

**You are required to write a 5,000-word reflective report on the many & varied challenges of Operational Leadership in Policing.**

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**Programme: MSc Policing (Operational and Strategic Leadership)**

**Module: Operational Leadership**

**Module code: BMPO 7001D**

**Submission date: 28/04/2025**

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## **Word count in main body 5,490**

### **Background**

Policing within the United Kingdom faces a number of current challenges, with declining trust and confidence in the police service for myriad reasons: as a result of a number of high profile misconduct and criminal cases involving serving officers; declining number of offenders being brought to justice and a lack of focus on crimes affecting local communities, to name but a few (HMICFRS, 2024). Recent high profile criminal cases have placed internal policing culture under the spotlight and have highlighted a culture of toxic masculinity and misogyny, which has been widely reported in national media (The Guardian, 2023). The Baroness Casey report, commissioned after a serving police officer kidnapped, raped and murdered a young woman in London, labelled the Met Police as institutionally racist, homophobic and misogynistic (Casey, 2023). Further high-profile cases of police officers committing serious crimes by abusing their power have further cemented the issue of concerning police culture - these issues focussed on the Met but had wide-reaching national impact given similar issues in other forces across the country (Sky News, 2024).

### **Introduction**

I am a serving police officer for Devon and Cornwall Police, which has faced its own challenges of leadership over the past few years: His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) has placed the force in 'Engage – enhanced monitoring' as a result of concerns over performance and quality of service delivered to the public (HMICFRS, 2023). Furthermore, there is a lack of continuity of leadership within Devon and Cornwall Police, with three Chief Constables serving within the space of 18 months (ITV News, 2024).

Operational leadership, particularly in challenging times such as these, requires an adaptive leadership style to deal with uncertainty and to navigate unforeseen leadership challenges – situational leadership theory suggests there is no universal model of leadership. Rather, leaders must adapt their approach based on the

situation, issue and maturity of their teams, choosing the most appropriate style depending on the circumstances (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977).

Leadership differs from management and is a more strategic skill which harnesses the power of people and their individual motivations to lead them towards a common purpose.

I have a natural participatory leadership style and try to treat teams with respect, to create the environment for honest feedback, learning and diversity of thought. I also have a varied and wide breadth of operational policing experience and as such, am adept at changing my leadership style to meet the challenges and situations when needed. Leading large teams, however, always uncovers unforeseen and difficult challenges - the leadership challenge I faced was shortly after promotion to Detective Superintendent. I spent a number of months as in a relatively small department before moving to a much larger department both in terms of number of staff and investigations. When I took over the department it was the worst performing CID in the force – in terms of a number of key metrics that were subject to measurement, such as supervisor review of workloads; number of investigations per officer and investigative updates on crime. I made several specific changes designed to increase accountability and psychological safety within the department – this resulted in positive improvements but did not create an environment whereby other leaders were able to anticipate and deal with future challenges. This report will use a reflective model to review the approach I took, the strength and weaknesses of this and how and consider how I can improve for future.

### **Theoretical Styles of Leadership**

There is a large body of research, opinion and information regarding leadership, and more specifically, effective leadership. Most people in business or the public sector have their own views and understanding of what 'leadership' means - however, defining leadership styles is important to understanding how exactly leadership is effective. The Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development describes leadership as "the ability to understand people's motivations and leverage them to achieve a shared goal." (CIPD, 2023). This differs from management which is

described as “the art of getting things done through others” (Monarch Business School, 2023). Leaders don’t just manage individual tasks but communicate, gain acceptance of ideas and motivate teams (Munna, 2021). Leadership, therefore, is a more strategic skill which leads people towards a common purpose by harnessing the power of people and their individual motivations and the importance of effective leadership on effective performance cannot be underestimated.

