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THE FORCES OF CHANGE: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF PERSPECTIVES ON EFFECTIVE POLICING BY ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE MEMBERS

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ABSTRACT

The once common practice of personality assessment in the context of personnel selection has become a controversial topic in psychology. This controversy may be unwarranted since many researchers have demonstrated that personality scales can be predictive of job performance. Some researchers have attempted to identify the personality traits common to effective police officers. Unfortunately, the most widely-used personality scales were developed to measure deviant personality traits and as such function better to screen-out less effective police applicants rather than screen-in the most effective police applicants. In order to evaluate the traits of both effective and less effective law enforcement officers, I interviewed 29 Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Members from Depot Division and "F" Division (Saskatchewan) The semi-structured interviews were transcribed and then analysed using interpretational qualitative analysis. The constant comparative method was the specific technique utilised to code and understand these data. Interview quotes that were most relevant to the original research question have been highlighted in this thesis. Over seven successive phases of analyses these quotes were clustered into internally homogeneous and externally heterogeneous groups. One overarching concept, two main themes, five superconstructs, 14 constructs, and a number of less comprehensive levels were generated using this procedure. Sixty-three effectiveness traits were identified during the analysis. These traits were best captured by three constructs designated as *The Intelligent Chameleon* (e.g., common sense and flexibility), *I Am What I Do* (e.g., dedication and self-discipline), and *Going the Extra Mile* (e.g., resourceful and interpersonal adeptness). The traits in these constructs were quite similar to those generated by researchers who utilised personality measures, and the Law Enforcement Assessment and Development Report (LEADR; IPAT

Staff, 1987) was the measure that most closely resembled these three constructs. However, participants identified effectiveness as a dynamic process that involved the interaction of personality traits, job duties, and the demands of the time. As a result of this diversity inherent in police work, police selection boards may have greater success in screening for clusters of effectiveness traits as opposed to producing a definitive list of individual traits.

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No democratic country in the world seems to love and revere its police force as much as Canadians do the RCMP. For some, especially outside the larger cities, the force may well be the last shining symbol of all that is good and right about Canada from sea to sea to sea. In an age where it is virtually impossible to believe in anything—governments, the justice system, religion, schools, and the media—the Mounties appear to be the only pure-hearted, independent guardians left, an indomitable public institution with a pristine image. (Palango, 1998; p.10)

Unless you're prepared to buy into the idea that policemen think differently than others then you won't understand the culture. Because we do think completely differently than anybody else. That's what makes us unique. But that's what makes the culture too. (Member with 15 to 24 years experience)

It is becoming increasingly apparent that job performance is a function of both ability and motivational or dispositional factors, and that the latter elements of performance have links to personality. (Borman, Hanson, & Hedge 1997; p. 300)

INTRODUCTION

Modern personnel selection involves the evaluation of a number of different factors such as cognitive abilities, physical abilities, and personality (Borman, Hanson, & Hedge, 1997). However, the assessment of personality in the context of personnel selection has become a controversial topic in psychology. At one time personality traits were used extensively to assist in selection and placement decisions; however, the past 20 years has seen a substantial decline in academic research and publication in this area of industrial/organisational psychology (Costa, 1996). This decline may be due to the disappointing results of many of the studies being conducted. Furthermore, Irving (1992) indicated that during this same time period comparatively little research was conducted on the role that personality traits played in the prediction of job performance. This is a lamentable state of affairs since the input of industrial/organisational psychologists would be beneficial in the attempt to match applicants to job positions. In an occupation such as law enforcement, research of this type is a necessity given the crucial role that police officers fill in our society. Overall, recent efforts have been relatively sparse in terms of using personality characteristics to select employees and evaluate their progress during their careers.

Arguments For and Against Personality Tests in Personnel Selection

Over the years, many psychologists have explicitly stated their concern that personality testing is not beneficial for employment decision-making (e.g., Atwater, 1992; Blinkhorn & Johnson, 1990). Whether these concerns led from or led to the decrease in research efforts is a chicken-and-egg controversy that will probably never be resolved to anyone's satisfaction. Inwald (1987) summarised the concerns about personality testing in three main points. First, there is an employer concern. Many employers believe that existing selection procedures

(e.g., interviews, background checks, probationary periods) are sufficient in and of themselves and personality testing is viewed as unnecessary and a waste of time. Second, there is a legal/ethical concern. In the United States many minority groups fear that personality tests are stigmatising or discriminatory. Third, there is a statistical concern. Many researchers feel that little evidence exists to demonstrate a relationship between personality traits and occupational performance.

There are, however, rebuttals for these three concerns. First, with regard to the employers' concern, Inwald (1987) argued that personality testing provides extra information to a selection board. Current selection procedures are fallible enough to warrant continual modification *if those modifications can be empirically demonstrated to provide useful additional information.* Second, with regard to the legal and ethical concerns, in contrast to other more subjective assessment techniques, the use of empirically valid and reliable personality measures may actually help to reduce the negative impact upon minority applicants. Third, the statistical concerns may result from the indiscriminate use of personality measures in poorly defined work situations. As Tett, Jackson, and Rothstein (1991) stated, "personality-job performance relations lacking clear conceptual bases would be expected to underestimate the potential value of personality measures" (p. 704). In other words, a lack of awareness of which activities and traits are relevant leads to poorly conceptualised relationships between job activities and personality traits. This precludes finding statistically significant and relevant relationships between the two. In their response to Blinkhorn and Johnson's (1990) "informal survey of research" (p. 671), Jackson and Rothstein (1991) emphasised the point that reliable and valid personality measures do predict job performance when job analyses are conducted to identify relevant performance components. Many others

have agreed that personality scales should only be used when scores are related to meaningful job behaviours (e.g., Costa, 1996; Hogan, Hogan, & Roberts, 1996; Irving, 1992; Yarmey, 1990).

Thus, concerns about the use of tests can be calmed by recognising that personality testing constitutes a source of additional, empirically-validated information for selection boards. However, researchers must be able to identify the relevant personality traits and performance criteria.

The Relationship Between Personality and Job Performance

Reviews Involving the Big Five

The underlying theory about using personality testing in personnel selection is that people's behaviour (what they do) is a function of their personalities (what kind of people they are) (Hogan et al., 1996). This has been demonstrated by researchers who have begun to use established measures of the Big Five factors of personality (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism) to predict general and specific job performance. Some researchers (e.g., Ones & Viswesvaran, 1996) feel that the use of these broad personality factors is more appropriate than the use of narrow personality traits because broader factors are more empirically distinct and have more explanatory power. In their meta-analysis of 86 studies, Tett et al. (1991) reported that Agreeableness and Openness predicted job performance very well when job analyses were used to discover relevant personality-oriented job tasks. In their meta-analysis of 117 studies, Barrick and Mount (1991) studied the relationship between the Big Five factors and job criteria across five occupational groups (professionals, police, management, sales, skilled/semi-skilled). They discovered that Conscientiousness predicted supervisor ratings of job performance and training proficiency

across all five occupational groups. They concluded that "those individuals who exhibit traits associated with a strong sense of purpose, obligation, and persistence generally perform better than those who do not" (p. 18). Piedmont and Weinstein (1994) concluded their review of the Neuroticism, Extraversion, and Openness Personality Inventory (NEO-PI; Costa & McCrae, 1985) literature by stating that every Big Five factor was required to account for the contribution of personality to supervisors' ratings of occupational success but, like Barrick and Mount (1991), concluded that Conscientiousness was the most salient factor. In other words, self-discipline, achievement orientation, and competence underlie success. They found that Extraversion and Neuroticism were also important factors in predicting job performance. Costa (1996) also reported that Big Five factors are associated with supervisor ratings of performance in a variety of occupations.

Recent Non-police Oriented Studies

In addition to these reviews, there have been a number of more recent articles by researchers who have investigated the personality-job performance association. The United States military has been a prominent consumer of personality tests. Using the Sixteen Personality Factors (16PF; IPAT Staff, 1986), Potter and Albright (1990) discovered that U.S Coast Guard graduates who received high performance ratings "were more bold or able to deal with stress and were more forthright" (p. 476) than graduates who received low performance ratings. Using the same sample of Coast Guard graduates, Blake, Potter, and Slimak (1993) found that the Dominance scale from the California Psychological Inventory (CPI; Gough, 1957) predicted performance ratings by superior officers. Driskell, Hogan, Salas, and Hoskin (1994) found that the Hogan Personality Inventory (HPI; Hogan & Hogan, 1992) scales of Ambition, Intellectance, and School Success best differentiated high

performers from low performers in a U.S. Navy electronics training programme. Rose, Fogg, Helmreich, and McFadden (1994) discovered that technical ability was related to NEO-PI factor scores of low Openness and high Agreeableness in a group of 65 U.S. astronauts. Carretta and Ree (1996) found that attitudes towards risk helped to predict U.S. Air Force pilot performance.

Personality testing has also been used in less "glamorous" occupations. Nye and Collins (1993) discovered that lower anxiety scores, as measured by the State-Trait Personality Inventory (Spielberger, 1979), were significantly correlated with performance at an American air traffic controllers' training academy. Two recent studies have involved employees from insurance companies. Muchinsky (1993) discovered that four scales from the HPI (Adjustment, Clerical Aptitude, Managerial Potential, and Service Orientation) predicted job performance for insurance company clerks. Arneson, Millikin-Davies, and Hogan (1993) used the HPI with insurance claims examiners and found that high performers were "analytic, challenged by intellectual activities, socially sensitive, and tactful" (p. 471). In a study with 274 European commercial pilots, Hormann and Maschke (1996) discovered that successful pilots were sociable, self-assertive, and action-oriented as measured by the Temperament Structures Scale (TSS; Maschke, 1987).

Personality testing has also been used to predict academic performance. Working with two groups of Israeli medical students, Weiss, Lotan, Kedar, and Ben-Shakar (1988) concluded that "personality factors such as motivation, persistence and general adjustment to the school environment play a crucial role" (p. 496) in determining grades. Lee, Byrne, and Lee (1991) found that better performance by American fourth year education majors on a teacher examination test battery was correlated with elevated Minnesota Multiphasic

Personality Inventory (MMPI; Hathaway & McKinley, 1943) scores on the Psychopathic Deviate (Pd), Hypomania (Ma), and Social Introversion (Si) scales. On the basis of their scores, high performers were described as being concerned with societal change, possessing an abundance of mental and physical energy, and being able to isolate themselves in order to complete academic assignments.

Finally, some researchers have used personality tests to predict the performance of security personnel. Shusman, Inwald, and Landa (1984) found that American corrections officers who were terminated from their positions had significantly higher scores on Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI; Inwald, Knatz, & Shusman, 1983) scales that measured tendency to abuse substances, previous job difficulties, difficulty in adhering to societal rules, and lack of assertiveness. Inwald and Brockwell (1991) found that 77.2% of the time IPI and MMPI scores could predict whether U.S. government security personnel were rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory by their superiors.

All of this information bolsters Hogan et al.'s (1996) conclusion that the data are reasonably clear that personality measures can validly predict job performance. However, one particular employment area that has lacked this type of rigorous, well-designed research is law enforcement.

Psychological Research with Police Officers

Personality Traits of Police Officers

Although many researchers have investigated the personality traits and attitudes of police officers, most of them have not investigated the association between personality traits and job performance. Snibbe, Fabricatore, and Azen (1975) studied White, Black, and Hispanic American police officers using the 16 PF. Participants' scores indicated that they

were tough-minded, alert, and interpersonally cool. Lorr and Strack (1994) administered the Law Enforcement Assessment and Development Report (LEADR; IPAT Staff, 1987) to 275 American police applicants. The LEADR is composed of the 16PF and the Clinical Analysis Questionnaire (CAQ; Krug, Cattell, & IPAT Staff, 1980). Using cluster analysis techniques, the authors produced a "good scorer" cluster (participants scoring as self-disciplined, socially bold, extraverted, emotionally tough, and low anxiety) and a "poor scorer" cluster (participants identified by paranoia, schizophrenia, obsessiveness, emotional toughness, and independence). American police applicants who were administered the 16PF by Hofer, Horn, and Eber (1997) scored as emotionally stable, dutiful, socially bold, objective, practical, self-assured, traditional, and relaxed.

Researchers studying personality traits in police populations have also used other measures. Utilising the Jackson Personality Inventory (JPI; Jackson, 1976), Manuel, Retzlaff, and Sheehan (1993) described Colorado policewomen as scoring lower than a normative sample on anxiety, complexity, conformity, interpersonal affect, and social participation. Gianakis (1994) conducted interviews with 29 American police officers, and these officers reported that every police officer needs to have patience, an ability to communicate with people, honesty, dependability, and good judgement. Kornfeld (1995) interpreted the results from 84 American police officer applicants from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2; Hathaway & McKinley, 1989) as "defensive profiles" (p. 538). These applicants "presented as psychologically healthy individuals who are comfortable with people, free of worry, and self-confident" (p. 539) and endorsed stereotypical male interests. Kirkaldy, Cooper, Furnham, and Brown (1993) reported that British police officers with an internal locus of control displayed lower stress scores and higher physical and mental health

scores than officers with an external locus of control. Biggam and Power (1996) found that Scottish police officers did not differ from a normative sample on intensity of positive or negative affectivity. Sear and Stephenson (1997) reported that British police interrogators' interpersonal behaviour was "dominant, arrogant, calculating, and not very agreeable" (p. 30) as measured by the Interpersonal Adjective Scale-Big Five Version (IASR-B5; Trapnell & Wiggins, 1990). Finally, Zacker (1997) discovered that American police applicants who were administered the Rorschach (Exner, 1991) had a socially correct presentation but were hyperalert, socially immature, less tolerant of stress, overvalued their own personal worth, and had a tendency to oversimplify. Overall, different researchers using different measures have discovered a wide range of traits in police officers and police applicants.

Attitudes of Police Officers

Personality testing has also been used to identify the attitudes of police officers. For example, Perrott and Taylor (1995) found that university-educated eastern Canadian police constables were less likely to hold authoritarian attitudes than non-commissioned officers or constables who had not attended university.

Two recent studies have investigated risk-taking activity by police officers. Levenson (1990) discovered that American police officers cited for bravery (i.e., prosocial risk taking) did not score highly on a measure of sensation seeking. The author speculated that these officers "may be motivated for reasons other than those that were assessed in this study, such as altruism" (p. 1079). Conversely, Homant, Kennedy, and Howton (1993) found that American police officers who did score highly on sensation seeking and risk-taking measures were more likely to engage in high-speed pursuits (although the appropriateness of the pursuits was not discussed). These last two studies represent examples of the non-linear

relationship between personality traits and behaviour: personality traits are better predictors of behaviour than the other way around.

Thus, a number of researchers have investigated the personality traits and attitudes of police officers. Researchers have demonstrated that police officers and police applicants possess a wide variety of traits and attitudes, ranging from emotional stability, low anxiety, and self-discipline to social immaturity, hyperalertness, and arrogance. This range can be taken as an indication that this trait heterogeneity may reflect a range in police officer effectiveness. In other words, effective officers may score quite differently on personality tests than less effective officers.

The Necessity of Properly Selecting Police Applicants

Given the multidimensional nature of police work, the task of relating personality characteristics to job-relevant police behaviour is very difficult. For example, a small-town constable will have different demands placed on him or her than does an officer in a large urban centre. Nevertheless, there are a number of reasons why research to determine who should and should not become police officers must be conducted. First, it is an extremely expensive undertaking to train individuals who will either leave their police force or be terminated from their positions. That money would be better invested in people who are most likely to successfully complete training and have long careers as police officers. Second, inferior job performance may result in doubt and distrust by citizens about the police. Police officers are authority figures who are entrusted with the safety of the public. When citizens feel that they cannot trust the police, it is reminiscent of the old Roman concern of "who watches the watchmen?" Third, police officers are far more likely to encounter dangerous situations (e.g., traffic accidents, armed civilians) than the average person. As a result, the

quality of officers' performances will literally mean the difference between life and death, either for officers or civilians. As a result, police selection procedures must be made as valid and reliable as possible.

According to Beutler, Storm, Kirkish, Scogin, & Gaines (1985), the procedure for selecting the best qualified applicants for police work, particularly concerning their personal characteristics and emotional stability, has traditionally relied upon subjective assessment by administrators working without much input from mental health professionals or in-field law enforcement officers. Many departments use a wide variety of other selection techniques, for example job simulations, interviews, criminal record checks, credit checks, educational standards, employment history, personal references, and medical examinations (Hibler & Kurke, 1995). Hiatt and Hargrave (1988) and Yuille (1992) all criticised the field of applied police psychology for its lack of research with regard to determining the psychological suitability of recruits for police work. For example, in Nietzel and Hartung's (1993) survey, between 1987 and 1991 less than three percent of the articles in six prominent law and behavioural science journals were related to police selection procedures. This is particularly disturbing since 93% of police psychologists recommended that psychological or personality testing should be used as a component of an overall selection process (Inwald, 1987). However, these psychologists realised that since personality traits are not sufficient—in and of themselves—to predict job performance, testing should not be used as the only criterion to make a hiring decision (Inwald, 1987).

Thus, there are a number of reasons why researchers should investigate police applicant selection procedures. Not only is training an expensive undertaking but, more importantly, police officers are placed in positions of trust where they are expected to be able

to handle life and death situations. The role of personality in police selection has not received the appropriate amount of attention from researchers.

Selecting-In and Screening-Out Police Applicants

In the best of all possible worlds, the use of psychological testing in actual selection processes would focus on identifying and recommending acceptance of individuals with effective characteristics, while rejecting those with less effective characteristics (McFadden, Helmreich, Rose & Fogg, 1994; Talley & Hinz, 1990). In other words, psychologists could use test results to assist selection boards to select-in or screen-out various applicants for police work. Selecting-in implies knowledge of the skills, abilities, and personality qualities that are specific to effective and reliable job performance (Hibler & Kurke, 1995). Screening-out implies a knowledge of the characteristics that are incompatible with effective and reliable job performance (Hibler, 1995). Unfortunately, in actuality personality testing typically deals with uncovering severe psychopathology in applicants and, as such, is focused on screening-out less effective applicants rather than also selecting-in effective ones (Benner, 1986; Irving, 1992).

A prime example of this approach is research involving the MMPI. It has become the instrument of choice for selecting police recruits (Beutler et al., 1985; Inwald, 1987). Since the MMPI was developed using psychopathological samples, it functions best as a screen-out measure. It has proven helpful in identifying deceptive or fraudulent police applicants (e.g., Borum & Stock, 1993; Costello, Schneider, & Schoenfeld, 1993) but the MMPI was not designed to predict job performance in normal, nonpathological populations (Barrick & Mount, 1991). As a result, the MMPI, as useful as it may be, should not be used as the sole criterion for making selection decisions. Some might argue that researchers and police

selection boards should substitute the MMPI-2 for the MMPI, but Greene, Gwin, and Staal (1997) point out that it is unlikely that the newer measure is any more useful than the MMPI for studying the personality characteristics of nonpathological individuals.

Ultimately, Tett et al.'s (1991) concerns can all too readily be applied to the MMPI. It is a test that is being applied to a work situation without any indication that the test is associated with meaningful job behaviours (Yuille, 1992). Thus, researchers need to determine what constitutes meaningful, effective job performance. One method of accomplishing this is to question in-field law enforcement officers about what characteristics are present in less effective law enforcement officers (i.e., future applicants with these less effective characteristics should be screened-out) and effective law enforcement officers (i.e., future applicants with these characteristics should be selected-in). An examination of the literature suggests that this type of approach is long overdue. Leake (1988; cited in Hibler & Kurke, 1995) reported that less than two percent of surveyed California law enforcement agencies have or will be conducting studies to establish the patterns of personality attributes that are associated with good and poor police work performance. Fortunately, research-oriented professionals have provided some indication of what personality characteristics are representative of less effective and effective police officers.

Current personality tests are used primarily to screen-out applicants with undesirable personality traits. The equally valid requirement of selecting-in appropriate applicants has been overlooked. Active police officers could play an important role in identifying the personality characteristics of effective officers.

The Less Effective Police Officer

The less effective police officer is one who, although selected for police work, demonstrates below average performance. For example, Shaw (1986) defined the less effective officer as "an officer who you would not want under your command . . . if the pre-employment screening procedure were perfect, this officer would not have been hired or he [sic] would have been terminated during the probationary period" (p. 93). For example, Malouff & Schutte (1986) reported that American police officers dismissed from duty have more vehicle code violations, a greater number of prior convictions for serious offences, shorter stays at previous jobs, and more dismissals from previous jobs. Shev and Howard (1977; cited in McCafferty, Souryal, & McCafferty, 1998) reported from their psychiatric experience that 35% of the current Sausalito California police officers were the corrupt or bad officers, "their personalities are not suited to police work and they are unable to learn about themselves" (p. 55).

Corruption and Violence

McCafferty has engaged in some theorising about the development of corruption in police officers. McCafferty, Souryal, and McCafferty (1998) reported that some corrupt police officers develop Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (4th edition) (DSM-IV; American Psychiatric Association, 1994) personality disorders such as narcissistic personality disorder or antisocial personality disorder as a result of the process of corruption. However, since "the pattern [of a personality disorder] is stable and of long duration, and its onset can be traced back at least to adolescence or early adulthood" (American Psychiatric Association, 1994; p. 630), it is more probable that these disorders were latent conditions that became fully expressed in a corrupt arena. Indicators of risk for corruption include "drug

abuse, alcohol abuse, or trauma that might have caused brain damage; disinhibition or erosion of one's ethical sense; juvenile delinquency; conflicts with authority; misconduct or poor relationships in former jobs; financial problems; and a criminal record" (McCafferty & McCafferty, 1998; p. 63).

In addition to corruption, the average citizen is also concerned about violence committed by police officers. For example, police officers have been characterised as "sociopaths who derive great satisfaction out of beating people" (Poland, 1978; p. 377). This negative viewpoint is amplified by researchers who have discovered that small groups of violence-prone officers are involved in a disproportionate amount of officer-citizen conflict (Toch, 1996). In a study conducted by the Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department (1991; cited in Toch, 1996), a group of 44 officers received significantly greater mean numbers of allegations of excessive force and general citizen complaints than other officers. "The extreme concentration of these [complaints] cannot be explained solely by officer assignments or arrest rates" (Independent Commission on the Los Angeles Police Department, 1991, p. 38; cited in Toch, 1996). Likewise, Regoli, Crank, and Rivera (1990) have shown that metropolitan Colorado police officers with overly cynical attitudes were more likely to engage in conflict with citizens.

The MMPI

In order to investigate the characteristics of less effective police officers, a number of researchers have used the MMPI. Bartol (1982) and Elam (1983) found that in comparison to the general population, American police officers had significantly elevated scores on the following scales: Correction (K), Psychopathic Deviate (Pd), Masculinity-Femininity (MF), and Hypomania (Ma). However, officers rated low by supervisors had significantly higher

elevations on all these scales than officers rated highly by supervisors (Bartol, 1982; Elam, 1983). Thus, greater degrees of defensiveness, overactivity, and disregard of social norms characterised below-average officers. Bartol (1982) reported that elevations on the Pd and Ma scales represented the most common MMPI profile that led to a judgement of 'high-risk' for below-average officers. The authors interpreted this as indicating that these officers were "often tough-minded, insensitive, and had little empathy" (p. 63). They interpreted the below-average group's elevation on the MF scale as an indication that members of this group had interests encompassing "aesthetic, artistic, and cognitive (such as reading) areas" (p. 61). In addition, Bartol (1982) found that below-average officers reported more anxiety, worry, and social alienation than did above-average officers. Bartol's (1982) overall results of elevations on the K, Pd, and Ma scales for all officers represents an excellent example of the so-called "police profile" (e.g., Talley & Hinz, 1990). In a follow-up study, Bartol (1991) reported that Pd, Ma, and Lie (L) scale scores were negatively correlated with supervisory ratings in small-town Vermont police departments. The most elevated scale was typically the Ma scale, and these officers were described as "hyperactive individuals who seek constant activity" (p. 131). Officers with high L scale scores demonstrated poor judgement and an inability to make quick decisions when necessary. Thus, officers receiving poorer ratings were more likely to disregard social norms, portray themselves in a favourable light, be suspicious, and be overactive. These officers were more likely to engage in behaviours such as frequent car accidents, improper use of firearms, and inappropriate use of authority. Blau, Super, and Brady (1993) compared the Hysteria (Hy), Hypochondriasis (Hs), Pd, and Ma scale scores of 30 Florida police officers rated as either "best" or "least best" by their division commanders. These ratings were made using McCormick's (1984; cited in Blau, 1994) good cop/bad cop

performance dysfunction criteria. The researcher independently assigned participants into "best" or "least best" categories on the basis of the number of elevated MMPI scale scores of each participant. The MMPI profile correctly identified the commander rating for 80% of the participants. In other words, officers rated "least best" by their commanders had a larger number of elevated scale scores; officers rated "best" by their commanders had a fewer number of elevated scale scores.

The MMPI and the CPI

Other researchers using the MMPI, at times in conjunction with the CPI, have found somewhat similar results. Beutler et al. (1985) found that MMPI scores indicative of low levels of internal sensitivity (Hs scale) were associated with the use of excessive force in campus and metropolitan Arizona police officers. Shaw (1986) reported that 42% of metropolitan American police officers deemed less effective by fellow officers had Pd scale scores above 60 (clinically nonsignificant), and 15% had Pd scale scores above 70 (clinically significant). Hargrave, Hiatt, and Gaffney (1986) reported that both high- and low-ranked American police cadets had elevations on the K, Pd, MF, and Ma scales. The authors also administered the CPI to this sample of participants. They interpreted the MMPI and CPI scale scores as indicating that both high- and low-ranked individuals were "highly defended, energetic, dominant, well-adjusted, independent, spontaneous, socially ascendant, flexible, and free from anxiety-related behaviors" (p. 252). In terms of effective job performance, Hargrave et al. (1986) reported that any significant amount of introversion, dependency, or prejudice was not desirable. Hiatt and Hargrave (1988) administered the MMPI and the CPI to 55 urban American police officers. Forty were previously judged to be satisfactory applicants by clinicians, and 15 were judged to be unsatisfactory applicants by the clinicians but hired

anyway. Unsatisfactory officers had significantly higher Pa and Ma scales, whereas satisfactory officers were more forceful, mature, and independent. "The unsatisfactory group contained more individuals who had such qualities as oversensitivity, rigidity, distrust, resentment, irritability, and maladaptive hyperactivity" (p. 124).

The MMPI and the IPI

A smaller number of researchers have used the MMPI in conjunction with the Inwald Personality Inventory (IPI: Inwald, Knatz, & Shusman, 1983). Inwald and Shusman (1984) administered both measures to a sample of 329 urban American police officers. Scales measuring acting-out behaviours best predicted negative work behaviours. Officers who exhibited "attitude problems" had higher IPI scale scores that indicated greater degrees of prior trouble with the law, hyperactivity, suspiciousness, and drug use. For all officers in the sample, elevations on the MMPI Pd scale were positively correlated with the number of job absences and reprimands for dereliction of duty. These officers expressed having difficulty following societal norms and were admitted risk takers. Antisocial attitudes and previous work difficulties predicted those who would be formally disciplined on the job. Overall, officers who presented test scores indicative of substance abuse, trouble with the law and job difficulty patterns were rated poorly by their supervisors. Scogin, Schumacher, Gardner, and Chaplin (1995) administered both measures to 82 Alabama police academy recruits. They also obtained one-year ratings from job supervisors for each participant. The authors found that the scales most predictive of poor supervisor ratings from the MMPI were the Pd, Pa, MF, Hs, and Hy scales. The IPI subscales Undue Suspiciousness, Anxiety, and Sexual Concerns also predicted supervisor ratings and were better predictors than the MMPI scales.

However, the researchers resisted "the temptation to engage in post hoc reasoning as to the meaning of this particular configuration of subscales" (p. 71).

Thus, it appears to this researcher that there are two styles of less effective policing. The first (and potentially larger) group is the antisocial group that comes into conflict with citizens and authority figures. Individuals in this group are characterised by narcissism, suspiciousness, cynicism, tough-mindedness, insensitivity, defensiveness, rigidity, irritableness, resentfulness, sensation seeking and hyperactivity. The second group of less effective officers is best described as the ineffectual group. These individuals are characterised by indecisiveness, introversion, dependency, cautiousness and oversensitivity. They are quieter individuals who go through the motions and fail to make a difference on the street.

