

St. Petersburg College

Center for Public Safety Innovation



Problem Solving
for the
Community
Police Officer
and
Citizen

Course Manual

Problem Solving for the Community Police Officer And Citizen

Course Manual

SPC St. Petersburg
College
CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY INNOVATION

Eileen LaHaie, Director
Center for Public Safety Innovation (CPSI)
St. Petersburg College
3200 34th Street South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33711
Phone (727) 341-4581
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Chapter One

Introduction

Purpose of Course

Community Policing represents a break with the traditional incident-driven policing. With Community Policing, police officers gain the assistance of neighborhood residents to act as partners in securing public safety. Beyond that, several features distinguish it from Traditional Policing, which are necessary for its success. They include empowerment, partnership, problem solving and accountability.

This two-day, 16-hour course focuses on the Problem Solving element of Community Policing. The course will provide participants with an understanding of the historical development of the Community Policing model and the relationship of Problem Oriented Policing (P.O.P.) to Community Policing. Participants will understand that Problem Oriented Policing is a necessary element of Community Policing. Participants will understand how a problem is a basic unit of police work. Participants will learn the four-stage problem solving model known as the *SARA Model*. During the instructive phase of training, students will learn the sub-steps of each of the stages of the *SARA Model*.

SLIDE 1



The Problem Solving training will use examples generated during the training or *real-life* community issues provided by the students to illustrate application of the material presented in the instructive phase. Students will then be given the opportunity to present their project and receive feedback on their problem solving approach.

Goals:

Goal 1:–The participant will understand the historical development of Community Policing and its relationship to Problem Oriented Policing.

Goal 2:–The participant will understand the evolution of policing from Traditional Policing to Problem Oriented Policing.

Goal 3:–The participants will be provided an overview of the philosophy and practice of Community Oriented Policing and how it provides the opportunity for creative problem solving.

Goal 4:–The participants will understand the nature of a problem.

Goal 5:–The participants will understand that a problem solving procedure is a way to think about a given, already perceived situation.

Goal 6:–The participants will learn the different steps in applying the SARA model to problem solving.

Goal 7:–The participants will understand and be able to explain strategies for working together in teams to facilitate the SARA model.

Goal 8:–The participants will demonstrate their ability to utilize the SARA model.

Purpose of Course

- Historical development of COP
- POP and COP
- Problems are part of Policing
- A Problem Solving Model
- SARA and how it works
- Practical application of SARA

Slide # 2

Chapter Two

Historical Overview of Policing in America

Learning Objectives

- To inform the audience about the changes in modern policing which led us to where we are today with Community Oriented Policing.
- To inform the audience of the differences between Problem Oriented Policing and Community Oriented Policing.
- To engage the audience in a discussion of the merits of proactive policing versus reactive policing.

SLIDES 3-6



Traditional Policing

Characteristics of Traditional Policing

- The police are reactive to incidents; the 911 system and calls for service drive police organizations.
- In a traditional police organization, information from the community is, for the most part, limited to complaints.
- Objectives and strategies are narrowly focused on immediate problems (directed patrols, etc.)
- The leadership of the police organization is based on internal operations: budget, staffing, Internal Affairs complaints, policies and procedures.
- Patrol officers follow orders and receive little encouragement to be innovative in dealing with problems.
- The evaluations of patrol officers are based upon number of arrests and tickets.
- The police have few external partnerships.
- Police view themselves and are viewed as quasi-military organizations.



The Effectiveness of Traditional Policing

- Research on traditional policing revealed the following:
 - Saturation patrol did not reduce crime, it only displaced it.
 - The kind of crime that terrifies Americans is rarely encountered by the police on routine patrol.
 - Improving response time on calls has little effect on the likelihood of catching criminals or increasing citizen satisfaction.
 - Most crime is not solved through criminal investigations by the police.

SLIDE 7

SLIDES 8-11

Problem Oriented Policing

- Herman Goldstein proposed an alternative to the incident-driven traditional policing in 1979 (*Improving Policing: A Problem –Oriented Approach*). Mr. Goldstein contended that responding to calls should represent the first step in a policing strategy. Then the police should attempt to find permanent solutions to the problem that led to the police call. He called this a *problem oriented approach*. His theory proposed that underlying conditions create problems. The problems in turn lead to incidents, some of which come to the attention of the police in the form of a police call. These incidents will appear to be isolated. They can, however, arise from a single common source. The police end up dealing only with the symptom of the problem, and not the problem itself. By dealing only with the symptom of the problem they can be assured that the problem itself will persist.
- Problem Oriented Policing provides police agencies a routine method for:
 - The identification of problems
 - An analysis of problems
 - The development of a response and strategy to deal with the problem
 - A way to evaluate the effectiveness of the strategy

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Limitations of Problem Oriented Policing

- All Community Policing involves problem solving, but not all Problem oriented Policing is Community Policing.
- Problem Oriented Policing does not always:
 - Seek input from the community
 - Include permanent patrol assignments
 - Utilize decentralized stations
 - Necessarily involve long-term evaluation of problems solved

SLIDES 13-14

The Preference for Problem Oriented Policing

- Although this usually generates some argument, there is a difference between Community Oriented Policing and Problem Oriented Policing, and Problem Oriented Policing is the *safer* of the two policing strategies.

