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On Corrections Research

FORUM

FEATURE ISSUE

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Correctional Service Canada | Service correctionnel Canada

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Forum on Corrections Research

This issue of FORUM contains facts that are timely, challenging and tantalizing. The question is this: Does a prison system that is bursting at the seams adjust by lowering its aspirations, or does it decide to do more with less, calling on its staff for the extra dedication and ingenuity that make this possible?

With a lowering of goals, one can put out a mission statement that says, "No matter what we did in the past, we are now in the business of warehousing people, and our task is to feed these people, to make sure they don't kill each other and to prevent them from escaping." The Correctional Service of Canada has chosen not to exercise this option, and has instead declared that it takes its "correctional" mission seriously.

But can the system's staff deliver on this resolve? If it cannot, the agency's mission statement becomes a compendium of glittering generalities, signifying nothing.

The answer rests in the hands and hearts of staff members now on board or about to come on board. It depends on how staff members feel about the mission and their roles in carrying it out. Is the commitment of staff members high and sustainable, or is it uncertain and unenthusiastic? Can staff commitment be depended upon, and can staff motivation be harnessed? If not, are there things that one can do to enhance commitment – preferably starting at once?

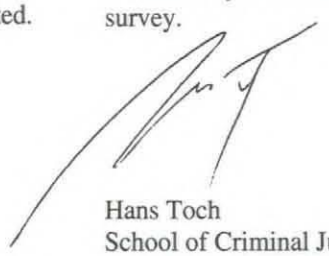
The superlative data in the pages that follow are revealing. In the article on the Correctional Service of Canada's study of staff commitment, we find that three out of four staff members say that they are "willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful." That is good news. However, only a third of staff members testify that "this organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance." That is not-so-good news.

There are interesting variations in the figures. Some are hard to explain, such as why there are regional differences in commitment. Other figures are less divergent, and more gratifying. It is nice to know that new staff are idealistic and that female staff members are strongly committed.

The bad news is that correctional officers and front-line staff are much less committed than are managers and supervisors – a fact that also holds for many other organizations. This difference in commitment poses the greatest challenge to those who must use the survey to design interventions to address the problem. Fortunately, the problem is far from insoluble. As another article in this issue points out, commitment is not a personality trait but a response to situations. For instance, we become committed to an organization when we can affect its policies and can advance ideas that have an impact on what is done. As social scientists put it, commitment varies with the control we exercise over organizational environments and with the degree of participation we are afforded.

A second fact that affects commitment is how our jobs are defined for us. The sort of job that invites commitment is one that satisfies one's self-esteem and provides a sense of accomplishment. Fortunately, redesigning jobs can improve commitment levels. Jobs can be enhanced through what is called "enrichment" – widening a person's discretion, for example, or upgrading his or her assigned tasks.

Canada has been in the forefront of examining inmate-contact jobs in the past, enriching positions by adding more human-service functions to custodial roles. The survey reported in these pages suggests that much remains to be done, including carrying forward this enrichment effort in light of accumulated experience. One comforting note is that the survey reinforces the direction of the effort. Low-commitment staff members feel that improvements can be made in the manner that they are managed. More important, high-commitment staff members share rehabilitation ideals, have a helping orientation and want to make innovations. Contributing in these areas may foster high morale, particularly if there are opportunities to learn, grow and achieve recognition. If such enhancements are paired with opportunities for low-echelon staff to shape agency policy, higher commitment levels ought to follow. A mission statement written by prison guards, for example, would likely be warmly endorsed in a postintervention survey.



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Research is often communicated only in academic publications in a specialized language, making it inaccessible to practitioners who must put research findings into action. In this section of FORUM, we hope to overcome the rift between researcher and practitioner by providing brief, plainly written descriptions of findings from recent studies.

The focus of this issue of FORUM is on staff. We begin by describing some of the findings of an extensive survey of public service employees. The survey explored how staff members balance work and family roles and the problems they encounter in doing so. The next article addresses the issue of employment equity, providing a progress report of the Correctional Service of Canada's efforts to meet its employment-equity targets. We then turn our attention to an issue that affects a large number of our correctional staff – shift work and its impact on human performance. Stress is the focus of two articles in this section, one presented tongue-in-cheek. The last two articles tie in with the theme of the last issue of FORUM – sex offenders. One article presents research on how sex offenders are perceived by staff, and the other describes efforts to train staff to deal more effectively with this offender group.

More information about the research reported here is available from the Research and Statistics Branch or by consulting the references provided.

We welcome contributions from researchers in the field who wish to have their findings profiled in this section.

The Challenge of Balancing Work and Family

In 1951, less than one quarter of Canadian women worked for pay outside the home. By 1987, more than half did, and the Conference Board of Canada estimates that, by 1993, almost two thirds of Canadian women will work for pay outside the home.

This tremendous influx of women into the paid labour force has had, and will continue to have, an impact on family and work domains for both men and women. Thirty years ago, when most women worked in the home, men may have counted on their wives to manage the family aspects of their lives. Today, with more and more women working outside the home, work and family roles for men and women need shuffling.

A recent study of public service employees explored how the changing relationship between family and work affected organizations, families and employees. The study also examined the effects of alternative work arrangements (such as flexible hours and work locations) in helping staff juggle family and work demands.

Sponsored by the Department of Health and Welfare, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council and the National Centre for Management Research and Development, the project surveyed 5,921 randomly selected public-sector employees working in six departments in the National Capital Region. The 19-page, 57-question survey yielded a wealth of information about their work and families, only a fraction of which can be reported here.

Sample

About half the sample were women. The average age of subjects was about 40 years; however, the men in the sample were older than the women on average (41.6 years versus 37.8 years).

Three quarters of the sample were married or living with a partner at the time of the survey. Significantly more men than women were married (80% versus 67%).

Two thirds of respondents had children at home. Of these, one quarter had children who were younger than school age (under five years old). Men in the sample were more likely than women to have children at home (70% versus 62%), but the average number (about two) and age (about 13) of children at home were similar for both men and women.

In the vast majority of families represented in this sample (87%), both the husband and wife worked for pay. Only 13% of respondents were members of traditional families where the male was the "breadwinner" and the female was the homemaker. About 11% of respondents were single parents; of these, two thirds were women and one third were men.

The Work Domain

These public sector employees worked an average of eight-and-a-half hours per day. Most (55.6%) had the traditional 9-to-5 workday, but women were significantly more likely than men to work traditional hours (60% versus 51%).

Both men and women found the 9-to-5 workday to be less appealing than flexible hours, compressed work weeks and work-at-home arrangements. About 42% of the sample worked under some type of arrangement that allowed them work-time flexibility – approximately 25% had flexible work hours, and about 17% worked a compressed work week.

A notable proportion of the sample regularly devoted enough time to work that their family life was affected – 25% worked overtime at home. In fact, on average, 22% worked more than 10 hours per day or approximately 52 hours per week, excluding time spent working on weekends. These figures are above the national average. Although men were more likely than women to work overtime on workdays (25% versus 19%), women who did work overtime spent significantly more time at it than men. This finding was true of all three types of overtime work examined in the study (work at home on workdays, and work at home or at the office on non-workdays).

Individuals who had access to a lap-top computer, a personal computer or a modem at home spent approximately one hour a day at home using

the computer for work-related activities. These individuals said they did so to help fit work in around family demands, to meet deadlines and to increase their productivity.

The Family Domain

On average, respondents in this study spent just over two hours per workday on home chores and errands. Despite the increase in women's participation in the labour force, there has been little concurrent change in the division of labour at home: women still performed the majority of housework and child-care tasks. Women in this study spent significantly more time on home chores than men (2.6 hours per workday versus 2 hours per workday). They also spent more time in activities with their children (1.9 hours per workday for women compared to 1.7 hours per workday for men).

Looking at how time was spent by men and women on days off work, we see that women spent more time than men on home chores (4.8 hours per day off for women versus 4 hours for men) and with their children (3.8 hours per day off for women versus 3.5 hours for men). Conversely, women spent less time than men on self-related activities such as recreation: on average, men spent 5.9 hours per day off on self-related activities compared with 5.1 hours for women.

The majority of women in the sample seemed to have added the demands of work to their lives without a concomitant reduction in family responsibilities. Almost 70% of mothers answering the survey indicated that they had the main responsibility for child care, while almost 60% of fathers said their spouse, the mother, had that responsibility. Looked at another way, only 6% of women indicated that their spouse, the father, had main responsibility for the children. Similarly, only 6% of fathers in this study stated that they themselves had main responsibility. Furthermore, less than one third of the sample believed that child-care arrangements were shared equally between both parents; however, men were significantly more likely than women to believe this statement (37% versus 25%).

Most of the staff members in this sample (70%) had their children cared for outside their home and appeared to be satisfied with their child-care arrangements.

Balancing Work and Family

Work-family conflict occurs when an individual has to perform multiple roles as worker, spouse and, in many cases, parent. Each role imposes demands that require time, energy and commitment to perform it adequately.

Half of the public sector employees surveyed (19% of men and 26% of women) experienced greater-than-average conflict between work and family (as based on reports in the literature).

They also experienced role overload. The measures of role overload were arranged on a five-point scale with high scores indicating higher role overload. Average scores generally indicated that respondents felt that they had more to do than they could handle (3.44); that they were physically and emotionally drained when they got home from work (3.44 and 3.28); and that they felt rushed (3.58) and did not have enough time for themselves (3.48). Women scored higher on all five measures of role overload.

Respondents also perceived that their work interfered with their family responsibilities. Three types of interference were examined. The first measured the extent to which the individual perceived that work demands interfered with the performance of family responsibilities. The survey found that staff members wished they had more time for their families (average score of 3.62) and for their children (average score of 2.89 on a scale where low scores indicate a problem with time). Although women spent more time on home chores and child care than men, they were more likely than men to feel that their job interfered with their family life.

The second measure of interference evaluated the extent to which the individual perceived that family demands interfered with the achievement of work responsibilities. Lower scores on this measure (average score of 1.84) indicated that individuals were significantly less likely to allow family to interfere with their work. The researchers offered two possible explanations for this: first, North American work ethics traditionally require that work demands take priority over family demands, and second, many workers perceive that there are fewer negative consequences from short-changing their family in terms of time or effort than short-changing their work.

The final assessment of interference, an overall rating, revealed that staff members, in general, did not perceive that they balanced their work and family roles well. The average score on this measure was 2.73 on a five-point scale, with lower scores indicating problems in balancing work and family.

Alternative Work Schedules

Since society makes certain events possible only at certain times, timing becomes important in determining the effects of work hours. Work-schedule incompatibility affects family members and their ability to spend time together. Conflict is also caused by the clash of an employee's work schedule with school events or necessary services (e.g., doctor or dentist appointments).

Work-time and work-location flexibility may have the potential to balance work and family by increasing an employee's ability to control, predict and absorb change in work and family roles. If flexibility is provided for when, and where, work is performed, staff can select the most efficient hours and locale according to work style, the demands of family members and the scheduling of leisure activities.

This study found, though, that work-time flexibility did not appear to help men or women balance work and family demands. Men and women working flexible hours and compressed

work weeks were just as likely to have difficulty managing their own and their family's time. They were also just as likely to experience work-family conflict as men and women who worked a traditional work week.

This finding suggests that increasing flexibility with respect to when one works may not be enough to reduce conflict between work and family demands. The researchers suggested that this may be because many government departments do not offer truly flexible work arrangements; that is, they do not allow workers to vary the times when they arrive for work and leave each day as needed. Rather, they allow staff to negotiate convenient arrival and departure times that must be adhered to quite rigidly. Employees who have this type of arrangement likely experience the same types of problems as individuals who work a regular workday.

Work-location flexibility was assessed by whether jobs allowed individuals to work at home or whether there was technology available (e.g., a portable computer) that would allow the individual to work at home. In this study, work-location flexibility had a significant impact on how employees spent their time. Individuals with access to technology in their homes worked significantly more hours per week than those who did not – an average of 2.5 hours more per day. On the other hand, these individuals spent significantly less time on child care, home chores and themselves than did individuals without access to portable technology.

The study concluded that public sector organizations cannot afford to ignore the issue of balancing work and family demands. Some recommendations to help organizations address this issue included restructuring the work environment to offer greater work-time and work-location flexibility; introducing courses to help employees learn how to cope with conflicts between work and family; and redesigning jobs. ■

L. Duxbury, C. Lee, C. Higgins and S. Mills, "Balancing Work and Family: A Study of the Canadian Federal Public Sector." Unpublished report, December 1991.

Employment Equity: A Focus on the Correctional Service of Canada

The objective of Treasury Board policy on employment equity is to enable the equitable representation and distribution in the public service of groups of individuals that have traditionally been under-represented: women, members of visible minorities, aboriginal peoples and persons with disabilities.

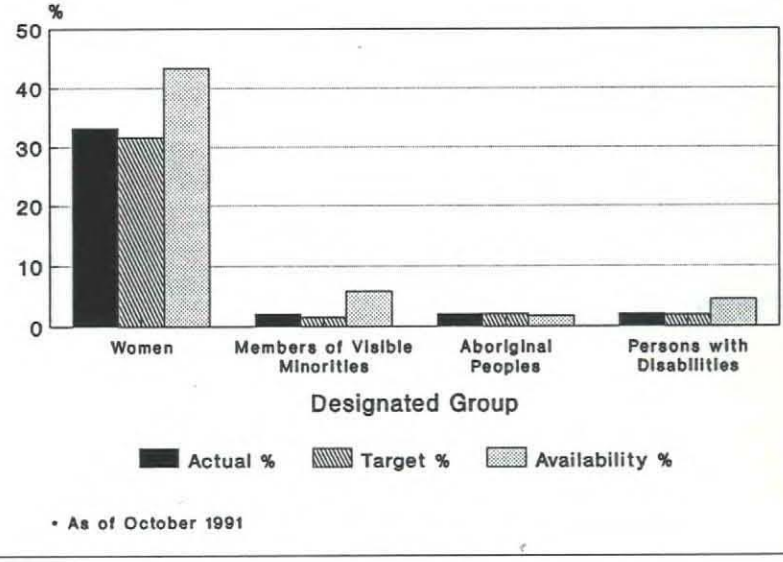
The first employment-equity targets established by the Correctional Service of Canada and approved by Treasury Board covered the period 1985-1988. These targets were quite specific, stating the percentage of the work force to be made up of each of the target groups. At the end of the three-year period, government departments were held accountable for their progress, or lack thereof, in meeting these targets.

Targets

The second three-year period has almost ended, and the Correctional Service of Canada received its report card on how well it progressed toward meeting its employment-equity targets. Overall, the results are extremely positive: all targets have been met and, in many cases, surpassed.

Figure 1 shows the target representation rates that were established by the Correctional Service of Canada and the actual representation rates that were achieved in each of the group categories as of October 1991. It also presents the availability rates for each target group. Availability rates are based on 1986 census data from Statistics Canada; they reflect the percentage of all persons who are available to work (i.e., who are

Figure 1
Actual*, Target and Availability Percentages by Designated Group



* As of October 1991

of an appropriate age with appropriate skills) and who fall into an employment-equity target group.

With one exception, the target for each employment-equity group is lower than the availability rate for each group. The one exception is the case of aboriginal peoples: nationally, the availability rate for aboriginal persons is only 1.8%, while our employment-equity target is 2.1%.

As the figure shows, all targets were met. Currently, the percentage of Correctional Service of Canada employees who are women, members of visible minorities or persons with disabilities surpasses our targets. In the case of aboriginal peoples, the target was reached, though not surpassed. As of October 1991, about 33% of our employees were women, about 2% were members of visible minorities, about 2% were aboriginal peoples and about 2% were persons with disabilities.

The data were also broken down by geographic location into rates for each region and rates for national headquarters. For women, all regions and national headquarters met their targets, some exceeding the target by as much as 3%. The highest female representation rate was found at national headquarters, where 46.5% of employees were women.

In the case of members of visible minorities, four regions reached their targets. The Pacific region surpassed its target by 2%. At 4.2%, it has the highest percentage of visible minority employees.

Four regions also met their employment-equity targets for aboriginal peoples. The Prairie region employs the largest percentage of aboriginal peoples at 5.1%; this is important, as the largest percentage of aboriginal offenders are found in institutions in the Prairies.

In the case of persons with disabilities, all regions except two surpassed their targets. National headquarters employs the greatest percentage of persons with disabilities, with 3.4% of its employees falling into this group.

Women

Women make up the largest employment-equity target group. Currently, about one third (33.2%) of the Correctional Service of Canada's employees are women, while our target was 31.6%. The Correctional Service of Canada continues to progress by employing more women in the management category and in non-traditional positions.

Figure 2 shows that the Correctional Service of Canada has steadily increased female representation in the management category, doubling the representation rate from 7.3% in 1986-87 to 14.7% in 1990-91. Despite such substantial progress, only about 15% of the Correctional Service of Canada's managers are women.

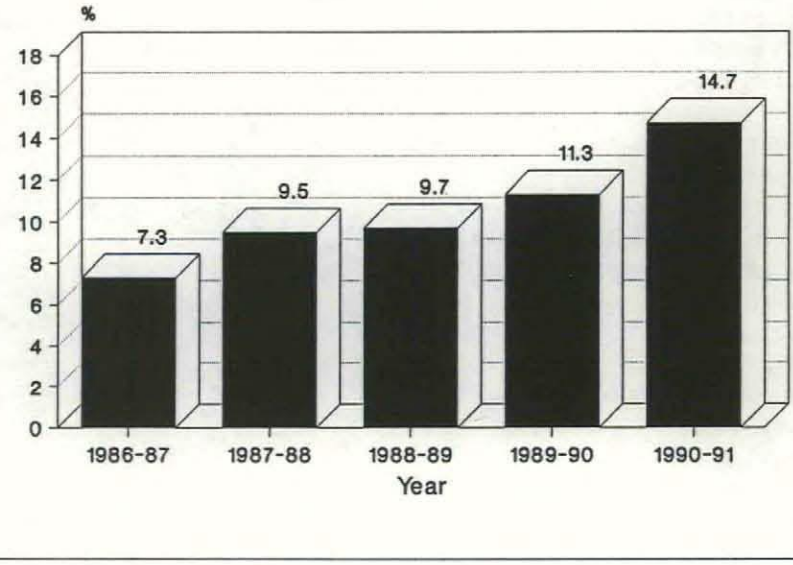
Rates of Departure

Another way of examining an organization's progress toward employment equity is to consider the rate of departure of persons in certain designated groups. Rate of departure refers to the percentage of members of the designated employment-equity groups who leave the Correctional Service of Canada. High rates of departure may signal problems somewhere in an organization – for example, how it deals with individuals in target groups or in the work environment.

Figure 3 shows the rates of departure from the Correctional Service of Canada for persons in each of the designated groups, as well as the rates for the public service overall. In 1990, for every designated group, the rate of departure from the Correctional Service of Canada was lower than the rate of departure from the public service as a whole. In some cases, the differences were substantial: the rate of departure of aboriginal employees from our organization was 11.8% while the rate for the public service was much higher at 18.7%; the rate of departure of members of visible minorities from the Correctional Service of Canada was almost half that found in the public service (6.2% versus 11.9%). The point is made, though, that even if our performance in this area is better than that of the overall public service, efforts are still needed to slow or decrease the departure of persons in employment-equity groups.

