

Leading the Next Generation of Law Enforcement Through Emotional Intelligence

by

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THEY'RE HERE! The face of law enforcement is going to change and be quite different than what we know today. This will be largely due to the influx of the "Y Generation". What does this mean for the profession of law enforcement, which is a traditionally administered in a para-military manner? Policing usually defers decision-making to those of higher rank in a top-down management style. Given the norms and perspectives of those now entering our agencies, the "usual" way may no longer be enough.

Obedience, loyalty and seniority may mean something entirely different to Gen Y. Those now in leadership positions can either chafe at the differences, or use the tenets of Emotional Intelligence to meet the needs and desires of this youngest generation. Leadership through Emotional Intelligence 'EI' will be what matters; open communication, teamwork and input from each member of the team may become the hallmark of those organizations that will succeed in the coming decade.

Generation Y

Those entering our workforce are substantially different than those now in charge. Baby Boomers, those born 1946 to 1964, are generally characterized by long work hours, sacrificing family time, and tending to stay with one company or organization for the span of their careers (Gamel, 2001). Generation Y considers work important, but prefers to balance work with personal and family time. They also express a need to be valued for doing the job and can be expected to change jobs numerous times looking for the right fit if not engaged (Gamel, 2001).

According to Cara Spiro in "Workplace Transformation" those now entering the workplace share "...optimism, education, collaborative ability, and open-mindedness." She says the "Y Generation are the hottest commodities on the job market." (Spiro, 2006, p.16) So who exactly are the Y Generation? Well according to Mr. Irv Gamal, President and CEO of Insight Systems Group, the Y Generation are the younger siblings of the "X Generation," those sandwiched between the Baby Boomers and the Y's (2001). Born 1980 – 2002, the Y Generation would include a range of young adults in their early 20's to children as young as five years old. They comprise about 76 million of the Nation's total population. This generation bears study and analysis because they are entering the workforce throughout this country. In fact, in the near future, they will become the "majority members" of the workplace.

Members of The Y Generation are characterized as being more racially and culturally tolerant than past generations. Gay rights and non-traditional gender roles have also become more widely accepted. The Y Generation is groundbreaking in the sense that its members have come of age in both a politically and socially tumultuous period, with constant bombardment from various media outlets. Unlike the Baby Boomers, this is the first generation to grow up having easy access to the Internet, iPod, MySpace and

Blackberries as ways of thinking and communicating rapidly. As the Y Generation goes to college and penetrates the work force, the landscape of America may change even more dramatically states Sophia Yan, in The Oberlin Review (2006).

According to Yan, the Y Generation have a reputation for experiencing boredom and frustration with slow-paced environments, traditional hierarchies and even slightly outdated technologies that is almost everything common in most workplaces. A common reaction of older workers to that frustration is aggravation: “Why do we need to adjust to them?” Boomers might say. “They should be adjusting to us” (Lanzalotto, 2006)

Why Should We Care?

Why is it important to understand the Y Generation and their impact on the law enforcement field? Well, according Catherine Mallozzi, a workforce readiness director, there is a growing concern surrounding baby boomer retirements. Mallozzi (2007) says that “although 80 million baby boomers are expected to retire during the next five years, only 50 million Generation X and Y workers are projected to replace them, and many of them are not adequately prepared for management.”

As aging baby-boomers begin retiring, the effects on the overall economy and on certain occupations and industries will be substantial, creating a need for younger workers to fill the vacated jobs, many of which require relatively high levels of skill. (Dohm, 2000) According to Dohm, “As the age of the labor force increases, a greater number of people will leave the labor force due to death, disability, or retirement. Of the 25 million people projected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to leave the labor force between 1998 and 2008, 22 million will be aged 45 years or older and will be leaving mostly to retire. The total number of people who left the labor force the previous decade was 19 million. Over the 1998–2008 period, the oldest baby-boomers will be aged 52 to 62. After 2008, as more and more baby-boomers reach retirement age, the impact of their retirements will continue to grow” (par. 2)

