



LEADERSHIP AND THE INDIVIDUAL

Leadership Reflection

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INTRODUCTION

This report reflects upon my experiences and challenges as a leader, together with my experiences under the leadership of others.

When undertaking a reflective practice, there is an element of structure required for efficiency. Therefore, as I share my experiences, I will utilise the structure of Gibbs' reflective cycle as a guide. Gibbs (1988)

As I move through this report, I reflect on my promotion to Detective Sergeant and the experiences and challenges I faced, both professionally and personally. I will discuss incidents that proved to test not only my working knowledge, but also my overall leadership style and personal resilience.

In undertaking this reflection process, I will aim to apply theory to these challenges, whilst also considering the leadership styles of myself and others around me.

BACKGROUND

From a young age my ambition was to become a Police Officer. However, for various reasons I was, in fact, 37 when I became an officer.

The concept of joining the police and being able to help people fuelled my determination to make it as an officer and I believe that, by joining later in life, this enabled me to bring life experiences as well as knowledge from training. When dealing with members of the public, this helps to keep things real, and has enabled me to draw from these experiences in my leadership journey.

My very first supervisor made a huge impact on me early in my career and that impact continues to shape me and the leader I continue to thrive to be. Her values and commitment inspired me to be true to myself and not afraid to stick with my own values. Knowing what is right and doing what is right are two different things and she embedded into my already strong moral belief the importance of doing the right thing. This supervisor could tell the right story at the right time, a key skill in leadership. Stories become memorable, making it easy to indulge an audience. They're also able to provide a 'live' example of how something is done and how/why it works, rather than simply instructing one what to do. This skill would leave staff open and willing to learn from her lessons. Zhu (2017).

Style?

I have been a Police Officer for twelve years and promoted to Detective Sergeant in 2018. Prior to this, I held no management experience. There is little, if any, training

following promotion and, as Adair (2009) states, there is no such thing as 'instant leadership'. He reflects upon growing leaders as if growing fruit trees. Something that takes time and from which others can benefit. *thoughts on adair?*

DESCRIPTION

Upon promotion, I assumed leadership of a team that had been established for some time and was aware of the differing levels of experience within it.

From being a member of the team to leading the team, I was already aware that each member, irrespective of their status, age and achievements, held unfulfilled needs. As their leader, it was for me to satisfy those needs and, to date, I have learnt to organise these, identifying areas of specialism and progression. This results in a team working more effectively. Mirza (2018) *why are needs important? motivation?*

This wasn't an easy task and on first assuming the role I realised that different team members would present different challenges and it was here I grew to understand different leadership styles and the need for adaptation of this at times. In addition, I learnt that each team member requires different levels of motivation, due to their own personal motivational levels. To ensure I addressed this appropriately, I familiarised myself with the Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory. Within this model, Maslow identifies that once a subordinate has satisfied their given level of need, there will no longer be motivation for them. (Your Article Library.com) ✓

Shortly after promotion, I was advised of an officer returning to division and onto my team. I will refer to this officer throughout as Detective Constable X (DC X). I'd previously heard rumours about DC X and her personality and the way she conducted herself, however I had never worked with her myself. As it became known to others that DC X would be working from the station, I was approached by several people advising me of the difficulties she would pose and how they believed she was not a person who would work well within my team. She was described by others as 'someone who trouble follows'.

Personally, I will take an individual on their own merit and judge them on how they ✓ treat me and colleagues, and not what others think. I believe this is a good standing to start from and as a leader, I am not prepared to rely upon subjective perceptions to influence my decision making. I believe this comes from my childhood upbringing of always supporting the underdog, if you see others down, go and help. This comes again from the morals and values that I hold and is often a motivating factor in my leadership style. Bereel (2009) believes the role of a leader and ethics are entwined, and this is important to bear in mind as a leader embarks upon an ethical quest. One must be aware of where these values and beliefs were formed and be able to justify them appropriately in any situation.

Initially, DC X appeared to fit in well and I observed her work with others and accept direction, without challenge, whilst completing tasks to a good standard

However, as time passed, it became evident that DC X was demonstrating traits of a personality that others had mentioned previously. This was fed back to me by team members and officers within the division. Additionally, I noticed that she had become more challenging to my decision making, offering alternative suggestions to team members in my absence. This caused some confusion and angst amongst the younger members of my team as they were unsure on whose direction to follow.