- Community Oriented Policing calls for a significant commitment in the partnership it forms with the community. The hallmark of this partnership with the community is trust. Asking the community for serious input in the decision making and priority setting of government carries with it a degree of risk – a risk that not all administrators will want to undertake. Problem Oriented Policing offers the ability to identify problems, find solutions, and then move on. This can be more agreeable for some administrators than long-term organizational commitment to community partnerships.

The Preference for POP over COP

- There is a difference between POP and COP
- POP is the safer of the two to implement:
 - Less risk by not involving community in decision making and setting priorities
 - It offers the ability to solve problems and move on

Slide # 15

Community Oriented Policing

Defining Community Policing

- Community policing is not easily defined. First Community Policing is not a *one size fits all* approach to policing. Second, the problems that it attempts to address are equally complex and diverse. And, there are many *authorities* on the subject who have put forth many different understandings and definitions of Community Policing.
- Herman Goldstein, who has been regarded by many as the *father of Community Policing* observed the following on the use of the term and attempts to define it:
 - “Indeed, the popularity of the term has resulted in its being used to encompass practically all innovations in policing, from the most ambitious to the most mundane: from the most carefully thought through to the most casual. The label is being used in ways that increase public expectations on the police and create the impression that community policing will provide an instant solution not only for the problems of crime, disorder, and racial tension, but for many of the other acute problems that plague our urban areas as well.”
- This overuse of the term has forced a need for definition and simplification. There is a danger in oversimplification. It is practically impossible to identify the one pure model of Community Policing. Community Policing in Largo, St. Petersburg, or Plant City may not even remotely resemble one another, and yet if it contains some shared defining

SLIDES 16-17

Herman Goldstein (Father of COP) Observed:

- “Indeed the popularity of the term has resulted in its being used to encompass practically all innovations in policing—
- From the most ambitious to the most mundane: from the most carefully thought through to the most casual.”

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SLIDES 20-22



characteristics may well indeed be Community Policing.

Having said this, we can now move on to some attempts by the *experts* to define Community Policing:

- “Community policing is a philosophy and an organizational strategy that promotes a new partnership between people and their police. It is based on the premise that both the police and the community must work together to identify, prioritize, and solve contemporary problems such as crime, drugs, fear of crime, social and physical disorder, and overall neighborhood decay, with the goal of improving the overall quality of life in the area.” (Trojanowicz and Bucqueroux: *Community Policing*:1994)
- Community policing is a collaborative effort between law enforcement and the community that identifies problems of concern to communities and works to solve them.” (*Community Policing Consortium*)

And one more:

- “The community policing concept has evolved from a critical examination of how police should respond to citizens and communities and to the problems of crime, drug abuse, and disorder. The community policing philosophy reaffirms that proactive crime prevention, not merely reacting to calls for service, is the basic mission of the police. Community policing fulfills this mission by maintaining a visible police presence in neighborhoods, undertaking activities to solve crime-producing problems, arresting law violators, maintaining order, and resolving disputes. At the same time, community policing is anchored in the concept of shared responsibility for community safety and security. In community policing, the police and citizens are partners in establishing and maintaining safe and peaceful neighborhoods.” (N.I.J.)

The Two Key Elements of Community Policing

- One common thread emerges from all of these definitions and these two defining characteristics will tell you if community policing is present in your community:
 - Partnership between the police and community
 - and
 - Working to solve the problems identified by the partnership

SLIDE 23



Goals of Community Policing

- A decentralized and personalized police service to the community
- Police do not impose order from the outside
- Police are a resource to solve problems identified by the community
- Implement organizational philosophy and strategy that is flexible and meet the needs of the community

Slide # 24

Goals of Community Policing

- Community Policing will provide a decentralized and personalized police service to the community. It recognizes that the police cannot impose order on a community from the outside, but that people must be encouraged to think of the police as a resource that they can use in helping to solve contemporary community concerns. It is not a tactic or a program, but a new philosophy and organizational strategy that provides the flexibility to meet community

needs and priorities as they change over time.

- In order to achieve community policing, the police must:
 - Gather and analyze information to monitor what is going on within the police organization and what is going on within the community.
 - Continually establish mechanisms for direct community involvement in determining police objectives and priorities.
 - Ensure that management is supporting empowerment of line officers and encourage creativity, innovation, and risk taking.
 - Ensure that evaluations of police officers are directly linked to the skills needed for community policing.
 - Constantly evaluate results and strategies for effectiveness and make the necessary adjustments to meet ongoing community needs.

SLIDES 25-26

Chapter Three

Problem Solving

The Nature of Problems

UPSTREAM / DOWNSTREAM

It was many years ago that villagers in Downstream recall spotting the first body in the river. Some old-timers remember how Spartan were the facilities and procedures for managing that sort of thing. Sometimes they say it would take hours to pull ten people from the river, and even then only a few would survive.

Though the number of victims in the river has increased greatly in recent years, the good folks of Downstream have responded admirably to the challenge. Their rescue system is clearly second to none: most people discovered in the swirling waters are reached within 20 minutes—many in less than ten. Only a small number drown each day before help arrives—a big improvement from the way it used to be.

SLIDE 27



Talk to the people of Downstream and they'll speak with pride about the new hospital by the edge of the waters, the flotilla of rescue boats ready for service at a moment's notice, the comprehensive health plans for coordinating all the manpower involved, and the large number of highly trained and dedicated swimmers always ready to risk their lives to save victims from the raging currents. Sure, it costs a lot, say the Down-streamers, but what else can decent people do except to provide whatever is necessary when human lives are at stake.