The Effective Police Officer

The effective police officer is one who demonstrates an above average performance during duty. Few studies have utilised measures that were specifically designed to select-in effective recruit characteristics. In a review of previous research on what constitutes a good police officer, Pugh (1986) states that some American recruiting officers look for someone who will

1. React quickly and effectively to problem situations.
2. Exhibit initiative, problem-solving capacity, effective judgement, and imagination in coping with complex situations.
3. Demonstrate mature judgement (common sense) in deciding to make an arrest, give a warning, or use force.
4. Tolerate stress in a multitude of forms.
5. Maintain a balanced perspective in the face of constant exposure to the worst side of human nature. (p. 1)

Additional characteristics mentioned by Pugh include honesty, responsibility, dedication, and reliability. After interviewing 73 American police officers and conducting a job analysis on the

results, Love and Hughes (1994) developed 13 performance dimensions: decisiveness, resilience, flexibility, perseverance, initiative, sensitivity, political sensitivity, impact, emotional control, self-confidence, open-mindedness, dependability, and leadership.

The CPI

In order to investigate the characteristics of effective police officers, a number of researchers have used the CPI. Hogan (1971) administered the CPI to three samples of Maryland State Police recruits and one sample of rookie Maryland State Police officers. CPI scale scores were correlated with ratings of overall work suitability made by supervising staff members of each participant. For recruits, four of the highest positive correlations involved the Dominance, Sociability, Self-Acceptance, and Independence scales of the CPI. For rookie police officers, two of the highest positive correlations involved the Good Impression and Independence scales. To Hogan this highlighted "the importance for effective police work of practical, functional intelligence in combination with sociability and self-assurance" (p. 685). Mills and Bohannon (1980) reported that, with 49 Maryland State Police officers, successful officers were "bright, assertive, autonomous, self-assured, responsible, and level-headed" (p. 683). These officers were also achievement-oriented. Interestingly, the authors report that in comparison with officers active ten years prior to the study, the current sample of officers were "slightly more tolerant, socialized, and conventional, . . . and considerably more flexible" (p. 683). Pugh (1985a) found that Edmonton city police officers who received good ratings from their superiors reported significantly fewer antisocial behaviours on the CPI than officers who received poor ratings from supervisors. After a four and a half year period, CPI scales reflecting a "stable, responsible, socially skilled individual" (p. 176) best predicted positive supervisor ratings.

The MMPI

The MMPI has been used to study effective police officers as well as less effective ones. Fraser (1949; cited in Pugh, 1985a) reported that the most efficient Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) Members scored significantly higher on the Hs and Hy scales, which was interpreted as meaning that these officers were preoccupied with physical complaints. Bartol (1991) found similar results with Vermont police officers; the higher the score on Hy or K, the better the ratings by supervisors. Bartol (1991) interpreted these findings as indicating that these small-town officers had to maintain a "stiff upper lip" and deny emotional or psychological problems in order to be evaluated as successful. An earlier study using the MMPI led Bartol (1982) to conclude that the successful American small-town police officer

> feels more physically competent, tends to be more accepting of society's values and standards, has fewer problems with authority and supervision, and is generally more guarded about revealing himself than unsuccessful officers. In addition, the successful officer tends to be less tense, anxious or worrisome, recovers more quickly from stress and threat, and demonstrates better social skills in dealing with the public. (p. 62)

Shaw (1986) found that in a sample of 127 metropolitan American police officers, 24% of ideal police officers had Pd scale scores above 60, and 3% had Pd scale scores above 70 (clinically significant antisocial attitudes and behaviour). Hargrave, Hiatt, and Gaffney (1986) reported that both high- and low-ranked American police cadets had elevations on the K, Pd, MF, and Ma scales. They concluded that the effective officers were more "sociable, outgoing, and gregarious" (p. 253) and dominant. Overall, in combination with CPI scores for these cadets, the authors reported that high-ranked cadets are "psychologically defended, energetic, competitive, dominant, independent, achievement oriented, spontaneous, flexible, and socially

ascendant. Further, they are well-adjusted individuals who subscribe to a rather traditional work ethic and show leadership potential" (p. 254).

In response to research findings that many police officers have elevated scores on the Pd and Ma scales, Talley and Hinz (1990) hypothesised that high- and low-ranked officers may obtain similar elevated Pd and Ma scale scores as a result of endorsing different individual items on the MMPI. In their study of 208 American university campus police officers, effective officers had higher scores on two subfactors of the Pd scale (ego inflation and authority problems) and on one subfactor of the Ma scale (imperturbability). The authors interpreted these scores as evidence that effective officers were self-assured, enjoyed being in authority, and denied feelings of anxiety, rather than an endorsement of antisocial attitudes or maladaptive overactivity. Thus, their results highlight the necessity of examining subfactor scores before applying traditional scale interpretations to participants. Unfortunately, it is extremely rare that these subfactors are reported in published research.

The MMPI and the IPI

Inwald and Shusman (1984) administered the IPI and MMPI to American police academy recruits and discovered that recruits who demonstrated heightened awareness and interpersonal sensitivity were rated more positively by their superiors. In addition, "some degree of suspiciousness is a positive attribute in successful police work" (p. 9) and officers with higher self-esteem were more likely to receive positive supervisor ratings. When Cortina, Doherty, Schmitt, Kaufman and Smith (1992) examined the MMPI and the IPI within the framework of the "Big Five" factors of personality, they found that American state police academy applicants who scored low on scales corresponding to the Neuroticism factor and high on the Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, and Extraversion factors made better police

officers. However, the authors concluded that the Neuroticism and Agreeableness factors would be the most useful predictors.

The 16PF

In a study utilising the Sixteen Personality Factors (16PF; IPAT Staff, 1986) with 333 Los Angeles patrol officers, Fabricatore, Azen, Schoentgen, and Snibbe (1978) found that better supervisor ratings were associated with higher scores on the E factor (aggressive) and better overall performance ratings were associated with higher scores on the I factor (tough-minded). They concluded that "superior officers are aggressive and tough-minded, conscientious and incorruptible, low-keyed and cautious" (p. 68). Gibson (1982) administered the 16PF to 98 Merseyside police constables in England. Constables who received the best on-the-job assessments from supervisors scored as more intelligent, conservative, respectful, and socially aware on the 16PF than constables receiving the poorest assessments. The author reported that extreme scores to be avoided included timidity, tender-mindedness, apprehensiveness, and tenseness.

The Ability to Communicate

One aspect of personality that was not elaborated upon in the above-mentioned research was communication ability. Many researchers have reported the importance of the sociable aspect of policing. Klockars (1985) asserted that "the police officer's most important tool is his mouth" (p. 145) and "the love of talk should be an attribute detected in prospective police applicants" (p. 146). Pugh (1985b) found that greater verbal expressiveness predicted better job performance after two years service as an Edmonton city police officer. Another group of police officers who were interviewed agreed about the "vital importance of verbal facility in every aspect of their jobs" (Muir, 1977; cited in Pugh, 1986; p. 5). Bradstreet

(1986) emphasised that officers should have excellent verbal skills for situations that involve "quick thinking and fast talking" (p. 109). Finally, Inwald (1987) reported that communication skills are essential since police officers spend a great deal of time discussing issues with citizens.

Police Specialties

Several researchers have investigated the personality traits that are adaptive for particular police specialties such as detectives and undercover operatives. McGurk, Platton, and Gibson (1994) completed interviews with 349 British detectives and conducted a job analysis on their responses. Some of the characteristics of "the good detective" included the ability to be away from family for long periods, interpreting feelings properly, empathy, tolerating uncertain information, communicating effectively, and being personable and approachable. Macleod (1995) asked members of a New Zealand undercover operations selection board what traits they look for in applicants. Results included strong motivation, sense of adventure, willingness to sever current close emotional relationships, ability to get along with a group, and a stable personality. Appearance and an ability to act were not considered to be relevant by the board. Operational success as an undercover officer was associated with moderate degrees of narcissism. Macleod (1995) concluded that "police officers in general may possess a greater quotient of 'normal' narcissism than many. Those who volunteer for additional risky and dangerous tasks are certainly likely to be so" (p. 245). Hibler (1995) reported that applicants for undercover operation were "fringe elements" (p. 304) who were currently dissatisfied with their lot in life. "Surely those who are complacent, self-satisfied, and self-satisfying would see undercover work for what it is: sometimes hard, often dangerous, and nearly always unappreciated" (Hibler, 1995; p. 304).

Thus, a number of characteristics can be used to describe effective police officers. Most of these are straightforward and self-explanatory: honesty, responsibility, dedication, reliability, flexibility, sociableness, open-mindedness, dependability, assertiveness, level-headedness, independence, traditional, low anxiety, and conscientiousness. However, there are some characteristics that have been used to describe effective police officers that have also been applied to less effective officers. For example, Bartol (1982) and Hargrave et al. (1986) demonstrated that effective and less effective police officers have very similar MMPI profiles. Effective police officers have been described as moderately narcissistic, suspicious, tough-minded, deny having psychological problems, dominant, and aggressive. This carry-over or lack of difference between effective and less effective officers may indicate that existing personality measures lack the specificity to detect differences between effective and less effective officers.

A Police Personality Profile?

Many researchers have interpreted their personality testing results as indications that effective police officers possess a combination of characteristics that can be conceptualised as a unique police personality profile. A unique set of personality characteristics for police officers makes a certain amount of intuitive sense, since characteristics that are adaptive for effective police work (e.g., assertive, independence, quick to take action) may be counterproductive in other occupations (e.g., banker). Yet it is unclear whether these research results adequately reflect the actions and attitudes of active law enforcement officers.

However, the reliance on one overall police profile to guide selection of applicants would result in the rejection of candidates who do not precisely fit the profile but would otherwise be perfectly acceptable police officers (Burbeck & Furnham, 1985). Given the

diversity of settings and work demands police officers experience, I do not believe that there is one distinctive police profile. Like Lorr and Strack (1994), I believe in the existence of multiple profile patterns or groups of traits. The inconsistency in the literature noted above is indirect evidence that there is more than one possible police profile. This inconsistency makes it easy to understand why some researchers lament the lack of clear cut differences between successful and unsuccessful police officers that police selection boards would find useful (e.g., Kirkaldy et al., 1993). I feel that the inconsistency reflects the lack of consensus among researchers about which personality and performance criteria are most appropriate, and a narrow-minded focus on finding a single police profile. In addition, restriction in the range of personality characteristics may be one reason why some researchers fail to find statistically significant differences between the personality test scores of effective and less effective police officers. Many studies were carried out with police officers or cadets who had already successfully passed screening procedures and, as a result, most individuals with less desirable characteristics were not available to participate in the studies. This restriction in the range of the predictor variables (personality characteristics) may result in an underestimation of the relationship between the criterion variables (performance) and the predictor variables. A similar problem with range restriction is encountered in research by the U.S. military (e.g., Edwards & Morrison, 1994).

The Current Study

Personality testing can be helpful in facilitating the employee-occupation match when personality characteristics are theoretically associated with job performance abilities. The relationship between personality and job performance has been extensively researched in a number of careers. It is interesting to note that the link between personality and performance

in law enforcement has been underrepresented in the research literature even though police officers play vital roles in today's society. Although a number of researchers have investigated the personality characteristics and attitudes of police officers, relatively few studies have been devoted to determining what personality characteristics are associated with effective police performance.

Researchers have demonstrated that certain personality characteristics should serve as "red flags" (i.e., characteristics found frequently in less effective law enforcement officers). Some of these characteristics are suspiciousness, cynicism, insensitivity, defensiveness, irritability, and hyperactivity. On the other hand, applicants who possess personality characteristics such as honesty, responsibility, dedication, reliability, and conscientiousness should be selected for police work since these characteristics are representative of effective officers. However, these characteristics have been generated through the use of psychological tests, like the MMPI, that were designed primarily to function in screen-out capacities (i.e., they were developed to measure a narrow selection of less effective characteristics). Members of law enforcement agencies, however, are exposed to a variety of both effective and less effective behaviours and attitudes of other officers. This wider range of experiences should make law enforcement officers more accurate sources of information than psychological tests regarding what constitutes effective and less effective characteristics. Fortunately, researchers have shown that law enforcement officers do make accurate and consistent judgements of peer performance (e.g., Azen, Snibbe, Montgomery, Fabricatore, & Earle, 1974; Bayley & Garofalo, 1989; Love, 1981). One way to access this source of information is to conduct interviews with police officers.

The main purpose of the current exploratory study was to uncover the behaviours, attitudes, lifestyles, and personality characteristics representative of effective and less effective Canadian law enforcement officers through interviews with RCMP Members. Personality traits alone are not the sole focus of this study since, as other researchers have pointed out, personality traits are influenced by the context in which they occur (e.g., Allport, 1937; Cattell, 1979). The secondary purpose of the current study was to determine how well real-life observations correspond with research-driven analyses by comparing the characteristics generated by Members with those identified in the literature as representative of effective and less effective law enforcement officers.

The Choice of a Qualitative Analysis Approach

According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994), qualitative research is

> multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives. (p. 2)

Thus, the intent is to understand the participants' beliefs about the nature of the issue being addressed (Patton, 1990). An interpretational qualitative analysis approach was used in the current study because there were no guiding theoretical propositions. In interpretational qualitative analyses "elements, categories, patterns, and relations between properties emerge from the analysis of the data and are not predetermined" by the researcher (Côté, Salmela, Baria, & Russell, 1993; p. 129). Interpretational qualitative analysis is similar to grounded theory qualitative analysis in that neither approach assumes a preconceived theory and both

utilise the constant comparative method (CCM) in the data analysis stage. However, in grounded theory qualitative analysis the CCM is used to produce a theory whereas in interpretational qualitative analysis the CCM is used only to discover patterns in the data rather than generate a theory. This method allows the researcher to use "comparison to build and refine categories, define conceptual similarities, find negative evidence, and discover patterns" (Mertens, 1998, p.351).

A qualitative analysis method may be chosen when available quantitative measures are not appropriate (Patton, 1990). In the current context, personality tests are not appropriate for two reasons. First, as mentioned above, the personality characteristics of effective and less effective police officers have been generated through the use of tests designed to screen-out psychopathological characteristics and not select-in adaptive characteristics. An appropriate solution is to interview police officers and hear in their own words their experiences and what they believe it takes to do the job well. Patton (1990) stated that qualitative methods are appropriate when the researcher requires this type of detailed, in-depth information or when the focus of the study is on unique qualities of particular individuals. Thus, the exploratory nature of the current study provides an opportunity to assemble a rich descriptive database for both select-in and screen-out characteristics. The second reason personality tests are not appropriate is that they lack flexibility because participants' responses (i.e., their opinions and experiences) must be divided into theoretically predetermined categories that were not developed with police officers in mind. The qualitative analysis method avoids the use of preconceived categories and provides the researcher with much-needed flexibility.

Why the RCMP?

Why should research of this nature be carried out with the RCMP? First, the vast majority of researchers investigating the personality characteristics of police officers have focussed on American police forces or, much less frequently, non-RCMP Canadian police forces. As a result, the personality characteristics studied by these researchers may or may not be applicable to the cadets and Members of the RCMP. Second, the RCMP is Canada's national police force and posts Members across the nation. The Force certainly influences many more citizens than does a police force that only covers one specific geographic location. Third, unlike most police agencies, the RCMP Academy provides training for a variety of urban and rural settings. As a result of this focus on training for multiple settings, RCMP Members may be more likely to witness a wider range of both acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from both RCMP Members and officers from other law enforcement agencies.

It is also important to conduct research with the RCMP because character or personality is explicitly mentioned in the basic qualifications for the Force. Every applicant must be a Canadian citizen, have proficiency in either official language, be 19 years of age or older, have a grade 12 education (or equivalent), possess a valid driver's license, meet the various physical and medical requirements, and *be of good character* (Royal Canadian Mounted Police Public Affairs and Information Directorate for Personnel Directorate, 1996; emphasis added). The current standardised screening procedure used by the RCMP includes the MMPI-2 (R. Roy, Force psychologist, personal communication, August 18, 1999), the RCMP Recruit Selection Test, the Physical Abilities Requirement Evaluation, an interview (for suitability and security), official language test, a background investigation, and a medical and dental exam (Royal Canadian Mounted Police Public Affairs and Information Directorate

for Personnel Directorate, 1996). Following the completion of this study, the RCMP can be provided with a copy of the results (i.e., participants' perceptions of characteristics that are representative of actual effective and less effective in-field performance). The RCMP may add these characteristics to their already existing applicant screening procedure in order to augment their screen-out/select-in capabilities.

METHOD

Approval to undertake this study was received from the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Regina. The Research Ethics Committee approval is attached in Appendix A.

Procedure

Interview Development

The interview was developed from previous research and general police literature. It was designed to cover the following topics: (a) the Members' history of police service; (b) preparation for the job; (c) characteristics of Members; (d) the effect of location on Members; (e) the effect of specialising within police work; (f) working within the RCMP organisation; (g) changes in policing; and (h) the future of the RCMP. The semi-structured interview was composed of questions designed to elicit detailed answers rather than "yes" or "no" responses. The specific questions used in the interview are listed in Appendix B. Additional non-scripted questions were asked in order to clarify participants' responses. The participants were encouraged to discuss their personal RCMP experiences and any topics that were of specific concern to Members and their ability to do their jobs.

Recruitment of Participants

A copy of the proposal of this study was sent to the Commanding Officer (CO) of "F" Division, Assistant Commissioner Beverly Busson (see Appendix C). "F" Division headquarters are located in Regina, Saskatchewan. All active duty Members in Saskatchewan (other than those posted to Depot Division in Regina) work out of "F" Division. The CO and I met in person to discuss the study. At that time Assistant Commissioner Busson gave her approval for the Members of "F" Division to be informed of

the study. Assistant Commissioner Busson arranged to have an electronic message that described the study sent to all "F" Division Members through the RCMP's internal e-mail server. This message included my name and contact telephone numbers and encouraged interested Members to contact me for more information about the study. Each interested Member contacted me by telephone in order to receive more information about the study. Each Member who expressed interest in the study was invited to participate.

A slightly different procedure was followed to involve Members from Depot Division. The CO of Depot Division, Chief Superintendent Gauthier, was about to go out of town when I attempted to contact him. As a result, I was instructed to meet with Dr. Gary Bell from the Programme Development department in order to arrange permission to contact the Members. Dr. Bell was sent a copy of the proposal of this study to review (see Appendix C). I then contacted Dr. Bell by telephone to discuss the possibility of contacting Depot Members. At that time Dr. Bell gave his approval for the Members to be informed of the study. He then arranged to have an electronic message that described the study sent to all Depot Division Members through the RCMP's internal e-mail server. Although I requested that my name and contact telephone numbers be included in this e-mail so that interested Members could contact me directly, the e-mail instructed interested Members to forward their name and telephone number to the Programme Support staff who then forwarded these names onto me. The Programme Support staff felt that it would be easier for interested Members to use the internal e-mail system rather than to contact me off-site. I contacted each person on the list forwarded by the Programme Support staff to give them more information about the study. Each Member who expressed interest in the study was invited to participate.

Participants were told that the main purpose of the interview was to learn their personal ideas about the characteristics of more effective and less effective Canadian law enforcement officers. "More effective" and "less effective" was left to the discretion of the participant, but I asked them to define their terms as specifically as possible. They were also informed that the resulting "profile" could be used as part of another screening device for future RCMP applicants. It was reiterated to all Members that their participation in the interview was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Furthermore, participants were also informed that neither their sex nor race would be reported. Since, relatively speaking, very few RCMP Regular Members are women or visible minorities (12% and 8%, respectively; Royal Canadian Mounted Police Official Language and Diversity Management Branch, 1997), research findings incorporating race or sex might compromise participants' confidentiality. Participants were assured that their responses would be held in strictest confidence and that no individual responses would be released to the RCMP, although a final copy of the entire study would be made available to the RCMP for its records and to interested Members upon request.

I fully explained the purpose and design of the study to interested Members who then were given the opportunity to make an informed choice about whether or not to participate. All Members who expressed initial interest in the study decided to participate.

Collection and Organisation of Interview Responses

The interviews were conducted at a number of different locations including private offices at the University of Regina, the Training Academy, and detachments throughout the province between February 1, 1999 and March 17, 1999. Before beginning the interviews, an Informed Consent form that reiterated the points I mentioned (i.e., participation is

confidential and involves generating characteristics of effective and less effective Canadian law enforcement officers) was reviewed with each participant (see Appendix D). Individuals were asked to sign the form if they agreed to participate and they were provided with a personal copy of the form. Participants were also asked to consent to having the interview audiotaped in order to record accurately their comments. All participants agreed to this and were asked to sign a second Informed Consent form for audiotaping and were provided with a personal copy of this form (see Appendix D). Each interview was recorded on audiotapes bearing the confidential participant number assigned to that participant (therefore names only appeared on Informed Consent forms and not on interview data). The length of the interviews varied from approximately one to three hours, depending on how much the participants chose to say. All individuals who agreed to participate in the study requested a copy of the summary of the research results (see Appendix D). As is common practice in qualitative interviewing, the interview was slightly modified during the course of the interviews in order to incorporate knowledge gained in the preceding interviews (e.g., Mertens, 1998; Patton, 1990).

The interviews were semi-structured dialogues designed to allow participants to express their own idea of what makes an effective law enforcement officer and the issues of concern to them. Many Members appeared to enjoy the interview process. A number of them stated that they had never "sat down and really thought about these things." As a whole, the participants reported that they appreciated the opportunity to share their opinions with someone since they sometimes felt "unheard" within such a large organisation as the RCMP.

Following each interview, I transcribed participants' responses. In order to guarantee anonymity, no identifying features, such as personal names, were recorded in the transcripts. This anonymity also applied to any individuals that participants mentioned during their interviews. Participants were assured that specific details of their responses would be reported in a way that would make it essentially impossible to identify an individual on the basis of quotations derived from their interviews. Every participant was given the opportunity to review his or her own transcript. Of the 29 interviews completed, 17 Members chose to review their transcripts and 12 stated that they preferred not to do so due to their time constraints. For those Members who did request to review their transcripts, a copy was either mailed to them or hand-delivered to them along with a cover letter (see Appendix E). They were also provided with an addressed and stamped envelope so that they could mail the transcript back to me when they had finished reviewing it. Of the 17 transcripts sent out, 15 were returned. I spoke with the two Members who did not return their transcripts. Both stated that they had reviewed the transcripts and neither requested that any changes be made. The transcripts that were returned contained either no revisions or only minor ones (e.g., correct spelling of a word). These changes were made to the transcripts and then the audiotapes of these 17 interviews were erased as agreed upon with the participants. Those individuals who chose not to review their transcripts were sent a letter informing them that their interviews had now been transcribed and that they could at any time request a transcript or make changes to what they had discussed in the interview (see Appendix E). None of these participants requested copies of their transcripts. Two weeks after mailing these letters, the audiotapes of the corresponding interviews were erased.

The names of all participants and their corresponding participant numbers were recorded on a master list. This list is kept in a locked filing cabinet at the University of Regina. All data collected in this investigation are stored in another locked filing cabinet at the University of Regina.

Participants

Participants were 29 RCMP Members on active duty in Saskatchewan. Twenty participants were from Depot Division and nine were from "F" Division. Participants' years of service ranged from 3 to 32 years, with an average of 22 years (see Table 1).

Table 1

Years of Service with the RCMP

	Average Years of Service	Range of Years of Service
Total Participants (29)	22	3 – 32
Participants not used in Analyses (11)	22	12 – 29
Participants used in Analyses (18)	22	3 – 32
Participants from "F" Division (9)	21	3 – 32
Participants from Depot Division (9)	23	17 – 31

As mentioned above, the sex and race of participants in this study are not reported. In addition, participants' ranks are not reported in order to protect confidentiality further. All participants volunteered to be interviewed after reading an electronic mail description of the study. All Members who expressed initial interest in the study decided to participate.

In qualitative analysis, one typically ceases the interviewing process when no new themes or examples are being generated. In the current study, repetition was clearly evident

after the eighteenth interview. However, I chose to interview all interested Members because I did not want to deny anyone the opportunity to share their experiences. In order to equally represent Depot Division and "F" Division in the study, nine interviews with Depot Members and nine interviews with "F" Division Members were chosen to be analysed. The nine Members from Depot Division were chosen because their number of years of service and type of service most closely matched that of the nine Members from "F" Division; this was done entirely independent of the content of the interviews. These participants' interviews were analysed in detail; the quotes that are the basis for the resulting "snapshot" of the RCMP were selected from these interviews. The remaining 11 participants were not directly included in the qualitative analyses. Their primary purpose was to provide me with a more in-depth understanding of the topics discussed with the other 18 participants. However, this is not to downgrade the importance of these 11 participants; their responses, along with those of the other participants, helped to increase my awareness of the interview topics and the concerns of RCMP Members.

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Analysis

<u>Computer Software</u>

</div>

The initial phase of qualitative analysis was completed using the ATLAS.ti computer software package (Muhr, 1997). This programme was developed for the visual qualitative analysis of textual, graphical and audio data. ATLAS.ti provides the tools necessary to manage, extract, compare, explore, and reassemble meaningful pieces of data in a creative, flexible way. The programme assists the researcher in dividing textual data into quotes, attaching codes to the quotes, and then displaying all the quotes of a given code or series of codes. Although ATLAS.ti facilitates many of the activities involved in qualitative data

analysis and interpretation of textual data (particularly selecting, coding, and annotation), the programme cannot automatically execute these activities; it requires the active, ongoing participation of the researcher.

Interpretational Qualitative Analysis

As mentioned in the introduction, interpretational qualitative analysis was used to examine the interview responses and the constant comparative method (CCM) was the specific method used to code and understand these data.

Coding is the first phase of the CCM. In this phase data are broken down into concrete parts and assigned a code name or descriptive label. Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest that the researcher must constantly ask questions and make comparisons in order to generate codes and find relationships among concepts.

The second phase of analysis focused on comparing and contrasting the codes developed in the first phase. The second phase involved grouping codes with similar content together in order to produce categories that had maximal internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity.

The third phase of analysis involved the process of identifying themes among the categories in order to produce subconstructs that were internally homogeneous and externally heterogeneous. This process of identifying similarities and grouping sets of elements together was repeated four additional times in order to produce constructs, superconstructs, main themes, and one overarching concept.

Quality Checks

The following quality checks, as described in Mertens (1998), were employed during the data collection phase of the study. The **credibility** (or internal validity in quantitative research) of the study was enhanced through the use of four research strategies. The first strategy is *prolonged and substantial engagement*. Although there are no specified rules as to how long a researcher must interact with participants, Mertens (1998) states that "when the researcher has confidence that themes and examples are repeating instead of extending, it may be time to [stop interviewing]" (p. 181). In the current study, examples and themes were being repeated long before the interviewing process was ended. The second strategy is *peer debriefing* and entails discussing findings, conclusions, analysis, and hypotheses with a "disinterested" peer. Questions from the peer are used to challenge the researcher's viewpoint and guide the next steps in the study. I consulted with three fellow University of Regina graduate students as well as my thesis advisor during the design, implementation, and interpretation of the study to satisfy this requirement. The third strategy used to enhance credibility was *progressive subjectivity*. This strategy requires the researcher to monitor her own developing beliefs and document the process of change throughout the study. This documentation is used to challenge the researcher to keep an open mind. For the current study I kept a journal describing the experience of interviewing and my feelings and thoughts following each interview. Also included in this journal were the changing hypotheses and beliefs I developed throughout the data collection and analyses. According to Mertens, (1998) *member checks* are the most important criteria in establishing credibility. As described previously, member checks were conducted throughout this study by requesting that the participants review transcripts of their own interviews. Seventeen of the 29

participants chose to do this. The positive comments received from the participants can be interpreted as an indication that the data are accurate portrayals of the concerns and views of participating RCMP Members. This strategy appeared to be particularly appreciated by the participants. In fact, a Member with more than 20 years service wrote as a comment on the returned transcript "Thank you for such an accurate interview."

