

Police Officer Communication: Bridging the Gap Between Law Enforcement and Policing  
Communication Styles



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Date

Police Officer Communication: Bridging the Gap Between Law Enforcement and Policing  
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## Abstract

Traditional communication training has programmed officers to become ‘law enforcement’ communicators, training a direct and controlling style of communication. A ‘policing’ style of communication is needed at times to interact effectively with citizens as well. ‘Policing’ style of communications has not been a primary focus of communications training for police academies around the country as primary training has focused on the direct and controlling style of communicating. The problem being addressed within this research is how to bridge the gap between ‘law enforcement’ and ‘policing’ styles of communication to produce a more effective police officer who can interact with citizens in a way which would increase public trust.

A study completed by the FBI (2012) showed that police academies are not training officers adequately in the areas of conflict management, problem solving, and persuasion. Instead, officers are being trained in a one-dimensional, authoritative way, resulting in an officer who interacts with citizens in a manner which results in unnecessary complaints. A review of Internal Affairs reports from four agencies of varying size, location, and demographics shows that officers are receiving complaints specific to their conduct everywhere.

The desire to rebuild trust between citizens and police was fostered by President Obama who created the President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing in 2014. This final report, released in 2015 by the U.S. Department of Justice was divided in to six pillars which have the potential for improved community relationships, more effective police officers, and increased officer safety.

Police communication training can be improved. Recommendations for improvement include implementing training in procedural justice as well as the pillars from the *President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing*. Additional recommendations for improvement in communication

training include the integration of ‘policing’ style of communication training into police academy curriculum as well as in-service training; including the five universal truths from *Verbal Judo* of George Thompson (1993) into police academy training; and integrating the four major components developed by the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice into communication training.

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## Police Officer Communication: Bridging the Gap between Law Enforcement and Policing Communication Styles

### **Introduction**

Communication within the profession of law enforcement is vital for successful resolution of conflict internally as well as externally. The ability to communicate as a law enforcement officer is not something that may come naturally to everyone who chooses to enter the career path. Academy training has traditionally conditioned officers to be more of ‘law enforcement’ communicators’ meaning they are trained to be direct and controlling with the style of communication delivered towards the citizens when interacting with them. Recent incidents across the country have demonstrated the need for a more skilled, ‘policing’ style of communicator within the career field. There is a distinct difference between a ‘law enforcement’ and ‘policing’ style of communication. The differences between the two take on different roles within the profession as well as involve different types of people. A ‘policing’ communicator may require a person with a higher skill set than a ‘law enforcement’ communicator as well (Solar, 2015).

Recent incidents across the country between law enforcement and the public have caused strain and reduced trust between the two groups. Trust between police and the people they serve is a necessary element of a democracy. In order to ensure stability within communities, faith in the criminal justice system, and guarantee the safe delivery of police services, trust must be restored between police officers and the communities in which they serve (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Incidents such as in Ferguson, Missouri or the ‘Freddy Grey’ case are prime examples of how trust of the police has been diminished. A result of these incidents specifically,

a lack of communication afterwards has contributed to the distrust of police when an appearance of non- transparency occurred.

In today's society, many communities have a diminished sense of trust of the police who patrol their neighborhoods. Much of this declined trust is due to the ineffective communication which takes place between the police and the citizens each day (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Understanding what communication methods are effective is an important step in the process of changing the current relationship between the police and community members. Examining communication methods which are successful within the private sector can also assist in developing new training criteria for communication in the law enforcement arena. The Department of Justice has spearheaded a program to evaluate what should change in order to rebuild community trust and legitimacy of police departments. This program and others alike will be examined in an effort to determine how the law enforcement profession can better train its officers to become better communicators. Specifically, how can this profession train officers to recognize when and how to utilize 'policing' style of communication to re-build trust from the communities in which they serve? In this paper, the issue of communication training in today's law enforcement profession will be addressed. The focus will be on how can there be a shift from the traditional 'law enforcement' style of communication training to the 'policing' style of communication?

### **Literature Review**

The following literature review begins with a review of an article entitled Law Enforcement vs. Policing: What's the Difference (Solar, 2015). This will set the stage for the following sections where communication training between sworn and civilian sectors will be

compared. Prior to researching communication training programs from either sector, a reader should be aware of the distinct difference between ‘law enforcement’ and ‘policing’ styles of communication.

### **Law Enforcement vs. Policing**

The terms “Law Enforcement” and “Policing” are not the same. Although used interchangeably, they have different meanings, roles, and require different styles of people to fulfill each role (Solar, 2015). In terms of communication, a law enforcement officer is quite different than a police officer. To understand the challenges faced in terms of communication training, it is important to understand the differences between ‘law enforcement’ communication and ‘policing’ communication.

‘Law enforcement’ communication can be described as a direct and controlling style of communication where an officer’s position of authority is exercised over an individual. From the academy level of training, officers are taught this ‘law enforcement’ style of communication as the primary style of interaction. In a publication written by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Peter McDermott and Diana Hulse (2012) recognized that police academies around the country lacked in training in the area of Interpersonal Skills of police officers. Specifically, McDermott and Hulse noted academies are not training officers in the areas of active listening, problem solving, persuasion, and conflict management (leb.fbi.gov, 2012). A result of this style of training has been the ‘law enforcement’ officer. This one-dimensional officer is able to interact with citizens directly and authoritatively. According to the authors, a side effect from these contacts can be diminished trust when a citizen feels unhappy with the results of the contact with the officer. Additionally, it is possible that a citizen will not enlist the assistance of a police

officer for a future problem based upon a previous contact when communication may have been abrasive or unpleasant when the situation may not have necessarily needed to have been so.

The 'policing' communicator takes a different role. In order for an officer to fall into this category, they must possess a higher set of communication skills. One who can effectively practice 'policing' communication is closer to a true professional within the field of law enforcement. These officers who excel in the 'policing' function are equipped with a communication skill set far superior to that of a mere law enforcement officer (Solar, 2015). A proficient 'police' communicator is able to utilize the necessary skills identified in the 'law enforcement' communication (direct and controlling) and is also able to decide when it may be applicable to allow a citizen to have a voice in a conversation. A 'police' communicator is able to recognize that not every contact should be resolved with the issuance of an order or command. According to Solar (2015), some situations are better resolved working with a citizen towards a resolution. 'Police' communicators are able to see the benefits in this style of communication to include increased trust from members of the public, increased officer safety, efficiency in resolving calls for service, and positive relationships being built within the community they serve. The foundation of trust from the community is extremely important to police officers. When examining the differences between the 'law enforcement' and 'policing' communicator in terms of community trust; a 'policing' communicator can be described as being able to quickly read a situation and respond in an appropriate manner to build trust; whereas a 'law enforcement' communicator will rely strictly upon the letter of the law to maintain his or her control of a given situation.

