The premise of discipline without punishment is the belief that the organization and its managers have the right to set reasonable standards and that managers have a responsibility to point out discrepancies when they arise; only the employee can decide whether or not to perform properly and meet those standards. The burden of responsibility for performance is placed clearly on the employee and not the agency or its managers.
Greenwood Village Police

- Serves 14,175 residents of Greenwood Village
- Daytime population 55,000 / Households 4,457
- Employs 67 sworn police officers and 26 civilians
- Responds to 63,000 calls for service annually
- Completes approximately 12,800 crime reports
- Operates on a budget of $8.3M for FY09
- 2 Police Unions FOP & IUPA

Learning Outcomes

- Examine the purpose of discipline.
- Discuss two types of discipline.
  - Progressive Discipline
  - Discipline without Punishment
- Examine the inherent problems with a punitive system.
- Discuss how to become less dependent on the discipline-control style of management
- Understand the concept of Discipline without Punishment.

What is Discipline?

- Discipline encourages employees to adhere to rules, policies, performance standards, and a general respect for others.
- Unfairness in discipline and general perceived unfair treatment of employees is the number one reason grievances are filed in union shops.
- Discipline generally is a short-term “fix” of a more serious underlying problem with a system or a person.
Objectives of Discipline

Question:
What are you trying to accomplish when you begin disciplinary action on an employee?

Answer:
Correction of a performance or correction of a behavioral problem.

Traditional Punitive System

- Fails to produce commitment and frequently prevents it from occurring.
- Short term consequences/frequent term pitfalls.
- Parallels the assumptions of the criminal justice system.

Beliefs about Punishment

- By treating people progressively worse, they will become progressively better (criminal justice model).
- Labels employees as problems at best, or criminals at worst.
A Positive Approach to Discipline

**Discipline**, training that develops self control.

**Punishment**, a penalty imposed on an offender for a crime or wrongdoing.

Problems with a Punitive System

- Rarely does a verbal warning build a better relationship.
- Rarely does an employee return from suspension with a renewed commitment to excellence.
- Appearance of favoritism.
- Primary goal is enforcement of compliance which rest on the idea of deterrence.

Problems with a Punitive System

- Managers and supervisors are reluctant to take action until a problem becomes impossible to ignore.
- Reluctance to take to task highly skilled employees who might resent being treated as *blue collar*.
- Employees are absolved of personal responsibility simply by accepting their punishment (paid the price and owes nothing more to the agency).
Problems with a Punitive System

- We only ask for sanctions; we do not ask for genuine commitment in the future.
- Encourages unethical conduct.
- Promotes an adversarial relationship (us/them).
- Everyone loses; employee, supervisor, and the organization gets only compliance.

Non-punitive Discipline

- Non-punitive Discipline is geared toward gaining acceptance of the rules/policies, not just short-term compliance with them;

Non-punitive Discipline

- Issue a verbal reminder that gets the employee to solve the problem themselves.
- Issue a written reminder if a second incident occurs, and meet privately with the employee.
- Give a paid “decision-making leave” that forces the employee to decide if she/he wants to stay with the organization.
- If no further incidents occur over a designated period, the most serious disciplinary step is removed from the employee’s file.
Signs of Good Discipline

Employees:
- Willingly follow rules.
- Meet or exceed standards.
- Practice good self-judgment.

Signs of Poor Discipline

Employees:
- Refuse to follow rules.
- Violate standards of acceptable behavior.
- Require constant oversight.

A Positive Approach to Discipline

- Successful organizations: create discipline.
- Acceptance of personal responsibility.
- Individual decision making.
- Goal self-discipline (being discipline).
The premise of discipline without punishment is the belief that the organization and its managers have the right to set reasonable standards and that managers have a responsibility to point out discrepancies when they arise; only the employee can decide whether or not to perform properly and meet those standards. The burden of responsibility for performance is placed clearly on the employee and not the agency or its managers.

