing the organization in a more productive direction while invigorating staff with a true sense of purpose.

Even the best-laid plans will require periodic adjustments along the way, which is why ongoing evaluation feedback is essential throughout the implementation process. Moreover, the inevitable emergency situations will need to be confronted. While every contingency cannot possibly be foreseen, even under the stress of emergency conditions, the key to responding effectively will be the extent to which the situation was anticipated and planned for in advance.

Although proactive planning is designed to reduce the number of reactive decisions that must be made under pressure, executive decisions will likewise be needed along the way. Every decision you make will not be the right one. After all, everyone makes mistakes. Benefit from your mistakes by learning from them and committing to improve. Moreover, keep in mind that all of your decisions, whether right or wrong, send unwritten messages rippling throughout the workplace, clearly indicating the extent of your commitment to the organizational vision, mission, and values and demonstrating the degree to which you are willing to “walk the talk.”

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*Leaders set values. Values drive behaviors. Behaviors determine culture.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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## SHAPING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

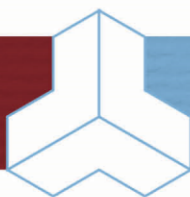
In terms of the potential for achieving the organizational vision, there is no stronger asset (or greater liability) than the facility’s culture. In fact, “understanding the culture” was mentioned numerous times by wardens when asked to list the most important advice that they would give to newly-appointed wardens (in the 2013 survey reported in Chapter 1). That is because being ignorant of the organizational culture or unable to influence it is destined to undermine the leader’s agenda. In essence, the culture is either working for you or against you.

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*Everyone is watching you, and you can use that natural human tendency to communicate your priorities, values, and the culture you want to establish.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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After we are socialized into a culture, it is extremely difficult to step aside and view it from a fresh perspective. As a result, wardens promoted from within a state prison system may find it helpful to obtain a more impartial outside assessment of their facility's culture. With such input, you can more objectively examine the informal system that binds your employees together through shared basic assumptions - i.e., the norms, values, habitual thinking, and unwritten rules regulating what is considered "acceptable" and "unacceptable" in your facility. Just as the culture maintains its own rules and regulations, it likewise prescribes rewards or punishments for conforming or resisting. If this informal regulatory process is not in alignment with the official system, you will soon be working at cross-purposes.

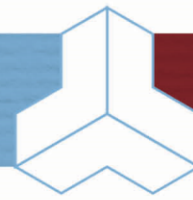
Once you have a better grasp of how the culture functions in your facility, you can begin to work toward redirecting its powerful influence in support of the organization's vision, mission, and values. This is the point at which the strategic plans discussed earlier get translated from paper to practice. The key word here is "practice." Modifying the organizational culture is a complex undertaking that is not accomplished merely by issuing new written policies. What is in writing merely describes the way everything is supposed to work, whereas it is the culture that actually dictates reality.

Leaders who are serious about reshaping their organization's culture will therefore need to address everything from how they communicate both verbally and nonverbally to what they pay attention to, how they respond to conflicts and crises, and what criteria they use to recruit, select, evaluate, reward, and discipline their employees. In all of these endeavors, the warden's actions speak far louder than words. Moreover, proactively addressing the negative features of a facility's culture can produce many collateral benefits, such as improving morale and productivity while reducing organizational stress, dysfunctional conflicts, and employee turnover.

Even the most well-focused, best-planned, and consistently targeted efforts will not, however, produce immediate results. That is because deep-rooted organizational change is evolutionary, not revolutionary. It cannot be rushed or superficially imposed. Rather, it must be given time to nurture, take root, and flourish. As a result, wardens embarking on widespread organizational change must be well-equipped with patience and persistence. Few other challenges that you face will demand as much of your time, energy, and leadership skills.

## **DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES**

While the organizational culture can work unobtrusively to promote or oppose the pursuit of your vision, it is the capability and commitment of your facility's workforce that will have the most direct day-to-day influence. During your first several weeks as warden, your mission is first to get to know your



employees, and then, get them on your side, not by the coercive power of your office, but rather, by the convincing power of your message.