My own leadership style lends itself to a participatory style, where I aim to inspire teams towards a common organisational objective by encouraging collective thought and decision making – this was initially identified by Likert but described by Wang et al (2022) as a style “in which leaders ask employees for their opinions before making decisions, delegate decision-making authority to subordinates in practice, and encourage active participation by employees to make decisions together.” On a personal level I am also equally motivated by my previous experiences of leadership – I have worked with both good leaders and ineffective leaders. Inevitably, I have been motivated to a higher degree by the impact of poor leadership which has left me frustrated and encouraged me to be a better leader – this is described as behaviourism learning whereby I learned by observing the behaviour of others (National University , 2024). I also recognise that motivation comes from within an individual as well as by their leaders and surrounding environment - John Adair theorises that “50% of motivation comes from within a person, and 50% from his or her environment, especially from the leadership encountered therein” (Adair, 2010). This is significant as it clearly shows the effect that I can have as a leader within my department and on others and it is important that I recognise and understand the importance of this.

I will explore different models of leadership theory below, particularly applied to the policing leadership context. It should be noted that some authors recognise that the leadership theory has deficiencies in its lack of relevance to actual implementation to day-to-day impact on performance, police and procedure. There are equally those, however, who point to the fact that empirical studies of police leadership have helped to develop the concept of leadership and the practical application of this to good result (Davis & Silvestri, 2020).

### Transactional and Transformational Leadership:

Transactional leadership refers to the flow of information and orders directly from a leader to their team, and the follower is rewarded or punished as a result of their performance (Bass, 2008) – in essence, this is a contract between a leader and a follower (Sashkin, 2004) whereby the follower must do what the leader says according to clearly and tightly defined objectives. There is undoubtedly a place for transactional leadership in policing, particularly in fast paced and dynamic situations in a control and command setting – the author has experience as a tactical firearms commander in charge of dynamic firearms incidents involving threats to life and as a senior investigating officer, leading the investigation into serious incidents such as homicide. In these fast paced situations a transactional leadership style is beneficial as it leaves little room for ambiguity or mistake, however, there are limitations of this rigid style of leadership, which does not necessarily engender original thought, autonomy or long term motivation (Bass, 1990).

In contrast, transformational leadership focusses on creating the environment and the culture to motivate and inspire individuals to problem-solve of their accord, motivating individuals to operate at a higher level of thinking (as opposed to just doing). This style of leadership sees a leader and followers prioritise organisational interests over self - research has shown this to improve employees attitude, motivation and performance (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). This style of leadership takes into account the emotions of followers.

There is a body of research which demonstrates the importance of transformational leadership in policing settings, particularly when solving non-linear problems which require diversity of thought and application. Dentsen (2003) found from a survey of 480 senior Australian police officers that this style of leadership was perceived as an indicator of leadership effectiveness in an individual and team; Sarver and Miller (2014) found amongst 161 police chiefs in Texas this style of leadership as most effective, with leaders employing this style perceived to be confident and open-minded; Murphy and Drodge (2004) found that Royal Canadian Mounted Police associated transformational leadership with greater commitment, motivation

and satisfaction and finally, in the UK, Dobby et al. (2004) found that out of 53 identified effective leadership behaviours, 50 closely associated with being a transformational leader. In particular, transformational leadership has the opportunity to break down the traditional hierarchy of policing and empower the wider organisation.

There is, however, criticism of transformational leadership in policing – Currie and Lockett (2007) highlight and question the ability for public sector leaders to be truly transformational in an environment which has such great influence from politicians and governmental influence (in the case of policing from the Home Secretary and publicly elected Police and Crime Commissioners). Cockcroft (2014) further argues that the principles of transformational leadership are at odds with operational pressures and the very nature of policing. Tourish (2013) bemoans the lack of consideration around the fact that an ineffective leader with a transformational style can actually have a negative effect, corrupting and coercing followers into their incorrect vision. Furthermore, this style of leadership is dependent on followers following – literature recognises the culture of junior officers in resisting managerial policy which renders transformational leadership ineffective (Skogan, 2008). The actual culture that exists within policing and local teams therefore can have a real and tangible impact on the effectiveness of leadership styles.

It is the authors view that despite this, there is real opportunity for transformational leadership to develop a team and a department to perform to a high level in line with organisational values and goals. Transactional leadership has the effect of demotivating and not fostering autonomy and is less likely to produce good effect in the long run, albeit it is useful and indeed an optimal leadership style in dynamic and fast paced incidents. A good leader adapts between the two styles depending on the situation.

