

Leadership Reflection

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Abstract.

Public Order and Public Safety (POPS) events are ever changing within the UK and policing them remains a high priority to organisations. This report reflects on Dyfed Powys's Police (DPP) capabilities, the changes needed to manage changing landscapes. A reflective journey as a leader within specialist operations, developing and managing POPS for DPP and how I was tasked with bringing staffing, accreditation and documentation in line with governing bodies requirements.

I will explore my own leadership style and show clear links to academic and educational theory. I will reflect on how this has aided in my development by use of self-reflection and experiential learning. Reflecting on my own and team actions, decision making throughout, reflecting on complexities encountered from managing this specialism. What challenges I overcame and what learning outcomes were achieved, showing how exploring leadership styles, linking to academic theory has helped to develop future proofing within specialist operations and how we now have become an improved organisation in this area.

Introduction.

Managing incidents of POPS within Policing is an area of concern for government and police services nationally due to its positive and sometimes negative impacts on the community, as demonstrated in the London Riots in 2011 which caused devastation to communities (Kawalerowicz & Biggs, 2015). The UK's event industries contribute approximately 39 billion pounds to the economy with half a

million people employed in the sector (UK Government, 2015). The effective policing of POPS events is essential. Operational guidance around police management of incidents must be documented, reviewed and circulated to all emergency services alike for a joint working approach (JESIP, 2016). A number of information sources are provided by policing governing bodies around POPS from the College of Policing (COP) and National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) to ensure standardisation around disorder (National Police Chiefs Council, 2019). A priority of the Association of Police Crime Commissioners (APCC) and the NPCC is to work closely with police leaders on reform and transformation of policing by the year 2025, a prevalent issue highlighted being the ability to deliver specialist capabilities, one of which dealing with POPS incidents, connecting policing both locally and nationally (National Police Chiefs council, 2017).

This report reflects on my own time as a manager within Specialist Operations in DPP and ensuring specialist capabilities within POPS are sufficient, and the changes and reform needed to meet the expectations placed on us nationally are met. I will explore leadership styles, linking to academic and educational theories around project management and leadership. Some academics argue people are born leaders as per The Great man theory (Spector, 2016), or has this now changed in modern society. I will reflect my own development through this process and how self-reflection, experiential learning has aided me. The report will reflect on organisational actions and decisions throughout my transition as a leader within the department in controlling POPS portfolios for DPP. I will share the complexities I encountered from managing staff, to ensuring compliance, criteria are achieved and reflect on how I met these challenges, essential learning and discovery around needing to change.

I will use Gibbs Reflective Cycle (GRC) to show how reflection has assisted my development, working style and learning practices. Using this cycle (Gibbs, 1988, p. 49) to structure my report, it will form the basis for my reflections, thoughts and discussions. Outcomes and lessons learned will assist future proofing performance, enabling me to transform working and operating procedures for the organisation.

Gibbs Reflective Cycle (GRC) - Description.

In early 2019 I returned back to DPP from secondment at the Counter Terrorism National Chemical, Biological, Radiation and Nuclear (CBRN) Centre, taking a leadership role within Specialist Operations. My primary role was to take control of the POPS portfolio, training of over 200 specialist officers, accreditation issues with command structures and also ensure operational deployments were satisfying national criteria. I also had responsibility for the day to day management of a team of Specialist trained Officers and Police staff who worked within the department.

My Initial investigations showed that the department, procedures, IT systems were inadequate and needed addressing, as national targets and priorities were not being met and we were low on staff numbers, training was poor and posed risks to the organisation. Adair (2019), argues that to effectively lead there are three levels to concentrate on. leadership and the leader themselves, the group and the situation tasked. All things I would be addressing within POPS.

I asked myself the question "what type of leader am I". when considering leadership styles, Covey (2020) argues that a leader has two sides to them, what they are (character) and what a person does (competence). In essence when discussing

How did you feel about this?