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*Credit staff when success is achieved. “We” is always better than “I.”*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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As a new warden, you obviously will inherit staff members who are already on board upon your arrival. It is equally likely that your agency’s central or regional office handles such human resource responsibilities as recruitment, selection, and training, but that does not mean that you are powerless to shape your workforce. To the contrary, your facility’s administrative policies and operational procedures will directly affect how your employees are motivated, evaluated, and developed, which, in turn, will affect how satisfied, committed, and productive they will be.

Because working in corrections does not tend to be well-compensated or offer prestigious status, it is a common misperception that the inevitable result is high turnover. However, this alleged cause-and-effect relationship misses the point that salary and status are not by any means all of the factors that prevent good employees from leaving. To the contrary, it is often the intrinsic satisfaction of feeling personally recognized, sincerely appreciated, and well-respected that are often more powerful magnets. Creating such a caring environment for your facility’s employees can potentially reap significant dividends in terms of everything from renewed commitment to reduced turnover. After all, when employees feel assured that they are indispensable members of your “facility family,” they may well think twice before simply walking away, physically or psychologically.

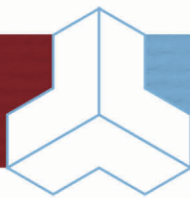
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*Make employees feel that they are a part of the institution. If employees feel valued, then you will benefit.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Ultimately, this means effectively integrating your staff members into a mutually supportive work team directed toward fulfilling the organizational vision. Because they are likely to represent a wide variety of racial, ethnic, gender, and generational distinctions, it is to your advantage to capitalize on the unified strength that they bring to the workplace. In that regard, the more closely you can match their individual distinctions with everything from motivational incentives to disciplinary actions, the more likely everyone is to achieve their full potential, and the more effective the outcome is likely to be.



## ALIGNING THE ENVIRONMENT

Yet even the most capable and well-motivated staff members cannot be expected to thrive in an unsupportive organizational environment. Realizing this, the best leaders inspire their employees to become fully engaged and committed to an organization in which they can rightfully take pride. As with nurturing any relationship, this demands a concerted effort to sustain their initial enthusiasm, rekindling some of the passion that has burned out over the years. Doing so involves not only addressing the needs of employees for feeling valued and appreciated, but also using their feedback to determine what organizational weaknesses can be corrected that would make the facility a better place to work. Ultimately, the intent is to create a mutually supportive foundation with the organization just as committed to the well-being of its employees as they are to the welfare of the organization.

Much of the strength of that foundation will depend on the structure of your executive team. Regardless of how talented, motivated, or charismatic a leader may be, no one has ever achieved success alone. The best leaders not only acknowledge this, but are quick to give credit where it is due. Developing a solid, collaborative work team means offsetting your weaknesses with strengths among your team members. Like a good coach, you do not need all of the skills to play every position on the team, but you do need the broad-based perspective and well-informed insight to realize what skills are needed to win. Then it is up to you to select people with those capabilities, trust and empower them, communicate your expectations, establish a framework of core values to guide their efforts, and capitalize on their synergistic energy.

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### *Develop a team—you can't be successful by yourself.*

National Institute of Corrections. NIC Survey of Prison Wardens. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice. 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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No matter how competent your team members are, however, there will always be executive decisions that only the warden can make. With the long-range strategic planning discussed earlier, it should be possible to anticipate many situations that would otherwise require reactive, time-sensitive decisions, thereby minimizing the number of issues calling for executive decisionmaking. When such decisions are needed, they should be objective, data-driven choices that are based on factual evidence rather than emotion, politics, or past practice. Aligning operational decisions with empirical evidence is what is known as evidence-based practice, which promotes the accountability, cost-effectiveness, and successful outcomes of initiatives undertaken at your facility.

Inasmuch as long-term outcomes are rarely, if ever, accomplished in isolation, those in the external environment outside of your institution can be just as influential as your internal stakeholders. As a





result, your ability to influence everyone from members of the legislature and state government officials to the media and leaders in your immediate community is likely to have a significant benefit. In fact, attending to such external stakeholders is yet another mark that sets leaders apart from managers.