As a leader, I am open to feedback and offer an opportunity for officers to share opinions. However, this was being done without consultation with myself and in such a way as to outwardly disagree with me and contradict my decisions.

I decided to just observe initially, rather than go straight into it, as I had not directly experienced it myself. As time passed, DC X, who holds a wealth of experience, became more and more disruptive to my team, isolating one member by constantly putting them and their abilities down. I could see that DC X would try to add a humorous spin on this, I believe to detract from what she was doing.

This colleague was younger in service and lacking in confidence and it appeared DC X had identified this as a weakness and was aspiring to take advantage of that by knocking the officer's confidence further. In addition, this appeared to be done for the entertainment of others. I was present during one such encounter and

observed the impact these comments had on said colleague by observing his physical reaction and body language. I knew then that I had to act upon this behaviour.

I don't know why she would do this, maybe to make herself look a better police officer, or was it to try to gain admiration from other team members? Who knows? I instantly felt frustration in this behaviour and realised this was drawn from my own values; I wouldn't treat anybody in such a way and didn't expect others to do so. However, I paused for some time and realised that others have a different moral compass and, not only did I need to remain calm to be professional, but to remain calm to get to the bottom of the problem. This is not how I allow any team I lead to work and made a note to myself that I would speak to DC X.

Before I was able to speak to her, a further job came in and, following a debrief, it became clear that DC X had again made decisions contrary to mine in my absence, leading the team in a different direction. On hearing what actions DC X insisted others do, I felt undermined and identified this needed to be addressed. Not just for my personal leadership journey, or colleagues on my team, but also for the wider public as the decisions she made were not compliant with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act (PACE) 1984, rules that Police officers are bound to adhere to.

To ensure integrity and fairness, I spoke with all team members individually in relation to this job. It became apparent the team were influenced to believe this

incident wasn't one of significance and therefore, DC X took the lead in directing them as to what to do, despite me already having given instruction.

As I listened to the actions taken, internally I was mortified. Externally, I remained calm and asked each officer what they thought of the situation and highlighted how it was wrong, and how their actions had resulted in an injustice to a vulnerable person. Having identified the errors of the actions taken, I ensured an understanding and learning from them. I openly discussed their views and accepted that a lot of this had been formed based on what they had been told by DC X. Whilst these team members were younger in service, I advised them that, whilst I'll openly accept feedback and suggestions, they were to follow the actions agreed. If they wished to change these, then a discussion is to be had, unless it was time critical decision making.

Prior to speaking to DC X I was feeling quite angry and frustrated but suppressed these feelings to gain an open dialogue from her. Having obtained her account and identifying the error in these actions, DC X became argumentative and raised her voice to me, identifying that she had 20 years' service and more knowledge of policing than I did. It was here I witnessed first-hand her attitude and belief of being a better police officer than I. I continued to suppress my frustrations and highlighted that her level of experience hadn't helped her on this occasion, and not only had she breached regulations under PACE, but she also encouraged her colleagues to do so. I took this opportunity to discuss other areas of concern that had become apparent, in a bid to have an open discussion and move forward.

DC X became very emotional, something which took me by surprise as she is a strong character who doesn't show emotion and rarely demonstrates empathy to the nature of our work. I reassured her that I was not there to make things difficult for her but to lead my team in the best possible way. This seemed to help DC X relax a little and explain to me how, since transferring to Dyfed Powys Police, she hadn't felt like her face fitted, she was often misunderstood, and she was never going to get on.

She described how she had been treated by her previous supervisor and the problems she had endured whilst in that department. Some of what she said was very difficult to hear and was nothing short of bullying, however I kept my opinions to myself, aware that I was getting one side of a story.

I offered reassurances that I was not that supervisor, I would not operate in such a way, and I run an open and fair team. Everybody is entitled to an opinion and to offer ways of working, but ultimately, each team member is to be respected for their views. It's important to be mindful of what skills, knowledge and experience each officer can bring to the team.

DC X explained she had never experienced this way of supervision. She previously worked for the Metropolitan Police in London where she said there was an aggressive work culture, due to the volume and nature of crimes experienced there.