The following quality checks, as described in Mertens (1998), were employed during the analysis phase of the study. The qualitative parallel of external validity is **transferability**. According to Mertens (1998), "in qualitative research, the burden of transferability is on the reader to determine the degree of similarity between the study site and the receiving context. The researcher's responsibility is to provide sufficient detail to enable the reader to make such a judgement" (p. 183). "Study site" and "receiving context" refer to, respectively, the participants in the current study and groups that resemble these participants. In order to provide sufficient detail, researchers are encouraged to give a "*thick*" or extensive description of such things as the time, place, context, and culture of the study. Although for confidentiality reasons I am unable to provide the exact location and time of interviews, an in-depth look at the participants and culture of the RCMP is evident through quotes used in this thesis and the overall results of the study. In addition, the use of *multiple cases* (29 in this study) helps to strengthen the transferability of the results.

Dependability is the qualitative parallel to reliability or stability over time. Mertens (1998), states that "in the constructionist paradigm, change is expected, but it should be tracked and publicly inspectable" (p.184). It is suggested that a *dependability audit* be conducted to affirm the quality and appropriateness of the research process. In order to satisfy this requirement, a dependability audit for the interview was conducted with my thesis

advisor during the data collection phase and with a fellow University of Regina graduate student during the analysis phase. This student compared the original version of the interview with the modified version in order to determine whether the modifications made sense and were appropriate.

Confirmability is the qualitative parallel to objectivity. In order to confirm that the data and their interpretation can be traced back to their original sources and that the process used to organise the data is logical, a *confirmability audit* should be conducted. A fellow University of Regina graduate student and my thesis advisor conducted independent audits on these data. These audits consisted of reviewing the data analyses to see whether the groupings of elements and codes were logical, and reading transcripts of interviews in order to ensure that the results of the analyses "made sense" with respect to what was actually said by participants.

As a result of the above quality checks these data appear to be a valid, reliable, and objective representation of the perceptions of the participants.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementing the Analysis

In the first phase of analysis, I identified the interview quotes that were most relevant to the research question or were of particular concern to the participants. The ATLAS.ti software programme was then used to "tag" these quotes in the 18 transcripts designated for analysis. The programme was used to assign a label or code to the quotes. One thousand eight hundred and ninety-seven quotes (or elements) were divided into 735 codes. The code names were generally derived from terms used by the participants during the interviews. Next, a computerised list of the 1897 elements (with their corresponding codes) was printed. Each element was cut out with scissors and placed into its corresponding code pile.

The second phase of analysis focused on comparing and contrasting the codes developed in the first phase. The second phase involved grouping codes with similar content together in order to produce categories that had maximal internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. The result of this phase was the development of 107 higher order categories. These categories not only described the topics identified in the first phase but also described the relationship between codes. A list of the 735 codes and the 107 higher order categories is available from the author by contacting the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research at the University of Regina. Examples of code labels and category labels are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Examples of Code Labels and Category Labels

Examples of the 735 Codes	Examples of the 107 Categories
"Community Policing"	"Inherent vs. Trained"
"Being Female"	"Coping"
"RCMP vs. Other Forces"	"Effect of Job"
"Rural Policing"	"Job Duties"
"Dedication"	"Specialties"

The third phase of analysis involved grouping categories together into clusters that maximised internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity. Thirty-three subconstructs that described the relationship between the categories were generated (see Table 3).

Table 3

The Thirty-three Subconstructs

Bitter and twisted	Positive influences
Negative outside influences	Needle in a haystack training
Intelligent flexibility	Respectful caring communication
Physical demands	The red serge
Leading by example	20 years ago today
Emotional maturity	First impressions
Detecting effectiveness	Doing it
Legislating sensitivity	A matter of degree
A different breed of cat (police are different)	Losing it
Geographical demands	Speciality demands versus generalist attitudes
Expediency	Mediators of stress
The circle of stress	Macho outfit
Impact of financial cutbacks	Lack of internal supports
Lack of external supports	Generational concerns
Screening for qualities and training for skills	Image versus deeds
The equity band-aid	The Force is dying
Job-specific stress	

This process of identifying similarities and grouping sets of elements together was repeated three more times in order to produce, respectively, 14 constructs, five superconstructs, and then two main themes. In the seventh and final phase of analysis, these two main themes were combined to produce one overarching concept or unifying theme developed from the data (see Figure 1). The descriptive labels assigned from the subconstructs to the unifying theme were generated through consultation with my thesis advisor. The 14 constructs, 5 superconstructs, two main themes, and one overarching concept will be discussed in detail in the following sections. The groupings that emerged
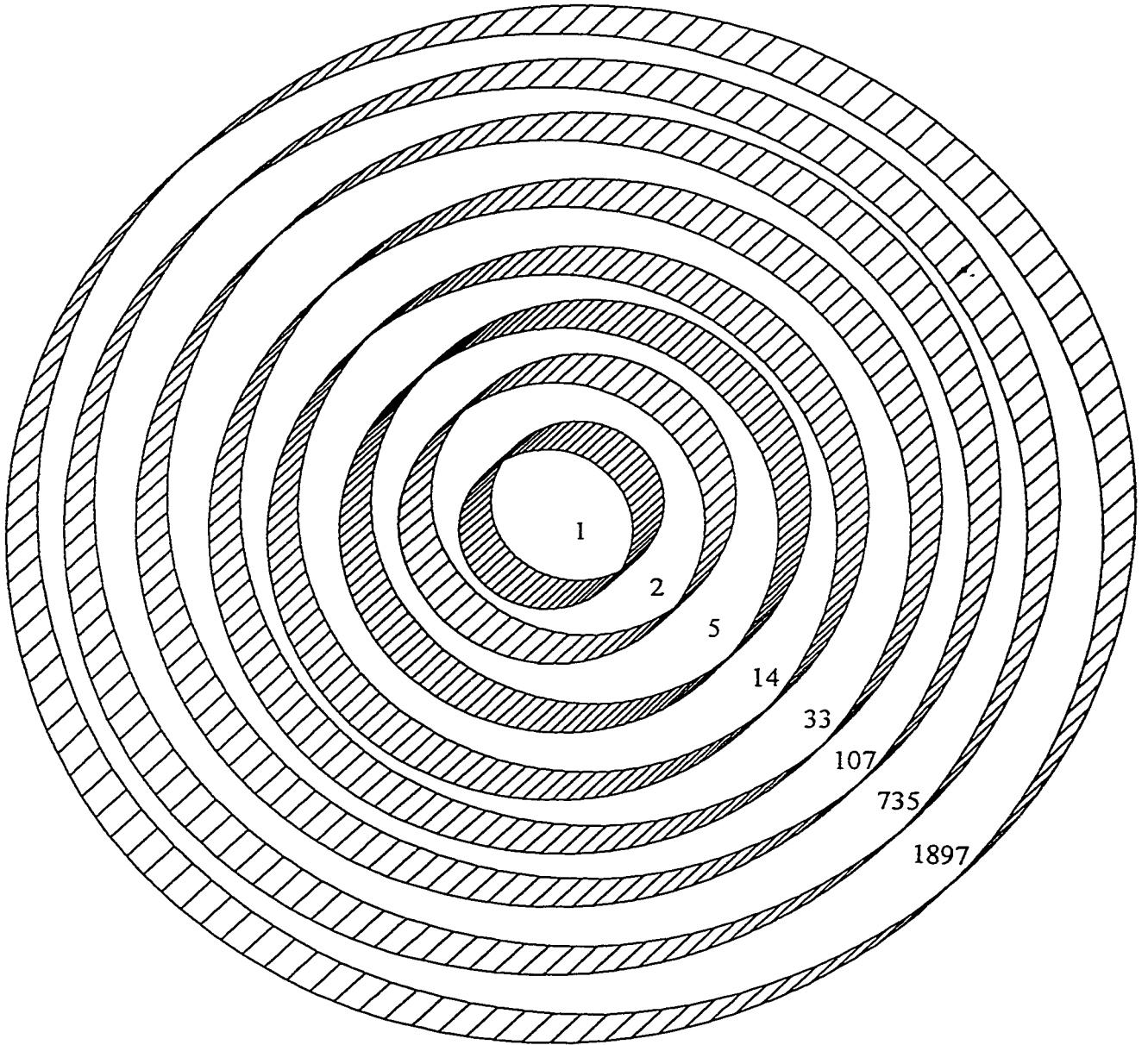
Figure 1. Levels of Analysis

from the analyses were conceptualised within a non-hierarchical framework. Thus, the levels are best conceptualised as levels of comprehensiveness rather than as a hierarchy of importance. For example, it is not my intention to suggest that the superconstructs are more important than the constructs, or that themes are more important than superconstructs.

Excerpts from interviews

Before proceeding, it is necessary to point out that since I did not wish to compare the responses of participants from Depot Division to those of participants from "F" Division, all interviews were combined for the analyses. Excerpts from interviews (i.e., quotes) will be presented to illustrate the different levels of information (e.g., themes, superconstructs). Nonessential or identifying details have been omitted from quotes in order to ensure anonymity. The quotes chosen for reproduction were judged to be particularly representative of the comments made by participants. Unfortunately, space constraints preclude the inclusion of all 1897 quotes used in the analyses.

Responses have been reproduced verbatim, so "colourful language" appears occasionally within the quotes. This "colourful language" was retained in order to provide the reader with a more in-depth understanding of participants' viewpoints. The appearance of ellipsis (i.e., . . .) within the quotes represents a significant pause in conversation. The appearance of squared brackets (i.e., [ ]) within the quotes represents either the deletion of information to ensure anonymity or the addition of information to clarify participants' responses.

Characteristics of Effective Members as Identified by Participants

The participants identified concerns, viewpoints, and traits that when taken together represent their experiences of what is needed to be an effective Member of the Royal

Canadian Mounted Police. As illustrated in Figure 2, there are 14 constructs, five superconstructs, two major themes, and one overarching concept (note: no figure presented in this study should be interpreted as an empirically validated statistical model). The standard procedures for reporting results in qualitative research is first to present the overarching concept and then move toward the outer rings of analysis; however, I am going to depart from this standard. Instead, I am going to present the sections of the wheel in an order that relates most directly to the original questions of this study. By addressing the "effectiveness traits" first, I am not implying that the context in which they are embedded can be ignored or considered non-essential.

The initial focus of this study was to uncover the personality characteristics of effective and less effective Canadian law enforcement officers. From the participants' responses to the interview questions, I identified 63 specific characteristics necessary for effective job performance (see Table 4). It is interesting to note that close approximations to 11 of Love and Hughes' (1994) 13 performance dimensions were part of this list (e.g., decisiveness, resilience, flexibility, perseverance, initiative, sensitivity, emotional control, self-confidence, open-mindedness, dependability, and leadership). Using the CCM, these 63 characteristics were successively combined into 10 subconstructs, 5 constructs, and 1 superconstruct (see Table 5).
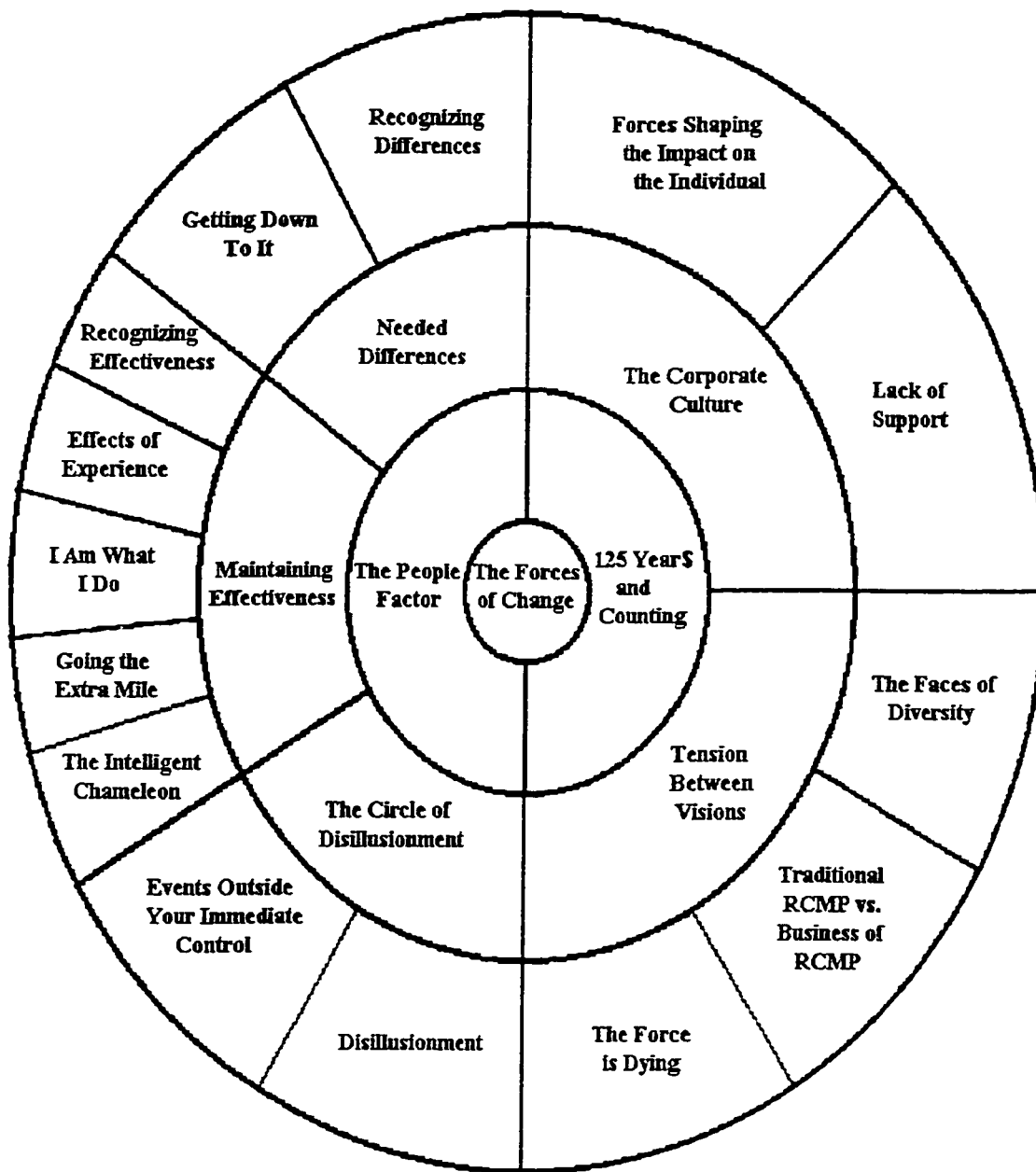
Figure 2. Perspectives on Policing Emerging from Interviews
with Members of the RCMP

Table 4

Characteristics of Effective Members as Identified by Participants

Self-confidence	Humility
Self-awareness	Able to make people feel comfortable
Self-discipline	Acting ability
Well-adjusted	Sense of humour
Controls emotional responses	Sense of community
Able to control fear	Able to be a team player
Tolerates frustration	Leadership
Calm	Type A personality
Maturity	Self-motivated
Exercises discretion	Responsible
Pay attention to your gut	Independent
Professional	Resourceful
Idealism	Willingness to learn
Dedication	Quick thinking
Desire to do the job	Insightful
Enthusiastic	Able to read the situation
Ethical	Reads people well
Honest	Common sense
Integrity	"Street smarts"
Dependable	Creative
Family values	Adaptable
Strong work ethic	Flexible
Good talker	Organised
Listening skills	Goal-driven
Trustworthy	Persistent
Easy-going	Attentive
Tolerant	Perfectionist
Optimistic	Patience
Open-minded	Inquisitive
Compassionate	Cautious
Empathic	High energy level
Respectful of others	

Table 5

Results of Analysis on the 63 Personality Traits

Subconstructs	Constructs	Superconstruct
Detecting effectiveness	Recognising Effectiveness	Maintaining Effectiveness
First impressions		
20 years ago today	Effects of Experience	
Emotional maturity	I Am	
The red serge	What I Do	
Respectful caring communication	Going the Extra Mile	
Leading by example		
Intelligent flexibility	The Intelligent Chameleon	
Needle in a haystack training		
Physical demands		

The Constructs of *The People Factor*

The five constructs that best capture the effective and less effective traits of police officers are *The Intelligent Chameleon, Going the Extra Mile, I Am What I Do, Effects of Experience,* and *Recognising Effectiveness* (see Figure 3).

The Intelligent Chameleon

Participants reported a number of characteristics that are important for effective police performance. These traits are internal in nature and are inferred from performance. They can best be described as mental fitness. Members should be creative and intelligent problem solvers with an ability to avoid tunnel vision. These abilities provided Members with the opportunity to fit into and adapt to almost any situation.
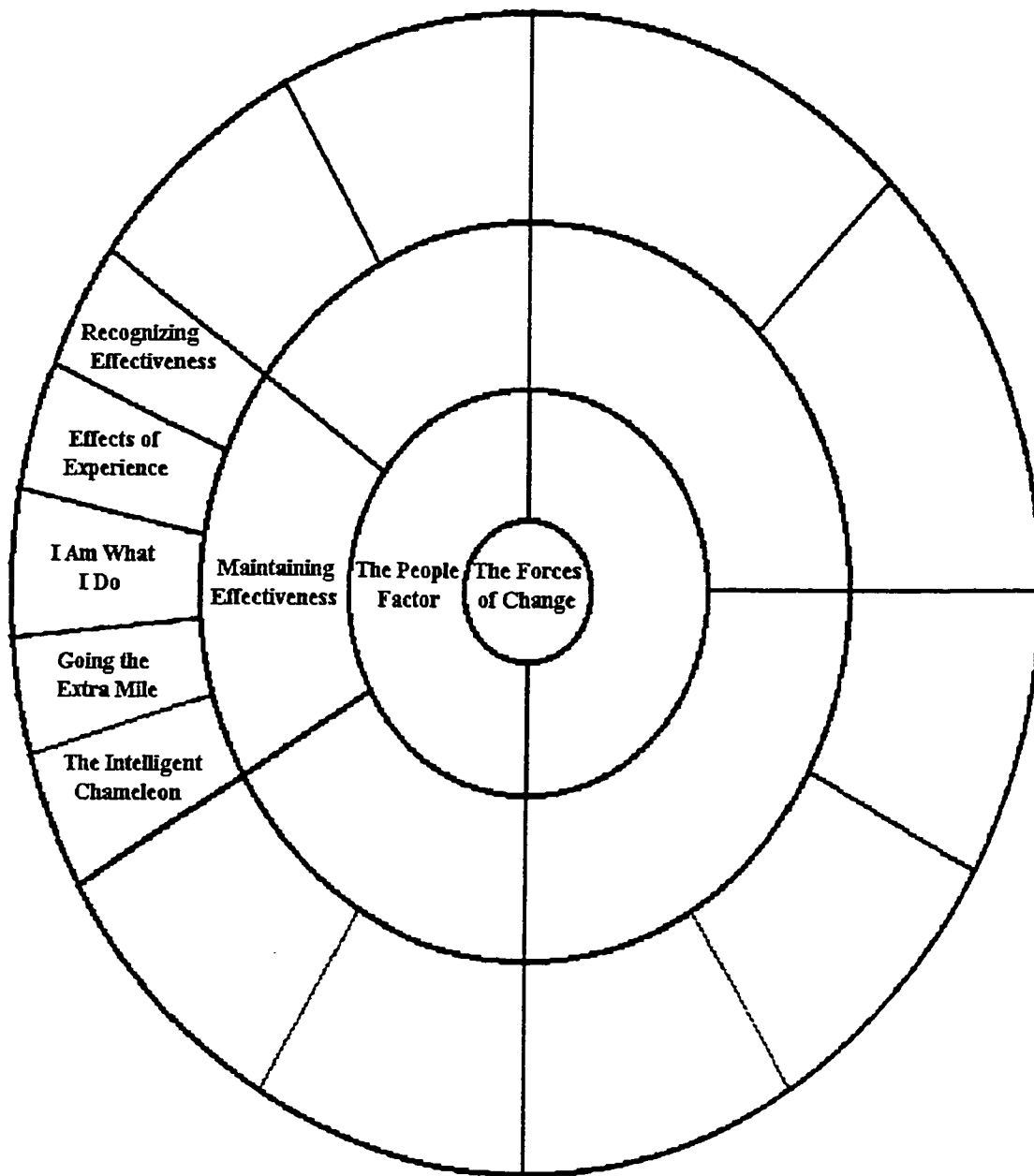
Figure 3. Maintaining Effectiveness

> I think they have to be intelligent and that doesn't have to be formal education. I think they have to have intelligence to problem solve, like to think things through and be able to work through whatever comes their way.

> Because in problem-solving policies are like a guideline. I think you have to rely on yourself so you have to know what a responsible person would do in this situation. And sometimes that's not very clear to some people who are very "book smart" or very sheltered as far as never having to make too many decisions on their own and I see that in training a bit from people's backgrounds.

> And then you're changing your personality all the time. If you're, unless you've seen it happen or you know it's happening, you know some guys get so good at it you don't even know what's going on. You go through a wide range of emotions in a very short period of time and that's where your acting ability comes in, but more importantly is the goal is to get to this point and I'll do whatever it takes to get there. When it's done [right] it's like art.

Another often-mentioned trait was flexibility. This characteristic seemed particularly important in the RCMP universe where Members have to adapt to different geographic locations (e.g., a transfer from La Ronge SK to Surrey BC or Red Deer AB to Whitehorse YK). General duty officers have to be flexible in order to investigate thoroughly a wide range of criminal activity. The more senior participants spoke of flexibility in terms of adapting to changes in tools and procedures.

> Well, you have to be flexible. For a lot of reasons. Flexible from the viewpoint of in my job I have to be flexible in my dealings with the people I work with in the community. But also at home because of the, we move a fair bit as you can see, so there has to be a lot of flexibility, a lot of give and take in the home environment also to be a success there. So you have to be flexible.

> The other thing that I think you have to have is ability to adapt to change, because over 30 years, I've been a policeman for over 30 years, and there is change. Whether it be change from not seeing all White males to women to other non-White people, minorities, to computers. I started off with a call box, right, put the key in, open it up and call, to police radios to cell phones to pagers, so you have to adapt to change. So I think you have to have an ability, and of course if you're investigating things, things change. Things can change

very rapidly from minor to major, so those things you have to adapt to change is the other thing.

> I think there's a point where you have to be polite and you have to be civil and you have to be professional, but I think there's also a point where you're dealing with somebody where you have to be prepared to stand up and go "that's all the crap I'm taking from you today" and, you know, call the person on something. Whether it's during the interview and you're being verbally abused or whether it's in a situation where you're dealing with somebody and, yeah, at some point you have to be prepared to say "okay, that's enough, I'm not taking anymore, you're under arrest. You're going to jail tonight" type of thing. So you've got to be able to, you can't be a punching board either. There's a fine line between the two. You know, to know when to sit there and stop being polite and taking all this garbage and then say "sorry bud, you're being an asshole and I'm going to treat you like one now. You're going to jail."

Effective Members also have to use common sense to analyse quickly a situation and

produce a solution (or at least a satisfactory temporary solution). "Street smarts" was

seen as a more powerful tool than "academic smarts." Thinking on one's feet was

seen as important because a life could depend on one's decisions. However,

participants did not report that Members had to be perfect; instead, they had to be able

to learn from mistakes.

> I really think, and it still holds true, that common sense plays a very big part of everyday policing. We have guidelines, we have books, we have statutes. There's nothing to say in most cases, we have to follow them to the T. If you can come up with an adequate solution, don't worry about it. We're kind of like referees in any hockey game or any sport, every time we blow the whistle we're going to have people who are in agreement, we're going to have people who disagree. But if, I think as long as you're not doing it covering up, or if you're doing it with the right intention, then I'll live with it.

> You've got to have enough common sense to say to yourself "there's one of me and there's six hundred people in this community and I can't go shooting my beak off in the middle of a drunken brawl or a party and expect I'm going to walk away with, you know, things intact" type of thing. You've got to have enough common sense to go "there's always tomorrow, there's always another

day. I'll just kind of make note of what went on here and I'll come back some other time when everybody's sober and I'm not going to get my beak punched in."

I think also decisiveness is very important. You have to be able to make decisions extremely quickly after assessing a situation, and that may be a matter of seconds, because your life or someone else's could be gone that quickly.

We assess things so quick, in seconds. We make an opinion and move. And if we're wrong, we're wrong. And we move on. I don't deal with "jeez, what if?" I self-evaluate and keep going. I just learn from that mistake. "Okay, I can't do that one anymore. Let's try something different." Most good policemen are that way.

You have to be willing to learn to adapt, to make mistakes, and to learn from those mistakes, and become well-rounded, be able to do a variety of things.

Participants also mentioned patience and cautiousness. Persistence and attention to detail often helped Members to live up to their famous reputation.

But patience in dealing with clients primarily is, I'd say, the number one attribute of effective law enforcement officers. You have to be able to deal with somebody who's drunk and trying to be funny, or somebody who's drunk and trying to be Mr. Testosterone. You have to be able to go into a situation like a domestic where you've got two people yelling and screaming at each other, they don't even care if you're there, or they don't want you there furthermore. And be able to have enough patience and develop the right approach to both the individuals, that you can get them to a point where they're willing to talk and maybe it's not even talking to each other so much as talking with you because at least if you can get them to talk to you, you can act as a go-between. So you have to be patient.

You have to pay attention to the little things. As we know—and this was part of our training too—sometimes a very minute detail will solve crimes, very serious crimes and very complex ones. The little details.

Well, first of all . . . patience, in police work, the old saying "the Mountie always gets his man," well that's as a result of patience. You get an investigation, you may not . . . it goes on for a long time. So you need to be persistent. Patient. Persistent is another one.

Cautiousness prepared the effective Member for any eventuality, and alertness helped to avoid being predictable and falling for obvious manipulations (e.g., criminals committing a blatant minor offence to cover a more serious offence).

> If you were a recruit I'd say "remember this if you remember anything: when you go to an investigation, you don't know what's gone on. You might think you know, but you really don't know. It's not like the movies. You really don't know. And if you go in with that attitude, that 'I don't know what happened here and I'm going to look at absolutely everything, I'm going to leave nothing unturned,' then you will investigate. In other words, you'll really find out what's gone on. If you go in with a preconceived idea 'oh I know what happened here' then you're going to miss all the evidence all around you." Classic example is you're running radar and you get a guy through radar and he's got a body in the back and you don't see it, all you're concerned about is getting your ticket served. That tunnel vision, we call it.

Effective Members also need to realise the importance of keeping up with the more technical, mundane aspects of their jobs.

> I suppose that as police officers today you'll have to know a lot about technology and computers. And that's certainly a skill that, it's a prerequisite now [before beginning in-field work]. You have to know technology because it's part of our policing today.

> Organisation, you've got to be organised to do this job or it's going to overcome you. The paperwork alone will kill you. So you have to be organised.

Mental fitness was also related to physical fitness. Some participants felt that physical fitness promoted mental fitness and vice versa. Although participants did not state that a Member had to be in perfect physical shape, being physically fit prevented one from getting too mentally low or mentally high. A high energy level plays a direct role with the ability to be patient and persistent. Likewise, participants felt that a mentally fit Member sees the benefits in being physically fit (e.g., physical fitness helps Members avoid injury or unintentionally injuring others when physical force is required). Although sheer physical

size is something beyond the control of any Member, it is something that effective Members will keep in mind when dealing with suspects.

You have to be capable as a police officer, and again I'm talking about being a good police officer, and I don't mean capable in a strictly physical sense. You have to be capable physically as well, absolutely, because despite what anyone says, the general duty police officer is going to deal with situations which require physical force and a skill level in order to handle the situation. And if you don't have that skill level physically or the physical ability to do it because you're completely out of shape, then someone's going to get hurt. Either yourself or an innocent bystander or the person who's committing the aggression because you'll end up going to a higher level of force when it's not necessary.

And I think keeping physically fit, and this job is not conducive to encourage you to be physically fit and yet I think it's very important because if you're physically fit you're mentally fit generally, you're healthy, and you have the right attitude to know you can go out there and have the confidence in doing your job.

