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George Mingle

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# AMERICAN JOURNAL of POLICE SCIENCE

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## POLICE PERSONNEL EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

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George Mingle

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(As Col. Mingle points out in the following article, the development of the ability of the individual police officer to a satisfactory level of all-around effectiveness is of vital importance. Toward this end a variety of personnel evaluation and development techniques have already been devised. One of the interesting procedures is that developed by Colonel Mingle for the administration of the Ohio State Highway Patrol. This procedure, as he points out, is not alone designed to numerically evaluate performance but to *find out where an employee needs correction and to make certain that he receives it*. The author is Superintendent of the Ohio State Highway Patrol and has been associated with policing for the past sixteen years. When the patrol was organized in 1933, he was appointed as a patrolman, served through the ranks, and was appointed its superintendent in 1944. He is a member of the Joint Committee on Post-war Speeds of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, of the Highway Advisory Committee to the War Department, and is counsellor of the Eno Foundation.—EDITOR.)

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The principle that the record of performance of a police organization as a whole is in direct proportion to the quality and efficiency of its individual officers is a generally accepted fact. It naturally follows that development of the ability of each individual officer to a satisfactory level of all-around effectiveness is of the most vital importance to any policing agency. In recent years, police organizations have made important strides in their methods of training uniformed personnel, in both recruit training and in the re-training or in-service training phase.

The accent here has been placed primarily upon formal schooling, centrally located and directed. These schools have to some extent been given our attention to the exclusion of another training and development process, one which has proven its worth throughout the whole of the history of policing. This is the *field instruction process*, or on-the-job training by a field supervisor.

### *Field Instruction: Values and Limitations*

Prior to the advent of effective police schools, this field instruction constituted practically the whole training process. The over-all results obtained by this field instruction alone were unsatisfactory, to the extent that this method has been replaced by the practices of subjecting all recruits to a course

of training, and of periodically giving experienced officers the benefit of a regular course of additional schooling in advanced subject matter. The fact, however, that there were many cases where substantial levels of efficiency were attained by field instruction alone, is an indication that there may be possibilities in this field for the development of police personnel which we are not utilizing to their full extent.

It is still a regular procedure in most departments for a newly trained recruit to undergo a "breaking in" period, wherein he works with experienced officers and is permitted to assume successively greater responsibilities only as he shows himself capable of handling them. This does not indicate any degree of failure in recruit training, but it does point out that there are limitations beyond which formal schooling cannot go. It emphasizes the fact that the practical field application of material absorbed in school is required, before a satisfactory degree of efficiency is attained. To a somewhat lesser degree the same obstacle is encountered following retraining schools, where experienced officers are the pupils. The field application of new material must be mastered before the full benefit of such schooling is accomplished.

A third opportunity for field instruction and somewhat more of a problem, is indicated by the many cases where, after schooling and reasonable experience both, the officer still does not meet the required level of performance, either in a general over-all way or in some specific phases of his work. A great many factors enter the picture which may account for partial failures. The quality of the man himself, his ability to learn and to adapt himself to this type of work are, of course, leading factors. There is, however, sufficient evidence to support the belief that failures of this type are in part the result of a fault in the field instruction and practical application phase of his training and development.

In private industry there has been increasing recognition in recent years that the foreman rightfully bears the responsibility of an on-the-job instructor. Experiences in war production, requiring the rapid training of new workmen, have focussed greater attention on the foreman as the *teacher* of his subordinates, not merely a *supervisor* of their operations. A result is shown in the industrial practice of training foremen in proper teaching methods and in employee relationship problems. The results as reported have been both favorable and substantial.

This principle of the foreman-instructor has already been shown to be common practice in police organizations. It is reasonable to believe that sufficient attention to this solution of our personnel problem will result in the more rapid and

effective development of both our new and experienced police personnel.

It is difficult to sustain the contention that a good officer or even a good corporal or sergeant is also a satisfactory field instructor. These men are judged upon their efficiency in the direction of field operations. Individuals among them may find it irksome to be required to assume the responsibility for the teaching and training of a new man. The teaching methods of individual field instructors are found to vary considerably, and the scope of their instruction may fail to cover the whole field of operations. There are many other factors which can enter into the picture to limit the progress of an individual man, with a resultant loss of efficiency to the department as a whole.

