"Good to Great" Policing:

Application of Business Management Principles in the Public Sector

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Foreword

I n his best-selling book *Good to Great,* Jim Collins gives business executives advice about how to push their companies from the "merely good" to the rarefied world of greatness. This PERF report explores how the principles of *Good to Great* might be applied to policing.

It is important to understand that Collins is extremely careful in how he uses the word "great." His criteria for greatness in business, based on stock market performance, are so stringent that he could find only 11 companies that qualified as great. To make a rough translation of Collins' principles into the policing environment: A police chief striving for greatness might set a goal of reducing violent crime in his jurisdiction by, say, 50 percent. It would not matter to the chief if crime were going up everywhere else in the country, because great executives do not look for excuses; they look to get things done. *And to be truly great, the chief not only would need to meet his target; he would need to ensure that the reduction in crime would be sustained even if he retired.* In Collins' view, great executives focus their ambition not on personal glory, but on making the organization great, and that includes "setting up their successors for success."

So Collins has set high standards for greatness. And if greatness in policing can be achieved, it certainly would be a powerful force for good in the world.

Good to Great first came to my attention in 2002. I was shuttling back and forth from Washington, D.C., to work with the Chicago Police Department (CPD), and everyone in Chicago seemed to be talking about "getting the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats." I asked what that meant, and the CPD's *Good to Great* fans referred me to the book. They explained that one of Collins' key findings was that in the companies with the most impressive records of success, executives began their quest for greatness not by setting goals, but by hiring the right people, dismissing those who would thwart change, and finding the best positions for everyone who remained. Once the right people were on the bus, *then* the leader and his team began deciding where to direct the bus in order to find greatness.

I read *Good to Great,* was intrigued, and wondered whether the analysis of how to make a business successful could be applied to policing. I tracked Collins down, and he was amazingly approachable for a man who had a book on the nonfiction best-seller lists for months. He invited me out to Boulder and before I knew it, I was on a plane to Colorado. A short time later, I found myself in a Boulder deli with Collins and Milliken, Colorado Chief of Police Jim Burack. What an amazing day we had!

Collins was intrigued with how his principles might apply to policing and other parts of government, as well as to nonprofit groups, social service agencies, even churches. While his research was in the field of business, he already was beginning to speculate that *the ability to overcome obstacles* seemed to be the key to greatness for police executives and other government leaders. (Collins has noted that in some ways, police executives face more obstacles than do business leaders. For example, throwing anyone "off the bus" can be far more difficult for police executives than for many business leaders.)

Our meeting with Collins could not have been more insightful, and I invited him to speak at PERF's annual meeting in 2004 in San Antonio via webcast. There was a lot of give-and-take in San Antonio between Collins and our members, and I recall
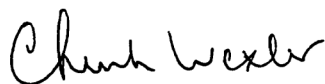
feeling that the session was intriguing from both perspectives: Jim was very taken with how police chiefs and sheriffs manage competing goals in a very uncertain environment, and the chiefs were taken with Jim's description of how companies achieve greatness. Carl Peed, Director of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), was at the meeting and expressed considerable interest in learning how these principles might apply to policing. That was the beginning of this project, and in March 2005 we convened an executive session in Washington, D.C., supported by the COPS Office. More than 30 police chiefs, school superintendents, and business leaders attended, and many expressed the view that we should explore this area further.

In comparison to *Good to Great,* this report only scratches the surface of its topic. Jim Collins had a team of 20 people who spent 15,000 hours helping him research his book. This report cannot come close to that level of scholarship. What we have done is gather anecdotal examples of how Collins' principles might be applied to policing. Interested readers looking for more on this subject are advised that Collins recently published a 35-page supplement entitled *Good to Great and the Social Sectors,* in which he offers his latest thinking about how government executives and other nonbusiness leaders may apply his findings to their work.

While this report mentions some police leaders by name and does not mention others, no one can judge who among us (if anyone) has achieved what Collins calls the "Level 5" leadership that results in greatness. In fact, calibrating success in policing is more subjective than in business, Collins has noted, because policing does not have standard "business metrics," such as using financial returns as a measure of performance.

Nevertheless, Collins says, "all indicators are flawed, whether qualitative or quantitative," so he encourages police leaders to forge ahead, setting their own audacious goals and finding an intelligent, consistent method of measuring results against those goals. And he offers guidance to anyone who wants to work toward Level 5: Start with good work habits, knowledge, competence, talent, and strong vision, and then do one simple thing—"Build enduring greatness through a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will."

One final thought: I am not someone who reads a lot of management books. And those that I have read, while interesting, tend not to be particularly memorable. But *Good to Great* has had an incredible resilience for me and for many police executives I have talked to. It has become the book from which a number of us have grasped some very fundamental principles—picking good people, facing brutal facts, developing a culture of discipline, and relentless follow-through. The original book had not one word about policing in it, yet as I read it, it was all about policing, especially the notion of overcoming obstacles that Collins told me about on that fantastic day we met in Boulder. I hope that as you read this monograph you will see how police leaders and others in the public sector are demonstrating these principles to push ourselves toward greatness.

Chuck Wexler

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Acknowledgments

Introduction

W hat makes an organization great? What sustains greatness? Why do some organizations never attain that status? These questions motivated Jim Collins, the author of *Good to Great* (Harper Business, 2001) to undertake the search for answers. We've all heard Voltaire's adage that "the perfect is the enemy of the good," but Collins turns that on its head. Instead, he contends that "good is the enemy of great," and that few individuals or organizations ever achieve greatness because they settle for being only good.

Collins' analysis is not based on his own guesses or opinions, but on an enormous amount of research. Collins and a team of 20 assistants searched for companies that made a "leap to greatness," defined by stock market performance. Specifically, they looked for Fortune 500 companies that experienced 15 years of performance at or below the general stock market, followed by a transition point, and then by cumulative returns at least three times the market during the next 15 years—a very rigorous standard. They sifted out companies that performed well only because they were in a winning industry; they wanted companies that showed great performance independent of their industry. And they studied the companies' long-term performance because "you can't just be lucky for 15 years." (p. 6)[2]

The Collins team found 11 companies that met its criteria: Abbott, Circuit City, Fannie Mae, Gillette, Kimberly-Clark, Kroger, Nucor, Philip Morris, Pitney Bowes, Walgreens, and Wells Fargo. To sharpen the analysis, each "great" company was paired with a company in the same industry that had had similar opportunities and resources, but had made no leap to greatness. And the team found another six companies that showed signs of greatness in the short term, but failed to maintain the trajectory.

Collins and his assistants then conducted an in-depth analysis of each of the 28 companies. They interviewed executives who held key positions during each great company's transition era. They studied everything they could imagine about the companies, from layoffs and management turnover statistics to business strategy and corporate culture. They read all the newspaper and magazine articles they could find about the companies.

The point of the analysis was to see if the team could identify unusual traits that separated the great companies and their executives from the lesser companies. Collins and his aides were able to identify such traits, and *Good to Great* was the result. The book details the often-surprising qualities and patterns that distinguished the great companies from those that were not great.

In 2005, four years after *Good to Great* was published, Collins acknowledged the growing interest in his book by nonbusiness entities, including law enforcement organizations, by publishing a monograph titled *Good to Great*

[2] Unless otherwise stated, citations refer to *Good to Great*.

and the Social Sectors. In this 35-page document, Collins offers his analysis of how the lessons of *Good to Great* should be modified to fit government agencies, charities, and other organizations.

TRUE CONFESSION: I AM A *GOOD TO GREAT* JUNKIE

When Chuck Wexler agreed to my suggestion that he read *Good to Great,* I knew it would become a window of opportunity for law enforcement. There is one thing I know about Chuck Wexler: When he recognizes a good thing, he runs with it. Shortly after reading the book, he called to tell me that he had given his staff copies of the book. That was good news, but not the great news I had expected. A short time later, he called to tell me that he was meeting with Jim Collins, and that was great news! Chuck was able to convince Jim to speak at the PERF conference, and then he organized a meeting of national law enforcement leaders to talk about the principles of *Good to Great*.

Why am I so taken with the principles of the book? **Because they work.** And they work not just in the business world; they work in law enforcement and in the public school system, as so ably demonstrated by the success of Ms. Jodi Leleck, principal of Broad Acres Elementary School in the Montgomery County, Maryland, school district.

The beauty of *Good to Great* is its simplicity, practicality, and directness. Those three qualities are almost always present in our police officers, who are the backbone of our departments. There is no reason those qualities should fade as the police rank gets higher. Embracing the principles of *Good to Great* changes the way people at all levels of the organization view their assignments and their responsibilities to their profession. You don't need to be a Level 5 leader to want to be a part of *Good to Great*.

While the book acknowledges that not everything can be controlled, police chiefs can control enough things to catapult a mediocre department into "greatness." Over and over, we have seen some of our strongest chiefs direct their entire departments to a focused mission with great results (for example, Chief Rick Easley in Kansas City focused his department on race relations; and Chicago Superintendent Terry Hillard worked to educate the community and police officers about different religions, cultures, and customs after 9/11). When a police department is the best it can be, all that is important to that department will follow.

Not only do I believe that *Good to Great* works for both the private and public sectors, I believe it works in our everyday lives. The principles of *Good to Great* can help build better families, better friendships, and better neighbors. When something this great comes along, you need to share it all along the way with everyone who will listen.

Karen Rowan
Retired General Counsel
Chicago Police Department

PERF's Interest in *Good to Great*

While working as general counsel for the Chicago Police Department, Karen Rowan read Collins' book and urged the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) to introduce it to the Forum's membership. The result was a presentation by Jim Collins to PERF's members at their 2004 annual meeting in which he explored with the audience the applicability for policing of the "Good to Great" (GTG) concepts. Both Collins and PERF members were enthusiastic about the potential relevance of the "greatness" concepts, and the consensus of the group discussion was that "there is a fit, albeit an imperfect one." There were, however, challenges associated with applying each of the principles in the context of policing, and the chiefs encouraged PERF to explore these challenges in greater depth.

In March 2005 PERF convened a conference, funded by the Justice Department's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, and attended by 33 representatives of the police profession, the Montgomery County Maryland Public Schools, and other public- and private-sector organizations. Attendees spent a day discussing the efficacy of using the GTG concepts for improving public organizations. (Appendix 1 lists the attendees.)

This report summarizes the key principles identified by Collins, evaluates their relevance for policing as perceived by officials at the PERF conference, and offers experiences and insights on issues identified by Collins and his team.

Results of the "Good to Great" Research

Collins' team spent 10.5 people-years researching the 11 great companies, the 11 comparison companies that did not achieve greatness, and the six companies that temporarily showed signs of greatness but faltered. The team then spent weeks discussing and debating the data in an effort to distill core characteristics of the great companies. The result was the seven qualities, concepts, practices, or principles summarized here:

(1) Self-Effacing but Fanatically Driven Level 5 Leaders

Collins coined the term "Level 5 leader" to describe the highest level of executive capabilities identified in his research. (Levels 1 through 4 are: Highly Capable Individual, Contributing Team Member, Competent Manager, and Effective Leader.) The Level 5 executives who led the 11 companies to greatness were ambitious, but their ambition was directed first and foremost toward the company and its success, not to personal renown. Collins stresses that Level 5 leaders are "fanatically driven, infected with an incurable need to produce *results*." (p. 30) When things go well, they give credit to other people, or in many cases, to simple good luck. When things go badly, they "look in the mirror" and never blame bad luck. (p. 35)

The Collins team also found that Level 5 leaders did not exhibit enormous egos; in fact, larger-than-life personalities were found in more than two-thirds of the comparison companies that did *not* achieve greatness. "We were surprised, shocked really, to discover the type of leadership required for turning a good company into a great one," Collins wrote. "Compared to high-profile leaders with big personalities who make headlines and become celebrities, the good-to-great leaders seem to have come from Mars. Self-effacing, quiet, reserved, even shy—these leaders are a paradoxical blend of personal humility and professional will. They are more like Lincoln and Socrates than Patton or Caesar." (pp. 12–13)

In *Good to Great and the Social Sectors,* Collins discusses how Level 5 leadership is different in a law enforcement agency or other nonbusiness organization. First, he notes, "most nonbusiness leaders simply do not have the concentrated decision power of a business CEO." (*Social Sectors,* p. 10) Unlike a CEO, a police chief has to answer to the public—and often to a mayor or city council. Police unions and civil service systems further inhibit chiefs' power. Thus, Level 5 leadership in policing may involve a greater degree of "legislative" types of skills, rather than "executive" skills, Collins hypothesizes. "Legislative leadership relies more upon persuasion, political currency, and shared interests to create the conditions for the right decisions to happen," he writes (p. 11). "There is an irony in all this," Collins adds. "Social sector organizations increasingly look to business for leadership models and talent, yet I suspect we will find more true leadership in the social sectors than the

business sector….True leadership only exists if people follow when they have the freedom not to."

