

Learning Curve

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Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services
Professional Development and Training Division

Executive Director's Corner



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Who is responsible for professional development?
(Circle the correct answer.)

- the individual employee
- the employee's immediate supervisor
- senior level leadership
- the Professional Development and Training Division
- all of the above

The correct answer is e. Professional development can only be effective if all parts of the organization work together to insure that each employee receives the opportunity to maintain and increase the knowledge and skills needed to perform their current jobs well and prepare for their next positions. Let's examine the various roles of each segment of the organization in relation to professional development.

Employees

Successful individuals always have a career plan, and it is the individual employee's responsibility to formulate that plan. You may compare it to a vacation. If you get in your car without a destination in mind and merely begin driving, you could end up just about anywhere. Unfortunately, far too many people approach their careers with less thought than they give their vacations.

With a career goal in mind, and a thoughtful assessment of their strengths and deficits, an employee is in a position to seek out the professional development opportunities that will move them toward their goal. It is important that they approach professional development from a broad based perspective. It may be that they need to take some college courses or get a degree. Perhaps individual workshops or seminars would be in order. Then again, some people may

benefit more from volunteering to serve on a committee or task force or take on a special project. Some self-directed learners may prefer reading books or articles or conducting internet research to fill in knowledge or skill gaps. And some employees may want to identify mentors to work with in furthering their careers. The options are many and a good professional development plan will include several different strategies.

Immediate Supervisors

An employee's immediate supervisor plays a very significant role in that person's professional development. Supervisors are responsible for evaluating the performance of their staff and providing regular feedback. Feedback that is specific and delivered in a constructive manner helps employees assess their current job performance and identify strengths and areas needing improvement. This type of

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Executive Director's Corner—continued

DPSCS Operations Meeting



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feedback assists employees in validating or correcting their self-assessments and provides the basis for determining professional development needs.

Another responsibility of supervisors is to coach and counsel employees for improved performance. Thus, in some instances the supervisor becomes the actual provider of professional development for the employees in their span.

Finally, it is the immediate supervisor's responsibility to create a learning climate within their units. Employees need to know that learning is valued, supported, and even expected in their work setting. In a learning climate, supervisors use every opportunity to create learning opportunities on the job. Staff meetings are dynamic interchanges of thoughts and ideas, and employees are encouraged to share new learning with the rest of their team. Employees are assigned roles that help them expand their capacities and challenge them to learn new skills. And supervisors support professional development by providing release time

for employees to take advantage of training opportunities offered both within and outside of the agency.

Senior Leadership

The culture of an organization is created top down, and it falls to senior leaders to create a culture that is supportive of learning and development. Thus, it is important that senior leaders send a clear message to everyone in their agencies that managers and supervisors at all levels are expected to fulfill their roles in assisting employees to receive the training they need to perform their jobs well and be prepared for promotional opportunities.

How can senior leaders send this message? First, and perhaps most importantly, they can be good role models, regularly engaging in professional development activities themselves. Second, they can make their expectations clear to managers and supervisors by making the development of staff a performance objective on which they will be evaluated. Third, senior leaders can insure that funding and release time are provided to support professional development.



DPSCS Training Consortium

The Professional Development and Training Division

The professional development of all DPSCS staff is at the very heart of the mission of the Professional Development and Training Division, commonly known as PDTD. The remainder of this newsletter is dedicated to describing some of the services and programs we have coordinated and conducted to meet the needs of DPSCS staff. This is merely a sampling of the programs provided by PDTD. Check out our SafetyNet site for a full description of the services and programs we offer.

But we cannot create an effective professional development system by ourselves. We need the participation of employees, supervisors, and leadership in determining needs, allocating resources, and supporting programs. The Training Consortium recently convened by Secretary Maynard is a cross-section of DPSCS who have been brought together to provide advice and guidance on the Department's professional development and training activities. This group will be a valuable resource to PDTD, and we look forward to working with them to continuously improve the quality of staff development and training in DPSCS.

Wishing each of you much growth and learning,

Nancy

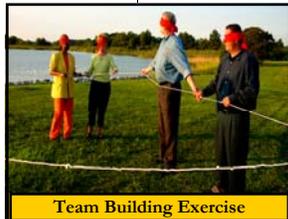
Nancy C. Hoffman, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Deputy Director's Corner

Organizational Change

By Steven Berry

The one constant in organizational life is the way we do business is always changing. According to [Warren Bennis](#), organization development (OD) is a complex strategy intended to change the beliefs, attitudes, values, and structure of organizations so that they can better adapt to new technologies and challenges. All organizations, whether public or private sector, profit or non-profit, must change the way they conduct business in order to stay ahead of the curve. Haphazard approaches to organizational change or development can lead to misdirection or failure. However, a well-planned organizational development process can result in the creation of effective strategic plans, design of efficient operational policies and procedures, enhancement



Team Building Exercise

of teamwork and development of leadership effectiveness.