Police work can be pretty tedious at times. Even the drudgery of the paperwork, and if you're not in pretty good shape that can . . . you can get sick doing that, you can get the flu or colds or anything. So I think that's a characteristic even though I wouldn't want to emphasise that too much I think. I think that's pretty important. For certain it helps you, if you're in good shape you can push yourself and yet you can feel that you're going to be dead, and stop and relax for a few minutes and you're back to normal in two or three minutes. It's not that when you're in shape that you can run forever but it's that you can stop and get back to normal real quick and then you can do it again whereas a person out of shape might feel that for two or three days. So I think that's the same, the peaks and valleys of police work like you might be sitting in the car for four hours and then you have to get out and chase somebody. When it's over you have to get right back to normal so you deal with this person in a professional manner. I think that people perhaps who aren't in a good as shape as they could be that's a tough thing to do.

The other thing that makes a good investigator is that you have a high energy level and you can go forever and ever and ever. But the downside to that is that it eventually catches up with you.

How big you are, I really don't think it matters that much . . . in terms of your stature. In some cases, obviously yes. It's going to matter, especially if you're

working alone and you're five foot five and you're dealing with some guy who's six foot whatever. It's going to matter, especially if he's not reasonable and you're dealing with one of the soulless types I've mentioned, the sociopaths, psychopaths.

Thus participants view policing as a dynamic rather than static occupation, one that requires continual shifting and effort. Policing is also seen as a learning process that involves the generation and judgement of options. Members are not expected to be perfect in their judgements but they are expected to learn from mistakes in order to avoid repeating them. A key component to flexibility and creativity could be open-mindedness or a willingness to examine all the options. Members must be mentally flexible in order to generate options and the examination of options requires persistence. Caution could be a manifestation of simultaneously weighing options prior to choosing a solution. In terms of purely physical matters, mentally fit Members choose to maximise their physical fitness while making the best use of their physical stature.

Going the Extra Mile

In the second construct, *Going the Extra Mile*, participants related effectiveness to Members' observable relationships with peers and the public.

> I do think it's still important to want to be a police officer. And to know why you want to be a police officer, and to have a sense of . . . duty and obligation to your Force. I think that's really important, because it does have ramifications in how you do your job. With this sense of dedication, this obligation, you tend to do things, you go that extra mile. That extra step to make that extra inquiry to solve that case. Or to take that extra step to get to the root of the problem that's existing in a certain household where you're called back there every weekend.

> And . . . be in a position where you will take the extra steps. A lot of times what you find is . . . you hear some police officer say "well, I get paid to work eight hours a day and that's what they're going to get." They put in their time, they show up on time and they leave right at five o'clock but my mindset is as a police officer you're more than just a worker, a clock puncher. If you have

to take the extra time to do something or you have to work that extra half an hour or hour or couple of hours to get something done, well you'll do it.

Many participants indicated that effective police officers need to have good communication skills. This ranged from a simple "hello" on the street to sitting down and interviewing people at great length. Respect, a genuine interest in people, and an ability to relate to people from different walks of life make it more likely that a Member is an effective communicator. Participants stated that Members who were rude, arrogant, or overly aggressive were often counter-productive. Instead, the verbal ability to put people at ease, particularly in volatile situations, helped to reduce the necessity of using physical force. This was made easier if the Member was perceived as a trustworthy individual.

> In my mind, the number one tool a police officer has—it's not the stuff on your gun belt, it's not the stuff in your car, it's not your pepper spray, it's not your self-defence techniques—your number one tool by far is your ability to express yourself. What you say and how you say it. That is so important. It's so incredibly important. You can make or break any given situation with what you say and how you say it. There's a real balance that has to be struck, especially in situations where it's recognised that things could become volatile. There's a real balance that has to be struck between being authoritative and effective and not getting over into that side where you become arrogant and challenging, especially with males, the testosterone thing going there. There's a real balance that has to be struck.

> You have to be able to talk. One of the things you're often told at Depot is the strongest, most effective muscle you have available to you—if you learn how to use it properly—is your mouth and your brain attached to your mouth.

> I also believe that communication skills are extremely important, and whether it be you have the gift of gab or whatever you want to call it, because believe it or not, sometimes gabbing will save your life. Other times shutting up will save your life, and you have to assess those situations.

In addition to being able to talk to people, participants felt that Members must be able to make effective use of their community's resources. Many participants spoke of their job as

resembling that of a social worker at times, and Members were often called on to offer advice to citizens. Participants felt that empathy (or at least an honest attempt at empathy) was an important component in connecting with those who were in need.

> The next time I would see them I always made a point to talk to them. Even if it was just to say hello. Sometimes they would be shy, especially sometimes with the Native people. They certainly won't look at you, well, just say "How are you doing? How are things?" and the next time again, say "hello" and he'll talk to you a little more. And say, "well, how are things at home now?" and sort of show a little interest. Not fake, but be genuine. And I think it goes a long way to solve or eliminate some of the problems you may have later.

> You've got to be a person who's a people person. You've got to be a person who has compassion. A person that's wanted to reach out and help others. Hopefully people who join the police force have at least part of this already ingrained in them because it's an integral part of police work because you're dealing with the public, you're dealing with communities, individuals. You're dealing with situations where you have to show compassion for people.

Participants identified the need for tolerance. Many participants appreciated the need for open-mindedness when dealing with peers and the public. In terms of other Members, participants stated that an effective Member functioned well as a part of a team. Moreover, the "RCMP versus civilians" viewpoint is seen as counter-productive. Instead, participants identified the necessity of viewing themselves as being on the same team with the community.

> Being tolerant, I would suggest that comes into play every shift. I'm talking about the general duty police officer now. Not only in terms of dealing with the public but in terms of dealing with the people you work with.

> Certainly there's no room for bias or prejudice or discrimination. And I don't want to sound like I'm just carrying, toting the company line, but it really is true. We can all make jokes, and we can all kid about this or that, but I think the bottom line is you can't walk around with discriminatory attitudes. If you do that, they're going to creep into your job and then you're not going to be conducting yourself as you should.

And one thing that does come to mind, I'm thinking back to my Northern days, is the ability to see the differences and appreciate the differences in culture, traditions, that type of thing and I know for myself when I did go North initially it was a major culture shock with some of the ways that the Aboriginal people out there lived and their traditions, their beliefs. And I think for someone to go there and think, "no, I'm just going to do things my way" you're not going to fully integrate in the community. You have to be willing to let go of that and sometimes do some things that you think "oh my God." And I'm thinking specifically of things like partaking in their traditional festivities and types of things, one thing that comes to mind is their traditional foods like the muktuk and all their foods from the land. And that's a tough one to overcome. But their traditions—if it's offered to you, and you turn it down, it's an insult to them as a people—so you really have to think about that.

But if you take the time, even just to say "hello" you're sure to get a little bit of a bonding there. And if you take the time to small talk . . . they get the feel that you're working with them and you're one of them. And you're there to help them, not to try to put them in jail or fine them or whatever. And even if you do, they understand that as well. As long as you do it in a way that doesn't offend them.

Part of being a people person is being a team player. You can't be the sheriff, the maverick out there getting all the bad guys yourself. It's not possible. It's a team effort, you have partners not only within the Force but in the community. Especially nowadays you have to be willing to use all the resources available to you and recognise that "yes, I am capable but at the same time to be most effective I'm going to have to use this resource and go here and go there."

Thus, the ability to communicate is a key skill. The ability to relate to others is important in dealing with peers (i.e., a team player), dealing with victims (e.g., demonstrating empathy and concern), and dealing with suspects (e.g., putting people at ease to defuse tension). Control is sometimes an overt physical activity but more often it is accomplished by subtle verbal manipulation. Members who are unable to communicate well may find themselves at odds with colleagues, interpreted as cold and uncaring by victims, and as a target to challenge by suspects.

I Am What I Do

In the third construct, *I Am What I Do*, participants identified the importance of presenting a professional image, both in terms of what is presented (e.g., honesty) and what is not (e.g., fear).

> The public looks up to you. And if they're going to look up to you, you're going to have to be somebody who's totally honest, totally professional, integrity without question.

> I think it just boils down to the core values the RCMP works with, I'm not so sure that the Force in general "walks the talk" as an organisation, but I think as individuals we do. So I think those are really important characteristics.

Participants mentioned the importance of honesty and integrity. These are important core values because the public looks up to the RCMP and Members often serve as role models, particularly in smaller communities. Many participants stressed that being a Member requires a great deal of dedication and desire. Members have to want to do the job and have an honest desire to help people, and be willing to do extra work when it is necessary. Participants felt that Members who are in policing primarily for the monetary benefits have an inappropriate attitude.

> I think on a whole and as a firm foundation for any Member I think you truly have to believe, you truly have to want to do this type of work and you have to be honest with yourself, you have to be willing to do the job honestly, professionally, and maintain that throughout to make it your way of life.

> I would say, first and foremost, integrity. I don't think you can be a cop without having integrity. You know, obviously I think that's the basic foundation to being successful in policing.

> You know, I don't think you can look at any aspect of the job that wouldn't be affected by integrity or lack of it. You know, that's what makes, I think that's the difference between good cops and what they call bad cops. You know, if you have that basic integrity, you're also going, you're going to be conscious

> of doing a good job. You're going to be conscious of covering all the bases, and you know, there's a selflessness that comes into play there as well.

> What we don't want is people just coming for the money and the benefits. Let's face it, the police forces are usually well-paid and they have good benefits. What you don't want is people just coming into your organisation because of the money and the benefits.

Many participants reported that presenting a professional image is particularly important in smaller communities where Members are closely observed by the public, even on their days off.

> You not only live the police work or the Member part of things or whatever during your office hours, it's all part of setting an example as well. So it does kind of filter over into your off-duty hours because whether a person wants to believe it or not the community knows who you are and they're always watching so you wouldn't want to be out there doing something that you just finished telling someone that "no you can't" type of thing. So in that sense it's definitely a way of life, for sure.

Participants mentioned the importance of treating the public with fairness while applying the concepts of right and wrong to individuals' behaviours.

> Well to get very basic you have to have a real good handle on the difference between right and wrong, really. And what you believe to be right and not just against the law as opposed to . . . again, the right thing to do sometimes is common sense and the discretionary part of whether we charge somebody or not sometimes that falls along the line of common sense as opposed to, because there's someone in an important position as opposed to an unemployed person. That shouldn't be how we make the distinction, how we use our discretion.

> It's nowhere near black and white. You have to be able to exercise that discretion. And it's one of the powers that we've been given. I mean, there could be policy on the books saying "you must, you must, you must" but there isn't.

Effective Members also tell themselves that even though theirs is a job associated with adversity and misfortune for members of the public, they are making a positive difference in

the world. In other words, internal gratification rather than external reward should motivate

Members.

> You just don't get a whole lot of accolades. We're in the unenviable position of no one wants the police to come to their house. Why would you ever want the police at your house? I mean just give me an example. Some people say "well, because your house was broken into." Well that's a bad thing, right? So you don't want them there for that, you could say you want them there after the fact but you never want to see the police. They're there because someone stole something from you, God forbid a family member died, I mean there's nothing worse than doing "a next of kin." They're there because you did something wrong, they're there because you're too noisy for your neighbours. They're always there for a negative reason, there's not a whole lot of positive going on with us. So it's like walking around like "Shleprock" with the cloud over top of you.

> So you have to be convinced anyway in your own mind that what you're doing is helping people and self-satisfy yourself to that. To the fact that I know I got that guy for impaired driving he's going to lose his job. I had a guy one time lose his job and kill himself over [offence]—like don't think that doesn't feel bad when your name's in a suicide note you know because "you ruined my life." Well, I guess I have to be satisfied that I was doing my job or I'm not going to survive. So self, and we also work in a place where we have, still have a lot of old school bosses that are not going to pat you on the back, I mean I've got a great one right now that makes a point of seeing what you're doing all the time, tells you you're doing a good job if you're doing a good job. I've worked for people that you talked to once a year and that was at assessment time and that's when you found out you did three or four things wrong all year and everything you did right really didn't matter 'cause they just felt that you had to record the negatives. So you have to be satisfied with what you're doing. If you're not, like I said, I don't know how you'd ever survive because it is so negative. You're the guy that goes over at Christmas because daddy got drunk and knocked over the tree and hit mommy and . . . nobody else is ever in that position of being somewhere uninvited and we are.

The participants also reported that Members need to be able to remain calm in a

variety of situations in order to do their job properly. This may require engaging in a

reasonable amount of emotional distancing at the scene of a traumatic event (e.g., fatal car

accident). Participants also reported the necessity of distancing in situations that made them

angry (e.g., a drunken parent striking a child). This self-discipline is also required when

citizens engage in direct verbal and/or physical challenging of Members.

> You have to be able to detach yourself from some of the gruel things, grisly things you might see like the bad fatal car accidents, that type of thing or whatever. You have to be able to deal with that and to detach yourself from that when you do finally call it a day and go home and stuff, you can't be carrying that home with you. But if something does affect you you can't be afraid to let it show to a degree.

> Well, the first thing I think is you have to have self-discipline because you're challenged verbally, you're challenged physically. You're challenged intellectually. So you have to have self-discipline to deal with things. To do it the way that it says because there's "justice" and there's "justice according to law," and they're not the same. And sometimes people become frustrated and they say, as you go along as a police officer, you say "well, yeah, you're not supposed to do it but you see it on TV. I don't care, I want to do it my way" and the movies and it doesn't work. So you have to have self-discipline.

> If you're not mature enough or you let your emotions get the better of you at times—I'm not saying you intended to do it but you could absolutely—you have a feeling of ultimate power in some situations where "I could do this, what the hell could this guy do about it?"

Participants reported that it is very important to be able to manage one's fear, and that

Members who could not control their fear or refused to acknowledge fear placed themselves

and others in danger (e.g., abandoning a partner or engaging in risky behaviours). One thing

that was important in managing fear was paying attention to "the gut instinct" and the

necessity of listening to the inner voice that warned of danger.

> Fear is an equaliser. Someone ever says to you or has said to you in your interviews that "I'm not afraid of anything, I go in there and do my job" they're lying to you. Fear is an equaliser. And good policemen manage fear. There's a difference of being fearful and managing it. And for those that aren't fearful, don't understand fear, those are the ones that are going to get hurt. The ones that know fear and understand it's an equaliser but learn how to manage it are the ones that are going to be successful because there's lots of places I've been where the odds are against me big time and I know they are

and anybody in their right mind would not be in this position. I mean, what fool would be in this position when there could be the outcome that I'm going to die—that there's going to be death here, it's going to be likely to be me. I mean, who puts themselves in that position, other than soldiers? Nobody. So you manage your fear and you use that to help you get through that situation. And so far it's worked.

It's very important to listen to your feelings, to that sense . . . that you get for certain situations. I know sometimes you go on a call and you drive there, you do your things and everything falls into place. And you don't get any sort of warnings about the situation. You get that and you go there. Some other time you'll get a call, a similar call will come in, and on the way there certain . . . you get sort of a little tension or gut feeling and that tells you something. And I always told them you have to pay attention to that. I know of times where I have gone and if I didn't listen to that I may have gotten into very serious trouble.

Thus, to a certain degree, the image of the Mounted Police is an interaction of Members' ideals with the expectations of the public. This raises interesting support for the idea of the RCMP being the symbol of Canada; the uniqueness of the Canadian perspective provided the fertile soil in which the institution of the RCMP flourished. Of course, individual Members continually endeavour to reaffirm that relationship. They strive to project qualities like honesty, fairness, and self-control despite the negative aura that surrounds them as individuals (e.g., their presence indicates that trouble/something bad has occurred).

Effects of Experience

The fourth construct is *Effects of Experience*. This construct did not introduce new personality traits; instead, it focussed on the idea that many of the traits identified in the previous three constructs were valid in the past as well as in the present. Overall, participants generally reported that internal personal changes resulting from policing experience were positive, whereas they experienced external changes (i.e., within the RCMP organisation) as less positive. When participants were asked about how they themselves had changed over

the past 20 years, the changes they identified were generally positive. Some changes allowed

them to interact better with their communities or to become better investigators.

> So 20 years ago I was a good talker. I wasn't a very good listener, I didn't take time to listen 'cause I knew everything. See I was young and immature, I just knew everything but I was a good talker. And I was learning from this fellow, but the thing I didn't learn well was to listen well. Even, I mean I could communicate well with people I interviewed but I mean I'm talking about my relationship with my peers. I probably didn't listen that well when I look back. That's the part of me that's grown considerably is I take time to listen, whereas before I didn't. 'Cause I knew everything, I didn't have to listen to ya, I knew all the answers, I don't need your help. And, well I didn't need you to tell me anything, I knew it all.

> I'm much more accepting now, not only of the bad people on the street that you're working with but co-workers and that. Yes, I think I have learned to be a lot more understanding than I was. I saw people, "shitrats" are the kinds of things we call them or the people that are going to cause you problems out there, I didn't really understand that they had things going on in their life. They didn't have the advantages growing up necessarily. I think I knew a little of that but I did not have a full range of understanding like I do, I don't know all the answers now but I know more than I did 20 years ago. So I'm much more empathetic to people's situations now, having seen it go through into a second generation now.

> So you become more laid back, more . . . not necessarily accepting but you don't jump to conclusions as quick as you used to. You wait for a little while longer. You don't make your judgements on the spur of the moment, you sort of wait and see.

> So you get over this I guess arrogance of your own abilities, and you become more accepting of other people's ideas and not just your own. So it's a maturing, a growing process as well. It takes a long time, like I said it took me probably 12 years before I had that big, I don't know if it was an attitude switch or if you start to mellow a bit. Maybe it's just mellowing.

Some participants reported that they now saw education as being more important in terms of

keeping oneself mentally active. Interestingly, some participants stated that they felt more at

ease with themselves as Members and didn't take themselves quite so seriously now. Many

participants reported that their idea of what characteristics constitute effectiveness in a

Member were relatively unchanged over the past 20 years (e.g., honesty, integrity, dependability).

> Today, as opposed to 20 years ago, you need someone . . . you see, 20 years ago it wasn't a big deal if you didn't exercise your mind and take courses. Today it's a must because the world is changing so rapidly that you have to keep progressing. Policing is changing so much. Technology and policing is changing. You have to keep abreast of issues. In the last 25 years I've seen so much change. You have to keep on top of this stuff so you've got to be actively educating yourself. That's one thing I see today that really wasn't that important back then. Back then, there was two in a troop of 32 that had university degrees. The rest were all high school. Nineteen, 20 years of age, grade 12. Today you don't see that. It's changing. Education is more important.

> I thought that was a real important thing, to have the look and the bearing and that background. To be a straight arrow sort of thing. And to me, I suppose at that time that was one of the primary qualities that you need to be a police officer. And since that time, of course, we've allowed police officers who have experimented with recreational drugs and who have done things in their past that years ago would have excluded them from being accepted into the Force. And as this started to happen and I realised talking with other Members at coffee and so on, and in confidence they'd say "oh yeah, I used to do pot" or this or that. I thought "oh man, how did you get in the Force?" But nowadays I don't think it's as important. It might even add to their overall life experience in a sense. I don't think it's as important anymore that a person have this . . . I don't want to say military bearing but this . . . you know, this sense of discipline about them and this overall look and appearance and demeanour.

> It would all still be the same. Police work has changed but the raw talent to do the job has not. It doesn't change.

However, many participants were not in favour of the changes occurring within the RCMP. Some spoke of the incompatibility of policing being both a service and a business. Many participants felt that a police force cannot be run like a corporation, and that many of the concepts being introduced (e.g., empowerment) are either implemented ineffectively or are not appropriate for a policing service.

I think the Force is undertaking a number of things, initiatives at the same time which . . . I question the timing of it. I think senior management is trying to take us from this point to this point very quickly. And it's like they're saying "we're living in the old ages. We're living in the Dark Ages. We have to get back, we have to modernise, we have to now go from being a . . . military-based, regimented, authoritarian hierarchy and we're now going to go to a new business, corporate culture where everybody has a say, where everybody's empowered, and you know, senior management isn't solely responsible for running the outfit." And that's a big jump. And I think they just tried to do it too quickly.

At the same time, the RCMP, and when I say the RCMP I'm referring to senior management I suppose, they're trying to introduce concepts that I think . . . are either ill-suited to the RCMP or aren't working. And that's concepts like, you know, empowerment, consensus, decision making by consensus, these sorts of things. I'm not saying we should go back to the old regimented, authoritarian way of doing things, but I think what's happened today is that the RCMP's senior management have abdicated their responsibilities to manage, to make the decisions. So there's a lot of drift right now in the RCMP. There's a lot of concepts being introduced that the average Member either doesn't understand or doesn't want to buy into because he or she doesn't believe they're going to effect any positive change.

Another change that participants noted was that the RCMP no longer seemed to be "one big happy family" and the pride in wearing the red serge seemed to be waning. Some participants had concerns that training at Depot Division was becoming too lenient and there was not enough discipline and tradition being instilled in cadets.

And that's what we're getting into, it's this individualism. And we used to be such a tight, tight group to a fault. That was definitely to my detriment. For 10 years in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police I wouldn't even associate with civilians. I dealt with them on a professional level only. I never had civilian friends. And why? Because it was safe. Because I never had to worry about anything. I could let my hair down with the guys. But I couldn't with the civilians because there was an expectation, I was a Mountie. And you never saw our guys out drinking and carousing with the civilians. I shouldn't say never, but it wasn't that common. We stuck together. And you knew you could depend on the other guy. Now, it's all individualism and jealousy and I think it's just ripe for corruption right now.

Well, the Mounted Police was something to be proud of because you had to be a cut above the rest to get in in the first place. Everybody knew that. And you had to be dedicated or you wouldn't get anywhere. And that was it. And we were very busy, you had to work, boy. You had somebody on your back all the time if you weren't working. And . . . people said "oh, it's a real negative outfit" and everything, and it was. You only got in trouble, you never got praised. But I felt like I was one of the boys. I was one of the guys. I was, too. I was treated like family, I was, you know, I went over for supper at everybody's place all the time and I knew their wives and their kids and their dog, you name it, we were all one big happy family. That was something to be proud of. When I put on my red serge, you bet I was proud. Because I had worked and worked hard and I was something special. As arrogant as that sounds. I felt like I was something special. I sure don't anymore. I mean, I won't wear my red serge anymore. I won't go to regimental dinners or balls or anything like that.

Plus their training's different too. In my day, you got a whole shitload of academics and then some physical involved, and when you came out to the field you had six months with a trainer where basically it was an internship. Now they do, well now it's dropped down to five, it's more of a university atmosphere, a campus. It's not discipline, they don't come out with any kind of a discipline. They're given a lot more leniency. A little more tolerant of mistakes, whereas before we weren't. I mean, the stories coming out of Depot where people are cheating on exams and nobody seems to worry about it. I mean, my God, these people have got to go on the stand at some point in time.

However, participants did report that they recognised some positive changes in the RCMP organisation. Members are now allowed greater freedom to interact with the public. Future postings are now more likely to be mutually negotiated rather than unilaterally dictated by RCMP management. Finally, many participants stated that the Force has become more committed to ensuring the health and welfare of the Membership.

Policing today has changed drastically. For the longest time, our policing philosophy when I first joined—and I don't know if the RCMP would admit to this—but they transferred people regularly, and there was a feeling that that was because they didn't want you to get too popular or get too well known. Today they realise to be an effective police person, you better be able to, you know, deal well with the public. We go to communities; we're there temporarily. The onus is on us to adjust and to fit in well, not to have the people come to us and to make us welcome.

Most of us have conversations with our spouses about where we're going to go next. In the old days you never had a choice, I mean you just went. But to a degree we certainly can set the parameters now.

Yeah. I would venture to say in the past—well I don't know how long Members' Assistance has been available—but I bet in the past 10 years we've seen more of a shift that way, that if you were an alcoholic, by God you were blacklisted. Now, it's "come on, let's get you down to treatment, let's try to help you. You're a valuable resource to us. We've invested too much into you to let you go down the pipe." So I think there's more caring. Give you an example. Our commanding officer, we have vision requirements. Not this commanding officer, but the gentleman before [the current one]. It used to be if you were classified as a certain vision they would kick you out. Now the commanding officer in his wisdom has decided he's got too much invested in you, we want to keep families, we want to keep good policemen around, showing compassion to this individual. He pays for the operations. Now you might say that's not much, but I guess if you're faced with all of this and you don't have a job, that's helping somebody. And plus easing the financial burden. He's not saying "you go out and pay for it." We'll pay for it. So I think there's more willingness on the Force to help people. We have relocation incentives to pay for this and to pay for that, to ease the burden. So I think we're trying to help and understand people more.

Thus, the sense is that Members have improved in spite of the rocky path the Force has been treading. It appears that the participants feel that their improvement in the face of adversity was made possible by the combination of their proper initial attitudes with proper training. The corporation model that the RCMP currently adheres to is seen as undermining both of these processes. It is the perception of these participants that individuals being recruited now do not have the proper attitude and they are not being provided with the proper training. As a result, the modern Force is much more individually-oriented than team-oriented. Fortunately, the positive changes the organisation has initiated have helped to keep Members within the Force.

Recognising Effectiveness

The fifth construct is *Recognising Effectiveness*. This construct did not introduce new personality traits; instead, it refers to the appropriateness and the speed with which

participants judged the effectiveness of other Members or cadets. In general, this was another area that participants mentioned "gut instinct" in decision-making (i.e., they made decisions but couldn't always consciously determine how the judgement was made).

> I think there's a lot of people at this Academy that if they would allow us to give an opinion on certain people, I think we could save the Canadian public a lot of money.

> You're always making judgements. You might make a judgement that no, I wouldn't want to work with this person. No, I don't want to spend any time with this person. You get the opportunity to work with them at a later date and you find out, well, first impressions were wrong or maybe they were right.

In terms of recognising the effectiveness of Members, some participants felt that it could be done relatively quickly whereas others thought that one had to work with the other Member first to assess that person's work style. Extreme cases were the easiest to judge. Many participants agreed that characteristics associated with very high and very low levels of effectiveness did not take long to become noticeable.

> When you meet the person, you just know. But I've never really thought of the common characteristics among those people that I've identified as being good police officers or potentially good police officers. It doesn't take long. I would say within a matter of weeks or a month you pretty much have a good sense, especially when you're working with them every day.

> It's . . . usually, I won't say usually, sometimes it's very easy to tell when a person is not effective when they're wearing the uniform but not doing the job. But other times it's not so easy because you learn to "talk the talk and walk the walk" in any job you're in.

> Just their attitude, their demeanour, how they conduct themselves. It shows. If they're egotistical, self-centred, bigoted, chip on the shoulder attitude, boy it doesn't take long to show. Or on the other hand you're none of these but you're an introverted person, have difficulty opening up and relating to peers, to others in your group. That becomes evident too very quickly.

Participants reported that it was often easier to judge the quality of cadets. Participants typically felt that such a decision could be made within the first day or week. Other participants felt it was important to give cadets the entire training period (including the in-field probation period) before judging cadets' effectiveness.

> I'm a firm believer in first impressions and they're usually right. I would think very shortly after meeting them, like I'll have a good idea, a good indicator. And that could be within the first hour of meeting someone. Now I'm not guided solely by that because again with the open-mindedness you have to be willing to give it time and stuff. But I think very shortly after the first meeting.

> I spend the day with them in class and I can tell you right then and there who should not be there.

> I think we put them on six months' probation now. I think that's a pretty fair time to make an assessment of how they're doing. I wouldn't want to make it after a first month, and we've seen issues where the first month has been great and this individual is the best thing since sliced bread coming to the detachment. But my God, you start adding a little bit of a workload on them and not worth a damn. So I think generally by the sixth month evaluation we have a pretty good handle on whether they're suitable or whether they're not suitable.

> Pretty much within a month I would say. You definitely have a sense of how they're going to end up doing in the field. It's so hard to pinpoint how you can just pick them out. You know what I mean? "Yep, this guy's going to do really well, this one's going to be really capable, this one's not." And a lot of it has to do with their personality, and this is of course what we're dealing with. Traits that would make a good police officer.

Thus, it is interesting to note that negative traits seem to be the more salient. If two Members are being observed and one demonstrates negative traits, that person will be deemed less effective while judgement is reserved on the other individual. Effective Members may experience an extended observation period prior to being judged truly effective whereas less effective Members are spotted more easily. It is also interesting to

note that participants felt that they could make decisions about cadets more quickly than decisions about Members. This may occur because training and experience act to obscure attitudes. In other words, cadets are more easily evaluated because such evaluations depend primarily on attitudes whereas evaluations of other Members involve an interpretation of experience, professional presentation, and attitudes.