Oh, a few people in Downstream have raised the question now and again, but most folks show little interest in what's happening Upstream. It seems everyone is so busy trying to rescue drowning victims that no one has time to investigate what has caused them to fall into the river in the first place. That's the way things are sometimes.

-Donald B. Ardell

Problem Solving

- Problems
 - A problem is a basic unit of police work
- Problem Solving
 - The process of devising and implementing a strategy for finding a solution or for transforming a less desirable condition into a more desirable one.

Slide # 28

Understanding Problems

Under community policing the police have been made aware that a problem is not just a crime, it is anything that concerns or causes harm to citizens.

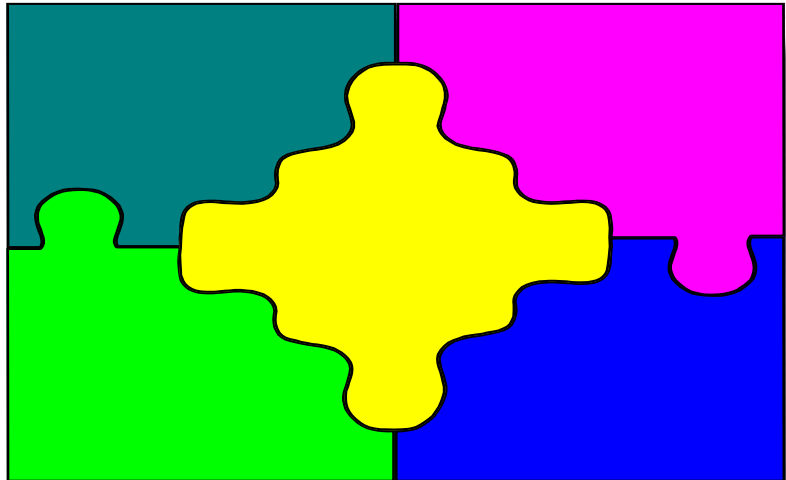
The community policing definition of a problem is:

- “Any condition that alarms, harms, threatens, causes fear, or has potential for disorder in the community, particularly incidents that may appear as isolated, but share certain characteristics such as common pattern, victim or geographic location.”



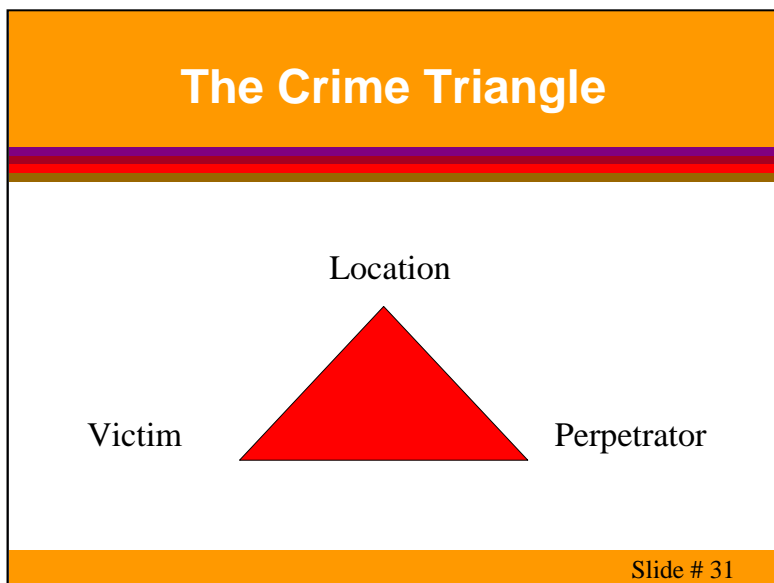
SLIDE 29

SLIDE 30



How Incidents Are Related

When the police use problem solving skills to solve crimes, one of the first things they look for are *connecting threads* within the crime. This means they want to see if there are any common elements that link this particular crime to other crimes. Sometimes referred to as the...



Crime Triangle, the three common elements present in every crime are:

- *Victim(S)*
- *Perpetrator(S)*
- *Environment* (the location and conditions present at the time of crime)

By looking for links to other crimes, the police greatly increase their chances of solving a crime by increasing their base of knowledge about the crime. For instance, if we have an elderly lady robbed by two masked men at an ATM machine, we look for similar crimes in other precincts or neighboring jurisdictions. Quite often a pattern of crimes will develop. The police compare notes, physical evidence, possible suspects and various other pieces of information about the crimes. As the volume of information and knowledge about the crime increases, so does, the chance of catching the criminals.

As stated earlier, in community policing, a problem is not limited to crimes, but to anything that harms or is a concern to the community. Therefore not all problems will have a perpetrator, victim, or environment. However, they usually have a person or persons who are effected by the problem, and they usually have an environment. It will be important during the information gathering stage to examine the problem for *common threads*.

The problems within our neighborhoods are caused by a variety of underlying conditions. Underlying conditions may include the characteristics of the people who live in or come into the neighborhood, the interactions between these people, the condition of the neighborhood, and how people

in the neighborhood feel about their neighborhood. Problems created by these conditions often result in a call for police service. From the outside these incidents that lead to police calls may appear to be different, but they generally stem from a common source. An example of this would be a call for vandalism to some public or private property within the neighborhood caused by teenagers. Without careful analysis, you may miss how other acts like this may be the result of a lack of recreational services for young people in the area.