Consider if you will, the possible challenges for a Boomer manager preparing to influence the development of the Y Generation as the leaders of the next generation. According to Bruce Tulgan (2007) of Rainmaker Thinking, Y’s will generally bring the following norms into the workplace:

- ❖ **High expectations of self:** They aim to work faster and better than other workers
- ❖ **High expectations of employers:** They want fair and direct managers who are highly engaged in their professional development
- ❖ **Ongoing learning:** They seek out creative challenges and view colleagues as vast resources from whom to gain knowledge
- ❖ **Immediate responsibility:** They want to make an important impact on day one
- ❖ **Goal-oriented:** They want small goals with tight deadlines so they can build up ownership of tasks

What makes these expectation norms specific to the Y Generation than other generations? It’s how these norms were formed and now relate to the new Y Generation employee. The Y Generation really doesn’t believe they have to settle for less than they expect. According to Geisler (2005), The Y Generation has a high self-esteem and will not tolerate intimidation. They have been raised with their teachers and their Boomer parents focused on positive reinforcement. Unlike Boomers who grew up with teachers

who could smack them and parents who were likely to side with the teachers this is not the case of the Y Generation. In their lives corporal punishment was discouraged at home and forbidden at school. They were told that if anyone bullied them or made them uncomfortable, they shouldn't endure it. They should speak up or report it. Geisler also says cell phones, e-mail, instant messaging, faxes, overnight mail, digital cameras and microwave ovens have all reduced the waiting time in their lives. Unlike the young people of the '60s who rebelled against authority, the Y Generation approach when opposing authority is more passive than aggressive. They work around, not against, authority. In "Managing Generation Y," Martin and Tulgan write of Gen Y: "In essence, they want to be 'paid volunteers' -- to join organizations not because they have to, but because they really want to, because there's something significant happening there." (Geisler 2005, par. 5)

As the supervisors of the Y Generation, which leadership skills will be most critical in the workplace? "Hundreds of reports and statistics prove that a motivating workplace is essential to the success of an organization," writes Sarah Ennis in "Interviewing and hiring top performers" (Ennis 2002). Employers want an energized and highly motivating work environment where employees want to work and stay. Newer employee's top career concerns involve balancing family and work demands, though, even above job security and earning a competitive salary, says Ennis.

According to research commissioned by Robert Half International, Inc., younger employees increasingly want work opportunities that reflect values and work environments that meet their needs (Next Generation Accountant, 2007).

The Y Generation wants to work; they just don't want the restrictions the baby boomer experienced. Fortunately, there are skills and strategies available to Boomers to better lead them if the boomer is up to this challenge. They can be found in the concepts of Emotional Intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence

"Know thyself" is the keystone of emotional intelligence, being aware of one's own feelings as they occur, (Goleman, 1995). In his book "Emotional Intelligence - why it can matter more than IQ," he describes EI as "social and emotional learning." According to Mr. Goleman, Emotional Intelligence measures four Emotional Competences, they are:

Self-Awareness

- Emotional self-awareness
- Accurate self-assessment
- Self-confidence

- Self Management

- Self-control
- Trustworthiness
- Conscientiousness
- Adaptability
- Achievement drive

- Initiative
- Social Awareness
 - Empathy
 - Service orientation
 - Organizational awareness
- Relationship Management
 - Developing others
 - Influence
 - Communication
 - Conflict management
 - Leadership
 - Change catalyst
 - Building bonds
 - Teamwork & collaboration

According to Fernandez, These skills are considered more important than the traditional hard skills, such as budget and strategic issued and they are looked for in managers. (Fernandez, 2007) Fernandez believes EI skills are more important than ever when describing success in the workplace. 'EI' is more than the use of cognitive skills like intellect and problem solving. They are keys to avoid derailing one's career. It is also using the emotional and social capabilities, competencies, and skills that influence one's ability to succeed coping with environmental demands and pressures. It's more than having a thick skin or a sense of empathy for others. It is a genuine ability to feel emotions in responses to others, understanding what you are feeling, understand how others are feeling, and to move forward constructively with the interests of the larger group at heart. EI has to do with building bridges and alliances, and being able to mend those bridges and alliances if they get damaged. Emotional intelligence enables us to make our way in a complex world, according to Fernandez.