Figure 3 also shows the rate of

Figure 2
Female Representation
in the Management Category



departure for men in the Correctional Service of Canada and in the public service as a whole. For each of the employment-equity groups, the rate of departure was higher than that of men, which stood at 4.5% for the Correctional Service of Canada and at 6.6% for the public service.

Future Targets and Strategies

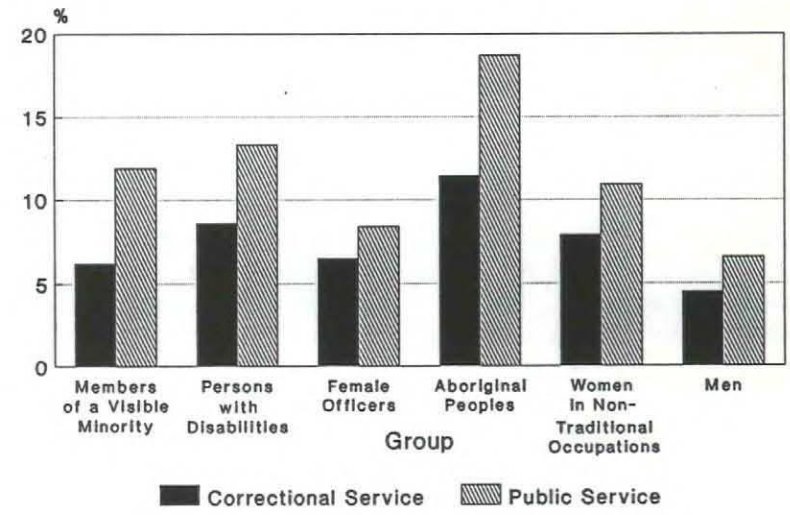
New employment-equity targets for the Correctional Service of Canada have been established to cover the next three-year period. These targets are subdivided into targets for recruitment, targets for promotions and targets for discretionary separations. Recruitment targets are based on the external availability of persons in the designated groups and on the organization's recent recruitment experience. Promotion targets are based on internal availability (current availability in the organization of persons in the designated groups). The separation targets are set so that the separation rates for the designated groups are no greater than those for the non-designated groups.

Further, targets have been set specific to the non-management category and to the management category.

For women, the targets have been even further subdivided by occupational category: scientific and professional, administrative and foreign service, technical, administrative support and operational. The highest recruitment target, at 82.9%, has been set for women in scientific and professional occupations. The highest promotion target, at 84.6%, has been set for women in administrative support positions.

Each region translates these targets into specific targets for each regional headquarters, institution and parole office. The accountability of line managers for employment equity is reinforced through the use of accountability contracts specific to employment-equity targets and through the use of performance appraisals that take into consideration managers' performance in meeting their employment-equity targets. A commitment has also been made to increase the work-force representation of women in the management cadre and to develop a national strategy to increase the participation of aboriginal peoples in the organization. Further, initiatives are being developed to enhance training and career-development opportunities for persons in the designated groups. Efforts will be made to ensure that employment equity is integrated into all processes that affect human-resource planning, including initiatives such as institutional construction. Further, support groups and regional and national advisory groups are being established to help employees, to provide a forum for target-group members to express their views and to make recommendations to senior management. ■

Figure 3
Rates of Departure (1990)



A Word on Women in Management...

"...women will never be fully accepted into management as long as the secretarial position is characterized by female domination, low status, role ambiguity and dead ends." ■

Source: N. Colwill, "Female Managers and Female Secretaries – Threads of the Same Tapestry," *Women in Management*, 2, 2 (1991): p. 8.

Shift Work and Its Impact on Human Performance

Research has shown that three major factors influence an individual's state of alertness and ability to perform on the job: the circadian cycle (i.e., the body's daily rhythm), sleep disorders and sleep loss. With shift work, disruption of the circadian system plays a major role and may affect a person's performance at work as well as in family and personal life.

This article summarizes information in Lydia Dotto's book, *Asleep in the Fast Lane: The Impact of Sleep on Work*, one section of which discusses research on shift work.

Sleep researchers estimate that about one fifth to one quarter of all workers in the industrialized world work shifts. These people are most likely to be working in protective, food or health services. It is just recently that people have begun to realize that shift-work schedules introduced without regard to the realities of human physiology have many hidden costs, including worker dissatisfaction, health problems, absenteeism, excessive overtime, low morale and family and marital difficulties.

The major problem with shift work is that it scrambles circadian rhythms – namely the sleep/wake cycle. Two of the most damaging features of shift work are weekly rotation and phase advancement, that is, shift rotation in a counterclockwise direction from day shift, to night shift, to evening shift.

Rotation of shifts on a weekly basis is extremely disruptive. Because it takes the circadian sleep/wake system a minimum of several days to adjust to an eight-hour schedule change, it barely gets a chance to settle down before another change is forced on it. Usually, workers only get two or three days off between shift changes, during which time they often go back to a normal sleep/wake pattern that further disrupts the circadian system.

An added complication is the large time shifts involved. The circadian system can readily adjust to a change of an hour or two a day, but a sudden eight-hour shift produces about as much circadian disturbance as flying from the middle of North America to Europe.

Added to this is the problem that shifts often rotate counterclockwise, creating a phase-advance situation. This works against the natural tendency of the human circadian system toward phase delay.

More than 60% of people who work shifts complain of sleep disturbances, compared with about 20% of regular day workers. Problems with insomnia, chronic fatigue and sleepiness on the job are common problems, particularly for people working on night shifts. When workers first begin a night shift after being on days, they usually have trouble staying awake in the middle of the night, during what is called the circadian "trough." This is when their biological clock says it is time to go to sleep. In the morning, night workers have the opposite problem: it is time for them to go to bed, but their circadian system is reaching its daytime peak alertness. Studies indicate that most shift workers average only about five-to-six hours of sleep during the day, unless they stay on their shifts longer than a week at a time.

Moving from an evening shift to a day shift also causes trouble for the circadian system. Evening workers are still awake at the time when most day workers normally go to sleep, at about 10:00 or 11:00 p.m. They then go to bed later, about 2:00 or 3:00 a.m., and wake up later (about mid-morning) than regular day workers. But when they start a day shift, they must suddenly advance their sleep period to 11:00 p.m. and get up at 7:00 a.m. This is very difficult. It has been equated with asking someone who works regular work days to go to sleep at 8:00 p.m.

Of all shifts, afternoons or evenings are perhaps the best for the circadian system, but workers often do not like them because they usually disrupt family and social life.

Another major health consequence of shift work is increased digestive problems, particularly among night workers who eat at a time when the circadian system has turned off the digestive juices for the night.

Mismatches between the circadian cycle and the external world are most severe during the first few days on a new shift schedule because biological clocks are still set to the old schedule. Weekly rotation, especially in the counterclockwise direction, makes it virtually impossible for the circadian system ever to synchronize properly with the external world. The result is that shift workers often do not get enough sleep. One study found that only 15% of shift workers, compared to 50% of regular day workers, got seven-to-eight hours of sleep per night. Furthermore, the sleep shift workers do get is often not restful.

Because many shift workers are chronically sleep deprived, they experience even greater levels of sleepiness at work than would be expected from circadian factors alone. One study compared episodes of falling asleep at work among 907 workers at eight industrial plants, seven of which had shift schedules and one of which operated on straight days. The study found that, on average, more than half of the shift workers reported falling asleep on the night shift and about one fifth reported falling asleep on the day and evening shifts. These figures compare with only 8% of permanent day workers who reported falling asleep at work.

Thus, it appears that poor adaptation of the circadian system to rotating schedules causes excessive sleepiness on all shifts, but particularly the night shift. Studies have shown that during the circadian trough between 3:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., people make more errors in reading gas meters and responding to warning alarms and take more time to answer telephone calls.

A number of sleep researchers have recommended very strongly that shift workers should not be required to work more than three consecutive nights.

Increasing automation in many organizations is compounding the problem caused by on-the-job sleepiness. Instead of actually doing things and moving around, many shift workers spend their time watching computers, dials or television monitors.

Individuals may vary in their ability to cope with the problems caused by shift work. Younger people, for example, are more adaptable to unusual or irregular sleep/wake schedules than middle-aged or older people. There is also some evidence to suggest that night hawks, who follow flexible sleeping habits, may be more suited to shift work than morning people, who require a more rigid sleep/wake routine.

The following are some suggestions to help you adjust to shift work:

- Try to keep as regular a sleep schedule as possible. Sleep at the same time each day while on each shift and avoid napping randomly.
- Follow a regular meal schedule, and eat only light snacks – such as fruit, soup and toast – at night to avoid digestive problems.
- A couple of days before starting a night shift, go to bed a bit later at night and wake up later in the morning. This phase delay will give your circadian rhythm a head start for adjusting to the new shift.
- Use light and dark to reset your biological clocks as rapidly as possible. The bedroom should be very dark when you are sleeping. When you wake up, make the room you are in as bright as possible. In fact, some sleep researchers suggest timing the lights so that they come on just before you are supposed to wake up.
- Ensure that you have a quiet place to sleep during the day.
- Avoid caffeine for at least three hours before going to bed. ■

L. Dotto, *Asleep in the Fast Lane: The Impact of Sleep on Work.* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1990).

Stress and Burnout

Employers believe that stress is the basis of more than one quarter of sick time reported by employees, a finding reported in a 1991 survey by the Canadian Institute of Stress. From 10% to 15% of Canada's work force is beleaguered by serious or chronic personal problems that affect job performance, estimates the Canadian Mental Health Association.

These are two of the stress research findings profiled in a recent report on stress among senior managers. Produced by the Program Development (Staffing) Branch of the Public Service Commission, the report was based on findings of current stress research and on information gathered from observations of senior executive counsellors at the Diagnostic and Career Counselling Service of the Public Service Commission. More than 187 managers in the public service have sought advice and consultation from these counsellors.

Stress may be defined as the body's response to any physiological or psychological demand. Although a certain amount of stress is necessary for healthy functioning, too much stress or inappropriate reactions to it can negatively affect the individual.

An individual's ability to tolerate stress depends on the frequency, severity and types of stressors confronted. It also depends on intrinsic or personal characteristics, including:

- past experiences
- personal values and attitudes
- sense of control
- personality
- residual stress level
- general state of health

A number of external or organizational factors contribute to stress, such as:

- work overload and family conflict
- lack of autonomy or control
- threat of job loss
- role conflict or role ambiguity
- interpersonal conflicts or external agency conflicts
- organizational culture and environment
- insufficient resources
- inadequate job training or overqualification for current position
- supervisor's attitudes
- changes in organizational structure

Symptoms

Stress affects a person's psychological functioning, behaviour and physical health. Psychological symptoms of stress include:

- anxiety
- irritability
- mood swings
- sadness or depression
- low self-esteem
- emotional withdrawal
- hypersensitivity

Behavioural symptoms of stress, which can affect an individual's work performance, include:

- inability to make decisions
- increased interpersonal conflict
- blocked creativity and judgment
- poor memory
- lowered productivity
- difficulty concentrating

Commonly recognized signs of the physical impact of stress include:

- insomnia
- headaches
- backaches
- gastrointestinal disturbances
- fatigue
- high blood pressure
- frequent illness

Burnout

Burnout, a severe reaction to stress, describes a state of physical and emotional depletion that results from the conditions of one's occupation. Recent research suggests that burnout may occur among senior managers almost

as frequently as among those in the helping professions, who were the "original" sufferers of burnout.

As with stress, burnout may manifest itself psychologically – with emotional exhaustion or overreaction; behaviourally – with lower job productiveness; and physically – with exhaustion.

Have you ever been referred to as a "Type A"? Type-A personalities are typically individuals who have high levels of achievement, are excessively competitive and are prone to impatience and aggression in their perpetual struggle to achieve more in less time. It has been estimated that more than three quarters of managers in North America show some level of Type-A behaviour. Some research has also estimated that Type As are up to seven times more likely than their more even-paced Type-B colleagues to suffer from coronary heart disease.

Stress and Senior Managers

Until recently, few people believed that senior managers experienced anything beyond a minimal level of stress. After all, they have control of the decision-making process, so what stressors could have more than a minimal impact on them?

Recent changes in management principles are now being seen as possible stressors for senior managers and as factors that may increase the intensity of already-existing stressors. One such example is the relatively new expectation that employers meet the human needs of employees. Expected to conform to emerging social principles, managers must develop policies on such issues as employment and pay equity. Further, with a change in management style, managers are expected to loosen control and emphasize effective "people" management rather than systems management.

Added to these developments is the changing face of the work force itself. With the increased number of working women, new sources of stress can be found in the complexities and commitments of dual-career and single-parent families. These changes demand more flexibility and consideration on the part of managers. In fact, work overload and family conflict have been cited as primary stressors for executives.

Some sources of stress are more common in the public sector than in the private sector. With the climate of fiscal restraint, managers are expected to do more with less, an expectation clearly evident in *Public Service 2000: The Renewal of the Public Service of Canada*. Although valuable, recommendations for delayering, altered management styles and increased accountability and innovation may be seen as additional sources of stress.

The political nature of the public service is the root of another source of stress for senior managers. Because of the electoral process, the time and scope necessary to envision and work toward long-term objectives within departments are cut short by the potential for a change in leadership every four years.

The trend toward decentralization may also be a stressor for those managers who question its value. More specifically, in the private sector, decentralization may be seen as necessary to improve service to a company's clients, but in government, some decentralization may take place to satisfy other objectives.

But What Can Be Done?

Initiatives that have been implemented in the private sector to reduce stress may be appropriate and adaptable to the public service. These include on-site day-care facilities, changes to the physical plant, job sharing, in-house exercise classes and extensive individual training and development packages.

Other suggestions offer tangible support to the senior management cadre, such as providing time to executives to balance work overload, family responsibilities and leisure activity. This means recognizing, for example, that frequent travel costs a manager in personal time and that taking holidays and annual leave are essential to a healthy lifestyle. It also means considering the impact of relocation on the manager's family, which may involve providing some form of job-search assistance to the spouse. Finally, ensuring that appropriate training and development programs are available and accessible may help reduce the stress that some managers experience in their work roles. ■

Public Service Commission, "Stress and Executive Burnout." Unpublished report, 1991.

Burnout...

"...the most committed workers burn out most severely...." Further, "If the achievement of money, fame, or professional excellence is compared not to one's own aspirations and needs but to those of others, no level of success will suffice. This can only add to the pressures that produce burnout. The drive for achievement can also be self-destructive when it dominates a person's life.... This preoccupation with work can lead to a double pressure: the push for more achievement and the absence of the other rewards in life." ■

Source: A. Pines and E. Aronson, *Career Burnout: Causes and Cures*. (New York: The Free Press, 1988: p. x and 77-78).

Not Stressed Enough?

A number of studies profiled in this issue of FORUM have found that staff experience a considerable amount of stress. But for those of you who are fortunate enough not to count yourselves among this group, the following is a sure-fire recipe for joining the ranks of the stressed. For those of you who can say that you often experience stress, the following points should help you to maximize your stress level.

1. Do not communicate openly by expressing how you feel. Do not ask for what you need, and certainly do not ask for what you want – just let people walk all over you.

2. Harbour resentment and complain often. Gripe and whine for at least 2.5 hours per day to anybody who will listen, especially to bosses, co-workers, family members and friends. Such behaviour helps you avoid intimacy and emotional ties, and personal isolation is very stressful.

3. Do not feel confident enough in your skills, values and beliefs to express your opinions and concerns. Blindly accept the judgments of others, personalize all criticisms and remain offended.

4. Do not develop a support system of any kind. No close friends, no pets, no social activities, no extended family – nothing. Never ask for help of any kind from anyone. Languish in loneliness and suffer, suffer, suffer!

5. Practise nasty, mean, humiliating, embarrassing and hateful behaviours toward other people. Gossip at every opportunity and concentrate on making other people look bad. Your turn is guaranteed to come.

6. Become a workaholic. It's easy to do. Just put work before everything else. Take work home every day and every weekend. Never take a vacation that lasts more than 28 hours, and definitely work on holidays. The goal is to burn out.

7. Avoid the urge to manage time. Be available to everyone, take on more projects than you can handle and say yes to whatever is asked. Cultivate the myth that you work better under pressure. After all, you must do everything yourself because you're the only one who can do things right.

8. Procrastinate, procrastinate, procrastinate. As Mark Twain said, "Never put off for tomorrow what you can put off for the day after tomorrow." If it were not for the last minute, lots of things would never get done.

9. Do not get enough sleep or rest. Lack of sleep reduces your ability to deal with stress by making you irritable – a sure-fire sign of stress.

10. Don't exercise regularly. As a matter of fact, don't exercise at all. Exercise only tones your muscles, improves your cardiovascular system and relaxes your nerves. Physical activity allows you a "fight outlet" for mental stress. Exercising also wastes time that could be better spent on stress-producing situations.

11. Eat and drink anything you want. Don't avoid fat, sugars, salt, red meat or caffeine. Strive to be at least 35 pounds overweight – excess weight maximizes stress on your heart.

12. Increase your intake of drugs. Take that valium, aspirin, alcohol and cigarette. Ignore those warning signs from your body when you are under stress.

13. Ignore whatever you read about the benefits of relaxation exercises. Positive self-talk, mental imaging, deep breathing, massages, yoga or anything else that relaxes you – avoid it. How can you possibly be stressed if you're relaxed?

14. Adopt the hurry–flurry–work syndrome. This is a great method for putting a lot of pressure on yourself. The H-F-W syndrome makes you think you're so important – "Look at me, look at how hard I'm working." Because you are so stressed, you must be working hard. Also, H-F-W could help you avoid responsibility. You look so overworked and worried that people don't want to ask you for anything.

15. Keep your problems to yourself. Since it helps to share worries with someone you trust and respect, your best bet for staying stressed is to suffer in silence.

16. Make every effort not to have fun. Beware of fun: you might laugh and enjoy yourself, and this is definitely detrimental to creating stress.

17. Remain inflexible, narrow-minded and bigoted, and avoid change. This allows you to get upset and stay upset about anything because you are convinced that you know everything.

18. Keep work and play imbalanced. No hobbies, recreational activities, movies, plays, books, concerts, walks in the park, visits with others, museums and games – avoid anything that could be mistaken as a cure for stressful situations.

19. Spend no time cultivating self-understanding. Give no thought to yourself, your values, goals or purpose in life. Give no time to analyzing your problems; just blame everything on your spouse, friends or family.

20. Set no goals and make no plans. Setting goals and making plans to reach them brings order and direction to your life. Personal goals force you to take care of yourself and your relationships. Career goals make you responsible for work success. Money goals mean that you're in control of your wealth. With no personal, career or financial goals, you can make sure that you remain distressed. If you don't know where you are going, anywhere you end up is O.K.! ■

Reprinted, with slight modifications, from C.C.W. Hines and W.C. Wilson, "A No-Nonsense Guide to Being Stressed," *Management Solutions*, October (1986): 27-29. FORUM is grateful to the American Management Association for granting permission to use this article.

What Do Correctional Officers Think of Sex Offenders?

by John R. Weekes
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Guy Pelletier
Department of Psychosocial Resources, Tom Baker Cancer Centre, Calgary, Alberta
and Daniel Beaudette
Department of Psychology, Springhill Institution (Atlantic)

Correctional officers perceive sex offenders in significantly more negative terms than non-sex offenders, according to a recent Canadian study. Another important finding of this research was that most correctional officers have to deal with sex offenders in the course of their duties and would like specific additional training relevant to these inmates.