Given the fact that wardens may well be prohibited from political activity on behalf of their institution, this means ensuring that your efforts are directed toward educating and providing information rather than lobbying. At the local level, a two-way relationship exists between your facility and the surrounding community, with each affected positively and/or negatively by the other. Thus, listening to the issues and priorities of your external community becomes as important as listening to your internal staff. It may even be beneficial to establish a prison advisory board to further promote working partnerships with key citizens and business interests.

If there is one partnership that at some point will inevitably become essential, it is with the media. Given the fact that most media interactions with corrections tend to occur under tragic or emergency circumstances, it is a natural inclination for wardens to do their best to avoid contact with the press. Given the unavoidable likelihood that your paths will eventually cross, however, a better approach is to anticipate and plan for it. In other words, cultivate mutually respectful relationships with the media well before disaster strikes. As with every other topic discussed throughout this guide, it is visionary wardens with such proactive leadership strategies who are most likely destined for success.

### **MANAGING FISCAL RESOURCES**

Today, however, it is not just professional capability and personal commitment that are necessary to prevail as a successful warden. To the contrary, given the fiscal challenges that have faced most states in recent years, the ability to do more with less without reducing facility morale has become an essential component of correctional leadership. Doing so is all the more challenging in light of the fact that most wardens do not enter the job with a strong fiscal background, but because the budget affects virtually everything throughout your facility, it demands your highest priority.

First and foremost, as with everything else discussed throughout this guide, the budget is a meaningless document unless it is aligned with the organizational vision and mission in a cause-and-effect manner. Not only does doing so provide greater justification for fiscal requests, but it also offers some protection against being held unreasonably accountable if the funding needed to fulfill stated goals and objectives is not forthcoming.

Moreover, it is nearly impossible to influence something that one does not fully understand. Wardens therefore must become intimately familiar with the budget to change or control it. In addition to the fiscal





details themselves, this also encompasses understanding the state budgetary process, from initial preparation to executive, legislative, and constituent review, and ultimately, implementation through the procurement, purchasing, and monitoring of expenditures.

While you are not expected to be personally familiar with every line item in the budget, neither does that mean that you should completely abdicate your fiscal responsibility to a “budget guru” who knows how to “crunch the numbers.” Nor should you rely exclusively on audits to flag problems. To the contrary, it is your responsibility to establish a fiscal oversight process that monitors expenditures against available balances, with “red flag” criteria built in to warn you of discrepancies and controls in place to prevent over-expenditures.

Additionally, since personnel costs represent the greatest percentage of the budget, you may want to address such related items as absenteeism, overtime, and other employee-related issues. Doing so may extend well beyond a mere overview of problematic expenditures, because the causal factors involved may be symptomatic of deeper organizational issues. Both physical plant expenditures and inmate accounts may likewise be languishing from lack of attention over the years, potentially calling for anything from a structural engineering assessment to an inmate account audit. Regardless of what oversight systems, review processes, or remediation strategies you undertake, however, the bottom line is that you are expected to be a good steward of your facility’s financial resources. Thus, fiscal responsibility rests squarely on your shoulders.

### **MANAGING YOURSELF**

Given the all-encompassing leadership demands that you face as a new warden in terms of everything from establishing initial priorities to determining long-range direction, shaping the culture, developing personnel, aligning stakeholders, and managing fiscal resources, it is easy to neglect yourself and your family. Nothing could be a more certain route to disaster.

Certainly, it is tempting to plunge in with both feet and get the job done by working at it 24/7, yet even if you could make that incredible effort, everything on your agenda would still not be accomplished. At some point, you have to accept the fact that you cannot control everything. Moreover, the energy and enthusiasm that you direct toward your work-related tasks can be expected to diminish if you have not included time away from the job to re-energize. Quite simply, it is essential to keep your life in proper balance. For in the end, what is all of it worth without any personal satisfaction?



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*The brutal reality is that wardens have full and total responsibility for an organization that they cannot fully and totally control.*

Anonymous warden, quoted in Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens* Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 112.

