A Force for Positive

CHANGE.

THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION ON PROBATION, PAROLE AND CORRECTIONS

88th Annual

Training Institute

Achieving Success And
Identifying Solutions: **Making Progress**
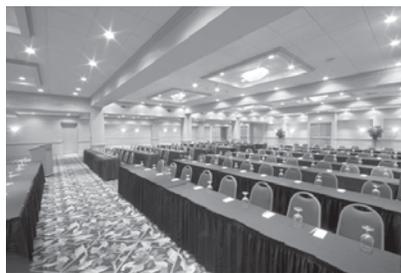
MAY 17-20, 2009

HARRISBURG EAST HOLIDAY INN

HARRISBURG, PA

HARRISBURG EAST
Holiday Inn

A MESSAGE *from the* PRESIDENT

To the Membership of PAPPC:

The 87th Training Institute was a huge success and exceeded my highest expectations.

The Panel on Monday was excellent. If you didn't have the opportunity to participate in the Conference, Bill Burrell was a great moderator and has offered to write up the Panel presentation as an article for a future Journal. Members of the Panel besides Bill Burrell were:

- James E. Anderson of JCJC
- W. Conway Bushey of the Adult Chief's Association
- Patricia A. Griffin as senior consultant for the National GAINS Center
- Carol L. Lavery the Victim Advocate of PA
- Shirley R. Moore from PA Department of Corrections
- Catherine C. McVey of the PA Board of Probation and Parole

They had much to offer and we look forward to Bill's article in a future edition of the Journal.

Dominic P. Herbst was well received as the closing speaker, suggesting that there is opportunity for quality intervention in addition to Cognitive Behavioral Theory. He was not only professional and articulate in his presentation, but very inspirational.

I offer my many thanks to all of the workshop Presenters, Moderators and all of the many members of PAPPC who pitched in to make the conference so successful. Thank you!

Now – on to the business of the future of PAPPC! Regional trainings were offered in the fall and were well-received (see page 5). I am reminding you of the scholarship(s) we are offering to PAPPC members and families. John Cookus is working toward providing certified training tracks next year at the conference. We adopted a Mission Statement at our June Executive Committee meeting that speaks to all of us, and began strategic planning in September.

PAPPC is continuing the quality educational and professional development opportunities for our members as we move forward into a future of change and innovation. I personally look forward to serving you.

Bob Kelsey
PAPPC President

Editor's Notes

We live in a time of uncertainty and anxiety about the sustainability of our planet, our country and the communities we live and work in. The media is replete with anecdotal accounts from each of these spheres which seem to proliferate the lack of hope and desperation. The easiest solution might suggest that we give up, find someone to blame, or continue to employ traditional practices and approaches even if they don't work.

While there is reason for hope as a society and profession, we are at risk if that hope hinges on the fruit of a correctional philosophy which invests heavily on the practice of institutional punishment and the isolation of offenders, to the deprivation of family and community approaches that have an evidence-based foundation. For some of us in the system, we have ignored the criminogenic factors and dynamics that operate in our system and communities and have tried to change offenders with simplistic, cookie cutter practices that ignore deeper individual and familial needs. Hope begins in our individual belief system that allows for the capacity and potential of an offender to change and in the availability of community resources that strengthen families. This vision of hope for individual and corporate change is an instinctive endowment that separates us from other primal creatures, but when lost or ignored makes us look and act…well less distinctive and more akin to those species. The reason for optimism is that emerging from our collective criminal justice systems is a recognition that hope now has some demonstrated support, often referred to as evidence based practices (EPB). These models and practices are being recognized as a strategy to strengthen families and support reintegration efforts and fundamentally change the way we practice our profession.

Can we engage our individual and collective intelligence, wisdom, and body of history and scientific research to meet both the current and approaching challenges? Both the population of offenders and families we provide services to and the victims and communities we serve call us to an ever increasing self examination of our professional calling and vision.

Two articles included in this Issue of the Journal *feature the components of the evidence based resources and practices in Pennsylvania and Virginia. We welcome your feedback on this issue.*

Keith Graybill
Editor

SPECIAL NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

I am pleased to announce that Deon Roth will begin serving as the Journal Editor beginning with the next issue. Please give him your full support. Deon is the Central Region Director for the PBPP, and a career professional in the probation and parole field

KEITH GRAYBILL

CONTACT US...

The PAPPC Journal is published by members of the Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections, P.O. Box 5553, Harrisburg, PA 17110. Articles are welcome and can be sent directly to this address, or to deroth@state.pa.us.

Membership information and applications are available from Patricia Farrell, 1401 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19002; (215) 683-6947; Patricia.Farrell@courts.phila.gov.