Shein and Shein (2017) note this culture would have been reflected in how she was led, as leaders ultimately create a culture, in line with the organisation's values. On transferring to Dyfed-Powys she demonstrated her investigative background with a view to becoming a detective, however felt overlooked when that opportunity was passed to myself and not her. As a result of this, she left for a different department involving investigations, but it was here she had an unpleasant experience with her leader. She was continually made to feel undervalued, belittled and eventually worn down. DC X explained when she offered her opinion, she was shut down and it was this experience that appeared to cause her to put up her barriers and be on the offensive all the time.

motivation?

It was difficult to hear how someone had acted towards DC X, when their role was to lead, nurture and mentor. DC X showed emotion when explaining this and I knew then that there was more to her. My natural aptitude is to turn something like this into a positive. Rather than jumping on a bandwagon and believing she wasn't a nice individual, it became clear her experiences have influenced her behaviour resulting in a negative attitude towards work and colleagues. Mullins and McLean (2019) explain that a follower's beliefs and expectations will influence their actions and behaviour. If DC X believed all leaders were as her previous leader, this would explain her negative attitude. ✓

Following an open discussion, DC X agreed to work with me to rebuild her confidence and support her in demonstrating her abilities. She is a very capable

Expert power?
officer and holds a great deal of knowledge, something that she can share with others but in such a way that would develop her as well as them.

I spent time getting to know DC X and identify what her aspirations were and how we could work towards that. Upon realising she was supported, I immediately noticed a difference in her attitude towards not only her work but towards others too.

needs met

During a review meeting, DC X explained how she felt she had grown as a person since joining the team and having our discussions. As a result, DC X was able to identify her qualities and, rather than using them as a way of beating another down to showcase herself, she was aware she could share these with others in a developmental manner and find fulfilment from this. This ultimately held a positive impact on the team who continued to work well together.

→ motivated?

Reward?

Due to the positive turnaround, I spoke with DC X and suggested she go for promotion to the rank of Sgt herself. She was taken aback at this suggestion, but over the time we spent working together, following our initial conversations, I could see the potential that she held in leading and nurturing. I believe that by doing this, rather than letting the negative impact of one leader affect her remaining career, it allowed for a positive impact and how she would thereafter positively lead others.

DC X explained that, in the 20 years as a Police Officer, she had never had a leader sit down with her, get to know, and understand her, and further develop her. She asked me why I did this, and, initially, it wasn't an easy question to answer. On reflection, as I mentioned earlier, my first supervisor was very much like this with me and has clearly impacted on the way I lead. I think everybody deserves a fair chance if they show the necessary skills and commitment.

FEELINGS

On assuming the role of Detective Sergeant, I became aware that officers within my team had more years' service than myself and felt themselves better placed to be a leader, despite them not having undertaken the route to promotion. My awareness of these feelings of others towards my position, initially led me to doubt myself and my abilities. I would often find it easier in discussions to play myself and my abilities down, something I believe I did before I could allow anyone else to do it, as a form of defence.

Within my recent promotion drive to the next rank, I became aware of 'Imposter Syndrome' and had been questioning my ability to lead this team, together with a troublesome individual. I questioned how I would gather the confidence to stand up to such challenges and knew that, behind the scenes, this was going to be a work in progress on a personal level as well as a professional level.

During this situation, I experienced several emotions and feelings, both when dealing with DC X and the remainder of my team. These ranged from feeling protective and supportive of my team, to feeling frustration, anger and thereafter fulfilment when dealing with DC X.

I brought about a significant amount of pressure upon myself throughout this experience ^{why?}, as I didn't want to let my team, or myself down. I was aware senior managers were watching the situation due to the 'cloud' that DC X had returned under and was often asked on progress.

This was the first test of my authority and leadership since promotion and throughout this process, I was dealing with my own feelings of imposter syndrome, whilst trying to demonstrate to others my capabilities.

power?

Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee (2007) acknowledge when one experiences an overwhelming negative emotional surge, the brain's ability to focus on the specific task is limited. From a 'self-management' perspective and to maintain positivity, I spoke regularly with my peers and colleagues. I was able to identify when feeling anxious and frustrated and talking this over assisted me in coping with the negativity I was experiencing.

Emotional intelligence was developed originally by Salovey and Mayer but is generally attributed to Goleman. Goleman believed the emotional qualities of individuals should be considered and believed they played a vital role in the application of intelligence in everyday life (Mullins, 2016). As a leader, Singh (2006) alludes to it being a prerequisite in developing emotional intelligence by being able to recognize and identify emotions.