A law enforcement officer can be described as a person who has completed a training academy and has taken a sworn role within a police department. The behaviors of a law

enforcement officer include reactions to certain incidents which involve an exercising of the authority they have been given under the law. These reactions are based on training provided in police academies, which instill qualities such as firm, direct, communication with little to no room for discussion. The exercising of authority is evident when dealing with a law enforcement officer and can be found in examples throughout the country. An example of this would include the arrest of media employee David Sepulveda. Sepulveda was standing in an area where suspected explosive devices were placed. Police had the area cordoned off, but the exact lines of the cordon may not have been as clear as the officers intended. Specifically, the crime scene tape surrounded the devices only, and did not allow for a safety area for citizens to stay away from. As a result, Sepulveda was observed inside the cordon taking photographs. The police yelled at him to get away from the area, but Sepulveda knelt down and continued to take photographs. The officers may have seen this behavior as a challenge to their authority, and they subsequently arrested the 64-year old Sepulveda for obstruction. According to Paul Bass (2016), the officers approached Sepulveda and were furious at his apparent disregard for their orders to get away from the scene (Bass, 2016). This is a prime example of a law enforcement situation, one in which the officers involved removed Sepulveda based on their training. No efforts were made to determine why he had entered the restricted area, or whether or not he even knew where the restricted area began.

Another incident of similar comparison took place in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 2013. In this incident, Dennis Henderson, an African-American social studies teacher, was walking from a community meeting while speaking to a local reporter. Police officer Jonathan Gromek drove by the two as they were walking. According to the ACLU (2013), Henderson criticized the officer's speed by stating, "Wow" as the patrol car passed. Officer Gromek turned his vehicle

around and approached Henderson and the reporter asking them if they had a problem. Henderson complained about the officer's driving and stated his intention to file a complaint. During this contact, Officer Gromek noticed that Henderson began to record the contact with his cell phone. Officer Gromek placed both Henderson and the reporter in handcuffs and told them to sit down. Before Henderson could sit, Officer Gromek allegedly swept Henderson's feet from under him, causing him to fall to the ground and strike his head on the concrete. The reporter was eventually released, but Henderson was booked into the local jail and charged with Obstruction of Highways, Disorderly Conduct, and Resisting Arrest. All charges were eventually dismissed and Officer Gromek was later found to have violated multiple departmental policies during this contact (ACLU.org, 2013). This incident is an example of an officer who appeared to become offended when a citizen voiced an opinion about the officer which was negative. As a result, the officer responded with emotion and unnecessary force. This incident may also be an example of an 'emotional hijack.' Daniel Goleman (2004) defines this condition within a person when the emotional portion of a person's brain processes information just before the rational portion of the brain is able to do so. As a result, a person acts before any direction from the neocortex can be received which is able to provide reasonable direction to the person. Using Goleman's theory, this incident took place with Officer Gromek when he reacted to the citizen's comment regarding his driving. The emotional hijack is said to exhibit three stages: a strong emotional reaction, quick delivery of the reaction, and the realization afterwards that the reaction was inappropriate (Goleman, 2004).

Both incidents highlighted above deal with officers' failure to practice effective communication. These incidents, and many like them, fall in to the "Law Enforcement" style of communication. These contacts dealt with officers who were not willing to listen or, look at the

big picture. Both incidents had a common characteristic, which were officers allowing their emotions to dictate their actions. Emotional responses made by police can often lead to negative outcomes to include discipline, termination, and decreased trust of the police. For many years, agencies have disciplined their officers but failed to institute real change in the communication taking place. In recent years, the pendulum has swung to the other direction and programs are now surfacing to change and improve communication styles by police. A study as recent as 2015 involved the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. Many elements of this study are geared towards officers being trained in such a manner that they are able to fall into the "Policing" category instead of the "Law Enforcement" category (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

### **President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing**

In 2014, President Barack Obama created the Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. This task force faced several challenges, with a major challenge being building trust and legitimacy of the police. The task force was comprised of 11 members selected by the President to address the distrust which is present by many citizens of the police. One element brought up while creating this task force was that many people of color stated they do not feel as if they are treated fairly in this country (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). This is particularly interesting when a main premise of the United States is equality under the law. When the task force was formed, this was a main focus, with the intentions of being able to make recommendations to rebuild trust between law enforcement and the community (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

According to this task force, the public will trust those who they believe are acting in procedurally just ways. Procedurally just behavior consists of four separate elements: “Treating people with dignity and respect, giving individuals a “voice” during encounters, being neutral and transparent in decision making, and conveying trustworthy motives (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). When members of the community are interacted with under these principles, research shows that relationships between citizens and the police will exist where trust is present and citizens feel an obligation to follow the law (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015). Within these types of environments, citizens are more willing to cooperate with authority figures as well as engage with them due to having shared values. The ideals of procedurally just behavior have become a part of law enforcement communication within the past two or three years. This idea is relatively new and has been a main platform of the President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing.

The task force organization was made up of multiple listening sessions which took place in the beginning of 2015. Within these sessions, testimony was given in order to create recommendations for actions. This testimony was from government officials, law enforcement, academic experts, leaders from grass-root movements, and any citizen who wished to contribute additional commentary. These listening sessions addressed specific areas of policing and the relations which existed between the police and members of many communities across the United States. From these sessions, six major topics were referred to as “pillars” and became the emphasis of the task force:

Pillar 1	Building Trust and Legitimacy
Pillar 2	Policy and Oversight

Pillar 3	Technology and Social Media
Pillar 4	Community Policing and Social Media
Pillar 5	Training and Social Media
Pillar 6	Officer Wellness and Safety

Table 1 – Pillars of President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing

Although each pillar created from this task force is intertwined within the subject of police communication, the emphasis here is on the challenge of training. The idea of procedurally just communication is relatively new to the area of law enforcement communication. As discussed in the previous section of this paper, most communication training within this profession up to this point was geared towards the “law enforcement” aspect, meaning officers were trained to be direct, controlling, and authoritative. There has not been emphasis upon training officers to practice any of the elements described as being procedurally just communication (trustandjustice.org, 2015). Law enforcement agencies across the country now face a challenge to train their officers in a manner which changes the direction of communication training. The new direction for communication training based on the President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing will transition the communication within the profession from the “Law Enforcement” side to the “Policing” side. The benefits from this include improved community relationships, more effective police officers within the communities, and increased officer safety.