(2) "First Who, Then What," and Getting the Right People on the Bus

When Collins and his team identified the 11 greatest companies of the period 1965 to 1995, they expected to find that the first step in taking a company from good to great would be to set a new direction and vision, and then hire or fire people as necessary to achieve that vision. "We found something quite the opposite," Collins writes. "The executives who ignited the transformations from good to great did not first figure out where to drive the bus and then get people to take it there. No, they *first* got the right people on the bus (and the wrong people off the bus) and *then* figured out where to drive it." (p. 41)

In fact, Collins said, "the main point…is not about assembling the right team—that's nothing new." Rather, the main point is that great leaders assemble their teams *before* they decide where to go. (p. 44)

Collins reasoned that if you begin with "who" instead of "what," you can adapt to changing conditions. "If people join the bus primarily because of where it is going, what happens if you get 10 miles down the road and you need to change direction?" he asks. (p. 42) Furthermore, an executive who hires the right people doesn't need to waste time looking for ways to manage and motivate them, Collins wrote. "The right people don't need to be tightly managed or fired up; they will be self-motivated by the inner drive to produce the best results and to be part of creating something great." (p. 42)

In law enforcement agencies and other nonbusiness organizations, moving people on or off the bus can be more difficult, Collins acknowledged in *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*. "Business executives can more easily fire people and—equally important—they can use money to buy talent," he wrote. (*Social Sectors*, p. 15) The social sectors, however, have one compelling advantage, he said: The types of people drawn to policing, teaching, serving the poor, or other social-sector jobs often have strong passion, commitment, and internal motivation. "The right people can often attract money, but money by itself can never attract the right people," Collins wrote. (*Social Sectors*, p. 17)

(3) Confront the Brutal Facts (Yet Never Lose Faith)

"All good-to-great companies began the process of finding a path to greatness by confronting the brutal facts of their current reality," Collins

wrote. "When you start with an honest and diligent effort to determine the truth of your situation, the right decisions often become self-evident….A primary task in taking a company from good to great is to create a culture wherein people have a tremendous opportunity to be heard and, ultimately, for the truth to be heard." (p. 88)

Newspaper and magazine articles about the great companies were peppered with phrases like "loud debate" and "healthy conflict," Collins noted. The Collins research produced no evidence that great companies had more information or better information than their unsuccessful competitors; rather, the great companies had "red flag" mechanisms and other tools for *calling attention to information that cannot be ignored.*

(4) The Hedgehog Concept

Perhaps the most mysterious lesson of *Good to Great* is the Hedgehog Concept, based on the Greek parable about the fox, which knows many things, and the hedgehog, which knows one big thing. Collins encourages executives to be like hedgehogs—apparently slow and plodding when compared to the fox, but blessed with "a piercing insight that allows them to see through complexity and discern underlying patterns." Hedgehogs "see what is essential, and ignore the rest." (pp. 90–91)

What is a "Hedgehog Concept"? For each company, it is an understanding of what the company can do better than anyone else in the world. That does not mean having a mere goal, a plan, or an intention to be the best, Collins stresses. "It is an *understanding* of what you *can* be the best at. The distinction is absolutely crucial." (p. 98)

For nonbusiness organizations, finding the Hedgehog Concept involves thinking about what the organization stands for, its mission or core purpose, and what it can contribute uniquely to the people it touches, better than any other organization, Collins adds in *Good to Great and the Social Sectors.* (p. 19)

(5) A Culture of Discipline

Collins and his research team noticed that the good-to-great companies had another thing in common: They all had a "culture of discipline" in which employees showed extreme diligence and intensity in their thoughts and actions, always focusing on implementing the company's Hedgehog Concept. The opposite of a culture of discipline is bureaucracy, Collins explains. "Bureaucratic cultures arise to compensate for incompetence and lack of discipline, which arise from having the wrong people on the bus in the first place. If you get the right people on the bus, and the wrong people

off, you don't need stultifying bureaucracy." (p. 143) In a culture of discipline, employees do not need to be disciplined, because they have self-discipline, so they can be given greater freedom and responsibility to do their jobs.

(6) Technology Accelerators

Collins warns against thinking of technology as a key to success. Among good-to-great executives, fully 80 percent didn't even mention technology as one of the top five factors in the transformation of their companies to greatness—even in companies that became famous for their pioneering applications of technology.

　　Instead, executives should focus on their Hedgehog Concept and think about what types of technology, if any, will be needed to accomplish their mission—and then become pioneers in those technologies, Collins writes. Executives should not seize on every technological fad simply out of fear of being left behind. "When used right, technology becomes an *accelerator* of momentum, not a creator of it," Collins explains. (p. 152)

(7) The Flywheel and the Doom Loop

To imagine the process by which Collins' 11 great companies became great, he asks readers to "picture a huge, heavy flywheel—a massive metal disk mounted horizontally on an axle, about 30 feet in diameter, two feet thick, and weighing about 5,000 pounds. Now imagine that your task is to get the flywheel rotating on the axle as fast and long as possible." (p. 164)

　　The point is that it takes time and the combined efforts of many people making many decisions and doing many things to achieve success. "The flywheel image captures the overall feel of what it was like inside the companies as they went from good to great," Collins writes. "No matter how dramatic the end result, the good-to-great transformations never happened in one fell swoop. There was no single defining action, no grand program, no one killer innovation, no solitary lucky break, no wrenching revolution." (p. 165) In fact, some of the good-to-great executives said they were not even aware that a major transformation was under way until they were well into it.

　　By contrast, the less successful companies tended to show a different pattern, what Collins calls the "Doom Loop." The Doom Loop is marked by chronic restructuring, fads, "management hoopla," action without disciplined thought, and above all else—inconsistency.

When Success Is Not a Matter of Profits

At first glance, it is easy to doubt the relevance of *Good to Great* principles in policing. The essence of being great in the private sector is measured by profits and stock market performance. It goes without saying that profits are not a way to calibrate success in policing. So how can Collins' book be a guide to law enforcement management?

Collins takes that question head-on in *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*. It is a question of inputs and outputs, Collins writes. "In business, money is both an input (a resource for achieving greatness) *and* an output (a measure of greatness). In the social sectors, money is *only* an input, and not a measure of greatness." So adapting *Good to Great* to enterprises other than business is simply a matter of defining success, or the organization's desired "output."

For policing, the obvious definition of success is reducing crime, Collins indicates. But sometimes it takes leadership to recognize the obvious, he writes: "In 1995, officers at the New York City Police Department (NYPD) found an anonymous note posted on the bulletin board," Collins writes. "'We're not report takers,' the note proclaimed. 'We're the police.' The note testified to the psychological shift when then-Police Commissioner William J. Bratton inverted the focus from inputs to outputs. Prior to Bratton, the NYPD assessed itself primarily on input variables—such as arrests made, reports taken, cases closed, budgets met—rather on the output variable of reducing crime. Bratton set audacious output goals, such as attaining double-digit annual declines in felony crime rates…." (p. 4, *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*)

Even in fields where it is difficult to measure a desired output, leaders should try to apply *Good to Great* principles, Collins writes. He cites an example from the world of fine arts: "When Tom Morris became executive director of the Cleveland Orchestra in 1987, the orchestra faced deficits exceeding 10 percent, a small and stagnant endowment, and a struggling local economy. Prior to taking the position, Morris asked two key board members, 'What do you want me to do if I come here?' Their answer: Make an already great orchestra even greater, defined by artistic excellence."

Collins praises the Cleveland Orchestra for its brazen decision to aim to become one of the three greatest orchestras in the world, and letting the endowment and other "inputs" take care of themselves. (The orchestra's endowment tripled.) "Clear, rigorous thinking is precisely what Cleveland's Tom Morris and New York's Commissioner Bratton brought to their work," Collins writes. "They separated inputs from outputs, and had the discipline to hold their organizations accountable for achievement in the outputs."

"To throw our hands up and say, 'But we cannot measure performance in the social sectors the way you can in a business' is simply lack of discipline,"

Collins adds. "All indicators are flawed, whether qualitative or quantitative. Test scores are flawed, mammograms are flawed, crime data are flawed, customer service data are flawed, patient-outcome data are flawed. What matters is not finding the perfect indicator, but settling upon a *consistent and intelligent* method of assessing your output results, and then tracking your trajectory with rigor." (pp.7–8, *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*)

Application of the Concepts in the Public Sector: A Case Study from the Public Schools

It was questions about how to apply *Good to Great* principles to non-business organizations that prompted PERF to invite Jody Leleck to be the keynote speaker at the *Good to Great* conference. PERF hoped to take the discussion beyond the world of policing, to include other types of governmental, charitable, or nonprofit organizations. Ms. Leleck's remarkable success in using the principles of *Good to Great* fit that bill perfectly. As principal of the Broad Acres Elementary School in Montgomery County, Maryland, Ms. Leleck overcame challenges that plague many government institutions—setting strict performance standards for employees, obtaining cooperation from labor unions, finding ways to remove some people from the bus, and maintaining a tight focus on long-term goals. As a result, she transformed a failing school into an up-and-coming school, and produced an example with which police executives can identify.

Ms. Leleck accepted her first assignment as a principal in 1999 when she was sent to Broad Acres. By all standard measures, Broad Acres had a failing student population, and the school was on the brink of being taken over by the state. It was Ms. Leleck's job to try to turn the school around.

Montgomery County is an affluent county, but its prosperity does not spill into the Broad Acres neighborhood, where a large immigrant community, primarily from Central America, lives. While many of the parents work very hard, 90 percent of the population lives below the poverty line. When students leave school at the end of the day, most are untended because both parents are working. Without question, Broad Acres is a needy community, and the school had attempted to respond to the obvious needs.

The principal who preceded Ms. Leleck had been a committed caretaker of the children and community. She had helped build a clinic adjacent to the school that provided medical assistance and social services to the community. The school staff and teachers had a benevolent commitment to ensuring that children were clothed, had medical care, and were exposed to the broader society.

The commitment to meeting those needs may have come at the expense of academic achievement. Test scores were miserable. In 2000, only 12 percent of third graders and 21 percent of fifth graders scored "proficient" in reading. Only 5 percent of third graders and 15 percent of fifth graders scored "proficient" in math.

Once Principal Leleck understood that there appeared to be no stated commitment to academic excellence, she made academic achievement the major focus of everything the school did. She applied the Hedgehog Concept of focusing on one objective and getting rid of every activity—including

popular ones like assemblies and field trips—that interfered with this one overriding objective.

In one way, Ms. Leleck departs from the principles of *Good to Great*. Unlike Collins' most successful business leaders, Ms. Leleck did not "get the right people on the bus" first and *then* work with those people on defining a mission. Instead, she decided to focus on academic excellence and then tried to obtain a staff that would commit to that mission. Principal Leleck was severely limited in changing the Broad Acres staff; she inherited teachers who had been at the school for as long as 20 years. Nevertheless, she offered experienced and caring teachers the opportunity to decide whether they could commit to the vision and remain on the staff.

Labor unions may be an even greater challenge for school administrators than for police chiefs. Ms. Leleck and Montgomery County Schools Superintendent Jerry Weast made a key decision. Rather than assuming that the unions would not support the new focus on academic achievement, they included Bonnie Cullison, the head of the teachers' union, as a member of the team that identified the goals and set the teaching standards. Leleck, Weast, and Cullison understood that teachers would have to buy into the changes, and they began with the assumption that teachers cared about the success of their students. They created opportunities for teachers to be part of the design and administration of the program, and they secured funds to pay teachers to work a longer day once a week so they could participate in planning and evaluation meetings. And teachers were encouraged to take part in professional development opportunities, such as attaining National Board Certification.[3] One of the lasting benefits of the Broad Acres experience was the ongoing dialogue established between the school administration and the unions— an exchange focusing on a shared concern rather than a divisive issue such as wage negotiations.

Ms. Leleck had to confront some experienced teachers who simply did not belong "on the bus" at Broad Acres and needed to be persuaded that their talents could be better used in a different school. In doing this, Ms. Leleck sent a powerful signal that she understood the "brutal facts" at Broad Acres and was prepared to deal with them. The trio of the superintendent, principal, and union head held individual discussions with these teachers, striving to make them feel that their skills were appreciated and could be used more effectively in another setting.

For the teachers interested in staying, Ms. Leleck requested that they make a three-year commitment to the school and that they become involved in planning the changes and assessing progress. About 60 percent

[3] By the time Ms. Leleck moved from Broad Acres in 2004, two teachers at Broad Acres had become or were working to achieve National Board Certification. The data for 2006 is that six more teachers achieved National Board Certification. There are 43 teachers at the school.

of the teachers chose to stay. New teachers who shared the commitment to excellence were hired; among them were a reading specialist and a math specialist.

Administrators and teachers worked together to define standards of performance, to define the activities and behaviors that were expected of teachers if they were to be successful, and to develop assessment measures for those standards. This was a major break with the past, when teachers had been judged primarily on their ability to merely keep order in the classroom. The union could see the advantage of a system that reflected and rewarded

A UNION LEADER'S PERSPECTIVE

The assumption is probably no different in policing than in the school system: Managers begin by believing that unions will oppose change. A more useful assumption is that the workers on the ground have as much interest in delivering excellent service as administrators do. Unions have an additional concern for employee welfare, but that does not automatically translate into opposition to organizational improvement. Teachers want to see students learn as much as police officers want citizens to be safe.

