

Developing Law Enforcement and Public Safety Knowledge and Skills for
the 21st Century:

Exemplary Works & Reflection

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As I continue working on my capstone project, I'm amazed at how many things have changed at my agency in just 16 months. Since starting this program, we have hired a new Chief, my third chief in my ten years with this department.

Several papers I reviewed in preparation for this week centered on North Platte's growth, the technology my department uses, and challenges with recruiting and retention. The three pieces of exemplary work encompass several topics, including implementing new technology, the best way to accomplish that legally and with community support, recruiting and retaining employees while at the same time bringing back a better sense of inclusion and family at the department, and a final budget review.

My first paper, *UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) Committee*, outlines the benefits and uses of a drone and legal guidelines. A committee creating sound policy and procedures hopefully ensures the drones will be used effectively to assist officers and protect citizens' rights. My second paper, *Organizational Theory and Change*, highlights the significant growth of North Platte and areas North Platte PD needs to improve on. My third paper, *Final Legislative Budget Document*, outlines how new technology, training, staffing, and capital expenses will fit into the budget to allow the department to function as smoothly as possible.

In my first paper, I outlined how our department would benefit from using a drone program. Since writing that initial report, our department has grown to have two different drones, and we now have three pilots. We have achieved buy-in from the community and city hall. Currently, one of our pilots is working with the mayor's office to take new photos for City Hall and the city's website. We have assisted neighboring agencies with investigations and had

our drone out to different community events interacting with youth and family. The drone program has proven helpful during investigations and is vital to improving community policing.

In my second paper, I outlined an area not specifically related to technology but certainly to policing in the 21st Century. Recruiting and retaining officers has become a struggle for agencies across the country. Departments need to shift their focus in this area to the 21st Century. This paper proposed a mentorship program for my department. Employees have commented our department has lost the sense of family that is so important to younger generations. The mentorship program not only benefits new employees but helps to bring a connection to all employees by encouraging involvement with all officers.

In my third paper, I presented a ten million dollar budget to the city of Any Town for Any Town PD. This was my first experience with budgeting. This project was a realistic scenario of the challenges faced by departments trying to "do less with more ."Most police departments would appreciate having the most cutting-edge technology. However, they must learn how to work those items into the budget while still taking care of the employees, maintaining equipment and buildings, and saving or paying for any capital expenses. This was no easy feat, and seeing how some things must be sacrificed from the budget gave me a new appreciation for my department's budget process.

These three papers addressed technology and leadership challenges with recruiting and retaining employees and presenting a budget. These are all areas where current police leaders must focus their time on practical and professional processes and success in new programs they implement.