Seeking the Underlying Conditions

- Police often deal with symptoms of a problem when answering calls for service
- Characteristics of people who live or enter into a neighborhood
- How people feel about where they live
- The condition of the neighborhood

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Community policing requires input from both the police and community in problem solving. Some of the outcomes of problem solving can be:

- To eliminate the problem entirely.
- To reduce the number of occurrences of the problem.
- To reduce the degree of harm caused by the problem, (by teaching people how to react to threats or encounters with gang members, or by teaching people how to react to an attack by a mugger or rapist can reduce the chances of being seriously injured or killed).
- To improve the way the problem is being dealt with. Finding new approaches, new resources, other service providers, etc.
- Changing the environment to reduce or eliminate the problem, (CPTED, for one).

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Chapter Four

The Process of Problem Solving

The Process of Problem Solving

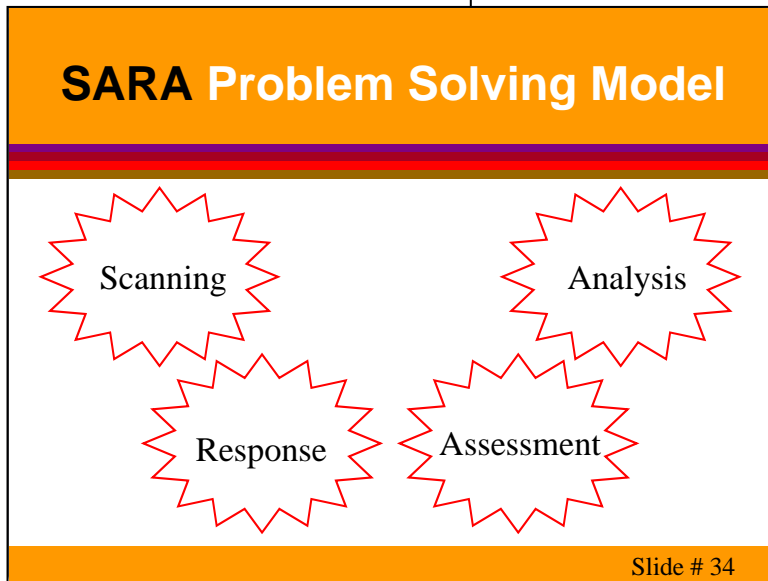
Problem solving (pro'blem sol'veng) *noun*

The process of devising and implementing a strategy for finding a solution or for transforming a less desirable condition into a more desirable one



Introduction to the SARA Problem Solving Model

SARA is a problem solving model first used by police officers practicing Problem Oriented Policing (POP) in Newport News, Virginia in the mid 1980's. The SARA problem solving model consists of four parts:



S•Scanning•The process of identifying the problem.

A•Analysis•The process of understanding the problem.

R•Response•The process of developing a solution to the problem.

A•Assessment•The process of evaluating the effectiveness of the solution on the problem.

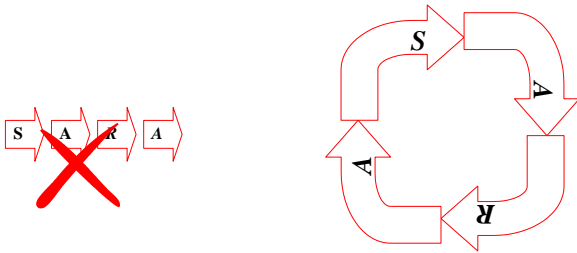
SLIDES 35-39

Understanding the Steps in SARA Process

The problem is, we don't know what the problem is.



Conceptualization: Problem-Solving Process



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Step 1: Scanning

The scanning step is where the problems are identified. First, engage the neighborhood association in brainstorming a list of problems. Once a problem list has been assembled, consolidated, and then prioritized, you have completed your scanning steps. In putting together a problem list, you may want to consider some sources of information outside the association to assist in a problem identification list. Some potential sources of information are:

- The Police—make use of the knowledge the officers who patrol your neighborhood have and their agency resources such as the Detective Division, Crime Analysis, Crime Prevention Unit, etc.
- Local Businesses
- Neighborhood Churches
- Schools
- Other Neighborhood Associations
- A Neighborhood Survey

List other sources for identifying crime problems:

SLIDES 41-43

Step 2: Analysis

Human nature is to go from the identification of a problem to a response to the problem without knowing everything there is to know about the problem and with even less analysis of this information. This step in the SARA model is the heart of the problem solving process.

The information gathered must be thorough and gathered from a variety of sources. Do not rely strictly on the police for providing the information about neighborhood problems. When you understand all the parts of a problem, you can design a custom made response tailored to the specific problem. Be sure to identify the underlying nature of the problem through a complete analysis of the data. Make sure you understand the problem from the perspectives of the key stakeholders in the neighborhood.

Step 3: Response

Clarify, and if necessary, redefine the problem before initiating the team's response. Make sure you have solicited suggestions for a solution to a particular problem from sources outside your group. Remember that not all solutions are designed to eliminate the problem entirely.

What will be the goal(s) of your response toward the problem?