### **Current State Training Curricula**

Many states have a standardized training curriculum for candidates attending a basic police academy. These academies are training officers in the basic skills in many areas within the policing profession. The candidates are hired by individual agencies and will receive more

specialized training when they arrive at their agency. In the state of Florida, when an officer is hired by an agency, they receive additional training in high liability areas to include: vehicle operations, firearms, and defensive tactics. A review of the literature suggests that the area of communication is not viewed as a high liability area of training when an officer is hired in a Florida agency. It can be argued that a significant amount of discipline, physical confrontations, and incidents which result in an officer being terminated are surrounded by an officer's ineffective communication skills.

The Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission develop the training curriculum for the Basic Recruit Academies throughout the state of Florida. All academies have identical training materials and all graduates of Florida police academies receive the same training, no matter which facility they may attend. Regarding the area of communication, the state of Florida places an emphasis on professionalism in officer behavior as well as the elements of active listening within the communication process. Other influential elements to include eye contact cultural background are discussed within the academy setting. The final section within the Effective Communication block of the Florida Basic Recruit Curriculum deals with recognizing verbal and non-verbal cues as well as other barriers to effective communication (Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2017). Additional portions of the Florida Basic Recruit Communications Curriculum train recruits to recognize and address issues such as people with disabilities, dealing with the elderly, juveniles, people in crisis, and members of criminal gangs. Currently, recruits within the Florida training programs are not receiving any standardized training which parallels the more recent style of communication training which has been proposed through committees such as the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing or the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice.

The state of California does not have a dedicated block of instruction at the academy level directed towards communication. Instead, communication ideals are threaded throughout the entire police academy and the ideas are similar to those being taught in the Florida police academies. According to Learning Domain 42 in within the California Training Specification, the focus on communication training revolves around cultural diversity. This block discusses stereotypes, discrimination, and racial profiling. The emphasis is on showing trainees the importance of recognizing ways to have successful contacts with citizens from differing cultural, racial, or ethnic backgrounds (California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, 2017).

The state of Texas Basic Recruit Curriculum contains a 16-hour block of instruction on Communication and Problem Solving. The stated goal of the block is to have the recruit develop “effective interpersonal communication skills” (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, Section 23, 2013). This block of instruction gives the recruit a brief overview of basic principles of effective communication to include limiting distractions, body language, and eye contact. Continuing further than other states, recruits in Texas are exposed to blocks on critical thinking as well as Community Policing. In this section, Community Policing is simply defined and the recruit is referred to the US Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services website. Recruits are taught about principles of community oriented policing directly from the federal government’s sites, which increases the possibility of these local officers adapting to the same thought processes being developed at the federal level. The communication block of instruction within the state of Texas is far more in depth than the other states examined within this research. Texas recruits are taught techniques such as redirecting individual’s behavior using verbal persuasion, understanding criteria relating to use of force during

communication, and elements that an officer should be able to recognize and control within each encounter. The communication block of instruction for the state of Texas was organized in part by George Thompson, the founder and creator of “*Verbal Judo*,” (1993) a text previously referred to in this research (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, 2013).

The State of North Carolina communication training is split into three sections. Officer Ethics, Communication Skills, and Responding to Victims and the Public, are all taught to recruits within their academy training. The section on Communication Skills is the section which applies to this research. This section is eight hours in length and discusses behaviors such as projecting control in voice command and direct actions. Officers are taught to de-escalate situations by utilizing active listening skills as well. North Carolina police academies also have three separate learning blocks dedicated to recognizing and effectively communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds. One section specifically discusses officer safety and survival considerations as they pertain to communication skills when dealing with people from different cultures. Within this training, North Carolina also incorporates work of Thompson, similar to Texas (ncdoj.gov, 2014). The literature is different in North Carolina as the book used here is titled *Tactical Communications Basic Course* (2009), but the method of thinking is similar to that used in Texas. Both states are employing an outside the box mode of thinking by going beyond the standard ‘law enforcement’ style of communication training.

The state of Wisconsin has two separate blocks of communication training within the police academy training curriculum. The training requirements are a total of 24 hours in length and are titled Professional Communication Skills I (8 hrs) and Professional Communication Skills II (16 hrs). As a part of Professional Communication Skills I, recruits are trained about elements of the basic communication process to include active listening, barriers to effective

communication, and officer roles within communication. Officers are expected to master the competency of workplace communication as well as recognizing the differences between on and off duty styles of communication (gtc.edu 2014).

The Professional Communication Skills II section takes the skills learned in the first 8-hour block and applies them in law enforcement specific situations. Competencies taught in this block of instruction range from miscellaneous police contacts, mediations and arbitrations, to crisis intervention. This section also covers the different dynamics of verbal and written communication. The section regarding 'arbitration' is regarding a style of gaining compliance or using force to get a result from a subject. This is similar to the traditional style of law enforcement communication which has been trained for many years. The 'arbitration' style trains officers to ask a subject to do something and gain voluntary compliance. Initially, the officer explains to the subject why the request is being made. If the subject refuses to comply, the officer will offer some limited options with a small window of time to comply. The officer will then take action based upon compliance or lack of compliance of the subject. Officers are trained to debrief subjects after any physical force is applied as well as articulate all actions taken verbally to supervisors and in any applicable police reports (gtc.edu 2014).

### **Private Sector Communication Training**

In an article titled *Six Communication Secrets of Top-Performing Organizations*, Bill Trahant (2008) studied communication methods within the private sector which led to success in the business world. The purpose of this study was to relate these communication practices from the private sector to government agencies as a way of potential improvement of productivity

from the employees. The results of the study from the private sector study revealed the following information about success of the business:

- 1) They must keep the customer front and center in all employee communication programs.
- 2) They design communication programs which engage and allow employees to play a role in running the business.
- 3) Businesses work to continuously enhance the communication effectiveness of the management.
- 4) Allow the talents of the internal communicators to bring about and manage the change.
- 5) Maximize the employee experience “brand.” (p. 69).