The major emphasis of organizational development is on integrating individual and team needs with the organizational goals. Through the better utilization of resources and allowing for more involvement of staff in decision making, especially those which directly impact them, organizations can thrive and enjoy greater effectiveness.

So, are organizational development and training related? The short answer is yes. As an OD consultant, an experienced trainer can assist leadership in assessing the organization or some individual organizational unit, analyzing the data

collected, and making a recommendation for an intervention to increase organizational effectiveness. Often the intervention will require some form of training,

but not always. This process can be very helpful in differentiating true training needs from the use of training as a "Band-Aid."

During the course of the past 2 years, the staff of the Professional Development and Training Division (PDTD) has been involved in numerous OD projects, including:

- Facilitating retreats and meetings
- Conducting assessments, including interviews, focus groups and surveys
- Facilitating "Managing for Results" sessions
- Providing strategic planning training
- Working with units to increase teamwork capabilities

PDTD considers every agency and division under the DPSCS umbrella our customer. Please let us know how we may assist you in working toward improving your agency's effectiveness in achieving the DPSCS mission.

Executive and Leadership Development

DPSCS Supervisor Academy

By Sue McGee

What do yarn, paper clips, index cards, tinker toys, helicopter rides, and the movie *Gettysburg* have to do with being a successful first line supervisor? All of these items, in conjunction with several skill and style assessments, are used to demonstrate the competencies and behaviors that lead to effective management.

The DPSCS Supervisor Academy is a first-line supervisor program based on current research and input from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), American Correctional Association, and the University of

Maryland Robert H. Smith School of Business. The 70-hour program addresses the Maryland Correctional Training Commission objectives and is approved to meet the training mandate for first line supervisors.

Moving from a peer to a supervisor means taking on new types of roles and responsibilities. New duties are significantly different from those held as line staff. One of the reasons for promotion is a mastery of the technical. Using those technical skills to get work done through others is the foundation of supervision and time is needed to understand this shift and adjust behavior.

The targeted audience for the DPSCS

Supervisor Academy is a cross section of first-line supervisors. Sharing information with other department supervisors, regardless of their specific assignment, proves beneficial for networking and continuous support inside and outside the classroom.

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DPSCS Supervisor Academy
January and March 2007

Executive and Leadership Development - *continued*

Continued from page 3

Each individual topic has specific objectives and the overall course goals are to examine the personal and professional competencies needed to be a successful first line supervisor. The following competencies were identified by NIC for supervisors/managers in the field of corrections:

Ethics and Values

Ethical behavior lies at the heart of good management and supervision. Ethics based upon respect, competence, and accountability is critical.

Interpersonal Relationships

The inability to effectively establish and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships is perhaps the main cause of leadership failure.

Team Building

Successful teams require thoughtful development and support. Supervisors who understand how to develop teams benefit.

Collaboration

Collaboration is important from two perspectives: internally and externally. Internal collaboration will encourage employees to become more invested in the success of their agency and have a better understanding and commitment to the Department's goals.

External collaboration is working with other stakeholders like the courts, law enforcement, and community groups.

Managing Conflict

If conflict is managed correctly, it can unify individuals, promote cooperation, and encourage solutions at the lowest level. Poorly managed conflict will decrease productivity, morale, and commitment.

Developing Direct Reports

Each employee must become a fully contributing member of the team. Part of a supervisor's job is to train, coach, correct, encourage, and reward.

Problem Solving and Decision Making

Responses to problems and the effectiveness of decisions have a crucial impact on the people who work for you. Using problem solving and decision making skills will improve the quality of decisions and the degree to which people will support them.

Motivating Others

An obvious statement: "A motivated employee tries harder than an unmotivated employee to get the job done and to do it well." An effective supervisor understands the internal drive that stimulates a person and finds ways to match them with the employee's performance.

Oral and Written Communication

Interacting and communicating are major parts of our jobs. There are numerous modes of communication now, and the better you are at communicating, the more effective a supervisor you will become.

Criminal Justice System

Regardless of your exact position, all parts of the corrections system have some impact on all other parts. One of the goals of this class is to break down some artificial barriers and learn from each other.