Maintaining Effectiveness

The five constructs mentioned above (i.e., *The Intelligent Chameleon, Going the Extra Mile, I Am What I Do, Effects of Experience,* and *Recognising Effectiveness*) can be combined to generate the superconstruct *Maintaining Effectiveness.* The general focus of this superconstruct is on effective traits and the ability to recognise them in others. Participants reported a wide range of characteristics, including flexibility, adaptability, open-mindedness, communication skills, and self-discipline. Judgements of effectiveness were often easier to make about cadets than about other Members.

> But I also believe we as police officers, I think that power is an issue for us. We have to be, or we wouldn't decide to take control of people's lives. And it's a thin line again. You have to realise your humanness and be humble or you get power-hungry. And people do get power-hungry, and that's when they believe they're better than everyone else or they can save the world. Or they're invincible, and they risk their life.

> A lot of guys get really personal with it and that's where they lose their objectivity. Once you lose your objectivity and you get yourself immersed in it from a personal standpoint, it's a spiral from there because then you lose all direction. You start doing things you would not normally do and . . . compromise yourself. It's not worth it.

> I thinks it's really important that a person who wants to be a good police officer recognises what his or her biases are, and if they're fairly extreme, if it goes into racial issues and sexists issues, then you better deal with it because I've seen that, they do exist of course. There's police officers out there who are racist and sexist. I haven't seen a lot of it but there are also homophobic

officers. Everyone jokes, there's always the jokes and you know when a guy's serious and when he isn't. But I think it's really important that an officer recognise his or her own biases and prejudices and how far they go, because if they go too far you're going to have to do something about it.

Overall, participants indicated that the three most significant traits within the *Maintaining Effectiveness* superconstruct were common sense, flexibility, and being a "people person." Common sense was identified as the ability to make the most appropriate decision following a conscious, realistic appraisal of a situation. This decision may not be the "textbook" response to a given problem, but the Member's behaviour maximised the benefit and minimised the risk for all involved parties (i.e., client, society, and Member). Flexibility was described as being open-minded and having an appreciation of the variety of options that are possible for any given situation. In addition, flexible Members were highly adaptable. Flexibility was identified as being necessary for the successful completion of job duties (e.g., changing the focus of an investigation on the basis of new evidence), positive interactions with peers (e.g., coping with the diverse personalities at a Detachment), and adaptation to changes in police work (e.g., making the transition from call box to car radio to cellular telephone). A Member who was a "people person" possessed good communication skills or "the gift of the gab." In other words, the Member was both a "good listener" as well as a "good talker." A "people person" had a genuine concern for individuals, and this was demonstrated by his or her ability to empathise with others.

Comparison with previous research. The traits identified by participants as common to effective police officers were similar to those reported by other researchers. The results generated from the four major personality tests reviewed in the Introduction (i.e., MMPI, CPI, IPI, and the 16PF) overlapped the constructs that were most directly related to effective traits (i.e., *The Intelligent Chameleon, Going the Extra Mile*, and *I Am What I Do*).

One could interpret this as evidence that most researchers share a common viewpoint about the traits of effective officers.

The MMPI, CPI, and the IPI all appeared to tap two constructs at the expense of a third construct. Researchers who used the MMPI generated results that typically revolved around *I Am What I Do* and *Going the Extra Mile*. For example, effective officers' scores were interpreted by researchers as indications that these officers were well-adjusted, free from anxiety, and self-assured (similar to *I Am What I Do*) and socially skilled, sociable, tolerant, and empathic (similar to *Going the Extra Mile*). Relatively few results were related to *The Intelligent Chameleon*. Researchers who used the CPI produced results that best matched *Going the Extra Mile* and *The Intelligent Chameleon* rather than *I Am What I Do*. For example, researchers showed that effective officers were level-headed (similar to *Going the Extra Mile*) and possessed functional intelligence (similar to *The Intelligent Chameleon*). Researchers who used the IPI generated results most closely resembling *The Intelligent Chameleon* (e.g., cautiousness) and *I Am What I Do* (e.g., low anxiety, self-control). The IPI did not appear to tap *Going the Extra Mile*.

In contrast to those measures, the 16PF does appear to tap all three constructs. Effective officers were cautious and intelligent (*The Intelligent Chameleon*). They were conscientious, respectful, and socially aware (*Going the Extra Mile*). Effective officers were also tough-minded and incorruptible (*I Am What I Do*). These results, although not based upon as many studies as those with the MMPI, CPI, or IPI, are very interesting and could be interpreted as evidence that the 16PF should be investigated more thoroughly with police officers and applicants.

The LEADR may be an even more promising measure. The LEADR may be superior to the 16PF in capturing the three constructs from the current study because the LEADR combines the 16PF with Part 2 of the Clinical Analysis Questionnaire (CAQ). Since the 16PF was developed for use with nonclinical populations, police selection boards can use it to select-in applicants with effective traits. The clinical scales of the CAQ can be used by selection boards to screen-out applicants with less effective or pathological traits. The potential effectiveness of the LEADR can be demonstrated by comparing the four dimensions of the LEADR (i.e., emotional adjustment, integrity/control, intellectual efficiency, and interpersonal relations) with the three constructs. Emotional adjustment "describes the applicant's ability to cope with stress, tension, and overall adjustment. It analyses degree of emotional stability and level of self-reliance" (IPAT Staff, 1987; p. 4). Integrity/control is the "extent to which the individual feels it necessary and appropriate to conform to group standards of conduct" (IPAT Staff, 1987; p. 4) and attentiveness to details. These two dimensions are quite similar to *I Am What I Do*. Intellectual efficiency is the "general ability of the individual to show good judgement" (IPAT Staff, 1987; p. 4). This appears similar to *The Intelligent Chameleon*. Interpersonal relations is the "ability to relate both to team members and to the public" (IPAT Staff, 1987; p. 4) and seems to capture the essence of *Going the Extra Mile*. Unfortunately, in comparison to the MMPI, CPI, and IPI, the LEADR has not been utilised frequently by researchers.

Overall, the characteristics identified in the current study were very similar to those generated by other researchers. However, the characteristics identified in the current study should be considered as embedded in the broader context of participants' experiences. In fact, many participants reported that the issue of effectiveness was not addressed sufficiently

by the identification of personality traits alone. As one participant stated, "I don't think you can really come up with a checklist [of traits]. How someone turns out depends a lot on how adaptable, creative, and capable the individual is—you don't start out as an ace, it's something that has to be developed." In other words, most participants mentioned that some outside factors directly influenced Members' effectiveness.

Disillusionment

There are two constructs that best capture the environmental factors that influence Members' effectiveness. These constructs are *Disillusionment* and *Events Outside Your Immediate Control* (see Figure 4). In *Disillusionment*, participants identified negative shifts in Members' attitudes. Some participants reported Members gradually losing their desire as a result of repeated disappointments. This process could be described as a progressive loss of hope. Participants reported that they felt isolated because they have tried to do their jobs but felt they were not supported by the Force.

> We're getting a lot of that in the RCMP now where guys are getting pissed off because of the lack of opportunities and the promotional system is all screwed up. And guys are disgruntled and they're not really doing the job they're capable of.

> They grow cold, they lose desire to do the job. A lot of them, when they join the RCMP they have a passion to become an RCMP Member. That passes with time, perhaps through discouragement, disappointment.

Participants reported that they felt that colleagues were less likely to help the public because of these feelings of alienation. Some participants even reported seeing this attitude shift go to the extreme. For example, some colleagues began to enforce their own values rather than the law or made sure that someone they "knew" was guilty received the proper punishment.

The People Factor

The Forces of Change

The Circle of Disillusionment

Events Outside Your Immediate Control
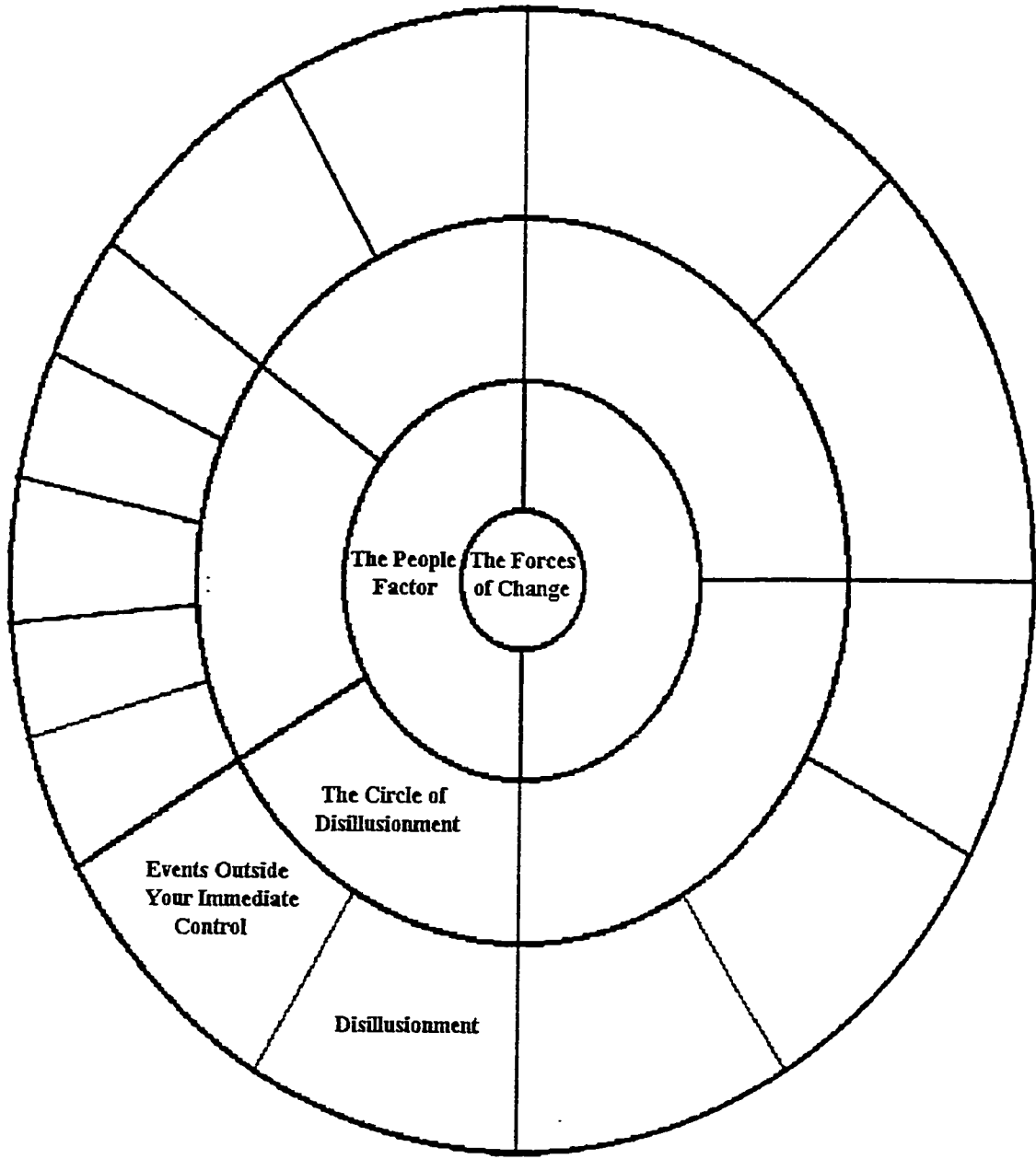
Disillusionment

Figure 4. The Circle of Disillusionment

If you forget that, for right or wrong or good or bad, that that guy that you're dealing with you have to treat him just like he was the mayor of the city. When you forget that then I think you're going down the wrong path. Yeah, the guy's an asshole clearly but he's given the protection of the Criminal Code and the statute, the Charter of Rights applies to him as it does to anybody else. If you start to forget that, start to blur the lines between right and wrong, then you're starting toward being unsuitable.

Or you know the person did it. You're convinced the person did it and you're just going to make sure he gets justice. And you'll do what you have to do to make sure that happens.

Participants also reported feelings of bitterness because they repeatedly dealt with the same problems and people without seeing any improvement in the situation.

You're seeing it. You're seeing wives being continually abused, kids being abused, young girls being prostituted, and you know most of the people in that neighbourhood are Aboriginal. It's little wonder in a lot of cases that a policeman doesn't want to go home and have Aboriginal people living next door to him. You know what I'm saying?

I laugh when some people are critical of the police when they see some situation and it's much more difficult than that when you think that these guys are working in that day in and day out. I'm amazed, to be honest with you, that there isn't more racism in police work a lot of times because of what people see.

Thus, changes in the Force have been associated with changes in Members' attitudes. The sense of alienation from the management of the RCMP was a common theme running through many interviews. Members' ideals may not necessarily mesh with the modern reality of the Force. When the ideals of individual Members fit with the traditions of the Force in the past, Members felt a strong sense of dedication and belonging. However, participants perceived that the focus of the Force has changed over time and that there is a lack of fit between individuals' standards and what the modern Force has to offer. In a sense, senior

Members may feel that the Force they joined no longer exists and they now work with a stranger.

Events Outside Your Immediate Control

The second construct is *Events Outside Your Immediate Control*. Participants mentioned that issues outside of policing affected their attitudes and performance. For example, daily worries such as finances reduced Members' abilities to function effectively. Alcohol use was also identified as something that could get out of control and adversely affect one's work.

> Maybe something's not going, I mean police officers are just members of the public and something might be going wrong in your personal life and finances might not be great.

> So that's what I'm saying, social, cultural things happen to them that change their whole perspective of the job. Which makes them less suitable.

> Some of them, in their social life, develop an addiction to alcohol, and alcoholism in police officers is a problem. I think it is. Particularly in the North. So they develop this rut that they get into and that really damages their ability to do their job as police officers, it really affects them big time.

Participants also mentioned that job-specific issues affected their job performance and home life. For example, a transfer may result in a position for which one is not qualified. Similarly, leaving a specialty such as undercover work and integrating back into the regular Force can result in a great deal of stress. Some participants reported that some stressors are specialty-specific. In addition, shift work (another reality of police work) can play havoc with Members' home life.

> And so I could see them being a very good police officer and say, "hey, there's a guy that would do real good in drug section." Gets over there, maybe not

cut out for it at all. The RCMP is bad for taking people that are excellent at highway patrol work and moving them to something else.

I did six months in [location], on the drag and that's like as low as you can go. So when I leave that, I have to come back, go in a police car and give out tickets. But sometimes psychologically I think it has an effect on people. They just can't do it, right? Then when you have somebody, like I may drive around in a Rolls-Royce or Cadillac and I got money to throw around and nice suites and I'm like that for a year. And then they want me back to give out tickets. "When you have something worthy in mind, when you need my expertise, call me." So people have that problem. And then you form bonds with people. If I spend six months with you and we're out there on the street, then I got to go to court and testify against you. So you may get to like the person, may be a decent person. So I think the stresses are . . . expanded. And I think that's the problem. The stress you might have, that same stress in different other areas but it's magnified when you do it as undercover work.

They work 12-hour shifts either seven to seven a.m. or p.m. and that can throw your body off. I don't know if you've ever worked in a shift situation like that, it can throw you right upside down for awhile. When you're working that shift and at Christmas you might have to work right through the whole Christmas and New Years' where you're not with your family like most other people are. When you're out there on Christmas Day and seeing that same crap, that can wear at you.

Generally speaking, yeah, there were times when I was tired, I was fed up, I was sick of general duty. Especially back then when you're putting in all the voluntary overtime. I don't know, I just did the job. As I recall, you just . . . perhaps I didn't handle it as best as I could have in some instances. I remember you have to hold your temper at work and be tolerant and put up with a lot of crap at work, and then you go home and there's that bicycle in the driveway again for the tenth time, that you've told your son sort of thing, or I remember the banister being broken off the walls because my kids were sliding down it after I told them 100 times. Plaster all over, and you just lose it sort of thing. And you yell and scream and you overreact. And I think that's quite common with police officers, they go home and they tend to let loose emotionally and mentally a little bit at home and overreact at times to certain things. I think most police officers recognise that though, I hope [they do] anyway.

On the other hand, not everything outside of a Member's control was necessarily negative. Transfers were not always stressors; many participants felt relocations could be extremely positive. The opportunity to change jobs provided an opportunity to break out of a rut.

> It has made a difference in the past with different people and that's a joy. That's a blessing of being a Member of the RCMP as opposed to small town police or city police. You can get stagnant, dormant, stale, in a rut and then ask to relocate.

> You can't, nobody's perfect but if you can't snap out of it and give your head a shake and say "those people are drugs and I'm not" then it's time for you to kind of re-evaluate. Not lose your job or anything but kind of take a step back. Maybe work the front desk at the office for a six-month period or maybe get into school resources where you're dealing with school kids or get into . . . any kind of a change. Get into traffic instead of working in the ghetto area. Those kind of things. And I think the police do identify guys that are burnt out.

Thus, there is a definite reciprocal relationship between work and home life. Problems at home can distract Members from their job duties. Job duties can adversely affect home life. This speaks to the issue that Members' effectiveness is a complex topic and that efforts to maximise effectiveness should take a holistic approach. In other words, multiple adjustments will increase the likelihood of improving one's effectiveness.

The Circle of Disillusionment

The two constructs mentioned above (i.e., *Disillusionment* and *Events Outside Your Immediate Control*) can be combined to generate the superconstruct *The Circle of Disillusionment*. The focus of this superconstruct was environmental influences that concerned participants. These influences were then associated with changes that occurred within Members. Participants described feelings of isolation and a loss of desire to do the job. Participants also indicated that many events beyond their control at work and at home influenced their degree of effectiveness on the job:

I think it's almost a case of isolation for some police officers when "I'm doing my job but nobody else is supporting us." You hear that, that's fairly common.

You're living within your own little realm there. When that starts to blur and things kind of get out of perspective I think that's the time where somebody's starting over to the unsuitable.

The process of change in Members' effectiveness. One participant with 15 to 24 years of experience with the RCMP reported

I'm glad you used the term "effective" law officers because I've believed for a long time that it's a relatively easy thing to be a police officer. You know, pretty much anybody could do that. But to be a good police officer consistently, in my mind that is probably one of the most difficult jobs you'll find—to be a good police officer consistently.

The process by which effective Members may become less effective and how they can then increase their effectiveness is focus of the current section. Figure 5 is a visual representation of the dynamic process of change described by participants. This dynamic process is the interaction of the traits from *Maintaining Effectiveness* with the environmental factors from *The Circle of Disillusionment*. Once again, the reader is reminded that the figures in this study are hermeneutic devices, and Figure 5 should not be considered a model derived from path analyses. Participants indicated that many Members will experience reductions in their effectiveness during their careers. Of course, no individual will possess every effective trait, nor will every Member encounter every challenge to effectiveness listed in Figure 5. Furthermore, a move from being effective to less effective is not necessarily linear and/or unidirectional; coping mechanisms can be engaged at almost any point in time to increase a Member's effectiveness. These strategies can be used to reduce—or preferably prevent—stress from having an appreciable negative influence on Members. However, if Members experience significant reductions in

INEFFECTIVE

Coping Strategies

Job-Specific Stress

Negative Outside Influences

Positive Influences:
- Change in location
- Change duties
- Remember why you joined

Bitter & Twisted

Adopted Beliefs
- Red Serge
- Leading by Example

Inherent Traits
- Intelligent Flexibility
- Emotional Maturity
- Respectful Caring Communication

Learned Skills
- Needle in a Haystack
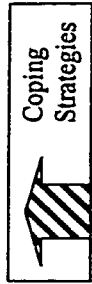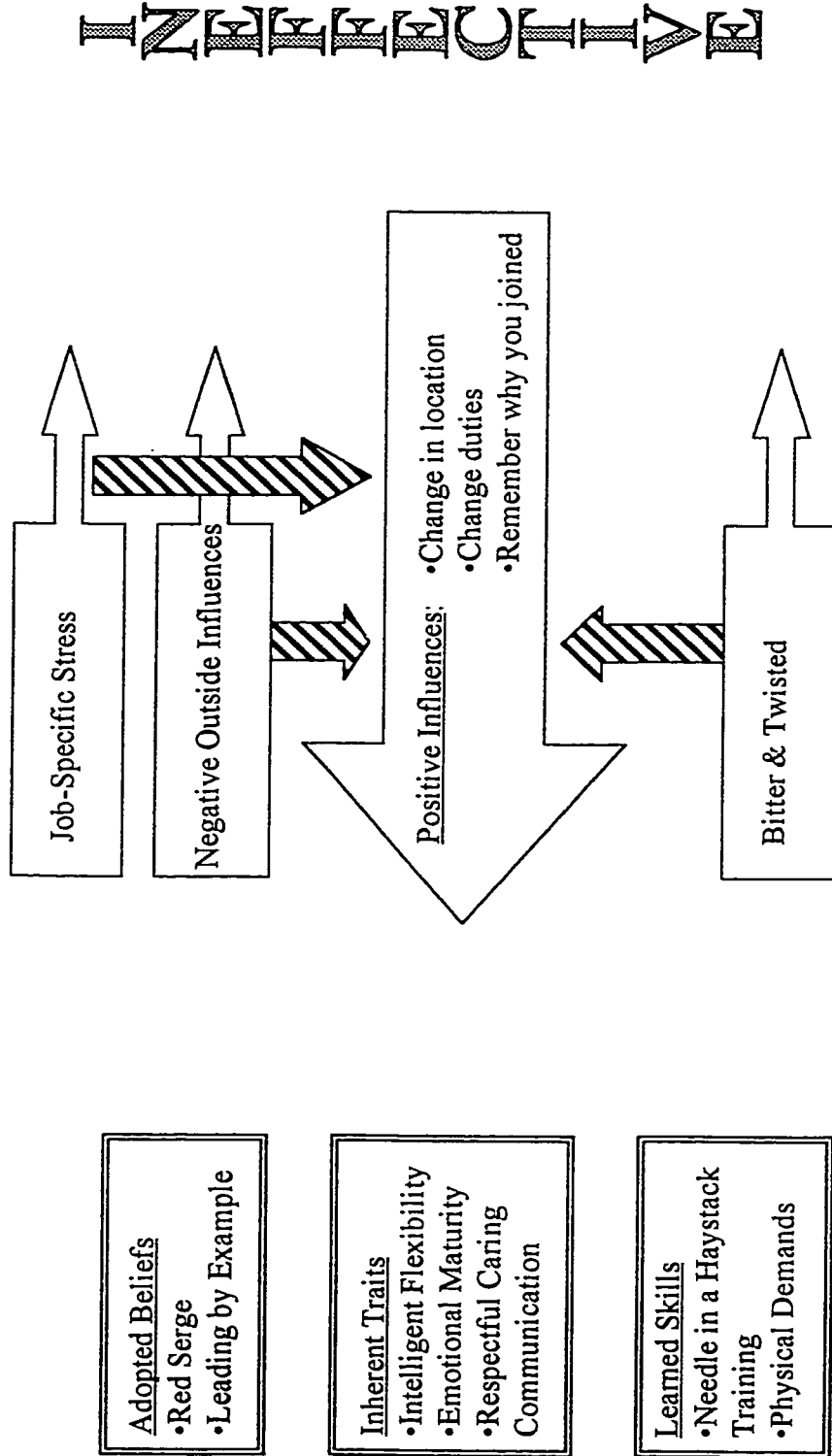- Training
- Physical Demands

Figure 5. The Process of Change in Members' Effectiveness

effectiveness, they may require a change in job duties or a geographical relocation in order to increase effectiveness.

With respect to effective job performance, participants were able to identify key beliefs, traits, and skills (i.e., *Maintaining Effectiveness*). These can be arranged into three clusters: adopted beliefs, inherent traits, and learned skills. Adopted beliefs (i.e., the subconstructs *Red Serge* and *Leading by Example*) are attitudes that Members would either have prior to training or adopt during their early careers in order to become more effective. Members should be honest, dedicated, and have a sincere desire to help people. They should be resourceful, self-motivated, and demonstrate good leadership potential. Inherent traits (i.e., the subconstructs *Intelligent Flexibility*, *Emotional Maturity*, and *Respectful Caring Communication*) are abilities that effective Members typically have prior to attending the Training Academy. Participants reported that some of these traits could be taught during training but that this process would be quite difficult. These traits include mental flexibility, adaptability, and the ability to make quick, common sensical decisions. Members should possess self-discipline and be able to control themselves emotionally in the midst of trying circumstance. In addition, Members should possess good communication skills and be able to help people feel at ease. Learned skills (i.e., the subconstructs *Needle in a Haystack Training* and *Physical Demands*) are mainly technical skills that are fairly specific to police work. Although some effective Members already possess these skills prior to joining the Force, participants believed that it is better to learn them on the job because "there's the right way, there's the wrong way, and then there's the RCMP way." In other words, the RCMP has a unique approach to teaching these skills to cadets. These learned skills included specialty-specific technical skills, time management skills (e.g., completing paperwork), and

persistence in investigations. Physical skills included physical fitness and the ability to expend high levels of energy over extended periods of time.

Effective Members may become less effective if they encounter certain stressors (i.e., *The Circle of Disillusionment*). This can occur at any point(s) during one's career. These three main paths can be described as *Job-Specific Stress*, *Negative Outside Influences*, and *Bitter and Twisted*. *Job-Specific Stress* includes difficulties such as shift work, high volume work loads in urban centres, always feeling on-duty in a rural setting, and excessive paperwork. *Negative Outside Influences* are factors that Members interpret as beyond their control. These can be found at home (e.g., financial problems), at work (e.g., a difficult undercover operation), or in both settings at once. *Bitter and Twisted* is the development of negative attitudes towards one's work and/or the Force itself. For example, Members could feel that they are isolated within the Force or feel that they have no future with the Force.

Fortunately, appropriate coping strategies can minimise the effects of these stressors. The RCMP organisation must facilitate the use of coping strategies, and individual Members must determine which coping strategies will be effective for them. These strategies include developing interests outside the Force, making use of humour, voicing one's concerns to significant others (e.g., spouse, peers), and exercise. In the best of all possible worlds, these coping strategies are used in a preventative manner by Members (i.e., to prevent stressors from having an influence on Members). These coping strategies can also be implemented by Members who recognise that they are becoming less effective due to the stressors (i.e., to reduce the effect stressors have already had on Members). Thus, use of coping strategies can increase the chances of a return to effectiveness for these Members.

However, some Members will experience times when their effectiveness levels have dropped substantially (e.g., burnout). In this scenario, Members demonstrate qualities that are the "flip-side" of effective traits. In such extreme cases, only a major adjustment such as a change in job duties or a geographic relocation may help to bring Members back to a higher state of effectiveness. As many participants stated, "a change is as good as a rest." Although colleagues and the RCMP organisation have a duty to identify Members in need and offer them services to improve effectiveness, participants clearly indicated that it is primarily up to the individual to identify their problems and then take steps to address the problems (i.e., through the use of coping mechanisms or change of job).

Getting Down To It

During the course of the interviews the participants also shared information that, although not directly related to the issue of effective traits, was related to some of the environmental factors that a Member had to deal with effectively. There are two constructs that reflect participants' reactions to RCMP policies. These constructs are *Getting Down To It* and *Recognising Differences* (see Figure 6). The first construct, *Getting Down To It*, involves participants' reactions to the official incorporation of community policing and the CAPRA (Community, Assessment, Partnerships, Response and Analysis) problem-solving model. Many participants felt that Members have a long history of doing community policing (i.e., communicating with the public to find solutions to common problems).