- Will you eliminate, reduce, displace, prevent, or do something else with the problem?
- What do you hope to accomplish by addressing this problem?

What strategies will be used to meet the goal(s)?

- Concentrate on individuals causing problem
- Organize and work with neighborhood citizens
- Refer to other government or private services
- Coordinate response with appropriate agencies
- Correct inadequate or the lack of service
- Use mediation or negotiation skills or services
- Share information with citizens to enable them to solve the problem or conform to the laws and regulations

Who can assist in the development of these strategies?

- Who are the individuals, groups, or agencies?
- How can they assist in designing the strategies?
- How can you solicit their participation and commitment?

What obstacles exist?

- What and who are these obstacles?
- What kind of inhibiting factors do they exhibit?
- What are the alternatives?
- How can these obstacles be overcome?

Your solutions should be innovative and creative and may not fit traditional law enforcement remedies for problems.

SLIDES 52-54

Step 4: Assessment

How will you know if you accomplished your goal? It is important to go back after a period of time and evaluate if you accomplished what you set out to accomplish. Some of the ways you may assess need to be considered at the assessment step. For instance, if a problem you are dealing with is gang graffiti – you may want to take a before and after photograph of some areas where the problem exists. You may want to rely on statistics and numbers like those used in traffic enforcement studies. This stage is often forgotten or people get so committed to the solution they designed that they are reluctant to go back to the drawing board.

Principles of Problem Solving

- Don't take anything for granted.
- Old patterns may hinder solutions.
- Trial and error may work as well as logic.
- Find the essential similarities in problems.
- Pay attention to the way the group works.
- Look at problems from different angles.
- Anticipate problems.
- Take the emotion out of problems.
- Anticipate the consequences.
- Learn from losing.

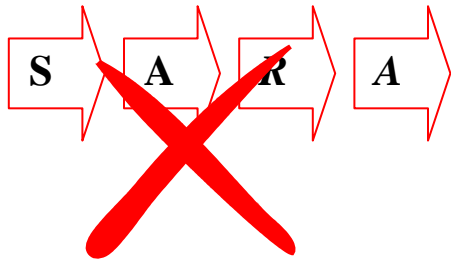
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Common Errors in Problem Solving

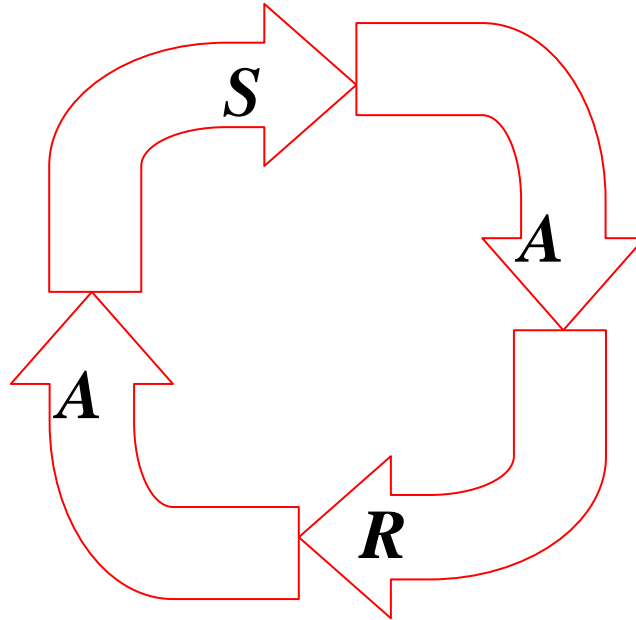
- The problem is not clearly defined/the group does not have enough information to understand the problem.
- The problem is stated too narrowly. Real problem will not be resolved. Only a symptom is affected.
- Tentative solutions are chosen too early in the process (before the problem is understood).
- The range of information gathered is too narrow.
- Some major constraints to solving the problem are ignored.
- Traditional solutions are preferred despite lack of effectiveness.
- Priorities among problems are not established.
- A plan for carrying out the solution, specifying who will do what when, is not developed or is not well thought out.
- Resources needed to carry out a solution are not clearly specified or obtained early enough in the process.
- The costs of a solution is not weighed against the potential benefits.
- Feedback and evaluation procedures are not built into the solution, therefore, no mechanism exists to monitor progress and determine effectiveness.

Chapter Five

SARA as a Self-Renewing Process



SARA does not begin with Scanning and end with Assessment once you are into problem solving. As you go through Analysis, you may find that you identified a symptom of the problem instead of the problem itself. At this point, you go back to scanning and start over. The same is true of Assessment. If you find that the solution you chose or developed has not had the desired effect, you go back to Scanning.



SARA is not linear; it does not begin with Scanning and end with Assessment. SARA is self-renewing.

Chapter Six

Working in Teams to Solve Problems

The Framework of a Meeting

Much of the success of a team will be the result of the work they do together at meetings. Many people dread going to meetings, but meetings can become productive and constantly improved. Productive meetings greatly improve your chances of successful problem solving.