#### Situational Leadership Theory:

Situational Leadership theory was first developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1977) and acknowledges that there is no universal or best style of leadership for every given team or individual. Rather, effective leadership is incumbent on adapting a leadership approach on the context and situation as well as the experience and style

of the individuals being led (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2008) – this was one of the first leadership models to take into account the fact that leadership isn't solely based on personality and behaviours of the leader but rather, also the individual being led and the context or situation that they are being led in.

It highlights the need for an effective leader to adapt and change their leadership style depending on the maturity of their followers and the situation at hand. It quantifies the extent to which the leader directs followers and the way in which a leader can support a follower with open discussion (Davis & Silvestri, 2020). There are 4 different styles that the leader can utilise, depending on the situation and maturity of the team member:

1. 'telling' followers – high direction of tasks and the direction of information is from the leader to the follower; particularly useful for those without experience or in a high-pressured tactical situation where a clear chain of command is beneficial
2. Selling/coaching – direction of task from the leader but also willingness and 'buy-in' from the follower
3. Supporting – encourages independent thought encouraging learning and confidence through guidance and feedback
4. Delegating – suitable for those followers with significant experience and encourages autonomy (Centre for Leadership Studies, 2025)

Situational theory has been applied to studies of police leadership and the benefits of this leadership style in moving from a coaching state to dealing with dynamic and fast moving critical incidents are self-apparent – a good leader should take into account not just their own style and ability but also that of their follower and the nature of the situation, particularly in a complex policing environment (Whitfield, Alison, & Crego, 2008). However, this theory isn't without criticism and Podsakoff et al. (2003) argue that a situational theory assumes too linear a relationship between the leader, the situation and the follower response, which doesn't consider the dynamic nature of leadership. Furthermore, other academics have highlighted the fact that this style can reinforce leadership stereotypes or produce a halo effect, whereby followers are pigeonholed into categories based on first assumptions, not taking into account the changing nature and development of individuals (Yukl, 2011).

### Servant Leadership:

This theory and style of leadership was first identified by Greenleaf (1977) who identified that “A servant-leader focuses primarily on the growth and well-being of people and the communities to which they belong.” While traditional leadership generally involves the accumulation and exercise of power by one at the “top of the pyramid,” servant leadership is different. The servant-leader shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible.

This style of leadership sees the needs of the organisation put first and focuses on the development of individuals. It encourages the modelling of ethical and caring behaviour and it is therefore easy to see how it can be attractive model in policing, which has a statutory bedrock of acting according to a code of ethics by doing the right thing and acting appropriately at all times (College of Policing, 2025). This style of leadership makes individuals feel more valued and results in more autonomous decision making – in non-dynamic situations this empowers individuals to deliver through empowerment, creating trust and a better problem solving approach. Research in a policing context has shown that servant leadership can improve morale, reduce burnout and enhance public trust (Jensen & Anderson, 2015).

There is some criticism of servant-based leaders and in dynamic situations that need a clear control and command structure it clearly will not lead to desired results. Without a clear objective set of moral standards servant leadership may not always promote ethical behaviours and followers may follow and be reliant on the leader’s personal ethical framework, which may not be appropriate (Shonk, 2025). It is therefore highly dependent on the leader’s own ethics, morals and approach.

### Emotional Intelligence:

All of these leadership styles exist in theory and critics point out that high-stress dynamic incidents don’t exist on paper – they are real and therefore are influenced by stress factors impacting on the leader. Goleman’s Emotional Intelligence theory

identifies 5 key components of EI which are important: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills (Landry, 2019). An effective leader, regardless of which leadership style they are employing, must display and develop effective emotional intelligence to help manage stress, improve decision making and better understand the individual dynamics on their teams. High emotional intelligence is key to delivering effective leadership, regardless of the style, and this quality must be present in any leadership style for it to be effective.