To request information about advertising in the PAPPC Journal, please contact Deon Roth, 1101 N. Front Street, Harrisburg, PA 17104; (717) 787-5689; deroth@state.pa.us.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE

pappc.org

Pennsylvania State University Prevention Research Center: Evidence-Based Prevention and Intervention Support

EPIS CENTER

PENNSTATE 1855

pennsylvania COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

PA pennsylvania DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

The Pennsylvania State University Prevention Research Center, through a grant from PCCD and DPW, operates the Evidence-Based Prevention and Intervention Support (EPIS) Center as part of the larger Resource Center. Penn State promotes the proliferation of evidence-based programs by educating practitioners and providers about the practical and economic benefits of implementing and utilizing such programs and assisting communities in achieving high-quality implementation and sustainability.

The EPIS Center is designed primarily to support the implementation of programs funded by DPW and PCCD, but is also available to answer questions and provide information to those who are interested in learning more about evidence-based programs for youth.

Agencies that have been notified that technical assistance is available to them can expect to receive assistance in the following areas:

- Program Selection
- Program Start-up
- Outcome Measurement
- Quality Assurance
- Implementing with Fidelity to the Model
- Data Management and Reporting
- Sustainability Planning
- Marketing and Community Awareness

Communities interested in evidence-based programs can receive information on a program's logic model, risk factors to be addressed, identified barriers to implementation and sustainability, key contacts for training and networking, and implementation timelines and benchmarks.

The EPIS Center is prepared to provide program specific information related to the following ten programs, but can also provide general information on implementing evidence-based programs in general.

THE INCREDIBLE YEARS
(IYS)

MULTISYSTEMIC THERAPY
(MST)

FUNCTIONAL FAMILY THERAPY
(FFT)

MULTIDIMENSIONAL TREATMENT FOSTER CARE
(MTFC)

STRENGTHENING FAMILIES PROGRAM 10-14
(SFP 10-14)

PROMOTING ALTERNATIVE THINKING STRATEGIES
(PATHS)

OLWEUS BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM
(OBPP)

PROJECT TOWARDS NO DRUG ABUSE
(PTNDA)

BIG BROTHERS BIG SISTERS
(BBBS)

LIFE SKILLS TRAINING
(LST)

For more information, please contact the EPIS Center at (814) 863-2568 or via email at EPISCenter@psu.edu.

Probation and Parole Basic Training Academy Recognizes 100th Graduating Class

They perform their duties armed with just four things: a cell phone, a vehicle, a firearm, and extensive knowledge. They are the parole agents of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole.

HARRISBURG – On March 14, 2007, the 100th graduating class of the Basic Training Academy (BTA) of the Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole received their badges and took the oath to become the state's newest parole agents. New county probation officers received their certificates.

This historic class includes 73 members: 48 state parole agents and 25 county probation officers. The 43 men and 30 women agents/officers will be working in Beaver, Bradford, Butler, Clarion, Delaware, Franklin, Lancaster, Montgomery, Northumberland, Philadelphia, Wyoming and York counties.

When the joint training program began in 1978, it was basic skills course lasting just five days. The training, now three weeks for county probation officers and seven weeks for state parole agents, has evolved into a multi-faceted curriculum reflecting the unique nature of agents as part law enforcement officer, part counselor, part social worker and part job counselor.

"To reduce victimizations, the training addresses many issues that contribute to criminal behavior," said Parole Board Chairman Catherine McVey. "Offenders have criminal thinking patterns, which lead to poor behavioral choices. We try to help them change these thinking patterns, and lead them to make positive choices in their lives."

Parole agents depend not upon high-tech gadgets, but upon one-on-one interaction with an offender to steer offenders toward crime-free lives and the safe return to their communities. Because approximately 70 percent of offenders enter state prisons with a drug and alcohol problem; agents must understand drug and alcohol addiction recovery and relapse. Often, agents need to understand mental illness in order to interact appropriately with an offender who has such a diagnosis.
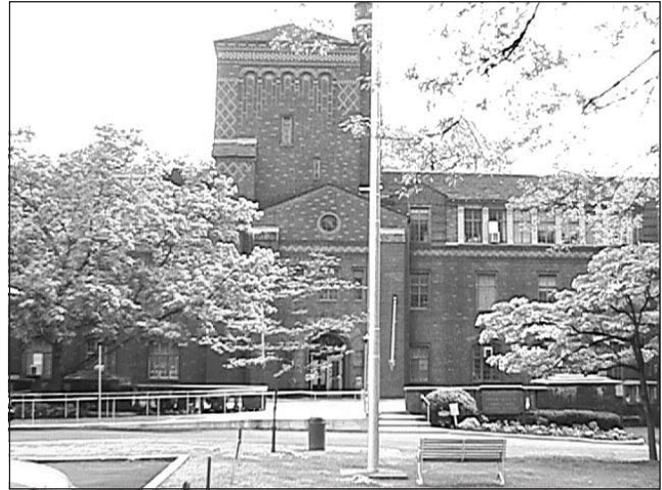
Pennsylvania Department of Corrections Training Academy

1451 North Market Street | Elizabethtown, PA 17022
Phone: (717) 367-9070

In fiscal year 2007/08, the Board conducted four training sessions for 672 agents at the state and county levels (499 state and 173 county). The total number of hours spent in this specialized training was 20,825 hours.