The study assessed correctional officers' perceptions of three offender groups: sex offenders against children, sex offenders against women and non-sex offenders. The study also examined the officers' perceived need for training and their level of contact with sex offenders.

A total of 82 front-line correctional officers – 70 males and 12 females from two medium-security federal institutions, one in the Atlantic region and one in the Prairie region – voluntarily completed a questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted of 19 scales on which officers rated, separately, their perceptions of the three offender groups. The scales were arranged in a bipolar fashion: at one end of the scale was a positive characteristic, such as "nonviolent," with a value of 1. At the other end was a negative characteristic, such as "violent," with a value of 7. Officers rated each offender group from 1 to 7, based on whether the positive characteristic or the negative characteristic best described the particular offender group.

Correctional officers' age, level of education, length of service in a correctional setting and amount of time with sex offenders were also recorded.

Finally, officers indicated the extent of their agreement, from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," to the following series of statements:

- I would like to have more training to deal with sex offenders;
- Working with sex offenders adds stress to the job;
- My training for this job did not prepare me to work with sex offenders;
- Sex offenders are treatable; and
- Offenders in general are treatable.

Results

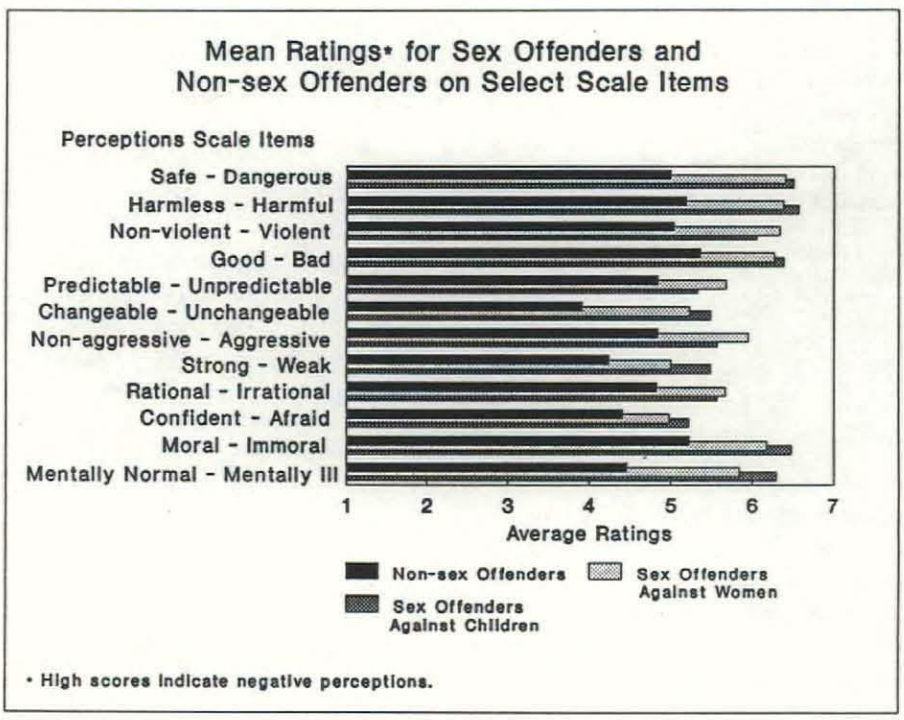
Correctional officers perceived sex offenders, in general, as significantly more dangerous, harmful, violent, tense, bad, unpredictable, unchangeable, aggressive, weak, irrational and afraid than non-sex offenders (see figure). Sex offenders against children were perceived as being significantly more immoral and mentally ill than sex offenders against women, who, in turn, were perceived as more immoral and mentally ill than non-sex offenders.

There were five scales on which sex offenders and non-sex offenders received similar ratings. These two groups were perceived as having similar levels of sex drive, control and intelligence, and were thought to be equally active/passive and non-manipulative/manipulative.

The vast majority (89%) of correctional officers reported having at least some contact with sex offenders.

Most respondents (68%) indicated that they would like more training to deal with sex offenders. Only about 12% felt that their training had adequately prepared them to deal with this unique group.

When asked whether sex offenders could be treated, only about one fifth (20.7%) of respondents thought that sex offenders are treatable. On the other hand, more than half (52.4%)



thought that offenders in general are treatable.

Older and more experienced officers were more likely to report that they had been adequately trained to deal with sex offenders. However, these more experienced officers also reported more job-related stress in dealing with sex offenders.

A relationship was found between a correctional officer's age, number of years of service in a correctional setting and education level: younger, less experienced officers reported higher levels of education.

It is interesting to note that the more highly educated correctional officers felt they were less prepared to deal with sex offenders. By the same token, those who indicated that they would like more training to deal with sex offenders were also significantly more likely to feel that sex offenders are treatable and less likely to report that their dealings with sex offenders contributed to stress on the job. Furthermore, correctional officers who stated they would like more training were also more likely to have involved themselves in greater contact with sex offenders and to endorse the treatability of offenders in general.

Discussion

The most salient finding of the study was that correctional officers had different perceptions of different inmate groups. Overall, sex offenders were perceived much more negatively than non-sex offenders.

However, these perceptions are at odds with research examining sex offenders' criminality, personality characteristics and social skills. For example, Gordon and Porporino[1] highlight the similarities rather than the differences between rapists and non-rapists on such diverse characteristics as criminal history, personality, social skills, sexual attitudes and arousal patterns. On the other hand, current literature on pedophiles and incest offenders suggests that these offenders are more likely to display unique differences in various characteristics.

It may be that maintaining negative perceptions of sex offenders serves to insulate staff from aligning themselves too closely with individuals who are commonly looked upon with disgust and abhorrence.

The findings of this study suggest that line staff openly endorse the social stigma surrounding sex offenders. It is important to note, however, that the study did not formally compare the perceptions of correctional officers to those of the general public toward sex offenders. That is, it did not assess the extent to which correctional officers as members of the general public, albeit in a unique situation of close contact with offenders, mirror society's perceptions of sex offenders. Future research is planned to address this issue.

Most respondents expressed a desire for additional training, presumably to better understand, and deal more effectively with, sex offenders. It is likely that training programs for new staff and in-service education for existing personnel would be improved by emphasizing the dynamics of inmates convicted of sexual offences. However, given the resiliency of attitudes and beliefs, it may be unrealistic to expect that informational training programs will extinguish the differences found in the present study between officers' perceptions of sex offenders and non-sex offenders.

Alternatively, a two-pronged approach to staff training – focusing on the modification of gross misconceptions as well as the development of effective ways of managing and integrating sex offenders in general-population institutions – will help reduce job-related stress, enhance correctional officers' self-efficacy and improve staff-inmate interaction. At the same time, such an approach would foster a more treatment-oriented environment. ■

[1] *A. Gordon and F. Porporino, "Managing the Treatment of Incarcerated Sexual Offenders,"* Corrections Today, *53 (1991): 162-168.*

Winston Churchill on Corrections...

"The mood and temper of the public in regard to the treatment of crime and criminals is one of the most unfailing tests of the civilization of any country. A calm dispassionate recognition of the rights of the accused and even of the convicted criminal against the State; a constant heart-searching of all charged with the deed of punishment; tireless efforts toward the discovery of regenerative processes; unfailing faith that there is a treasure, if you can find it, in the heart of every man. These are the symbols which in the treatment of crime and criminals make and measure the stored-up strength of a nation and are sign and proof of the living virtue in it." ■

Source: Winston Churchill, 1911, as quoted in J.P. Conrad, "The Pessimistic Reflections of a Chronic Optimist," *Federal Probation*, June (1991): p. 4.

Training Staff to Deal More Effectively with Sex Offenders

by Claude Tellier
Senior Project Officer, Staff Training and Development, Correctional Service of Canada

Since sex offenders constitute approximately 15% of the Canadian federal inmate population, there is a critical need for a training strategy to improve management of sex offenders. The conclusions and recommendations of the Pepino enquiry, the Working Group on Mental Health and the recent WP[1] Group Needs Analysis also underlined the importance and necessity of training staff to deal more effectively with sex offenders.

Following a decision by the Correctional Service of Canada's Executive Committee, a National Steering Committee on the Management and Treatment of Sexual Offenders was formed to oversee and co-ordinate development of the training program. This committee was made up of representatives from the Solicitor General Secretariat, the National Parole Board and, from the Correctional Service of Canada, Health Care Services, Staff Training and Development, Research and Statistics, Offender Management and the Community Release Programs and Support Services Division.

A comprehensive training strategy for dealing with sex offenders was the outcome of the committee's efforts. In developing the training program, the committee sought the professional services of Dr. Howard Barbaree, a nationally and internationally recognized expert on the treatment of sex offenders. It also drew on the work of Dr. William Pithers and Dr. Linda Beal, who developed a sex offender training package based on the relapse-prevention model for probation and parole officers of the State of Vermont's Department of Corrections.

Based on these consultations, the relapse-prevention model was chosen as the approach to manage the Correctional Service of Canada's sex offenders. It became an integral part of the training program.

Relapse prevention is a structured treatment and supervision model which is applied to sex offenders during incarceration and after their release into the community. The model was originally developed for managing substance abuse. The model recognizes that substance abusers have an ongoing risk of relapsing, that is, of returning to the patterns of behaviour that caused them to abuse drugs or alcohol. Relapse prevention teaches offenders self-management skills, methods of controlling impulses and ways to develop strategies for avoiding or coping effectively with problem situations.

In 1983, Dr. Pithers, of the Vermont Center for the Prevention and Treatment of Sexual Abuse at the Department of Corrections in Waterbury, Vermont, and his colleagues, Marques, Gibat and Marlatt, modified the relapse-prevention model for use with sex offenders.

Dr. Pithers and his associates are pioneers in the field. They have generously given permission for the Correctional Service of Canada to draw upon their work and adapt it to fit the Canadian situation.[2]

The Sex Offender Training Program

The Correctional Service of Canada's sex offender training program is primarily designed to increase the awareness of staff who evaluate, manage and treat sex offenders and to provide them with more tools for dealing with the special needs of these offenders while ensuring continuity between the penitentiary and the community.

The program is divided into two separate units.

Unit I – An Introduction to the Assessment, Treatment and Management of the Sex Offender

During this part of the training program, an overview of sex offending is given. Correctional workers are prepared and sensitized to working with sexually abusive individuals.

The curriculum is designed to:

- increase participants' awareness of how sexual attitudes influence their work with sex offenders;
- help them develop a clearer understanding of the dynamics of sex offenders' criminal behaviour;
- increase their knowledge and skills in assessing sex offenders; and
- acquire further knowledge of a variety of treatment techniques used with sex offenders as well as increase participants' understanding of relapse prevention.

Issues such as the assessment of denial and minimization, sexual preference and social competence and the identification of the offence cycle are also covered in Unit I.

Unit II – Sex Offender Risk Assessment and Relapse Prevention

Training offered in the second unit focuses more on teaching skills useful mainly to employees who are directly responsible for dealing with and managing sex offenders. Participants

[1] *The WP occupational group includes all case managers in the Correctional Service of Canada.*

[2] *For more information about the work of Dr. Pithers and his colleagues, we recommend a paper entitled "Relapse Prevention: A Method for Enhancing Behavioral Self-Management and External Supervision of the Sexual Aggressor" by W.D. Pithers, G.F. Cumming, L.S. Beal, W. Young and R. Turner. This article appears in* Sex Offenders: Issues in Treatment, *edited by B. Schwartz and published in 1989 by the National Institute of Corrections. See also Dr. Pithers' article in the last issue of FORUM.*

have the opportunity to learn and perfect their skills in interview techniques, in evaluating risk factors and needs, in identifying causes of relapse and in developing supervision strategies to reduce recidivism.

The units are subdivided into modules to allow flexible delivery of the program while ensuring that the needs of the different correctional occupational groups are met.

Implementation

The training package was successfully piloted in the Ontario region during January 1991. The overall results were extremely encouraging, with many correctional officers, case managers and psychologists impressed with the way this approach assists them in their dealings with sex offenders.

The training program includes a train-the-trainers component, a five-day workshop on sex offenders offered to trainers. It is critical, if the content of the modules is to be properly delivered, that trainers who have certain qualities and skills are selected. The trainers selected in the five regions of the Correctional Service of Canada were chosen mainly because of their good presentation skills, their vast experience in dealing first-hand with sex offenders and their familiarity with the typologies and dynamics of sexual deviance.

Our experience to date certainly supports the need to carry on with this training project. The long-term objective is to provide all correctional staff with a general knowledge of sex offenders by the end of the 1993-94 fiscal year. All case management officers and other professional groups who directly manage sex offenders will receive more thorough training.

Consensus among professionals working in the field as to which factors best predict sex offender recidivism has not yet been reached. Available literature is in the infancy stage, and much work remains to be done. Definitive statements about risk assessment, therefore, cannot be made.

At the same time, however, it is vitally important that we use what we do know as creatively and actively as possible. Victims of sex offences, especially future victims, cannot wait for us to perfect our knowledge and techniques. Being proactive, and doing the best we can at the moment, offer the most hope for victims and are the best ways to expand our knowledge and skills. Accordingly, we are training our staff to apply the relapse-prevention model, now considered to be the most effective management program for sex offenders. ■

Who Are the Leaders?

Describing a study of 25 large Canadian organizations, which was conducted by Jane Howell and Christopher Higgins of the University of Western Ontario, the National Centre for Management Research and Development reported:

"To find the potential champions in your organization...look for these quintessential qualities:

- Extremely high self-confidence, persistence, energy and risk taking.
- Exceptional leadership behaviors, inspiring others with their vision of an innovation's potential. Strong personal conviction which gains the support of others.
- Long tenure which helps to establish credibility in the organization and influences perceptions of competence." ■

Source: National Centre for Management Research and Development, *Ideas for Managers*, 3, 2 (1991): p. 2.

Coming up in *Forum on Corrections Research...*

The June issue of FORUM will focus on long-term offenders.

For future issues, the editors of FORUM are soliciting articles on the following topics:

- violence and suicide in correctional institutions;
- the role of punishment in corrections;
- women and crime; and
- family violence.

We welcome your suggestions regarding specific research in these and other areas that could be profiled in future issues of FORUM.

If you wish to submit a full article or a research brief to FORUM, please write to us at:

Research and Statistics Branch
Correctional Service of Canada
4B - 340 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0P9

Commitment, Attitudes, Career Aspirations and Work Stress: The Experiences of Correctional Staff

by David Robinson
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Correctional Service of Canada

In the field of corrections, most applied research aims at providing new information to help manage offender populations. In developing knowledge that contributes to effective corrections, researchers have focused primarily on offender issues. As a result, research has not emphasized staff issues as an important component of running successful correctional systems. Underscoring the priority assigned to staff in its Mission, the Correctional Service of Canada has recognized the need for more information about its work force.

The Staff Commitment Study was proposed by the Research and Statistics Branch to close a number of gaps in our understanding of staff issues.[1] The Branch planned to use a large national sample that would supply high quality data on all Correctional Service of Canada staff. Staff studies had been conducted in the past, but many of them suffered from small sample sizes because so many people refused to participate. Previous studies relied on mail surveys, a technique which limits the number of staff members who respond to the survey. Other studies are characterized by unrepresentative samples focusing on specific occupational groups (e.g., correctional officers). By using a random sampling strategy for the Staff Commitment Study, some of the shortcomings of previous surveys were corrected.

The data-gathering approach for the study was designed to capitalize on the high quality of the sample. Several sources of data were consulted by researchers, including questionnaires and individual interviews with staff members, in addition to supervisor surveys and performance-appraisal data on staff who consented to the release of this confidential information for the study. Trained interviewers administered the questionnaire package to groups of staff members and conducted the personal interviews.[2]

Correctional Service of Canada researchers also took advantage of the large national sample to focus on a broad variety of staff issues (see boxed text). Extensive demographic information (e.g., age, gender, education, region, occupational category) and work-history information (e.g., length of service) was also incorporated into the data collection design. This made it possible to examine staff attitudes and perceptions in relation to various characteristics of Correctional Service of Canada staff.

Many of the data-collection devices employed in the survey were used in previous studies of correctional systems and in research projects on other types of work organizations. For example, some of the questions used to measure commitment were also used in a recent large-scale study of the federal public sector (see "The Challenge of Balancing Work and Family" in the Research in Brief section in this issue). Additional research instruments tapped issues of particular concern to the Correctional Service of Canada and were designed specifically for the Staff Commitment Study.

This article provides a potpourri of findings about our staff, including commitment to the organization, attitudes toward offenders, perceptions about job stress and patterns of health and lifestyle. This article addresses only selected issues but a number of research reports will be published using the knowledge gained from this important study.

Some of the issues addressed by the study were:

- staff commitment to the organization
- attitudes toward organizational change
- multiple dimensions of job satisfaction
- career orientation and work motivation
- supervisor and self-rated job performance
- attitudes toward the field of corrections
- beliefs about rehabilitation and the custodial function of corrections
- perceptions of stressors in the correctional workplace
- aspirations for career development
- critical incident experiences
- attitudes toward the organization's Mission
- health and lifestyles

The Sample

Findings presented in this article are based on a sample of 658 staff members who completed questionnaires

[1] *For a discussion of the goals of the research project, see D. Robinson, L. Simourd and F. Porporino,* Research on Staff Commitment: A Discussion Paper. *Report No. R-18. (Ottawa: Research and Statistics Branch, Correctional Service of Canada, 1991).*

[2] *Goss, Gilroy and Associates of Ottawa were contracted to carry out the data collection. Although the training for the project was conducted by the Research and Statistics Branch, none of the interviewers were Correctional Service of Canada staff members.*

Patterns of Health among Correctional Service of Canada Staff

Health issues have become an important concern for managers for a variety of reasons, including the productivity of workers and their overall degree of emotional well-being and satisfaction. The Staff Commitment Study provided us with the opportunity to measure some health characteristics of a representative sample of our staff. Here are some of the basic findings:

- Only 3.8% of staff members surveyed judged their health to be poor, while 53.7% judged it to be average and 42.6% believed they were in excellent health.
- About 16% of respondents said they used over-the-counter medications (e.g., brand-name analgesics, laxatives, etc.) at least once a week, and about 23% said they were taking a prescription medication.
- One third of participants were smokers. About half of these said they smoked about one pack of cigarettes per day, while approximately 13% said they smoked more than one pack per day. Of the two thirds of participants who did not smoke, about one third are ex-smokers.
- Fifteen percent of those surveyed said they abstained from alcoholic beverages. Of the majority who did drink, 7% drank every day and 6.6% drank four-to-six times a week. Most respondents (63.8%) consumed alcohol from less than once a month to once a week. The average number of drinks per drinking occasion was 2.8. However, 13.1% of those who drank said they had five-or-more drinks at one time. ■

and/or interviews.[3] Only 8.6% of those available for interviews refused to participate in the study. An additional 4.6% failed to attend on the day when interviewers visited their work sites. This represents a very high rate of response to the survey. Most staff members were more than willing to take part and showed a great deal of interest in the objectives of the research.

The sampling procedure for the project was designed in conjunction with the Statistical Consultation Centre of Carleton University. The design was based on the Correctional Service of Canada's staff population of 10,500, although senior managers were excluded from the survey. The design team made certain that the five regions and the various occupational groups within the organization (correctional officers, support staff, etc.) were well represented in the sample. All participants were selected randomly by computer.