### **Critical Reflection Models**

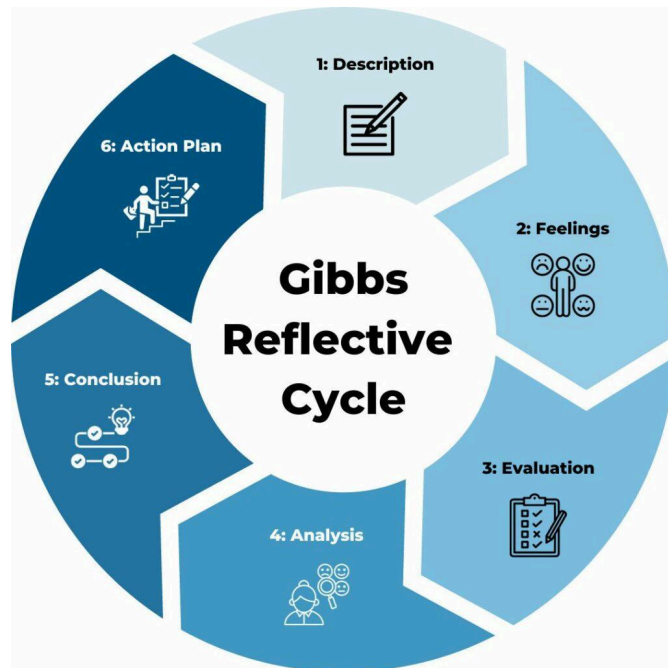
There are a number of different reflective models which help individuals engage in critical reflection. Many different academics and business schools recognise the key to improving leadership is through reflection by critically thinking about strengths, weaknesses, positives, feelings, attitudes and behaviours. (Roberts, 2008). Furthermore, self-awareness has been cited as one of the most important competencies for leaders to develop (Toegel & Barsoux, 2012) and the benefits of critical reflection are as follows:

- Increased co-operation between people
- Improvement in emotional intelligence
- Innovation and openness to new perspectives
- Motivation to deal with long-standing issues
- Better morale
- Facilitation of insight and stimulation of self-discovery (The Institute of Leadership, 2025)

I will look at a number of reflective models and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of each before using one to reflect on my own leadership challenge.

Gibbs' Reflective cycle:

This model was produced by Graham Gibbs in 1988 and consists of 6 stages of structured reflection, as demonstrated below (Channel, 2023):

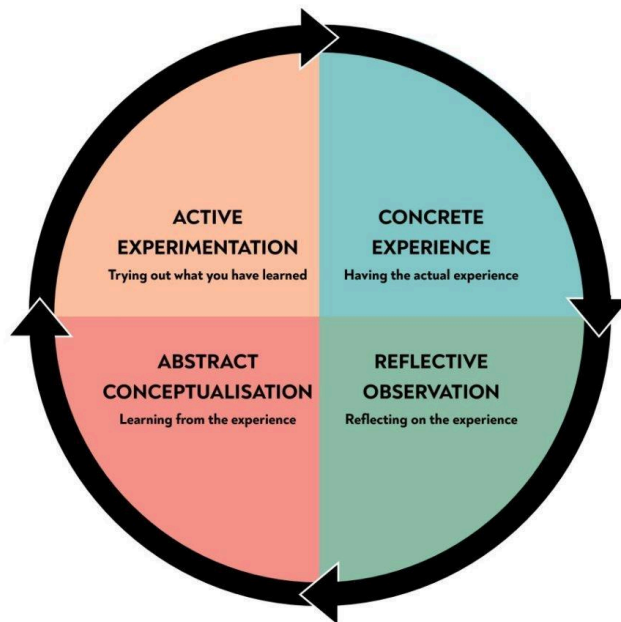


There are 6 clear stages that must be thought about, meaning that is more structured than some of the other models. This means that it is beneficial for those new to self-reflection and helps leaders reflect not just on what has happened; but why it happened; how it made the leader feel and what can be done differently in the future.

However, this cycle can be too rigid and can oversimplify complex situations in a situational manner or focus too much on an emotional response (University of Hull, 2024). Naturally, the appropriateness is situationally dependent but may not apply in complex and dynamic policing situations.