*Relationship Between "Rating" and "Development"  
of Police Personnel*

Every police department has some type of "rating" method whereby the ability and value of each individual is appraised and reported to the executive. Rating procedures, however, range from one extreme to another. In some instances an occasional verbal report to the executive of a man's progress and his weaknesses and possibilities constitutes the sole basis of appraisal. In others, a thorough analysis of the individual is made. Some form of rating or evaluation system is used and the reports are submitted to the executive at specified intervals. There are, however, very substantial differences in these rating methods and their effectiveness varies—at least sufficiently to indicate that if there is any one system which is applicable to all types of police organizations it has succeeded in evading the scrutiny of a great many of us.

Usually these personnel rating systems serve one or more of three purposes:

- a. To determine the individual's qualification for his present position or for promotion to some other position.
- b. To determine if corrective measures should be employed, as for example, transfer or disciplinary action.
- c. To determine need for additional training—either for the individual himself or the force as a whole.

The first and second of the foregoing receive perhaps the majority attention of police executives. It is with reference to the third—the training and development purpose—that it is our belief we may not be utilizing the possibilities of the field instructors to their full extent. Our rating or evaluation systems have provided these field supervisors with guidance for the analysis and reporting of personnel. It is reasonable that we

should also provide them with proper guidance and assistance in their equally important function of developing the abilities of their men.

Once a recruit has completed his basic training and is put to work under supervision, he is squarely in the hands of his field supervisor, usually a corporal or sergeant. This non-commissioned officer is a key man, and upon him depends to a great extent the progress of that recruit in the years that follow. Other supervisory officers are not without a certain responsibility in the field instruction of their men, but it is not possible for them to be able to give each individual man a great deal of attention. We must then depend upon the immediate supervisor of the man to do this job. Since it is he who is in a position to best appraise the value of his subordinates we also depend upon him heavily in our evaluation or rating of his men.

It appeared to us in the Ohio State Highway Patrol, that these two functions of a field supervisor, on the one hand the appraisal of his men, and on the other hand the correction of the defects found in his appraisal, were but two parts of a single function. What was needed most was a workable method which would provide for an accurate and complete appraisal based on our own standards of satisfactory performance, and guidance and assistance to the field supervisor in his function as a field instructor, to the end that their efforts would be directed toward a satisfactory goal and that reasonably uniform results be accomplished.

In a state police or patrol organization the post commander, usually a corporal or sergeant, is the key field supervisor. He bears a somewhat greater responsibility in the supervision and development of his men than a non-commissioned officer of proportionate rank in the average municipal department. This is simply a matter of geography. A state police or patrol post, although it may have all modern facilities for communication with its troop or district headquarters and with general headquarters, is still in a somewhat isolated position. It is not unusual for a post to operate for a considerable period without the benefit of the presence of any officer other than the post commander. In addition, the field of operations in such a post is apt to be wider, due to its decentralization, and to the fact that all phases of activity are handled by all of the men, there being little or no specialization such as is represented in municipal departments by special squads or bureaus. Additionally, this decentralization has made it practically impossible for a state police or patrol organization to conduct those short weekly in-service schools which become common in municipal police departments.

### *Objectives of a Rating System*

Any police officer must be an all-around man, to be efficient. A state police officer must be particularly so. He normally operates where little or no assistance is at hand, and the scope of his activity includes every function for which his organization is responsible. Consequently the commander of a state police or patrol post bears a particularly heavy responsibility in the direction of his men and in the development of their ability.

Our own experience with personnel rating and evaluation methods had included both a free-written type of report and later prepared rating systems. By the former is meant that type wherein the superior periodically submits in his own words his analysis of each separate man, setting forth his good points, his weaknesses or deficiencies and his own recommendations on the matter. The supervisor of necessity utilized his own conception of a satisfactory standard of performance in drafting this report. The prepared systems gave fairly satisfactory results but were not entirely suitable for a plan which has the objective of improving field operations. They were "rating" systems solely, designed to put a numerical value on each man's worth.

The most favorable feature of a true rating system of this type is its convenience, together with its appearance of accuracy and preciseness. Even a carelessly constructed rating system may have this appearance of precision and we may be misled by it until our own or our men's distrust is incurred by a series of clearly evident errors. This fact led us to study the problem closely, and to the conclusion *that the actual rating of a man with a numerical value was of secondary importance if not entirely beside the point. The point of most interest to us was simply to find out just where the man needed correction and improvement and to make certain that he received it.*

### *Procedure in Establishing a Proper System*

In order to put this principle to work it was clear that the basic step was to establish in a definite concise form, just what our standards of satisfactory performance were. This would appear to be a simple matter, for any supervisory officer is ready at any time to tell you what constitutes a good man. It is surprising the way they differ when over-all performance is broken down into its separate phases, and specific information is required. This in itself indicated the need for guidance of this type.