*Go slow, keep stress under control. Enjoy it [the job]!*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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Just as you were advised at the beginning of this chapter to take all aspects of the job into proper perspective before diving head-first into the warden's office, it is equally indispensable to maintain a balanced perspective between your personal and professional life. Most fundamentally, that means developing the ability to cope with stress effectively. By this, we do not mean handling only the short-term episodic stress that results from a one-time institutional crisis, but more importantly, it means managing the ongoing day-to-day, chronic stressors that take a slow, debilitating toll on your long-term physical and mental well-being.

At this early point in your executive role, it is probably unlikely that you are experiencing any of the significantly debilitating symptoms of stress. Nevertheless, keep attuned to the physical, emotional, and behavioral warning signs described in chapter 7, along with the recommendations for dealing with them. As a hard-driving leader focused on making things happen, you may well be prone to imposing unrealistic deadlines and pressing yourself to do more and more in less and less time, perhaps because you are taking yourself too seriously. If so, it may be helpful to keep in mind that the facility survived long before your appointment, and that it will continue to function long after your departure. Of course, that is not to diminish the effect of your leadership, but rather to keep your ego in properly balanced perspective.

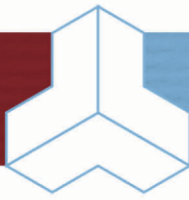
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*Check your ego at the gate and do not take yourself or your new position too seriously.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

*Critical analysis is the most important skill in your toolbox. Develop it; strengthen it.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.



Keeping yourself well-grounded means developing a healthy sense of self-awareness. Get an honest, critical appraisal, and use the feedback constructively to find out who you really are, not just who you want to be or think you are. Most importantly, guard carefully against letting your ego run wild and becoming addicted to the power and authority that come with your position. Because power can lead to corruption, it is not surprising that unethical behavior is often associated with those who become overwhelmed by their own sense of importance. Almost daily, you can expect to face temptations that could lead you to compromise your values, whether for your own benefit or that of the organization. The substantial power that you have may lead to the mistaken belief that you can succumb to these temptations with complete impunity. Whether you are able to maintain your integrity in the face of such ongoing pressures will be the true test of your values and the courage it takes to maintain them. Quite simply, there is no more indispensable attribute for a leader than integrity.

In fact, maintaining your personal core values is particularly essential because of your high visibility as a role model. In the fishbowl life of a prison warden, your every move is open to scrutiny, and staff will be quick to emulate your behavior. Be aware not just of what you say, but also the unspoken messages that your body language is communicating. Take advantage of this ongoing opportunity to influence, inspire, and engage your employees.

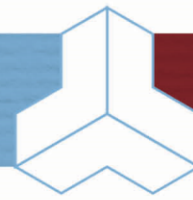
Again, however, the fundamental message for you is not to forget to take care of yourself and your family. Certainly, it can be lonely being “at the top,” but that does not mean that you have to forge ahead alone. Draw on the support of loved ones, and be there for them as well. It may also be helpful to identify a mentor, someone you trust and respect who can be there for you, not only for advice when things are falling apart, but also to share your triumphs during good times. Whatever combination of mentorship, stress reduction, lifelong learning, or other avenues of personal development that you elect to pursue, make sure that you include time for yourself high on your priority list. For you cannot be a productive warden without being a well-rounded person.<sup>iii</sup>

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### *Never stop learning.*

National Institute of Corrections. *NIC Survey of Prison Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2013. Response when asked the most important advice to give to a newly appointed warden/superintendent.

