Police Leadership Training

A focus on leadership competencies and skill development promotes better leadership. Researchers at the Center for Creative Leadership have identified critical leadership competencies that cut across types of organizations. These competencies include managing change, solving problems, managing politics and influencing others, taking risks and innovating, setting vision and strategy, and understanding and navigating the organization. Building trust between the community and police agencies requires leaders who are well trained and developed in these competencies. The goal of this is to develop what has been called transformational leaders who help drive a shift in the police organizational culture.

Industrial and organizational (I-O) psychologists are well positioned to assist governmental agencies in conducting training needs assessments in order to identify the key knowledge and skills underlying these competencies that are relevant for police agencies. Then gaps in current police leadership training and development activities to enhance those knowledge and skills can be identified and a systematic approach to leadership development created that includes formal training, mentoring (e.g., by key leaders in organizations outside of policing), and developmental activities on the job. I-O psychologists can then help in the creation of training objectives, sequencing those objectives, and the creation of innovative training designs to facilitate not only learning but also the transfer of that learning to the job. We also have many experts in on the job leadership development activities (including the Center for Creative Leadership) who can translate best practices in the leadership development and evaluation in the private sector to the key challenges of developing effective police leadership especially in regards to working the community groups.