#### Keep the customer front and center in all employee communication programs

Although this principle was discussed within the private sector several years ago, and documented by Trahant (2008), it has recently become a thought in law enforcement training as a result of the President’s Task Force Training. The idea of customer-centered communication parallels the ideas presented in the second suggestion of procedurally just behavior (giving individuals a voice during encounters). By training police to focus on the citizen when in communication with them, instead of a quick resolution, the possibility of a positive outcome will be greater. This style of communication also involves the first suggestion in procedurally just behavior as well (treating people with dignity and respect).

#### Designing a communication process where the employee is allowed to play a role in running the business

Morale within a law enforcement agency can make or break the quality of service delivered to the community. If communication within the ranks is of higher quality and morale is improved, the chance of better services being delivered to the community will increase. The Watson Wyatt Communication ROI Study (2007/2008) found that highly effective organizations were ten times more likely to involve their employees in obtaining input regarding decisions which affect them. Open dialogue between management and their employees was found to have the greatest impact when the dialogue was followed up by some sort of action by the management (Trahant 2008). If law enforcement communication training began to mirror this element of the private sector, improvements internally may be observed which could then transfer to external customer service.

#### Businesses work to continuously enhance the communication effectiveness of the management

The Watson Wyatt Communication Study (2007/2008) found that top performing companies within the private sector recognize the value of day-to-day contact between management, lower levels of supervision, and employees. They communicate through managers to relay key messages to the employees, gather input from all levels, as well as establish individual goals which are in line with the goals of the corporation (Trahant 2008). This type of communication mirrors that of a chain of command style within a law enforcement agency, but adds an element of gathering input from all ranks that is not currently present at all law enforcement agencies.

#### Allow the talents of the internal communicators to bring about and manage the change

Trahant (2008) found that “effective companies have managers who are diligent and successful in engaging the communication function within their organization to manage and plan

for change” (p. 72). Specifically, these companies have placed people in management positions who are better at getting ‘buy-in’ when change is coming for a given policy or method of doing business. Enthusiasm and delivery of information were found to be two largely influential parts of how successful businesses are able to bring change. Another key element is to make sure that the managers are informed about the change and are able to effectively communicate to the employees when questions are posed (Trahan 2008). Managing change effectively was found to be done well within the private sector in businesses which succeeded. These same techniques can be easily transferred to the law enforcement sector with the same methods. Informed managers who enthusiastically deliver the change can begin the process of creating officers who are more effective communicators with members of the community.

#### Maximize the employee experience “brand.”

Many large companies spend millions of dollars each year marketing their products, and many have begun to do the same with their employees. The thought behind this is to invest in the employee experience which will result in recruiting for the future, retaining of current employees, and establishing a positive business reputation as an employer of choice where prospective employees will be driven to the company. By doing this, the company builds a loyalty from the employee, one which drives employees to deliver a quality of work that is superior to many other corporations. Although difficult to establish within the law enforcement profession, the idea of establishing a ‘brand’ can happen. If accomplished, it can make recruiting and retention of quality officers easier each year (Trahan 2008). To some extent, it has happened already with differences in union contracts, benefit packages, and incentives at different

agencies. This 'brand' can be improved with levels of communication through the ranks which will reflect in morale, job performance, job satisfaction, and officer safety.

### **Text Review**

In a book titled *Challenging the Law Enforcement Organization* (2006), Jack Enter Ph. D. discusses many elements of effective management within law enforcement. Included in his text is a section which can be applied to a police officer's interactions with the public as well as a manager's interaction with a subordinate. Chapter six addresses communication skills such as engagement skills. Enter (2006) points out that many managers who have risen through the ranks have made it to that point having dealt with supervisors in reactive communication scenarios, with little to no listening skills. The skills desired to become a better communicator are broken down into four categories: oral communication, nonverbal communication, listening skills, and written communication skills. In order to become proficient at these skills, an officer needs effective training as well as mentoring as well as repetition.

Law enforcement officers use oral communication skills more than most career paths and tend to be more effective than others based on the frequency of this practice. A common error made by managers within the profession is the attempt to communicate while emotional about a given subject (Enter, 2006). The same can be said when a police officer communicates with a citizen about a given situation. For example, if a citizen speeds past a police vehicle and commits multiple traffic violations in the presence of the officer resulting in the officer conducting a traffic stop, the officer may be somewhat emotional upon the initial approach of the violator. The first communication with the driver will set the tone and have a lasting impact on the driver

and/or passenger(s) regarding the professionalism of the officer. The presence of emotion can have a tremendous effect on oral communication.

Nonverbal communication can be summarized with the phrase, “it is not what you say, but how you say it” (Enter p. 89). Most of what we communicate is through gestures, facial expressions, and other nonverbal indicators which can shape the tone of a conversation or interaction with a citizen. The study of Kinesics is the study of body language in nonverbal behavior. Recognizing certain mannerisms and gestures such as crossing arms in a defensive posture when feeling threatened, is a form of Kinesics (Enter 2006). Proxemic behaviors are the use and impact of distance in the communication process. Personal space and body positioning when communicating with others is a part of proxemic behavior. How we position ourselves when speaking with members of the community can elicit a certain feeling or response from a person. A skilled communicator can observe specific reactions based on kinesics when certain proxemic behaviors are used (Enter, 2006). Training of these styles are more advanced are not typically found on an academy level of communication.

Enter (2006) points out that effective communication requires various strategies and skills. An important point to note from a management perspective is the need for proactive communication. Enter (2006) suggests that management cannot wait for subordinates to come to them, rather managers should proactively approach their subordinates and seek out communication in an effort to determine the needs to their people. Along the same lines, ‘police’ communication within communities follows this same suggestion. The Community Oriented Policing style of the profession takes a proactive role with a police officer engaging the citizens of the community and communicating to determine the needs of the citizens. By working with citizens, and practicing many of the leadership style qualities described by Enter (2006), the

qualities described as an effective leader can carry over to that of a police officer who is trusted and respected by the community. The benefits of having officers who are trusted and respected by the community include positive relationships between law enforcement and the citizens as well as both groups working together to reduce crime within the community.