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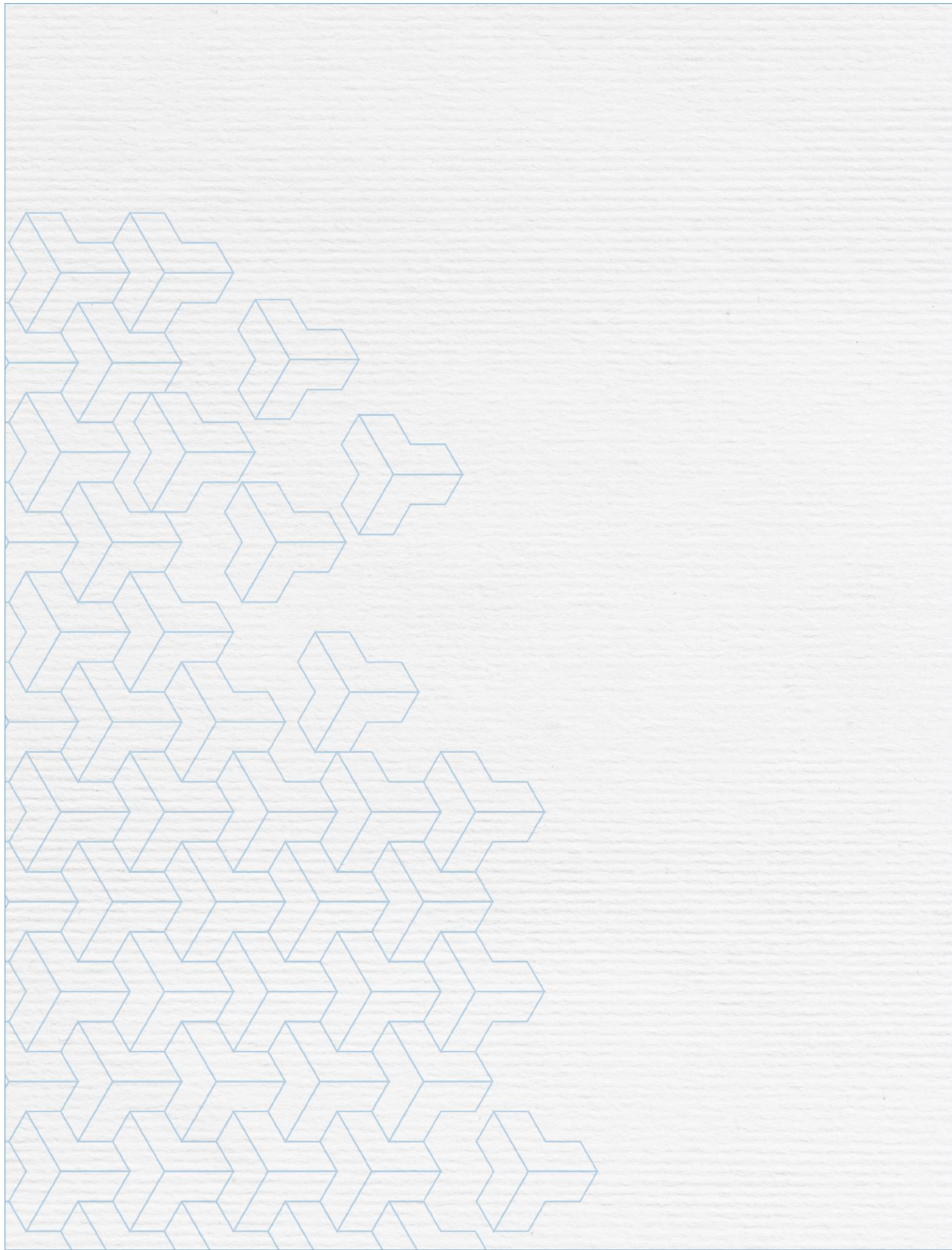
## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> Susan W. McCampbell, Marie E. Hall, and Elizabeth P. Layman, *Resource Guide for Newly Appointed Wardens*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice, 2002, p. 119.

<sup>ii</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>iii</sup> Since chapter 8 is a summary of all previous material, see earlier chapters for specific checklists associated with these topics.







## APPENDIX A: RESOURCE LIST

*Addressing Prison Workforce Issues in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Approaches that Work.* Middletown, CT: Criminal Justice Institute, 2003.