How was this measured?

what your leadership style is, it can be put simply as getting someone to follow you effectively. This statement would give the assumption that there is a right style and a wrong style of leadership, especially as in the past 20 to 30 years within the police service, its been a very hierarchial organisation that encourages disciplined approaches to service by authotarian, autocratic leadership styles to promote and maintain order. This has helped the service to deploy efficiently with staff knowing and understanding roles, procedures by rank within it. The managers holding all power and decision making capabilities (Mullins, 2013). On reflection an issue for me with in following this type of leadership was in the modern police service we are telling staff to not think for themselves and rely on leaders to give all instructions, which in turn gives no reponsibility to teams who may crave it. Mullins goes on to explain how this causes resentment from ambitious staff who want to contribute more. A more democratic styled approach to leadership can encourage interaction and particiaption from team members, involving them in the decision making processes, empowering them. I wanted to explore this, but it could be argues that a drawback was that decision making could be lengthier, whilst collating all ideas from staff, maybe less productive and cost effective. Laissez-faire leadership is at the opposite end of the scale with employees trusted more, minimal inputs from managers and maximising potential within individuals. It is argued however that this type of leadership isnt effective as the organisational goals set are never met, roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined and ultimately its masking over the cracks of poor leadership in senior managerial roles (Norris, et al., 2021).

I lead by doing, and jumping straight into tasks. Maybe this is due to my learning style, and having completed Honey and Mumford's learning styles questionnaire (1992), it has shown me as an activist and this is something on reflection that I am

conscious of and try to be more pragmatic and reflective in my professional capacity.

Referencing my initial question, my own leadership style is creative, charismatic, confident and one who engages with people. Linking closely to Transformational leadership in theory, as defined by Bass (1995) who states that this form of leadership relies on the trust of followers, loyalty and respect towards a leader with all striving to achieve the same goals, bettering themselves. Linking closely with Maslow's Hierarchical needs (Maslow, 1943, cited in Mullins, 2013, pp.252-254) individuals are developed and motivated to reach higher goals, wanting more depending on what they have and where they have come from, each step of MASLOW being an improvement. Following this theory, I wanted my own staff to better themselves and achieve their aims and goals. Maslow suggests as needs are met the higher the aspirations. Moving through sections from initial Psychological needs, Safety, Love, Esteem to finally reaching their pinnacle of self actualisation. Constantly improving with high motivation. I Linked these theories within my department and I provided suitable working spaces, enabled growth, provided job security and opportunities. Tichy & Mary (1986) argue that any transformational leader has three main roles and these are to reorganise and revitalise, create a new vision and finally to create change and this is how I saw my role within my new role. A new start was needed.

I set out my main concerns to the team and organisation, these being;

- a) Lack of accredited commanders, structures to deal with incidents of POPS professionally.
- b) Low levels of Specialist Trained Officers within the organisation for POPS, with our cadre numbers disproportional.

- c) Training and delivery was being affected by poor venues, lack of certified trainers and managing existing staff accreditation.

leading POPS for DPP I had an element of power to manage proposed changes and Roe (2020), defines Power as having two parts, 'position' and the 'person'. I had the position and I wanted to ensure that I was what my team and the organisation needed. Being transformational in nature I wanted to bring the team along with me and ensure they felt part of the project, empower them and I needed to gain their support. When discussing 'Power' and how to best use it, it has been argued that there are five bases of power, namely legitimate, reward, expert, referent, coercive and some years later an added sixth of informational (French & Raven, 1959). Having looked at all six categories and reflecting on my own role within the police, legitimate power is given by rank within the organisation still. I also bring the addition of 'expert' (power) as working within POPS for 20yrs and also being a qualified lecturer, the sharing of 'information' (power) to staff will assist the organisation.

I felt that one area of concern for myself was the motivation of my own staff. I'm very motivated, following MASLOW's Hierarchy for some years now, I needed more and to find out what motivated my own team in the first instance. Locke (1968) discusses how goal setting links very closely to motivation and gives job satisfaction. I needed to develop a passion for them in work proposed, a better team ethos, making the work meaningful, somewhere to grow, giving recognition for hard work done (Mullins, 2013).

Recognising the needs of the staff was important and Mullins & McLean (2019) argue that understanding the individual is very important, what their personality is

and their uniqueness. They discuss the issues around individuality and how these are shaped by cultural differences, gender, family, experiences in life, cultural and social factors, and I needed to consider these as a leader. I held one to one meetings to find out what staff felt and what they required to grow, this on reflection aided both myself and the team as performance improved following this cathartism.

a) Lack of command structures within POPS.