The following points on the conduct of meetings will improve your productivity :

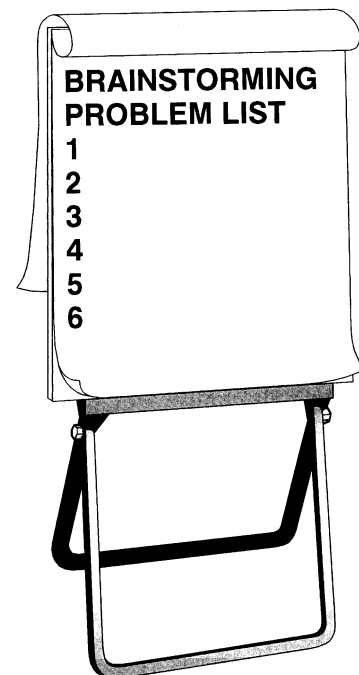
- Meetings should always start on time. This means all members of the team must arrive on time for the meeting.
- Interruptions should be kept to a bare minimum.
- Every meeting should have an agenda that spells out:
 - The purpose of the meeting.
 - Topics to be discussed and by whom and for how long.
 - The agenda should be reviewed at the beginning of the meeting.
- Roles of team members should be assigned to accomplish:
 - The meeting leader or facilitator
 - ◆ A timekeeper whose job it is to hold topics to their allotted time limits.
 - ◆ A note taker to record notes of discussions, document decisions made by the team, records the agenda items for the next meeting.
 - ◆ If a note board or chalkboard will be used during the meeting, designate a person who writes out the information on the board. This is not the note-taker's job.
- At the conclusion of every meeting there should be some discussion on how to improve the next meeting.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a technique used during a meeting to generate a lot of ideas very quickly. Brainstorming helps to generate some excitement and creativity while separating the members from their ideas.

The following are guides for conducting a brainstorming session:

- Start with a review of the topic or problem and make sure everyone understands it.
- Give team members a few minutes to collect their thoughts on the subject.
- Tell people to just start putting forth their ideas; shout them out as quickly as the board writer can record them.
- The person giving the idea should not explain the thought at all. The board writer should obtain the person's initials so that the facilitator can come back and have that person explain the idea during the consolidation process.
- There should be no judgement of people's ideas as they are presented; no groans, moans, or any other commentary on a person's idea.
- The facilitator should be coaching and coaxing the team on. Encourage connecting their ideas.
- All ideas should be written and displayed for all to see.





Consolidation

After the team has exhausted all ideas, it is time to clarify and consolidate a list. This is accomplished by:

- Going back to the beginning of the list, obtain the person's initials and call on them to explain their idea.
- After everyone has explained his or her ideas, attempt to consolidate the list into a smaller list. For instance, if one member said *kids hanging out*, another member said *kids stealing and vandalizing property*, and another said *kids speeding through the neighborhood* – all these ideas could be consolidated under the heading *Juvenile Issues*.

Multi-voting is the process used by the team to prioritize their ideas. Members will decide which ideas will be worked on first, which are most serious, which require the most resources, etc.

At this point all of the ideas have been brainstormed, clarified, and the team is now looking at a consolidated list of ideas or problems, in order to engage the team members in multi-voting:

Explain that the team is about to create consensus on the priority of the issues or problems that have been identified.

- Tell each member that they have three votes each.
- They then, in turn, cast their votes as follows:
 - Either by placing all three votes on one item,
 - By placing one vote on each of three items, or
 - Two votes on one item and one vote on another
- Voting begins and at the end, votes are tallied and a prioritized list is created.

Remember that time is of the essence if you are going to have a high powered meeting where a lot gets accomplished. The facilitator must constantly keep the team on task and moving along.

Chapter Seven

Practical Exercise

The class will use the SARA model to work through a problem unique to their community or neighborhood. During all four stages of SARA, the team should use brainstorming/consolidating/multi-voting techniques to build their lists. The team should also assign the roles of:

- Team Leader
- Facilitator
- Note-Taker
- Team Scribe

The team leader will present the team's work product to the class.

The practical exercise should be a *real-life* problem and the exercise should be taken seriously by all participants. The information generated during these exercises may produce real solutions to real problems.¹ Participants will be able to keep their work product to return with them to their agency or association for their consideration.

¹ Refer to Appendix A for a Problem Solving Guide to assist you in this exercise.

Problem Solving Guide

SCAN

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Problem list: (prioritized) 1.	4.
2.	5.
3.	6.
Problem statement:	

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

Where the problem occurs:	
Days of the week when the problem occurs:	Time (s):
How often the problem occurs: <input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Sporadically	
How the problem occurs:	

PROBLEM ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

Gang affiliation:	Occupation:	Vehicles:
Clothing:		
Other distinguishing characteristics:		
What Laws or Ordinances are being broken:		
What policies/procedures impact the problem:		
What policies/procedures impact the problem:		
What other agencies/service providers/groups/individuals can assist in the solution to this problem:		
Who is responsible for contacting/maintaining liaison with the agencies/groups:		
What will the plan accomplish or what is the anticipated outcome:		
What are some possible interventions or strategies to deal with the problem:		

PROBLEM ANALYSIS (CONTINUED)

What are some obstacles to solving this problem:		
What has to be done before a plan can be implemented:		
Who is responsible for preliminary actions:	Action:	Due by:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		

Response

PLAN

Plan statement (specifically what will this plan accomplish):

RESOURCES NEEDED TO ACCOMPLISH PLAN

Money:		
Equipment:		
Personnel:		
Vehicles:		
Court orders/legislative approval:		
Crime Analysis:		
Other:		

