



LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

In a democratic society, two values are fundamental: the rule of law and safeguarding communities. Law enforcement officers have the unique responsibility to not only protect these values, but also to provide protection of citizens' rights. Training law enforcement officers is a serious responsibility that continues throughout an officer's career. Developing officer leadership skills is at the foundation of nurturing a quality law enforcement officer and a quality agency.

We also must prepare law enforcement leaders to instill the proper values and decision-making ethics so that both the individual member of an agency and its organizational culture are transformed. Every officer is a leader regardless of rank and is expected to conduct him or herself consistent with recognized leadership behaviors. There is a distinct need to balance character with competence. Law enforcement officers must possess the leadership skills, capacity, and courage for effective operation. Creating a culture of leadership is a process that takes place over time and encompasses many things, including education and training, modeling appropriate behavior from current leaders, mentoring, and coaching.

The Law Enforcement Leadership Initiative (LELI) is designed to increase a greater understanding of leadership competencies for law enforcement. While considerable writing and research exist about leadership development in the business sector and military, similar efforts for law enforcement are incomplete. Through research and the involvement of subject-matter experts from a wide array of professional organizations, LELI is constructing baseline competencies for law enforcement leadership development.

Leadership Competencies for Law Enforcement

LELI is focused on developing leadership competencies for law enforcement, from entry-level officers through senior executives. These competencies will identify the core knowledge necessary to prepare officers for a leadership role in the organization, regardless of rank or assignment. The development of these competencies will reflect core values such as integrity and a commitment to the principles embodied in the Constitution, as well as skills such as effective communication, understanding of social context, and problem solving in multi-cultural settings. When completed, the proposed competencies will serve as an outline to identify what officers at a particular rank and level should be receiving as part of their leadership development. LELI objectives are to develop these competencies in conjunction with key law enforcement organizations, then deliver them to local, state, federal, private, and academic organizations that provide law enforcement training.

Benefits of Leadership Competencies

The development and identification of these competencies will provide state, local, and tribal law enforcement organizations the ability to determine their specific organization leadership needs and improvements. This "competencies framework" will serve as a map in providing decisionmakers with recommended choices and strategies for selection and best practices learned from agencies throughout the United States.

Strategy

In partnership with representatives from local law enforcement agencies, executive-level law enforcement and government organizations, and key stakeholders, LELI achievements include:

- Comprehensive literature review of leadership and leadership development.

- Review of current best practices in leadership development and creating a culture of leadership.
- Assessment of leadership development needs from within law enforcement.
- Development of core leadership competencies.
- Briefings for and outreach to the law enforcement community.

Conclusion

As law enforcement and communities change and new challenges emerge, law enforcement officers and executives must be prepared to face this new future—better trained officers and supervisors mean greater trust, less fear, and ultimately, safer communities. As the threats against our nation transcend jurisdictional boundaries, our nation's law enforcement community must not only receive the best training available, but also must learn to work collectively, based on the best and most complete knowledge available.

LELI National Partners

- International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Training and Standards
- National Center for Women and Policing
- National Association of Counties
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
- National Sheriffs' Association
- Federal Bureau of Investigation Academy
- Major County Sheriffs' Association
- Major Cities Chiefs Association
- Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies
- Police Executive Research Forum
- International City/County Management Association
- National Governors Association
- International Public Management Association for Human Resources
- The U.S. Conference of Mayors
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Fraternal Order of Police

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