The program is held in two sessions. Session I is five days followed by an approximate four week break with Session II concluding with five more classroom days. The class is structured to provide content about a topic with an application of the information to an activity or exercise. Assessments used for individual feedback include a Leadership Style Inventory and DiSC (measures your tendencies for dominance, influence, steadiness, and conscientiousness in interpersonal skills). The instructors use a variety of training methods to insure involvement and practical application.

Each participant is loaned a copy of the book "*Developing the Leader Within You*" by John Maxwell. This book includes tips and stories about effective management. The book is assigned reading between the two sessions, with small groups assigned two chapters each for presentation on the last day of class.

Successful completion of the program also includes preparing an action plan committed to writing with follow up ninety (90) days later.

The most recent class graduated on June 29, 2007. Congratulations to all.



Supervisor Academy – May & June 2007

Scott Eric Atkins, Margaret Boulware, Tanique Brown, Laverne Buckner, Marty Creaney, Patricia Elickson-Towns, Patricia Fisher, Marlene Gaines, Glendora Gordon, Lillie Henderson, Andrea Janifer, John Jay, Gabriel Jibana, CherRon Johnson, Ruth Johnson, Nakia Kutcherman, Kareem Land, Andrew Lipchak, Ricky Lovett, Shawn McClain-Irvine, Latrenda McNair, John Moore, Kimberly Moore, Lynda Moore, Serena Mosteller, Walter Nolley, Angela Patterson, Joy Rhymer, Emma Rogers, Michael Ruckle LCSW-C, Greg Shumake, Ann Wilkes

Administrative and Support Staff Training

Effective Business Writing

By Phyllis Mills-Greene

Everyone writes in some form every day. Whether it is formal writing for business purposes or an informal note to a friend, we strive to convey our message effectively. The increase of electronic modes of communication and the accompanying shorthand text message style is having a great impact on writing, but we still want the recipient to understand the message. The need to reinforce and enhance our written communication skills was the catalyst for the Effective Business Writing Program.

As we encountered co-workers from different agencies within DPSCS, one question was echoed over and over again, "Do you have a writing course?" And so, in conjunction with the Baltimore City Community College (BCCC), we developed and presented our first Effective Business Writing Program.

The two-day program, which was offered four times during the last fiscal year, is designed to provide a review of the principles and mechanics of good business writing.

The participants receive training in various writing techniques, grammar, and the purpose and impact of writing. Participants

from all employment classifications from the Office of the Secretary, Division of Correction, Division of Parole and Probation, and Division of Pretrial Detention and Services attended the sessions.

As a result of this course, I was reminded of a few writing tips that I want to share with you.

Homonyms

Be cautious of words that sound alike but have different meanings. For example, 'their' means a person or group of people and is different from 'there' which refers to a location.

Know the audience

It is really important to know the audience when writing. Some writers are guilty of using acronyms that are unfamiliar to the audience. If a document that contains several correction related acronyms is presented in court as evidence, the judge or jury may be unfamiliar with the terms, thereby causing confusion during a legal proceeding.

Order of events

Presenting information in chronological order can be a critical factor in business and personal writing. For instance, if I say "we are going to the amusement park, then pick up the children for a day of fun and enjoyment," does this mean we are having a day of fun and enjoyment without the children? Similarly, in documenting an incident for your supervisor, noting the correct order in which a situation

developed may be crucial to further action.

Proofread

Time spent proofreading is never wasted. What a writer intends to say is not always what ends up on paper. Ask a co-worker to look over the material. Computers are a mindless, marvelous but menacing tool that can convey your message accurately and quickly. Unfortunately, it can also communicate a completely different message if spell check is relied on too heavily.

Recently a colleague sent this message, "I will have the documents ready toady." Actually the word should have been 'today' but the mindless computer spell check recognized 'toady' as a word and signaled spelling okay and the message was sent.

The response to the Effective Business Writing Program from the participants was very positive. They said the information was timely, useful and many of the past participants know someone who wants to attend a session. Future programs will be offered soon. Look for the announcement via e-mail and/or posted in employee areas within the institutions or contact [Phyllis Mills-Greene](#).



Community Corrections Training

Supervision Planning: Creating A Supervision Plan

By Gene Farmer
and Ray Sheaffer

Effective training comes with teamwork, planning, and developing courses that really aid the people who attend the classes. One such course is helping the supervisors and agents in the Division of Parole and Probation. This training was designed by Field Supervisor Colotta Moore and delivered by Ms. Moore and Field Supervisor Raymond Sheaffer. We also had much help from the Employee Development Training Unit and Field Supervisor David Dawkins, who designed a template that has helped staff work with the Supervision Plan.