Reflecting the demographic profile of our staff, the majority of participants were male (63.9%) and about one third (32.9%) were French-speaking. The average age of respondents was 40.2 years. About 33% had completed high school or less, and about 30% had a university degree. About half of those surveyed had been working with the Correctional Service of Canada for five-to-nine years, approximately one quarter for less than five years, and one quarter for 10 years or more.

Attitudes Toward Corrections and Correctional Clientele

The staff commitment project used a number of measures to assess staff attitudes toward correctional work and orientations toward offenders. We examined attitudes among staff members who work with offenders: correctional officers, case-management officers, institutional line staff,[4] professionals (e.g., psychologists, teachers, nursing staff) and correctional supervisory staff. In general, correctional employees in the Correctional Service of Canada have a positive view of working in corrections, and hold positive attitudes toward the clientele with whom they work.

Very few correctional staff members who participated felt ashamed to tell people that they worked in the field of corrections. Only 22% agreed with the statement "Usually I am not very proud to tell people that I earn my living working with criminals." Most believed that correctional work was a good career choice. Seventy-three percent of staff who responded to the questionnaire agreed that: "In general, there are more good things than bad things about having a career in corrections."

There were interesting results concerning staff attitudes toward the way correctional work is conducted. For example, most participants were forward thinking about correctional work in that they would be open to new ideas for improving their work with offenders. Only 13% endorsed the belief that "there is only one way to work with offenders and new ideas will not make any difference in this line of work." Another indicator of their attitudes toward correctional careers concerned their "human service" orientation; 83% of those surveyed who work with offenders said they "prefer a job that gives me the opportunity to help people solve their problems."

In general, positive attitudes toward offenders followed positive attitudes toward the field of corrections. In particular, correctional staff appeared to endorse a rehabilitative rather than custodial attitude toward offenders. For example, only 14% of staff surveyed held the view that

[3] *A total of 654 staff members completed questionnaires, and 619 completed interviews. Ninety-three percent of the sample completed both interviews and questionnaires.*

[4] *This includes food-service workers, maintenance workers, shop instructors and other general trades and labour workers who have contact with inmates.*

"rehabilitation of adult criminals just does not work." Although some staff members were unsure about its effectiveness (22%), the majority (64%) supported the theory that rehabilitation does work.

Table 1 provides more specific figures relating to issues of rehabilitation and custody. Again, the majority of participants held optimistic views about rehabilitation and appeared willing to contribute to this enterprise.

There was some variation in attitudes toward corrections and offenders when we broke the correctional staff sub-sample into smaller categories. In particular, we were interested in the attitudes of our largest group of front-line staff – correctional officers – compared with those of other correctional workers.

To summarize, correctional officers tended to be somewhat less favourable in their attitudes toward corrections and rehabilitation. Still, the majority of correctional officers, a full 65%, felt that there was more good than bad about a career in corrections. In addition, only 23% agreed with the statement "rehabilitation does not work."

Figure 1
Average Commitment Scores of CSC Staff Surveyed

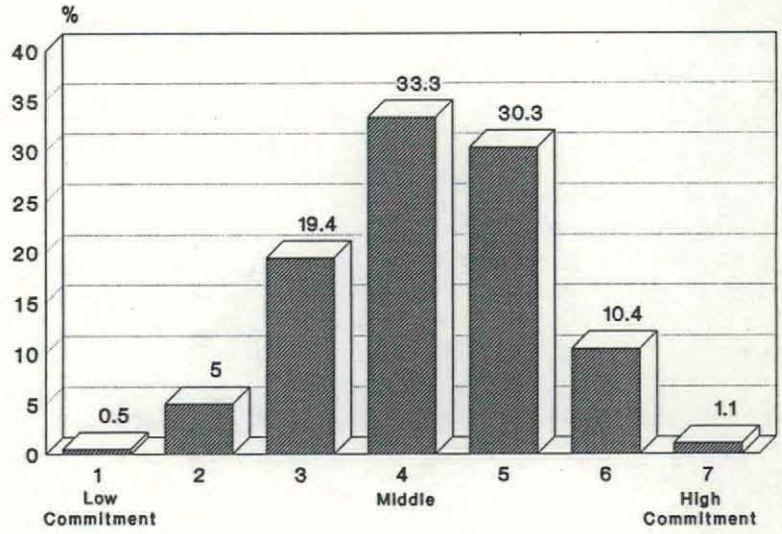


Table 1
Correctional Staff Attitudes Toward Offenders

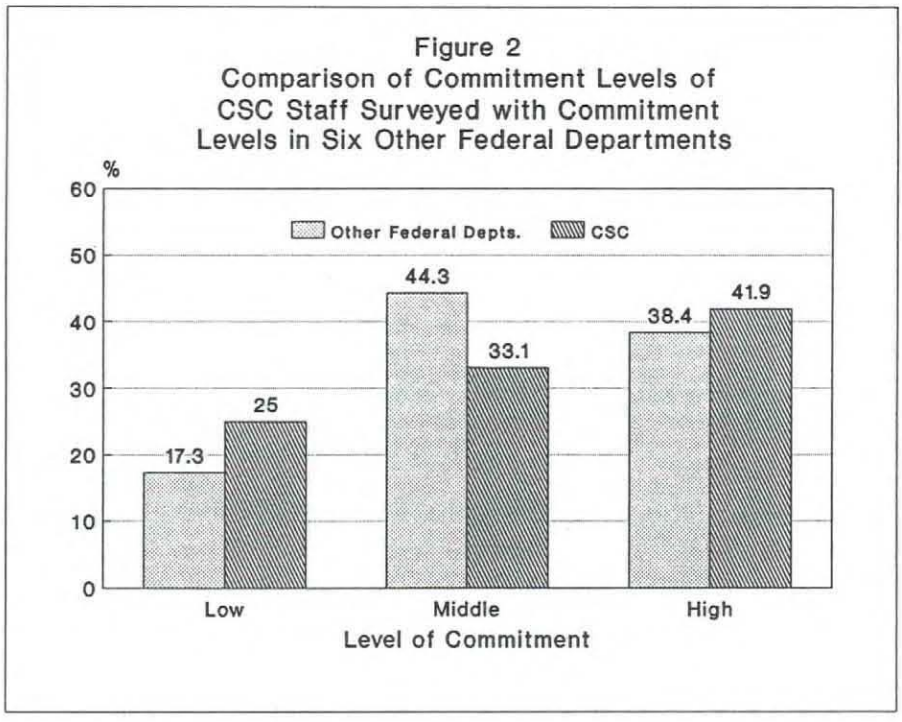
	Percentage			
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Staff should work hard to earn trust from offenders.	19.5	51.2	22.2	7.0
The way to get respect from offenders is to take an interest in them.	21.8	53.1	20.9	4.3
Sometimes staff should advocate for an offender.	10.8	59.7	21.5	8.0
Rehabilitation programs should be left to mental health professionals.	6.6	11.6	49.1	32.7

The attitudinal data on correctional staff are optimistic given the reintegration objectives that have been embraced by the Correctional Service of Canada. Roughly three quarters of respondents who work with inmates enjoy their work. A similar proportion support the safe reintegration of offenders into society.

Staff Commitment

We used the 15-item *Organizational Commitment Questionnaire* to measure the levels of commitment of Correctional Service of Canada staff.[5] This questionnaire has been used in a number of studies by various types of organizations. Commitment can be interpreted as reflecting feelings of loyalty and pride toward an organization, agreement with its goals and values, willingness to exert extra effort to make the organization successful and a desire to maintain employment within the organization. Each of the 15 questionnaire items contain a statement about commitment. The respondent rates his or her commitment level using a seven-point rating scale. The scores for all 15 items are then combined, and an

[5] *R.T. Mowday, R.M. Steers and L. Porter, "The Measurement of Organizational Commitment,"* Journal of Vocational Behaviour, *14 (1979): 224-247.*



average commitment score ranging from one to seven is calculated.

Figure 1 shows the average commitment scores of our sample. Only a small proportion of participants fell within the low-commitment extreme. Almost one third were in the middle category, perhaps sitting on the fence between low and high commitment, while about 42% were in the higher range of commitment to the Correctional Service of Canada.

There were also several more concrete indicators of commitment in the responses of staff participants:

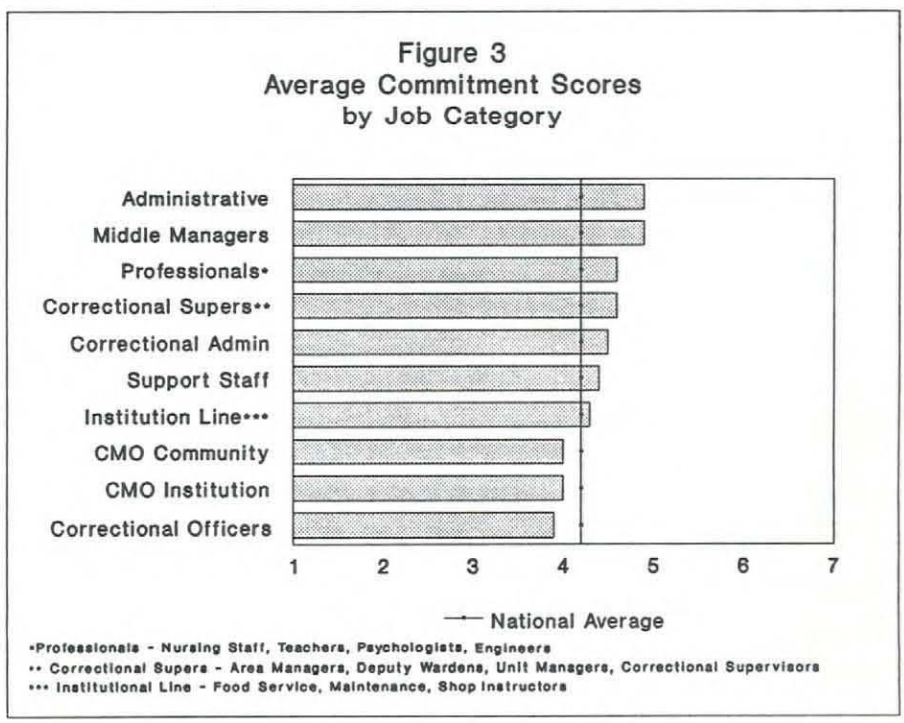
- 76% of staff said they were "willing to put in a great deal of effort beyond that normally expected in order to help this organization be successful";
- 54% said they were "proud to tell others that I am part of this organization";
- 37% said that "this organization really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance"; and
- only 9% said that "deciding to work for this organization was a definite mistake."

When compared to the results of the large public service survey of six federal departments in which an abbreviated version of the *Organizational Commitment Questionnaire* was used, it can be seen that, in general, the levels of commitment in the Correctional Service of Canada are comparable to other departments. As shown in Figure 2, however, a slightly larger proportion of Correctional Service of Canada respondents fell within the high-commitment category, and within the low-commitment category. These differences in distribution result in a smaller proportion of correctional staff who are categorized in the middle-commitment group.

Overall, the survey provided positive results concerning employees' level of commitment to the Correctional Service of Canada. There were slight regional variations in commitment levels, with Ontario and Quebec showing lower scores than the national average and the Pacific region showing a higher average.

There was also a clear indication that some staff groups were less committed than others. Figure 3 illustrates the average commitment scores for 10 occupational categories within the organization. Strikingly, the results revealed that respondents who worked directly with offenders (e.g., correctional officers and case-management officers) expressed the lowest levels of commitment. The highest levels were expressed by those who had administrative duties and middle-management responsibilities.

An important goal of the Staff



Commitment Study was to provide greater understanding of how commitment among correctional staff is influenced. We asked what factors might account for why some staff members are more committed than others, and discovered that a variety of factors came into play. As we have seen above, higher commitment was associated with not working directly with offenders. Other factors included length of service (newer staff members were more committed), gender (females were more committed), having positive attitudes toward the field of corrections, having a desire to work with people, being open to change, having career-development goals and plans, feeling that the organization was open and flexible about new ideas and reporting a low level of job stress. Job stressors that were more closely associated with lower commitment included vague complaints about management and feeling that inmates were stressful (e.g., day-to-day relations with inmates were a source of irritation or annoyance).

Because some factors had stronger influences on commitment levels than others, we conducted analyses to determine the relative importance of the various factors.[6] The most important factors were, in descending order:

- having positive attitudes toward the field of corrections;
- viewing the organization as open and flexible;
- having a career-development orientation; and
- reporting lower levels of work stress.

Having positive attitudes toward corrections was by far the most important factor that emerged from the analyses. It appears that strong commitment is much more likely to be expressed by people who like the field of corrections and the work involved.

The above factors suggest two areas of influence on commitment. One refers to external sources whereby the personal characteristics of staff members have a favourable influence on commitment, such as having positive attitudes toward corrections and possessing a career orientation. The other factors are more internal and may be controlled more easily by the organization, for example, the way work is structured, work-related stress and communication and openness within the organization.

There were some interesting differences when we looked at factors that influenced commitment across different occupational groups. Because of the lower commitment levels we observed in staff members who worked directly with offenders, we examined the case-manager and correctional-officer groups more closely.

For both groups, positive attitudes toward corrections was again the most critical commitment factor. However, we found that the importance of other factors varied between the two groups. For example, the second most important factor for correctional officers was endorsement of rehabilitation. The third most important factor for this group was complaints about management – correctional officers who complained about management were less likely to be committed. For case-management officers, career-development orientation was the second most important factor, followed by the perception that the Correctional Service of Canada was open and flexible concerning new ideas.

Differences in the importance of commitment factors across occupational categories should help us select strategies for increasing commitment among groups of staff that show particularly low levels of commitment. More detailed analyses of the data should provide further clues as to how we can help specific groups of staff become more engaged in their work.

Workplace Stress

The broader survey of Canadian federal public service departments suggested that many public servants experience a great deal of stress, which they attribute to their work. The results of our study led to similar conclusions.

There are a number of methods used to assess stress in work populations, including measures of health and emotional well-being, subjective reports of stress symptoms and reports of feeling stressed or burned out. In our study, we asked respondents, by way of questionnaire items, to rate the level of day-to-day stress they experience in the course of doing their job. In addition, interviewers asked the participants to talk about the types of stress they experienced in an effort to gain a greater understanding of what factors in our workplace contribute to feelings of stress. After conducting their interviews, researchers rated the level of stress they observed in those interviewed.

The results were interesting. Table 2 shows the responses we

Table 2
Perceptions of Workplace Stress among CSC Staff

	Percentage		
	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree
A lot of times my job makes me very frustrated or angry.	52.9	13.1	34.0
I usually feel that I am under a lot of pressure when I am at work.	45.0	16.3	38.6

[6] *Multiple regression was used for these analyses.*

received to questionnaire items concerning stress.[7] About half of the respondents agreed that they experienced some degree of stress in conducting their work.

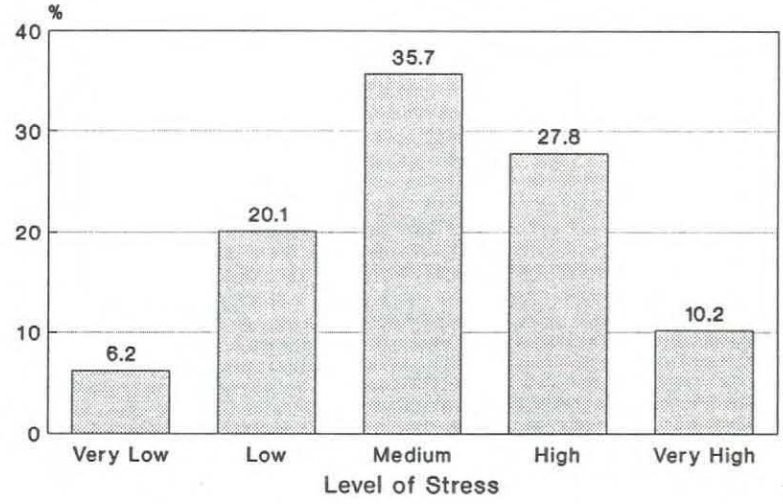
A similar picture emerged when we looked at the interviewers' ratings. As Figure 4 shows, the ratings, based on all of the information that came out in the interview, were made on a five-point scale, ranging from very low to very high work stress. Surprisingly, only 26.2% of those interviewed were described as experiencing low or very low stress. Most participants (63.5%) fell within the medium and high levels of stress, and about 10% were placed in the very high work-stress category.

What causes stress in our staff members? The question is a difficult one to answer. We asked participants to identify up to six major sources of work stress in their lives. We then attempted to place the responses into a number of broad categories. Although classifying many of the responses was difficult, the results provided some indication of what those interviewed believed to be the major causes of work stress.

Figure 5 illustrates the frequency of identification for each of the broad categories. It is interesting to note that the sources of stress most frequently cited pertained to correctional security issues. About 27% reported stress associated with fear of offenders or lack of more security procedures. The second and third most cited sources of stress referred to poor communication in the organization and a workload that was judged as being too heavy. About one quarter of staff participants cited these areas as a cause of stress in their day-to-day work.

Personal relationships at work were another interesting source of stress. For example, inmates and co-workers were both identified as being equally stressful. While some staff members felt that their immediate supervisors were a source of stress (21%), the majority did not mention supervisors when they were asked to think about what made their jobs more stressful.

Figure 4
Ratings of Stress Levels among Staff Interviewed



Management was rather vaguely perceived as a source of stress. For example, about one fifth of participants reported stress because of their perception that management imposed policies on staff. A related concern was that management did not provide sufficient direction and failed to listen to staff.

Less frequently mentioned sources of stress included lack of training, staffing procedures, union matters and bilingual policies. There were several sources of stress that were too specific to place in the broad categories developed by the researchers. For example, a few staff members complained of too many telephone calls or discriminatory behaviour on the part of other staff members.

Future analysis on the issue of stress will attempt to provide greater understanding of how individual characteristics of staff and workplace conditions affect stress levels. For example, we will be exploring what characteristics – including personality traits and occupational history – contribute to higher stress levels. In addition, we will examine how characteristics of staff predict the sources of stress that are identified.