Why a change to Emotional Intelligence Leadership? It has been hypothesized that one important aspect of effective leadership lines in the leader's ability to gain the emotional commitment of his or her followers. (Sosik & Megerian, 1999: George, 2000) Law enforcement is constantly faced with situations in which they are required to use their best professional judgment on behalf of others. Many require arresting or detaining individuals who are a danger to themselves or to others. At the same time, officers are responsible for the safety and welfare of offenders, their peers and themselves. Methods that develop and maintain a decision making process that is Emotionally Intelligent improves personal safety while at the same time reducing the organization's exposure to liability. (Manzella & West 2003).

Goleman (1999) extended the concepts of EI to leadership for each generation in the workplace, emphasizing how EI can affect individual and group success through the deployment of one or more leadership styles. Goleman suggests that emotionally intelligent leadership is the key to creating a working climate that nurtures employees and

encourages them to give their best. That enthusiasm, in turn, pays off in improved performance. Since these traits are especially meaningful to Generation Y, they will become more important in the coming years.

Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee (2002) said, “Organizations and individuals everywhere today are striving to excel in leadership. What makes good leaders is one of those subjects that will be debated forever. But the complexity in today’s business environment means that good management is no longer enough and the search for a renewed leadership agenda is more important than ever.” (p. 3)

To present their concept of EI leadership, Goleman, et al (1999) noted six leadership styles (Table One, below). Although the styles have various levels of positive and adverse impact on any follower, consider the response one might receive from Generation Y as one’s leadership moves from one style to the next. To lead Generation Y employees to achieve the goals and objectives of the organization, the leadership styles of Visionary, Affiliative, Democratic and Coaching may be more effective than more traditional styles of coercive or pacesetter (which may be seen as dominant styles in hierarchical or paramilitary organizations). Teamwork, collaboration, mediation, harmony and commitment are the objectives emphasized in the four more effective styles. As one considers the characteristics of the Y Generation entering the workplace, the reader can reflect on these leadership styles and their effectiveness in achieving the desired commitment and response to any leadership effort.

Goleman (1999) wrote, “Evidence suggests that emotionally intelligent leadership is key to creating a working climate that nurtures employees and encourages them to give their best. That enthusiasm, in turn, pays off in improved performance”. (Ch.3, par. 30) Moving amongst the listed styles may be the best approach to motivate those now walking through our doors seeking a career.

TABLE ONE

Leadership Style	EI Competencies	Impact On Climate	Objective	When Appropriate
Coercive	Drive to achieve; initiative, emotional self-control	Strongly negative	Immediate compliance	In a crisis, to kick-start a turnaround, or with problem employees.
Visionary	Self-confidence; empathy; change catalyst	Most strongly positive	Mobilize others to follow a vision.	When change requires a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed.
Affiliative	Empathy, building bonds; conflict management	Highly positive	Create harmony	To heal rifts in a team or to motivate during stressful times.
Democratic	Collaboration; team leadership; communication	Highly positive	Build commitment through	To build buy-in or consensus, or to get valuable input from employees.

			participation.	
Pacesetting	Conscientiousness; drive to achieve; initiative	Highly negative	Perform tasks to a high standard.	To get quick results from a highly motivated and competent team.
Coaching	Developing others; empathy; emotional self-awareness	Highly positive	Build strengths for the future.	To help an employee improve performance or develop long-term strengths.

Table is adapted from Goleman et al (1999)

The link between EI strengths in a leader and the organization's climate is important for EI leadership for success in leading the Y Generation. According to Tulgan (2007), "Managing people is harder and more high-pressure today than ever before. There's no room for downtime, waste, or inefficiency. You have to do more with less. And employees have become high maintenance. Not only are they more likely to disagree openly and push back, but they also won't work hard for vague promises of long-term rewards. They look to you—their immediate boss—to help them get what they need and want at work." (par. 2)

A Hay/McBer analysis of data on 3,781 executives, correlated with workplace climate surveys filled out by those who worked for them, suggests that 50 to 70 percent of employees' perception of working climate is linked to the EI characteristics of the leader (Goleman, 1999). Research using that same data explains the role of EI competencies in leadership effectiveness, identifying how the distinct styles of EI-based leadership affect workplace climate.