In this training, performance objectives cover risk, needs, and responsibility. This means finding the right mix of services for the offender so that they will be better able to make the needed changes while under supervision. Part of this training is to define the offender's criminogenic factors, short and long term goals, and steps in problem solving with the supervisee. One of the key elements is to train employees in helping the individual who is supervised identify the triggers causing relapse into patterns of unacceptable behavior.

All of the concepts presented in this training are focused around the mission of the Division and

emphasize the critical, dynamic nature of the supervision plan. Hopefully, the plan developed at the inception of supervision will not be the same as the plan developed for the final phase of the supervisee's probation or parole. While special conditions are an integral part of the plan, it is emphasized that they do not drive the supervision plan as a whole.

Risk assessment is the linchpin of the supervision plan, as this is what case classification is based on. Because we assess and re-assess (incident and behavior caused) at critical points during the supervision period, it is important to stress the

- interrelationship of information gathering (motivational inter-viewing),
- assessment of that information,
- identification of the supervisee's stage of change,
- criminogenic factors, and development of a plan which prioritizes addressing the most critical needs first.

The plan is validated through a *Behavior Contract* between the supervisee and their agent/monitor.

Finally, participants are given skills in problem solving which are to be shared with those supervised, as they are the ones responsible for implementing change in their lives.

All of the principles taught in each of these modules are reinforced by group activities designed to enhance the agent's, monitor's and supervisor's ability to "break" from outmoded



*"If we do things
the way we always
did, we will
continue to get
what we
always got"*

methodologies and be more creative in addressing the risk and needs of the individuals supervised in the community.

Under various names, these concepts have been utilized in a piecemeal style by many employees in the field over the years and have proven to be successful. Now, they have been formalized, given an appropriate name (evidence based practices) and implemented on a statewide basis, giving the Division consistency in addressing its mission. Admittedly, for some of us, change has been difficult. To help soften the change process, remember: "If we do things the way we always did, we will continue to get what we always got." Clearly, that is no longer acceptable in this increasingly complicated society.

In review of the training evaluations many of the participants trained advised that this training has greatly benefited them when preparing the Supervision Plan. This was one example of training that had much research and collaboration to improve learning and understanding in an ever changing field of community corrections. For more information, contact [Gene Farmer](#).



E-Learning and Information Technology Training

Computer Training

By Michael Helm

The Information Technology Training Unit provides training in general computing and Microsoft Office Suite applications. These classes include Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Access. Most classes are broken down into beginner and intermediate levels. The goal is to provide the basic skills first and then follow-up with more complicated tasks that the application has available and will further assist our employees in their duties.

Out of all the user applications utilized within our Department, Microsoft Word and Excel are the most prevalent tools. Here is a suggestion when using Microsoft Word to create letterhead documents or any document that contains information that stays the same on every page.



Use Headers and Footers for items on the top and bottom of a page. Headers are good for placing the department, agency, or division letterhead and the footer is used for notes, page numbering, file location, creation and modification dates, date of printing, and who created the document.

Headers and Footers

- From the menu bar go to 'View' then 'Header and Footer.' The first time you do this, Word opens a blank header and places the insertion point in it. If you just want to add text to a header or footer, you can simply type it into the header or footer area.
- You can add other types of information by using the 'Header and Footer' toolbar.

To place information along the left hand side of the document in Word, use a text box to enter the information, place it to the far left, convert it to a frame, and lock the anchor.

Creating frames

1. On the 'Drawing' Toolbar (Toolbar: A bar with buttons and options that you use to carry out commands. To display a toolbar from the Menu Bar, select 'View' 'Toolbar'),



click Text Box .

2. Click or drag in your document where you want to insert the text box (text box: A movable, resizable container for text or graphics). Use text boxes to position several blocks of text on a page or to give text a different orientation from other text in the document.
3. Convert a text box to a frame
4. If the text box is on a drawing canvas (drawing canvas: An area on which you can draw multiple shapes. Because the shapes are

contained within the drawing canvas, they can be moved and resized as a unit.), you must drag it off to complete this procedure.

5. Select the text box.
6. From the Menu bar, select 'Format' 'Text Box' and then click the Text Box tab.
7. Click 'Convert to Frame.'
8. Click 'OK.'
9. Position the frame in your document.

This will allow you to enter the text in the body of the document without effecting the headers, footers, or frame on the side.

In Microsoft there are always numerous ways to create, modify, and design documents. So, if you have a creative way to do something email it to [Michael Helm](#). We will test it and then maybe you will see your process in this newsletter. Also, let me know if you have any training recommendations. You know what you need, so let us fulfill your needs and enhance the services we provide.

For hands-on computer training, watch for PDTD's [Course Catalog](#) on the [SafetyNet](#).