Staff Aspirations

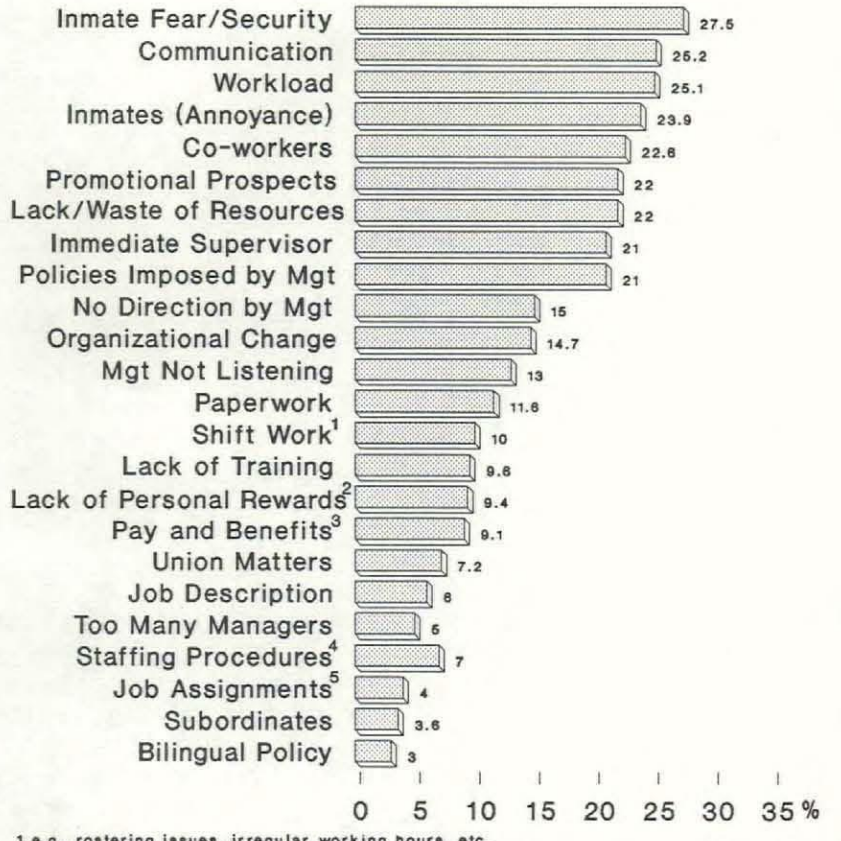
Interviewers asked staff participants a number of questions about their career plans in the Correctional Service of Canada, what they were doing about their plans and what the organization could do to help them. In particular, respondents were asked where they would like to be in their career path five years from now.

About 7.5% of the respondents said that retirement within the next five years was their major career goal. Another 14.8% felt that they would like to work outside the organization within five years. Hence, close to 80% of staff interviewed planned to remain employed with the organization in the foreseeable future.

By asking if they had applied for a position outside the organization in the last six months, we were able to

[7] *The questionnaire items were derived from F.T. Cullen, B.G. Link, N.T. Wolfe and J. Frank, "The Social Dimensions of Correctional Officer Stress,"* Justice Quarterly, *2 (1985): 505-533.*

Figure 5
Issues Identified as Sources of Stress
by CSC Staff Interviewed



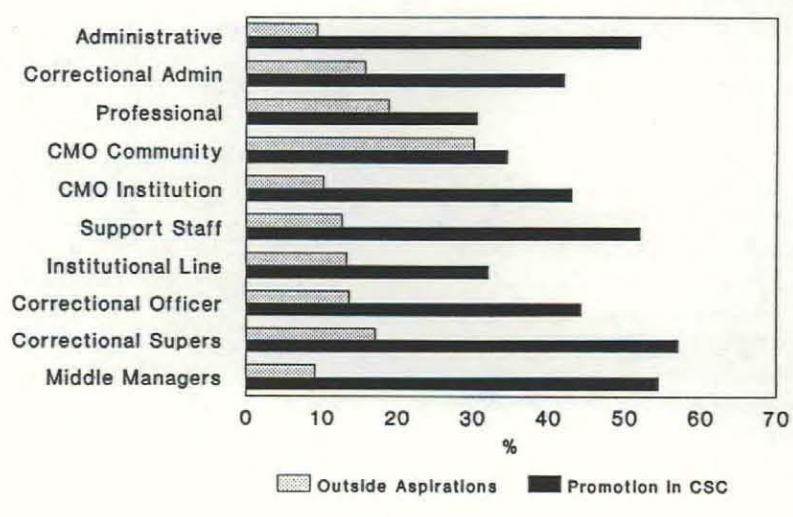
1 e.g., rostering issues, irregular working hours, etc.
2 e.g., never see results, etc.
3 e.g., low pay, retirement provisions, wage freeze, etc.
4 e.g., unfair staffing, acting positions,hiring from outside, too many term positions, etc.
5 e.g., relocations, change in security level of institution.

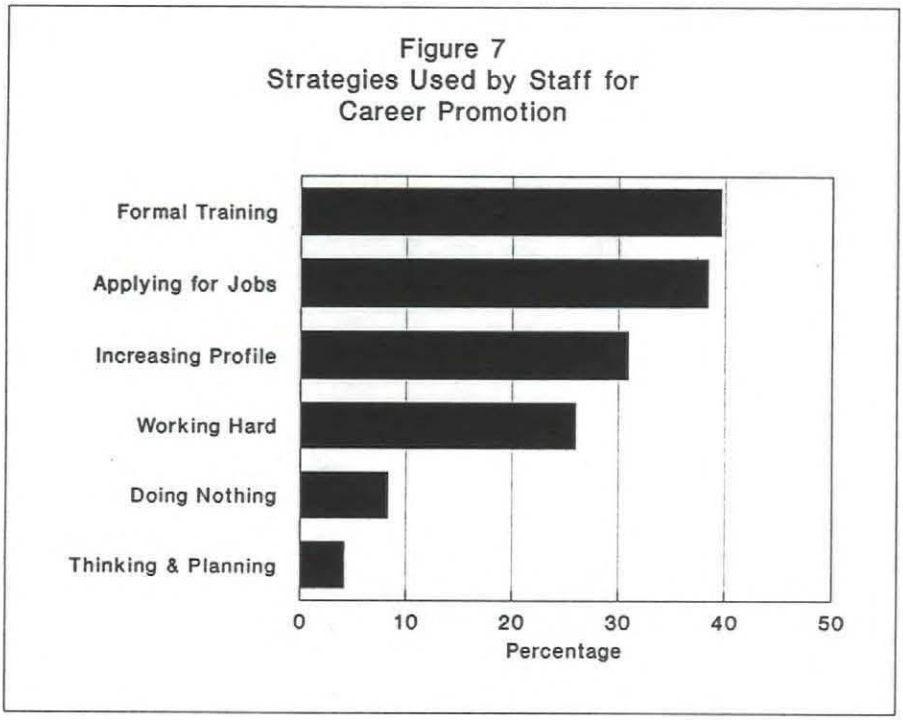
gain some understanding of the equivalence between outside aspirations and concrete steps taken to fulfill those aspirations. About 37% of those who had outside ambitions had applied for jobs in other organizations in the last six months. While some staff members may be delaying their exit from the organization, it is possible that many of those who hope to leave will not take steps to turn that hope into reality.

Of the participants who said they intended to remain with the Correctional Service of Canada, a minority felt that they would be content to do the same job for the next five years. About 26% of the "stayers" said they wanted to do the same job, while about 4.8% said they would like lateral transfers (e.g., to a new institution) and 9.6% said they would like a lateral transfer that involved a different type of job within the department. Almost half of respondents, or 44.3%, said they would like to be promoted in the next five years. This included some staff members who said they also had aspirations to pursue careers outside the organization. Thirty-five percent of those interviewed who were seeking a promotion said they wanted to be promoted to management.

When we looked at the desire for promotion by occupational category, we found only slight differences across the 10 staff groups. Figure 6 shows the proportion of staff members in each group who wanted promotions and the proportion who planned to pursue careers outside of the organization. The community case-management group had the highest proportion of staff with career aspirations that did not include the Correctional Service of Canada. The figure also shows that staff belonging to the professional, community case-management and institutional line-staff groups had the lowest levels of aspirations for promotion. Correctional supervisory staff and middle managers exhibited the highest levels. About 44% of correctional

Figure 6
Career Aspirations by Job Category





officers, which is the largest occupational group in the organization, hoped for promotion. Again, differences in proportions of staff members who wanted to stay with the organization and receive promotions did not vary a great deal across the major occupational groupings.

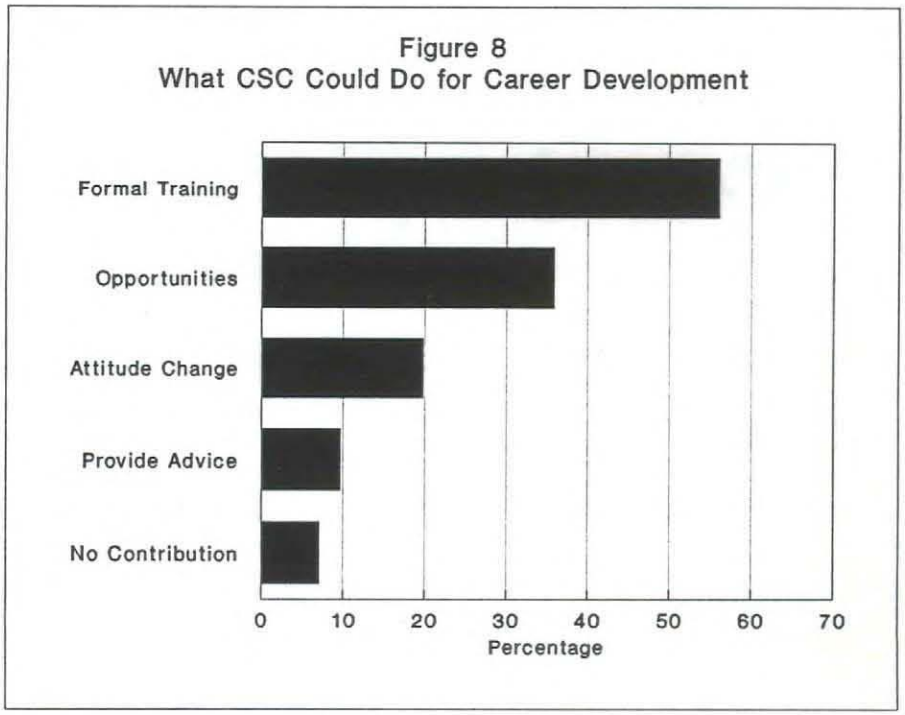
There were some links between aspirations and staff commitment. Based on the *Organizational Commitment Questionnaire* scores discussed above, we divided the sample into low, middle and high commitment and compared aspirations across the three levels. About 34% of respondents in the low-commitment category were considering leaving the Correctional Service of Canada in the next five years, while only 12% of the middle- and 6% of the high-commitment groups were looking to outside career alternatives.

Aspirations for promotions were also related to staff commitment. Our data indicated that 35% of the low-, 40% of the middle- and 54% of the high-commitment groups said they wanted to receive promotions within the next five years.

We also examined the strategies adopted by respondents to further their careers in the organization (see Figure 7). Although most respondents combined more than one approach, participation in some type of training was the most frequent response. This included taking university courses, French-language instruction and other types of formal training. Applying for jobs and accepting acting positions were other strategies used by participants. Only a small minority of those who wanted promotions said they were doing nothing to further their careers.

Many respondents believed the organization could take concrete action to help them pursue their career objectives (see Figure 8). Only about 7% felt that it could make no contribution to their career development. For the majority of participants who wanted to be promoted (56%), the provision of education and training opportunities by the organization was perceived as very important.

Many respondents felt that the organization should provide them with leave time or funding to pursue training that would be relevant to their career development in the Correctional Service of Canada. A large proportion also felt that the organization could help them by offering more opportunities to act in higher positions, allowing them to gain the necessary experience to qualify for competitions. About one fifth of those who wanted promotions felt that the organization's attitude toward staff was an obstacle to their mobility. For



example, some of those surveyed mentioned that the organization could do more to encourage performance, while others stressed that capabilities and skills should be recognized as the sole criteria for promotion.

In terms of training opportunities, other survey results indicated a relatively high rate of participation in programs that were offered or sponsored by the Correctional Service of Canada. Seventy-five percent of respondents had participated in at least one workshop, training session or conference in the year preceding the study. On average, those surveyed had participated in 2.3 training sessions. Approximately 61% claimed to have made requests to attend a particular training session. Of those who had made a training request, 60% said the request had been granted.

Results of the Staff Commitment Study show that very few respondents want to remain in the same job for the next five years. Rather, our profile suggests a work force that is eager to be exposed to different types of work within the organization and to advance to higher levels in it. It is also encouraging that only a small minority of those surveyed want to pursue careers outside the Correctional Service of Canada in the next five years. In terms of career mobility within the organization, it is clear that staff members see education and training as the key strategy for advancement. ■

Does Education Make a Difference for Correctional Officers?

Higher educational standards for correctional officers have often been viewed as a method of increasing job satisfaction and professional status. Education has also been seen as a vehicle for enhancing correctional treatment: better educated staff who work with offenders may be more sympathetic to the cause of rehabilitation.

Data from the Staff Commitment Study made it possible to compare correctional officers with varying levels of education on a variety of factors. The results suggested that higher education leads to positive results in some domains and more negative ones in others. In some areas, education does not seem to make any difference.

About half of the correctional officers in the sample had completed high school or less (44.5%), while close to 14% had completed a bachelor's degree at a university. The remainder had achieved some level of postsecondary education including community college diplomas or courses or university courses.

Education was associated with more positive attitudes toward offenders: higher educated officers were more likely to support rehabilitation, were less interested in the custodial, or security, function of their jobs and preferred less social distance from inmates than officers with less education. However, the correlation only surfaced when we compared those who had actually completed university with those who had not.

Interestingly, the university-educated officers were no more likely than their less-educated counterparts to prefer jobs that involved working with people. Also, there were no differences attributable to education when we looked at the extent to which officers believed they should be involved in counselling offenders. In other words, those with bachelor's degrees were no more ready than others to intervene with offenders in the role of counsellor or helper.

We also looked at job satisfaction. Consistent with previous studies of correctional officers in other jurisdictions, we found that the higher the education of the officer, the lower the level of job satisfaction. Officers with high school education or less reported the greatest job satisfaction, those with an intermediate level of postsecondary achievement had the second highest level of satisfaction, and officers with university degrees reported the least satisfaction.

There were a number of other areas where we did not detect any differences by education level. There was no difference in the levels of commitment of correctional officers with varying levels of education. The same was true when we looked at the number of staff who wanted to leave the organization. We also discovered no differences between the three educational groups when we looked at measures of personal involvement in the job, the need for growth and career-development orientations. We had expected that correctional officers with higher levels of education might be more interested in career-development issues and show a greater preference for work that provided opportunities for personal growth. However, the data failed to confirm our predictions.

These results do not have clear implications for employment policy. On the one hand, educated officers appear to express attitudes toward offenders that are more in line with the reintegration objectives of the Correctional Service of Canada. On the other hand, we have seen that more educated officers, especially university-trained staff, are not as happy in their jobs as their colleagues who have less schooling. In addition, the pattern of findings implies that while university-trained officers may be more positive about reintegration, they do not necessarily perceive that they can contribute to this function in a substantial way (e.g., counselling, helping people).

These findings hint that we should look beyond educational achievement to other strategies if we want to increase job satisfaction and promote correctional officers' involvement in the work of reintegrating offenders. ■

Why Do We Need Organizational Research?

"The focus [of criminological and correctional research] generally remains on the lawbreaker, types of crimes and criminals, and processes for inducing change. While these are critical issues and provide the substance or **content** of the correctional enterprise, the failure to study correctional agencies, organizational behavior, structural arrangements, and decision-making strategies, among others, reveals a serious inattention to the **process** of corrections." ■

Source: A.W. Cohn, "The Failure of Correctional Management – Reviewed: Present and Future Dimensions," *Federal Probation*, June (1991): p. 12.

Some Responses to the Staff Commitment Study

Results of the Staff Commitment Study were presented to a gathering of the Correctional Service of Canada's senior managers in December 1991. The following are excerpts from three senior managers' comments on the study.

Comments from Dan Kane, Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Operations, Ontario Region

"First of all, I have found that there is not a lot new in the study, as interesting as the study is, but I do find one thing both new and disturbing, and that is the attitudes of the WP group.[1]

"Historically, this was always the feeder group for senior management in the Correctional Service of Canada, and I think it would be a mistake for us if we did not pay particular attention to that shifting attitude, because I think there is a powerful message there, and we had best be responsive to it.

"And it's a difficult issue to be responsive to because, of all the groups in the Correctional Service of Canada that we have responded to, there is not one that we have been more proactive with than the WP group, certainly in the Ontario region. We have paid more attention to that group, that single group, than any other one in our employ, and I think that it is noteworthy that that did not seem to turn the corner in terms of their attitude.

"We had a meeting recently in the Ontario region with all of the senior managers in the region, all of the presidents of the Union of Solicitor General Employees and a substantial number of vice-presidents and shop stewards. We sat down and talked about the future of the education of staff in the CSC [Correctional Service of Canada], and it was a very interesting session as we sat together and tried to tackle the issues of the future in unity.

"We spent a day talking about training and the front-line staff hammered away long and hard on the need for relevant training and on the need for what can best be called leadership on the part of the front-line supervisors – leadership being defined as: a) earning the respect of those that you lead, b) earning the respect of those that you serve, and c) being able to get people to work toward a common end without creating any resentment or resistance in the process.

"As a region we have sat down and given that issue considerable discussion, and we are in the process of trying to focus our efforts and our finest talent, in terms of trying to sit down and say 'How can you turn that around.'

"It would appear that for our front-line staff, as they look to the organization, as they look up in the organization, the values and attitudes and vision they have are shaped so strongly by their vision of, and their relationship with, their supervisor. I think this is an incredibly important element that we will ignore at our peril.

"I do not believe that we can spend a lot of time proselytizing the middle management and senior management of the CSC, and see a lot of dividends in return. I believe that this group is basically converted to the correctional principles as they have been so well enunciated over the last several years, and then I think that it is not a higher sense of ownership from this group that we need, but a higher sense of ownership from the bottom-line troops that we need. These bottom-line troops end up responding most directly and positively to the front-line supervisors.

"I would disagree, here and now, loudly and long, that our staff is not committed. The issue is not commitment – the issue is committed to what? This study has asked our staff to declare a level of commitment to a particular set of correctional objectives, and a particular statement of beliefs and objectives.

"I know for instance, that on the one graph that shows the uncommitted portion, and the huge chunk at the top represents the lowest level of commitment to that which we are trying to achieve, we say those people have low commitment.

"But it has been my experience that there are members of that group who have high levels of commitment to different things. Within that group you may have people who have low

[1] *The WP occupational group includes all case managers in the Correctional Service of Canada.*

levels of commitment to our goals and objectives, but enormous and disproportionate influence in terms of shaping the attitudes and values of other staff away from what it is that we are trying to accomplish.

"The neutral group is interesting because in the presence of a very powerful and influential leadership of this negative group they will remain silent, and we will lose them. They will tell us 'Gee, isn't that awful that people have these attitudes'; yet, given the opportunity to stand up and do something about it one-on-one with some of these individuals, they will choose to do otherwise.

"So, I think that it is not a question of commitment. Generally speaking, my experience with the CSC has been that our staff is enormously committed – it is a question of committed to what, and I think this is where we have to spend some time.

"The attitude and competency of our front-line supervisors is absolutely critical to the future of this organization. It is simply not good enough for all of us to be able to say 'Rah, rah – Go team go – ain't it grand – aren't we all in accord with this thing,' and assume that this is in fact going to be sufficient to change much if we don't have the front-line supervisors, the sergeants in the army, pulling along with us – in fact, dragging us behind, in terms of marching on to progressive change.

"The other issue that I think is worth spending a moment or two talking about is that we have long equated interpersonal skills, a thing upon which we place very high value, with leadership skills. There is a substantive difference. There are those individuals who have superlative interpersonal skills and yet are weak or ineffective leaders. There are also those powerful leaders whose interpersonal skills may be just a little weak. It is an issue that I think we need to spend more time on. We need to focus more attention on this because having a bunch of 'nice folks' who are well skilled interpersonally is not good enough. We have got to be able to march forward and translate those interpersonal skills into powerful leadership skills.