My first concern having taken over the portfolio of POPS was the lack of command structures within DPP, a lack of commanders on our cadre. In line with Adair's (2004) theory of Task, Team and the individual I wanted to firstly address the Task and the shortage of senior specialists in the role. I needed to change current cultures within the organisation and I wanted to bring in vibrant, motivated staff to manage and command. Zhao (1996), defines change and alterations as differing structures, people and changing practices in an organisation, something I needed to explore here in DPP. Unfortunately within the police, change can be resisted and senior managers have difficulty in accepting change and implementing new programs or policies (Weisburd & Braga, 2006). Initially this happened with my own line management but I highlighted the risks faced if not corrected, and following this perceived threat to them, they allowed me to investigate what was needed to mitigate it. I wanted to pick the correct personalities for the role of commander in line with national requirements. Both Munson (1921) and Metcalf (1928) define that people with correct 'traits' can be found and identified to perform certain leadership roles. Traits defined as something that is a habitual, a pattern of behaviour. A stable, safe pair of hands as an analogy (Kassin, 2003). Although the theory itself does seem to make sense, Zaccaro (2007) argues that you cannot just find someone

Thoughts or feelings?

How did you do this?

Why

and this is not always the case, with a chequered past. It's a point of discussion that's argued in that the role of leadership is so vast it can be quite difficult and frustrating to find a person who fits as a perfect leader (Lord, et al., 1986). I took it on myself to speak to managers within the organisation who both wanted to get involved, were passionate and had a thirst to take POPS forward and lead, quite a difficult task but regular meetings virtually and in person helped me gauge suitability. From these meetings commanders were sent on national courses to train and accredit.

What made you choose to do this?

Why

Innovation in my approach was key and I started to look at IT systems within the organisation to assist within POPS structures, commanders and accreditation. Laufs & Borrion (2022), suggest technological innovation and systems are now assisting policing, and I used this to my advantage, assisting with command structures by ensuring I completed regular quality assurance procedures, paperwork submissions for existing and newer commanders. I created a new online call system, IT pages linking our systems within the organisation with all necessary details around accreditation, deployments, and details surrounding commanders could be found and amended. On reflection this now allows me and the organisation to link directly into national systems and is an improvement in line with Adair's earlier theory.

What was the benefit?

b) Adding to Specialist Officer cadre.

My second issue of reform was the numbers of specialist officers within our POPS cadre. DPP were at an all-time low with officer numbers, resulting in mutual aid capability being effected. We were not complying with expectations placed on us by the NPCC and this effected costs and proposed deployments (National Police Chiefs Council, 2020).

your thoughts of feelings about this?

Being approximately 50-75 officers short, I needed to promote POPS and sell the role of becoming a specialist officer. Historically, Newman (2008) argues that policing culture around disorder has followed a very militaristic approach and if you were a big, strong, powerful male officer then you were suitable for this role, a discriminatory view. This was still the perception, so I needed to break down these barriers. There was a lack of female representation and our staffing was disproportional and I wanted to address it (McManus, 1997).

Armstrong (2016), argues that people will put barriers in place and these are manifested in various guises including, what they hear, perception, false information, group and peer influence. All these issues I felt were in part there within our own workforce around POPS and I needed to change stigmas. I had to promote more positively.

I wanted to try and engage new staff emotionally and I brought some positivity to it. Naragon-Gainey & Watson (2009) discuss how enthusiasm, cheerfulness, positive energy can assist the positive affectivity within a role to an individual. I was interested to explore this further and bring it into the role for the new user. I started to promote the department on our intranet pages within IT systems and I organised roadshows at stations for new staff to attend and see what we did and to get involved. Naragon also discussed how low levels of positivity could have negative affects on the individuals, manifesting into unhappiness, depression and withdrawal around the role. With this in mind I wanted to set up evaluations for staff to help me realise why and what we were doing wrong.

In line with Jones & Rothwell's (2018) findings around effective evaluation techniques, I starting to collect data from officers as to their concerns. I organised

interviews with some new and older members of the unit and reflected on the findings, I also created a questionnaire for staff to complete on annual training. I reflected on my own observations. All data was collated and reviewed, and I submitted new proposals as a result to management. Some feedback given to me as simple as having better changing facilities, to better communications with officers and making all feel part of the team.