Upon reflection, when DC X explained her previous experiences, I displayed empathy and an active interest in her as a person and officer. I wanted to gain a personal insight and understanding of her and her feelings, together with her ambitions and her motivations before I made any decisions on how to deal with her and her behaviours. According to Long (2007) the greater our understanding of motivation, the greater our interventions will be.

As we evolve from a young age, we develop through a cause-and-effect method of learning, and this will often develop into a behavioural trait and can be carried through to adulthood. I was keen to identify this line of thought process with DC X and her behaviour towards others and work. By cause and effect, I mean a connection where one event will lead to another event, for example, each morning, we may be woken by an alarm clock (cause). This results in us getting up out of bed (effect). (Study.com)

In doing so I felt equipped with relevant knowledge to deal with the task. Had I not gathered this information and spent this time with her, I would not have been able to

motivate her as a leader, nor would I have been afforded the opportunity to identify her motivations.

Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee (2007) hold the importance of listening and understanding your teams, explaining that once an understanding of reality of emotional norms and organisational culture is achieved, a basis can be formed to develop an ideal vision for the team. For this vision to entrance individuals, it must also be in tune with their personal vision.

EVALUATION

I believe as Police Officers it's a requirement to be alive to our emotional intelligence, within every role. This is more so as a leader, not only for yourself but also for your colleagues around you. This is important for day-to-day challenges, but also for the very nature of the role and the distressing circumstances individuals will face. Some may find more challenging than others for various reasons.

Holding emotional intelligence isn't a natural talent for many, but rather a capability that is learnt. (Mullins, 2016)

With that in mind, I refer to the Herzberg Theory. Frederick Herzberg used a two-factor theory – motivator factors and hygiene factors. These were identified following a study where several staff were required to recollect an occasion that had resulted in them feeling extraordinary well regarding their job and the events leading to this.

Likewise, they were requested to recollect an occasion where they weren't left feeling very good. (Boddy, 2008)

The motivational factors for this theory were achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility and advancement. Whereas the hygiene factors showed company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relationships and working conditions. (Boddy, 2008)

Using this theory during this situation, I was able to identify the motivational factors as being recognition of her abilities and experience, giving DC X added responsibility for younger members of the team and thereafter her advancement, by way of discussing and supporting her for promotion. ✓

As a leader, I can identify motivational and hygiene factors and aim to bring a balance. For example, when leading a live job and undertaking a briefing, I'm aware of the hygiene factors and aim to identify the inevitable long hours, the overtime, the restrictions of policy, before others can. By doing this, I endeavour to turn these into motivational factors. This is done by talking about the job, how we have been trusted to undertake the task, how we are protecting vulnerable people and identify the great responsibility this is and how we should feel proud as it's a good recognition of the team and individuals. I have learnt from using this method, that it enhances their belief in their abilities, a belief that is reinforced from others, as well as me.

The responsibilities of a leader don't stop there, and it is my responsibility to ensure these factors are dealt with rather than just recognising them. To do this, and particularly since the arrival of DC X, I remain present and am a visible leader throughout the task, whilst offering good working conditions, easing the long hours with regular breaks, and ensuring all work together, with debriefs throughout. By doing this, my aim was to counter any negativity around supervision or from individuals. By remaining with the team, I'm available for support and demonstrate to DC X that I am present, both for her reassurance, but also a subtle reminder that I am there. style?
motivation?

After identifying the concerns with DC X and as my confidence grew, I would, on occasion, take her and others out of their comfort zone by giving them tasks they hadn't experienced previously. I did this with the reassurance that I was there to support throughout and wouldn't ask this of them if I didn't believe they could do it. This was often a gamble as I was aware of the pressure this put individuals under. However, I had to maintain my own emotional intelligence around this and remain supportive whilst being firm and objective. Initially DC X challenged my decision making, favouring certain officers for certain tasks. Whilst I acknowledged this was beneficial in some circumstances, I remained firm in my decisions once made. This resulted in officers receiving a sense of achievement which I would openly recognise in debriefs, offering empowerment and demonstrating what can happen when you believe in yourself and/or the team works together. style?