After the construction of the basic standards of performance, the next thing needed was a mechanism to accomplish these:

- a. Keep the required standards before all men continually for their own guidance.

- b. Keep these standards before all supervisory officers to serve as a guide in their appraisal of their subordinates.
- c. Provide a uniform procedure for the treatment of individual cases where deficiencies are found.
- d. Establish the control necessary to assure that the process was carried out, and carried out in accordance with our established principles of supervision.

The performance standards were not arbitrarily established in accordance with general headquarters beliefs alone. Opinions and experience of staff officers were considered. In addition men of all ranks from the field were consulted. Records of personnel covering a ten year period were examined, as were manuals of rules and regulations, instructional bulletins, general orders, and material taught in training and re-training schools. A practical approach, rather than a technical analysis appeared to be most favorable, and it is here that the field viewpoint as presented by field officers was most useful. This field viewpoint was believed most important, for the process applies directly to field men and the abilities and personal qualities shown in field operations, and was to be administered in greatest part by field supervisors.

It became apparent during these studies that our standards of satisfactory performance had undergone some changes during the previous ten years, occasioned both by normal progress in operations and also by statutory changes in our authority and responsibility. Logically there would also be other changes made in the future and provision was made for this. As completed, the whole mechanism is so constructed that any necessary changes in operational standards and methods can be accomplished without in any way disturbing the plan.

Thirty-one separate factors were finally arrived at, which appeared to cover both the personal qualities considered necessary in a uniformed officer, and his field of operations. This included supervisory personnel also. The standards as finally determined, comprised the following factors:

1. Appearance
2. Health and physical condition
3. Conduct and deportment
4. Judgment
5. Interest in the organization and its work
6. Fellowship and association
7. Discipline
8. Initiative and self-reliance
9. Resourcefulness
10. Alertness and observation
11. Loyalty
12. Courage
13. Honesty and honor

14. Leadership
15. Effort
16. Knowledge of the patrol area
17. Knowledge and conformity with policies and procedures
18. Dealing with the public
19. Cooperation with other departments and officials
20. Organization and direction of work
21. Desk duty
22. Ability to make reports
23. Ability as an investigator
24. Scope of activity
25. Operation of motor equipment
26. Maintenance of motor equipment
27. Maintenance of post equipment
28. Maintenance of uniform and personal equipment
29. Preparation and presentation of court cases
30. Use of firearms
31. General efficiency.

An explanation of each factor was drawn up to establish three considerations about it:

- a. Exactly what is meant by the factor.
- b. The significance and importance of the factor as it applied to the organization.
- c. The performance level required as satisfactory, or "what is expected of a man" under that factor.

It will be seen that the thirty-one different factors are of several general types. Some appear to be strictly personal qualities, which have a direct bearing on a man's value as a police officer. Honesty, loyalty and courage are of this nature. Others have to do with some particular skill or ability, such as the use of firearms and his ability in the use of motor equipment. Still others, as his effectiveness in the preparation and presentation of court cases deal with a complete phase of field operations. The qualities of leadership, organization and direction of work, and discipline, are some which apply to all men but particularly apply to supervisory officers.

It early became apparent that some factors would overlap with each other, and to entirely separate them would require a technical rather than a practical approach. For example, factor No. 18 (dealing with the public) has to do with the way an officer conducts all his dealings with the public. This is considered important. Another factor, No. 21 (ability to make reports) deals with his ability and effectiveness in the performance of desk duty, which is a substantial part of the regular activity of our men. On duty at the desk he conducts a great many dealings with the public, yet he also has many other duties to perform. If his conduct of his dealings with the public while on desk duty should be deficient, it follows that his

deficiency would be applicable to both factors. The conclusion was reached that since our objective was simply to find out where the man was wrong and to apply corrective measures, this double application of a single deficiency would be of little hindrance, and would have the added quality of greater accuracy. In such cases the deficiency is recorded under both factors if it applies to both.

It is anticipated that from time to time in the future it will be necessary to revise these factors. Long experience in their use is expected to point out the need for this revision. For the sake of completeness, and accuracy, and to maintain the practical viewpoint, it may be necessary to combine several factors under a single heading, or to divide a factor into two or more parts, perhaps to eliminate a factor entirely if it is not needed, or to add new ones which will become necessary. Particularly is this true of the last factor, that of general efficiency. This is admittedly a clean-up item. It is not believed practical at this time to break down the whole field of a uniformed officer's activity into entirely separate phases and treat each as a separate factor. Some caution is employed here and not too much is attempted at once. It is expected that as the necessity is indicated, some of the separate skills and abilities which make up a man's general efficiency will be singled out for particular attention and established as separate factors. This will be done only as the need is shown, in order to avoid a too cumbersome report. Attention is also given to the reduction of the number of different factors, and experience now shows indications that this can be accomplished as the men become more familiar with the system.