Fortunately for all concerned, the administrators responsible for Broad Acres School acknowledged the professional commitment of the teachers there. Understanding that the union and the school district shared goals, a joint team was established to design an intervention program that would help students be successful. We focused on the best interest of the school while realizing the need for a plan that would serve everyone, insofar as that was possible. There were teachers at Broad Acres who did not belong on the "new bus," but you could not just sweep them aside. They had talents that needed to be recognized and respected. When the staff was provided with the expectations of the intervention program, they were asked to decide if they wanted to stay "on this bus" or relocate to settings where there was a better fit for their talents.

Because we were a team that shared a focus, and because we dealt with reality rather than assumptions, we were able to accomplish an enormous amount of improvement with relatively little conflict.

I want to share with you my conviction that those who deliver service—whether it be education or policing—care about the quality of that service. If managers will accept that premise and include employees in the planning of organizational improvement, the results will be worth all the effort it takes to build the bridge between employees and managers.

Bonnie Cullison
President
Montgomery County Education Association

the complexity of teacher roles and responsibilities, and it became a strong advocate of the standards.

The standards were important, in part, because they defined expectations. The vast majority of workers are more comfortable when they know what is expected of them. There were teachers at Broad Acres Elementary who had never been told what was expected of them.

Next came what Collins calls "confronting the brutal facts, yet never losing faith." The most brutal fact was that by all objective measures, the school was failing—and many parents did not even know it. The children were being cared for, and many students, while not achieving academic success, were enjoying their schooling experience. Parents had to be presented with the test data, and they had to be told they could use vouchers to move their children elsewhere.

Initially, many parents did not embrace the changes. As the curriculum became more rigorous, some students complained to parents that

TAKING A SCHOOL 'FROM DREADFUL TO VERY GOOD'

As a principal of what was the lowest-performing school in our system, I appreciate the concepts in *Good to Great* because they supported me in my belief that all children can meet or exceed standards. For me, the key concepts were hiring and empowering the right people, focusing on things that would make a difference for children, making decisions and allocating resources based on data, and using continuous improvement to consistently maintain high expectations.

During a period of four years, Broad Acres Elementary achieved remarkable success. By 2004, the Maryland State Assessment scores indicated that 75 percent of third graders and 60 percent of fifth graders were proficient in reading (compared to 12 percent and 21 percent, respectively, in 2000). In 2004, 67 percent of third graders and 54 percent of fifth graders were proficient in math (compared to 5 percent and 15 percent in 2000). Broad Acres moved not from good to great, but from dreadful to very good, with abundant evidence that the commitment to constant improvement has been instilled as the new organizational culture. The flywheel remains in motion because teachers respond to each year's increase in scores with, "Just wait until next year; we can do better!"

Jody Leleck
Former Principal of Broad Acres Elementary School
Acting Associate Superintendent
Office of Curriculum & Instructional Programs
Montgomery County Public School System

the teachers were working them too hard and that school was no longer fun. But parents, and perhaps immigrant parents most of all, value education, and these parents needed to be shown that their children had been receiving an unsatisfactory education and that the new ethos at Broad Acres would prepare them to succeed in the future. Ultimately, no parents chose to move their children.

Jim Collins' book was published during the second year of the restructuring process, and Jody Leleck discovered it. In it she found affirmation for many of the things she and her team already were doing—and encouragement for sticking to their plans, no matter how difficult the course seemed at times. Sharing the book with others on her team was a way of reinforcing their shared commitment. When things got worse before they got better (test scores dropped even lower in the second year), they found inspiration from reading that *Good to Great* businesses experienced the same uphill battle but ultimately were successful because their focus carried them to their objectives.

In other words, Principal Leleck and her team maintained focus on their Hedgehog Concept. They pushed their Flywheel until it began turning and

LEARNING TO BE GREAT

Leaders in public service agencies need to recognize that complacency means failure. They no longer have a monopoly on providing the public with critical services. The evidence is increasingly apparent that the public sector is engaged in an entrepreneurial competition with the private sector. For-profits and nonprofits already offer choices about educational opportunities, and other public services are facing similar challenges. Private security agencies, for example, abound not just in retail establishments but in neighborhood communities.

In my organization—a public school system of more than 20,000 employees serving more than 139,000 students with an annual budget of $1.7 billion—we are making progress. We are making unorthodox inroads in educational reform and demonstrating unique capabilities in teaching and learning. Kindergarten children are being taught to read, when only a few years ago, they were taught basically to play. We are introducing rigorous standards of achievement at every grade level.

We are focusing on doing what we do—education—and trying to do it better than anyone else. All of our components are focused on ensuring that every classroom has a quality teacher and that every teacher has quality support. All of us are continuing to learn how to sharpen our competitive edge. We are learning to be great. Collins teaches us that simply being good is not good enough.

Jerry D. Weast, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
Montgomery County Public Schools

gained momentum, and they did not succumb to the Doom Loop of changing course with every setback. It could be said that even before Collins invented these terms, Leleck was showing an intuition for greatness.

Application of the Good to Great Principles in Policing

T he Broad Acres case study demonstrates the utility of the GTG ideas in a school. But what about policing? Do the ideas fit as well in this profession? PERF's GTG conference members explored each principle in turn.

(1) Level 5 Leaders

Collins and his staff were surprised by their finding that the Level 5 executives who led each of the GTG companies to greatness were quiet, self-effacing, and humble. If they had an expectation, it was that they would find flashy, high-profile, publicity-seeking leaders. In fact, according to Collins and his researchers, self-promoting leaders often were found heading the less successful comparison companies.

The quiet leaders should not be construed as being without ego; they were strong and driven, but their ego needs were channeled "…away from themselves into the larger goal of building a great company" (p. 21), and they were driven to build a great company rather than a great name for themselves.

What about policing? Conference participants said that everyone could think of one or more people they considered Level 5 leaders, but there are not many who are nationally known. The characteristic tendency of Level 5 leaders to maintain low profiles may keep them out of the national limelight. There are scores of police leaders in this country who serve in low-profile departments, and one would like to believe that many have the qualities of Level 5 leaders.

Collins himself believes that Level 5 leaders in any field are more prevalent than we realize. How to spot them? "Look for situations where extraordinary results exist but where no individual steps forth to claim excess credit," he says. (p. 37)

Regarding the nature of the personalities of Level 5 leaders, however, there may be an argument for a critical distinction when it comes to police leaders. Given the very public nature of policing and the high-visibility issues that police leaders must face, such as the use of force and the need for fairness in police officers' dealings with the citizens they serve, it can be argued that what police refer to as "command presence" is a critical trait. In fact, when a "defining moment" comes—a terrorism event or other catastrophe, a controversial police officer use of force, the killing of an officer, the kidnapping of a child—if a chief fails to rise to the occasion and speak in a very public, visible way, he risks losing credibility with the community and officers in his or her department.

Police chiefs, like other executives, offer themselves for service but do not select themselves. If police organizations need more Level 5 leaders, mayors and city managers ought to be reading Collins' book to better understand the types of chiefs they should be seeking. Collins recognizes this issue in the private sector as well:

> The great irony is that the animus and personal ambition that often drive people to positions of power stand at odds with the humility required for Level 5 leadership. When you combine that irony with the fact that boards of directors frequently operate under the false belief that they need to hire a larger-than-life, egocentric leader to make an organization great, you can quickly see why Level 5 leaders rarely appear at the top of our institutions. (pp. 36–37)

Conference participants expressed the view that, even if they were not Level 5 leaders, Collins' work helped them examine their leadership styles and consider whether there might be advantages in trying to reshape them. Collins believes that many people have the potential to achieve the fifth level.

> [U]nder the right circumstances—self-reflection, conscious personal development, a mentor, a great teacher, loving parents, a significant life experience, a Level 5 boss, or any number of other factors—they begin to develop. (p. 37)

An interesting issue that deserves more attention is the preparation of the next generation of leaders. Collins notes that Level 5 leaders set their successors up for even greater success, while Level 4 leaders do not. (p. 39) In policing, "brief tenure" is often cited as a reason for not being able to identify and develop the next generation of leaders, but this reasoning assumes that such work has to be the personal undertaking of the chief. Level 5 leaders are often committed to the implementation of processes (empowering managers to make important decisions, creating leadership academies, and sponsoring personnel for external management and leadership training, for example) that help ensure the identification and preparation of the next leaders. Bob McNeilly served almost a decade as police chief in Pittsburgh. During that period he successfully reformed the department in the wake of a Justice Department consent decree. In his last year as police chief, he sent eight of his commanders to a three-week executive development program, something police chiefs in their final years rarely do. In cultivating and showing respect for his aides, McNeilly maintained a "culture of discipline" in the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police and gave those commanders a professional gift for life.

Similarly, in eight years as police chief in Washington, D.C., Chuck Ramsey transformed a troubled department into one that is well respected

for crime reduction and controlled use of force. A number of managers who served with Chief Ramsey have now become police chiefs in other cities, and Ramsey closely mentored Cathy Lanier, who succeeded him as chief.

There are small and large ways to encourage and mentor future leaders. Jody Leleck, keynote speaker at the conference that generated this document, encouraged the chiefs at the table to bring their bright, upcoming assistants to conferences. Travel budgets often are tight, of course, but it would cost little to invite one or more lieutenants or captains to accompany the chief when she or he addresses a local civic club or attends a community function in a formal capacity. While there may be a fine line between showing favoritism and providing mentoring opportunities, drawing that line is one of the chief's less onerous leadership responsibilities.

The decentralization that has accompanied the movement to community policing in some cities has had the additional benefit of giving potential future chiefs on-the-job training as the commander of a full-service area or district station. In some departments these local commanders have the responsibility for managing personnel, making assignments, dealing with media inquiries, and being responsible for crime. Even a medium-sized city like Madison, Wisconsin, with a population of less than 300,000, has four district stations, each of which serves as an enriched learning environment for a future chief.

Another, less formal, means of developing leaders occurs when organizational heads encourage their command staff to think on their own, to ask questions, and to challenge the boss in a constructive way. This kind of internal encouragement of managerial risk-taking and decision-making strengthens a management team both individually and collectively.

DIVERSITY OF OPINIONS AS A KEY TO SUCCESS

You need to work harder than those around you. You need to understand and be in contact with the work level of the organization, and you need to surround yourself with a diverse group of people who will congratulate you when you are right and, more importantly, tell you when you are wrong. If your closest advisors look like you, talk like you, and think like you, you will never make the changes necessary to be successful.

William Lansdowne
Chief of Police
San Diego Police Department

As Collins explains it, one of the crucial elements in taking a company from good to great is somewhat paradoxical. The great companies had executives, on the one hand, who argued and debated, sometimes violently, in pursuit of the best answers. But on the other hand, everyone unified fully behind decisions, regardless of any parochial interests.

Lorne Kramer, city manager in Colorado Springs, Colorado, and formerly the police chief there, also stresses the importance of leading with questions. He argues that chiefs need to push everyone on their team to have and to express an opinion—not only to get information and develop leaders, but to protect themselves and their departments. "It's always the quiet ones who will kill you," he said. "If they are silent, they don't own it. By their silence they will undermine what you are trying to do."

Collins notes that Level 5 leaders tend to develop deep and strong executive teams to which they look for direction. He warns against a different type of leader: the "genius with a thousand helpers." Collins isn't using the word "genius" sarcastically; such a leader may in fact be very smart. But the problem is that "when the genius leaves, the helpers are often lost," Collins explains. "Or, worse, they try to mimic their predecessor with bold, visionary moves (trying to act like a genius, without being a genius) that prove unsuccessful." (p. 46)

Bill Bratton, chief in Los Angeles, former commissioner in New York City and Boston, and head of the transit police in New York and Boston, agrees that the boss does not need to have all the good ideas if the boss has the courage and ability to select team members who can and will voice ideas. In fact, Bratton repeatedly has attributed his success to hiring people who are smarter than he is (about some things, anyway).

(2) Getting the Right People on the Bus

Collins contends that people are not an organization's most important asset. Rather, "the *right* people are" (p. 51), and he places strong emphasis on the need to get "the right people on the bus, the wrong people off the bus, and the right people in the right seats" on the bus. (p. 13) While it is difficult to argue this point, the realities of the police world make this one of Collins' more difficult principles to apply.

When police chiefs are appointed, they inherit nearly all of their personnel, including poor performers and those who are unenthusiastic about the chief's philosophy. If the new chief is lucky, a number of these people may be near retirement or may be offered early retirement by a city manager or city council. This will provide the opportunity for some people to exit the bus if they don't like the new direction and will provide

key opportunities for the chief to seek the people best suited to be on the new chief's bus.