The discipline without punishment system is designed to achieve two goals:

+ solve problems
+ enhance relationships

Therefore, discipline without punishment is dedicated to achieving the following outcomes:

- Build superior performance.
- Have employees take personal responsibility for their actions.
- Avoid confrontational and anger provoking situations that can damage relationships.
- Salvage potentially good employees who had performance problems.
- Provide a system for desired performance and conduct.
A Positive Approach to Discipline

Disciplinary issues can be separated into three categories:

- **Attendance**
- **Performance**
- **Behavior**

**Attendance**: employees are expected to come to work and be on time; irresponsible conduct and behavior are grounds for termination.

**Performance**: is a measurable outcome; it is the responsibility of the employee.

**Behavior**: employees must act with respect and courtesy at all times, and never have an excuse for discourteous or disrespectful conduct.

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**Performance Competencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTENDANCE</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning / Organization</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
<td>Decision Making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Working Relations</td>
<td>Working Relations</td>
<td>Working Relations</td>
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<td>Initiative</td>
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<td>Team Building</td>
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<td>Customer Service</td>
<td>Quality of Work</td>
<td>Customer Service</td>
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</tbody>
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**Discipline Without Punishment**
A Positive Approach to Discipline

Instead of warning and reprimands, the supervisor or manager:

- **Identifies the discrepancy** between actual and expected performance.
- **Explains the reasons** why this is important and why performance standards must be met.
- **Seeks agreement to change** and perform up to the expected standards.
- **Reminds the employee** that they are responsible for proper performance.

If the problem continues or another problem arises:

- The discussion is more in depth, but the goal never changes.
  - Discrepancy between performance and standards
  - Personal responsibility
  - Agreement on improvement
- Even if the employee becomes hostile or defensive, the mature adult explanation continues.

If the initial conversations are ultimately unsuccessful:

- **Employee is suspended with pay.**
  - **Asked to consider their future with the organization and decide if they are willing or able to meet the performance standards.**
  - **Pay removes the usual hostility and demonstrates the desire to help the person take responsibility for their reactions.**
A Positive Approach to Discipline

If the initial conversations are ultimately unsuccessful:

- **Employee is suspended with pay.**
  - Call it *decision-making leave* and have the employee return with a written statement of agreement on how they plan to meet performance standards.
  - If problems continue, the only logical consequence is **termination**.

Recognition

“Outstanding leaders go out of their way to boost the self-esteem of their personnel. If people believe in themselves, it is amazing what they can accomplish.”

Sam Walton

Building Superior Performance

- **Recognize good performance, control or confront poor performance.**
- **Determine actual performance, determine desired performance.**
  - discrepancy in execution
  - discrepancy in knowledge
A Positive Approach to Discipline

Building Superior Performance

- Job engineering, training.
  - Is there a change
- Provide recognition or begin coaching.

A Positive Approach to Discipline

Recognition Checklist

- Timely
- Specific
- Sincere
- Individual
- Personal
- Proportional

A Positive Approach to Discipline

Coaching

- Before the meeting
- During the meeting
  - gain employees agreement to change
- After the meeting
  - document, follow-up
- Is there positive change
  - provide recognition
  - if not begin formal discipline process
A Positive Approach to Discipline

Formal disciplinary Action

- Level One
  - Written reminder 1 (text book…oral reminder)
  - Gain employee’s agreement to change
  - Positive change?
    - Provide recognition, continue through process.

- Level Two
  - Written reminder 2
  - Gain employee’s agreement to change
  - Positive change?
    - Provide recognition, continue through process.

- Level Three
  - Decision making leave
    - organization demonstrates good faith.
    - employee given time to review employment.
    - easier on supervisor/manager.
    - employees’ family not financially punished.
    - promotes fair treatment of employees.
    - increase defensibility for termination.
  - Gain employee’s agreement to change
  - Positive change?
    - provide recognition or move to termination.
Choosing Discipline Over Punishment

The *discipline without punishment* approach is much more defensible, both from a legal standpoint and in the perception of the manager who is responsibility for taking action.

A Positive Approach to Discipline

Additional Benefits:
- Lawyer Proof
- Peer Proof
- Union Proof

Learning Organizations
DI SC I P L I N E W I T H O U T P U N I S H M E N T
A Positive Approach to Proper Conduct

QUESTIONS

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