

JAIL BULLETIN

Number 61

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PRINCIPLES OF INMATE SUPERVISION - PART II

MATCHING LEADERSHIP STYLES WITH PRISONER CLASSIFICATION

Leadership style and prisoner classification must "fit" together so that the officer's supervision techniques match the maturity level of prisoners and their willingness to cooperate. The manager must ensure that while each housing area has prisoners who behave differently, those prisoners should be supervised through a corresponding leadership style.

Officers have different styles of supervision which are usually based on their experience, working personality, or basic values. A highly-skilled officer will be able to change leadership styles to fit the situation or to fit the types of prisoners encountered.

The prisoners' behavior style is determined by their willingness to cooperate or their ability to cooperate.

For our purposes, we will limit our categories to three basic areas for leadership styles and classification:

LEADERSHIP STYLES

- Directive
- Collaborative
- Democratic

PRISONER CLASSIFICATION

- Maximum Security
- Medium Security
- Minimum Security

The chart on the following page depicts how the leadership style of the officer should "fit" the housing category of the prisoner.

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LEADERSHIP STYLE	COOPERATION LEVEL	CLASSIFICATION
Directive	Low Cooperation	Maximum
Collaborative	Medium Cooperation	Medium
Democratic	High Cooperation	Minimum

Leadership Style

Directive. An officer adopts a directive style when prisoners are not cooperative or when they do not understand rules of the detention facility. The officer must:

- o State directives clearly in a language and manner that the prisoner understands;
- o State expectations of the officer and of the management to prisoners so the prisoner understands what is to be done, how it should be done, when it will be completed, and what will happen if it is not completed;
- o Continue to focus on the basic elements of the directive message in a rational manner, even if the prisoner protests or attempts to confuse the issue: and
- o Take accountability action when the prisoner completes or refuses to complete the directive. The prisoner should be rewarded or reprimanded immediately after the action is completed.

Collaborative. When prisoners are attempting to cooperate or they have the ability to work on problems, the officer should adopt a collaborative supervision style. In this approach the officer should:

- o Listen to ideas, comments, complaints and alternative suggestions of prisoners, and then the officer should make the necessary decision;
- o Help prisoners develop alternative solutions by allowing nonthreatening discussion; and
- o Always reserve the right to make the final decision.

Democratic. When prisoners have the ability and the willingness to be cooperative, it indicates that they have reached a maturity level where the officer in charge may establish a democratic decision-making situation. Usually this occurs in a trustee or work group situation. In this case, the officer should:

- o Join in with the prisoner or prisoners when making a cooperative decision or agreement;
- o Allow prisoners to make decisions within the boundaries of the organization's rules and philosophy; and
- o Ensure that after the prisoners make a decision they are accountable to that decision.

Classification

The following classification designations and corresponding behavior should determine the leadership style of the officer in charge of prisoners.

Maximum Security - Prisoners are housed in this area who are violence prone, overly impulsive, unwilling to cooperate with staff or unable in some way to follow the rules of the detention facility. Also, incoming prisoners are often housed in this classification until diagnostic testing and classification procedures are complete, and until observation and experience indicates the appropriateness of a lower classification.

Medium Security - Prisoners are housed in medium security who are attempting to be cooperative with detention staff. They may have some problems with their ability to follow rules, but staff are able to train or develop those abilities.

Minimum Security - Prisoners are cooperative. They have demonstrated a willingness and ability to assume responsibility for their behavior, agreements and joint decisions. Usually prisoners in this housing category are workers who have been delegated organizational tasks. Minimum security prisoners have also passed careful scrutiny of their behavior while incarcerated, and their propensity for escape has been considered.

Summary

Management staff need to be aware that, to be effective, prisoners should be housed in maximum, medium or minimum security classification areas depending on the prisoner's ability or willingness to cooperate with detention staff. Corresponding with those classification designations, staff should adjust their supervision style to be either directive, collaborative or democratic.

This month's Jail Bulletin is taken from the National Institute of Corrections Jail Resource Manual, May, 1989 edition. The authors are Rod Miller and Paul Katsampes.

QUIZ

Nebraska Jail Standards require that jail staff receive eighteen (18) hours of in-service training each year. The Jail Bulletin may be used to supplement in-service training if an officer studies the Bulletin, completes the quiz, and this process is documented by the jail administrator for review during annual jail inspection.

SUBJECT: PRINCIPLES OF INMATE SUPERVISION
PART II

NAME _____

DATE _____

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1. The prisoners' behavior style is determined by their willingness or ability to _____.
2. The democratic leadership style is best suited for _____ security classification inmates.
 - a. Minimum
 - b. Medium
 - c. Maximum
3. What leadership style allows for the least amount of inmate decision making and input?
 - a. Democratic
 - b. Collaborative
 - c. Directive
4. Inmates who are trustees or in a work group may be supervised with a _____ technique.
 - a. Democratic
 - b. Collaborative
 - c. Directive
5. When supervising prisoners using the collaborative approach, the officer should always reserve the right to make the _____ decision.

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ANSWER SHEET SHOULD BE RETAINED BY JAIL ADMINISTRATOR OR TRAINING OFFICER.

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PART II

NAME _____

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1. The prisoners' behavior style is determined by their willingness or ability to COOPERATE.
2. The democratic leadership style is best suited for MINIMUM security classification inmates.
 - a. Minimum
 - b. Medium
 - c. Maximum
3. What leadership style allows for the least amount of inmate decision making and input?
 - a. Democratic
 - b. Collaborative
 - c. Directive
4. Inmates who are trustees or in a work group may be supervised with a DEMOCRATIC technique.
 - a. Democratic
 - b. Collaborative
 - c. Directive
5. When supervising prisoners using the collaborative approach, the officer should always reserve the right to make the FINAL decision.

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