I wanted to motivate my own team so we could tackle these current issues together and promote positivity. McGregor (1960) states there are two types of manager in his theory X and theory Y research. Theory X, the manager who has little trust in their staff and will manage them closely, give them little scope to grow and have a negative impact on motivation. Theory Y, is explained as a manager who offers his staff far more scope to be creative, delegates more work to them and is more supportive to their actions and in turn assists in the motivation of the team.

He argues against the more hierarchical approached theories to leadership such as autotarian styles and debates their worth. On reflection the police service as a whole appears to be moving away from the Theory X style of management and more into the realms of Theory Y, empowering and motivating its staff and this is how I wanted to be with my team, delegating tasks, supporting their decision making and working as a team through this transformation.

I set out a clear objectives as to the steps necessary, building a plan for success (McClay, 2009). My team had fallen into a specific way of working and were unfocused, and this had an impact on our performance around POPS. I needed to motivate them and a theory Y approach would assist, and did on reflection as my team members told me how much more positive they felt during a working day as

this new approach to management had helped them grow as they craved more responsibility prior.

Herzberg, et al (1959) suggests that to motivate staff there are two factors that need to be achieved, hygiene factors (dissatisfiers) and motivating factors. Similar to Maslows theory the basis of the work is motivation, with things in place for the individual to excel. I now had a clear strategy to get motivation higher and I started to hold meetings to find out what concerns they held, and it was clear that previous working conditions and supervision within the department was poor, causing job dissatisfaction and no oppourtunities. Managing these meetings, agendas and setting clear objectives have really helped me on reflection and given my team the oppourtunity to participate more and for us to problem solve better (Barker, 2007). Setting out working parameters, gave specific tasks to each member of the team to complete individually and within the group in line with force objectives, each staff member now had more responsibility in the team (Aime, et al., 2014).

what was it?

why was this good?

Tuckman (1965), explains his stages of team development mainly known as FORMING, STORMING, NORMING and PERFORMING as key to working within groups. During these meetings there was active discussion as each staff member had their own thoughts and ideas and this helped the group ethos, mitigated any frustrations in line with these views. You must however be mindful as the chair/leader of over excitement during meetings. This happened to me and I had to reign staff members in as disagreements did happen.

thoughts or feelings about this?

c) Training and Delivery, Accreditation.

I set out my plan to fulfil organisational needs, the training was poor, no venues and not everyone was accredited so this was an issue in adhering to national guidance and core principles (College of Policing, 2022).

Schilit (1987), explains when setting out a business plan, key considerations are to keep it simple, organised, specific and highlight the benefits to the organisation and how this assists in future planning and finally to ensure the request is reasonable and not too ambitious. I set out the officer numbers required to be trained and stated how we could best achieve goals by utilising new probationers, and I presented these to management. Abiding by these simple principles above I was successful in achieving desired staffing, accreditation was improved by more assessors being trained to assist and venue costs were agreed. I met senior staff within the organisation to tell them our situation in POPS, and although daunting with perceived barriers to change, my suggestions were agreed. Slayter (2016), suggests ways to manage relationships with supervisors including highlighting problems but having solutions to hand. He goes on to explain the necessity to remain calm, positive, and look to remedy rather than blaming others. On reflection this is how I approached these early meetings by answering problems I'd already highlighted, being positive throughout and setting out the value to the managers.

How was it received?

How did you do this?
How did you learn or know to try this?

I gave the POPS example of Hillsborough where 96 football supporters lost their lives due bad decision making on the day, poor organisational planning, utilising non trained staff leading up to a semi-final football match in the English FA cup. If managed and prepared for with all relevant staff and skills in place with officers, correct numbers and contingencies to potential threats and risks this disaster could

have been mitigated and dealt with far better that day, and I told chief officers I did not want a repeat in DPP, and neither did they.

(GRC) - Feelings.