"Our front-line staff have been fairly articulate in what that means for them. It means: 'Does this individual know what I am responsible for? Does this individual understand the situation that I have to face on a day-to-day basis? Does this individual have my respect? And does this individual spend any time with me?'

"The absent supervisor is getting to be a common theme. You say 'Where is your supervisor?' – well, my supervisor is off at a meeting somewhere, doing all the right things, or perhaps, not doing the right things, but for the right reason. They want to see more involvement of their supervisors, they want to spend more time with their supervisors.

"I do believe that the secret to success – the secret to achieving the next level of achievement in the organization – is going to depend very directly on our capacity to provide supervisors that have a) the right leadership skills; b) the right motivation themselves; and c) the right amount of time to spend at the job of supervising as opposed to chasing the other issues in which we are very apt to involve them."

Comments from Brian Lang, District Director, Northern-Interior District Parole Office, Pacific Region

"After reviewing the study I guess I had a number of mixed reactions to it. Number one was the regional differences, and I suppose the study left me, in a lot of ways, wanting to hear more.

"I was surprised and somewhat disappointed about the commitment levels of the case-management staff – I had expected, from my own experience, that it would be higher than it was – and the fact that it falls within the lower range of scores on the scale was surprising, and I was somewhat disappointed and concerned about that.

"This is coming from my perspective in a community office. I guess when I left the last senior administrators' conference in May – I'm a relative newcomer to the management group – I was very impressed with the presentation that was given to us on benchmarking. And it seems to me that this particular study would lend itself very well to that type of process, and I would be very interested in receiving more material on this and on the types of organizations or operations that perform particularly well and why they perform well.

"With respect to the support-staff group, the study didn't give me the information that I required, I guess in a sense on the differences between institutional and community operations, and I think that there has been an interesting phenomenon which seems to have grown in the past year or so, that I am not sure how to deal with yet, but I think that the Mission Document, in a general way, has created certain expectations among staff: expectations for enhanced performance on the part of management, and there is often a sense of dissatisfaction when those expectations are not met in a fairly comprehensive way.

"I can recall in my own small operation – a year ago we didn't have computers. Now everybody has them, and there was a complaint that was made to me recently that someone's computer took four minutes to boot up versus two minutes for another computer in the office, and I thought that was a rather strange development – but it seems as if as we acquire more tools we seem to want more – there's something to look at there.

"I guess in many ways the study, in a general way, wasn't terribly surprising. I think that the fact that the percentage of staff who are expressing general satisfaction or general commitment with this organization was somewhat predictable from a subjective perspective, but there are a series of anomalies in there that I am really quite interested in having a further look at, and I hope that we can start focusing in on operations that are

continued on page 40

Gender Balance

There are at least two ways of looking at employment equity, or gender balance. One is the more traditional approach – setting goals and establishing accountability for their achievement. The other is a cultural approach – separating the issue of gender from discussions about the future of organizations. With the traditional approach to gender balance, the motivation for organizational response comes primarily from extrinsic influences. Within a broader cultural perspective, organizations are intrinsically motivated to make more and better use of the capacities of both genders.

In this issue of Views and Reviews, a female manager presents two perspectives on employment equity. It is left to the reader to decide whether, and to what degree, the two views are compatible or mutually exclusive.

by Lucie McClung
Correctional Service of Canada

Equity Is Not a Women's Issue – It Is a Management Challenge

Much has been said about the identification and elimination of barriers to women in the work force. A host of individual and organizational coping strategies has been proposed, ranging from "how to fit in" to "defining a feminine managerial style."

In the 1970s and 1980s, much was done to secure equality of opportunity for men and women. Today, the representation rate of women in the public service is equal to that found in the Canadian labour force.

However, much more needs to be done. Consider the following findings of the *Task Force on Barriers to Women in the Public Service* (1990):

- Women are not evenly distributed throughout the occupational groups of the public service – the majority (60%) perform clerical or secretarial duties.
- In almost all occupational groups, the majority of women occupy the lower levels, associated with lower pay.

These realities are reinforced by outdated assumptions and false impressions about men and women. No matter how inaccurate these are, they have become "conventional wisdom," severely limiting opportunities for women.

Even in the face of predicted shortages of skilled workers and an aging labour force, it is clear that gender balance will not be achieved automatically. **The time for debate is over – there is a pressing need for change through action.**

Success in this matter depends on a willingness to challenge prevailing norms. The gap between the perception and the reality of women's commitment and abilities must be addressed. Management must be held accountable to achieve better representation of women in all job categories, reflecting the proportion of available men and women in society as a whole. Policies to support women's multiple commitments to work, the family and the community must be implemented. Job options and career enhancements must be developed.

Without official commitments and clear agendas, the ultimate goal of equality will not be achieved.

The Category Is "People," Not "Men" and "Women"

The decade of the 1990s is a time when the public sector is redefining the essential characteristics of a successful organization and tackling the challenge of how to become one.

Designed to serve customer requirements, organizational behaviours will become more and more externally driven. Innovation, creativity, responsiveness – all leading to productivity – will be encouraged and actively pursued.

In the race to change the focus of current organizations, solutions and mutually acceptable plans of action must be quickly found. There is too much at stake to continue to take shots at one another – everything must be open to analysis and change.

And therein lie opportunities for **men and women**.

Organizations must question traditional command-and-control styles of leadership as the only way to get results. The definition of leadership must be expanded to create a widening path for all sorts of executives, men and women, to attain positions of leadership. Successful organizations will recognize and value diverse leadership styles to find the strength and flexibility to endure and grow.

With organizations flattening, technology changing and competition increasing, leaders will have to know how to draw upon talents and ideas wherever they are found. They will be called upon to mobilize the support of those they do not supervise directly and will be judged on their ability to make things happen without the old command tools.

Organizations will be so hungry to find people who can deliver these skills that gender will become a minor consideration.

This is good news for women because it levels the playing field.

Isn't it time to stop talking about gender differences? ■

Studying Senior Managers' Career Paths

by Mike Hale, Charles Stuart and Dawne Carleton
Training and Development Division, Personnel and Training Sector
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Correctional Service of Canada

Career advancement within the Correctional Service of Canada, no matter how mysterious it may seem, is in fact the product of several definable, and for the most part controllable, variables – not divine intervention. Education, experience, personal commitment and the organization's corporate dynamics are the basic precepts for employees interested in careers within the Correctional Service of Canada.

In March 1991, we asked our senior operational managers (the wardens and district parole directors, as well as former wardens and district directors now working at national and regional headquarters) to participate in a study tracking their career paths. Of the 70 senior managers asked, 40 agreed to take part. They were sent a questionnaire to fill out on their background and their views on various aspects of career progression within the organization. Several participants were also interviewed, either in person or by telephone, for a deeper understanding of their views. Highlights of the study findings are presented here.

Education/Skills

Education is closely linked to career mobility. The figure shows that the vast majority of senior managers pursued postsecondary education. In fact, almost two thirds (65%) had master's or Ph.D. degrees, while just less than one third (30%) had bachelor's degrees. Two senior managers in the sample held high school diplomas.

The managers in the sample held a total of 89 degrees, and most had at least two. Some obtained as many as four different degrees during their careers. The fields of study varied across a wide range of arts and science disciplines. General arts, psychology, criminology and education dominated the fields chosen for bachelor's degrees. For master's degrees, criminology was most common, surpassing all other disciplines (12 out of a total of 36). Social work, public administration and education were the next most common choices.

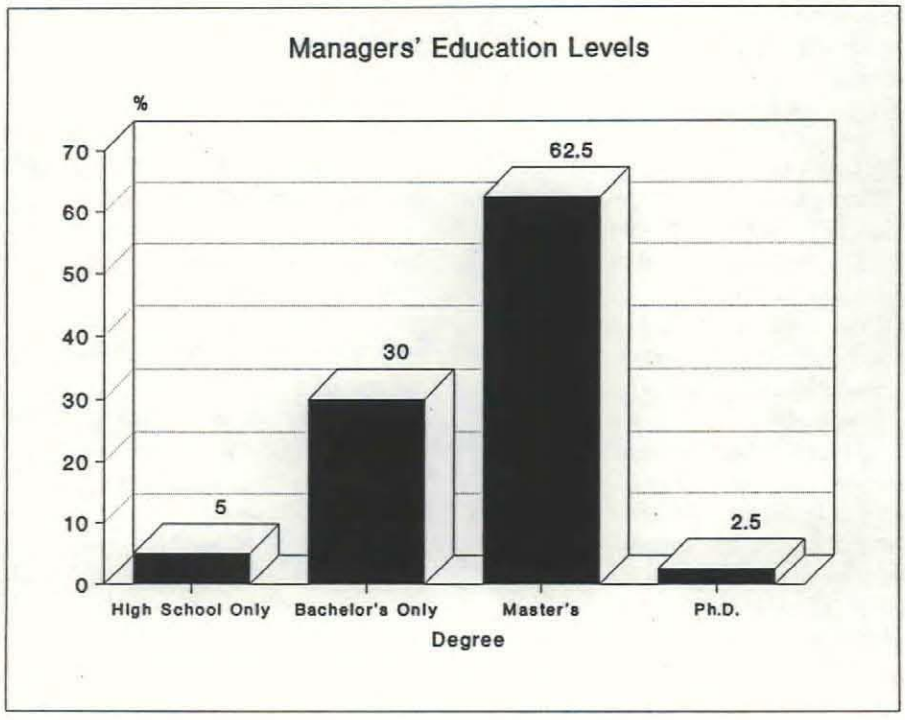
While education is an important factor in career progression, formal education is only one part of it. For a senior manager in this organization, learning, through various situations and media, is a vital part of successful managing. Unlike in the past, when they were primarily seen and heard, senior managers must now look and listen as never before. The decisions that they make must reflect a knowledge of, and sensitivity to, all of the internal and external groups that influence the system.

When asked what skills were most important for their careers, just over two thirds (67%) of respondents ranked communication as most important, but various other managerial skills were also highly ranked including analytical, managerial and leadership abilities.

Previous Employment

What were these senior managers doing immediately before they began their first job in corrections? Most were students attending university (16 respondents). Other common occupations were: secondary school teacher (7), worker in private industry (5), public servant (3), social worker (3), probation officer (3), volunteer worker (1), psychologist (1) and member of the military (1).

When asked why they chose a career in corrections, about half of those who responded stated that they had a prior interest in corrections. Another 22% were working in corrections as volunteers, summer students or in field placements. These two categories – previous interest and



volunteer or student involvement – when combined, account for almost three quarters (72%) of responses. Six of the senior managers (17%) entered the field of corrections because of either the availability of employment or the opportunity for a career change. Four (11%) entered corrections for reasons related to salary or job stability. The common circumstances among these senior managers were that, for the most part, they liked corrections and became committed to it early in their careers.

Beginning a Career in Corrections

How did these future senior managers begin their careers with the Correctional Service of Canada? Twenty-four (60%) began as case management officers – 15 (37%) as case management officers in the community and 9 (23%) as case management officers in an institution. Five were initially employed as teachers in institutions, two were psychologists and two were employed as correctional officers. The remainder began their careers in one of the following positions: case management supervisor (1), social development officer (1), food services officer (1), secretary (1), finance officer (1), head, social development (1), co-ordinator, regional community services (1) and assistant director (1).

Half of the managers (50%) spent six months to two years in their first position, while about one third (32%) spent between two and four years in this job. A minority (18%) spent more than four years in their first position.

For more than half of these managers (22 or 55%), their second position involved a lateral move as opposed to a promotion.

The career progression of these future senior managers began to take shape as they gained their second promotion. A substantial proportion entered into supervisory and management positions early in their careers: 22% became area managers (parole) while another 18% moved into positions at the level of assistant warden (e.g., assistant warden, socialization, education and training or technical services). Others moved into initial management positions in correctional programs (e.g., head, social development) or operations (e.g., head, living unit), or into various positions at regional or national headquarters.

The average (mean) length of time these managers spent in their second career position was just less than two years (20 months), while the most common (modal) length of time was considerably less at one year.

Career Progression

Career paths often did not involve promotions directly from one level to the next. Of the senior managers who eventually attained positions as district directors, the vast majority (15 of 22) first experienced a number of lateral moves or promotions to positions at institutions and headquarters. Many who began their careers as case management officers on the community side (i.e., parole officers) moved on to institutional management positions, became middle managers (typically assistant warden, socialization), and then moved to a regional or national headquarters position before returning to a community office as the district director.

The great variety in the period of time spent in first and second positions and in the types of jobs taken illustrates that there is no particular career path that aspiring employees should follow in pursuing a career with the Correctional Service of Canada. Instead, it is evident that all manner of job assignments and time frames contribute to career development, with the underlying key factors being flexibility and mobility. The findings show that frequent movement among institutional, community and headquarters positions is, in fact, the norm.

There were key positions held by respondents, however. Just as the majority of these senior managers were case management officers early in their careers, the most common mid-career position was assistant warden, socialization. Just over half of the senior managers (21) held this position at one time or another. Other common mid-career positions were assistant warden, security (5) and assistant warden, education and training (5).

These findings clearly dispel the notion that there is a direct vertical career path leading to management positions. As further evidence of this, we found that these senior managers occupied an average of seven different positions in an average time span of 13 years – a new position almost every two years – before attaining the position of warden or district director. On average, of the six positions held after the first one, three were lateral transfers and three were promotions. This fifty-fifty split between lateral transfers and promotions indicates that the broadening of experience through lateral moves is as important as promotions in career advancement.

Lateral moves were often also geographic moves, an observation which highlights the importance of mobility. Each senior manager made an average of five geographic moves before becoming a district director or warden. These moves helped managers broaden their background of experience and skills. In fact, 23 of the 40 respondents (58%) had a combination of institutional and headquarters (regional or national) experience. Of these 23 senior managers, 4 (17%) had moved once, 13 (56%) moved twice and 6 (26%) had moved between three and five times before obtaining their first warden or district director position. A significant number (13 or 34%) had a combination of institutional, community-office and headquarters experience. Similarly 14 (37%) had both community and institutional experience. Very few managers in the study had only institutional or community-office experience.

Secondments to regional and national headquarters were most often mentioned as providing the most valuable job experience. But another factor also proved important to many – mentoring. Several mentioned that a warden or senior manager had taken

an interest in their development at some point in their career.

The career paths of respondents exhibit how these senior managers adhere to a continuous learning philosophy. At the time of the study, 27 had progressed beyond the level of warden or district director into positions providing new career experience. On average, these 27 experienced three lateral moves and one promotion after their first warden or district director position (in an average span of five years).

Thus, for most senior managers later in their careers, lateral transfers surpassed promotions in frequency by almost three to one. For example, 27% of the senior managers moved into a second warden or district director position, and 16% held anywhere from three to five different warden or district director positions. The remainder moved into positions within regional or national headquarters.

Despite careful preparation, however you choose to express it, fortuitous circumstance (or pure luck) remains a powerful factor in career progression, and a daunting one at that. At first glance, it seems to override such important elements as education, experience and personal commitment. But, even as being in the right place at the right time is supported by one senior manager, it is qualified by the next: "When you think about it, luck is actually that moment when **opportunity meets preparation**. If you have the preparation, you'll recognize the opportunity."

Conclusion

Typical career paths do not exist for those aspiring to senior operations positions in the Correctional Service of Canada. Instead, this study found that there was as much lateral movement as there was vertical movement (i.e., promotions). Moreover, the lateral and vertical moves spanned the gamut of positions in corrections.

While most of the managers who responded placed a high value on education, something more important was highlighted – learning. A willingness to learn was undoubtedly the single most important factor in shaping the careers of these managers. Mobility was also crucial, and the study shows that it was closely related to learning. Learning in itself was not enough; managers had to be prepared to move to take advantage of opportunities, experience new positions and develop their skills.

Finally, a strong sense of self and of personal values emerged from the responses of these managers: they are committed to doing a good job, to helping offenders and staff members and to maintaining a stable life outside of corrections. ■

Mentorships

In recent years, popular and academic literature has drawn attention to the benefits offered by mentoring relationships to protégés, mentors and organizations. It has been suggested that mentoring can lead to career advancement, higher pay and greater career satisfaction, thereby leading to a more committed staff.

A recent study by researchers from York University and Queen's University compared mentor relationships with typical supervisory relationships among 94 managers from high technology firms in the Ottawa area. A mentorship was defined for managers as the individual "whose career you have influenced most." A typical subordinate was defined as a direct subordinate "with whom you have a working relationship, that is most typical of the relationships you have with your subordinates."

They found that managers rated protégés as more promotable and more similar to themselves than typical subordinates. However, managers communicated less frequently with, and tended to be physically further away from, protégés than typical subordinates. Managers reported providing significantly more psychosocial support, but not more career-development support, to protégés than to typical subordinates.

The study found other statistically significant differences between the mentoring relationship and the typical subordinate relationship. Compared to typical employees, protégés were:

- more likely to be female;
- younger;
- more likely to have been hired and placed by the manager;
- more likely to receive friendship and counselling;
- confided to more;
- given more support and sponsorship;
- seen as providing more benefits to managers;
- recommended for more promotions and promoted on these recommendations more often; and
- less likely to be in the current position in the next five years.

Although managers were equally likely to review performance and provide feedback, engage in career planning, teach, promote and sponsor protégés as they were typical subordinates, protégés were found to have more successful careers, as measured by advancement and promotion, than typical subordinates.

Mentoring has been so effective as a career-development and training tool that many companies are investing in formal programs to encourage such relationships among employees. ■

R.J. Burke, C.S. McKenna and C.A. McKeen, "How Do Mentorships Differ from Typical Advisory Relationships?" *Psychological Reports*, 68 (1991): 459-466.

Exposure to Critical Incidents: What Are the Effects on Canadian Correctional Officers?

by Lois Rosine
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Correctional officers exposed to trauma in the line of duty face potentially unpleasant and disabling after-effects. Appropriate and timely intervention lessens the impact on the officer, by reducing personal stress. Intervention also helps the organization as it can facilitate the recovery of an officer's level of performance to that before the incident, and can decrease the likelihood of long-term disability leave.

Persistent psychological problems have been identified among a variety of individuals exposed to unusually traumatic or life-threatening events. It has been documented that the distress caused by such incidents can continue over extensive periods and severely impair functioning.

Historical Context

Traditionally, the concept of a disorder related to trauma has been associated with warfare. As early as 1871, during the American Civil War, Da Costa described a condition, called an "irritable heart," that was characterized by symptoms of anxiety in response to a stressor.[1] During World War I, veterans with these symptoms were thought to be suffering from "shell shock." By World War II, reflecting the influence of psychodynamic theory, the difficulties suffered by combat veterans were thought to be the result of some unresolved conflict rooted in the patient's unconscious. These conflicts, awakened in the theatre of war, were variously called "traumatic war neurosis," "combat neurosis" or "gross stress reaction."[2]

As the literature on war veterans grew, other investigators described similar syndromes in individuals exposed to such stressors as industrial accidents, natural catastrophes or even accidents in the home. The first extensive description of trauma not incurred in combat was done by Alexander Adler,[3] who studied the victims of the Coconut Grove fire – people who had been trapped in the locked, burning building. This direction led, in 1952, to the inclusion of "gross stress reaction" in the first version of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-I), a tool commonly used to diagnose mental disorders.