Picking the right people and getting the wrong people off the bus are critical factors for success in both public and private organizations. A police department that is top-heavy with administrators promoted by the previous chief may present a formidable challenge for a new chief who is committed to significant change and is potentially a Level 5 leader destined for greatness. How do you assess the qualifications of the people who are in the seats? Who can be moved, when, and with what consequences to make room for the right people?

One participant at PERF's Good to Great conference inherited an especially dire situation. When Jim Lewis became chief in Green Bay, Wisconsin, he was faced with a system in which, for decades, promotions had been based solely on seniority. Competence had never even been a consideration for promotion. Lewis recognized that until he changed this policy, his department would always be captive to a system that rewarded longevity over exemplary performance. Lewis, a quiet and determined man, focused on changing the system, and he succeeded in establishing a new one that rewarded performance, accomplishments, and successful experience.

David Couper, who served as chief in Madison, Wisconsin, for 20 years with civil service protection, had some advantages in staffing his bus. During two decades, he was able to hire a large majority of the officers in the department. Further, during his term of service he had wide latitude in structuring promotional exams. In Chief Couper's department, as in most, however, an officer had to perform extremely poorly to be removed from the organization, and many older officers remained loyal to a style of policing different from the one Couper was promoting.

Couper devised a string of strategies to sidestep this "B Team." He developed an officer advisory group that met with him monthly to discuss organizational issues. Slots were set aside to guarantee representation for women and ethnic minorities who were underrepresented among older officers. When the department set out to create a long-range plan, Chief Couper defined criteria for membership on the planning team to include anticipated future service of at least 10 years. He wanted planners who had a stake in what they were planning, and he wanted younger planners who were more inclined to embrace his community-oriented philosophy of policing.

Couper's officer advisory group was a textbook example of Collins' suggestion that leaders create a "Council" to develop an organization's Hedgehog Concept and consider other issues and problems. (p. 114) The Council is a group created by the chief executive to argue and debate, but not to form a consensus; the executive maintains responsibility for making final decisions.

By whatever means are available, personnel problems have to be confronted in an organization that aspires to greatness. Most police chiefs have had to deal with at least one person who is a major organizational roadblock. For a new chief, especially one who comes from outside the department, this can be a difficult challenge. Other employees may sit back, withholding allegiance and information, until they see how the new leader performs. In fact, the other employees may wish the roadblock were gone but may not give the new leader any indication of their feelings, leaving the new chief to wonder whether removing the individual will be applauded or will detonate a political bomb.

Collins' advice is to bite the bullet:

> When you know you need to make a people change, act…Letting the wrong people hang around is unfair to all the right people, as they inevitably find themselves compensating for the inadequacy of the wrong people.…Waiting too long before acting is equally unfair to the people who need to get off the bus. For every minute you allow a person to continue holding a seat when you know that person will not make it in the end, you're stealing a portion of his life, time that he could spend finding a better place where he could flourish. (p. 56)

The new leader who dawdles before removing the roadblock risks signaling weakness or lack of commitment to his organizational goals, leaving other employees to speculate about whether he or she really "means it."

Paul Evans bit the bullet in Boston. Promoted from inside to be the commissioner, he had spent his entire career with the people who initially were on his management team. He had grown up with some, served in Vietnam with others. One had been in his wedding. But five years into his tenure as commissioner, Evans realized these people were coasting and were fighting among themselves rather than working together. Evans would later reflect, "They had it made." They were no longer "hungry" or focused on the future of the department. There would be no forward movement while they were in position. Evans needed to change who was on the bus, and he wound up replacing almost the entire command staff, moving all and demoting some. In facing the brutal facts, Evans recognized that taking the department to the next level required personnel changes that could cost him lifelong friendships.

When Bill Bratton became the police commissioner in New York City, he looked at the available command talent and decided he had to reach down at least two generations to get leaders who were motivated to improve the organization. He promoted one- and two-star chiefs and inspectors and overnight wiped out several generations of command

staff. This was unheard of in New York. In one of his key appointments, Bratton promoted Jack Maple, then a lieutenant in the Transit Police, to deputy commissioner for crime control. It was Maple who designed CompStat, the revolutionary crime-fighting strategy that today is used in countless police agencies around the world. In 1996 Bratton elevated John Timoney to first deputy commissioner. In 1994 Timoney had become the youngest chief of the department in NYPD's history. He was one of the department's most respected leaders and represented the new way of thinking.

When he became the chief in Los Angeles, Bratton recruited several outsiders to his leadership team—again, unprecedented. But he also promoted a number of well-respected insiders. In both New York and Los Angeles, he identified and promoted commanders who already had demonstrated the kind of work ethic and values he wanted to instill in these agencies.[4]

Each of these men—Lewis, Evans, Couper, and Bratton—had a simple message: It is no longer business as usual. There is a new way of doing business—get on the bus, sit in the right seat, and don't be afraid to fail. These personnel changes were highly controversial, but over time, all proved to be right. It can take time for a change to be validated, and for new people to prove themselves and develop credibility.

Sometimes tough changes can be tempered with kindness. In Colorado Springs, Manager Lorne Kramer, in a move to get the wrong people off the bus, changed three department heads but managed to treat them very well during the transition. The double message was not missed throughout city government: (1) You have to be able to do the job in order to work here, and (2) We treat people decently.

Level 5 leaders face the facts and make difficult decisions. They have confidence in their decisions and stick by them through the controversy. And they seek ways to be gracious, as well as humble.

What if you cannot make such dramatic moves? What if you cannot fire the person who needs to be removed? What if the political environment makes transfer to another part of the system problematic? What do you do with the misfits? Where do you send them? School systems are similar to police departments in that there are many schools in any system, and it is possible for teachers to transfer from one school to another. But like police agencies, schools have a limit on using this transfer strategy to solve personnel problems, because no school wants to be a repository for ineffective teachers, just as a police patrol division will not be eager to receive an officer who has failed to perform well in another part of the organization.

Some police departments assign officers who are not deemed "suitable for street work" to units that take incident reports by phone. Unfortunately, poor attitudes transmitted over a phone line can be just as damaging as those transmitted face to face. It is hard to hide a bad officer.

[4] For example, Bratton brought in John Miller, a gifted New York journalist and network anchor, to head up his Counter Terrorism Bureau. Miller's considerable experience covering terrorism in the Middle East for ABC News was unprecedented, and he became sought after around the country by local and federal agencies.

Furthermore, labor unions and other bodies (e.g., civil service boards) can have considerable power to block efforts to jettison employees who simply do not like the new organizational direction. The manager who wants to demote or remove an unacceptable employee needs a lot of evidence. We have, on occasion, seen a chief's entire tenure consumed by the effort required to remove a single employee who is not performing adequately.

Performance Evaluations

In the private sector, a manager's opinion that an employee is performing poorly may be all that is needed to fire the employee. In the public sector, extensive documentation of poor performance is necessary. Performance evaluation remains an ineffective tool in the police management toolbox. Because the policing job is enormously complex, many departments still have not created performance evaluations that adequately reflect the work police do. The tendency is to measure that which is easy to measure, rather than what matters. "Orderliness" (including neatness, attendance, punctuality) and conformity with organizational rules and regulations still constitute the bulk of what is measured in many police personnel evaluations. "Don't mess up" (which sometimes translates into "Don't do anything"), and you won't get a bad evaluation.

Good performance evaluations are not only assessment tools; they also are training tools that communicate to the employee what the organization expects. And they become motivational tools when outcomes for the officer are tied to the evaluation scores, even if that outcome is "only" recognition by colleagues of a job well done. Such recognition cannot be given unless the assessment tool reflects the nature of the work. Years ago, a consultant to the Houston Police Department asked how employees could be expected to act like supervisors, managers, and leaders when everyone in the organization was evaluated through entire careers with an instrument that was designed to control a 20-year-old, high-testosterone male who was armed with a gun and given a fast car to drive. It's a question many departments still need to answer. *Until police agencies invest the effort to produce valid and reliable instruments for measuring the real work of policing, it will remain very difficult to move nonperformers or poor performers out of the organization based on regular evaluations.*

On the question of deciding whom to hire, conference participants who felt they have been successful in creating a good organizational culture tended to agree with Collins that character attributes are far more

important than "…specific educational background, practical skills, specialized knowledge, or work experience." (p. 51) For Chief Charles Deane (see sidebar), the critical attribute is integrity. For Chief David Couper, it is a person's attitude toward people—whether the applicant thinks people are basically good or basically bad. Both chiefs long ago made the commitment to personally interview every candidate before the candidate signed on—no small matter, as both of their departments have hundreds of officers. And

INTEGRITY AS A BUS TICKET

It could be argued that the success of the Prince William County Police Department can, in many ways, be attributed to the commitment to get the right people on the bus and to move the wrong ones off. As Jim Collins suggests, finding the "right" person may have more to do with identifying character traits and innate ability than specific knowledge or skills.

During a period of 35 years, the department has evolved from a fledgling, obscure organization to a well-respected police agency. In that time, its leadership has never wavered from the belief that standards, especially those dealing with issues of integrity, are of paramount importance. That belief is embodied in the fact that we would rather work with fewer staffers than lower our standards for employment.

This commitment has been demonstrated in terms of rigorous recruitment, selection[5] and training, a thorough and unbiased transfer and promotion process, and a culture that advocates the certainty of dismissal for proven dishonesty.

For example: The son of a well-respected senior staff member was not hired because he did not meet standards. The son of a well-respected middle manager was dismissed from the basic training academy because he lied about the loss of an item of issued clothing. Individuals who have not had consistently good work records have not been promoted in spite of their exceptional performance on tests and in the assessment center process. It has been our belief that elements of the promotion process are of value in screening candidates, but a proven work record and unquestioned integrity are required essentials for promotion. One such case resulted in a lawsuit against the chief and agency that could have been settled by promoting the individual. That offer was rejected because of a work record that supported the consensus that the person was not suited to supervise. Today, police staff clearly understand the department's expectations regarding integrity.

Chief Charles Deane
Prince William County (Virginia) Police Department

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[5] For the past 15 years, the final step in the employment process has been a personal interview with the chief of police. At that meeting, if offered employment, the applicant is informed of the department's expectation regarding honesty and integrity. This theme is continued throughout basic training.

they agreed that the answer to chiefs who say they don't have the time to do this is, "You don't have the time *not* to do this."

Another way to avoid recruitment mistakes—whether recruiting new officers or individuals to fill management positions—is to take your time. One participant reported that his organization had chosen several times to work below authorized personnel strength to avoid taking candidates who were less than qualified. Another said that when he is new to a department, he does not make managerial-level appointments until he has had considerable time to assess the candidates. He gives potential managerial candidates a number of varied assignments so he can assess their performance.

When Bill Bratton becomes the chief in a department, he immediately tends to the needs and concerns of patrol personnel. He will look at equipment, education, and the basic everyday tools an officer needs to do the job. Bratton recognized long ago that if you do not address the everyday working conditions of officers, you miss an ideal opportunity to have an impact on an agency. Bill Lansdowne, chief of the San Diego Police Department, similarly argues that greater focus needs to be put on the beat officer who is the one who delivers police service.

Career Development

One alternative to moving people off the bus is to help them become more effective as the organization moves in a new direction. Although Collins cautions against wasting too much time with an individual who does not belong in the organization, the CEO of Circuit City, one of the 11 "great" companies, argues for trying to salvage the good ones who simply do not fit.

> I spent a lot of time thinking and talking about who sits where on the bus. I called it "putting square pegs in square holes and round pegs in round holes." Instead of firing honest and able people who are not performing well, it is important to try to move them once or even two or three times to other positions where they might blossom. (p. 57)

Bruce Romer, chief administrative officer for Montgomery County, Maryland, inherited a management team in need of change. He replaced half of the department heads. But that left another 300 managers who could not be fired but whose support would be critical to moving the county government in new directions. Romer created a new class of employment, collapsing organizational ranks and bringing lower level

THE MADISON, WISCONSIN LEADERSHIP PROMOTIONAL ACADEMY: DEVELOPING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

In the 1980s, then-Chief David Couper instituted the Leadership Promotional Academy in the Madison, Wisconsin, Police Department (MPD). The Academy initially was open to anyone who wished to learn more about department policies and procedures, and it was required of anyone who wanted to be considered for promotion.

The Leadership Academy is a two-week course open to anyone who wishes to compete for promotion, with the approval of the individual's supervisor. Work performance during the previous 12 months must be judged satisfactory. A person wishing to be promoted is required to have attended an Academy within the five years prior to the current promotional process.

The Academy consists of 10 days of classes, during which three or four different topics are covered each day. The chief opens with a history and overview of "Quality" in the MPD and discusses the organizational mission and core values. Ethical leadership is another topic. A class on current issues in policing is led by Professor Herman Goldstein. Other classes covering organizational roles, policies, and procedures are taught by as many as 30 different MPD members representing every rank. Each of the 10 days of class is coordinated by a different lieutenant. In addition to learning course content, aspiring leaders meet the current leadership of the department and, in turn, are assessed by the people teaching the classes.