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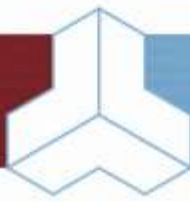
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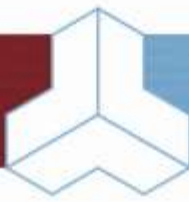
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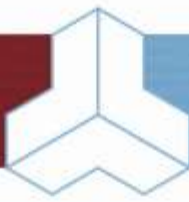
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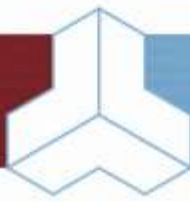
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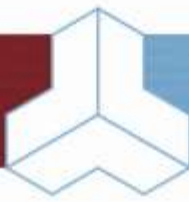
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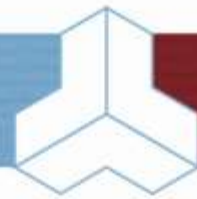
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## APPENDIX B: THE NIC NATIONAL WARDENS' SURVEY

### METHODOLOGY

Development and implementation of the National Prison Wardens' Survey administered in 2013 was a collaborative effort among several stakeholders—i.e., the funding agency (National Institute of Corrections), the project administrator (Center for Innovative Public Policies), and researchers at Florida Atlantic University (School of Criminology and Criminal Justice and School of Public Administration).

Following a comprehensive literature review, the survey instrument was drafted and a hard copy was pretested in November, 2012, with the 24 participants attending NIC's Executive Training for New Wardens. Onsite discussions probed further to identify any items that might be unclear, missing, redundant, or otherwise confusing. After revisions were made, the online version of the survey was pretested with eight wardens from seven states. Feedback was very positive, with only a few minor changes made after this stage of the process.

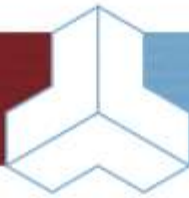
At the same time, researchers were exploring avenues for obtaining email contacts for wardens throughout the country, since the online capability of Survey Monkey was determined to be the most efficient method for administering the survey to such a large, geographically dispersed target group. In that regard, NIC placed a notice on their discussion board website in November, 2012, asking state correctional agencies to submit a list of wardens in their state. The few responses received primarily came with names only, (not email addresses), thus making it impossible to contact them.

By early January, 2013, it had become apparent that it would not be possible through this approach to obtain a national list of prison wardens with specific contact information. The research team therefore initiated its own investigative process, developing a customized list through information available in state Department of Corrections websites, follow-up personal contacts, and discussions with DOC research personnel. This process yielded a list of approximately 898 names of wardens and their email addresses, (representing 47 states).

To check the accuracy of these addresses, a test email was sent to everyone on the list in late January, 2013, explaining the project and providing them with a "heads-up" alert to watch for the upcoming survey. After eliminating 21 invalid email addresses and correcting others, a total of 877 names remained on the list. By January 28, 2013, the survey was sent to these validated email addresses, asking for a response within two weeks.

By mid-February, a follow-up email was sent to everyone, thanking those who had replied and requesting those who had not to do so. Since survey responses were anonymous, it was impossible to distinguish





one group from the other, so a generic email was sent to everyone. The survey was left open online for another month thereafter. By that time, a total of 360 people had responded, representing a 41% response rate. However, there were 34 respondents who did not answer the majority of important questions, so they were eliminated from the analyses, resulting in 326 useable cases (a 37% response rate). Twenty-two respondents who were formerly wardens and are now state directors or administrators were removed for a portion of the quantitative results, but their responses to the open-ended questions were included in the qualitative analysis.

Overall, forty-three states are represented in the sample. For various reasons, three states did not participate (Illinois, Washington, and Georgia), and no one from the states of Maine, Delaware, Rhode Island, or New Hampshire responded to the question about their current state of employment. While it is unclear whether anyone from those four states responded, it might be speculated that since all of these are small states with very few wardens, anyone responding might have been concerned about anonymity if their affiliation was acknowledged.



## APPENDIX C: INFORMATION ON THE FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA), THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA), AND THE PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT (PREA)

### FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

A source of confusion in many organizations, FMLA allows eligible employees to take leave for specified family and medical reasons. Not only are the provisions of this legislation often misunderstood and misapplied by both employers and employees, but the recordkeeping provisions can also be daunting.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, eligible employees are entitled to twelve workweeks of leave in a 12-month period for:

- ✦ The birth of a child, and subsequently, to care for the newborn child within one year of birth;
- ✦ The placement with an employee of a child for adoption or foster care, and subsequently, to care for the child within one year of placement;
- ✦ The care of an employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition;
- ✦ A serious health condition that makes an employee unable to perform the essential functions of his or her job;
- ✦ Any qualifying exigency arising out of the fact that an employee's spouse, son, daughter, or parent is a military member on "covered active duty;" or twenty-six workweeks of leave during a single twelve-month period to care for a covered service member with a serious injury or illness if the eligible employee is the service member's spouse, son, daughter, parent, or next of kin (i.e., military caregiver leave).<sup>i</sup>

FMLA also addresses break times for nursing mothers, leave policies for military reservists returning to work, and care for children and aging parents. Now that same-sex couples are legally considered spouses under federal law, "if they are 'spouses' under state law, all federal laws and regulations that include spouses include the broader same-sex definition in those states where same-sex marriage is legal. FMLA refers to state law for the definition of 'spouse.' Thus, for FMLA, an employee can take leave for a serious medical condition, including military-family leave, of the same-sex spouse if the employee lives in a state that allows same-sex marriage."<sup>ii</sup>

For wardens and superintendents, the best advice is to be aware of the agency's policies regarding FMLA, and assure that accurate records are being kept. Most importantly, administrators need to understand the policy and be able to explain it to subordinates. Additionally, it is essential that the facility's leadership assure fair application of the rules. As discussed earlier in terms of staffing needs and overtime expenditures, managing the fiscal aspects of the workforce means being able to assess the impact of all



leave categories on the facility, (including FMLA), determining how they will affect the budget, and planning accordingly.

### **AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) became law in 1990, and was amended in 2008. The law and its related administrative regulations focus on ensuring that persons with disabilities are not discriminated against in the workplace and that they have access to public buildings and services.<sup>iii</sup> In the correctional workplace, ADA is applicable to employees, volunteers, and inmates, as well as members of the public who have access to your facility. It embraces considerations ranging from initial hiring to continued employment for staff who may become disabled, inmate access to programs, accessibility for everyone throughout the facility, and overall public access.

Wardens therefore need to be aware of the impact of ADA from multiple perspectives--employees, visitors, and inmates. Moreover, if new construction or renovation is forthcoming in the future, compliance with ADA's standards for accessible design is essential. The key to avoiding ADA-related liability is to be knowledgeable about what is required and anticipate potential difficulties before they occur. A brief overview of ADA applicability to corrections includes such issues as:

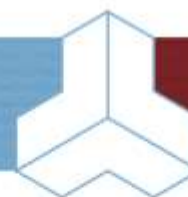
#### *Facility design:*

Planning for new construction or renovating existing facilities requires accessibility consideration – for everyone who will be entering the facility. Wardens who are tempted to defer to the architects to ensure that ADA standards are met may be disappointed to learn that their expectations were unfulfilled. Being proactive, asking questions, and holding architects accountable may avoid costly retrofitting or lawsuits challenging illegal denial of services.<sup>iv</sup>

#### *Inmate access to programs and services:*

Inmates with qualified disabilities should have access to prison services and programs for which they are otherwise eligible, (unless they are excluded on the basis of an articulated and documented security risk). For example, this includes:

- Providing sign-language interpreters, as well as making information available in Braille.
- Providing access to Telecommunications Device for the Deaf, to assist hearing-impaired inmates with communicating.
- Enabling inmates to physically get to wherever a program is being held, without encountering high door thresholds, narrow doors, steps, or similar impediments. (For instance, if an inmate in a wheelchair is qualified to attend a program that is held somewhere that can only be reached by stairs, if at all possible, it should be moved to a more accessible location).



- ✦ Giving special consideration to emergency evacuation planning for housing units holding inmates with any type of disability that may limit their ability to move without assistance. However, it should be noted that since “handicapped” or “disabled” is not a legitimate inmate classification, assigning inmates with mobility issues to one designated housing unit may not be the best procedure, not only in terms of inmate safety, but also in terms of their rights under ADA.

#### *Employment:*

There are ADA standards addressing the hiring process, as well as accommodations for employees who may become disabled. Check with your human resources office for information about how ADA applies to the correctional workforce.<sup>v</sup>

#### *Facility visitors:*

Prisons also need to be accessible for visitors, which includes anyone with legitimate access—from attorneys to family members.