However, when the second version of the DSM was published in 1968, the post-traumatic syndrome category was omitted. This was surprising, given that the syndrome had achieved international recognition and various research investigations were being carried out. This may have occurred because post-traumatic syndrome, until now, was closely associated with war; the DSM-II was written during the relatively tranquil period between World War II and the Vietnam War, and the authors may have assumed that such a category was not relevant in peacetime.[4]

The problems of veterans returning from the Vietnam War provided convincing evidence to the authors of DSM-III that a category for post-traumatic syndrome needed to be reinstated. The category was identified as Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and was defined as being caused by a stressor severe enough to produce psychological trauma in most normal individuals.

In the late 1970s, research literature on victimology began to identify a host of individuals who were experiencing the symptoms of PTSD but who were survivors neither of combat nor of disasters. These were people who had been subjected to such things as physical and sexual violence or abuse. During this time, information on occupational stress was also accumulating from studies of a variety of occupational groups, such as teachers, health care workers, police and correctional workers. Members of these groups were presenting a variety of physiological and emotional difficulties related to stress.

As the 1980s approached, clinical practitioners who worked with individuals experiencing occupational stress began to notice occupational groups where some members were presenting symptoms of traumatic stress. These individuals who, by the nature of their work, were exposed to traumatic events, included police, fire personnel, ambulance and paramedical personnel, hospital emergency-department staff, disaster workers and rape crisis workers.

As part of their job responsibilities, these personnel are exposed to extremely unusual events, such as riots, hostage takings, being shot at, shooting someone in the line of duty, finding murder and suicide victims, watching someone die in spite of rescue efforts and other equally gruesome situations. These occupational events, which fall outside the range of usual human experience and are considered to be extremely distressing to almost

[1] *N.C. Andreasen, "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder," in H.I. Kaplan and B.J. Sadock (Eds.),* Comprehensive Textbook of Psychiatry */IV. Vol. 1, 4th Ed. (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins, 1985).*

[2] Ibid.

[3] *A. Adler, "Two Different Types of Post-Traumatic Neuroses,"* American Journal of Psychiatry, *102 (1945): 237-242.*

[4] *Andreasen, "Posttraumatic Stress Disorder."*

anyone, have been defined as "critical incidents."[5]

Clinicians in the field are finding that personnel exposed to such critical incidents may show a variety of physical, behavioural, emotional and cognitive stress symptoms similar to those for PTSD. The main symptoms of PTSD include: intrusive memories of the traumatic event, nightmares, hypervigilance, an exaggerated startle response and intense psychological distress when exposed to things associated with the original trauma.

The differences between critical incident stress and PTSD lie in the number of symptoms experienced by the individual and the duration of the symptoms. Critical incident stress may be thought of as a continuum of severity, with PTSD at the most extreme pole.

Personnel differ widely in their responses to critical incidents.[6] Some experience little or no effect, others experience short-term impact, while a limited number experience severe and long-term difficulties.[7]

Many of the psychological reactions experienced by persons exposed to traumatic stress are situationally related and disappear over time. However, for some individuals, the effects are severe and long lasting enough to affect their daily functioning. The human and economic costs associated with traumatic stress are significant and include increased absenteeism or resignation from work, increased use of medical services, health deterioration, marriage breakdown and even suicide.[8]

Critical Incident Stress among Correctional Officers

There are major difficulties in attempting to study critical incident stress. It is impossible to predetermine when war, riots or most other traumatic events will occur. Generally, the appropriate baseline information cannot be collected before the event. Thus, if we are to understand traumatic stress, we must compromise and study it retrospectively, asking individuals to recall their past experiences. The workplace can provide a natural laboratory for learning about the impact of exposure to traumatic stress on high-risk occupational groups.

Correctional officers are one such group. Penal institutions represent an occupational context where exposure to traumatic events is not unusual, where officers are subjected to a variety of critical incidents during the performance of their duties.

The literature identifies certain classes of events as potential triggers for traumatic reactions in an occupational context. For correctional officers, these classes of events are represented by such incidents as suicides, murders, riots, hostage takings and assaults. While not routine, these events are not unexpected in correctional work.

Although the role of general stress has been studied in the field of corrections, there is currently no research on the impact of exposure to critical incident stress in corrections. However, a major research project examined the impact of exposure to occupationally related traumatic events on correctional officers. The following is a summary of information gathered on the rates and effects of such exposure.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 122 correctional officers employed in six institutions in the Ontario region. Participating personnel were from both maximum- and minimum-security facilities and from male and female institutions. All personnel in minimum-security settings had been previously employed in medium- or maximum-security facilities. Seventy-five percent of participants were employed in male institutions. Males comprised 71% of the sample. This is not surprising, as female staff have only recently been hired as correctional officers in male facilities.

Frequency of Exposure to Critical Incidents

Information was gathered on correctional officers' exposure to job-related traumatic events. These events frequently involved exposure to serious injury or death; multiple casualties; unusual sights, sounds and circumstances; first-hand knowledge of the victim(s); and threats to officers' own safety and security. Only two officers had not been exposed to a job-related critical incident. The average number of exposures among all officers was 27.9. These numbers may seem high, but higher-security institutions have long histories of violent incidents, and most correctional officers have spent some or all of their careers working in these volatile environments.

There was a significant gender difference in the average number of exposures, with males experiencing an average of 32 exposures and females experiencing an average of 16 exposures, a breakdown reflecting the fact that the women had been employed in corrections for a significantly shorter time than the men (6 years versus 17 years).

The frequencies of exposure were collapsed into the following five categories: no exposure, one, two and three occurrences and more than three occurrences. The table lists the different types of events to which officers were exposed and the percentage of officers in each category.

Reliability of Respondents' Recall

One of the problems with the above type of data is that they rely on the respondent's ability to remember past events and experiences. Officers in this study often referred to events that were known to the author, and they frequently backed up one another's description of events. It is the author's opinion that the figures given here

[5] *J.T. Mitchell, "When Disaster Strikes: The Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Process,"* Journal of Emergency Medical Services, *January (1983): 36-39.*

[6] *J.T. Mitchell, "Recovery from Rescue,"* Response, *Fall (1982): 7-10.*

[7] *R.M. Solomon, "Post-Shooting Trauma,"* The Police Chief, *(1988): 40-45.*

[8] *J.T. Mitchell and G. Bray,* Emergency Services Stress. *(Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1990).*

Percentages of Officers Exposed to Traumatic Events

Event	Frequency of Event					Range of Frequencies
	0	1	2	3	>3	
Suicide Attempt	56%	16%	6%	5%	17%	0-50
Completed Suicide	42%	21%	15%	10%	12%	0-10
Murder	55%	14%	10%	4%	17%	0-24
Hostage Taking	66%	17%	9%	5%	3%	0-5
Been Taken Hostage	91%	7%	2%	0	0	0-2
Potential to Shoot Another *	60%	16%	12%	7%	5%	0-20
Been Physically Assaulted	54%	18%	9%	4%	15%	0-20
Seen the Physical Assault of Another	16%	16%	10%	8%	50%	0-50
Riot	35%	25%	13%	7%	20%	0-12
Slashing	64%	6%	1%	3%	26%	0-50
Other **	59%	29%	6%	6%	0	0-3

* This category included aiming the gun at another as well as actually firing. The criterion was the officer's belief that he or she would have to shoot.

** This category included events such as serious accidents while on the job and receiving life-threatening letters or phone calls.

may underestimate actual rates of exposure, as officers were often reluctant to remember these psychologically painful events. In fact, a number of officers commented that it was difficult and painful to recall the unpleasant memories as they made every effort to suppress associations and memories of traumatic events.

In conjunction with being exposed to critical incidents, 61% of officers reported that they received injuries at work (see Figure 1), and 43% of these injuries resulted in one week or more off work (see Figure 2).

Critical Incident Stress Symptoms

Officers were also asked about the impact on them of exposure to critical incidents. The PTSD section of the Diagnostic Interview Schedule was used to assess critical incident stress symptoms.

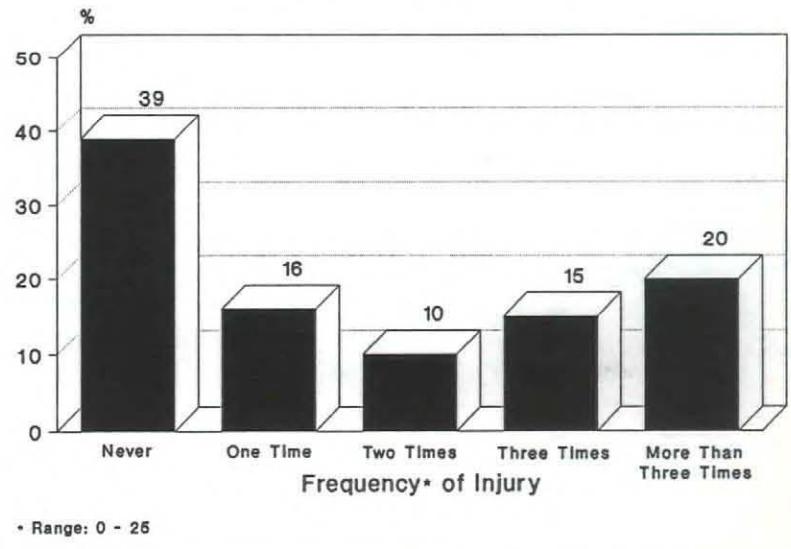
Twenty-eight percent of officers reported experiencing no symptoms of critical incident stress. As mentioned above, only 2% of officers were not exposed to traumatic events in the correctional work environment. In other words, 26% of exposed officers did not experience symptoms of traumatic stress after the incidents.

At the other end of the continuum, 17% of officers in this study experienced effects severe enough to be clinically diagnosed as suffering from PTSD. This is significantly higher than the 1% level found in the general population and is approaching the 20% level found in Vietnam veterans wounded in battle.[9] In 81% of officers studied, their symptoms disappeared in less than three years. For the rest, however, their symptoms took three years or longer to abate. Most officers continued to perform their duties during these periods, an indication that adaptation is possible even in the presence of severe stress.

The remaining 57% of officers in the sample presented a variety of symptoms different in number and severity. As illustrated in Figure 3, most common symptoms were sleep disturbances, nightmares and an exaggerated startle response. The average number of symptoms experienced by these officers in their lifetime was five. There were no significant gender differences.

The vast majority of officers who had experienced symptoms of critical

Figure 1
Percentages of Correctional Officers
Physically Injured at Work



[9] *J.E. Helzer, L.N. Robins and L. McEvoy, "Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the General Population: Findings of the Epidemiologic Catchment Area Survey,"* The New England Journal of Medicine, *317, 26 (1987): 1630-1634.*

Figure 2
Percentages of Correctional Officers
Off Work for More than One Week Because of Injury

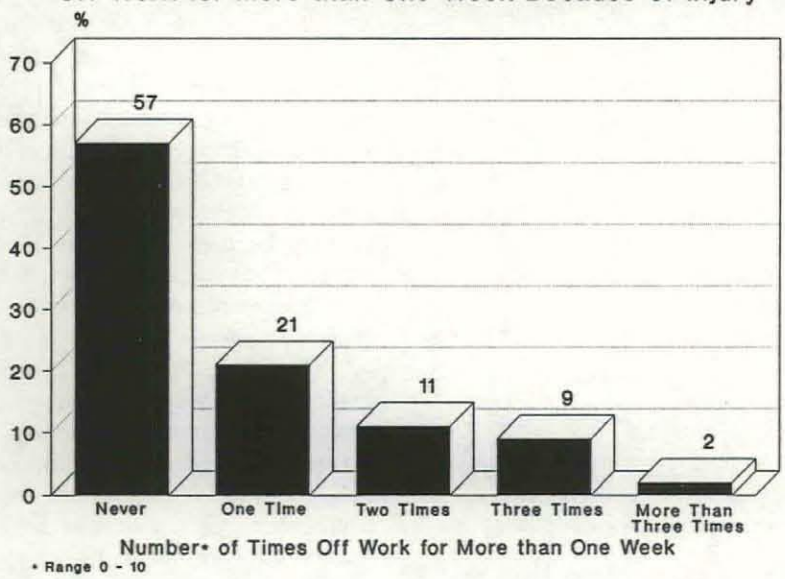
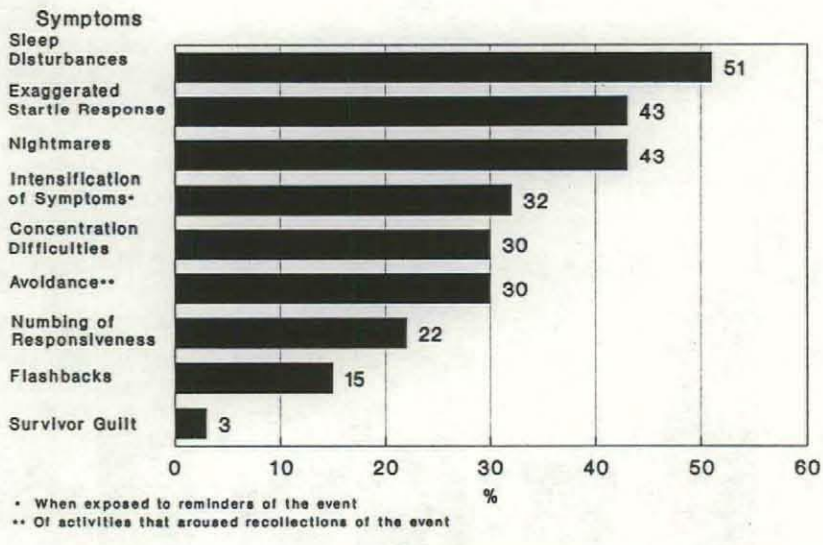


Figure 3
Post-incident Symptoms
for All Officers



incident stress (94%) said the personal impact of these events was severe, with 4% rating it as moderate and 2% as having little or no impact.

Almost half of these officers (47%) reported that their exposure to critical incidents had indirectly affected their families. Anecdotally, officers said that their families were affected by their mood swings, irritability and general anxiety following the traumatic events. Many officers said that they did not discuss the traumatic incidents with their families because they did not wish to worry them. In addition, they wanted to shield their families from the violence they experience both directly and indirectly.

Most officers (62%) said they spoke with someone after the incident, while 10% had not discussed it with anyone. About one quarter (27%) reported receiving emotional support without asking for it, and 5% received some form of practical support.

Health Measure

Permission was requested from participants to contact their physicians about their general health. Three percent of the sample did not grant this permission.

About two of every five officers in this study (42%) had sought professional help for a traumatic stress-related health problem. Their physicians reported that 34% of the officers currently suffered from a stress-related problem that required medical attention; for half of these, their doctors indicated that the problem was related to exposure to a traumatic event.

The more critical incidents to which persons are exposed over their lifetime, the more likely they are to experience critical incident stress symptoms.

Physicians were asked to rate their patients along a continuum of seriousness from mild to severe. Of the 34% of officers identified by their doctors as having a stress-related problem, 18% were considered by their doctors to have a serious problem, 78% a moderate problem, and 9% a mild problem. For 41%, their physicians considered the problem serious enough to interfere with daily living, and 59% required medication.

As stated, only 42% of the officers sought professional help. It is likely that only those with the most severe difficulties discussed their symptoms with their doctors. Officers

accept many of the critical incident stress symptoms as an occupational hazard and perceive acknowledging them as a sign of weakness. Further, it has only been within the past five years or so that the impact on personnel of exposure to traumatic events has been discussed in correctional settings. Such information has not been widely disseminated, and many officers are still reluctant to acknowledge any personal effects from such events for fear of a negative reaction by peers or management.

Critical Incidents and Post-incident Symptoms

To determine the long-term effect of exposure to critical incidents, officers were also assessed in terms of their current functioning. It was found that the more critical incidents to which persons are exposed over their lifetime, the more likely they are to experience critical incident stress symptoms. Similarly, the more critical incident stress symptoms individuals experience, the more likely they are to be currently experiencing difficulties.

These findings discount the common belief among staff and managers in corrections that individuals become hardened to critical incidents and, over time, are unaffected by such events. Further, the findings provide evidence of a need for intervention procedures after incidents.

Workplace Interventions

In 1988, the federal government brought together personnel from a variety of government departments to receive training in the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing (CISD) model developed by Dr. Jeffrey Mitchell,[10] of the University of Maryland. Believing that though the model was developed for use with emergency and public safety personnel, it could also be used with corrections staff, the Correctional Service of Canada sent representatives from the various regional jurisdictions to the training session. These representatives then developed plans to implement critical incident response capabilities in their regions.

The goal of critical incident stress management is to protect and support personnel while minimizing the development of traumatic stress response syndrome, which can cause decreased performance, absenteeism, physical and mental health problems and family difficulties.

Critical incident stress management offers a continuum of interventions:

- on-scene debriefing;
- initial defusing;
- formal CISD; and
- follow-up CISD.[11]

On-scene debriefing is provided by a trained, designated person who observes the operation and monitors for any acute stress reactions at the site. The intervenor helps affected personnel deal with their reactions, and in most cases personnel are able to return to their duties. The intervenor may also be in a position to offer suggestions to the crisis manager regarding personnel who are exhibiting such strong stress reactions that relief or reassignment to a less stressful role within the situation would be appropriate.

Participants are reassured that they are experiencing normal human reactions to abnormal events.

The second level of intervention is the initial defusing, which takes place within a few hours of the incident. It can be led by a mental health professional or by a specially trained peer who is knowledgeable in the field of critical incident stress management. This is a brief intervention that identifies potential stress symptoms with suggestions on how to manage them as well as suggestions regarding prevention techniques.

When a formal debriefing is not required, the initial defusing can be followed up, as necessary, with a brief but discreet contact at the work site or a "check-in" phone call.

The third level of intervention is the formal CISD. This is a structured psycho-educational process led by a qualified mental health professional that should be conducted as soon as possible after the incident. The leader must be knowledgeable and skilled in the areas of group-work techniques and critical incident stress, and understand the unique demands placed on correctional personnel during an incident. The use of a professional leader is imperative because the issues raised during the CISD have the potential to overwhelm an untrained facilitator.[12]

The rules of the process are clarified at the beginning of the Critical Incident Stress Debriefing. Confidentiality is emphasized and personnel are encouraged to participate. This is a supportive process, not a critique.

Next is the fact phase. Group members are asked to share information about what they saw, heard, touched, smelled and did during the incident. This stage allows individual members to form a more complete understanding of what transpired during the critical incident and provides a forum for personnel to begin to process their experience.[13]

The thought phase and the reaction phase follow, allowing personnel

[10] *Mitchell, "When Disaster Strikes: The Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Process." See also Mitchell and Bray,* Emergency Services Stress.

[11] *Mitchell, "When Disaster Strikes: The Critical Incident Stress Debriefing Process."*

[12] *K. Armstrong, W. O'Callahan and C.R. Marmar, "Debriefing Red Cross Disaster Personnel: The Multiple Stressor Debriefing Model,"* Journal of Traumatic Stress, *4, 4 (1991): 581-593.*

[13] Ibid.

to identify and focus on their cognitive response to the most stressful aspects of the incident, and to describe their emotional reactions at the time of the incident and express their present feelings about it.

During the fifth phase, participants are asked if they have had any symptoms, either physical or psychological, since the incident. Participants are reassured that they are experiencing normal human reactions to abnormal events.