On Day 2 of the course, students are introduced to the promotional project, which is a key component of the course. Each student is expected to identify and analyze some work process or system in the department that may need improvement and to suggest an idea for improving it. They write papers and make an oral presentation to the members of the management team who are responsible for the area of the organization under scrutiny. Over the years, MPD managers have gleaned several good ideas from this process.

The advantages of the Academy are multiple. Students learn about the organization and about leadership theories and practices. They meet organizational leaders they might not previously have known, and leaders become familiar with students. Course coordinators and class teachers get hands-on leadership training, and the entire organization benefits from the generation of new ideas. Most important, the process helps ensure that all aspiring leaders have basic preparation, and it helps identify those who are best qualified to board the leadership bus.

A similar academy is held for officers seeking promotion to the rank of detective.

Chief Noble Wray
Captain Sue Williams
Madison Police Department

managers into an "elite" management team, members of which were given professional training to elevate their management skills.

Management training can be a tool for Level 5 leaders to develop a strong management team, but unfortunately, management and leadership training within police departments is likely to be minimal, if not completely absent. There are exceptions in some larger departments, and Madison, Wisconsin (see sidebar), a medium-size department, has an excellent program of leadership training.

There are some external training programs. In the last 25 years, PERF's Senior Management Institute for Policing (SMIP), for one, has had an impact on policing that has been apparent to both participants and observers. Effective leadership programs provide a critical means of developing managers and leaders for organizations that do not have the luxury of being able to provide their own executive development training. They

SMIP BUILDS LEADERS

One of the experiences that helped shape my career was my attendance at PERF's Senior Management Institute for Police (SMIP) in 1996. Throughout my career, SMIP provided the best executive leadership program to me personally. Many other police executives have shared that impression. When I was chief in Pittsburgh, I sent members of the command staff to SMIP every year. Currently, there are approximately 26 Pittsburgh Bureau of Police SMIP graduates, eight of whom graduated in 2005. This program excels because superb instructors provide an excellent forum during the three-week period. They use an applied, case-based curriculum and rigorously demand thinking in ways one might not be accustomed to. The combination of the intensive curriculum and spending three weeks working with, and learning from, a group of peers presented an excellent learning environment.

As a course graduate and as chief, I have witnessed others return from that program better able to accomplish tasks with higher levels of responsibility. My commitment to executive development has strengthened as I have observed members of my staff develop enhanced conceptual skills with the experiences provided by SMIP.

This experience has demonstrated that despite the restrictions many police departments may encounter in terms of hiring and discharging, the right kind of training can help develop the right people to occupy the right seats on our bus.

Chief Robert McNeilly
Elizabeth Township Police Department
Former Chief of Pittsburgh Bureau of Police

can choose to develop the "best available person" into the "best person for the job."

In his discussion of getting the right people on the team, Collins asserts that the "… 'who' questions come before 'what' decisions." (In other words, the great companies first got the right people on the bus, and only then began deciding where to steer the bus.) SMIP presumes that the nominating chiefs have answered the "who" question, leaving the program free to address the "what" issues. Bill Bratton has identified the SMIP program as the key development program in his career; unlike any other program he had attended, it exposed him to faculty members outside of policing. Bratton and others found that one of the most effective ways to build an executive team was to send promising managers to leadership programs like SMIP.

The impact of national training programs such as the FBI National Academy, Northwestern University Center for Public Safety's Executive Management Program, Southern Police Institute, California POST-supported West Point Leadership Program run by the Los Angeles Police Department, Police Executive Leadership Program at Johns Hopkins University, and SMIP reaches beyond the classroom and the individual student. When chiefs, in order to send employees to these programs, must identify young officers or managers with the potential to be leaders, they are more likely to become conscious of other ways of developing and using leadership potential in the organization. At the very least, when a student returns from one of these programs, the chief will be inclined to call on him or her to put what they have learned into practice, thereby extending their education. While giving a boost to the careers of the people who attend them, these programs also provide the stimulus for their organizations to identify and reward people with leadership ability.

When Chief Lee Brown left Houston to head the New York City Police Department, some of the young leaders he had developed in Houston also left the department to head police agencies in Texas and other states. Many of these new chiefs had participated in national training programs or conferences that gave them a sense of the wider world of policing. What may have been lamented as Houston's loss should be heralded as a gain for the policing profession. Whatever loss Houston suffered was temporary; under Brown's direction, the organization had developed the means of fostering leadership, and the department today, headed by Chief Harold Hurtt, is full of bright young managers who will work to improve their own organization before some of them eventually move on to improve other departments.

The same thing is happening in Madison, Wisconsin. For years, the Police Department had many excellent young managers who never left town. Madison is a splendid place to live, and a great many people who live there, including police officers, have no desire to be anyplace else. But beginning in the 1980s,

Madison officers began to be involved in national-level research and to attend conferences and training programs that gave them access to, and information about, other agencies. As their vision of the police world expanded, so too did their willingness to venture into it.

While national training programs are excellent, elite institutions, the flip side of the coin is that they are small; relatively few desks are available each year. This lack of comprehensive, widely available leadership training is an issue that has been discussed in American policing for decades, and the solution is probably not yet on the horizon. Even if more training becomes available at a national or regional level, it will

REDESIGNING THE BUS IN ARLINGTON, TEXAS

The Arlington, Texas, Police Department is a community policing department in philosophy, function, and structure. This commitment was initiated in 1983 under the leadership of Chief David Kunkle and has been sustained and expanded and 730 officers and professional staffers during my time as chief.

Early in the planning stage, it was recognized that the Hedgehog Concept of community policing needed a new burrow (or bus). It wasn't enough to get the right people on the bus and into the right seats. If community policing was to be effective in that sprawling city, new physical arrangements were needed.

Arlington conducts "geographic policing." A department that had been housed in one central location now occupies three district stations (with a fourth planned) at which a deputy chief has responsibility for all policing services delivered in that area. Districts are further divided into sectors for which lieutenants have responsibility for services seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Within sectors, sergeants are responsible for problem solving and service delivery in beats. All property crimes are handled at the district level. This geographically-based arrangement facilitates the sharing of information within and across shifts and promotes the perception of responsibility for an area among all the officers who work there.

The newer district stations have workspace for some other city employees, such as Neighborhood Services, thus promoting closer problem-solving relationships across city departments. One has a large community room, complete with media facilities that brings officers and citizens together for special events.

The Arlington bus was redesigned so that riders no longer look at the back of head of the passenger in front of them. Seats have been relocated so that passengers with a similar destination can have on-going conversations during the trip.

Chief Theron Bowman
Arlington Police Department

remain important for individual police departments to groom their own leaders as Madison is doing with its Leadership Academy.

"Flywheel Teams"

When a leader cannot move people in and out of the organization, it can be helpful to develop "kitchen cabinets" or "leadership teams" of people who are supportive of the proposed new organizational direction. They brainstorm and plan with the chief and begin to implement ideas in the organization. Their enthusiasm and dynamism can be infectious and can produce enough real change to set the Collins Flywheel in motion, despite apathy or opposition from others in the organization. One conference participant referred to this as her "subversive" means of supporting change.

Restructuring

If it is difficult to move people on and off the bus, it may be possible to rearrange the seats on the vehicle so passengers can interact more effectively. This might involve organizational restructuring such as changing the number of layers of management and supervision. It might involve restructuring that puts people into area-specific rather than task-specific work groups. Also, work teams might be allowed to ride in smaller buses that are all headed to the same place (to the Hedgehog Concept) but that have developed different routes for getting there. In the last 20 years, many departments have physically decentralized their facilities so that officers can work more directly with citizens and, at the same time, work more closely and effectively with each other. For example, detectives may no longer inhabit separate, secretive work spaces, working instead in close proximity with patrol personnel. Arlington, Texas (see sidebar) has created new facilities in which all personnel serving a neighborhood share office space with their supervisors. The people are the same, but the seats on the bus have been rearranged to facilitate interaction.

(3) Confront the Brutal Facts (Yet Never Lose Faith)

Collins notes that the GTG companies were characterized by a pattern of good decisions based on solid information. There may have been some bad decisions but they were significantly outnumbered by good ones, and the GTG companies made many more positive decisions than did the comparison companies.

> When … you start with an honest and diligent effort to determine the truth of the situation, the right decisions often become self-evident. Not

always, of course, but often. And even if all decisions do not become self-evident, one thing is certain: You absolutely cannot make a series of good decisions without first confronting the brutal facts. The good-to-great companies operated in accordance with this principle, and the comparison companies generally did not. (p. 70)

Perhaps the best example of a "confronting the brutal facts" program in policing is CompStat. Pioneered in New York City under then-Commissioner William Bratton, CompStat refers to weekly citywide and precinct-by-precinct computerized statistical reports on crime—and to meetings in which police commanders are grilled about local increases in crime or other facts revealed by the statistics. As the program has become widely publicized, more departments are following New York's lead in using current crime data at regularly scheduled meetings to identify problems, compare performance across districts, and assess the impact of responses to previously defined problems. Data do not lie. People may lie *about* data (or manipulate data to serve their objectives), but when several people are examining the same data and asking hard questions about the data, there is a good probability that the data will reveal "truths that cannot be ignored"—a key GTG precept. Police agencies are fortunate in having more "real-time" data readily available to them than do many other organizations. In well-run police agencies today, crime data are current. It is no longer a matter of waiting for quarterly reports. On Monday morning, commanders and officers can know about the crimes that occurred over the weekend. The most recent incidents and the developing trends can be studied daily.

It is not enough for data to be readily available. Managers need to be intimately familiar with the data and involved in analysis and assessment. Data should "belong" to no one group in the organization. History offers some cautionary tales. In the mid-1970s in Dallas, Chief Frank Dyson promised to reduce the crime rate dramatically. Detectives, who were vehemently opposed to Dyson's plans for organizational change, managed to increase the crime figures month by month. As creators and monitors of the data, they were able to topple the chief by manufacturing false statistics about crime. In Chicago in the 1980s, some district commanders "killed crime" by either not reporting certain crimes or by downgrading their seriousness so that crime would appear to be less of a problem than it actually was. With pressure from the news media and from the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting program, which refused to publish Chicago's dubious crime statistics, the department faced the brutal facts of its internal problems and dealt with both the guilty personnel and with the issue of an easily manipulated data system. Mechanisms are

now in place to monitor the veracity of the department's data. The Chicago experience was a wake-up call to other agencies to improve and monitor their own reporting systems.[6]

The increasing focus on data has been one of the driving forces in a sea change in policing from solving individual crimes to preventing crime. While crime prevention was a goal urged by some policing prophets in the 1960s and 1970s, it did not become a dominant policing strategy until the 1990s. Computers and computer-savvy personnel have helped move the status of "prevention" from philosophy to practice. The ability to have real-time data and the internal capacity to analyze the data have allowed departments to view crime problems in ways that isolate types of crimes by time and location and to identify patterns that can be strategically addressed. The power of problem-oriented policing begins with data that are used to identify a problem, and ends with data that are used to determine whether the strategy designed to address the problem has been effective.

Data from internal surveys can provide a means of detecting and dealing with sensitive situations. When the Clearwater, Florida, department was struggling with internal racial issues, Chief Sid Klein commissioned an employee survey that focused on attitudes about race and about members of other groups. The chief led his officers through discussions of the results. The conversations focused on the data rather than on the feelings of individuals or groups of officers about each other. Again, statistical information was used to prompt a frank attempt to face a brutal reality.

Collins' research indicated that big-ego, larger-than-life leaders often are the least likely to have access to truthful information about their organizations. For one thing, they tend to believe they know the answers and don't need to bother with data. For another, they tend to surround themselves with people who consider it their responsibility to protect the boss from bad news. By contrast, GTG companies deliberately strive to create climates in which the truth is heard and valued.

Collins offers suggestions (pp. 74–80) for creating this climate.

(1) Lead with questions, not answers.

(2) Engage in dialogue and debate, not coercion.

(3) Conduct "autopsies" of mistakes without blame.

(4) Build "red flag" mechanisms that prevent you from ignoring the data.

He offers an interesting example from the business world in which a company gave its customers the option of "short pay." Short pay is exactly that: the customer pays less than the amount on the invoice if the service or product was not satisfactory in the customer's view.

[6] In 1983 Pam Zekman, Head of the Investigative Unit of WBBM-TV in Chicago, received the American Bar Association's Silver Gavel Award for her documentary, "Killing Crime: A Police Cop-Out," which revealed a long-standing Chicago Police Department practice of manipulating crime statistics.