Four styles; visionary, affiliative, democratic, and coaching—generally drive climate in a positive direction. Two styles - the coercive and the pacesetting - tend to drive climate downward, particularly when leaders overuse them. It is important to note each of those styles can be effective when applied in appropriate circumstances (Goleman, 1998). A common complaint of the Y Generation workers is the desire to "...understand why managers are so set in their ways, are reluctant to change the status quo, are impatient with questions, hoard information and pull power trips." (Kehrli & Sopp, 2006, p.113-4). Unlike the baby boomer generation who didn't question authority, with the Y Generation "...it's more an issue of having a strong curiosity and desire to better understand the history or background of a situation". (Kehli & Sopp, 2006) According to Kehrli & Sopp, managers should not interpret the questions of Gen Y as disrespect or distrust for leadership. Using EI in one's leadership will allow the manager to respond more constructively and satisfy the Gen Y employee's "need to know."

Applying 'EI' in the workplace using the Visionary, Affiliative, Democratic and Coaching description from Table 1 creates a win- win for the profession. Open communication such as the flow of information up and down as well as laterally through an organization will assist the agency accomplish its mission of leading the Y Generation. Whereas other generations will also benefit from EI leadership, experts believe the Y Generation "...bring radically different demands and attitudes to the workplace than did

previous generations”. (Gogoi, 2005) Maria T. Bailey, CEO of marketing firm BSM media says, “They’ll definitely work more on their own terms. She also believes that their command of technology and having experienced affluence so early in life puts them in a unique position to negotiate those demands.” (Bailey, 2006, pg. 2).

Recruitment and Retention

Merle Switzer, Consultant for the CA Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), led a 12-month effort to analyze best practices and recurring issues in the recruitment and retention of peace officers for that State. In POST’s “Best Practices Update 2006, Recruitment & Retention” there is ample discussion regarding the generation now entering law enforcement and their ongoing need for open communication. In Chapter 14 of that report, “Improving Organizational Communication to Enhance Retention,” Switzer emphasized the relationship between communications, teamwork, and the employee’s need for information sharing. According to Switzer, absent effective communication, an agency cannot function optimally.

Switzer states “In an agency where communication works well an individual gets the information necessary to do what needs to be done in that clear direction and expectations are communicated in a way that the employee understands. Increasingly, employees have an expectation that their perspectives, ideas, concerns or questions will be heard and acted upon appropriately” (Switzer, 2006, p.169). Switzer does not refer to the Y Generation by name in the POST Best Practice Update, however during the 12-month focus group, discussions often centered around the Y Generation their needs and the generational gap. In the 2006 POST Symposium, the number one area deemed to be best to retain employees emerged was to “develop and retain effective supervisors and managers” by implementing these strategies:

- Improving skills in supervision
- Improving management, and leadership was strongly recommended
- Consistently practicing such skills as management by walking around
- Employing a coaching model with employees
- Recognizing good performance-both small and big accomplishments
- Being personable, treating people with dignity and respect
- Avoiding micro-management, helping people see their value to the organization
- Employing good listening skills were viewed as important

Tulgan (2007) concurs. He lists the Generation Y norms as:

- High Expectation of Self
- High Expectation of Employers
- Ongoing Learning
- Immediate Response
- Goal oriented

The Multi-Generational Workplace

For EI leadership of the Y Generation to thrive in a multigenerational workplace it's important to understand that every generation is uniquely shaped by its own locale in history. This formative influence has enduring effects, and brings something new and important to the workforce (Spiro, 2006). Spiro says, "that's why when dealing with the Y Generation it's so important for managers and leaders to understand, regularly address generational differences that manifest themselves in the workplace" (p.16).