FIRST PLAN OF ACTION

Action: (If the plan has phases, state actions by phase)		Conducted by:
When:	Where:	
Resources needed:		Duration:

SECOND PLAN OF ACTION

Action: (If the plan has phases, state actions by phase)		Conducted by:
When:	Where:	
Resources needed:		Duration:

THIRD PLAN OF ACTION

Action: (If the plan has phases, state actions by phase)		Conducted by:
When:	Where:	
Resources needed:		Duration:

FOURTH PLAN OF ACTION

Action: (If the plan has phases, state actions by phase)		Conducted by:
When:	Where:	
Resources needed:		Duration:

FIFTH PLAN OF ACTION

Action: (If the plan has phases, state actions by phase)		Conducted by:
When:	Where:	
Resources needed:		Duration:

SIXTH PLAN OF ACTION

Action: (If the plan has phases, state actions by phase)		Conducted by:
When:	Where:	
Resources needed:		Duration:

Assessment

AFTER ACTION EVALUATION

Was the plan implemented:	Was the plan followed as outlined:
Did the plan accomplish the goal:	
What data supports the outcome:	
If the plan did not attain the goal, why:	
Will the plan continue to be implemented:	
What new strategies have been developed to deal with the problem or improve the plan:	
What will happen if the plan is removed:	
How will the plan be monitored in the future:	
Who will be responsible for the plan in the future:	

Appendix–Problem Solving Guide

Scanning

- Have you identified a problem?
 - Yes
 - No. If the answer is "no," conduct a survey of community groups, neighborhood organizations, churches, civic groups, area activists, business groups, service organizations and agencies, etc.
- What is your perception of the problem?
- How do people outside of law enforcement perceive the problem?
- Is there a difference in the perceptions? If "yes," what is the difference?
- How serious is the problem?

ANALYSIS

- Who are the involved persons?
 - Offenders/Suspects
 - Complainants/Victims?
 - Others

- Where is the problem happening?
 - Physical setting
 - Social setting
 - What are the similarities and differences between locations where the problem is happening and where it is not?

- Describe the sequence of events.
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

- What is the current response to this problem by:
 - Yourself and the department?
 - The community?
 - Others: (governmental agencies, private sector service providers, etc.)

RESPONSE

- What will be the goal/s of your POP project? (eliminate, reduce, displace, other)
- Which legs of the Problem Solving Triangle are you going to attack?
- What strategies will you use? Check which of the strategies you might use. This list is just a guide and is provided as an informational aid. You are encouraged to develop your own strategies in addition to these.
 - Concentrate on individuals who cause a disproportionate amount of the problem?
 - Coordinate with or refer to other governmental/private sector service providers?
 - Coordinate the police response with other agencies?
 - Correct inadequacies in services or press for new services?
 - Use mediation or negotiation skills or services?
 - Eliminate fear through education and the dissemination of factual information?
 - Disseminate information to help citizens solve their problems?
 - Disseminate information to elicit conformity to laws and regulations that are not known or understood?
 - Educate the community on the limitations of governmental response?
 - Mobilize the community and/or develop support for addressing the problem?
 - Make use of existing forms of social control?

- Alter the physical environment (CPTED) to eliminate or reduce the opportunity for the problem to recur?
- Develop new forms of limited authority which will allow intervention or detainment?
- Use civil law to control public nuisances, offensive behavior, and conditions that contribute to the problem?
- Use the criminal justice system to arrest and prosecute offenders?
- Use selective enforcement with specific criteria?
- Enforce laws or take action traditionally done by another agency?
- Intervene without making an arrest?
- Seek new conditions for releasing offenders on probation or parole?
- Develop your own creative strategies?
- Who can assist you in developing these strategies?
 - Other law enforcement personnel?
 - Public or private agencies?
 - Community groups?.
 - Neighborhood/business associations?
 - Individual citizens?
- Obstacles
 - What obstacles exist?
 - What are the alternatives?

- What is your plan of action? (Consider using a plan of action form.)
- Implement the plan. (REMEMBER, YOU ARE EMPOWERED!)

ASSESSMENT

- What are the results of the Plan of Action? (Complete a Problem Solving Assessment Form.)
- How will you monitor the problem to determine if it recurs or worsens?

Starting a Neighborhood Organization

Partnerships between law enforcement officers and community members are proving themselves to be effective crime-fighting liaisons. Information on how practitioners can assist citizens in establishing grassroots organizations to build safer neighborhoods has been provided below.

When starting a grassroots organization, like a block or neighborhood association, the people in the community are given a chance to decide what needs to be done, and work together with law enforcement to effectively fight crime. If you know of a building, block or neighborhood that should be organized, look over the six steps explained below.

DEFINE THE ISSUES

Some neighborhood groups are established as multi-purpose organizations, bringing residents together around a variety of concerns. Others begin as a response to a crisis—a sudden increase in drug sales or an outbreak of racial tensions, for example. Whatever the reason, a spokesperson should be identified to represent the people in the neighborhood. It is essential that others living in the area be consulted to find out what they think the important issues are and what should be done. Collecting information about the issues is a critical first step.

RESEARCH THE COMMUNITY

What is the size of the area to be organized—one building, a single block or a full neighborhood? Make sure the size of the area is manageable for a new organization.

Take a walk and look at the neighborhood with a critical eye. Where do people socialize? Which local merchants might be supportive? What are the sore spots—vacant lots, abandoned buildings, drug-dealing points, dangerous street crossings?