A contributing factor to a citizen's level of respect for a police officer can be derived from the tone and overall feeling after a police contact. The perception of fairness and legitimacy of the individual officer can be a determining factor in the citizen's level of respect for the police. How officers communicate with citizens has a tremendous impact on the outcome of the overall perception of the respect for the individual officer, the law enforcement agency, and the profession as a whole. Currently, police departments are training officers in a specific style of communication which leans more towards the 'law enforcement' style of communication. The literature suggests the profession is not succeeding in terms of training officers in effective communication with citizens.

The work of Thompson (1993) is an integral part of the basic recruit law enforcement academy's communication training throughout the state of Texas. Within *Verbal Judo*, the goals stated are to increase officer safety, enhance professionalism and improve efficiency. All of these goals are to be accomplished by an alternative way of communicating. The five 'universal truths of human interaction' declared by Thompson (1993) state:

1) People feel the need to feel respected
2) People would rather be asked than be told
3) People have a desire to know why
4) People prefer to have options over threats
5) People want to have a second chance (p. 206)

Table 2 – Five universal truths of human interaction

This text is centered more around training officers how to respond to a situation through effective communication instead of ineffective reactions. By meeting citizens at their level, and communicating with them in the way they want to be given information or directives, the author believes more effective relationships can be built between citizens and law enforcement officers. A simple example is given where an officer enters a domestic dispute and diffuses the situation by reading the newspaper and asking to use the telephone to answer a classified ad about a used car while a husband and wife are arguing. The two involved stop arguing, look at the officer with confusion and allow him to use the telephone. When the officer hangs up and cannot understand why the seller would not talk about the car at 2:00 am, he asks the husband and wife if there was anything he could do for them and explains that neighbors would appreciate peace and quiet. After leaving, the officer explains to the trainee (Thompson) that after ten years policing, he just knew that he could use that technique to solve the situation instead of commanding force. This text trains officers in how to creatively address conflict and control emotions. Additionally, it demonstrates how words can be used instead of actions to solve problems. Having the ability to communicate without shaming people assists in building trust and cooperation with the community (Thompson, 1993).

### **Agency Review**

The following section is a review of agency Internal Affairs information specific to the area of police officer conduct towards the public or courtesy. This section will look at four agencies from around the country. These agencies vary in size, population, demographic makeup, and economic levels. The purpose of gathering this information is to determine if any area of the country appears to receive less complaints in the area of conduct than others.

**St. Louis Police Department.** The St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department is located in St. Louis, Missouri. There are approximately 1,319 sworn and 548 civilian members of the agency. The Chief of Police in St. Louis is Colonel D. Samuel Dotson, who has been in law enforcement since 1993. Chief Dotson manages the second largest police department within the state of Missouri and maintains an annual budget of \$173 million dollars. There are 318,000 residents within the city of St. Louis and thousands of visitors who also come to the city each year (slmpd.org, n.d.). After a comprehensive review of Internal Affairs complaints filed with the St. Louis Police Department between 2011 and 2015, the following was found regarding complaints on officers pertaining to communication/conduct:

	Not Sustained	Sustained	Unfounded	Total
Conduct Unbecoming	104	118	10	251*
Verbal Abuse	19	1	0	23*

Table 3 – St. Louis PD Internal Affairs Statistics

\*Additionally there were 8 cases withdrawn for unknown reasons, 2 solved by mediation, and 6 with unknown dispositions (slmpd.org 2016).

**Orlando Police Department – Orlando, FL.** The Orlando Police Department is a unique agency. With over 700 sworn officers and more than 100 civilians in the agency, the department is responsible for much more than the 270,000 residents inside the city limits of Orlando (cityoforlando.net 2016). The level of tourism within the city of Orlando brings thousands of people into the city each day, tourists and visitors with whom police officers come into contact. According to an article in The Orlando Sentinel (2016), the city of Orlando saw a record high tourism rate of 66 million visitors during the year 2015. The Chief of Police in Orlando is John

W. Mina. Chief Mina is a Veteran of the United States Army who came to the Orlando Police Department in 1990. He is a graduate of the 254<sup>th</sup> session of the FBI National Academy and was appointed to the position of Chief of Police in April 2014. As a part of his duties, Chief Mina maintains the largest budget in the city, which is approximately \$153 million dollars (cityoforlando.net, 2016). After a comprehensive review of the previous five years (2011-2015) of Internal Affairs complaints filed with the Orlando Police Department, the following was found regarding complaints on officers pertaining to communication/conduct:

	Courtesy	Identification	Conduct Towards the Public
Sustained	1	0	6
Not Sustained	4	0	5
Exonerated	2	4	2
Unfounded	0	0	4
Total	7	4	17

Table 4 – Orlando PD Internal Affairs Statistics

**Laurel Police Department – Laurel, MD.** The Laurel Police Department is located in Laurel, Maryland. The agency has a total of 70 sworn officers and encompasses a total of four square miles. There are approximately 25,000 citizens within Laurel. The Chief of Police for the agency is Chief Rich McLaughlin. Chief McLaughlin has pioneered programs in Laurel to include body worn cameras, AED’s in patrol cars, active shooter training, as well as training dealing with mentally ill persons. In addition, Chief McLaughlin has been a proponent of

Community Policing initiatives and has placed an emphasis upon building partnerships with the community in which his officers serve. After a comprehensive review of Internal Affairs statistics over a five-year period (2009-2013), the following was found regarding complaints filed with the agency on officers pertaining to Conduct Unbecoming/Discourtesy:

	Conduct Unbecoming	Discourtesy
Sustained	3	0
Not Sustained	1	0
Exonerated	4	1
Unfounded	4	1
Total	12	2

Table 5 – Laurel PD Internal Affairs Statistics

**Louisville Metro Police Department – Louisville, Ky.** The Louisville Metro Police Department consolidated and began operating in 2003 in Louisville, Kentucky. The merger included the incorporation of the Jefferson County Police Department and the Louisville Division of Police. The agency currently employs approximately 1,281 sworn members. LMPD covers 399 square miles in land, which contains approximately 709,264 people within the jurisdiction. The Chief of Police is Steve Conrad who has been with the LMPD since 2012. Chief Conrad began his career with LMPD, prior to the merger in 1980. He left in 2005 when he became the Chief of Police in Glendale, Arizona. Chief Conrad returned to Louisville in 2012 as the Chief of Police. Chief Conrad emphasizes community involvement and conducts “Chief Walks” every Tuesday from 4 pm- 5 pm in an effort to reach out to members of the community. By doing this each week, Chief Conrad hopes to set an example to his officers regarding the

importance of enhancing relationships within the community as well as providing citizens opportunities to speak openly with officers (louisvilleky.gov, 2017).