> Short pay gives the customer full discretionary power to decide whether and how much to pay on an invoice based upon his own subjective evaluation of how satisfied he feels with a product or service. Short pay is not a refund policy. The customer does not need to return the product, nor does he need to call [the company] for permission. He simply circles the offending item on the invoice, deducts it from the total, and sends a check for the balance. When I asked [the company owner] his reasons for short pay, he said, "You can get a lot of information from customer surveys, but there are always ways of explaining away the data. With short pay, you absolutely have to pay attention to the data. You often don't know that a customer is upset until you lose that customer entirely. Short pay acts as an early warning system that forces us to adjust quickly, long before we would lose that customer. (pp. 79–80)

Short pay is a wonderfully creative idea, perhaps not readily applicable to policing, but it may serve as a stimulant for thinking of more relevant early warning devices. To make an extreme example, by the time police or firefighters are pelted with rocks and bottles in the streets, the reality that hits them is more brutal than community feedback data would have been.

Confronting brutal reality will do little more than make you run for cover unless your willingness to face the facts is coupled with an unwavering faith that you are on the right path and will prevail. Collins calls this the "Stockdale Paradox," in honor of Admiral Jim Stockdale, who survived eight years of imprisonment in Vietnam by facing reality but holding fast to the belief that he ultimately would get out, would prevail, and would "turn the experience into the defining event of my life, which, in retrospect, I would not trade." (p. 85)

The men who did not survive the prisoner-of-war experience were, paradoxically, what Stockdale called "the optimists"—the ones who continued to believe that release was just around the corner, and who, as a result, repeatedly were disappointed.

There are, of course, many cases where chiefs face brutal facts and persevere. Confronted with several organizational cultures, Chief David Kunkle in Dallas changed departmental policy to end unproductive responses to alarm calls. Sir Ian Blair, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police in London, recognized the need to change the storied culture of Scotland Yard and instituted one of the largest geographic community-based policing programs in the world. This effort would be his front line of defense in combating terrorism. In Kansas City, Missouri, then-Chief Richard Easley brought officers together to confront internal racial issues. The candid and tough discussion resulted in heightened sensitivity as well as a communications awakening across the upper management levels. In New Orleans,

then-Superintendent Richard Pennington recognized the extent of corruption issues in the department and, in an unprecedented move, invited FBI investigators to work alongside New Orleans IAD staff to root it out. Both John Timoney in Miami and Charles Ramsey in Washington, D.C. recognized that their departments had significant problems with police use of force and reengineered their policies, resulting in dramatic reductions of deaths and injuries. In Chicago, then-Superintendent Terry Hillard took on the issue of racial profiling by inviting outspoken community leaders to sit down with top Chicago police commanders in citywide forums to candidly discuss issues of race and class. These forums became standard operating procedure in Chicago. Similarly, Ed Davis, who served as superintendent of the Lowell, Massachusetts, Police Department for a dozen years, did not wait for a tragic event or tensions between police and the community to build trust. Concerned about growing complaints across the country during the 1990s of racial profiling by police, Davis launched a series of community forums designed to build bridges between the Lowell police and minority groups. The forums not only opened channels of communication; they sometimes uncovered potential problems before they could result in tragedy. For example, police learned that among members of a Liberian community in Lowell, it was considered respectful to get out of one's car when stopped by police and to approach the police car, rather than waiting for the officer to approach the stopped vehicle. Some Liberians also had a custom of keeping their wallets stuffed in their socks. It is not difficult to see that such customs could easily have resulted in disaster. But by encouraging public debate on the question of racial profiling, the Lowell Police Department became more familiar with the communities it served, learning critical information that helped the department avoid crises that could have seriously damaged police-community relations.

(4) The Hedgehog Concept

The Hedgehog Concept may be the most problematic for public service agencies. Collins argues that, for companies to be great, they need to determine the one thing they can do better than any other company in the world and focus on producing only that thing. Even if it means completely changing what the company produces, that should be done in order to move the company from good to great. Determining the path the company should take, what is its Hedgehog Concept, evolves from finding the overlap of three "circles" in a Venn Diagram. The three circles are:

(1) What you can be the best in the world at.

(2) What you are deeply passionate about.

(3) What drives your economic engine (Because police agencies and other nonbusiness organizations do not have a profit-making "economic engine," Collins modified the third circle somewhat in his monograph *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*. He argues that nonbusiness agencies should consider what drives their *resource* engine— not only money, but any other resources that allow them to function and achieve their Hedgehog Concept.)

(*Good to Great,* pp. 95–96, and *Good to Great and the Social Sectors,* pp. 17–19)

All the energies of the company are focused on the area where these circles converge. And sometimes the result involves destroying the "curse of competence":

> To go from good to great requires transcending the curse of competence. It requires the discipline to say, "Just because we are good at it—just because we're making money and generating growth—doesn't necessarily mean we can become the best at it." The good-to-great companies understood that doing what you are good at will only make you good; focusing solely on what you can potentially do better than any other organization is the only path to greatness. (p. 100)

So what is the Hedgehog Concept for law enforcement? Police have responsibility for a wide range of outcomes that cluster roughly under the heading of "public safety." Police service is largely call-driven, and police are able to decide what the organization will do only to a limited degree. By requesting service, the community dictates the function. Police participants at the GTG conference agreed that the Hedgehog Concept could have temporal or geographic applicability in their agencies, with a deliberate focus being given to a particular problem or a particularly problematic neighborhood for some specified period. Even within the organization at the same time, different bureaus or units might be focused on different hedgehog concepts. The point is to be focused.

Policing did become more focused in the 1990s when proactive policing—focusing on stopping crimes before they occur, which had been a low priority in many agencies—shot to the top of almost every chief's priority list. Police chiefs learned that strategic partnerships with the community can affect crime. Using CompStat, problem-oriented policing, community policing, and improved technology, police departments began to focus on crime reduction as a core mission. Performance, which previously had been measured by the number of arrests and crime clearance rates, increasingly was measured by the reduction of crime.

Some city managers have adopted the practice of having each city agency focus some of its energies for the year on a problem or issue that concerns the entire city. One year it might be youth; another year it might be the elderly, or reducing poverty, or city beautification, or recycling. Some might call this a case in which a limited Hedgehog Principle is used to address a problem and create a team effort across agencies. But one wonders whether Collins might consider such programs a "Doom Loop"—every year a new direction, a new event, a new fad, a new Hedgehog Concept.

Constant improvement can be a valuable goal for any agency. Collins' discussion of "The Council," while formulated as a means of discovering a company's Hedgehog Concept, is potentially quite useful for police organizations that are seeking ways of planning long-range improvement. The "Characteristics of the Council" are these:

(1) The Council exists as a device to gain understanding about important issues facing the organization.

(2) The Council is assembled and used by the leading executive and usually consists of five to twelve people.

(3) Each Council member has the ability to argue and debate in search of understanding, not from the egoistic need to win a point or protect a parochial interest.

(4) Each Council member retains the respect of every other Council member, without exception.

(5) Council members come from a range of perspectives, but each member has deep knowledge about some aspect of the organization and/or the environment in which it operates.

(6) The Council includes key members of the management team but is not limited to members of the management team, nor is every executive automatically a member.

(7) The Council is a standing body, not an ad hoc committee assembled for a specific project.

(8) The Council meets periodically, as frequently as once a week or as infrequently as once per quarter.

(9) The Council does not seek consensus, recognizing that consensus decisions are often at odds with intelligent decisions. The responsibility for the final decision remains with the leading executive.

(10) The Council is an informal body, not listed on any formal organization chart or in any formal documents.

(11) The Council can have a range of possible names, usually quite innocuous. In the good-to-great companies, they had benign names like Long-Range Profit Improvement Committee, Corporate Products Committee, Strategic Thinking Group, and Executive Council. (pp. 115–116)

Principal Leleck had her planning team. David Couper, the chief in Madison, Wisconsin, for 20 years, met each month with a leadership team that represented a cross-section of the organization. In Baltimore County, Chief Neil Behan used his Monday morning staff meeting as a "Council," where each member had an opportunity to debate and discuss challenges and problems facing the organization. Each meeting ended with the chief issuing a directive for action to members of the Council. It is hard to imagine that an organization would *not* improve if it had the services of a Council that regularly focused its discussion on ways of enhancing the performance of the agency.

(5) A Culture of Discipline

Collins says that the ability of an organization to function like a focused hedgehog depends on the existence of a culture of discipline. Discipline is not just about action, he says; the formula consists of disciplined people, disciplined thought, and disciplined action. The culture of discipline depends on getting the right people—disciplined people—on the bus in the first place. It is wasteful to hire the wrong people and then try to impose discipline on them to force them to perform the right behaviors, Collins argues. A culture of discipline should not be confused with a tyrannical leader who imposes discipline through sheer force of personality. Instead, executives should try to hire people with self-discipline.

Chief Darrel Stephens of the Charlotte, North Carolina, Police Department exhibits this discipline in many ways. He and his department are known for careful research, consistent follow-up, and continual refinement of programs.

Again, because most chiefs inherit, rather than select, the majority of their employees and managers, it is difficult to create the kind of culture of discipline Collins found in the GTG companies. But creativity and a self-generated sense of responsibility do not flow out of people on whom discipline must be imposed. So the police department that wants to move in the direction of constant improvement must find a middle ground between having a culture of discipline and being willing to impose controls on employees who need it because they lack internal discipline and they cannot be forced "off the bus."

Many departments that have oriented themselves toward community policing and problem solving—approaches that require creative and responsible officers—have attempted to redesign their disciplinary systems so that honest mistakes that result from well-intentioned acts are dealt with more generously than are malevolent deeds. In some departments,

the honest mistakes are appropriated for "teaching moments"—opportunities to distill lessons from an incident that can provide future guidance for the organization. Discussion rather than discipline is used to help an officer who has made a mistake consider alternative behaviors or approaches. Sometimes citizen complaints are handled through mediation between the citizen and officer. This can strengthen the bond with the community while instructing the officer and avoiding the punitive disciplinary process. In this kind of organization, employees may be more willing to be experimental and creative in their responses to problems and may be more likely to generate and share ideas for the improvement of the organization.

Discipline in an organization has two purposes. The disciplined manager or leader not only focuses on what the organization needs to do but also uses discipline to focus on—and eliminate—those things the organization should not do. The organization should not do anything that takes attention and resources away from the central objective of the organization. Since the Hedgehog objective at the Broad Acres School was to raise reading and math scores, the disciplined decision was made to reduce the number of field trips taken per year while making sure the trips were specifically relevant to the curriculum, and to hold assemblies in the evenings to avoid infringing on instructional time. These changes caused parents to complain that their children were no longer having fun at school. It would have been easier—surely much more pleasant—to have preserved the events that provided entertainment and social education, but a culture of discipline prevailed and the focus on the goal was sharpened.

Police departments wrestle with Collins' question of trying to eliminate tasks from the organizational "to-do list" if the tasks do not serve the Hedgehog Concept. In some departments, officers no longer rush to every call regardless of seriousness. In other departments, certain crime reports are taken online or by phone. In still others, officers schedule appointments with citizens in response to "cold" crimes. Many departments have curtailed their response to burglar alarm calls, either requiring some kind of verification that an actual crime may be occurring or charging for repeated runs to false alarms. Some departments no longer provide on-duty escort service for funerals. Each of these changes can be a painful decision for a chief who is concerned about losing public support because he is reducing services. But these decisions reflect the discipline necessary to allow a police agency to focus on its core mission.

A culture of discipline also requires that a leader take a long, hard look at facts about the organization, and then act on those facts. Paul Evans, commissioner in Boston, was concerned about the number of incidents in which officers fired at suspects who were fleeing in vehicles. When suspects were

shot after the danger had passed, the community asked understandably tough questions. When innocent bystanders were shot or run over, or police officers injured, both the community and police were distraught. In 1972, the New York City Police Department had changed its policy so that officers were prohibited from firing at a person in a moving vehicle unless the occupant(s) of the vehicle is/are using deadly physical force against the officer by means other than the vehicle. Although there was 30 years' worth of research and experience to support the policy, it remained controversial in many departments, including the Boston Police Department. Evans decided a change had to be made, and the department adopted the policy of not firing at moving vehicles. The Patrolmen's Association in Boston waged a campaign against this change that resulted in a vote of "no confidence" against Evans, but he stood firm in the face of opposition. When John Timoney became chief in Miami, he instituted this same policy there, and the city has not had a single incident of an officer firing at a vehicle in four years.[7] These policy changes resulted in dramatic reductions in officer-involved shootings without compromising officer safety.

Level 5 leaders make disciplined decisions regardless of personal consequences. They put the interests of the organization above their own. In the case of a Level 5 police chief, this means putting the interests of the larger community above all other factors, including his or her own police department and career.

(6) Technology Accelerators

Collins and his research team found that technology was not a prime cause of either greatness or decline among the companies they studied. (p. 162) They did find, however, that the GTG executives thought differently about technology than did the leaders of the merely good companies. While the great companies made pioneering use of selected technologies, the technologies were not adopted for their own sake and did not drive the direction of change. The technologies were chosen to support a company's Hedgehog Concept.

Technology has long been a daunting challenge for police departments. In 1972, the Dallas Police Department almost certainly was not unique in having to wait in line to use the city's mainframe computer while the city's water bills were being run. Now, of course, the police department has its own computers, as do many departments. Few departments, however, are satisfied with their systems, primarily because they have not been in a position to design a system that truly fits their needs.