In this instance, I used the transformational leadership style, together with the transactional style. This afforded me to give instruction but also empower individuals.

Transformational leaders hold a vision and can articulate to others. These leaders guide others to encounter identical passion and motivation, to fulfil these goals. (Cherry, 2020). According to Robbins and Judge (2017), both transactional and transformational leadership styles complement each other, rather than oppose each other. They go on to say the best leaders are both transactional and transformational, explaining how the transformational leader will build on the previous transactional style. This results in followers achieving levels of effort and performance surpassing transactional leadership alone.

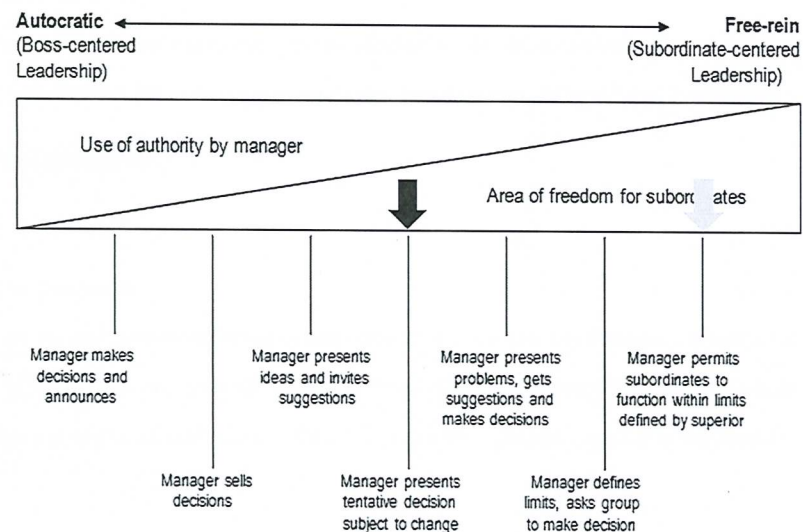
This leadership style highlighted the positives of supporting colleagues, rather than knocking them down. Through this style I was able to share my passion for the job and invite others to feel it too. It enabled me to demonstrate to DC X how I gained satisfaction from this and how this supported a positive environment. By doing this I was conscious I was using my power as a legitimate leader and, although DC X had a lot of experience, I believed she used her 'information power' to enhance her status. By doing this, I identified to DC X that information power is something to be shared, rather than used to one's own advantage, to enhance the opportunities of colleagues. She could still retain an expert power in this field due to her knowledge but would also gain satisfaction watching others develop from this. In fact, according to Walsh & Vito (2018) by sharing their power with colleagues, leaders will increase their own.

The Tannerbaum and Schmidt Continuum of Leadership Behaviour (1958) portrays the use of manager authority to lead at one end of the continuum, compared to offering autonomy and freedom for followers to be involved in decision making at the other.

Officers will depend on others to act in a particular way and as a leader, it is crucial to understand what motivates them. (Boddy, 2017)

Having invested time and effort into this team, I was disappointed and disheartened when I was aware of the impact that DC X had made. I acknowledge that I took some of these actions personally and felt frustrated, as it appeared others had been right in their opinions of DC X and initially, I felt naïve for believing in her, doubting myself again. I felt if I had been more of an authoritarian leader then she wouldn't have behaved in this way. I have been told previously that people think I'm too kind or too nice and this may be seen as a weakness. I disagree and believe it's a strength, however on occasions like this, I have doubted myself. Haskins and Johri (2018) identify the strength of kindness in leadership, believing it improves motivation and obtains a higher engagement and participation with increased commitment from followers.

When assessing this model, I believe I dealt with jobs, situations, and individuals on the corresponding central point within the continuum scalar as highlighted by the red arrow in the below diagram.



(www.managementstudyguide.com)

However, on reflection and on speaking to colleagues regarding the situation of the changes in decision-making, I believe my team, in my absence, and under the direction of DC X, believed they were at the end of the scale, where the yellow arrow indicates.

I do, however, acknowledge that to be a successful leader using this method, there must be room for manoeuvre. Whilst I hold myself in the central part of the table for this situation, I'm aware there are occasions where I will be required to move in

either direction when considering the individuals, environment, myself and organisational factors.