I have considered various feelings within my workplace. My own, team, users and the organisations. I have briefly spoken around the feelings of the team and the proposed new staff members to the unit. Caruso & Salovey (2004) argue that Emotional intelligence is key to motivation and wellbeing. They discuss how four stages of emotion will help managers, namely identifying emotions, the signals, events going on and being demonstrated by others. Secondly using emotions and how we do this to influence thinking and what we do to guide us through processes. The next is predicting the future by understanding the effects of emotions, changes due to new rules and the what if's. finally, is how we are managing emotions, reasoning around problem solving, judgments and behaviours. On reflection and my own feelings and that of the team, they were consistently there at different levels throughout the project. I managed these throughout, emotionally aware throughout and this helped reduce my stress as a result of understanding emotional states.

I am conscious of how emotions can come to the surface and affect situations, stress and anger can contaminate a group and impacts on others attitude. From my teacher, training background around conflict management I have used Betari Box model as an emotions based theory which shows how my attitude and behaviour affects others attitudes and behaviours. In a negative or positive guise depending how I come across. This has worked for me on reflection and I'm very conscious to remember how my emotional state can affect others, I try and always be a positive

person (College of Policing, 2020). During this process of change there were times where I needed to use positive reinforcement with my team as staff around me struggled with the additional workload at times and felt undervalued. Following Skinner's theory of setting targets and reinforcing with positive responses, I used rewards with overtime at times. This reinforced the efforts of the group, however on reflection this is not something I could have sustained as financially it would not have made sense, but it worked very well in motivating my teams work ethos, boosting morale on occasion (Skinner, 1953).

During this organisational change, I did on reflection neglect my own needs. I felt quite anxious and stressed on occasions but I never realised at the time as I was completely focused on achieving goals and objectives for the organisation. Rees & Rumbles (2012) argue that when organisations are continually meeting new demands it can lead to staff burnout including excessive workloads, lack of reward and disparity with home, work life balance. They discuss whether organisations even care about stresses placed on staff and on reflection this is something I have taken away from this work. As an activist and a doer as earlier discussed, I must on occasion be able to say No, or look for assistance. I am now on reflection very aware of this both in my own work and that of my own team and I ensure we have regular consultation around mental wellbeing to ensure that there is 'career wellbeing' and that my staff like what they are doing daily, and also I enable my staff to look after their 'physical wellbeing' by taking time to physically train, walk, relax away from the office if they feel they need it. On reflection this has improved positivity, productivity and is discussed and debated as being essential to team work and motivations (Clifton & Harter, 2021).

good recognition of money rewards is hard to support what did you do instead?

what caused this?

How? what type?

good feeling about doing this!

what about you?

(GRC) – Evaluation.

Evaluating the process and measuring performance is one of the key issues considered during the review of the project, to realise accomplishments and highlight any areas for improvement. By monitoring all data, new staffing and activities it can be established if the project has been successful, this is debated by Walsh & Gennaro (2019).

When measuring performance, Oettmeier & Wycoff (1994) explain that managers and leaders generally are responsible for the evaluation of Administration, Guidance and Counselling, Research, Socialisation, System Improvement, Documentation, strategy and what has been the learning. On reflection I have led on most of the above processes and continue to do so. Evaluating the administration and processes in place now, I can say they are far better, managers have reinforced this and by being electronically managed on live systems within DPP, managers and staff can access and comply with requirements. In line with policies, all documentation is now updated and reviewed by myself annually. All current staff and any proposed new officers can view all necessary documentation within POPS prior to making decisions around being part of the unit. This shows that the work I've led on has advanced and improved procedures. I continually evaluate training on an annual basis and seek feedback from peers and managers and governing bodies around this (College Of Policing, 2022). I continue to hold meetings virtually and in person with all parties and stakeholders. I have learned on reflection that I require the help of all my team to keep updated here as I cannot simply do it all on my own. Powell (2007) argues that the efficiency of the leader will be seen by the attributes and efficiency of the team and by looking at the team you can see what type of

For who?
Is this good?
good point
was this a
change in
learning?

leadership is there. On the flip side a cynical leadership style will have a similar affect on the team making them negative. I am a creative, enthusiastic leader and on reflection the team have followed this trait during the project in line with Powell's theory.