[7] John Timoney's letter to the editor, Tuesday, December 5, 2006. http://www.miami.com/mld/miamiherald/news/editorial/letters/16165274.html

HOW TECHNOLOGY ACCELERATED
CHANGE IN THE CHICAGO POLICE DEPARTMENT

In 2000, the Chicago Police Department was seven years into the implementation of its community-oriented policing strategy, commonly referred to as CAPS, or the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy. While significant changes had already been made in the way the department policed, newly appointed Superintendent Terry G. Hillard charged his new command team to "take CAPS to the next level."

We knew where we wanted to go (Collins would say we had identified our Hedgehog Concept). Our efforts were focused on three key areas: to make Chicago the safest U.S. city; to partner with the community and other city agencies to solve problems of crime and neighborhood disorder; and, because criminals know no boundaries, to share information with the hundreds of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies in the greater Chicago area. But like many departments at the time, Chicago had mountains of data sitting around in file cabinets or locked in an antiquated, largely inaccessible mainframe computer. We were data-rich, but information-poor.

In 1995, the department had begun a technology upgrade, transitioning from an old mainframe system to one that featured a new relational database.[8] The idea was right, but the implementation had lost focus. Instead of examining how this new tool could be used to position the department to meet its three goals, efforts had become mired down with getting information into the database by automating the same forms used by the department for decades. This approach lacked what Collins would call the necessary, relentless focus on our Hedgehog Concept. It wasn't looking at what information was needed to accomplish our three key goals; nor was there an understanding of who needed the information, why they needed it, when they needed it, and how best to present it. In 2000, the technology implementation was in trouble. One frustrated detective expressed many department members' concern: "This is ridiculous. I spend all my time putting data into the system, but I never get anything out that helps me do my job!"

Missing was a tool that could organize and link the millions of tactical, statistical, and administrative files that were available, do it in real time, and do it in a way that made sense to the most important user—the cop on the street. New thinking on the part of Hillard's management team led to the formation of a unique partnership between the department and the Oracle Corporation. This partnership in turn resulted in the development of a new tool—Citizen Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting, or CLEAR. We brought to the partnership the vision and law enforcement business know-how; Oracle supplied its technical and IT expertise. But experience had already shown us that building a system around our current business practices would not help us achieve our goals. And we recognized that there were plenty of police departments throughout the country using innovative business practices that could improve the way we policed. We wanted to incorporate some of these innovative ideas into CLEAR, so we asked PERF to analyze law enforcement "best practices" both nationally and internationally to ensure that CLEAR reflected the very best.

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[8] A relational database is one with the ability to compare and link any data element to any other data element.

So, did the use of technology help the department accelerate its efforts to meet its core missions? Yes—and the proof is found in three key areas.

1. **More productivity:** CLEAR allows officers to do more in less time and to solve crimes that were unsolvable before. By linking previously unavailable information, the department has stopped many criminals in their tracks. Since CLEAR was rolled out, the department has also enjoyed a 22-percent reduction in violent crime and a 27-percent decrease in homicides. During tight budget times, this increased productivity also has allowed the department to put more officers back on the street.

2. **Better management and accountability:** The department now is able to monitor in real time the effectiveness of plans to address crime and disorder problems and to immediately make adjustments when needed. Millions of files at officers' fingertips and a lot of good old-fashioned police work have also resulted in a new capacity to identify emerging crime. Members are now easily deployed where they are needed, when they are needed.

3. **Stronger partnerships:** Designed to be scalable (able to handle growing amounts of work easily), CLEAR now allows information to be shared with every law enforcement agency in Illinois. As the result of a successful partnership with the Illinois State Police, CLEAR has expanded to become I-CLEAR, significantly increasing the state's crime-fighting capacity. The department is rolling out a new community component called CLEARpath which allows the department to share crime information with residents who sign up for CLEARpath e-mail updates about crime alerts and other news.

CLEAR isn't finished. New modules will continue to be developed—always with the department's Hedgehog Concept in mind. Terry Hillard's successor, Superintendent Philip J. Cline, built upon the CLEAR program with effective crime-reduction strategies—a combination that resulted in record-low crime rates in Chicago.I believe that Collins has it right when he says that technology, while it doesn't create change, surely can be an effective accelerator of change.

Barbara McDonald
Former Deputy Superintendent
Chicago Police Department

THE FLYWHEEL AND THE REVOLVING DOOR

Policing in America has always had the problem of "revolving chiefs," whether they were competent or not. It has also had a problem with the double-edged sword of reform of civil service. While civil service was designed to protect chiefs from politics, it also protects incompetent or lazy chiefs. Nevertheless, a number of American cities have been fortunate to have some very competent chief executives leading their police departments for extended periods (five to ten years). This stability often depends on having a competent, politically stable chief executive at city hall.

Often (but not always) these police CEOs are brought in from the outside to repair a troubled department, tackle an overwhelming crime problem (whether the fault of the police or not), or take the department in a new direction, such as community policing.

Competent police leadership starts at the top. In the first few years, the new chief must spend time becoming established within the community and within the department. It is a lot of work, and there comes a time when there is a "tipping point" of acceptance with the community (usually earlier) and the department (usually later). During these first years, the true Level 5 leader must be out front and visible, leading and showing results by dealing with the issues the hiring authority has identified as priorities. At the same time, the chief must begin the long-term process of developing future Level 5 leaders within the organization, building that capacity from the ground up, starting with the officer selection process and training of recruits, and continuing to promotions and advanced training based on performance. By the five-year mark, the fruits of this labor will begin to show with inspired, competent middle- and upper-level leaders in the right positions in the organization. As these individuals get into position, the chief must then step back and give them the room and guidance necessary to truly reach self-actualization in their profession. Stepping back doesn't mean doing less work. It means working more behind the scenes, mentoring below and coordinating and facilitating above and in the community. Once these managers and leaders are in place, the chief can devote more "quality time" to being visible and marketing the department with "deeds and not words."

Being a good chief executive means always doing the right thing, no matter how difficult. The effect of difficult decisions can be cumulative, especially among groups that are negatively affected by the decisions, resulting in diminishment of the chief's power. At that point, the best leader may have to make the most difficult decision of his or her career—the decision to leave the organization and turn it over to the cadre of leaders that has been developed to do the job.

Chief Robert K. Olson, ret.
Former chief, Minneapolis and Corpus Christi Police Departments
Former commissioner, Yonkers Police Department

Even so, several departments in the country have successfully used technology as an accelerator for their Hedgehog Concept. For example, as Barbara McDonald notes, the Chicago Police Department has implemented its massive computerized crime information database known as CLEAR (Citizen Law Enforcement Analysis and Reporting) to support its crime-reduction strategies. It is used effectively by both administrators and street cops to allocate patrol resources where they are most needed. It is used to help solve crimes with a state-of-the-art relational data base. And, of course, the New York Police Department could not have pioneered the highly effective CompStat model without successfully finding ways to get accurate and timely information from the field to the administrators downtown. Technology in Chicago and New York was critical in supporting the vision of the leaders of both of those departments.

(7) The Flywheel and the Doom Loop

The concept of the Flywheel, as described in the opening section of this paper, refers to the relentless, steady push toward a goal that finally produces sufficient momentum to keep the change moving. The concept of the "Doom Loop" refers to the tendency of some organizations to run off in one direction, then turn and chase another fad in a new direction. This habit of running after new ideas dooms the organization to tracking in circles rather than making any real progress. The Doom Loop often is the fate of departments that have a number of new leaders in rapid succession, but it also can happen with a chief who has been in place for several years and is addicted to the thrill (and publicity) of new programs for their own sake.

Many major-city chiefs are subject to relatively short tenure or anticipate that they may be. (The average tenure of a major city chief is less than four years. The rule of thumb is the larger the city, the shorter the tenure.) Consequently, there is the temptation to rush into new processes or programs to fix all the apparent problems with an agency. In response to these eager leaders, Collins says:

> It's important to understand that following the buildup-breakthrough flywheel model is not just a luxury of circumstance. People who say, "Hey, but we've got constraints that prevent us from taking this longer-term approach," should keep in mind that the good-to-great companies followed this model no matter how dire the short-term circumstances…. (p. 172)

Chief Olson correctly suggests that successful pushing of the flywheel can depend on the chief's ability to develop managers and then step back

and let them grow as they take on new responsibilities and are tested. But before the flywheel ever gets its first push, the chief needs time to create the trust and the support, both internal and external, to make the change possible. The change, however desirable, may be destabilizing. A chief has to make the complicated calculus of how much change can be accomplished, at what cost, within a predictably short tenure. It's a tricky business.

Using a Crisis to Get the Flywheel Moving

Because the management of crises is a common part of a police executive's job, conference participants were asked to consider whether crises constituted an insurmountable obstacle to organizational greatness. There is no question that crises are a distraction, and that they can funnel resources away from the change effort; however, they do force the Hedgehog leader to come up for air and tend to matters outside the burrow. Most police leaders and some of the corporate leaders at the conference had dealt with crises, and few considered crises a permanent roadblock to organizational improvement.

What became very clear, however, is that quite often, crises in police agencies became the major catalyst for widespread organizational change.

In New Orleans in the mid-1990s, Chief Richard Pennington confronted severe and widespread corruption by implementing significant changes. With the support of Mayor Marc Morial, Chief Pennington fired, demoted, or reprimanded scores of officers; tightened background checks on recruits; created an early warning system to detect problem officers; limited off-duty employment; created a new public integrity division outside of police headquarters (to make it more welcoming to complainants); raised abysmally low police salaries; required ethics training of officers; established problem-oriented policing and CompStat programs; and made many other changes. The changes produced sharp reductions in the city's homicide rate, particularly in public housing areas.

Dean Esserman joined the Providence Police Department directly after the city's mayor—one of the longest serving mayors in America—was convicted in federal court of corruption and the former chief was implicated in a promotions testing scandal. Esserman aggressively leveraged one scandal after another to develop a mandate for change. Sixty days into his tenure with the Providence Police Department, he had removed the entire command staff, launched an investigation into a promotions testing scandal, and discovered and destroyed a wiretapping system that was illegally recording all phone calls into and out of the department. He did all this in full view of the public and thereby held himself and the department to account to the citizens.

Even if a crisis costs a chief his or her job, the organization might be strengthened by the crisis and more strongly motivated to bring about

needed changes. Many chiefs said that a crisis can provide the stick they need to propel change.

When Robert McNeilly became the chief of the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police, he was faced with a consent decree from the U.S. Justice Department for pattern and practice violations. He had a choice: Either fight the decree or somehow find a way to use it to make changes that needed to be made. McNeilly, who came from within the department, decided to embrace the decree and used it as an opportunity to change the way the bureau does business. The experience generated widespread reform. McNeilly pioneered the development of an early warning system to alert department managers about problem employees who needed to be counseled or disciplined. McNeilly's work made the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police a model for reform that has been studied by police leaders all across the country.[9] (But it should be noted that while McNeilly was recognized nationally for his leadership and vision, he paid a significant price and faced internal challenges from employees who resented the changes.)

A crisis in the New York City Police Department allowed Commissioner Bratton to make his own powerful public statement about corruption. An investigation by prosecutors uncovered extensive corruption in the 30th Precinct. When the results of the investigation were due to be released, Bratton went to the district station and removed the badge from one of the corrupt officers. He held it up for the media and assembled police personnel and announced that that badge number would never be used by anyone in the NYPD again—ever. A shameful moment was transformed into a moment of dramatic and memorable condemnation of corruption.

When John Timoney was faced with a scandal in Philadelphia concerning the underreporting of rape, he first changed the reporting system to make sure the department captured every report of rape and sexual assault. Then he invited women's advocacy groups to review every case to make sure a good investigation was conducted. If they thought more work was needed, they could make a request for further investigation. As a result, the department obtained more accurate reporting of sexual crimes and rebuilt the essential trust between the community and the police department. A crisis can become an important accelerator to needed change.

And as Rick Neal, a vice president at Motorola, pointed out (see sidebar on following page), a crisis often provides the opportunity for direct interaction with customers, and serves to underscore the important relationship between the customer and the organization. Attitude toward crisis probably is the key; leaders who see a crisis as an opportunity are

[9] For example: *Turning Necessity Into Virtue: Pittsburgh's Experience with a Federal Consent Decree* (http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/ric/ResourceMain.aspx?RID=217) and *Federal Intervention in Local Policing: Pittsburgh's Experience with a Consent Decree* (http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/ric/ResourceMain.aspx?RID=90). Both can also be found at www.vera.org.