ANALYSIS

The primary aim within this situation was to minimise the risk of disruption to my team with the arrival of DC X. I was given fair warning and background information prior to her starting. However, as detailed previously, I was clear I would judge for myself.

For the greater good?

On reflection, it has been challenging because those around have all had an opinion, usually of a derogatory nature of DC X. In addition, I have felt several different emotions throughout.

From previous learning on leadership, I was able to identify the Adair's model of three circles of leadership, within which he identifies areas of task, team, and the individual's needs. Adair's model infers each circle is engaging with the other, resulting in some strain between them. Adair argues that it's essential for leaders to ensure a balance of the needs of each circle in relation to others, which, if successfully achieved, should foster a cohesive team approach, enabling individuals within to make their optimum contribution. Adair (2009)

From a personal perspective I knew I had to firstly work with my team and ensure they understood the basis upon which this team was built, how successful they were, and this disharmony would be temporary.

In addition, I spent time with DC X, identifying motivators and needs and supported those on an individual basis, whilst considering the impact of this on the remainder of the team on an individual basis too.

concern spending too much time,

Once addressed, these areas fell naturally into place. The primary area for me was my leadership on investigations and the strategic structure I had put in place. Once there was a common understanding of this circle, the others were always on the surface but as they had been identified, were more accessible to deal with.

why this good? As a result of dealing with this situation in this way, the team have formed a more cohesive approach to work, as well as each other. If an individual's needs come to the surface, I have observed others address it within the team, rather than falling to me every time.

CONCLUSION

It's very easy to be drawn into the beliefs of others and led along with their way of thinking and in this instance, I could easily have formed an opinion of DC X prior to her joining us.

Awareness of one's own morals and values is an intrinsic part of leadership, as is emotional intelligence. The effectiveness of emotional intelligence is a relatively new concept, and some leaders still find it hard to accept. Previous studies with executives have claimed the demand of the role means it is imperative they rule with their heads and not their hearts, with some believing if they were to demonstrate empathy and compassion, this would conflict with the goals of the organisation. In addition, they believed if they weren't detached emotionally, they wouldn't be best placed to make the hard decisions. (Goleman, 2020)

With that in mind, it is important a leader understands themselves, as well as others. Although colleagues may hold similarities, everyone is unique in some way, whether that be a skillset, needs, motivations etc.... People respond contrastingly to various situations and leaders must hold the ability to recognise and understand this. This awareness will allow for a better understanding of your own reactions to others and their reactions. (Quinn, 2003)

When considering leadership models, the Hersey and Blanchard Model of leadership is relevant in policing. Hersey and Blanchard identified four differing styles of leadership (Directing, Coaching, Supporting, Delegating) and during this situation with DC X, I have utilised this method to get the best from her and my team, ensuring the organisation's goals are met. This model involved an adaptation on my part to the differing styles throughout, to allow me to foster working relationships. (Business-to-you, 2020)

why?

To grow as a leader, experience alone is not enough. One needs to learn from that experience. This situation taught me to adapt styles throughout due to situational changes. The need for emotional intelligence of both my subordinates and I, and to take opportunities to review my own style, rather than just concentrating on what is in front of me.

The learning for me has come from motivational factors and being aware of the different motivators of others. Whereas I seemed to concentrate primarily on Herzberg's motivational factors, as this appeared to be the obvious reasons during live investigations, this situation identifies the need to think wider and to consider other theories too, such as Maslow's Needs theory. This theory assisted me in the longer-term support and engagement with DC X.

ACTION PLAN

Based on the experiential learning theory, described by Kolb (2015) as an experience of learning from life experiences, this situation has equipped me in terms of leadership theory and its practical application.

I intend to progress by completing my ILM Level 5 Diploma, to equip me further with relevant knowledge of methods and theories, enabling me to deal with future leadership challenges appropriately and positively.

From this experience, I'm aware of the importance of emotional intelligence of not just colleagues but myself too. I took the behaviour of DC X personally, which it never was, and spent a lot of time overthinking things, rather than dealing with what was in front of me. This is an area for me to continue working on and to grow as a leader.

Since promotion, I've enjoyed the role of leader, keeping true to my values and beliefs, which is a key principle personally. Moving forward and learning from this situation, I will be open to the situational leadership that arises in the world of policing. In conclusion, "If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got", (Coulthard, 2017, pg 368).

Word count of text 5,492

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