Getting the perfect team together is far easier when researching academic theories than the actual application of a good team in the real world. For me on reflection it has been difficult within the team managing differing personality traits with each requiring something different from me to get best results. Managing personalities can sometimes be challenging but by linking in with theories above I continue to develop my styles here. Constantly reviewing these, meetings I have found has assist me in line with Thomas (2007) thoughts on mastering team management.

On reflection my transformational leadership style has worked well, however at times a more robust authoritarian management style was needed, especially in early senior management meetings where as the subject expert, I'd have benefitted in making decisions quicker. There was a lack of knowledge from managers and this slowed down processes. This frustrated me as I just wanted to get on with it but my more democratic, respectful style was slowing the process as they required me to explain my rationale. On reflection however this was correct as I did not upset anybody unnecessary and it helped me later when I needed support. Utilising the leadership behaviour continuum may have assisted me in being more robust, staying at the theories 'Tells' (leader section) when decision-making, rather than delegating, sharing ideas and being more to the subordinate section of the theory (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 2009)

(GRC) – Analysis.

On analysis, key learning for myself on reflection is the quantity of leadership theory available. One of which I mainly followed being the Situational Theory of Leadership (Hersey & Blanchard, 1988). This assisted me in my task and helped me manage better. It discusses stages of knowledge and competence within the team, organisations and how committed they are to the task, enabling me as the leader to manage people to achieve better outcomes as all are not at the same level. To bring the best out of each member of the team, achieving best results around tasks and giving staff confidence to develop from coaching or mentoring. This has shown me to be more aware of team capabilities and competence levels.

what about the Team or organisation?

(GRC) – Conclusion

In conclusion I have reflected greatly from this project on my leadership skills, team and differing personalities. Professionally the teams closer, working better, more efficient with better structures in place (Livi, et al., 2015). Police are used to change and are resilient as the Windsor report has demonstrated (Winsor, 2011). Hanson (2018) argues resilience comes from changes in the brain, as it remodels learning from experiences it strengthens resolve. I have been successful in what I set out to achieve by getting the structures, practices within DPP to the required levels as set out by the COP. Our staffing, disproportionality, accreditation have been improved. Training and delivery around POPS is better and now utilising IT systems and innovation, all staff within the organisation are working better in POPS.

where to next?

During this task I have revisited my own actions in line with experiential learning as set out by Kolb (2015). He explores how experiences of learning take place within work, education and personal development and these aid and assist in decision-making, something which I have reflected on within this paper. In any organisational change or uplift there's questions to answer as to why it is happening and I see myself effectively managing changes as we evolve.

I will need to adapt to cope with significant pressures to come in managing organisational need, the task and the team's individual requirements. If anything this reflective report has shown me that I am doing a lot of things right within the organisation as I regularly gain verbal reward from my team and managers on my work, and this is reflected in my annual development reviews. Reflecting on my leadership style and management, I am happy that it has been effective but I will look to engage in more theory around it, to improve relationships and empower my staff where I can. Smith (2019) discusses the role of the police change manager within the organisation and I can see that this is something to adapt into in order to be more open to future changes in this newer organisation as it moves away from authoritarian practices of the past.

(GRC) – Action Plan.

Throughout this process I have learned that forward planning and preparation is key in POPS within policing. Kennedy (2014) states various models of continued professional development (CPD). The Cascade Model I'm now utilising in my department by sending staff on relevant training courses, events to improve

knowledge, application around POPS, keeping motivation high, feelings of value. I continue to promote the department within the organisation as a leader of change. I am implementing the Training/Standards Model of CPD discussed by Kennedy, where all staff and managers will be assessed to national standards annually to ensure their skillset remains.

Conclusion.

Initially I spoke around my transition back to DPP and how I looked to change POPS.

Utilising the Gibbs cycle (1988) I have looked at my leadership style, working practices and related them to theory to improve standards. I have explored what type of a person I am professionally and personally, and revisited how I manage my team and how I am viewed within the organisation.

On Reflection I have focused on theory that can benefit me moving forward although academic opinions are open for debate. Leadership within the police service is ever changing and with direct entry (Kernaghan, 2013) and new police innovation at the forefront of our governing bodies, the capacity to change is there (White, 2014). I will continue to adapt and develop myself, members of my team and seek feedback from peers as I strive to be better and offer more value within my role.

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