A VIEW FROM THE PRIVATE SECTOR: CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Maintaining credibility and managing in a crisis go hand in hand. Crisis situations are part of the entire customer interaction process. Two things are important to remember: First, credibility is built over time and not during an incident; second, managing the crisis is just that—managing. The crisis is managed through preparation, planning, training, and execution. These situations, if managed well, offer opportunities to broaden and strengthen relationships with customers. Because of the nature of our product—mission-critical communications and information—our customers have very high expectations of us and our technologies. They expect the product to be tailored to their unique needs and they expect highly reliable, secure, and instantly available networks and systems. To meet these expectations, a sizeable portion of our work is dedicated to staying ahead of potential problems. We have to have strong diagnostic tools (both centralized and remote) and rapid deployment of necessary resources to customer locations.

If problems occur outside the scope of our preparations and the problem turns into a system failure, the technological problems become intertwined with customer problems. Our customers, because of the nature of the business, have significant public exposure during these events. We have had instances in which we responded well to the technological problem but did not adequately handle the information process with the customer, the media, and the general public. It is our job to acknowledge and understand the magnitude of the problem, communicate the steps necessary for restoration, collaborate with the customer, and execute the solution. Sometimes this has to be done humbly before a large audience, in partnership with the customer.

Every event is different, and every customer situation adds a different dimension of complexity. It is our job to learn, adapt, and create increasingly better proactive processes to prevent these events from happening. The key in these situations is not only to have the technological resources in place but to have streamlined decision-making, an immediate problem-evaluation process, and a laser-sharp focus on the number one priority—fixing the problem in the shortest time possible. All other internal concerns take a back seat to getting our customer back on the air.

Rick Neal
Vice President
Motorola

more likely to be graceful under fire and to move their organizations forward rather than be stymied by the setback.

Conference participants agreed that a crisis that involves fault on the part of the agency should be dealt with honestly, openly and—when appropriate—apologetically or with obvious sorrow. Retired Chief Terry Hillard of the Chicago Police Department offered this advice: "When you mess up, 'fess up and clean up." It is a lesson one of his protégés took to heart. As the new executive director of Chicago's Office of Emergency Management and Communication, Ron Huberman was with the mayor and the fire chief, welcoming President Bush to the city, when the 911 system failed. He went immediately to the media to admit that the department had "messed up." And he set about dealing with policies, procedures, and personnel to solve the problem. What could have been a career-ending incident became an opportunity to strengthen his relationship with his own managers as well as to strengthen community trust.

Perhaps the most dramatic example of this kind of leadership can be found in the handling of a tragic death in Boston after the community celebration of the Boston Red Sox victory over the New York Yankees in 2004. A college student who had been swept up in the celebrations died tragically as a result of a Boston police officer's actions. The Commissioner of Police, Kathleen O'Toole, immediately met with the victim's family to express her personal condolences. Commissioner O'Toole then publicly took responsibility for the department's actions. Acting with minimum facts but certain that a young woman had died, O'Toole did what her gut told her to do—accept responsibility and look for ways to prevent future tragedies.

Similarly when Jim Burke, the legendary CEO of Johnson & Johnson, was faced with the tampering of Tylenol, he completely reengineered how Tylenol was packaged, radically changing an industry standard, and restoring trust with Johnson & Johnson customers.

The examples of crisis management reflect a major advancement in policing from only a few decades past, when a "deny, justify, and stonewall" posture too often characterized the response to crises. Full disclosure of errors and a transparent effort to correct them can strengthen bonds with the community and clients, while efforts to deny responsibility or to cover up a problem will breed distrust and disrespect. Full disclosure is another way in which an organization faces brutal reality. When the external stance in a crisis is to deny and justify, that easily can become the internal stance as well, with little recognition that serious efforts need to be made to fix the problem that caused the crisis in the first place, or to improve the way the organization responds to crises. When the Madison

CONFESSION, CONTRITION, AND FORGIVENESS: ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Long before I became an ordained minister, I learned as a police chief the importance of confession, contrition, and forgiveness for individual and institutional health.

In the late 1980s, there was a fire in a low-income, mostly minority housing complex that had been a thorn in the side of the community and the Madison Police Department (MPD) for a long time. The frequent site of assaults and drug dealing, it consumed an inordinate amount of MPD time. One long-term solution was to locate the south district substation next door to the complex, but before that solution could help, there was the fire that could have ignited the town.

When the fire call went out, a young female sergeant—a very promising supervisor—heard it and responded in what she thought was a private comment to the dispatcher by singing, "Somerset is burning down, burning down, burning down…."

The sergeant did not know that a tape of her conversation with the emergency center dispatcher would be sent around the department. She also did not know that a child would die in the fire. Both facts would make newspaper headlines the next morning.

We had a potential crisis on our hands. Appropriately enough, the entire community was outraged. Minorities, especially, were expressing a potentially dangerous level of anger.

Our first response was to publicly admit the violation and to express pain and regret from the chief's office. No denial. No justification. No blaming the victims. Our second move was to meet as soon as possible with community leaders to formulate the larger response. Ministers in the black community agreed that a public apology from the sergeant, plus her commitment to a substantial amount of community service, would satisfy their congregations.

Then we needed to "sell" this approach to the police union. We put forth our position and why we thought it would be the best way out of a desperate situation. The union leadership agreed with us, and a press conference was arranged. I escorted the sergeant into the room filled with reporters and other observers, and introduced her. She made a deeply heartfelt apology. Members of the community accepted the apology, and she thanked them for their generosity. I walked her out of the room without permitting questions.

Confession. Contrition. Forgiveness. They did not occur spontaneously. They happened because they were goals for which we made a very determined effort. The result was a peaceful community, a department in which many employees spent many subsequent hours in small-group soul-searching, and a basically good sergeant who took a step that day toward greatness.

Fr. David Couper
Episcopal Priest
Chief of the Madison, Wisconsin Police Department, 1973–1993

sergeant in Chief Dave Couper's accompanying sidebar confessed and apologized for her behavior, many other members of the department were drawn into conversations among themselves about their own attitudes and the consequences for their mission. "'Fess Up and Clean Up"—both inside and out. Perhaps the saying should be "Mess up. 'Fess up. Clean up. Step up." Step up to improved organizational performance.

Crises that may or may not involve fault on the part of the agency may be occasions for the expression of sorrow. Thirty years ago it would have been unheard of for police leaders to visit a grieving family as Commissioner O'Toole did. They would have feared that any expression of sorrow would appear to be an expression of guilt and that would cause the agency to appear to "side" with the grieving family rather than with the officer or officers involved in the incident. In the late 1970s, Joe McNamara had just become the chief in Kansas City when 15-year old Rory L. Lark was killed in an encounter with police. McNamara attended the funeral, and the department was outraged. Most lawyers for cities and police departments had generally recommended not expressing any kind of regret for fear that this would be used against the city in future litigation.

When Ray Kelly was the commissioner in New York City a second time, an officer climbing to the top floor of a housing project walked onto the roof and startled a man who was walking across the roof from one apartment to another. Startled himself, the officer reacted by fatally shooting the man. In an unprecedented move for the NYPD, Ray Kelly acknowledged that this shooting was not justified and apologized to the family. His action proved popular in the community, but controversial in the department because officers felt that Kelly should have waited for the officer to be questioned and the investigation to be completed.

Similarly, officers in Boston attempting to execute a search warrant went to the wrong address. When they knocked down the door, a black minister in the house died of a heart attack. Because he had been correctly briefed by his officers and they admitted they had made a terrible mistake, Commissioner Paul Evans was able to go immediately to the family and to the public with an apology.

In 2007, regardless of who might eventually be found to bear greater responsibility for an incident, police leaders are much more likely to say, "We are so sorry this has happened and we are sad for your loss. We will do everything possible to learn what actually happened." This is not an expression of guilt, only an expression of humanity. Greatness in policing requires this kind of compassion and transparency. In the 21st century, compassion **is** the response of a disciplined police culture.

Achieving a "Culture of Greatness" in Policing

Collins gives us a common language to talk to one another about factors that promote organizational greatness. We talk about "facing brutal facts" and "getting the right people on the bus," about "good being the enemy of great," and about Level 5 leaders. In law enforcement, the most difficult part of achieving greatness may be *sustaining* the types of changes that can make a police or sheriff's department great. Police chiefs in major cities have notoriously short tenures, typically only a few years. A chief who wants to achieve greatness by Collins' definition—success that lasts 15 years or longer—needs to think beyond his own tenure. In policing, greatness is not merely about finding a few great individuals for top management positions, but also creating great *systems* for overcoming obstacles and establishing a strong, self-disciplined *culture* within the organization that will continue long after the chief retires or is replaced.

Thus, in the world of policing, some of the Collins principles may be particularly important—for example, finding Level 5 leaders who pay close attention to preparing the next generation of leaders and are not afraid to set up their successors for even greater levels of success. That may involve giving managers plenty of authority to make important decisions, sending managers to leadership academies and bringing them along to professional conferences, and encouraging managers to think on their own, ask questions, and "challenge the boss" in constructive ways. Sustained greatness in policing also may hinge on Collins' principle that greatness involves hiring people who are comfortable with strong internal debate but will always support the chief's decisions, once they are made. A great police agency will not have a "genius with 1,000 helpers," but rather a chief with a strong management team that will continue to ask tough questions after the chief has departed. And the farther down the ranks this culture of discipline extends, the more likely it will survive a change at the very top.

One additional point: In a conversation with Chuck Wexler, Collins emphasized that in public-sector organizations, achieving greatness often is about "overcoming obstacles." It may be crystal-clear that a police or sheriff's department's Hedgehog Concept should be finding ways to reduce violence and other crimes, but the trick is to find ways to accomplish the goal. If an ironclad labor agreement prevents a police chief from firing officers who are not performing, perhaps the only way to overcome that obstacle is to move the officers to new positions where they might prove more useful. If a tight budget prevents a chief from acquiring the latest computer technology, the only solution may be to look for a computer whiz on the staff who can make the best use of the technology in hand.

In this connection, Collins also warns public-sector executives to avoid the temptation to obsess about "systemic constraints" that are beyond their

control. He cites the example of hospital executives who, when asked, "What needs to happen for you to build great hospitals?" answered, "The Medicare system is broken, and it needs to be fixed." When pressed, the hospital executives were able to cite at least one health care organization that made a leap to superior results, Collins noted. Even when faced with enormous obstacles, a few leaders usually find ways to "build a pocket of greatness." Collins encourages public-sector leaders to ask themselves, "What can you do *today* to create a pocket of greatness, despite the brutal facts of your environment?"

Finally, it should be noted that *the process of seeking greatness* cannot help but improve a policing agency. Whether a given police chief or sheriff actually achieves greatness is something that will be left for others to decide. But for each chief and each sheriff, any efforts to find the path to greatness surely will lead to some improvements. And in policing, even a small success can be immeasurably large. Each murder, rape, robbery, or other crime not committed is utterly important to the person who is not victimized and to his or her family and friends.

Collins has given us the dots. Our challenge is to find ways to connect them in the contexts of our own organizational puzzles. For this we are grateful to you, Jim Collins. You have inspired us to find greatness in what we do.

Appendix 1. Attendee List for March 29, 2005
Good to Great Leadership Summit

Chief William Bratton
Los Angeles Police Department

Chief Jim Burack
Milliken, Colorado Police Department

Bennie Click
Retired Chief
Dallas Police Department

Reverend David Couper
St Peter's Episcopal Church
Wisconsin

Bonnie Cullison
President
Montgomery County, Maryland Education Association

Superintendent Edward F. Davis, III
Lowell, Massachusetts Police Department

Chief Donald De Lucca
Miami Beach Police Department

Chief Charlie Deane
Prince William County, Virginia Police Department

Chief Kim Dine
Frederick, Maryland Police Department

Paul Evans
Director
Home Office–Police Standards Unit
London

Chief Terrence Gainer
U.S. Capitol Police

Raymond Geoffroy
Assistant Deputy Commandant
U.S. Marine Corps

Chief Ellen Hanson
Lenexa, Kansas Police Department

Ron Huberman
Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communication

Chief Gil Kerlikowske
Seattle Police Department

Lorne Kramer
City Manager
Colorado Springs

Chief David Kunkle
Dallas Police Department

Chief William Lansdowne
San Diego Police Department

Dr. John Leathers
Pennsylvania State University

Jody Leleck
Principal
Broad Acres Elementary School
Maryland

Chief James Lewis
Pomona, California Police Department

Bob Lunney
Consultant
Police and Public Safety
Toronto

Chief J. Thomas Manger
Montgomery County, Maryland Police Department

Barbara McDonald
Senior Advisor
Chicago Office of Emergency Management and Communication

Chief Robert McNeilly
Pittsburgh Bureau of Police

Rick Neal
Vice President
Motorola

Michael Nila
Franklin Covey

Carl Peed
Director
Office of Community Oriented Policing Services
U.S. Department of Justice

Chief Charles Ramsey
Washington, D.C. Metropolitan Police Department

Bruce Romer
Chief Administrative Officer
Montgomery County, Maryland Office of the County Executive

Karen Rowan
Former General Counsel
Chicago Police Department

Jim Sarallo
Senior VP & General Manager
Motorola

Jerome Weast
Superintendent of Schools
Montgomery County, Maryland Public Schools