Where it has changed now from before was, before yes you used to go into a community and you'd say "Okay, here are the problems. Now we're going to work together to address the problems." That's the way it was done in the past. Now it's not going in and saying "yeah, here are your problems" it's going in and saying "what are your problems? Let me sit down with you and tell me what your problems are. And together we can decide on which are the more serious problems and together how can we solve those problems as a unified body, as a united body." This is the twist now. Before community
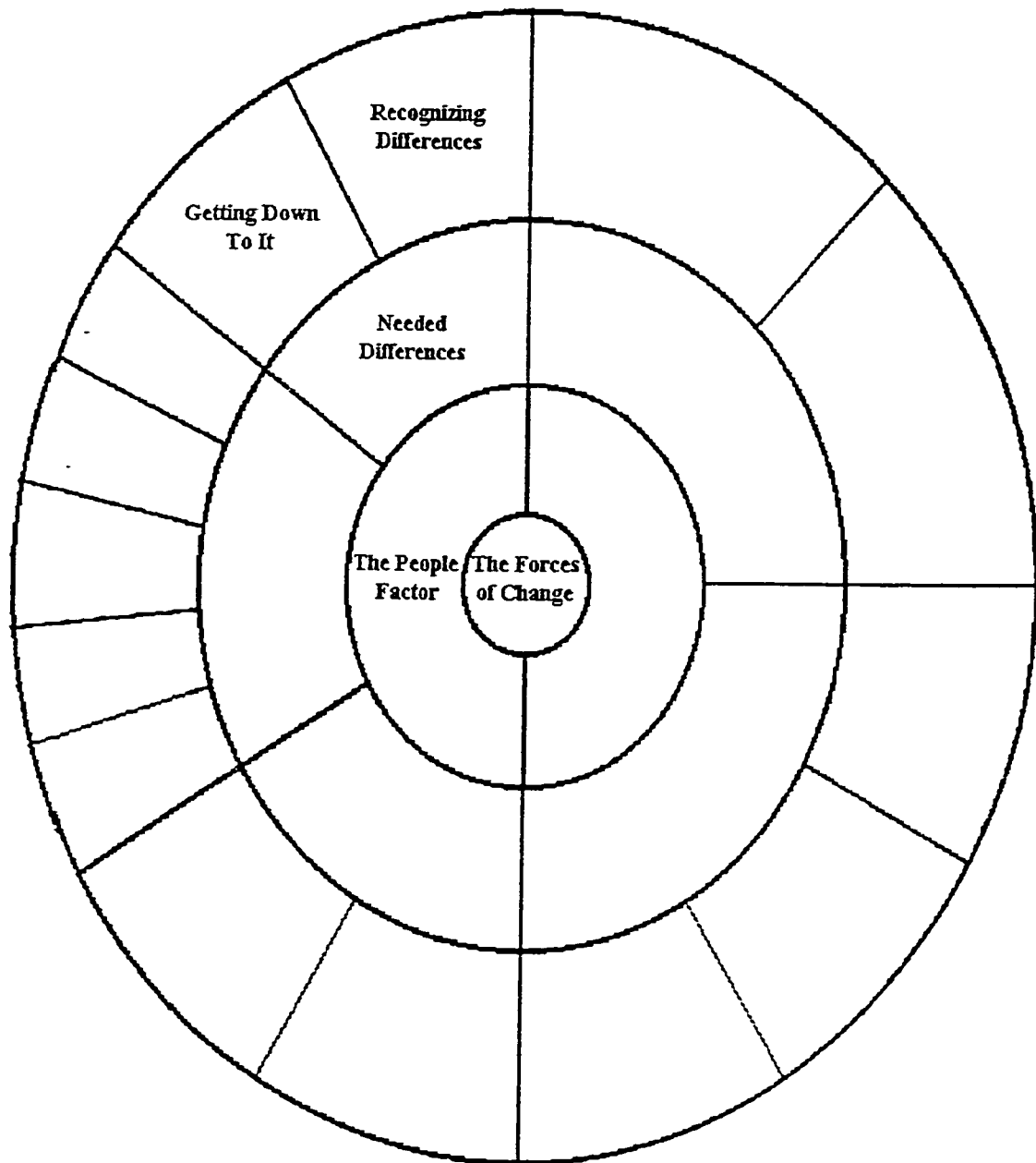
Figure 6. Needed Differences

> policing it was A way of doing policing, now it is THE way of doing policing.
> With that twist that you don't go into a community and say "oh yeah, here's
> your problems. Here's what we're going to do for you." But now you go in
> and meet with the community, have consultations with the community,
> discuss what their problems are together and then work together on solutions
> and then work together in implementing those solutions. That's where it has
> changed. So it's becoming more ingrained into police work and it is now THE
> way rather than A way of doing the job.

Some described the current community policing programme as a mere repackaging of

informal practices, and many participants resented the perceived attitude of upper

management that this was something new and revolutionary. In short, many participants

thought that community policing is an excellent idea but it was marketed poorly to the

Members.

> And you see, a lot of people that come to us and say "you don't know anything
> about this and we're going to show you how to do this." But in rural areas
> you're the coach of the hockey team. You walk a beat in the city. You know
> the people, you know the stores, you know their problems, you know
> everything. So what they've done is they've repackaged it, they researched it,
> they repackaged it, and they resubmitted it. So when you tell police officers
> they don't know anything about it, right away—because in our culture, you
> can't tell us anything anyway, you don't know what you're talking about—but
> when you come in and tell us that we don't know what we were doing for the
> last 20 years or 30 years, then you're not going to get a good response.
> However I think we have been, to some degree, involved in the community
> for all our service. I mean, you can't **not** be involved in the community.

> So, I just think the Force is, senior management's spent too much time navel-
> gazing and somebody dreamed up or discovered these new, supposedly new,
> things that aren't new at all and that's why there's a lot of cynicism and a lot of
> I think resentment by Members on this community based policing. Because
> they're all going "when did you guys wake up? We do that every day. And I
> resent the implication that we don't." I think that's probably the thing that's
> driving the anger or the resistance to it.

However, some participants did report that the RCMP had always done community policing

in smaller communities but not necessarily in large urban centres (due to the fast-paced

nature of urban policing). These participants felt that Members in larger urban centres would

benefit from the official community policing programme. Some participants felt that community policing was not always an effective tool because some communities are unwilling to expend the effort to co-operate with the RCMP and community meetings take Members away from where they should be—on the street.

> I think that's aimed at municipal police forces whether it's ours or someone else's as opposed to rural police forces. And the reason I say that is you'll find that in most small communities, community policing has been done for years otherwise they wouldn't get their work done. If they weren't treating the community they served with respect and dignity and fairness, then they wouldn't have any co-operation elsewhere. And I think unofficially or not knowing that it was called "community-based policing" Members that were stationed here, there, and Timbuktu have been doing just that for years.

> Also, my experience, not my experience but what I've been told because I haven't ever been involved in a community consultative group, what I'm told by Members in uniform, try to get the community members to come to those meetings. They're all gung-ho for the first meeting and after that it's like half show up to the next meeting, two show up at the next meeting. The next thing you know, you're the only one sitting there twiddling your thumbs going "this is community-based policing?"

> And also because, you know, the very thing that we shouldn't be doing we're doing. We're taking police officers off the streets, away from their first, primary job, putting them into meetings, meetings, meetings, more meetings, more paperwork. We should be getting back to the basics in some respects, and we're not.

Participants' attitudes towards the marketing of CAPRA were somewhat similar. In short, participants stated that effective police officers had been using this style of problem solving for years and that it was nothing new. However, many participants appreciated the idea of formally teaching CAPRA to cadets as a basic policing skill rather than waiting for cadets to acquire it through their own trial-and-error experiences on the street.

> Being a police officer means that you are professional and you do treat everybody with respect, even the lowest of the low, even the Clifford Olsons.

You're sensitive to even their needs. That's not new. That's been the basis of police work since the very first policeman ever came into existence. It's got nothing to do with CAPRA or "community-based policing." These are just catchphrases to encapsulate, I think, how people see police work. It's always been done. Proper police work has always been done like that. Now these are just the, they'll be a flavour of the month that comes up. In five years, after the year 2000, there'll be something else. Another CAPRA or a progression of CAPRA and we'll have to call it that.

I'm sure you've heard of the CAPRA problem-solving model. Now that is one of my biggest pet peeves in the Force, not because of what it represents. What it represents is excellent, but it's how it was marketed, and I'm not blaming anyone. It's just that it was marketed, it was almost force-fed upon the Membership in my mind. That's my opinion, that it was force-fed on the Membership as, and it was promoted, unintentionally, but it was promoted, the perception was that it was being promoted as the end-all of policing. The messiah. "It will solve all your problems." And it's taken on this negative connotations in the minds of many police officers. You say the word CAPRA to some guy in [location], he's going to roll his eyes. It represents almost evil in the mind of some of these police officers. It's like a catalyst for bringing out all that they're angry about within the Force. This civilian influence, these academics who've never sat in a police car having so much power and promoting all these programmes. And again, these perception are based on ignorance of course. And I don't mean that in a negative sense, it's not knowing. They don't have the information. CAPRA is nothing more, of course, than what good police officers have been doing for years and years.

Participants generally responded scornfully to the following quote about "legislating officer sensitivity" used in the semi-structured interview:

There appears to be a change in emphasis on how policing should be done. Some researchers who have never been police officers claim that the police must show the victim "that society does care and that the criminal justice system will treat them with respect, with understanding, and with sensitivity." These researchers also claim that "the police were not comfortable with and generally ill-prepared" to offer these services to victims and imply that legislation is required to ensure that law enforcement officers will treat victims of crime with respect and sensitivity (Normandeau & Leighton, 1992; p. 688)

Many participants felt that Members were already skilled in treating victims of crime with respect, understanding, and dignity. However, participants did report that this was often

difficult due to the time constraints placed on Members in the field. Some participants

thought that it was nonsensical to attempt to *legislate* attitudes and stated that it would be an

unenforceable law.

> I would suggest that at certain times it's not because our officers are probably not trained well enough for that. Some provinces are excellent with victim services and that's the first thing we do is refer someone to victim services. All too often in policing we take for granted that it's only a break-in, big deal. But these people now can't sleep in their house, they have to move, they want . . . you know. And we don't get in-depth with that, I'd like to say we do but we don't. So yeah victim services should probably improve. But is it our responsibility? I don't think so. I think it's our, yeah, treat them with respect and give them guidance and tell them who they can get ahold of, absolutely. But as for time and . . . no, we don't have time to sit down with everybody and see how everybody's feeling after something. It's the reality of policing, I mean I'd love say we do and at times I do but there's days when I'm going from call to call to call to call and all I'm doing is trying to keep my head above water. We provide a service but at times we're guided by time and there's just not a lot of it.

> And I think that if you have those traits you will naturally be sensitive to the victims. I can't imagine not being sensitive to the victims. And I mean, I think back to the times where I've dealt with victims who were the biggest pains in the butt for whatever reason, but you know, maybe I wasn't always pleasant and sensitive in my responses to them and I regret that, but inherently, basically, I think cops are like that: I think they *do* feel for the victim. They sympathise with the victim, they empathise with them, so I think that's an unfair, an unfair statement to make about police.

> I completely disagree [with the interview quote]. We don't have, I don't think we've ever needed our hand forced through legislation to understand where a victim was coming from, we don't need to be forced to treat these people any differently [from the way we've been treating them].

> The good police officers have always done that. I don't need to be legislated. I don't have to have someone say "[name], if you don't do this you're going to lose a week's pay" or whatever the legislation. A police officer who understands his role in society doesn't need all that. I firmly believe that.

Interestingly, there was a variety of responses to the notion of "dinosaurs" in the Force and

their role in policing. Some participants felt that the dinosaurs were Members who were

resistant or unable to change, and were stubbornly holding onto the old ways (i.e., locked into an outdated mode of policing). Participants spoke of the necessity of Members to use all the resources at their disposal, even the new resources. These participants look forward to the day when all the dinosaurs have retired. However, other participants felt that the term dinosaur was extremely subjective. In other words, one was a dinosaur if one didn't agree with "the flavour of the day." Moreover, these participants stated that it was not resistance to *all* change, simply those changes that did not make sense or that were doomed to failure. Another group of participants stated that dinosaurs (i.e., those espousing traditional policing views) were necessary to the Force because the RCMP's new programmes may not be successful and the Force may have to return to the traditional methods anyway.

> Sometimes I think that a certain number of people have to be kept around just for reality check, whether they're old school or just their views are different. I don't think there's anything wrong with differing views. If they're not going to do what we're supposed to be doing then okay maybe they shouldn't be around but I hate to say they shouldn't be for the fact that what happens if three years from now we find out this isn't working? Chicago, Illinois says community-based policing doesn't work. I read an article on them in the newspaper probably six years ago. Doesn't work. That was right around the time we were embracing it and bringing it in. The chief of police in Chicago and the mayor was saying "it ain't working, we're going back down to cracking heads and arresting people period, you don't like it too bad." And their crime rate's down again so . . . and I don't think we should get rid of those people for fear that we change again and not everybody should always be on the same page. I think it's okay to have varying opinions.

Thus, *Getting Down To It* marks a point in the growing sense of alienation between Members and RCMP management with regard to actual on-street practices. Members voiced concern about whether those in management remember what it was like to be an on-street officer. Those who resist official policy changes are labelled dinosaurs. However, "dinosaurishness" is probably an enduring quality because there will always be Members who resist policy (although they may resist for a variety of reasons). In other words,

"dinosaur" is an empty term because its criteria are quite vague. Some participants who do not view themselves as dinosaurs may find themselves labelled as such at some point in the future. Participants may view management's poor handling of community policing and CAPRA as analogous to the Normandeau and Leighton (1992) quote about legislation: Members are already doing what those in charge are "suddenly" demanding of them.

Recognising Differences

The second construct is *Recognising Differences*. Participants noted that there is a police culture that demands a certain attitude but that Members are not cookie-cutter workers.

> Well the RCMP has the attitude that any Member can do any job but that's not totally true. Well it's true in one way. You will always have a Member try to do that job but how successful he is depends on the Member, how adaptable, how creative, and how imaginative he is. You go back to the chameleon again, you want to fit in. Some people make transitions much easier than others do.

> I think it takes a special type of person to do any type of job in the RCMP. Like the isolated ones, not everybody can do that type of work and not everybody can do the large urban centres type of work.

Many participants identified the existence of a separate police culture that spanned geographic boundaries. Police officers from different agencies were seen as having similar personality traits but differing in terms of how policing is handled. Many participants reported that their own particular culture, as opposed to that of younger Members, involved viewing policing as a way of life rather than as a job.

> And I know City police. We're all the same breed. I don't know what the personality type is, but we're definitely a certain breed.

> In terms of when I joined, and I think it's still, there are remnants of it today left in me, is the RCMP is not a job it's a career and it's a public service career. You know, it entails that whole idea that you are responsible to the public and

you are providing a special service and you know, you are doing, providing good in a sense and you know, this "serve and protect" is very much part of that, that motto.

That's one thing we try to instil . . . in our Members is you're special, you're not a clock puncher. You're there to work with the community. Of course, you can carry it to extremes as well. I've done it in the past, and some Members are just so wrapped up in their work that they don't have time for their own families, their own social life. So that's the flip side. And then you have other Members who don't get involved in anything. So you've got the two extremes and hopefully most of us fall in the middle where we will do the extra.

However, some participants admitted that the way of life can be taken to extremes and negatively influence one's family and marriage. These participants stressed the importance of a life outside of the Force.

I guess when I was, the Force was my life and it was number one, it was hard on my marriage. I noticed that my wife wasn't responding to me the way I thought she should and so I took a serious look at why and the reason why, quite frankly, is because I was putting the Force first, and I really was. And I was well thought of by the Force in those days. This was back in [year]. And . . . why was she upset? Well, I was always doing something with the Force. If I wasn't, and we did PR in those days too—playing basketball with some town high school team, you know, the Mounted Police to raise money, that kind of thing—or I was out drinking with a bunch of the guys and maybe a bunch of the City police guys, or I was out checking license plates and that and not getting home when I should because I want to check out all these plates. I'd be waking up in the night and writing notes in my notebook because I just thought of a way, an angle to go after somebody. So it was consuming me totally. Days off I'd be down, I remember being down with my boys, they were just little guys and they were playing around in the police parking lot and I'm there ripping a car apart, you know, going through the carpets because I thought, that night I'd thought "I know where that . . .", I was looking for a credit card, " . . . and I know where it's hidden." So I tore this car all apart looking for this credit card. Interestingly enough, I didn't find it but I remember thinking "what am I doing? My kids are running around on the pavement." So that was why. She had enough of this Mounted Police; it was totally consuming us.

In addition, some participants spoke somewhat begrudgingly of an inability to "turn off" the inner police officer even when they wanted. One participant reported feeling like "a bloody policeman" even when on holidays.

It is clear from participants' responses that not all police officers are alike. Participants admitted that there are many diverse personalities and duties within the RCMP.

> Well they come into play, you know there's so many experiences that one finds him or herself in as a police officer. Especially in the RCMP because it's such a diverse Force. One year you could be up in Tuktuyuktuk literally with a dog team as your source of transportation. Your communications is your spouse at home on the radio. Right down to working in Burnaby or Surrey with the high-tech technology, stuff in the cars, the computer system, dealing with all kinds of serious matters.

> It's funny because, some characteristics I think you need to become a police officer you have to be honest and you have to have very good people skills and you have to have common sense and you have to be intelligent, you kind of have to be able to problem solve. But then there's a lot of different personalities that are good police officers. Like there's some that are very, like I say very abrupt. It's not that they don't have people skills but they just have a very different personality. And you have little guys that are very quiet, very meticulous, their paper work's always great, and they still get the job done even though they're never in your face, you know. And then there's the other Type A personalities, which is the majority of course. I think we are. It's really high achievers, they want to overachieve all the time, they're very self-motivated and I don't know if that's one thing that attracts us, the difference of the job everyday when they go to work it's a new challenge but I think that's part of it.

Even though participants reported a certain amount of heterogeneity within the Membership, they clearly identified themselves as different from the general population and doing a job that most in the general population would not want to do.

> But boy did I feel terrible after because I was, I had imagined myself now as this cold beast capable of doing something like this and not having any feeling about it because I still was not having any reaction to it. It was a couple of days later when I finally broke down, my whole body just started shaking and I didn't know what it was. Then I clued into the fact that I was now reacting

after the fact to this terrible tragedy that I was able to work through at the time. So if that's what people mean by you have to be cold, then I would say yes. But I like to define that as being professional. There's a job that has to be done and it's a terrible job at times but you've got to do it because nobody else is going to do it. And I guess that probably makes most of us smile when you're at a party and somebody says "I wouldn't do your job for all the money in the world." Most of us feel good about that, most of us think "well, we must be doing something that's very important if other people don't want to do it."

I don't think it takes a, you don't have to be a genius to be a police officer, you just have to like people, like the job. And everybody's nosy, I mean, you go by a car accident and you've got 1000 people standing there looking. They all want to see why we're there. So I mean, if you like to get into the situation, but I think that a lot of people can't stand being under a microscope and we're under the microscope all the time.

So I'm a bit of a loner. And I think that it's something that you would see in a lot of police officers to start with. They're in an organisation, a Member of an organisation but as a person, they tend to be very "this is my family, this is my house, this is my castle."

Maybe it's a wanting to be on the edge thing too at times. You can go from being scared like crazy to happy that you want to do it again. You know the kids that go down the waterslide screaming and hollering, they get to the bottom and say "again! Again!" but they cried all the way down. It's the same sort of thing when you go and arrest some bad guy that you know nobody else wants to arrest or even if it's just in a general duty policing situation where you go and do a good job.

Many participants felt that the Force's attitude that "any Member can do any job" (i.e., should be a generalist) was no longer accurate.

Well I think, yeah, I think we have to be careful, not everybody can do every job in the Force. And that's, organisationally, I think that's a mistake they make sometimes in how we move people around. 'Cause you may be a very good generalist, you could be in the field and doing police work for three, four years somewhere on the Prairie region doing a good job and think "boy, I want to get into drug enforcement, I want to get into plainclothes unit in the city. That's where I want to go and I, I've done well here and I'm a good problem solver and I've been very effective working with my communities so I think I'd do well there." You may get there and find out that's not what you want and they don't want you. And if that happens then you have to move on

or you may get there and decide that this is the greatest thing since sliced bread, "I want to stay here forever."

Participants reported that every job within the RCMP seems to have common denominators for effectiveness but certain jobs required the emphasis of some traits over others (i.e., specialist). For example, although all positions require an ability to get along with others and be part of a team, some person-oriented positions demand a high level of that trait while some technical-oriented positions require a much lower emphasis on that trait. As a result, Members who excel in one area may not be as effective in another area. In other words, any Member could do any job but not necessarily do that job well.

> I'm not sure it's necessarily different characteristics as opposed to more emphasis on certain characteristics.

> We talked about drugs, we talked about computers, technology. Those are two very distinct, very different. You have to have skills, certain skills to do that. You have to have certain personality character traits to do these things, particularly an interrogator. Informatics, technology, and computers you have to have the technical ability. That's more headwork from that perspective. The other one is more savvy, to be a good investigator. To have good savvy, good common sense. To be a good technician you don't need that common sense, you need head knowledge. The other is just . . . good savvy, good common sense. Good . . . relatability here. Those are traits you don't need to be a technical, technical takes headwork.

Participants identified other factors that affected one's ability to do the job effectively. The promotions system sometimes placed a Member into a position for which that person was not well-suited. As one participant put it, placing "square guys [in] round holes." Unfortunately, participants felt that one often did not have much choice when offered a promotion; one took it regardless of where one was being posted to or one risked being passed over in the future.

So I've been lucky but I see lots of square guys going into round holes and vice versa. But it's not the RCMP's fault necessarily, like the promotional system now, if you don't take a promotion, like if you, okay "we're going to make you a Corporal 'cause you're on the list, the only opening we've got is in [location]" so take it or don't get promoted basically is what they're saying. So you get guys who are not going into perhaps their strengths. (25 or more years of experience)

There's a lot of positions they've got to accommodate. That's one staffing nightmare. Staffing will tell you trying to fit the people to the job and the places to the people and making everyone happy, think of all their individual concerns versus the RCMP concerns, from a business point of view. That's a big shuffle, it's a big job for a rural police force as mobile as we're supposed to be, wow. (15 to 24 years of experience)

Some other factors that influenced Members' effectiveness were detachment size and location. For example, some Members do well in a highly structured urban detachment but feel very lost in a more unstructured rural setting (e.g., how to best use one's time). One participant felt that it would be easier for Members who were raised in rural settings to acclimatise to urban settings than vice versa (i.e., easier to learn to prioritise work than to generate it). In terms of location, participants commended the Force's policy of carefully screening volunteers for Northern duty, given that area's particular demands (e.g., isolation).

As I said, to go is North is volunteer. They don't take [just] anybody. When I went North you were interviewed as well as your spouse for suitability. It was made clear to you; you might be posted in an area that is very remote. You might be posted in an area that is all Natives, you might be the only Whites. You might be posted to an area where you are the only police officer and backup is 350 miles away. So it takes a different personality and character. Lots of Members say "no way, that's not for me, thank you very much." So it takes a different personality and character and attitude, different values, different interests to do that.

You learn very quickly on a small detachment. Like certain personality types would not be able to survive on a small detachment because everybody has to pull their own weight and they've got their own responsibilities. Whereas in a larger detachment or a specialised group, these people can fit in very well and function very well but they can't function at a level where they don't have the

support of the infrastructure where they're responsible for everything they do and say and they have trouble functioning in those environments but in another environment within the police universe they could function very well.

Thus, the homogeneity or heterogeneity of police officers depends on one's point of view. In comparison with the public, police officers are seen as similar to one another but quite different from the public (relative police homogeneity) . However, within the police culture there is a diversity of individuals (relative police heterogeneity). The relative homogeneity may be the basis of the Force's generalist attitude that any Member can do any job competently. This attitude may also be a carryover from the days when Member duties were relatively less complex and differentiated than they are today. Members espouse a specialist attitude more in keeping with relative heterogeneity. Participants realised that certain factors influence a Members' effectiveness and that success is not an all-or-nothing phenomenon. Instead, Members can complete jobs with varying levels of competence. However, despite the diverse nature of Members, participants did view themselves as different from the general population.

Needed Differences

The two constructs mentioned above (i.e., *Getting Down To It* and *Recognising Differences*) can be combined to generate the superconstruct *Needed Differences*. This superconstruct is comprised of information that focussed on reactions to RCMP policy (i.e., the implementation of recent initiative, and the espousal of a generalist attitude). Members conduct their policing duties in particular ways that the RCMP is now attempting to standardise, and this process is encountering a certain level of resistance from the Membership. In addition, although they recognise themselves as part of the greater community, participants identified the RCMP and Members as unique within society.

I may not like all the changes. I may not like the direction the Force is going in but I work for this outfit and so I have to make the best of it. You have to compromise. You have to—part of the flexibility—you do have to go along with it. I can't sit there and butt heads with everybody for the rest of my service, because I'm not doing myself or anybody else any favours. So you have to learn to work within the system. I may never agree with the system's workings, but you have to, you have to fit in. (15 to 24 years of experience)

A police personality? Boy that's hard to say because even though I would tend to say yes, I mean, you know, policing, a cop has to have a certain personality with those various characteristics. I have met so many diverse and different characters, it's kind of scary, it really is. Within this office, there are so many diverse personalities that it's amazing that we all do the same job.

Summary of *The People Factor*. *Maintaining Effectiveness*, *The Circle of Disillusionment*, and *Needed Differences* comprise one main theme: **The People Factor**. This theme encompasses a range of Member-oriented issues. Participants clearly identify themselves as part of society but still distinct from the general public. Particularly important traits identified by participants for effective policing included mental flexibility and good communication skills. Policing was described as a dynamic occupation that requires constant shifting and effort. However, participants felt that the traditional idealism of Members does not necessarily correspond to the modern reality of the Force. Overall, many participants were pessimistic about the Force's future. Members are feeling isolated from and disillusioned with the Force as the result of shifts in RCMP policies. Participants identified recent management initiatives–such as community policing and the CAPRA problem-solving model–as tools already in use by effective Members, and these policies were perceived as being forced upon the Membership. Participants felt that they continued to improve as police officers despite conflict with the organisation, and reported that this was possible due to their idealism and traditional Academy training. The difficulties encountered in the work setting

were perceived as affecting not only one's job effectiveness but one's home life as well. The

essence of **The People Factor** is best captured by the following quotes:

> What is a good Member and what isn't a good Member? It's very difficult to say. You've got some people who work the eight to four, "I'm paid to work eight hours, I've got to take my lunch and my coffee breaks." You're going to get the minimum. Now is that a good Member or a bad Member? I think you'd have to look at what he's producing during this time. Is he giving you good value for your dollar? You can have some Members who can accomplish more in one hour than other Members can do in a couple of days. So what yardstick are you going to use to measure what a good Member is? It's very, very difficult.

> We've come a long way over the years. We didn't have women in the RCMP until the early '70s. We've got . . . visible minorities, you know there's a big push to get more visible minorities, more Native Aboriginal people in the RCMP. So there's all kinds of pressures. More reflective of the mosaic of the Canadian public. There'll be changes and probably lots of turmoil but . . . we'll have to wait and see. It's really hard to predict what's going to happen.

> It is the second most recognised [symbol] in the world, the RCMP. Behind Coca-Cola. The RCMP is the second most recognised. I shudder to think that ten years down the road it's going to be the second most recognised because they're a big joke. Because they're a bunch of clowns. That's my own view. I'm basing that on what I see. That's all. I pray to God that ten years down the road I'll be proven wrong. But that's the way I see the Force today and where it's going. And I hope I'm wrong.

> We're going to lose a tremendous amount of experience. And we're going to be a very junior Force, and that's where our weakness is going to show. That's our chink in our armour, that we're not going to have people capable of doing proper investigations, and that scares me because we are going to have case law. We're going to deal with bad decisions in court based on poor investigations. Once you've got bad case law, forget it. We're talking a lifetime to have that changed. The good news, I guess, of that is we'll eventually gain our experience and our composure but that's going to cost us, for sure. We're going to be soiled. Tarnished. And we're getting that now. And that's because people are making mistakes, 'cause they don't know what they're doing. Not taking the time.

The Constructs of *125 Year$ and Counting*

Forces Shaping the Impact on the Individual

There are two constructs that focus on Members' ability to cope with stress and organisational transition. These constructs are *Forces Shaping the Impact on the Individual* and *Lack of Support* (see Figure 7). In *Forces Shaping the Impact on the Individual*, participants spoke of the importance of recognising stressors and the necessity of implementing coping strategies.

> But I can't name a police officer who isn't cynical. I think it's more of a result of doing the job and seeing the way the court system or the "justice system" doesn't work. And seeing the way that multiple offenders know how to work the system. And seeing the way that the offenders who say they're going to change their ways don't. All those things lead up to the cynicism. And it's a question of dealing with the cynicism in the right manner so that you don't let it get to you.