Kolb's experiential learning cycle:

This model focusses on learning through experience, a key part of development and leadership:



This model focuses on 4 key and distinct areas: concrete experience (the learner experiences something); reflective observation (the learner reflects on the experience and their knowledge, and identifies any gaps between the two); abstract conceptualisation (the learner has a new method or idea as a result) and active experimentation (the learner applies what they have learned to a new situation) (McCleod, 2025).

It has a number of benefits in that the model supports adaptive learning and encourages leaders to apply their learning and experiences to future situations. However, this model is more theoretical and less easy to follow and is perhaps better utilised by experienced self-reflection. It also does not consider feelings or emotions into the experience.

Rolfe's reflective model:

This is the most simplistic of the reflective cycles and asks three questions, as follows (University of Edinburgh, 2024):



This model is simple and allows for inexperienced reflectors to use this – as such it is highly accessible and allows for users to think about experience, the implications of this experience and what this means for the future.

This model, although accessible and simple, is limited in that it may not provide sufficient depth or understanding of complex leadership theories. It also doesn't apply to all situations, such as dynamic ones, as there is not always opportunity to analyse before taking action (Online Nursing Papers, 2025).

Utilisation of a reflective model:

In summary, there are a number of different models and not all are covered here – each has positives and drawbacks depending on the users' experience of using a specific model; their levels of reflective ability and the time available to undertake detailed analysis. More experienced self-reflection may need a combination of models to aid cover all aspects of a particular situation, however, this requires an advanced level of self-reflective ability.

Having considered these models I am going to use Gibb's self-reflective cycle as I have used this before; appreciate the structured nature of the model and specifically want to explore my feelings and emotions in the situation.

## **Operational Leadership Challenge and Response**

I have reflected on how my leadership style and ability has translated to a recent challenge that I have faced in work. I will discuss the leadership challenge and then reflect on this using a reflective model. I will consider the leadership styles I have described in the previous section and how I applied these or could have applied them. I will use the STAR model to describe the operational leadership challenge (National Careers Service, 2025):

### **Situation:**

I was promoted to the rank of Superintendent in April 2024 and was temporarily the head of the Major Crime Investigation Team. This department investigated homicides and other serious and complex crimes. This was a relatively small department of specialists that investigated no more than 20 crimes at a time. As it was a small, specialist department of highly motivated individuals it was relatively easy to enforce and enact high performance and standards by communications – homicide investigations are supported heavily by partner agencies, such as the CPS, and specialist ICT systems. As such, performance remained high and required relatively little direct input from me as head of department.

I then got posted to the head of a geographical Criminal Investigation Department – this was far larger, with approximately 3 times as many staff and 1200 live criminal investigations. The scale and scope of the department was far larger and I initially found the sheer size a challenge.

At the time of my posting the department was the worst performing CID in the force by a number of metrics in respect of Rape and Serious Sexual Offences (RASSO): outcomes; timeliness of investigations; number of investigations per investigator; frequency of updates from officers and frequency of supervisor investigative reviews. The department had a high volume of investigations and a low number of officers that had the capability and capacity to deal with these offences. This could not be fully explained by demand and investigator numbers but was having a significant

impact on welfare and wellbeing within the department with higher-than-average number of absences from work on account of sickness.

**Task:**

When I started in the department I was clearly tasked by my line management to improve performance in respect of the metrics mentioned above and I had to devise a way to do so.

**Action:**

I started off by analysing the issue and seeking the views of those in the department. I did 'floor walks' and arranged 'drop in sessions' at different ranks to get a view of the issues within the department. As an example, I organised an away day with the Detective Inspectors, middle manager who highlighted the fact that they felt that the Detective Sergeants were not owning issues at their level and were instead looking for their leaders to deal with their tasks, such as low-level welfare and performance issues. Meetings with the Constables and Sergeants highlighted the fact that there was a culture and perception of being too busy to deal with their day-to-day tasks appropriately. Furthermore, investigators at all ranks felt fearful of making a decision or getting into trouble for making a mistake. At all ranks there was a real lack of understanding around performance both on an individual level and departmental level.