BUILD A CORE GROUP

Recruit a handful of people—three or four are enough to help launch the organization. A group has more credibility than *one* individual, represents the community better and can share the work. Also, working in a group can be much safer than working alone.

HOLD CORE GROUP MEETINGS

When the core group meets, it should come up with ideas for projects to kick off the organizing drive. Simple activities like a block cleanup, a letter-writing campaign or a potluck fund raising dinner are fairly easy to coordinate. This will give the people who come to the first general meeting a beginning list of projects to get involved in. The first project should give the organization higher visibility in the neighborhood.

Community Problem Solving: A New Synergy

RENO, NEVADA

Today's police cannot address crime problems alone; they simply cannot single handedly contain the burgeoning crime, drugs, and gang problems that now beset our society and drain our federal, state, and local resources. Traditional reactive incident-driven methods have resulted in the police ricocheting like pinball from call to call-often involving the same suspect, location, victim, or crime. Under these conventional practices, the police have neither the knowledge or ability to establish patterns or similarities between incidents-leaving them with little more than short-term results.

Under the rubric of community policing, the complimentary components of community engagement and problem solving are guiding police toward a new understanding of their role. The police now better realize that their effectiveness relies upon and draws from the expertise and assistance of myriad government agencies and community resources, and that problem solving requires that officers deal with the underlying causes of crime and disorder rather than repeatedly addressing only their symptoms.

BEYOND THE RHETORIC OF ENGAGEMENT

Community engagement entails much more than the rhetoric and nostalgic lure of rehashed police community relations. It is not simply intoxicating colloquialisms and fancy labels. Meaningful engagement requires that officers share their power and the proprietary interest in handling neighborhood problems.

For some agencies, this is a radical departure from traditional thinking and has resulted in reluctance and outright resistance by some officers. One principal reason for this resistance is the fact that for the past half century the philosophy and training of the police inculcated the view that they alone were responsible for addressing crime problems. In order to reduce resistance and improve officers' skills for confronting today's problems, training is minimally required in interpersonal communication, cultural diversity, resource identification, and community mobilization.

For police administrators, gathering community input should be an ongoing process rather than being limited to times of crisis. Agencies can acquire valuable information through a variety of means, including neighborhood meetings and citizen surveys. Engagement also requires that neighborhoods get involved and that residents understand and accept their role in problem solving and share the burden of crime control.

SARA: A GUIDE TO PROBLEM SOLVING

We would do well to have officers thinking more like street-level criminologists. To move beyond merely handling incidents independently, the police must take a more in-depth interest in problems by acquainting themselves with some of the underlying conditions and factors that cause them. As James Fyfe asks, "Can anyone imagine the surgeon general urging doctors to attack AIDS (symptom) without giving any thought to its causes?" Fortunately a model exists for helping street officers to attack and solve crime problems. The SARA (for scanning, analysis, response, and assessment) model of problem

Neighborhood Justice Center

918 Railroad Avenue
Tallahassee, Florida 32310
(904) 921-6980

Working out a problem?

Let us help you find a solution!

MEDIATION IS

- Mediation is a shared problem solving process.
- Mediation is a way of helping people resolve conflicts by talking to each other.
- Mediation focuses on what each person thinks is important and fair.
- Mediation helps people make their own decisions to resolve their conflict.
- Mediation is confidential.

MEDIATORS ARE

- Mediators are trained problem solvers who listen and ask questions.
- Mediators help parties reach their own agreements.
- Mediators do not take sides, sit in judgment or tell people what to do.
- Mediators cannot force parties to enter mediation or to reach agreement.

AGREEMENTS ARE

- Agreements are decided upon by the parties.
- Nothing is decided unless you agree to it.
- Once an agreement is written, the parties sign it and the mediator witnesses it.
- Agreements can be changed if both parties agree to do so.

REFERRALS CAN BE MADE BY

- Businesses
- Schools
- Churches
- Walk-ins
- County/City/State Agencies
- Private Agencies
- Attorneys /Sheriff/Police Department
- Employers/Employees

- ☑ Others

TYPES OF CONFLICTS

- ☑ Parent and Child
- ☑ Friends
- ☑ Neighbors
- ☑ Student and Teacher
- ☑ Landlord and Tenant
- ☑ Co-workers
- ☑ Employer and Employee
- ☑ Consumer and Merchant
- ☑ Organizations
- ☑ Roommates

ISSUES MEDIATED

- ☑ Complaints About Pets
- ☑ Harassment
- ☑ Property Disputes
- ☑ Vandalism
- ☑ Complaints About Noise
- ☑ Money Owed
- ☑ Neighborhood Issues
- ☑ Cross-Cultural Conflicts
- ☑ Breach of Contract
- ☑ Auto Repair

THE BENEFITS OF MEDIATION ARE

- Voluntary: You choose mediation.
- Confidential: Mediation is held in private.
- Convenient: You meet when it's Convenient for you, including after work hours.
- Creative: You have control over the process and the agreements made.
- Impartial: No one determines the rightness or wrongness of the dispute.
- Binding: You make the agreement, you live by your agreement, or you agree to make changes you can live with.
- Informal: Parties discuss their situation together with a mediator without going to court or needing witnesses.

ALL SERVICES ARE FREE

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