The professional development curriculum is critical to developing the skills of probation and parole staff in achieving the mission of public safety and reducing recidivism. The training program now includes:

- Up-to-date training by medical professionals on infectious diseases, drug and alcohol addictions and recovery programs and mental health issues;
- Enhanced defense tactics to ensure the safety of the agent and the offender;
- Recognition of gangs and other security threat groups;
- Specialized case management of sex offenders;
- Using risk and needs assessments to assist with successful offender re-entry into the community; and
- Training to help assess domestic violence situations and responses to Protection From Abuse orders.

The graduation ceremony took place at the Department of Corrections Training Academy in Elizabethtown.

PAPPC Sponsors Regional Trainings

Last fall, The Pennsylvania Association on Probation, Parole and Corrections sponsored three regional workshops focusing on motorcycle gangs. Edward Bachert, MS, MPA, Safe & Secure: Schools and Industries, LLC, was the presenter. A broad base of information was offered regarding motorcycle gangs and outlaw motorcycle gangs in Pennsylvania and across the nation. The resurgence of such gangs was also explored. The free training sessions were scheduled from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at each location.

The fist of the three regional trainings was held on November 13, 2008 at Shippensburg University. Nearly 40 people attended. The training was well-received with positive feedback from participants indicating that it was very interesting and valuable. An overview of PAPPC was presented and membership applications were made available to all participants. Special thanks goes to John Cookus for assisting with the scheduling of this event. The second workshop took place on November 19, 2008 at Best Western-The Inn at Towamencin, followed by a session on November 20, 2008 at The Bishop Connare Center in Greensburg. Attendance and response to all three sessions was favorable.

✓ As of January 31, 2008, Pennsylvania's parolee population was 30,796.

✓ Average length of time on parole is 2.05 years.

✓ 43% of parolees have one year or less on parole

✓ Profile of parolees as of December 2007:
  • 89% male; 11% female
  • 74% require treatment or educational programming:
    – 59% drug and alcohol
    – 47% high school diploma or GED
    – 23% unemployed for 6 months prior to prison
    – 20% have some degree of mental illness
  • 65% of offenders are age 21-39; the average age is 33.

The number of parolees successfully completing their sentence in the community under parole supervision was 6,054 in FY 2006/07, a 10 percent increase over the previous fiscal year.

LESSONS LEARNED

Evidence-Based Practices in the Real World
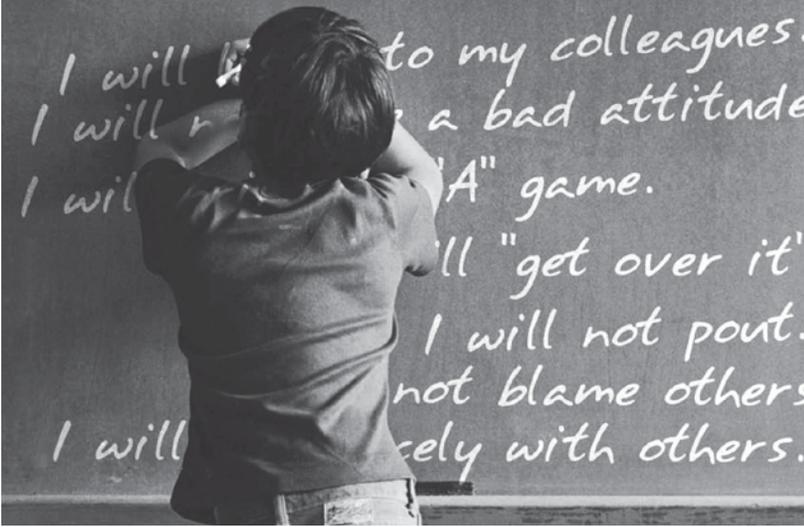
Modern correctional practice is changing. It must. Faced with skyrocketing offender populations during the past two decades (BJS, 2006), much of it due to recidivism (Langan and Levin, 2002), and with correctional expenditures rising as well (BJS, 2005), leaders of correctional agencies are looking for better ways to address a growing array of complex challenges. In the process, they have been asking themselves some difficult questions:

- **What can be done to stem the tide of offenders recycling through our correctional systems?**

- **How can the effectiveness of correctional interventions be enhanced, while addressing the systemic stress created by a rising correctional population?**

- **How can better levels of public safety be achieved, given the above-noted challenges?**

These are questions I began asking myself about five years ago, as I was promoted into the chief's job in a medium-sized probation and parole office in Virginia, one where I had spent nearly my entire professional career. Shortly after stepping into my new role, I began harboring serious doubts as to the long-term efficacy of the correctional model under which we operated. Something was missing. There was no doubt that my officers worked hard, with a strong commitment to their chosen profession, but whatever we did or how hard we worked, it seemed that problems grew faster than our solutions. Overwhelming workloads left my staff drained, exhausted and frustrated. It felt like we were beating our heads against a wall.