From these sessions and by utilising performance data I concluded that the department had a culture of apology – i.e. they considered themselves “too busy” – and this resulted in poor performance and ultimately a poor level of service to victims, particularly RASSO victims. The direct and informal feedback I had from the front-line was that this was not optimal but was perceived to be unavoidable on account of how 'busy' all officers were.

At around the same time that I started my new role I attended the Police Leadership Programme (Level 4 – senior leaders). During this course we covered the concept of psychological safety, which refers to how individuals perceive threats and rewards when they take risks at work. In a psychologically safe environment people are less

defensive and feel at ease developing innovative solutions, admitting mistakes and achieving team and departmental goals (CIPD, 2024).

A high performing team has psychological safety but there is also accountability for that team – a team that is psychologically safe and has accountability exists in a learning zone and can deal with complex departmental issues, as well as learn and deal with unanticipated issues, as highlighted in the image below (Thinking Space Coaching, 2021):



I concluded that the department was not accountable and was not psychologically safe, in part as a result of the previous SLT leadership style which was very transactional and punitive. The department was acting in the anxiety or apathy zone and not achieving good results as a result. I wanted to create a culture and environment whereby the department would operate in the learning zone, working autonomously, creatively and capable of solving future problems.

I saw my action to create the environment and culture that was accountable to performance and felt psychologically safe. I therefore delegated the creation of a performance framework and the setting up of regular performance meetings to the

Detective Chief Inspector – I provided really clear communication that departmental performance would be measured according to regularity of supervisor reviews (ensuring that Sergeants were performing at their rank); that investigators would update their crimes every 28 days and surmised that the overall workload of the department should decrease as result. I chose three distinctive targets to assist with clarity of communication and communicated this very clearly across the department using a variety of medium and styles. In this way, a regular performance framework and monitoring regime was established – I chaired performance meetings and the Inspectors were held to account and were given the autonomy to hold their Sergeants to account, who, in turn, held their investigators to account. I employed a supportive and servant leadership manner in doing so.

I also invited the Police Federation into the department to do a cultural audit and concluded that the fears about unfavourable treatment of women had dissipated with a change of SLT and transparency of decision making. Furthermore, I took steps to increase the trust and confidence in fairness of decision making by circulating, as an example, the principles of staffing decisions regarding moves within and out of the department.

#### Result:

My efforts to create a psychologically safe and accountable department initially worked. From drop-in sessions and the reports from the Police Federation, I knew that individuals felt more psychologically safe and furthermore, that they were aware of the goals of the department were. This was also borne out by the data – the number of crimes with supervisor investigative reviews increased by 30% and overall workload of the department decreased by 15% in 3 months. This was a result of Sergeants performing at an appropriate level, investigators having appropriate support and clearly communicated direction.

However, very shortly afterwards another performance issue was identified at a force performance board level – my CID department was the worst performing force for the number of outstanding RASSO arrests. There were more suspects waiting to be arrested than anywhere else in the force by some considerable margin and I couldn't

work out why, when I felt had created a learning zone, that this had not been picked up or anticipated by the Inspectors or by me.

I have used Gibb's Reflective Cycle to reflect upon this.

#### Description:

As previously described, the previous SLT had used a predominately transactional leadership style in dealing with departmental challenges. This had created a department that were not accountable and did not have psychological safety. When I joined the department, I set about understanding the issue and then creating a increasing psychological safety and accountability. I did this by directing holding middle managers to account for their team's performance and also introducing transparency and principles of fairness in decision making, particularly around CPD and leadership opportunities. I tasked clearly defined issues to these middle managers and empowered them to come up with the solutions to these and to implement change.

I believed that I was creating a set of leaders capable of being adaptive and dealing with undefined problems. However, this was clearly not the case as a new issue had arisen which was unforeseen – this pertained to outstanding RASSO suspects who had not yet been arrested, in some cases for several years after report without a clear rationale as to why. This was undeniably a poor indicator of performance and I realised that I had failed to create a unit which would anticipate and problem solve the next issue 'on the horizon.' Policing has been described as a Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous (VUCA) environment and autonomous leaders are required to perform effectively in this environment (Hill, 2017).

