
The Community Policing Since the 1980s

Since the 1980's, community policing has been on the rising – in most neighborhoods, on most streets, in most towns. Police everywhere have shown that getting to know their community and taking the time to understand its needs can really make a difference. According to Peak (2015), "... the community can and must play a vital role in problem solving and crime fighting." So, how does it work and what are some of the basic principles that make up community policing?

To begin, Peak states, "...[community policing was designed to reunite the police with the community]" (2015, Pg, 98). This allowed both the community and the police to benefit from each other's interactions. Lesson 4 states that it is becoming, "a growing trend that is making a difference in how officers can reduce crime." This is because the police and the community work hand in hand to reduce crime instead of the police doing it all on their own. Instead of officers taking on a crime-fighting role, they take on a more problem solving role when it comes to the community, allowing them to look at crimes a little differently than they usually would.

So what are some of the basic principles these police officers are using to conduct community policing? Well the first, and arguably most important, as mentioned before is that officers take on a broad problem-solving approach, as taught in Lesson 4. This allows officers to change their perspective like they may not have done originally and work with the community to a different degree. Another is that police priorities now focus on the community and what is really going on. Police are now directly dealing with citizens concerns, problems, and crimes. Throughout this whole ordeal, police have the goal to stay as close to the community as possible though. Therefore, they are accountable to community needs and, because of this, gain criminal intelligence and knowledge through the community. Having such a close-knit relationship allows officers and the community to now have a channel of communication. In fact, "Community institutions such as families, schools, and neighborhood and merchants associations are seen as key partners with the police in creating safer, more secure communities," says Peak (2015, Pg, 98). Now, how does this impact these relationships?

Well, the goal has and always will be to keep the community safe, but the police also have a goal of getting criminal intelligence from the community as well. The principles that they have set up are in place for a reason and that reason is to always keep the lines of communication open. So, for example, if a crime is committed in a neighborhood where there is a regular patrol set up, witnesses will be more likely to talk to that one police officer they know about what they saw than they would anyone else. It's really about establishing a connection and getting to know the people around you, just like in any normal situation. Members of the community are seen as much higher value to the police than they normally would be with community policing.

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Peak says, “the views of community members have greater status under community policing than under the traditional policing model” (2015, Pg, 98).

From the 1980's, community policing has come a long way. “Community policing has been applied in various forms by police agencies in the United States and abroad and differs according to community needs, local politics, and available resources,” states Peak (2015, Pg, 98). It seems that working and getting to know the community is truly the way to solve crimes as well. There are several basic principles, but all of them are put in place to make sure the community and police are safe each have a relationship that is strong and can withhold.

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