
JAIL BULLETIN

NUMBER 9

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The Jail Bulletin is a monthly feature of the Crime Commission Update. The Bulletin may be used as a supplement to your jail inservice training program if officers study the material and complete the attached "open book" quiz. The Bulletin and quiz may be reproduced for use by your staff. We welcome any jail training material you would like to contribute to the Bulletin.

GIVING DIRECTIONS AND ORDERS

One of the major responsibilities of a jail officer is to provide effective supervision and maintain continuous custody of inmates from book-in to release. The results the officer gets depends a great deal upon his/her ability to give directions or orders clearly.

In order to supervise and manage inmates, the jail officer must develop the ability to communicate orders and directions effectively. Orders fizzle when they are given to the wrong people, in the wrong way, at the wrong time. How the officer asks or tells inmates to do things can make all the difference in the world in the kind of response that will be received.

The following rules are based on Rudyard Kipling's "Six Honest Serving Men" and have proven to be very effective in the managing of people. The formula does appear absurdly simple but by answering the what, where, when, why, how, and who of an order shows that planning is apparent and this does win the confidence and respect of the inmates. Now, let's apply these "Serving Men" to the following rules:

1) Make the order clear and complete.

A. WHO is to do it?

- 1) Does the officer's order state clearly who is to do it?
 - 2) Does it leave any loop-holes for passing the buck?
 - 3) Does it clearly define who is responsible for results?
 - 4) Does it delegate sufficient authority to the right person for the job?
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- B. WHAT is to be done?
- 1) What does the officer want the inmate to do?
(Example: The officer gives the order to the inmate stating, "Take these boxes to the kitchen." But what does the inmate do with the boxes when he gets them there?)
 - 2) What is to be used/ordered to complete the job?
(Materials, supplies?)
 - 3) What equipment is to be used?
(If an inmate uses the wrong equipment, who is to blame?)
 - 4) What results are expected?
- C. WHEN is it to be done?
- 1) When is the job to start?
 - 2) When is the job to be finished?
(Lots of jobs just hang around because nobody puts a date on them.)
 - 3) Does the order reflect the urgent need to do the job?
- D. WHERE?
- 1) Where are the supplies located?
 - 2) Where is the work to be done?
 - 3) Where is the completed project to be delivered?
- E. HOW?
- 1) How is the work to be done?
 - 2) Does the order allow sufficient leeway?
 - 3) Can the inmate understand the instructions?
 - 4) Are special details clearly outlined?
- F. WHY?
- 1) Why is the order necessary?
 - 2) Why is a certain method being used?
 - 3) Why have special requirements (if any) been made?
2. Be positive: When giving an order, always use a positive sentence. Many times an inmate does exactly what he is told NOT to do because the order is phrased in the negative, and he remembers only the idea. He forgets the "DO NOT" part of the order.
3. Make the order fit the person
- A. What is the inmate's experience?
 - B. Is he quick or slow to understand?
 - C. How cooperative is he?
 - D. Is his morale good, poor, or only fair?
 - E. Does he have good self-discipline? (Will he require close supervision on this job, or can he work by himself? Can he be depended upon to do the job in the best way he can, and on time?)
 - F. Does the inmate have the ability to carry the job through to completion? (Should more than one inmate be in on the order? Should the order be given to someone else?)
 - G. Does the way the order is worded and given to the inmate invite cooperation?

CASE STUDY:

Officer John Cash thinks all inmates are dumb. They never seem to do anything right on the work details and Officer Cash says they are "driving me crazy."

For example, yesterday he told trustees Washington and Dingy to "go paint the jail library." The two inmates went off to do their assigned work and Officer Cash did not check on them all day. However, at the end of his shift, his Shift Supervisor called him in and asked: "Cash what's the idea telling those two inmates to paint everything in the library? The place looks like a Las Vegas nightclub stage set for a patriotic dance act."

Unable to answer his Shift Supervisor because he had not seen the new paint job in the library, Officer Cash rushed over there. He suddenly got a headache when he saw the results of the inmates' work. They had painted the library walls fire-engine red, the ceiling blue with white clouds, the floor white with red stripes, and the new wooden bookshelves a combination of red, white, and blue. In addition, all furniture in the room--desks, chairs and tables--had been painted red, white, and blue, with stars and stripes decorating them. It was a very patriotic-looking room. The inmates were cleaning the paint brushes when Cash found them.

"You dumb idiots!", he yelled. "Why would you paint every damn thing in that library? Don't you have any common sense? I just wanted the walls painted, and they were supposed to be green like every other wall in this jail."

Inmate Washinton replied: "But, Officer, we were in the Army and in the Army they have a rule: 'If you can't move it, paint it.' So we painted everything in there except the books, which we moved."

"Yeah," added inmate Dingy, "and we did it in the paint we found over in the storeroom. Wasn't no green paint in there. Man in the storeroom said they ain't got no green paint, so he gave us this. You didn't exactly tell us how you wanted it, so we used our imagination, like the shrink who counsels us told us to do. We did a nice job, huh?"

Who goofed? Officer Cash wanted to know if the inmates could be disciplined for painting everything in the library red, white, and blue. His Supervisor told Cash he could not discipline the inmates because he, Cash, was responsible for their errors. Officer Cash did not issue proper instructions: He did not tell the inmates what was to be painted (only the walls), what color paint to use (green), or where to obtain the paint (a new can of green paint was in the jail kitchen, where it had been used to paint a door). Nor did Officer Cash SUPERVISE the inmates properly; he should have accompanied them to the library and explained to them that only the walls were to be painted. Officer Cash was negligent for leaving the inmates unsupervised during an entire eight-hour shift. The next time Officer Cash tells inmates to paint something, exactly how should he word his orders and directions and what other responsibilities does he have as a supervisor to see that the job is done correctly?

--Adapted from materials contributed by:
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QUIZ

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

SUBJECT: GIVING DIRECTIONS AND ORDERS

1. One of the major responsibilities of a jail officer is to _____

2. What are the six rules of making an order clear and complete?

3. When giving directions or orders you should:
Be tough; inmates have to know who is in charge.
Give only vague directions; inmates should be given a chance to develop their creativity.
Be positive

CREDIT: 1/2 hour credit for Jail Inservice Training requirement

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DATE _____

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WHO

WHERE

WHAT

HOW

WHEN

WHY

3. When giving directions or orders you should:

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ANSWER SHEET SHOULD BE RETAINED BY JAIL ADMINISTRATOR OR TRAINING OFFICER