One stressor is the expectations placed on Members. Participants mentioned the difficulty in continuously meeting the high expectations of the public. Small town policing had its own unique stressors. Participants mentioned the lack of back-up in more isolated postings.

> Well I think that if you allow the image to become your life then yeah, I think it is a lot of extra pressure. We get into this macho stuff like most men do and you're not supposed to be fearful and you're not supposed to be . . . the image puts us on a pedestal that we can never stay on. It can't happen. You can never remain on that pedestal. And because of that people start to fall off in their private life before they fall off in their professional life.

> Because down in the rural setting, you know, you'd be on the highway, you'd be 30 miles from any place. At night you might be the only person on the radio. Very often I'd be working, say highway patrol on an evening shift middle of the week, there wouldn't be anybody working in any of the neighbouring detachments. That's where your shortages come in, of course, but . . . my support or my backup was literally minutes just to get ahold of somebody because I'd have to key repeater, wait for somebody to answer at dispatch, tell them what's going on, tell them where I am, they'd have to try to
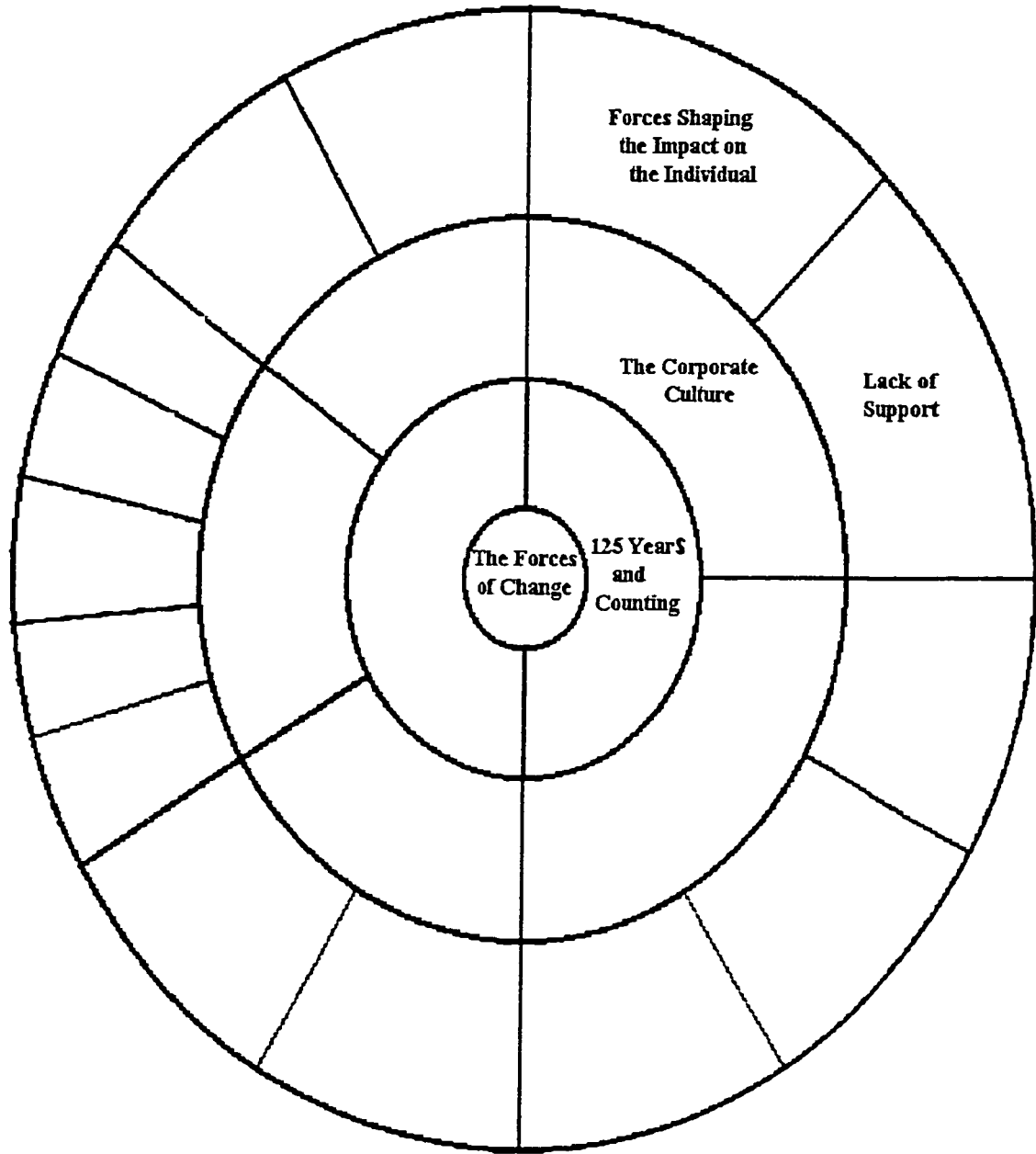
Figure 7. The Corporate Culture

get somebody out of their bed or get them on the road to try and provide assistance.

The lack of professional boundaries was also a major concern in small towns. Participants who had served in rural detachments reported feeling that they were never truly off-duty. Citizens would often stop Members on the street or come to their homes to report their concerns.

> People meant well, but it, at times it got frustrating when they invaded your privacy. They, to them these incidents are of a major thing and they did not hesitate to phone you at home or to come knocking on your door, and you tried your best to treat them well.

> The other thing with that too is whether you're working or not, on shift or not, you're always working. While you're in that community there's no getting away from it 'cause people know what your office hours are and if you're not at the office they'll come to your door so that's the way it is.

Participants mentioned that the RCMP life could also be very stressful on their families. Members work shiftwork and often need to work overtime before coming home. Some participants stated that their spouses had grown to dislike the RCMP due to the stress placed on the family and on the Member in particular.

> I think you've got to know when to back up and when to slow down and use the old adage 'when to smell the roses'. I think Members tend to be a little too intense, a little too focused on the job to the exclusion of their family and other aspects of their life, and I say that from a certain experience, personal experience. I've been there and I've done that. You know, I kind of hit that wall and realised that you can't do that. It won't work. Because your family will suffer and you will suffer and your health will suffer and all the rest of those things. But you got of kind of, just lighten up.

> You have this false expectation that we're going to love and marry and have children for the rest of our lives and live like our grandparents. Police work is not conducive to that, especially if you're going to be doing it to the best of your ability and then some.

Many participants spoke of the need for Members to be aware of their stress levels. Participants with longer service records recalled the outright competitive or macho attitude of Members (e.g., not taking sick days even if needed). There was a pervasive attitude that Members who sought counselling for stress-related concerns were weak. Fortunately for Members the stigma surrounding psychological assistance has diminished as they learn that not seeking help results in some major emotional costs (e.g., substance abuse, marriage breakdown).

> And people don't like to recognise that Members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police can burn out. They always think that we're these tough guys that can go forever and ever and ever and a lot of Members don't even like to admit that they're on the edge. But the consequence of not getting the help is astronomical. And sometimes it's too late. And Members are reluctant to accept help too. If you see somebody saying "listen, you need to take a break buddy" "no, I don't" and they'll just keep on going. So there's no easy answers to that.

> That's a stigma in this organisation. People who will go and actually see someone for stress-related disorders—it's not macho, it's not kosher. You're looked down upon by your peers.

> And policemen rarely admit to their private side of life. They'll hide it or they won't admit to it or they'll try to deceive people in knowing what's really happening in their family. Let's face it, we have more physical abuse happening in RCMP Members' families than I think people care even to admit to. Alcoholism is way up, suicides are way up, family abuse is way up, misuse of pharmaceutical drugs is way up. We're kidding ourselves. It's all because we've got this macho . . . thing that we have to adhere to that we're the greatest guys, we're supermen. We can do this. Or superwomen. And we don't realise what the cost is, and the cost is a lot. I'm not talking in financial terms, I'm talking emotional terms.

> There's still the stigma attached to it, a lot of Members won't go, in my opinion, to the Force psychologist or seek help because there's still that male pride, stubbornness, "I can do it on my own, I don't need help" sort of thing. And the stigma's still there, and I feel it myself. In the past when I've thought about maybe going to seek help for this or that I think "ah . . . what a wuss"

sort of thing. So I never have and perhaps maybe I should have in the past I don't know. The help is there, both for the family and the Member.

Although participants recognise that many Members are still unwilling to seek help, Members are being encouraged more to ask for help and many participants were grateful that the Force provides the necessary assistance (e.g., Force psychologists).

> And of I course, I think the Force is great in terms of taking care of it's Members. There's a Force psychologist in every Division, full-time. There's a MAP programme, Member Assistance Programme. There's all kind of help out there if you need it. There's counselling, marriage counselling.

> Because I think we have a lot of stressful people in the Force. Lot of stress. They're really stressed out with their job and they hold it inside, they don't talk about it. I would think our Force psychologist is probably the busiest in years, because Members are now, you're being told you've got to get this out.

Participants spoke of a variety of coping mechanisms. One was to acknowledge the limitations of policing. For example, some participants were becoming accustomed to the idea that another promotion may never come. Another was to recognise the importance of home life and to have something in place for when one's RCMP career was over (i.e., to avoid the "now what?" syndrome).

> And I think that's part of it, is just accepting the fact that it's just not like it used to be. Where at ten years you were promoted to Corporal, at 15 to Sergeant and at 20 you could expect to be a Staff Sergeant. Those days are gone. And that's not the most important thing in life anyways. And I think accepting that is real important in terms of getting on with life and the job. Sure, do your job as best you can, put in the hours, VOT [voluntary overtime] if you can, and then go home and be with your family and your hobbies.

> My job is not to convict. I have to stop short of the conviction in court 'cause you know what you read in the papers about court and it's terrible. So then you sort of change. So if I can say to myself my job is to remove impaired drivers from the road, well if I don't convict them I took them off the road that night. It doesn't make me happy 'cause they get to go and drive again but maybe he learned something. There's a good chance he did. There's a good chance that he didn't. But if I say to myself my job is to take them off the road

then I did my job that night. Now I can't really go any further than that. If I do I just make myself crazy. I think that's where the burnout comes from.

Participants also identified the importance of humour. Many participants spoke of the usefulness of "gallows humour" or "cop humour" in making traumatic events more bearable. Other participants spoke of the importance of an understanding spouse or colleague with whom one could vent and then move on with one's life.

> They talk about "cop humour." It's pretty tasteless and gross at times but something that's used to make really traumatic situations more bearable. You laugh about stuff like that. If you didn't laugh why you'd be depressed and crying. So it's a defence mechanism.

> I think it's good because if I have a long difficult hard shift I have somebody to come home and talk to. That's very important. And share what has happened. You might have been dealing with something where you saw a little child killed. You have feelings and you want to express what you've experienced. To vent sometimes, to release that. It's good to have a spouse for that. At least it's helped me.

Physical exercise helped some participants to deal with the build-up of stress, as did engaging in hobbies. Receiving acknowledgements of appreciation from the public helped Members to cope with job stress. Probably the most common coping mechanism that participants mentioned was the ability to relocate. This was often verbalised as "a change is as good as a rest." Transfers allow Members an escape route should they feel that there is a poor match between themselves and their current position.

> The burnout comes from the negative, negative, negative, everything's negative. There's just not a lot of positives. And the first time I got letters, little "thank you Constable [name] for coming to the class" I'll tell you, I pretty near cried. They were delivered right to my house by this teacher and I never even thought anything of it, I didn't think anything of the talk let's put it that way. All of a sudden these came and I started reading them one after the other and I thought "wow!" I felt so good, I felt good for weeks after it just because somebody took the time to draw a little picture of a police car on a piece of paper. So you really have to dwell on the positive when it happens.

Having someone come back and thank you, 'cause nobody thanks us and yet we do a good job. Our Members, our young people our old people, we do a good job. And it's not very often that someone says thank you. So that's more important than getting promoted 'cause like I said, promotion doesn't give you a lot anymore. So that's a big reward in my eyes, big reward. It's worth all the efforts that you put in and anytime someone's been thanked by someone in the community, guys are really, that's just a, that's a real motivator. You know, you can imagine at a detachment if someone writes a letter to the paper thanking Constable [name], that's a real Kudo, that's a real feather in your hat, that's a real acknowledgement of the job you did. It's people appreciate you now for what you are. And it doesn't happen a lot but when it does happen it's a good feeling.

But that's always a good thing, I think, about the RCMP is that if you feel like "look, I'm starting to get into a rut. I'm dealing with the same people day after day. I'm starting to lose my sense of 'ha-ha' with these people." It's time to get out. So that's a plus.

I mean, you know, if you've been at one place for a long, long time, there really is a lot of truth I think in our job in, you know, a change is as good as a rest.

But the way I kept from being burnt out is the beauty of the Mounted Police, why I love it so much is I was able to get into something else and that was uniformed work.

Thus, there is a push for greater recognition or acknowledgement of problems within the Force. Another way to phrase it is "acceptance over denial." Denial of problems may be functional in the short term for the Force (i.e., Members complete their work no matter what) but this is detrimental in the long term for individual Members (e.g., burnout, substance abuse problems). Acceptance of the true state of affairs may result in some short term "slow-downs," such as a reduction in voluntary overtime, but the Force should ultimately reap the long term benefit of having Members who are happier and more likely to be consistently effective.

Lack of Support

The second construct is *Lack of Support*. Many participants specifically identified the judicial system and the RCMP upper management as being unsupportive. Participants admitted that most judges were competent but some make very poor decisions (e.g., chronic offenders receiving light sentences).

> We need to educate our court systems too. They have to back us up and they're not. In [location] we had a guy that came to the courts with a 47th break and enter and theft and he gives him probation for God's sake. Come on, give me a break, this guy's time to do heavy time. It just kills me. It's just like this YO [Young Offender] Act they're talking about. What a joke.

Many concerns were reserved for the RCMP management. Participants reported that they did not feel that management "backed them up" when citizens made complaints against Members. They felt that the accused Member was "guilty until proven innocent." Some participants mentioned that this concern would be one of the few benefits of a union (i.e., the union would be quicker to rally to the Member's defence).

> The politicians that are running this outfit, the people that have got ahead, they won't back us up at all. And everybody feels like they're totally out on their own, and they are. Like they'll just, we're guilty until proven innocent guaranteed.

> Like I mean, you got to be careful to do anything with anyone nowadays. Because you could lose your job. I mean, you truthfully could. And that's scary because they don't back you. Like I don't believe they back you. And I think that's affected the morale of the outfit. And I think that also affects how we do our job which affects our future.

> Now if we had a union within the Mounted Police, say "okay fine. Yeah, you go right ahead and complain against this Member, but if you're in the wrong we will sue you." You don't see too many public complaints against city police forces, Edmonton, Calgary, very rarely that you do. They have a union that backs their members up. Okay? I mean, if the Member is in the wrong, the Member's in the wrong. But if he's in the right, and you have people think

that he's in the wrong, there's got to be something, you got to draw lines somewhere.

There's a lot of political interference, there's, and unfortunately those that are in the upper management scale of things their hands are tied to a degree by that political interference. If you think of the APEC situation, one has to wonder what really did happen there. It'd be interesting to see what the outcome may be with that, whether the truth will actually come out or not. I don't think it will.

Participants also remarked on the lack of positive feedback within the RCMP hierarchy.

Many mentioned that one knows when one's done wrong because it is directly pointed out to

them but one is very rarely told that one is doing a good job.

I don't know if it's old school but we have so many people that do so much work and they do it so well but we don't tell them. We don't tell them. And we don't know what they're doing most often, that's why we don't tell them. If I don't do what you do and I can't do what you do, how can I tell you you did a good job? And I think that's the real problem to be quite honest.

And typically our Force is not good at acknowledging good things, it seems that we sit on the perch waiting for someone to make a mistake and then we try to cut them off. And so you don't develop risk takers, you don't actually, that's not true empowerment, there's no developmental opportunities for people if that's how you run things. Organisationally it seems to go that way and that's not to say everybody is that way 'cause some people are different. Obviously I've had people that were good like that, that allowed you to make mistakes, and allowed you to grow with the mistake or I wouldn't have that attitude today. But I've also had the other ones. And, but we don't have enough people like that in our Force, I don't feel. We have too many of the others still. We're getting better but we need more.

Financial cutbacks were also mentioned. Participants made it extremely clear that, as a result

of financial restrictions, Members are unable to do the same quality of job. Although

participants realised that the government controlled the flow of money, many participants felt

that upper management should speak out more against the attitude of "doing more with less"

before officer safety becomes too compromised. A common concern about RCMP management was the feeling that the RCMP lacked leadership and direction.

> I mean, certainly the financial crunch has put an added pressure onto the Force which neither the Members or the board or senior management seem to be able to control. I mean obviously we aren't able to control the deficit situation. It has led to a lot of additional pressure, and a lot of additional criticism, and I think dissatisfaction with the average Member. And again, you have to look at it in context of the way the deficit has accumulated and who's contributed to it within [location], within this Division. We have always met our budget cuts. Now we have this 11, I think 11 million dollar deficit or whatever, we have to somehow make up for it. The majority of that has been accumulated by other Divisions, such as [location]. So we're finding in this Division, we're being asked to bite the bullet, to help do our part to bail out other Divisions. No matter how magnanimous Members will be in this Division, that's going to be hard for them to understand and to accept. But I guess it's, we're all one outfit, and so we have to share the problem. It's contributing.

> I think we're going to have to redefine some of the jobs we have to do because of cutbacks. We're going to have to, you know, alert the public to the fact that . . . for the longest time I think the policeman played just about every role in a community that there could be. That may be a thing of the past. And I think it's going to be gradual but I think you're going to see us start investigating less things and attending less complaints because of cutbacks.

> And the other thing that concerns me is that I think, again, my feeling is there's a real abdication of decision-making responsibility by senior management. Nobody will make a decision anymore. Nobody wants to be seen to not be empowering their subordinates or trying to build a consensus. Those are great things, and I mean, I've long argued that we have to get away from the authoritarian, authoritative, military hierarchy where I can't talk to this person because there's somebody in rank between us, and I have to go to them first . . . I reject that wholeheartedly. But . . . I just think that there comes times when the hard decisions have to be made by the guys who are being paid to make them. And they're not doing that. There's a certain drift going on in the Force right now, and there's a certain tendency to rather than just make a decision, move in that direction, and live with the consequences and adapt to it down the road, the Force is saying let's hire an external review committee to examine this area. And then they come back and they give you what everybody knew they were going to say. You need more money and you need more people, you need to go back and focus on what we're doing, you have to focus on organisation, you need to improve training, and you have to bring people in that already have skills. Like hello. We all know that, and I

think senior management's always known that. But that's a delaying tactic so they don't have to throw more money at the problem. Now they go out and they hire an external review to examine the promotion system and to interview Members. Again, the findings are not a surprise to anybody except management, I suppose.

The problem of alienation with regard to expenditure of effort was mentioned in *Lack of Support*. First, there is a perceived lack of support from the judicial branch. Some participants perceived their hard work to have been a wasted effort when judges handed down poor decisions. Second, financial constraints meant that effort was being expended under very trying circumstances. Third, the lack of direction from RCMP management may mean that there are few suggestions as to where and how effort should be focussed. As a result, Members' efforts are diffused into potentially unproductive areas.

The Corporate Culture

The two previously-mentioned constructs (i.e., *Forces Shaping the Impact on the Individual* and *Lack of Support*) were combined to produce the superconstruct *The Corporate Culture*. This superconstruct included participants' message about the necessity for Members to recognise their stress levels and incorporate the appropriate coping strategies into their professional and private lives. Unfortunately, other components of the justice system, including the RCMP organisation, are seen as not providing Members with all the tools necessary to do the job and as failing to provide a clear direction for the future. Instead, the RCMP is perceived as being preoccupied with the transformation from providing a service into running a business.

> And, and . . . somebody unfortunately read Stephen Covey's book one day and took it to the Commissioner, left it in the reading basket in the corporate bathroom or whatever the case was, and they all suddenly discovered for the first time in their life things like the seven effective habits of management. Well, hello. They're not revelations. And I don't want to sound conceited here or arrogant by any means, but they're pretty common sense things.

What the Force is going to be . . . I don't know if we're going to be as effective because now what's happening is they've turned . . . they think of police as a business, and it's not a business—it's a service. We have to remember that we're a resource to the people, to the community. The police is a resource. And we're basically the last resource. When do you call the police? Is when you're in trouble, when there are some things you cannot resolve on your own, and that's when the police is called. And that resource is . . . a lot of cases now, that resource is not available for certain things.

I think if we keep going in the direction that we're going we're forced by the federal government to look at the RCMP as a business. And everything has become as of late like business cases. We're not a business. We're not, we're not a business that is able to make money and in turn, like through whatever it is that you do, and then reinvest that money within your own business. I don't think it can be handled that way. And unfortunately that's the way that it's being done right now. With the federal government and it's really unfortunate because I think we're going to lose sight and we're going to lose the ability to do the job effectively.

The Faces of Diversity

Three constructs, *The Faces of Diversity, Traditional RCMP versus Business of RCMP*, and *The Force is Dying*, encompassed some of the participants' concerns about the future of the RCMP (see Figure 8). In *The Faces of Diversity*, participants identified the RCMP as a diverse Force. Although participants spoke against discrimination against any groups, some male Caucasian participants expressed scepticism about the advantages of allowing women and visible minorities into the Force. In general, the capabilities of female and visible minority Members were questioned. Although some women and visible minorities were seen as capable officers and investigators, most were not.

And I've worked with visible minority Members that have been excellent investigators. And let me tell you, that's an uphill battle for them. And they've got to prove themselves every day. And they're intelligent and they've got the drive and they make it happen. But conversely, they're outnumbered by those that aren't.

The Forces of Change

125 Years and Counting

The Faces of Diversity

Tension Between Visions

Traditional RCMP vs. Business of RCMP
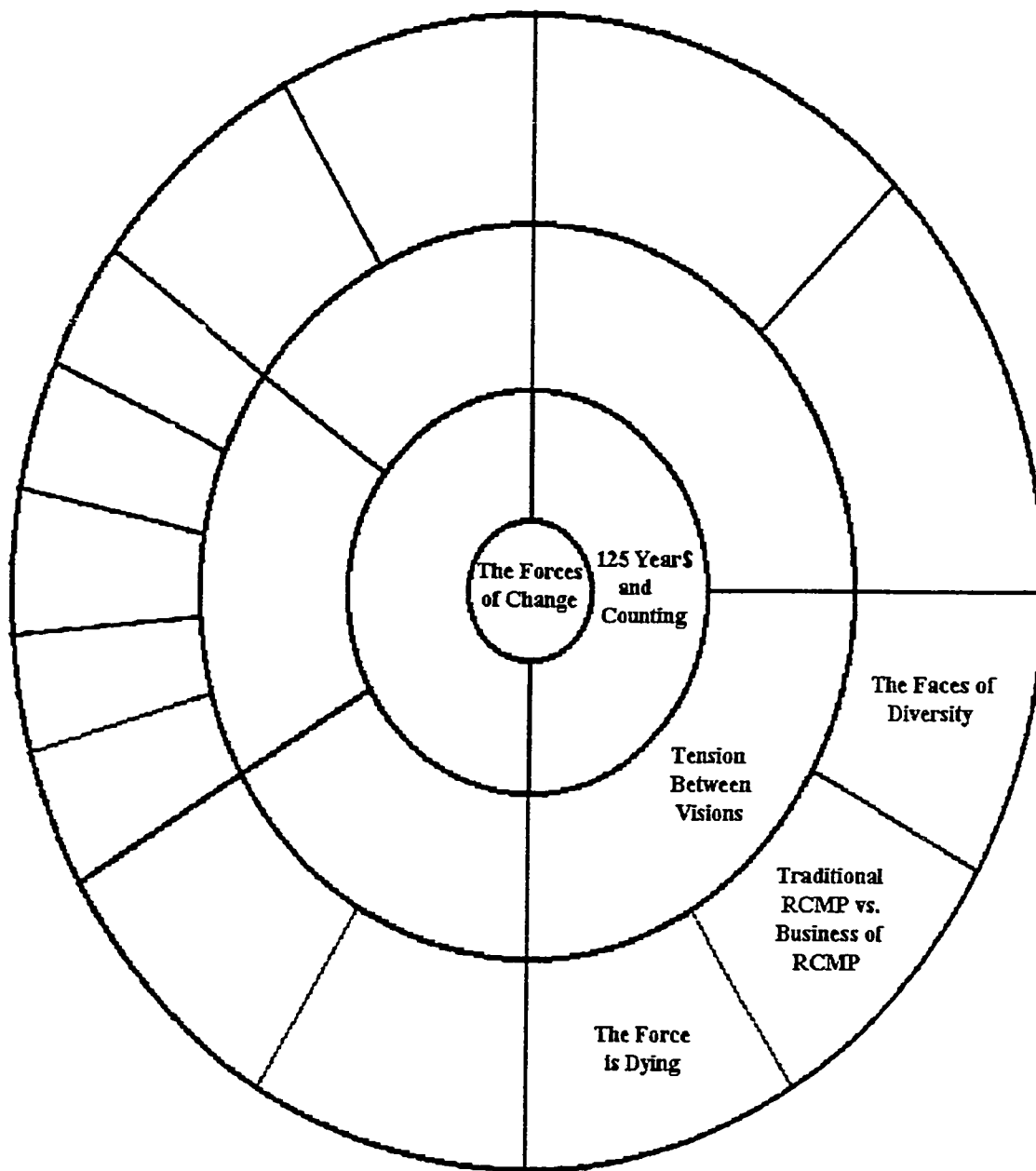
The Force is Dying

Figure 8. Tension Between Visions

I know lots of very, very good female Constables. Very good investigators. Extremely good competent people. But I know most women aren't. They don't have the chutzpah for it.

Furthermore, some male Caucasian participants perceived that visible minorities and women were the recipients of special treatment (i.e., being promoted due to favouritism or official policy).

> I don't think there's a Member out there that wouldn't say, "I haven't got a problem with female Constables. I haven't got a problem with visible minorities. But they do everything I do. They do the same kind of entrance exams. They do the same kind of physical exams. They do the same workload that I have to do." But what's happened is that they've made special deals and some of them circumvent the actual process that the rest of us have gone through. And so when you get someone that's a visible minority that's at the same place you were or are with 4 years service and you've got 12 in, do the math. Doesn't work, I don't care how bright you are. You haven't paid your dues. And that's a big thing, you've got to be able to prove yourself. But there's a lot of favouritism going on because you're a visible minority or you're a Constable of a different gender. Lots of that happens. And that's because of affirmative action, there's political motivation behind it. That kills us daily. It's not right.

Issues specifically related to female Members included concerns about their physical abilities (e.g., in subduing larger opponents) and officer shortages that occur when these Members are on maternity leave. Some participants did make positive references to female Members being very successful at handling volatile situations without resorting to physical force.

> We think differently, we react differently. Far as I'm concerned, these girls here are social workers. They spend all their time talking, they never do any action. We got to do the action, and we don't do any talking. It's not fair that I'm making the same salary and they can't do the whole job whereas I can, because we did it on our own. All of it. And I can be just as compassionate as a woman with a woman who's just been raped. No problem. So I don't buy that garbage, we used to do it all the time. But they can't come out, do the physical thing. They got to get me to do it. And that's reality.

> By virtue of the fact that only one of us in the species can have babies at this point in time, we all know that a female Constable on staff, she's going to get

pregnant. And what that causes for you is a man short. If you're in a busy spot that causes super strain, super stress, and automatically creates a barrier between yourself and the other Members.

Women came into the Force in '74, and that was a big issue. And of course they come into a chauvinistic little programme and, to say the least, they're challenged. Some of them put up with a lot of, really a lot of malarkey for a lot of years—and there's still that. I get a kick out of some of our Members, male Members, who always like to use the argument "we couldn't fill [location]", which is a very difficult, physical detachment, "to police with all females." And they're probably right, we probably couldn't. But by the same token, I've been in detachments where the females, because of their approach towards people, their understanding of people, their ability to deal probably better with people, have contributed largely to a lower crime rate because they have made inroads with dealing with them. They very much have better contacts with those people, the youth particularly.

Participants who were not male Caucasians also recognised the Force as diverse. However, these participants did not feel that they were the recipients of favouritism. Rather, they expressed feelings of having to overcome extra hurdles that male Caucasians did not encounter. One concern was that they were assigned a lot of work and responsibility that was not accompanied by real power. The sense was that the Force was not doing enough to combat discrimination.