The qualities of flexibility and adaptability in the standards of performance are assured by the foregoing provisions. Our experience with rating systems has shown that a lack of flexibility was a noticeable defect of many. Prepared rating systems are usually very carefully devised but are based upon the experiences of a few "typical" organizations or departments. There are marked differences between police departments, particularly among the various state police and patrol organizations throughout the country, in both their authority and also in their operating and administrative methods and procedures. Because of these differences, a rating or evaluation plan which fits one organization perfectly might not necessarily serve adequately in any other such law-enforcement agency.

#### APPLICATION OF THE PLAN

In the scoring sheet which we developed for personnel evaluation and development for members of the Ohio State Highway Patrol, note that provision is made for the recording of a numerical value to each factor by the supervising officers. (See

Figure I.) The numerical figure has no meaning except as is stipulated in the following table, and an alphabetical designation would no doubt serve equally well:

FIGURE I

STATE OF OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
STATE HIGHWAY PATROL

PERSONNEL EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Name..... Date.... Post.... District....

	5	4	3	2	1
1. Appearance .....					
2. Health and Physical Condition.....					
3. Conduct and Deportment.....					
4. Judgment .....					
5. Interest in the Organization and Work.....					
6. Fellowship and Association.....					
7. Discipline .....					
8. Initiative and Self-Reliance .....					
9. Resourcefulness .....					
10. Alertness and Observation .....					
11. Loyalty .....					
12. Courage .....					
13. Honesty and Honor .....					
14. Leadership .....					
15. Effort .....					
16. Knowledge of Patrol Area or Assignment.....					
17. Knowledge of Policies and Procedures.....					
18. Dealing with the Public.....					
19. Cooperation with other Departments and Officials					
20. Organization and Direction of Work.....					
21. Desk Duty .....					
22. Ability to Make Reports.....					
23. Ability as An Investigator.....					
24. Scope of Activity .....					
25. Operation of Motor Equipment.....					
26. Maintenance of Motor Equipment.....					
27. Maintenance of Post Equipment.....					
28. Maintenance of Uniform and Personal Equipm't					
29. Preparation and Presentation of Court Cases...					
30. Use of Firearms .....					
31. General Efficiency .....					

Scoring Officers:

Unit.....

Unit.....

Unit.....

Unit.....

Signature.....

**Value of 5:**

Indicates that the man is far above the standard which is considered acceptable. It is an exceptionally good score.

**Value of 4:**

Means that the man is acceptable, and there are no indications of a need for improvement. It indicates that, during the scoring period, there has been shown no reason for correction or criticism. It is a satisfactory score.

A score of 4 is the normal starting point, in that it will automatically prevail when no deficiency is evidenced.

**Value of 3:**

This score indicates some need for improvement. It means that the man has shown some evidence that he is not entirely satisfactory, under this factor. It indicates some lack or deficiency, but not to so great an extent but that with reasonable effort it could be corrected. A score of 3 is not to be considered lightly, neither is it a reason for great apprehension unless the matter is neglected.

This score may also indicate that the man, previously scored with a 2, has made substantial progress in the correction of his defect but has not yet reached the satisfactory level.

**Value of 2:**

This score indicates that the man's deficiency has reached serious proportions and that he had ample opportunity and guidance to correct it, but has not done so.

To the man himself, a score of 2 should signify that he is far below standard, and that either he is not able to make progress in bringing himself up to requirements or else is not putting forth the effort necessary.

A field supervisor, by scoring an individual with a 2 under any factor, is in effect stating that for at least several successive periods in the man's past his performance has been below standard to a substantial degree, that he has given the man the best assistance and guidance of which he is capable, that he has specific evidence of both the man's deficiency and his own steps to correct it, and that the man is familiar with every aspect of his case. Generally, as in the case of a score of 3, his score will remain stationary for several scoring periods before again reducing it, unless substantial improvement is shown which warrants an increase of one point.

When a man is scored with a 2, it becomes the responsibility of the district headquarters to take steps to assist the post commander in bringing about correction or improvement.

When a score of 2 is recorded for any factor, the regular report will be accompanied by a written statement setting

forth the evidence of the man's deficiency and measures taken to correct it, for the attention of general headquarters.

Value of 1:

This score means that the supervisors at both the post and district headquarters have agreed that the man has shown no reasonable likelihood of his bringing himself up to standard under their joint or separate guidance.