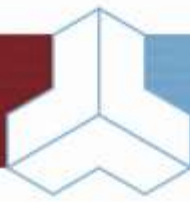
Ultimately, understanding your organization’s policies and procedures, assuring that staff are trained to comply with disability-related legislation, and conducting periodic audits of accessibility are important steps for achieving ADA compliance. On all of the issues related to ADA compliance, federal guidance is available from the Disability Rights Section, U.S. Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice (online at ADA.gov). All states also have disability advocate offices that can become collaborators with correctional facilities, rather than potential litigants.<sup>vi</sup> Working with your state and local disability rights stakeholders can develop valuable insights, as well as allies to assist your efforts.

### **THE PRISON RAPE ELIMINATION ACT (PREA)**

PREA continues to promote fundamental changes in how correctional institutions safeguard inmates from sexual abuse and harassment. Most administrators are familiar with the PREA standards published in 2012<sup>vii</sup> and support their agency’s efforts to comply. The audits of facilities began in 2013, and are expected to continue into the foreseeable future.

For newly appointed wardens, listed below are several strategies to help determine your facility’s PREA readiness:

- ✦ Review the prison’s PREA assessment, along with the status of plans of action
- ✦ Assess PREA-related written directives, policies, procedures and training, including inmate orientation
- ✦ Assure that all contractors and volunteers working in the facility are in compliance
- ✦ Examine the data and read the investigations of incidents of sexual abuse, assault, harassment and voyeurism in the facility, as reported in the Bureau of Justice Statistics’ Survey of Sexual Violence<sup>viii</sup>



- ✦ Determine if inmates in the facility have ever been surveyed by the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and if so, review the results <sup>ix</sup>
- ✦ Learn about the audit process, audit instruments, and proofs of compliance <sup>x</sup>
- ✦ Talk to inmates and find out what they know about their personal sexual safety and how to report allegations
- ✦ Meet with the facility's PREA coordinator to be sure the facility's compliance is on track
- ✦ Confirm when the facility is scheduled for an audit

The national PREA Resource Center provides a starting place to learn more.<sup>xi</sup> It contains archived webinars, updated FAQs, and links to relevant sites, as well as information about other sources of studies, reports, lesson plans, assessment tools, and audit preparation.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>i</sup> U. S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, available at: <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>. See also the FMLA Final Rule Website 2/5/13, available at: <http://www.dol.gov/WHD/fmla/2013rule/>

<sup>ii</sup> Society for Human Resource Management, FMLA template for model policies, available at: [http://www.shrm.org/templatestools/samples/policies/pages/fmlaleave\(withservicememberleaveexpansion\).aspx](http://www.shrm.org/templatestools/samples/policies/pages/fmlaleave(withservicememberleaveexpansion).aspx)

<sup>iii</sup> Full text of the statute is available at: <http://www.ada.gov/pubs/adastatute08.htm>





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iv See <http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/Guidance2010ADASTandards.htm> and [http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/Guidance\\_2010ADASTandards\\_prt.pdf](http://www.ada.gov/regs2010/2010ADASTandards/Guidance_2010ADASTandards_prt.pdf) and [http://www.ada.gov/accessible\\_cells\\_prt.pdf](http://www.ada.gov/accessible_cells_prt.pdf)

v Information on Title I of the ADA is available at: [http://www.ada.gov/ada\\_title\\_I.htm](http://www.ada.gov/ada_title_I.htm)

vi Information on the National Disability Rights Network is available at: <http://www.ndrn.org/index.php>. Additional local advocates are the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI) at <https://www.nami.org> and local chapters of the Mental Health Association.

vii To view the standards, go to: <http://www.prearesourcecenter.org/training-technical-assistance/prea-101/prisons-and-jail-standards>

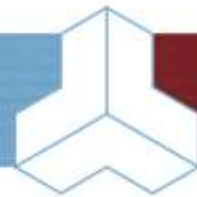
viii <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=dcdetail&iid=406>

ix <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=20>

x <http://www.prearesourcecenter.org/audit>

xi <http://www.prearesourcecenter.org/about>





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