It was disheartening to see so many of the felons we supervised recycle through the correctional system time and time again, often the result of predictable and well-documented patterns of behavior. Why did people keep coming back into the system? What was lacking in our approach? Why weren't the offenders "getting it"? Wouldn't we all be safer in the long run if we could figure out how to reduce their chances of returning to the correctional system?

In our quest to find answers, my colleagues and I discovered that there are many things we can do to help offenders "get it", to take charge of and responsibility for building a better future for themselves and their families. Two decades of correctional research has coalesced around a set of principles and practices that, if implemented with skill, commitment, energy and fidelity, can reduce recidivism (Bogue, et al, 2004). These so-called evidence-based practices, emerging from the "What Works" correctional literature, suggest that a specific set of risk reduction strategies can improve long-term correctional efficacy (Taxman, et al., 2004).

In my probation district, we had become accustomed over the years to a risk control emphasis. We employed a contact-driven supervision strategy, one that provided increasingly severe, often punitive, sanctions to address noncompliance. These external controls were moderately effective in the short term. However, they overlooked a simple truth identified in the research: Lasting change in human behavior

by Neal **Goodloe**

LESSONS LEARNED   I will listen
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is an internal, cognitive process, driven not so much by threat of punishment as by the level of intrinsic motivation one generates to change for the better (Miller and Rollnick, 2002). That certainly would explain why we kept seeing the same offenders time and time again. We just weren't very successful in changing them from the outside in and they were unable to generate sufficient motivation to make the internal changes necessary for their own long-term success. Prisons and jails were filling up with examples of this simple truth.

As we learned more, the challenge of leading my office and to a certain extent the larger criminal justice system, toward this new intrinsic change model became increasingly apparent. Much of the shift had to be attitudinal. I had come up through the ranks believing that if I told offenders what to do, how to do it, when to do it and what would happen to them if they didn't, that should serve as sufficient motivation for them to toe the line and change. It rarely happened, and if it did, it was not for long. It occurred to me that our correctional role might be too narrowly defined.

Instead, what if we considered ourselves as both authority figures and interventionists, as change agents, trained and skilled in helping offenders find and maintain the insight and motivation necessary to improve their lives in real, measurable, lasting ways? What if we did a better job of assessing their crime-producing issues and accurately interpreting their unique pathways to crime? What if we became more adept at collaborating with others in the community to implement a coordinated intervention plan, one that actually had a positive impact on thinking and behavior? What if we carefully measured what our officers did and how it worked, got rid of the stuff that had little value and beefed up those practices and programs that showed positive results? Over time, would these changes improve our correctional outcomes? The research suggested that it would, but it wouldn't be quick or easy.

Once we understood what the research was telling us, "business as usual" was no longer an option. Yet, we had no idea what we were doing, or even where to start. No practical, step-by-step road map for an evidence-based implementation process existed. There were a handful of implementation efforts already underway from which lessons could be learned, but how broadly could those lessons be generalized? We had no clue. So, with our community partners, we jumped headfirst into murky evidence-based waters, along with several other jurisdictions in Virginia as pilot sites in the implementation of an Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) model. Needless to say, we made quite a few mistakes along the way. We learned from them, as well as our successes. The following are some of those lessons learned.

First, a caveat: This is not intended as a scholarly work. It is an experiential piece. What worked in my office might not work in yours and vice versa. Every work setting will have its own starting point and its own existing set of strengths and challenges from the outset. Start where you are, not where you think you should be, or where you would like to be. There is never a good time to start a change process of this magnitude, especially in turbulent, resource-scarce times. Start anyway. Go as fast or as slowly as your situation dictates. Understand that, once you start, nothing will ever be the same.

PLANNING, ORGANIZATIONAL READINESS AND STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Start with a detailed implementation plan, developed up front, with as many key collaborators at the table as possible. This will avert a lot of headaches down the road. The help of a skilled consultant from outside of the organization may be needed here to facilitate the initial discussion, one with no vested interest in the inevitable internal politics simmering just under the surface. We received technical assistance under a grant from the National Institute of Corrections that allowed us to bring in a number of consultants to help us get started.

During the planning phase, the organization should:

- Take a hard look at what the system does as a matter of routine. Identify those things that are absolutely mission-critical and those that are meaningless and wasteful. Gather consensus around those things that truly matter.
- Engage in an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to determine the organization's operational position, culture and readiness to absorb change.
- Identify resources that will be needed. Where will they come from?
- Identify and recruit individuals at all levels of the system who can serve as catalysts for change, helping to generate and sustain energy and commitment for an implementation process.
- Carefully assess the prevailing attitudes, values and beliefs of all major stakeholders and how they might be expected to either support or inhibit an evidence-based change process. Anticipate and plan for the impact of those who will drag their feet or create resistance to change.
- Gather your mentors around you. They can help keep you motivated and committed to the task at hand. They can also cheer you up when things inevitably don't go exactly as planned.