Characteristics of the Y Generation indicate that leadership through EI produces an employee who believes they are valued and part of a team. This will inevitably create a more loyal employee (Fernandez, 2007). According to Fernandez, EI in the workplace reflected on some of the most challenging work situations that have faced supervisors. She said it's not usually the hard technical skills, such as budget and strategic issues; these technical skills often help supervisors get ahead in their careers early on. However, the supervisors who derail later in their careers lack the EI skills to lead effectively. Fernandez further states, "It's faulty communication, organizational culture problems, the inability of individuals to understand one another, or their inability to grasp the impacts of their own actions or inactions that cause problems." (Fernandez, 2007)

Chief of Police Bernard K. Melekian, of the Pasadena Police Department has effectively demonstrated the EI leadership that Fernandez (2007) described as causing challenging work situations. More than 20% of Chief Melekian's officers have less than 2 years experience; and 32 % of the department's officers have less than 3 years on the job. One-third of the department's sergeants have less than 3 years in their rank. Melekian has often stated that sergeants represent the most important person in the life of a line level officer. He agrees the "hard technical" skills are also critical, but he gives just as much importance to EI skills as described by Goleman, Fernandez and others. To be proactive developing EI leaders of the Y Generation, Melekian implemented a Training Matrix for supervision to ensure their ability to lead this young department through EI. Some of the training each sergeant must attend is: POST Supervisory Leadership Institute; Essentials of Supervision; and Churchill Leadership. Chief Melekian has acknowledged the influx of the Y Generation, and taken steps to ensure emotional intelligence leadership. (Melekian 2007)

How do we lead/connect through EI?

Recently, Los Angeles CA County Sheriff Lee Baca swore in 107 new sheriff's deputies at that agency's graduation. Most of the graduates were members of the Y Generation, with the majority between twenty-one and thirty years of age. Baca, a 35-year veteran of that organization, told the recruits in his commencement speech that it was extremely important that, as they strive for success in their new positions, they don't sacrifice the most important aspect of their lives, their families. His stated hope was that each and every officer would learn to balance the many demands of the profession with the importance of maintaining their family, as he believed family was the priority. He concluded by ensuring their families that the organization would take good care of the man and women that chose to serve their communities.

During Sheriff Baca's speech, he used several demonstrated EI leadership styles to emotionally connect with his new deputies and their families:

- Visionary: self-confidence; change catalyst; mobilize others to follow a vision
- Democratic: team leadership; communication; build commitment through participation
- Coaching: emotional self-awareness; builds strengths for the future

The Sheriff was fully aware that the young officers he was addressing were not of his generation, but a unique generation, as he stated during his address his own son had become a deputy sheriff and he felt he understood them. He also took the time to shake hands with each and every deputy, thanking them for choosing the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. The emotional connection was apparent by the applause from those in attendance. If this attitude and philosophy is demonstrated throughout the leadership of the organization, this organization is on the right track in demonstrating EI leadership to lead the Y Generation.

Planning for the Future

Those in leadership positions in the law enforcement profession should be concerned with succession planning. How does this relate to leading the Y Generation through 'EI'? Providing the tools for the Y Generation employee's success in the organization will help ensure additional interest and careers in law enforcement by creating a working environment where mentors (coaching) are honest and clear, stating what specific behaviors are expected and why they are good or bad. Together goals should be discussed and ways in which to accomplish them. Supervisors should keep in mind that the Y Generation thrives on praise. Positive reinforcement is part of the mentoring. This open dialogue and understanding has proved to be very successful in organizations all over the nation according to Spiro. (2006; pg16 (3)).

As stated in the overview of Chief Melekian's organization, baby boomers are retiring in large numbers and promotional opportunities are opening up to younger employees with less experience. These supervisors must be prepared to use the EI leadership style of open communication and teamwork to engage the Y Generation. To do less will mean we will have lost our opportunity to truly lead. It will also mean a generation less prepared to lead others once it is their turn.-

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