As in the case of a score of 2, the report will be accompanied by a complete history of the case for the attention of general headquarters.

It will be seen that this type of scoring is intended to keep attention focussed on the correction of deficiencies as much as on the analysis or appraisal function. This is in line with the basic principles of the whole plan.

Normally a man's score in any given factor must progress downward or upward by single stages. It may be held at a single stage for an indefinite number of scoring periods, depending on the merits of the case, or it may progress downward or upward as previously described.

However, in particularly vital factors, such as honesty and conduct, normally handled by immediate disciplinary action, any score down to the lowest, may be given for a single violation or deficiency. In such cases the report is submitted at once without regard for regular scoring periods, and appropriate action taken at once. Conversely, under certain factors which are not of a nature as to require drastic action in the event of a deficiency of long standing, the score will never reach the bottom level or require general headquarters' action.

It is required, when a deficiency is used in reducing a man's score for the period that definite evidence of this deficiency be established. This evidence may be reviewed at any time by a higher authority, either as a routine measure or in the event that a particular case comes up for specific consideration.

Evidence of this nature may be a simple account of the individual man's action as observed by a supervisor, or it may be based upon statements from responsible sources, which have been definitely established as fact.

It is considered essential that confidential reporting be avoided and that every individual be familiarized with his complete record up to date. He is to be informed of his deficiencies if any exist. It is to be clearly established that he understands what is required of him and what is expected of him in the way of effort toward his own improvement. It is not permitted that he be kept in the dark about his standing and progress. His own effort is required to bring about the needed improvement, for although the post commander and other field supervisors must take positive steps to instruct him and steer him onto the

right track, it is only his own sustained effort which can bring about the improvement which is indicated.

In the Ohio State Highway Patrol, our table of organization has established a lieutenant as commanding officer of each of the five districts within the state. He is assisted by a first sergeant as second in command. Each post is under the command of a corporal. A field sergeant, stationed at district headquarters, is the corporal's immediate superior, and exercises field direction over three or four posts which are assigned to him, and maintains regular contact between his posts and district headquarters. Normally the corporal remains at this post except for regular monthly meetings at district headquarters, or unless called into that office for some particularly important matter.

It appeared proper, when this evaluation and development plan was put into effect, to place a part of the responsibility for its application onto each of these field supervisors within the District. Although the corporal does bear the greatest responsibility in the direction of his men, yet the other three supervisors do exercise direction and have occasion to observe and appraise each of their men. The field sergeant has always borne a direct responsibility dealing with the appraisal and field training of personnel, somewhat less specific than that of the corporal but greater than that of the lieutenant and his assistant, the district sergeant. It was decided that all of these field supervisors should have a part in the evaluation of all their subordinates and in their correction and development. This was not any departure from previously established principles of administration. Each of these officers then, is not only kept completely familiar with every aspect of every case of those subordinate to him, but also takes an active part in submitting a report, and in taking corrective steps within the normal field of his operations.

An added safeguard, one which had proven successful in our experience in the past, was included. This is the principle that any appraisal of a man must be concurred upon by two of his superiors before it would bear any weight.

The scoring of all ranks below the general headquarters staff is done in accordance with the following schedule:

**Patrolmen:**

The corporal and field sergeant concur on one report and submit it to district headquarters. The lieutenant, after consultation with the district sergeant, submits a report on the patrolman to general headquarters.

**Corporals:**

The field sergeant and district sergeant concur on one report and submit it to the lieutenant. The lieutenant submits a report on each corporal to general headquarters.

**Field Sergeants:**

The lieutenant and district sergeant concur on one report and submit it to general headquarters.

**District sergeants:**

The lieutenant and the captain in command of the uniformed division concur on one report.

**Field lieutenants:**

The general headquarters staff officers concur on one report.

Reports are submitted quarterly. Copies of reports become permanent records at the post, district headquarters and general headquarters.

It may appear at first glance that this system is too complicated, and not simple enough for practical use.

When examined more closely it is found that the report is not complicated, but it does require that a supervisory officer pay close attention to his men at all times, instead of on the one day of each period when he marks a rating score.

When boiled down in practice, it is found that the method requires only that a supervisory officer answer these questions about each man, and under each of 31 factors:

1. Is he up to standard in this factor?
2. If not, how far below standard?
3. What are his possibilities for correcting himself under supervision?
4. Can I show specific evidence of his deficiency?

More detailed information about the system and its application will be available upon a request directed to Colonel George Mingle, Superintendent, Ohio State Highway Patrol, Columbus, Ohio.

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