#### Feelings:

I took this failure very personally – I had thought I had set out a series of measures that would see the departmental leadership improve. And it had, but only in a really narrow focus based on specific performance metrics. The changes I had made internally led to improvement and my line management believed that performance had improved. But there is a difference between performance being effective on paper and, in this case, the victim experience of the police actually improving. I had

failed to build a robust team in a VUCA environment that could identify and improve, making the mistake of improving statistics as opposed to overall victim experience.

My reflection is this is the reason I was so disappointed and that I had fallen into the pitfalls that previous leaders I had worked with fell into. It is not unusual for leaders to take things personally and Wilding (2023) argues that this should not be seen as a weakness but rather, “a reflection of passion, commitment, and deep sense of responsibility.”

I recognised that becoming too emotionally affected could impact on my ability to continue to perform as a leader and to create psychological safety - I discussed this particular issue on the Police Leadership Programme I previously referred to and sought the views of other policing leaders. An overwhelming consensus was that a senior leader should take pride and be connected to the performance of their wider team but ultimately should be personally and emotionally detached to allow for a more objective assessment and to “view challenges without bias or emotional interference, promoting clearer and more effective decision-making (Echelon Front, 2025).”

My personal view is that a fully detached leader is unlikely to be invested in either people or performance – taking things personally is fine to the extent that it doesn’t impact on the ability to objectively assess the situation and make future decisions impacting on performance.

#### Evaluation:

The focus on a narrow band of performance metrics did lead to an increase in performance in only a very narrow area. This had not actually improved the experience of a victim having their crime investigated and did not improve the satisfaction of the ‘user’ of the department’s services – it was inherently intrinsically focused. As such, the action I took did have the desired effect but did not improve performance more widely or create a unit capable of dealing with future unforeseen issues.

#### Analysis:

I believed that I was employing a transformational leadership style, however, on reflection I was actually instilling too narrow a focus on specific performance metrics which were focused on statistics, as opposed to focussing on quality of investigations and victim experience. My focus was not transformational and according to situational leadership theory I was in the 'telling' stage when I should have been in the selling/coaching stage. I feel in hindsight, and given the fact that I had seen this errant approach in previous leaders, this should have been predictable and I therefore took this personally. As a leader I had not demonstrated strategic foresight of anticipating future issues, which is a trait that good leaders employ to "systematically explore future possibilities before they arise and make informed decisions to thrive amongst uncertainty (Bosworth, 2024). As a leader, I should have built a team capable of doing the same by modelling this ability to look past the current problem (Hall, 2017).

#### Conclusion:

There is an old adage that 'what gets measured gets done' and I should have framed the problem of RASSO performance as a learning problem, encouraging the operational leaders to problem solve. Instead, I set narrow and clear targets which they followed but did not consider the wider performance and quality issues. This has resulted in an inflexible department which performs well in what is measured but isn't equipped with middle managers to anticipate and 'future-proof' the department for future challenges.

#### Action Plan:

I have reflected on this scenario and believe I need to take a different approach in two key areas: not taking the performance of the department so personally and adapting my leadership approach. I need to create a culture of ownership using situational leadership and by coaching and directing my teams, as opposed to merely telling and measuring a narrow band of performance. In this way future performance challenges will not require me as head of department to be identified and rather, these issues will be foreseen by others. I also need to remain partially emotionally disassociated from performance issues to ensure that I can display strategic foresight and can do this, as I have already done, by sharing issues that I face with leaders at a similar level who can offer an independent and objective view.

## Conclusion

A range of leadership styles can and should be utilised by me as a strategic leader depending on a range of factors: the situation; the context; the experience of those I lead and the nature of the problem. The incorrect application of a leadership style can lead to unintended consequences and the failure of a department to predict future challenges. A range of critical reflective models are available to assist with analysing my leadership performance and I have utilised Gibbs' Reflective Model to conclude that I need to not take the performance of the department so personally and appropriately adapting my leadership approach. I will continue to use reflective cycles such as these to reflect and improve upon my leadership performance.

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