It is particularly important to take a careful inventory of tasks and duties performed by staff every day, determine which are in alignment with an outcome-focused orientation, and which are process-driven busy work, representing little or no long-term value. We found that often an officer's time was consumed by activities designed more for the sake of short-term efficiency than long-term effectiveness. In effect, the paperwork was getting in the way of the people work.

In an evidence-based environment, there are no sacred cows. Everything is subject to scrutiny and question. Determine which low-value tasks can be streamlined or eliminated completely. Identify those tasks that have more outcome-related value and accentuate them. Then look at what mission-critical capacity may be completely lacking in your system and prepare to build it from scratch, along with your community partners.

The dirty little secret of an evidence-based implementation is that it is initially harder than "business as usual". Whatever you might hope for in terms of additional resources, you may be lucky to get half. Things will gradually improve once everyone has mastered new skills, but the going early on may be tough. Your staff needs to hear this from you up front. Finding efficiencies in your operation will allow staff to grow into their new roles incrementally, so that the learning curve doesn't kill them. Unfortunately, I speak from experience. I often had my foot mashed down on the gas pedal, resulting at one point in something approaching staff mutiny, once my staff figured out how hard it was to fit the implementation pieces into their busy workday. I failed to fully enunciate how the "frontloading" of the supervision effort would save officers time in the long run, as communication with offenders improved and the authoritative "shoving match" we had engaged in was replaced by a correctional partnership based on "win-win" strategies. Once this happened, violations would decrease, outcomes would improve and their work life would become a more positive experience.

In the Virginia pilots, the participating chiefs were given the autonomy to rewrite our contact requirements to better reflect the tenets of an evidence-based approach. We largely discarded our traditional contact-driven standards that tended to produce a "cookie cutter" supervision style, replacing them with an emphasis on the *quality* of the contacts required to support better offender outcomes. This was a huge shift in mindset, from "counting contacts" to "making contacts count". In the process, we minimized low-quality contacts in lower-risk cases that simply wasted time better spent at the opposite end of the risk spectrum.

Be prepared to build in room for contingencies that are beyond your control. Economic downturns, resource shortfalls, job market fluctuations and staff turnover can all wreak havoc on the execution of an EBP implementation plan. Remain flexible when it looks like you will not meet implementation deadlines. Life will go on. Keep your eye on the prize. Your situation is unique and whatever goals you have set for your organization must be tempered by the understanding that there will be unexpected bumps in the road that will slow you down from time to time.

CULTURAL CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND VISION

An evidence-based approach works best when developed from the ground up, at the field level. Find bright and energetic people in your organization to serve as ambassadors, mavens and coaches. Ultimately, your implementation will succeed or fail based on the work and commitment of key staff. Find fertile ground, plant seeds and tend what you have planted. Some in your organization will be on board from the very beginning and eager to assume leadership roles. Once a change movement has taken hold, some who were initially resistant will want to jump in as well. Be prepared to roll with the resistance that accompanies a change process and keep in mind that there will always be those, both inside and outside of the organization, that want to see you fail. You will never be able to convince everyone to come along for the ride. Accept that fact early on and you might not need medication later (my favorites, the two T's, Tylenol and Tums).

Your vision for the organization should be communicated clearly and often to everyone around you, so that there is absolutely no mistaking where you are leading them. Give staff time to adapt to new concepts, to gain and master new skills and to demonstrate that mastery. Set high standards, but be patient. If you are lucky, you will have only a handful that stubbornly resist coming over to your side. Dealing with the most resistant will require you to set specific performance goals and expectations, and to provide regular, consistent affirmations when you catch them doing something right. Whatever they choose to do, uncommitted staff cannot be given an opportunity to pollute the culture. Some will choose to leave, while others may eventually come on board and can become key players in the implementation. While you're at it, make sure to regularly thank those in your corner for their trust in your leadership. It will make them want to work that much harder for change.

In particular, try to get your management team and seasoned veterans to embrace your vision early on. They may be

LESSONS LEARNED

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the hardest to sway. Most will have been doing things the same way for a number of years and will resent any insinuation that they have been doing it "wrong". Change is hard for everyone, but particularly hard for those with high levels of proficiency in, and respect for, the established ways of doing "business as usual". They may be intimidated at the prospect of learning new skills at the same time as those they supervise. Training them first makes good sense.

Try not to spring new things on staff without first discussing it with your management team. Managers do not like surprises and they thrive on the opportunity to have input. We started having weekly management meetings to nip small problems in the bud and to take the office "temperature" every Monday morning. These meetings helped us become a more cohesive group, enhanced mutual trust and let us air our dirty laundry behind closed doors, not in front of line staff where it could do a lot of damage.

Often, those staff members most enthusiastic about a change process are those who are younger and less experienced. They haven't established much of a frame of reference as to how the work should be done. Some will have recently been through a college curriculum in which evidence-based correctional principles and practices were taught. They are often more open to new ideas and the acquisition of new skills. Herein lay the potential makings of an organizational generation gap, a turf war that will require considerable skill to navigate if infighting among seasoned and newer staff is to be avoided.