Phase six is the teaching phase. The group leader teaches about stress response syndrome, its symptoms, specific coping strategies and prevention techniques. The goal is to normalize the feelings and experiences of the group so the final or re-entry stage can occur. During the re-entry phase, personnel are given the opportunity to interact with one another, and, where necessary, individuals deemed in need of additional support are quietly offered the opportunity.

The follow-up CISD is the final level of intervention. This occurs whenever it appears necessary, at the one-month, six-month or one-year anniversary of the event or at any other time when there seem to be unresolved problems interfering with the individual's ability to function. It may be conducted on a group or an individual basis.

Conclusion

Pre-education on the effects of critical incident stress is an integral component of its management. Training in methods of stress reduction and stress prevention techniques helps protect personnel, both at the time of the event and in the long term. Knowledge of the signs and symptoms of critical incident stress allows for early identification of problems. Early intervention minimizes short-term symptoms and greatly decreases the likelihood of long-term problems.[14]

Management alone cannot be responsible for preventing the long-term problems that result from exposure to critical incidents. Staff must also take responsibility for their own wellness and practise stress-prevention techniques such as eating properly, getting adequate sleep and exercise, reducing nicotine and caffeine consumption, controlling alcohol consumption and ensuring a balance between the amount of overtime they do and the amount of time they spend outside the work setting.[15] Participation in pre-education training and in postincident defusings and debriefings are the responsibility of individual staff members. Individuals who recognize stress response syndrome and seek help immediately greatly reduce the likelihood of both short- and long-term problems.

Providing pre-education and postincident intervention can reduce both the short- and long-term impact of traumatic events. Such strategies benefit both the employee and the organization. Employees benefit in that disruptions to their well-being are minimized. The organization benefits from increased employee morale, a positive work orientation, facilitated return to previous levels of work performance and reduced need for long-term sick leave. ■

[14] *G.S. Everly,* A Clinical Guide to the Treatment of the Human Stress Response. *(New York: Plenum Press, 1989). See also G.S. Everly, Workshop presented at Advanced Training in Critical Incident Stress and Post Trauma Syndromes. (Sarnia, Ontario, May 1991). And see J.T. Mitchell, "The History, State and Future of Critical Incident Stress Debriefings,"* Journal of Emergency Medical Services, *November (1988): 47-51.*

[15] *P.G. Hanson,* The Joy of Stress. *(Islington, Ontario: Hanson Stress Management Organization, 1985).*

Workshop for Women in the Correctional Service of Canada

by Holly Flowers
Human Resource Officer, Personnel and Training Sector, Correctional Service of Canada

The Correctional Service of Canada is committed to equality and to the development and advancement of women in decision-making roles. This commitment was demonstrated by the sponsorship of the recent Workshop for Women in the Correctional Service of Canada. Held 4-7 November 1991, at Mont-Ste-Marie, Quebec, the workshop was attended by more than 110 middle managers representing a range of occupational groups from across the country.

The workshop was to provide a forum for sharing ideas about women's issues in the correctional workplace. It provided an opportunity for women to discuss the means by which they can make a greater contribution to corrections in Canada.

On the agenda was a wide range of topics including general women's issues, careers and career path planning, the Federally Sentenced Women's Initiative, the role of middle managers, networking, role models and mentoring, dealing with sexual harassment, balancing work and family, financial planning, supervising men and stress management.

The speakers delivered their topics with enthusiasm and expertise. Key speakers included Ole Ingstrup, Commissioner of Corrections; Kay Stanley, Co-ordinator, Status of Women Canada; Anne-Marie Trahan, Associate Deputy Minister, Justice; Ginette Stewart, Commissioner, Public Service Commission; Susan Niven, Momentum Management Group; Linda Duxbury and Lorraine Dyke of Carleton University; and Lisa

Hitch, Joan Gibson, Elizabeth Lynch and Jane Miller-Ashton of the Correctional Service of Canada.

After three days of thought-provoking presentations, the participants developed recommendations to help the Correctional Service of Canada to use the resources of women better and gain gender balance and respect in the workplace. The 26 recommendations were presented at the December meeting of the Correctional Service of Canada's executive committee. Recommendations will be reviewed by the regions and discussed in detail at the February meeting of this committee.

The participants recommended that the Correctional Service of Canada:

- establish a (regional/national) mentor program that allows for:
  a) a process by which coaches and mentors are assigned to individuals, and
  b) training seminars for middle and senior managers in peer coaching and mentoring which would apply to both men and women;
- develop and implement national and regional counselling programs to assist women in their careers;
- review the competitive process to remove any systemic barriers that exist against women, and to encourage and attract women to apply for more job competitions;
- provide gender-awareness programs for men and women at the institutional level;
- increase the recruitment of women in institutions so that they may provide better support for each other. This would act as a retention mechanism for female correctional officers.

Since the workshop, certain initiatives have been undertaken by the regions. The Personnel and Training Sector will be producing a summary of the workshop proceedings and recommendations early in 1992. ■

The Impact of Tenure and Status on Staff Perceptions of the Work Environment in U.S. Federal Prisons

by William G. Saylor
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and Kevin N. Wright
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Relatively little research has been conducted on differences among correctional staff based on their type of position (custody versus non-custody), amount of contact with inmates, supervisory responsibilities, tenure, experience and institutional security level. What research has been conducted has focused on the manifestation of negative symptoms among employees, rather than on their organizational experiences.

Previous studies, for example, have identified numerous work-related problems experienced by prison employees, such as alienation, burnout, cynicism and job dissatisfaction. These findings may lead one to infer that working conditions in prisons are difficult and unpleasant. Yet, results of a U.S. Bureau of Prisons (BOP) study of its employees present a different picture.

This paper describes the study and its findings, examining the issue of tenure in federal prisons – whether longevity of employment in prisons affects individuals' perceptions of their work environment.

Generally, the study revealed widespread satisfaction among federal prison employees with regard to seven particular aspects of their work environment.

A close look at the findings, however, reveals certain key differences among staff. For example, staff who had frequent contact with inmates, those who worked in custodial positions and employees with longer tenure generally had lower opinions of the work environment of federal prisons. Conversely, individuals with supervisory responsibilities had more positive views.

Past Research on Tenure and Experience

Longevity is one of the characteristics that has been associated with job dissatisfaction among prison employees. Cullen and colleagues[1] identified two contrasting, but plausible, views of the effects of experience on job perception. The first suggests that everyday pressures over time may lead correctional staff to burnout, leaving them with poor attitudes and negative perceptions of their work situation. The alternative perspective suggests that experience may provide valuable resources enabling officers to cope effectively with the stresses and strains of their jobs.

Research findings generally support the first proposition, that favourable attitudes about working with inmates decline with tenure. Length of time as a correctional officer has been associated with less favourable attitudes about inmates,[2]

[1] *F.T. Cullen, B.G. Link, N.T. Wolfe and J. Frank, "The Social Dimension of Correctional Officer Stress,"* Justice Quarterly, *2, 4 (1985): 505-533.*

[2] *N.C. Jurik, "Individual and Organizational Determinants of Correctional Officer Attitudes Towards Inmates,"* Criminology, *23, 3 (1985): 523-539.*

less confidence in inmates' rehabilitative potential,[3] lower perceived legitimacy of inmates' social protests[4] and a greater orientation toward custody.[5]

The effect of experience on how staff members perceive the organization is less clear. Jurik and Halemba[6] found greater job satisfaction among those who had been employed longer. However, subsequent research by Jurik and Winn[7] detected no significant difference based on length of experience. Cullen and colleagues[8] also failed to detect a relationship between correctional experience and job satisfaction. They did, however, find more work-related stress among those with longer tenure. Jurik and Musheno's research[9] failed to show that feelings of social distance from inmates declined among staff members with more experience.

Methods

In 1988, the Bureau of Prisons' Office of Research and Evaluation initiated a new research program designed to measure the organizational climates within its facilities. A survey questionnaire,[10] now administered to staff annually, was aimed at providing Bureau managers with critical information about the organization's social climate as conveyed by staff perceptions and attitudes about the care and custody of inmates, crowding, the personal well-being of staff and the quality of work environments in Bureau facilities.

In the first Prison Social Climate Survey, questionnaires were mailed to the homes of approximately half of the employees working in federal prisons. A total of 8,099 surveys were mailed to staff employed at 46 facilities (the total number of federal facilities at that time). Individuals were selected for inclusion in the survey using a sampling method that divided the population based on the presence or absence of five characteristics – employment in UNICOR (federal prison industries), minority status, gender, supervisory position and custodial position. A sample of staff who fell into each of these groups was randomly selected.

A total of 3,325 usable questionnaires were received by the Office of Research and Evaluation, a response rate of 41%. Although this rate was lower than desired, the characteristics of those who did respond generally reflected the characteristics of the staff population, with three exceptions: black staff members were significantly under-represented in the sample, women were slightly under-represented, and supervisors and staff with greater longevity in the system (obviously overlapping groups) were over-represented.

[3] *B. Shamir and A. Drory, "Some Correlates of Prison Guards' Beliefs,"* Criminal Justice and Behavior, *8, 2 (1981): 233-249.*

[4] *J.R. Hepburn, "The Erosion of Authority and the Perceived Legitimacy of Inmate Social Protest: A Study of Prison Guards,"* Journal of Criminal Justice, *12 (1984): 579-590.*

[5] *E.D. Poole and R.M. Regoli, "Role Stress, Custody Orientation and Disciplinary Actions: A Study of Prison Guards,"* Criminology, *18, 2 (1980): 215-226.*

[6] *N.C. Jurik and G.J. Halemba, "Gender, Working Conditions, and the Job Satisfaction of Women in a Non-Traditional Occupation: Female Correctional Officers in Men's Prisons,"* Sociological Quarterly, *25 (1984): 551-566.*

[7] *N.C. Jurik and R. Winn, "Describing Correctional-Security Dropouts and Rejects: An Individual or Organizational Profile?"* Criminal Justice and Behavior, *14, 1 (1987): 5-25.*

[8] *Cullen et al., "The Social Dimension of Correctional Officer Stress."*

[9] *N.C. Jurik and M.C. Musheno, "The Internal Crisis of Corrections: Professionalization and the Work Environment,"* Justice Quarterly, *3, 4 (1986): 457-480.*

[10] *W.G. Saylor, "Surveying Prison Environments." Unpublished manuscript, Office of Research, Federal Bureau of Prisons, Washington, D.C., 1983.*

Measuring the Work Environment

The Prison Social Climate Survey is divided into five main sections: sociodemographics and job experience, personal safety and security, quality of life, personal well-being and work environment. Of the four substantive sections, the work environment section explores aspects of organizational processes that traditionally have been associated with social climates. For the 1988 survey administration, this section included 57 items that measured seven different aspects of the work environment:

Authority and Structure How well is the Bureau of Prisons organized and how well does it operate? Respondents indicate if the lines of authority are clearly delineated and how well the organization communicates change.

Supervision Respondents are asked about the adequacy of supervision. Several items question whether or not the supervisor provides the direction and freedom necessary for respondents to do their job. Other items deal with job performance and feedback.

BOP Satisfaction The respondents are asked whether or not they are satisfied with the Bureau of Prisons, whether they are likely to remain with the Bureau and how the Bureau compares with other prison systems.

Institution Satisfaction Respondents are asked to compare their institution to others in the Bureau and if they prefer to continue working where they are now.

Job Satisfaction Respondents' satisfaction with their particular jobs is evaluated.

Personal Efficacy This section explores whether respondents feel that they deal effectively with inmates. It assesses influence, accomplishment and ease experienced while working with inmates.

Job-related Stress This section estimates the impact of the job on the individual.

Measuring Status and Experience
The sociodemographic and job-experience section of the Prison Social Climate Survey contains a series of questions about respondent characteristics, such as frequency of contact with inmates, type of job, supervisory responsibilities, length of time with the Bureau of Prisons and security level of the facility in which respondents work. Additional information, which can be used as a control for other effects, is gathered on race, ethnicity, gender, age, previous experience in other prisons and shifts.

Findings
Overall, survey participants responded positively to the seven work-environment scales. With regard to authority, structure and supervision, most responses were positive. Only 27% of staff gave negative ratings to the authority and structure or quality of supervision in their facilities. Job and Bureau satisfaction were the most favourably viewed of the seven indicators of the work environment, with more than 70% of the subjects giving averaged responses in the positive range. There were slightly lower levels of institutional satisfaction, but still only 27% of staff gave negative ratings.

Responses associated with personal efficacy suggested that most staff members feel that they are at least occasionally effective in dealing with inmates. Further, only about one out of seven (15%) reported that they were regularly troubled by job-related stress.

These favourable ratings of the work environment are not what one would expect from reading the literature on prison staff. They suggest widespread positive feelings about the settings in which federal-prison employees work. Still, for all seven scales, a minority of respondents evaluated their facilities in the negative range. In some cases, this may indicate an incompatibility between the employee and the setting. In other cases, however, dissatisfaction may be systematically dispersed within some segment of the organization.

To explore the possibility of systematic dissatisfaction, the study examined how staff response differed based on status and longevity. The analysis revealed that personnel working in custodial positions had less positive views than non-custodial personnel of the authority, structure and supervision within their facilities. They were less satisfied with their jobs, their institutions and the Bureau of Prisons. They also perceived themselves as less effective in working with inmates. However, they perceived lower levels of job-related stress than did non-custodial staff.

In comparison to those with more limited contact, staff members who had frequent contact with inmates (irrespective of whether they were custodial or non-custodial) rated operational authority and structure, as well as the quality of supervision, less positively. In contrast, however, they reported feeling more efficacy in dealing with inmates. They also reported greater job-related stress. As might be expected, supervisors rated their work environment better than non-supervisors in all aspects except job-related stress where there was no difference. With regard to institutional security level, the survey found greater satisfaction at lower-security facilities.

Findings with regard to tenure with the Bureau and at the respondent's particular institution are intriguing. Staff members with longer tenures with the Bureau of Prisons expressed lower levels of satisfaction with their current institution, but higher levels of satisfaction with the Bureau. Longer-term BOP employees also had more positive opinions about the authority and structure within their facilities.

In contrast to these findings, employees with longer tenure at a particular facility were more satisfied with the institution than those who were newer, yet had more negative opinions about all other aspects of its work environment. Staff members newer to an institution rated authority, structure and supervision more positively than those who had been there longer. They expressed greater satisfaction with their jobs and with the Bureau. They also perceived themselves as having greater efficacy in working with inmates, although they reported higher levels of job-related stress.

Positive associations were found between the age of employees and their perceptions of their work environment. Older staff members had more positive views on six of the seven scales. The only scale that was not influenced by age was the respondent's evaluation of the quality of supervision.

Discussion
The study findings lead to four significant conclusions about prison operations:

- Positive opinions about the work environment within prisons are prevalent among employees of U.S. federal prisons.
- There are, however, important and patterned exceptions to this finding.
- There are three groups that hold less positive opinions about most aspects of their work settings: people in custodial positions, those who have frequent contact with inmates, and staff who have greater longevity at a particular facility. On the other hand, non-custodial staff members who have frequent contact with inmates and older staff members tended to have a greater sense of efficacy in their interactions with inmates.
- Older staff members had a positive outlook on virtually every aspect of their work environment.

What might this tell us about managing prisons? It seems to suggest that having more input into decisions is associated not only with more positive opinions of the organization, but also with greater levels of satisfaction. This position is further supported by findings that staff members working in

minimum-security facilities, which are less hierarchical, are more positive about the prison's organization and are more satisfied with their jobs.

These findings suggest that a high priority for contemporary prison managers must be finding ways to increase teamwork, communication and decision making among prison staff who work most closely with inmates, without compromising the safety and security of prison operations.

This study also discovered that individuals who have been employed by the federal prison system longer were more satisfied with the Bureau, but less satisfied with their current facility. Staff members newer to a particular facility rated its operations and supervision higher than longer-term employees, expressed greater job satisfaction with the Bureau, perceived themselves as more effective with inmates and were less troubled by job-related stress. The only work-environment variable rated higher by staff members who have been at a particular prison longer was institutional satisfaction.

These findings appear to have detected differences in the way mobile and non-mobile staff members experience working in federal prisons. In the Bureau of Prisons, advancement opportunities are greater for those who are willing to relocate. There are simply more jobs open nationally than at any single facility. Furthermore, at the higher levels of management, there is an expectation that individuals will move periodically. Consequently, staff members who remain at a facility, either out of personal choice or because they are no longer promotable, reach a plateau in their careers.

Because their career opportunities are more limited and their jobs may become routine, non-mobile staff members evidently come to be less satisfied with the Bureau of Prisons and their jobs, and are less positive about facility operations, supervision and their own effectiveness. Evidently, as they become resigned to remaining at their current location, their expression of satisfaction with that facility increases.

In contrast, staff members willing to relocate have positive opinions about the Bureau of Prisons, but are less satisfied with their current situation. This is probably because they have moved and expect to move again in the future as they continue to progress in the organization, and because they consequently have not had time to build the level of commitment to the institution that develops over time.

The potential for conflict between mobile and non-mobile employees is obvious as attitudes and allegiances differ between the two groups. Managers need to monitor the development of this phenomenon and seek creative ways to foster institutional commitment among mobile staff and job enrichment among stationary staff. Stationary staff members need ways to grow in their jobs, to experience new challenges and to undergo renewal.

This study demonstrates that staff members are not uniformly negative about the working conditions in prisons, as previous research seems to suggest. However, important differences among staff members, based on their status and longevity, were detected. Future research is needed to test these findings in state prisons and to evaluate the ability of managers to manipulate environmental conditions to create more positive attitudes among certain segments of the staff. ■

(continued from page 26)

performing particularly well, and use the data that we glean from that type of study to transfer that information to operations that might be having more difficulties."

Comments from Paul Oleniuk, Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Operations, Prairie Region

"In the early seventies, the Canadian Penitentiary Service targetted a recruitment campaign to university campuses. One poster, in particular, that I remember had a picture of an inmate holding onto the bars, and it said on the top 'So you want to change the world – Start here... apply to the Canadian Penitentiary Service,' and so on. I thought that's really a dramatic thing. In speaking to our recruits, as I'm sure most of you do as well, I am always impressed with their enthusiasm, their energy and their commitment. However, somewhere along the line something happens to some of them. After the first year, three years, five years or ten years, something happens to make them less committed, less enthusiastic than when they signed on.

"Whatever happens is not an isolated thing. It's not being passed over for overtime or a late overtime cheque or a roster change. It seems to be something persistent which changes their attitudes toward their work.

"Our challenge is to find what that persistent irritant is and deal with it, to shape our policies accordingly.

"I don't know if the results of the staff commitment research are good or bad. I do know that the number of people who are 'uncommitted' is almost as high as the number of those who are 'committed,' and that, I don't think, is good.

"The pollsters say that a large undecided vote is good because they can be shifted. Then I think we are in good shape because a full third of our staff can be motivated to change.

"One of the interesting things: I was looking for some kind of correlation between this and some of the other behaviours of our staff and of our organization, and I just took a quick look at grievance statistics – and interestingly, the region with the highest level of overall commitment had the lowest number of grievances, and conversely, the region with the lowest commitment had the highest rate of grievances. Those relationships didn't bear out for the other three regions, but they do for the two extremes.

"We have a challenge, and the challenge is to isolate those irritants, deal with them and shape our policies accordingly. I really appreciate this sort of research." ■

Canada