After a review of Internal Affairs statistics over a five-year period (2011-2015), the following was found regarding complaints filed on officers regarding Courtesy and Conduct Unbecoming at LMPD:

	Courtesy/Conduct Unbecoming
Sustained	55
Not Sustained	142
Other	49
Not Completed	1
Total	247

Table 6 – Louisville Metro PD Internal Affairs Statistics

### **Theoretical Framework**

The following information will address two key theories associated with the issues of communication within the profession of law enforcement. Additionally, the concept of generational differences within the profession will be examined. The first section will cover the *conflict theory* while the second section will address the idea of the *procedural justice theory*.

#### **Conflict Theory**

The conflict theory was developed by Karl Marx (1848) and states that conflict is used as a means of change. Based on this theory, the people who have power tend to exploit those who do not have power, thus causing the less powerful to remain at levels of inferior power. Many would argue that law enforcement communicates and acts based on a sense of power similar to

that illustrated in the conflict theory. Power has been said to be the capacity to affect the life situation of people and the way in which a police officer communicates has this potential (Rummel, n.d.).

While Marx's (1848) conflict theory seems to relate directly to law enforcement, more recent research suggests that there is more to the story. Foster (2014) believes that there is an additional branch of this theory titled the *guaranteed conflict theory* and gives this as a reason as to why police continue "killing black people" (politicsusa.com, 2014). In her article, Foster states that law enforcement communicates in a manner that is guaranteed to result in conflict. She describes how police currently proactively police in accordance with Kelling and Wilson's Broken Windows Theory (1982) where minor infractions are addressed by police in seemingly over-reactive ways. According to the Broken Windows Theory, everyday offenses, such as jaywalking and criminal mischief, are addressed by patrol officers with the intention of strict enforcement not allowing the more severe crimes to be committed. According to Foster (2014), policing in line with the Broken Windows Theory is guaranteed to result in racial profiling and targeting citizens from lower income areas which will, in turn, bring about increased conflict. Two cases Foster specifically speaks about as examples leading to guaranteed conflict are the Michael Brown (Ferguson, Missouri) and Eric Garner (New York City) cases (politicsusa.com, 2014).

While Foster does interject opinion in her article in an effort to sway the reader in a specific direction, the idea of conflict theory is demonstrated in the article. The separation of power between law enforcement and citizens can be seen when law enforcement communicates with citizens during everyday contacts. The current training delivered throughout many law enforcement academies in the country enhances the feeling of conflict due to the emphasis of

authority and lack of attention to training officers to open conversations to allow citizens to have input when it may be appropriate. Conflict theory appears to support the ‘old school’ form of communication training within many police academies across the country.

**Procedural Justice Theory**

The Procedural Justice Theory can be best described as the belief that the criminal justice system, specifically interactions with law enforcement, are viewed as being legitimate by the members of the public when a citizen believes they were treated fairly. In other words, a citizen places more importance on the quality of the treatment they receive from law enforcement over the outcome of a given situation (Hough et. al., 2010).

Procedural justice focuses on how law enforcement interacts with members of society and how the characteristics of those interactions shape the views of the public. Evidence shows that the overall perceptions of procedural justice by the public will have a major impact on the overall rate of public safety. According to the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice, there are four major components of procedurally just behavior:

1) Treat people with dignity and respect
2) Give individuals a “voice” during encounters
3) Be neutral and transparent in decision making
4) Convey trustworthy motives

Table 7 – National Institute for Building Community Trust and Justice

When law enforcement behaves in ways which exemplify the above characteristics, the public is more likely to have confidence and trust in the system. In addition, citizens who are met with the above communication qualities are also more likely to have a positive relationship with law enforcement in future contacts. Procedural justice is not something that police officers do, rather it is a philosophy that they operate under. A police agency adapting to the above four

components will have the organization viewed in a positive light. In addition, the agency as a whole will gain trust and legitimacy with the community they serve as well as be able to serve in a manner that is safer for the officers due to more respect for the laws by the citizens (cops.edu 2014).

The concepts developed by the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice are congruent with the successful methods of approach which have been in existence in the private sector. The four components above are similar to the elements in which Trahan's (2008) article on successful methods of communication within the private sector was written. It appears these methods have been in successful within the private sector for many years. These methods within the law enforcement realm fall under the procedural justice theory.

One key concept of procedural justice which differs from traditional police behavior is the idea of a shared value of what social order within a community is considered. Basically, the police and the community should agree as to what they believe what social order is within the community and the police will work to uphold this level of order. Together, the police and community are able to agree on a level of social order and how it should be maintained to enhance positive relationships between both groups. The work done by groups such as the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice has shown that this approach is more effective at producing law abiding citizens within a community and conforms to the principles of procedural justice (trustandjustice.org, 2015).

### **Generational Differences**

The concept of generational differences throughout the profession of law enforcement presents a unique challenge in terms of communication. Members of each generational class

have different qualities which may bring about difficulties in training when attempting to reach a common ground in communication. In the late 1980's to 1990's, applicants to the law enforcement profession experienced a movement from the Baby Boomer generation towards the Generation X generation. The Baby Boomers typically have parents who were born in the early 1900's to the 1940's. This group values hard work and has often been referred to as being workaholics due to an intense dedication to their job. There is a high level of competitiveness within this generation and they enjoy the challenges brought about through peer competition. Baby Boomers are open to change and work better when there are multiple possibilities as to how an incident can be resolved. Baby Boomers embrace working in social settings and are proponents of teamwork. In addition, the Baby Boomers will fight for something they believe in (Batts, Smoot, and Schrivner 2012).