There will be some who give lip service to culture change, while secretly undermining your plans. Do not allow them to go underground. If your rapport with other staff is healthy, you will soon know who the malcontents are. Those who are off the bus should be given an avenue for voicing their concerns and their resistance. Their thinking and attitudes will need to be heard, explored and challenged, patiently and with the best active listening skills you can muster.

I found that staff could be motivated by the suggestion that they were making history, that they had arrived at a place where the old walls were coming down, with unlimited opportunity to reengineer their profession for the better. It's an exciting time to be in the work and that excitement can be infectious if presented in just the right way. Of course, sugar-coating the challenge is not recommended. Staff should know exactly what you are getting them into.

Foster the development of a "learning organization" (Senge, 1990), where it's OK to make mistakes and to have your skills honestly assessed by others.   Keep the mood light, encourage staff to laugh and enjoy their day, model that fun and balance in your own work life and set about creating a culture of hope and optimism. In so doing, you will maintain an atmosphere that keeps everyone relaxed and interested in learning more and getting better.   Coming to work should be as enjoyable and rewarding as you can possibly make it. I found that allowing staff to flex their work schedules was a big incentive, particularly among those with families. Just a kind word or a post-it note of encouragement left on a desk can have a significant positive impact on the mood around the office. Helping staff find that elusive balance between their work and personal life, and modeling it in your own, helps keep morale high, despite the stress of mastering new skills amid ongoing workload pressures.

> "Try not to spring new things on staff without first discussing it with your management team. Managers do not like surprises and they thrive on the opportunity to have input."
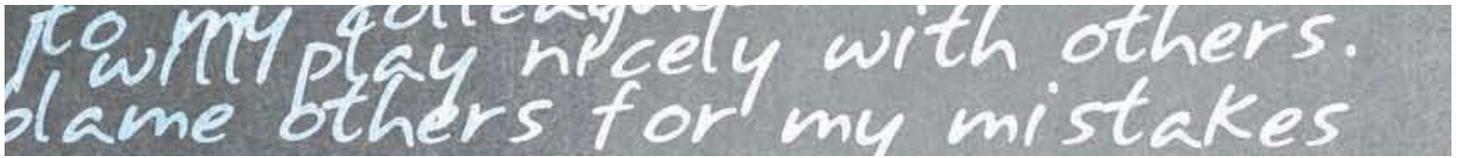
Little things can make a big difference. We instituted "casual Thursday", the first Thursday of each month, on which staff could wear anything they wanted to work and the management team would see any probationers who came in. We also created a procedure to triage "walk-ins" at the front desk and determine their level of need. This protected officers' schedules and helped them manage their time better. We held picnics and other staff development activities designed to take the edge off a little and encourage open communication. We had "open agenda" staff meetings designed simply to get some honest discussion going among staff about what was happening and how everyone felt about it.

Healthy cultures, those with the capacity to embrace new concepts such as EBP, are based largely on trust. It is absolutely essential to be real, to mean what you say, to communicate well and to model at all times what it is you expect from others. If staff sense any inconsistencies between what you preach and what you practice, trust will go right out the window and along with it, any chance you had of getting your implementation pieces in place. Likewise, it is important to have those above you in your system that trust you and support what you are trying to accomplish. Most of the resources and operational flexibility you will need must come from those higher in the chain of command. They will need to be kept well-apprised of what you are doing, why it's important, and what you need to accomplish it. Some "managing up" might be needed.

SKILL ACQUISITION

First, start with your own skills. Read as much of the "What Works" literature you can get your hands on, so that you will be up to speed on the latest research and how you can best operationalize it. The National Institute of Corrections website (www.nicic.org) is an excellent place to start.

Take a real, honest inventory of your own strengths and weaknesses, so that you can move forward in your professional development. Try taking a "360 degree" personal assessment that can help you better understand your management style. I did one of these assessments and found it very helpful. You may find, as I did, that your view of your strengths and weaknesses differs considerably from how others see you.

You should be willing to learn and master the same evidence-based skills, tools and techniques you are requiring of your staff. Your credibility is at stake. You need to be able to model what good skills look like, and be able to honestly and accurately critique the performance of others. You can't do this without mastering the skills yourself. Your presence in the training setting

signifies that you place significant value in learning. It shows that you are willing to put in the effort required to master the skills being taught and that you will know what mastery looks like when observed in others. Staff will respect you for that.

Learning entails more than just sitting through a class. If you and your staff hope to achieve proficiency at more than a mechanical level, practice is essential for everyone. Just as one learns to play the piano, skills are acquired over an extended period of time with directed practice and regular coaching. Once attained, skills must be periodically refreshed to maintain and enhance proficiency. Unfortunately, it's not like riding a bike. You can "unlearn" skills if they're allowed to lie dormant.