Institutional Training

Communication Skills for the Correctional Professional

By Dawn Pearson

In June, 2005, the Professional Development and Training Division piloted its program entitled, "Communication Skills for the Correctional Professional." This program was initiated at the Maryland Correctional Institution for Women in Jessup and the Maryland Correctional Training Center in Hagerstown. Before attending the session, participants were asked to come to class with an open mind, willingness to learn, and to document the most difficult interaction they have had with an inmate/offender.

The module is based on the Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (CBI) model. This concept is based on the belief that thinking controls overt actions. In other words, our internal behavior controls our external behavior. This program identifies specific types of interventions to assist in restructuring the thought process of offenders, as well as basic decision making and problem solving.

The purpose of the program is to:

- understand criminal thinking and behavior,
- apply critical thinking skills to problematic situations, and
- identify triggers and hot buttons.

As correctional professionals, one way we can make inmates and offenders more accountable for their behavior is the manner in which we communicate with them. This session identifies five basic principles of accountability. They include:

Breathe –

If you are in the middle of a tense situation, take a long, slow breath in through the nose and let it out the mouth. When there is not enough oxygen going to the brain to respond, we react.

Ponder –

In most cases, pondering will always be in the form of a question. Ask the question of yourself, rather than to the inmate/offender. This prevents escalation of a situation.

Focus –

Once you have pondered the situation, it will allow you to really focus on the problem and prepare you to respond appropriately.

Acknowledge –

Acknowledging the situation does not imply that you agree or support the specific issue. It shows that you are aware of the dilemma. In most instances, acknowledgment diminishes the negative energy associated with the subject.

Redirect –

After you have recognized the subject, you can redirect the path.

As correctional professionals, you have to learn to understand what triggers and hot buttons you have. In order to be effective, you must learn to control them.

During the session, each participant completes a thinking report. The thinking report is a tool that assists in helping to recognize how our thoughts can lead to unfavorable behavior. Restructuring those thoughts by recognizing the risk is a

way to help change distorted thinking into something positive. The participants use a hypothetical situation which demonstrates the correctional employee is able to control his/her own thoughts and behavior, using the five steps of accountability: breathe, ponder, focus, acknowledge, and redirect.

Participants discuss their most difficult interactions with inmates/offenders and apply the tools offered during the class to a practical exercise. The five basic principles of accountability will enhance the communication of correctional professionals, as well as build good relationships. The participant evaluations for the program resulted in very positive feedback. As a result, this program has been offered throughout the Department.

Do you think this program would benefit correctional professionals within your institution? For additional information, contact [Dawn Pearson](#).



**Conference Opportunity ~
National Workshop on Adult and
Juvenile Female Offenders
October 20 to October 24, 2007
Marriott Inner Harbor
Baltimore**

*Features high caliber workshops and
nationally recognized speakers
For Information visit www.ajfo.org or
email: APFOConference@msn.com*

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[PDTD SafetyNet Page](#)

Learning Curve

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PDTD Mission

Professional Development and Training Division provides a comprehensive, integrated learning system for employees who protect the citizens of Maryland.

PDTD Vision

Committed to promoting collaboration, communication, and innovation throughout DPSCS, PDTD fosters a highly trained and professional workforce that ensures the seamless transition of defendants and offenders from pretrial through community supervision and ultimately to productive lifestyles, creating safe Maryland communities.

PDTD Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles of the Professional Development and Training Division are to:

- *Assist DPSCS staff in aligning with the organizational mission*
- *Encourage life-long learning and growth for all DPSCS staff*
- *Develop leadership at all levels within DPSCS*
- *Stay focused on customers, both internal and external*
- *Teach evidence based content, utilizing adult learning principles*
- *Support all learning styles through creativity and innovation*
- *Collaborate with the various agencies of the Department*
- *Partner with external agencies to provide enhanced training and development opportunities for DPSCS staff*

Editor's Corner

PDTD on the SafetyNet

The Professional Development and Training Division's site on the SafetyNet offers many resources and lots of helpful information. On the [Resource](#) page you will find links to nationally-known professional and training associations, as well as tips and tricks for computer use. Short, useful publications with ideas on topics such as time management and workplace wellness are available on the "[Career Briefs](#)" page.

A small library in the Sudbrook Office is home to over 200 books and DVD training programs that we are able to lend to you at no charge. Titles range from leadership to team building, emotional intelligence, communication, of course everyone's favorite, **FISH! Philosophy™**. To find out if there is something in our inventory that meets your needs, stop by the PDTD Office or contact [Cindy Reisberg](#).