Generation X falls between the Baby Boomers and the most recent group known as the Millennials. This group falls within a smaller time period with no precise beginning or end. The approximate birth years for members of Generation X would fall between the mid 1960's and the 1980's. Generation X'ers are said to be savvy, self-reliant, and skeptical. They are not into pampering and do not place much concern as to what others think about them (Taylor & Gao 2014). Of the two generations on either side, Generation X members are said to be taking charge of their lives and moving towards success better than either of their neighbors. In the workplace, Generation X'ers are taking management roles. They are mentoring the younger employees within the corporations and helping them build successful businesses. Additionally, in the United States, 35% of Generation X'ers have college degrees versus only 19% of Millennials. Many founders of startup companies such as Tesla Motors and SpaceX are Generation X members.

Research has found that approximately 55% of startup founders are Generation X'ers (Martin, 2016).

The final generation within the law enforcement field at this time is known as the Millennials. Typically, this generation contains people born between 1983-2001. Training Millennials will take special considerations due to the fact that there is a difference in thinking within this generation. Instead of the notion that this generation will have to adapt to the thinking of the generations previous, it is important to consider the philosophies of this generation and take them into account when training people within this category. When training this new generation, it may be important to consider two factors which are important in enhancing learning for Millennials. As communication training takes place, consideration should be given to how the training is delivered for maximum effectiveness. Lecture style delivery should be de-emphasized and a student-centered mentality should be adopted. This generation learns better through active engagement instead of lecture based information delivery. This is important to consider given the current structure of many police academy structures across the country (Werth, E. & Werth, L. 2011).

Second, technology used by Millennials everyday should be integrated into learning settings. This generation is driven by technology whereas previous generations may appear to be intimidated by certain advances in technology. Technology is able to provide instant feedback and interactivity desired by Millennials on a daily basis (Werth, E. & Werth, L. 2011).

### **Assessment**

As a part of the literature review conducted for this paper, there were multiple areas examined concerning making improvements to communication training within the law

enforcement profession. First and foremost, recognizing the need for improvements within the area of communication training in law enforcement must take place in order for change to happen. Once the need for change has been identified, there are other factors to consider.

Identifying the difference between ‘law enforcement’ and policing’ styles of communication and the needs for each type within the daily activities of a police officer is paramount. For many years, we have seen officers trained primarily in a ‘law enforcement’ style which has led to many strained relationships within the community and diminished levels of trust between citizens and police. Many officers today are performing in accordance with their training which is resulting in adversarial contacts with citizens who are unhappy with the service they receive. Some of the same incidents may have been able to be resolved differently with a ‘policing’ style of communication if the officer interacting with the citizen had been exposed to more advanced training as well as have been equipped with a more advanced skill set to deal with the citizen in a mature manner.

The President’s Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing recognized many of these points after identifying the six pillars of concentration. After releasing the final report in 2015, the task force noted the major challenge of police in today’s society was rebuilding trust and legitimacy. The task force recognized the communication barriers between police and citizens and was able to make recommendations to improve levels of trust and legitimacy of the police. A main ideal which arose from this task force is procedurally just behavior. The task force described procedurally just behavior as having four different parts which were designed to improve citizen/police relationships and enlist citizens to feel an obligation to follow the law. The idea behind procedurally just behavior is that citizens will feel this obligation when they trust the process which appears legitimate and trustworthy.

Each state in the country has the discretion to create their own communication curriculum which will be taught within their police academy training. Research completed for this paper polled five different states which found differences in communication training from state to state. For this research, training curricula for the states of Florida, North Carolina, California, Texas, and Wisconsin were reviewed. Currently, no two states are alike in their communication training.

The state of California does not have an individual section for communication training, rather communication training is threaded into multiple lessons throughout the lessons. By doing this, academy recruits may not be exposed to some of the more complicated elements of the 'policing' styles of communication, which require refined skills and more explanation. Additionally, students in California may not be taught which situations may be better for 'policing' styles and which may be better for 'law enforcement' styles of communication (ca.gov, 2017).

The state of Florida places an emphasis on active listening skills and professionalism in addition to the traditional directing and controlling styles of behavior that officers are taught. The second part of communication training in the Florida curriculum is geared towards dealing with disabled persons, people in crisis, dealing with the elderly, and people in other special categories. There is no part of the Florida curriculum which addresses any idea of 'policing' style of communication or procedurally just behavior (CJSTC, 2017).

The state of Wisconsin split the communication training into two separate sections. The first section (8 hrs) contains elements within the basic communication process to include active listening, barriers to effective communication, and officer roles within communication. The

second section of instruction (16 hrs) takes on more of the police role to include police contacts, crisis intervention, mediations, and verbal/written communication. This section trains officers how to gain compliance from a subject by utilizing a voluntary compliance attempt before resorting to physical force. This section also trains officers to debrief subjects after they have used force which may have an impact on future contacts with police (gtc.edu, 2014).

The state of Texas combines communication training dealing with problem solving. Additionally, Texas police academies add *Verbal Judo* elements into their communication training as well as critical thinking into this section. Principles of Community Oriented Policing are also interjected into the communication section in an effort to reach the stated goal of helping the recruit develop “effective interpersonal communication skills” (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement, Section 23, 2013). The state of Texas is training officers in the area of communication progressively towards the ideals of procedurally just behavior, which is also in line with the recommendations of the President’s Task Force.

The state of North Carolina is similar to other states in that the communication training focuses on direct and controlling communication. The training is broken into three sections where recruits are trained in the area of Ethics, Communication Skills, and Interacting with the Public. North Carolina training is similar to training in Texas in that the training has gone a step past the traditional ‘law enforcement’ style of communication and integrated some advanced forms of training such as the ideas proposed in the writings of Dr. George Thompson (ncdoj.gov, 2014). The *Tactical Communication Basic Course* is the entry level introduction to techniques such as *Verbal Judo*. North Carolina has introduced academy recruits to this training at the academy level to begin the foundation of the alternate thinking in communication styles.

After reviewing private sector communication training which has been successful, some similarities were found with successful business practices and recommended practices for law enforcement. The idea of keeping the customer front and center in private business has been in place for many years. A similar principle was suggested by the President's Task Force when Pillar 1 recommends "giving individuals a 'voice' during encounters" and "treating people with dignity and respect" (U.S. Department of Justice, 2015).