Some staff will need remedial training and coaching. Do not view this as a sign that they don't care or that they are uncommitted to what you are trying to achieve. They may just need additional support, practice and modeling. Don't give up on them. Often when they are struggling, staff respond better to a peer as their skills coach, rather than a supervisor. Train exceptional staff to serve as coaches. They can spread the enthusiasm and expertise necessary to support a learning environment. Just make sure you take some existing tasks away from your coaches, so that you don't burn them out.

Recognize and reward mastery of the skills at which you want staff to excel. Offer formal recognition at staff meetings, with a certificate of appreciation and a nominal cash award or movie tickets. This sets the tone for what you are after. Staff are probably better than you at assessing the performance level of their peers, so they should have a voice in who is recognized. On a more informal basis, sit in on staff interactions with offenders and provide feedback at the conclusion. After a while staff will get used to being observed and might even welcome it as an opportunity to receive honest feedback and improve upon their skills.

When in doubt, slow down. Skill acquisition is hard work, it takes a long time and it is easier for some than others. Everyday work life will conspire to get in the way of a learning organization. Still, learning must remain a high priority. Otherwise, staff will find ways to weasel out, claiming that their overwhelming workload leaves no time for training and practice. They may have a point. If so, find something else to take away or streamline a low-priority duty to give staff the time to concentrate on learning and practice. It's that important.

TOOLS, INFRASTRUCTURE & RESOURCES

There will never be a "good" time to begin your evidence-based implementation. Resources or lack thereof will always be

LESSONS LEARNED

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an issue, no matter how well you time the roll-out. Knowing that, start small and take incremental steps that build upon your initial successes. Your implementation will take longer if you go slowly, but by taking your time you can use what limited resources you have to their greatest advantage.

Having said that, you will need some tools to help you get started. The most important of these is a validated, fourth-generation assessment instrument, one that measures various risk factors and the criminogenic (crime-producing) needs that fuel them. The assessment instrument should include an integrated case planning module to help translate data into action and the capacity to track program and offender outcomes. Administration of this instrument should be brief enough --less than 45 minutes to be an efficient data collection method, yet comprehensive enough to cover all of the major criminogenic factors identified in the "what works" research, including the generally-accepted criminological theories that explain causation. Along with an actuarial risk tool, your staff should receive training in how to accurately interpret the assessment data so that key issues can be identified and a strong intervention plan enacted. Needless to say, this plan will go nowhere without the engagement and buy-in of the offender and the coordination of effective community resources.

In a new case, staff should initially concentrate their efforts on getting to know the offender, developing a level of comfort in the relationship and starting to ask open-ended questions that get at the heart of the criminal thinking that underlies bad behavior, just as you would peel an onion. This discussion should lead the offender to a deeper understanding of who they are and how they got that way. Engaging the offender in the process and achieving "buy-in" should lead to an agreement on what needs to change and a strategy and timeline for making that change. There should also be an understanding as to how success or lack thereof will be measured, the incentives to be employed for successful completion of plan items and the sanctions to be imposed for falling short. Creating an effective supervision plan, one that is a living, breathing document that changes and grows as the supervision does, is where the time invested in assessment and deportment starts to pay off. The plan is not intended to be shoved in the file and forgotten. It should be the focal point of supervision and intervention and should help drive the change process.

Staff may initially balk at the time commitment required to get a case up and running this way. They will need reassurance that the extra work put in up front will pay dividends as the supervision unfolds, leading to better cooperation, a deeper understanding of the needs of the case and a reduction in violations, revocations and new crime.

Staff will also need to reach an understanding that they cannot give "Cadillac" level services to everyone. The bulk of their resources, time and energy must be applied in those cases representing the highest risk of recidivism. Those at lower risk require little supervision from a public safety standpoint, although they still may need a treatment referral to address their needs. There is a tendency to over-supervise low risk clients, but it is a waste of precious resources and waters down your overall effort. Incidentally, the research shows that overdosing low-risk offenders with supervision can actually *increase* their risk of recidivism (Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2001). We employed a telephone supervision system for the lowest third of our risk spectrum, largely removing them from active supervision.

Dealing with noncompliant behavior during the supervision process requires the careful selection of appropriate sanctions, designed to teach better choices. We turned to "thinking reports" when employing sanctions. Thinking reports get at the underlying cognitive and emotional features of decision-making, so that the offender can better process their misbehavior and understand its sources. Then alternative ways of thinking and behaving can be considered, practiced and reinforced. Thinking reports can be used in tandem with other sanctions to help offenders learn from their mistakes and make better judgments in the future.

The physical setting in which the supervision takes place might also need some work. How does your lobby look? Is it dirty, poorly lit, with distressed/broken furniture and overflowing trash cans? That's the first thing a new probationer sees when they walk into the building. First impressions are important. At my office, we shut down for an afternoon one day to beautify the lobby with a fresh coat of paint. We also ordered some new furniture and hung some framed pictures and inspirational quotes on the walls. For months afterward, I heard comments from probationers about how great the office looked, and how it made coming in more pleasant. In fact, the lobby stayed cleaner once we freshened it up. In short, try to create a physical environment that is welcoming and supportive of the work you are doing.

The most important resource you have, of course, is your staff. Treat them that way. Find ways to relieve the pressure, take their minds off of their inbox and encourage informal interaction. Manage by walking around. Make yourself available and listen more than you talk. Take maximum advantage of your management team. They are your eyes and ears, being closer to
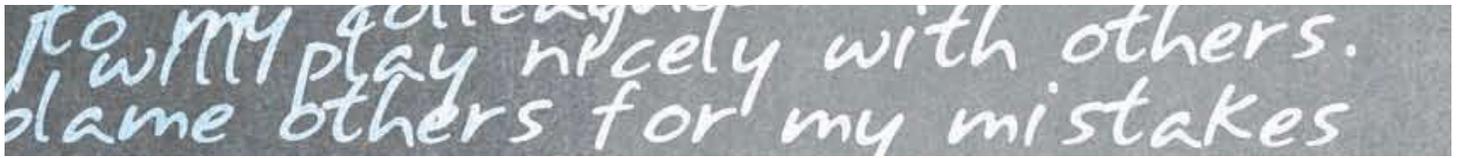
the work than you can afford to be most of the time. Give them an opportunity to lead and make sure that you fully value their contribution.

Be willing to swallow your pride and ask for help when you get stuck. There are now a number of practitioners that have been where you are or hope to be. The National Institute of Corrections can put you in touch with others who are or have been in a similar situation. There may be others in your state who can offer some guidance. Keep in mind, however, that every implementation process is unique and what worked for someone else might not work for you. Likewise, don't hesitate to try something that didn't work for others, as long as it is supported by research. You might have better results.

Finally, learn how to be a "squeaky wheel". Always be on the lookout for opportunities to get your hands on additional resources, be it grants or other sources of funding. Most budget folks are concerned foremost with how to balance this year's budget and may not fully appreciate the value of lowering recidivism rates five to ten years from now. Decision-makers at the top of the organization will need to support a long-term resource allocation strategy, if resources are to be properly invested in producing better outcomes.

PERSONNEL AND OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

Hiring and promotional decisions are the most important ones a leader will make. They can have lasting ramifications for the agency. So, hire the best you can find, understanding the set of skills and attitudes you are looking for. Those with the fire in the belly to become a change agent are pretty easy to spot if you ask the right questions in the interview setting. I asked a lot of attitudinal questions during interviews, such as "What can you tell me about your correctional philosophy?" and " What do you think works best with this population and why?" I could tell right away if an applicant had ever considered these questions. Hire for capacity. You can always teach the skills. Expect to make a bad hire occasionally and try not to beat yourself up about it. It happens.

Increased turnover during the implementation process is to be expected. It happens when you can least afford it and yet turnover is a natural byproduct of any major organizational shift. Some staff will hear what you're up to, sense that the culture is changing, question whether that's the job they signed up for and resign or transfer to another office. Some of them might be your most experienced people. You certainly do not want to lose talented staff, in whom much has been invested and on whom

you have depended for years. Try your best to help them get on board or help them make a graceful exit. Just do not let them hang around and pollute the environment.

After several years of feeling sorry for myself, I came to view every vacancy as an *opportunity*, a chance to hire someone with the right stuff for an evidence-based mission. I also learned that it's OK to be picky, even if it means that no applicant in the pool measures up and the position has to be re-advertised. Better to have the chair stay empty for a few more months than to be filled by an ill-suited candidate.

While examining your organization's capacity for change, don't overlook your support staff. Secretaries and administrative staff have good ideas and see the work from a different point of view. Their contribution should be valued. Incidentally, many of the personnel issues I faced involved friction between officers and secretaries, for a variety of reasons (different roles, different educational levels, different expectations, etc.). Look for opportunities to bring line and support staff together to talk it out.

In general, personnel issues are more challenging than the technical aspects of an EBP implementation process. These are emotional events, requiring considerable time, skill and sensitivity to solve. They can fester if not addressed quickly and deftly. I botched more than my fair share.

COLLABORATION

It is important to get key stakeholders around the table from the very beginning, even those who are resistant and stonewall-ing. Ideally, the list should include judges, prosecutors, police, jail staff, treatment providers, criminal justice planners, commu-nity/neighborhood leaders, state-level leaders, consultants and others in the criminal justice system. Having a carefully selected ex-offender on board (as a former consumer of correctional ser-vices) might also be helpful. Everyone who has an interest in the outcome should have a voice. Review the science together. After a while, some semblance of a consensus will start to form around the goals, direction and role of each member of the team.

Meet regularly. Make it the same day of the week or month, at the same time, in the same place. Lunch meetings work well. People need to eat anyway. The chair of the meetings should rotate among the major players.

Maintain enthusiasm for what you are trying to achieve together. Develop a shared vision for what that future looks like. Consider the benefits to your community if you are successful and the implications if you fail. A sense of controlled urgency should prevail. Those who voice the most resistance must be