Open dialogues of communication are points made throughout the private sector which have shown to be successful. The law enforcement field has recognized the importance of open dialogues as well and has mirrored the private sector in some ways when it comes to this element. For example, the referenced text written by J. Enter discusses the importance of open dialogue with employees on a routine basis. This type of communication is a newer concept to law enforcement. Additionally, the ability to effectively manage change and enlist buy-in from employees within the private sector is similar to that in law enforcement. Selecting those for management positions who can effectively get buy-in and manage policy changes or changes in the direction of the agency is extremely important. How well the people selected for these positions are able to communicate to others is very important in both the civilian and sworn world.

The textbooks reviewed as a part of this research addressed communication skills which leaned more towards the 'policing' side of communication. Both books combined basic skills as well as advanced skills which included oral communication, non-verbal skills, listening skills, proxemic behavior, and the concepts of *Verbal Judo*. Although many of these books are available, few have been used at basic levels of police training. Police communication training remains at the level of the 'law enforcement' communicator who is being trained to interact with

people only in a direct, controlling style. Some states within the country, such as Texas are including this information within the training they mandate, but many are not.

Internal Affairs reports were reviewed from four police departments around the country. The only category reviewed was whichever dealt with officer behavior towards the public. Each agency titled the category differently, but the review was primarily focused on if officer's current communication style with the public was generating complaints. After reviewing the statistics, it is clear that police officer communication can be improved. Complaints are being lodged against officers in the area of communication in each department queried. In St. Louis, Missouri there were a total of 274 complaints filed and 119 of those were sustained. The city of Orlando, Florida had 17 complaints filed with 6 being sustained. The city of Laurel, Maryland received 14 complaints with 3 being sustained. The Louisville Metro Police Department took 247 complaints with 55 being sustained. Based on this data set, under the current methods of communication training, officers are receiving complaints regarding their interactions with citizens.

### **Conclusion/Recommendations**

Communication within the law enforcement profession is an essential element which must take place on a daily basis. Recent incidents around the country, which have stemmed from a breakdown in communication between law enforcement and members of the community, have resulted in diminished trust from citizens. A lack of legitimacy and lower trust level of police has caused strained relationships to become common place in some areas of the country. In the wake of growing distrust and anger towards police by some, the government responded by creating the President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing to examine how this trend can be fixed. Other groups, such as the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice formed with

the same idea of building trust between law enforcement and communities must take place.

Within groups such as these, the idea of procedural justice was brought to the forefront.

Understanding procedural justice and bringing the principles of its theories into the profession of law enforcement will begin the positive changes towards building bridges with the community that law enforcement needs to effectively communicate and enjoy a successful relationship with.

Another aspect is to understand the differences between ‘law enforcement’ and ‘policing’ communication. Recognizing that there are differences between the two styles of communication and seeing the values of each within the profession is extremely important. After the review of current training models from academy training conduct from different states, it appears that many states are still concentrating on communication training towards the controlling and authoritative ‘law enforcement’ style of training.

Based on the literature reviewed in this paper, many states within the country are currently training officers to communicate in a manner which is centered around a traditional ‘law enforcement’ style of communication. As a result, officers are being hired with a skill set consisting of a communication style which is mainly authoritative and controlling. This style has led to decreased trust of police as well as increased citizen complaints to Internal Affairs Sections within agencies nationwide. Some states found within the review, specifically Texas and North Carolina, have recognized the need for variations in communications training. The communication training curricula within these states reflects a combination of ‘law enforcement’ style of communication as well as some of the principles of ‘policing’ communication.

The ideas presented in the private sector communication review are directed more towards the internal workings of the law enforcement agency. The private sector secrets for

success which were suggested by Trahant (2008) can be directly related to internal operations and relationships within a law enforcement organization. Developing and managing ways to bring about change have presented challenges to law enforcement organizations for decades. The suggestions brought forth by the author from the private sector can be transitioned to the law enforcement side if law enforcement managers are open to the methods which are being successfully utilized within the private sector. Morale within an agency is extremely important and must also be considered when considering the internal communication process. Improvements internally in morale will more likely result in better services being delivered externally.

A review of Internal Affairs complaints from agencies of varying sizes and locations found a common denominator. Officers are receiving complaints about the way they communicate with citizens, no matter where they police. The agency's size, location, or economic area does not seem to be a factor. As an alternative, agencies can look at the way in which they are training officers to communicate with the public. It may be time to consider a change from the traditional 'law enforcement' communicator and look towards the benefits of training police officers to learn to communicate in ways which coincide with the qualities of the 'policing' communicator. Generational differences are a factor as well. It should be taken into account that officers from different generational categories should be trained in a manner which would be more effective for their generation. Training a Baby Boomer in a manner in which a Generation X member learns better would prove to be counterproductive.

Thompson (1993) developed a text which has been utilized nationwide in communication training. The author has suggested an alternative way of communicating instead of the traditional controlling style being taught for many years. The five "universal truths" (p. 206) discussed in

Thompson's text are intended to improve efficiency, enhance efficiency, and increase officer safety. Thompson's text was designed to train officers how to respond to situations through effective communication instead of resorting to ineffective reactions. It is through the use of ineffective reactions which have resulted in the lack of trust and legitimacy that the law enforcement profession finds itself in today.

Based upon a review of the literature and analysis of the data presented, the following four recommendations presented as ways to bridge the gap between 'law enforcement' and 'policing' styles of communication:

- Police academy training must be a combination of current communication training as integrated lesson plans. These plans should include training in procedural just behavior, to including ideals discussed in the pillars within the *President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing*.
- Police academies across the country must implement new communication training concerning the differences between 'law enforcement' and 'policing' styles of training to be delivered at an in-service level at local law enforcement agencies. This training should discuss scenarios that teach when each style would be practical to increase working relationships within the community.
- Police academies across the country must integrate the five universal truths of George Thompson's *Verbal Judo* into communication training at the academy level training. This training, which will be new to many agencies, will enhance the development of professionalism of the officers being trained for the future.
- Police academies across the country must integrate the four major components developed by the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice into police

communication training. This will serve as a method of building trust and legitimacy within police/community relationships.

Improvements within communication between law enforcement and members of communities in which they serve will begin to pave the road to higher levels of trust and legitimacy which will benefit both parties involved. Without this additional training, the diminished trust between police and communities will only continue.

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