Sexism and racism is established, it is maintained, it is advanced, and it is refined. The refinement stage in policing for non-White people is to give you plenty of work, give you plenty of responsibility but don't give you any power.

I agree, they should get rid of all quotas but until people are held accountable for their actions you can't have it both ways. Where are all these people that are arguing against employment equity when women are discriminated against and non-Whites are discriminated against? Where are they? Why don't they come and say "oh, see, it's because of what you're doing Mr. White male that we have these programmes and these things in place. Stop. Cut it out." You never see that. People were complaining but they can't have it both ways. You can't hold somebody back and for me, I think employment equity is just a way for people not to be held accountable.

Thus, diversity in the Force is recognised but not always welcomed or appreciated. Rather than a "diverse yet equal" attitude, there seems to be an atmosphere of "diverse and different." These differences are manifest in the polarised attitudes regarding the "benefit" of being a visible minority or female Member. Unfortunately, some of the issues may not be resolved at any time in the near future (e.g., female Members will continue to have children). Of particular relevance to male Caucasian participants was the promotions system as it is perceived to apply to visible minorities and women (general concerns about the system will be discussed later). The difficulties that many male Caucasian participants have had with the current promotion system may have sensitised them to any actual or apparent advancement being made by visible minorities and women (two groups seen as lacking merit by some male Caucasians). Ultimately, the Force will have to find some way of reconciling the unique experiences of visible minority and female Members with those of male Caucasian Members in order to bring about an attitudinal balance among Members.

Traditional RCMP versus Business of RCMP

In the *Traditional RCMP versus Business of RCMP* construct, participants identified concerns with the existing promotions system, worries about the new generation of Members, and a general concern about the future of the Force. Many participants stated that the promotions system does not work because the most deserving Members are not being promoted ("deserving" was usually identified as good all-around job performance). This has led to major morale problems within the Membership.

> You've got to create an image that we're not biased, we have Natives, we have females, and I'm not against females. I know some females in supervisory positions that are very capable and I know a lot that aren't. And they're in there because the Commissioner said, "you will promote a female in this job." So away she goes. And what's your background in policing? How much experience do you have? I'm not saying that out of spite or animosity,

because I went through the officer candidate programme successfully and never got commissioned. And I saw a lot of people get commissioned and I shook my head and said, "how can they possibly give this person that job?"

And I'm not saying this out of spite or anything, but I've seen people get commissioned, get promoted, go up the ladder who did not have the ability. Far from it. Because we want that colour, we want that gender, we want that sex, we want that race. That's why. I've seen it happen too many times over the past five or six years. And it's increasing more and more and more. That's going to hurt the Force. Because you're not going to have the people of leadership ability in leadership positions. So I shudder to think of the decisions that will be made or the lack of them. That's unfortunately where I believe the Force is going. It's scary.

Although participants stated that sometimes performance was being recognised, Members who were receiving promotions were perceived as being successful because they "got lucky" on the written promotions test, were of a certain ethnicity or sex, or because they espoused the popular corporate managerial viewpoint. Some participants stated that they had avoided applying for a promotion lately because of these perceived biases. Participants recognised that alterations to the promotions system had been made over time, but many felt that the system was continually being overhauled rather than being refined. There was a feeling that the system should simply go back to being a more direct assessment of daily performance and an interview rather than the use of a written test and a written appraisal of one's own competencies.

In the '70's, demographically speaking, it was possible for a Member with a relatively good record to progress through the ranks, Corporal to Sergeant to Staff Sergeant. But now in the 90's, demographically speaking, you've got this big blurp of Members with 20 years service because of the baby boom and they're still Constables. Like you can't promote them all. And so that was recognised, the promotion system changed for that reason and others, and it frankly hasn't worked. And it hasn't worked because, in my opinion—and I think the opinion of most people—it's not an equitable system. The best people aren't being promoted for the job. I think that's recognised. And Members, like I say, who were excellent police officers who put their hearts and souls into their work for years for a number of reasons, one of them being

the expectation that they would be promoted and they haven't been because of this new promotion system which is based on simulation exercises and then it was interviews and now it's your own performance report. At any rate, it just doesn't seem to be equitable. There's no standardisation involved in the process. So there's this sense that you don't get promoted because of merit now, it seems to be more so that you're promoted because you lucked out on this simulation exam, it's not knowledge-based. Or you had a boss who scored you high on your performance report or something like this. There just seems to be a real cynicism about the rank structure. The respect for rank is gone.

Many concerns about the newer generation of Members were voiced. Participants reported that younger Members appear unmotivated and lack dedication to the Force. Newer Members were seen as treating policing as a job rather than as a career. This came out in remarks about their poor investigative skills, and their unwillingness to relocate geographically and to undertake voluntary overtime. Some participants singled out visible minorities in particular. Some felt that the hiring of visible minorities was appropriate but had not been well implemented by RCMP management. There was a concern that entrance standards were being lowered in an effort to appear politically correct. The RCMP's approach of aggressively recruiting visible minorities was disliked because individuals so recruited were seen as more likely to leave the RCMP once a better job opportunity came along. Thus, these people were perceived as lacking dedication to the Force.

I think they are going to have to continue to have strict recruiting policies that will continue the calibre and the quality of the Members that they have in the organisation because that's the future really is the Membership. And it depends on who they are going to recruit and why. If they are doing the political thing to get eight to ten percent of them female and they lower their standards to meet the quota I think they're going to have trouble. If they need so many visible minorities and they lower the standards then they're going to have trouble. I think they should actively recruit visible minorities and females but I think they should not lower their standards or the type of individual they are looking for in a police officer.

I see it a lot where I guess forced by Federal legislation and that type of thing to recruit certain minority groups, we're getting people that don't fully understand what the Force is about, are here because somebody aggressively recruited them and I don't think that even if they are successful with the programme at Depot, that we're looking at somebody who's willing to put in the 25 years plus. As far as a career goes, something bigger and better is going to come around and they're going to be taking it. And we're missing out on, by doing that, I think we're missing out on a lot of people that are out there that want to do this but because don't fall under certain minority groups or whatever—and I'm not picking on these groups—it's just the way things are that unfortunately your White Anglo-Saxon farm boy with a high school education just doesn't cut it anymore and they're not getting those opportunities and that's where we're missing out as far as dedication goes.

They're right, they should have minorities. But I think it becomes political, and I think so that they can say "we've done this and done that" they're rushing it. We've accepted a lot of minority Members that really were not reported well on, you know? It's not to say we haven't had a lot of problems with our own, everyday, White, Caucasians grouping either. We've had a hell of a time with them at times too. But all in all, I think our intentions were good but we missed the boat in how to deal with it.

Another theme in participants' responses was the feeling that the RCMP was implementing too many changes too quickly without a firm future direction. Participants felt that many changes, like the civilianisation of the Force and hiring of visible minorities, were good ideas but were carried out in an inept manner. This led to many Members expressing concern about the future of the RCMP. Some participants felt that the RCMP would change so dramatically as to be almost unrecognisable in a few years or that the RCMP would actually cease to exist. Many participants reported that many senior colleagues had left or were about to leave the Force as a result of these concerns.

I think we're changing too fast and I don't think there's anybody in the organisation that can say "we want to be here in two years, this is our long range plan for two, five, and ten years."

Well, unless we can get a handle on what is expected of us, from management and from the citizenry I think we're doomed. We're not going to make a comeback.

If the provinces become responsible for their own policing as you see in Ontario and Quebec that would be the end of us. You wouldn't have any more red serge Mounties doing what we do all across the country. And we're a very very important part of Canadian society. I know it's sort of a political statement, but we really are the fabric that holds society together in Canada. I believe that. We are still very well respected in all the communities we police and we're the common denominator from coast to coast. That's a very important part of Canadian society is the Mounted Police. That's what draws a lot of us to it, still to this day.

Thus, concerns about upward mobility and the retention of traditions were important themes. Participants felt that the promotions system needed to reflect a fair assessment of merit. Members may be better able to accept the relative infrequency of promotions if they perceive the procedure to be a fair one. Concerns about the loss of informal traditions of the Force (e.g., dedication, voluntary unpaid overtime) have led to further strain. Of course, participants' attitudes towards younger Members may be a natural age-old phenomenon (e.g., Aristotle was concerned about the state of Athenian youth), but it appears that the participants are from a generation that has been exposed to maximal change with minimal time for accommodation.

The Force is Dying

The third construct, *The Force is Dying*, represents participants' apprehension that the RCMP is slowly faltering under the current pace of change. As mentioned above, traditional aspects of policing are perceived as falling by the wayside. However, participants reported that these changes are not limited to newer Members. As morale levels are perceived to drop, even senior active Members are changing their behaviour.

> I know right now that there's a very, very big problem with morale. Because you cannot trim the fat and trim the fat and trim the fat to the extent where you start trimming muscle—year after year—and not expect it to reverberate onto the Membership.

Members posted to rural areas are no longer content to be the small town police officer; commuting from larger urban centres has become a frequent reality. In order to staff less attractive postings, the Force is having to make deals with Members rather than simply informing them of where they will be posted.

> We used to be able to make people go to those spots. "You're going, that's what's happening. You're going there." But now we've relaxed so many aspects, like we've got this reason, we've got that reason. Now, they don't have enough people to fill the slots up North. They're begging and borrowing, twisting people's arms to go up there. Promising them this and promising that. Where does it end?

Members are less likely to go out of their way to assist the public. The issue of the unwillingness to engage in overtime was again mentioned. Some participants felt that the Force is coasting on an old reputation and that the current RCMP administration does not seem aware that the Force is in trouble.

> I think the Mounted Police is riding on an old reputation and they don't have a clue what they're doing.

> But I didn't care, I was working 24-hours a day anyways. Never got out of my uniform. And I loved it. Because I was a Mountie, and I was doing it. And it was good, I knew I was doing a real good job, and I loved it. You know, that's dedication. And I don't begrudge it to this day. I never got overtime. You could put in overtime in those days but it was frowned upon. And I never put it in. We just didn't bother. We didn't look at shift schedules, we just worked. And still our courses were all very competitive, very competitive outfit. You were always fighting against the next guy to get ahead. But it was, we were working for the public. Now, we're not working anymore. These kids, they're not working. Girls are afraid to stop anybody. The guys are all upset because the girls don't have to work and they're not working, they're sitting with their feet up drinking coffee. There's a, this is a little crude, but that's police work. There's a saying that's been going around for

years called FIDO. You're driving in the car and there's two of you and you see something happening and you say "FIDO." It's "F" it, drive on.

I always equate it to this: I see the Mounted Police on the floor in its death throes and I see a whole bunch of people standing around looking at it and saying, "ah, he'll be okay. He'll be okay. It's just you guys making this up. It's just he needs more money," that's what they keep telling us. "Oh, money's the problem." Well, we keep saying money's got nothing to do with it.

Thus, the Force is suffering from a combination of many stressors. The perceived deterioration of the Force is associated with some senior Members jettisoning their traditional values, perhaps in an effort to distance themselves from the perceived changes occurring in the Force.

Tension Between Visions

The *Faces of Diversity*, *Traditional RCMP versus Business of RCMP*, and *The Force is Dying* were combined to produce the superconstruct **Tension Between Visions**. This superconstruct consists primarily of concerns about relatively recent changes to Force policies and concerns about younger Members. The introduction of diverse groups into the Force is not seen as having been accomplished smoothly. RCMP policies such as promotions are perceived as unfair. Senior Members see a clash between their policing culture and that of junior Members. These all contribute to a sense that the RCMP is no longer the best police force in Canada.

But I think that's the biggest problem in the Force right now. These people come out and they're who they are. And that's it. They don't seem to be interested in becoming a policeman, Mounted Policeman, specifically. They just are individuals and they're here for what they want. They're here for the money, they're here for the prestige, they're here for whatever, but they're not here to become a career Mountie, whereas when I joined everybody there had the full intentions of becoming a Mountie for life. Not everybody did, but that was their intention when they joined. Now when they've got recruiters going around and saying, "oh, give it a whirl" and I've been told this by the gals that

are in this outfit so it's not something, "give it a whirl, give it a try." We're not getting the best people.

For instance the issue of being on call, for many many years we just were on call. You went home and the phone rang so you got out of bed and went to work. In the last few years in some provinces now you're being compensated for being on call. There are people who won't take calls, that refuse to take calls. They'll go home at the end of their shift and they are not available to help somebody. Now that creates a bit of a rift in attitudes if you and I work at a detachment and you don't want to take calls. See it's a voluntary thing. Well if you don't take calls, excuse me that means I have to take all of them. And so someone has to provide that emergency 24-hour service to the community. You can't be forced to do that. So I do it. So I'm on call all the time and you're not, so you have a home life and I don't.

But I still say when I joined the outfit in [year] you wanted me pretty bad because I was here in 9 months and at no time was I told "upgrade your education, learn a second language." So I still believe there's still a lot of us around that they still—and I hate to say owe something to but it was never anything—had I been told, let me put it this way had I been told in [year] "in order to get ahead in this outfit you need this, this, this, and this" then maybe I would've started working that way. As opposed to all of a sudden 10 years later finding yourself in a position of you can't do anymore unless on your own time you want to improve and I think most of us take university courses and try to improve that. That's more of a self-thing than it is a career aspiration.

And at the same time they're civilianising the RCMP. Civilianisation. Hey, I'm in agreement that you don't need a police officer counting beans. But, they've gone too far. And now we have, for instance, a civilian Member or actually a public servant is now the grievance co-ordinator for this Division. We have a public servant who is now the harassment co-ordinator. We have a public servant who is now the alternative dispute resolution co-ordinator. Public servants, obviously have those concerns. Public servants are also part of the union and they have shop stewards, they have union representatives to assist them with their concerns. The RCMP, when we have a grievance is now reviewed at the initial step by a public servant, who I would suggest has no concept of what that grievance may stem from or may be referring to. If a Member complains of harassment, the harassment is going to be handled first and foremost by a public servant. Again, who has never done any policing. Who may not have any concept of why the unit commander who's the accused let's say or the supposed perpetrator in harassment, why he or she did what they did. It's easy to sit back and say, in an isolated situation, clearly this boss harassed this individual. Rather than if it was an individual who has had some

policing experience themselves, they might say, "well, I've been there, done that. I can appreciate from both ends why the decisions were made that were done." Again, another direction, another change that's not necessarily a good one for the Force. But it's being motivated by saving dollars.

Summary of *125 Year$ and Counting.* The **Corporate Culture** and **Tension Between Visions** comprise the second main theme: **125 Year$ and Counting**. I believe this title is fitting since many of the participants' concerns involved the current financial situation of the Force. Although the information presented in **The Corporate Culture** and **Tension Between Visions** may appear to be little more than a litany of participants' complaints, it is important to note that participants always presented their views in a context of a concern for the future of the Force. **125 Year$ and Counting** involves friction between Members and the RCMP organisation. The organisation is perceived by many participants as being in a transition from a policing service to a corporate business but unable to provide a firm sense of direction for the future. This transformation has been accompanied by many changes to Force traditions, including increased Member diversity (e.g., female Members, visible minority Members) and changes to the promotional system. Diversification of the Force was met with mixed feelings by participants. Many participants felt that the current promotion system is inappropriate and a major source of morale problems.   Participants appear to come from a generation that has been exposed to maximal change in the RCMP organisation but was only allowed a minimal amount of time for adjustment. Furthermore, participants perceived a lack of support from the government, and from the RCMP management, in terms of financial cutbacks and the lack of clear direction for the Force.   Fortunately, there is a growing movement within the Membership to acknowledge personal difficulties in response to such stressors and to incorporate coping strategies in order to increase effectiveness.

As I said at the outset, I joined the RCMP at the time I believed it was the best police force in the world. I don't believe it's the best force anymore in the world, I think we've suffered as a result of some of the things that talked about earlier, directions and corporate culture and, you know, external pressures like financial and political and what have you.

We've got to somehow stand on our own, get rid of the political arm that's been our puppeteer. We've got to be able to know what we're doing and the government's got to give us the confidence that we know what we're doing.

I think [the future of the Force is] really strong because I believe that all the young people that we've put out since 1994 will have, I know the ones I've seen at the detachment level have a very positive impact on our communities. Now over the next five or six or seven years we're going to put through thousands more cadets at Depot. And so we're putting all that sort of problem-solving, forward-thinking people out into the field replacing some of the dinosaurs that will be leaving. I think the future looks good. I mean it looks good from a policing perspective.

Integrating Their Story: *The Forces of Change*

The overall results of this study are best conceptualised as the integration of all participants' personal experiences and perspectives. As is common when using qualitative research methods, the participants shaped the ultimate direction and focus of the study (e.g., Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Maxwell, 1996; Mertens, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 1995). As a result, the data included information about personality traits as well as environmental/ organisational factors. A common theme among all the interviews was the causes, results, and long-term effects of the changes that are happening within the RCMP. I have labelled this concern **The Forces of Change** and see it as the overarching concept of the data. These forces reflect the changes that both the RCMP Members and organisation are experiencing.

The two themes that comprise **The Forces of Change** are **The People Factor** and **125 Year$ and Counting**. In their interview responses participants indicate that the close relationship that previously existed between the RCMP organisation and the Membership is

encountering strain. Figure 9 is a visual representation of the dynamic relationship between these two major themes. As time passes, the close relationship between the RCMP as an organisation (i.e., **125 Year$ and Counting**) and the individual Members who compose the RCMP (i.e., **The People Factor**) is perceived as slowly growing more distant. This represents the growing degree of stress and alienation that many participants mentioned during their interviews, a crucial tension and dynamic of **The Forces of Change**.

The Forces of Change

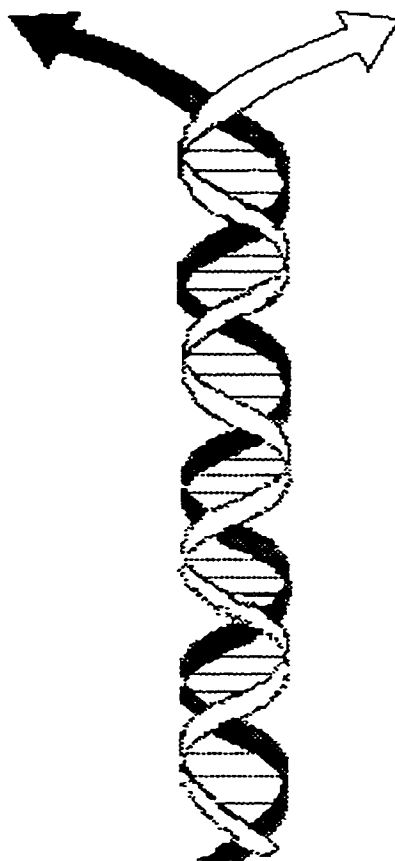125 Year$
& Counting

The People Factor

Figure 9. The Forces of Change

STRENGTHS AND CAUTIONS

Strengths of This Study

One major strength of this study was that by using this method of data collection I reduced the likelihood that participants' responses were misunderstood. By engaging in open dialogues with participants I was able to receive instantaneous feedback about whether I clearly understood their concerns. This was a welcome, although unexpected, quality check during the course of the study.

Another strength of this study was the degree of honesty and openness with which the participants spoke during the interviews. I believe that the participants were honest for a number of reasons. First, I clearly indicated to all participants that I was not affiliated with the RCMP management and that their identities would be kept confidential. This assurance of anonymity may have provided the impetus for Members to discuss honestly issues of concern. Second, participants' reactions to me before, during, and after the interviews were very positive. Members were courteous and demonstrated genuine interest in the study. Some participants offered me guided tours of their workplaces or invitations to join their co-workers on a meal-break in order to further discuss Members' concerns. Third, participants' language became more casual during the course of the interviews. Most of them began their interviews by speaking politely and apologising for any slips into "colourful language". As participants became more comfortable with me, they began speaking about more emotional/personally important topics and their language seemed to become more "everyday." Less formal speech patterns were evident, and the use of "colourful language" and police vernacular became more frequent and with fewer apologies made for these "slips." Fourth, participants' spontaneous responses and reactions during interviews indicated that

they felt I was trustworthy. Many participants spoke about personal experiences that clearly affected them deeply. Many participants thanked me for the opportunity to tell their side of the story.

The third strength of this study was that there were many different interpretations of the results other than my explanation. Realisation of the diversity of interpretations was helpful to me as a check against developing tunnel vision on this topic. In addition, the inclusion of verbatim quotes from many participants provides readers with the opportunity to draw their own conclusions about the topic rather than accept mine at face value.

The fourth major strength of this study was that participants had the opportunity to speak candidly about their current circumstances. During the interviews Members attached a great deal of importance to being heard, supported, and respected by the RCMP organisation. During the interviews the participants had the chance to share their experiences and describe their feelings about what it is like to be an RCMP Member. A different type of research approach (e.g., questionnaires) would not have been flexible enough to capture adequately the depth and diversity of information that the participants wished to share.

Cautions to the Reader

The reader is cautioned to refrain from focussing only on the list of effectiveness characteristics. Although the original focus of the study was to interview Members in order to uncover the behaviours, attitudes, and personality traits of effective and less effective Canadian police officers, the 29 participants expanded the focus of the study to include environmental and organisational factors that influenced Members' effectiveness.

Although qualitative researchers feel that "permitting" the participants to shape the ultimate direction and focus of a study is a strength of qualitative research (e.g., Marshall &

Rossman, 1989; Maxwell, 1996; Mertens, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 1995), this opinion is not necessarily shared by researchers who support other research paradigms (e.g., Wolcott, 1994). These researchers might interpret a change in the study's focus as an indication that both the researcher and the participants strayed off-topic. In the current study, some readers may perceive the inclusion of information about environmental and organisational factors as going beyond the original scope of the study.

Some readers may feel that the interviewing process went off-topic. There may be several reasons why participants spoke about environmental and organisational factors influencing effectiveness. First, my style of interviewing may have affected participants' responses. I believe that my role in this study was "to access the perspective of the person being interviewed" (Patton, 1990, p. 278) and that every piece of information was necessary for "the person being interviewed to bring [me] into his or her world" (Patton, 1990, p. 279). Therefore, my definition of off-topic may be less restrictive than that of other researchers. In addition, I do not believe I would have been demonstrating respect for the dignity of the participants had I prohibited them from telling their stories. Second, the interview questions may have lacked structure and focus, and therefore invited off-topic discussion. This could have been avoided through the use of a more highly structured interview.

It is important for the reader to remember that this study was not designed to be applicable to all law enforcement officers. For example, not every rank in the RCMP was represented in this study. Although the study description was e-mailed to all Members currently posted to Saskatchewan, no commissioned officers volunteered to participate. My intent was to reflect accurately each participants' perceptions, opinions, and personal beliefs about being an effective Member of the RCMP; it is an empirical question—one that can be

addressed in future research—whether Members of different ranks and years of service would share the perspectives analysed in this study. Since participation was on a voluntary basis, self-selection into the study is a potential source of bias; this is, however, a factor in all research with human participants. Although I was told 29 different stories, it is interesting to note that I found general agreement among all of the Members who were interviewed for this study.

EPILOGUE

Participants were able to identify specific characteristics of effective RCMP Members. These characteristics were similar to those reported by other researchers, and revolved around three key constructs (i.e., *The Intelligent Chameleon*, *I Am What I Do*, and *Going the Extra Mile*). However, participants also pointed out that effective Members need to combine these characteristics with the ability to cope with transitions. Given the ebb and flow of politics, the flux of fads, and the impact of technology on both crime and policing, this ability to cope with transitions and a tolerance for ambiguity may be key elements in effectiveness. It is important to note that the environmental and organisational influences upon effectiveness that were identified by the participants were not part of the original focus of the study and were unexpected results. This study was conducted during a demoralising time of government cutbacks to the Force and as a result some of the environmental and organisational factors reported by participants may have been influenced by the resulting uncertainties. These factors were only de-emphasised in the Results and Discussion section because the results involving personality traits were the original focus of the study; it is not intended to diminish their significance. A report devoted solely to these environmental and organisational factors, and their influences on Members' mental and physical health, would be warranted.

When all is said and done, we many not be able to specify *definitively* each individual trait that will lead to effective job performance, because the traits cannot be isolated from the diverse job requirements or from the point in time in which the job is being done. However, police selection boards may be able to screen for clusters of traits (such as those found in *The Intelligent Chameleon*, *I Am What I Do*, and *Going the Extra Mile*) that typically are

important for almost any police duty at any time. The LEADR may be an appropriate personality measure for police selection boards to use in accomplishing this goal, since it appears to capture the traits from these three constructs.

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APPENDIX A

Table of Contents

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 4, 1998

TO: Kathleen Lewis
Psychology Department

FROM: G.W. Maslany, Chair
Research Ethics Review Committee

Re: **Development of Basic Suitability Profiles for Canadian Law Enforcement Officers: Perceptions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police**

Please be advised that the committee has considered this proposal and has agreed that it is:

__X__ 1. Acceptable as submitted.
(Note: Only those applications designated in this way have ethical approval for the research on which they are based to proceed.)

_____ 2. Acceptable subject to the following changes and precautions (see attached):
Note: These changes must be resubmitted to the Committee and deemed acceptable by it prior to the initiation of the research. Once the changes are regarded as acceptable a new approval form will be sent out indicating it is acceptable as submitted.
Please address the concerns raised by the reviewer(s) by means of a supplementary memo.

_____ 3. Unacceptable to the Committee as submitted. Please contact the Chair for advise on whether or how the project proposal might be revised to become acceptable (ext. 4161/5186.)

G.W. Maslany

cc: C. Stark, supervisor

GM/ab/ethics2.dot

APPENDIX B

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Semi-structured Interview

To protect your anonymity during the interview, I will be asking you not to say your name while we're taping, or anyone else's name, or your race, sex, marital status, income, date of birth, exact number of years or exact location of service, rank, or whether you are currently an active or retired Member. If you do accidentally mention any potentially identifying information during the interview, I will leave out that information when I am transcribing these interviews.

SECTION I: DEMOGRAPHICS

Approximate number of years of service with the RCMP

Approximate number of years of service with another police force

SECTION II: HISTORY OF SERVICE

I'd like to learn about your experiences with the RCMP during your years of service. What I'd like to know is what provinces you have served in, approximately how long you were there, whether you were posted to urban or rural settings, and what type of duties you performed (e.g., patrol, K-9, undercover). You can either start from your most recent posting and work backwards or you can start with your first posting after graduation from the Academy and go forwards, whichever is easiest for you.

SECTION III: PREPARATION FOR JOB

When you began police work, were any of your duties a surprise? Was anything missing from training that would have made the transition easier?

SECTION IV: SUITABLE AND UNSUITABLE MEMBERS

As I've already mentioned, the purpose of this interview is to get your opinion about what characteristics make up a suitable Member and what characteristics make up an unsuitable Member.

People have different conceptions regarding what characteristics are most suitable in effective law enforcement officers.

1. From your experience and observations, what do you consider to be the essential elements of a person for effective work as an RCMP Member?
    - Character traits and other personality attributes (e.g., dealing with feelings; common sense)
    - Attitudes (e.g., job vs. way of life; emotional hardening; handling stress)
    - Family situation (e.g., marital status; children)
    - Skills (e.g., good with details and technicalities; physical fitness; firearms)

Why is that characteristic/attitude/skill needed? What situations do you need that characteristic/attitude/skill in? How do you develop that characteristic/ attitude/skill?

2. From your experience and observations, what characteristics do you consider go into the makeup of an unsuitable RCMP Member?
    - Character traits and other personality attributes (e.g., dealing with feelings; common sense)
    - Attitudes (e.g., job vs. way of life; emotional hardening; handling stress)
    - Family situation (e.g., marital status; children)
    - Skills (e.g., good with details and technicalities; physical fitness; firearms)

3. How soon after meeting fellow Members can you detect whether or not they are suitable for RCMP work?

4. How do you detect whether or not someone is suitable for RCMP work? What's the first or most important thing you look for?

5. If I had spoken to you 20 years ago, what characteristics would you have thought made up a suitable RCMP Member? What about ten years ago?

    Why do you think your opinion has changed?

6. If I had spoken to you 20 years ago, what characteristics would you have thought made up an unsuitable RCMP Member? What about ten years ago?

    Why do you think your opinion has changed?

7. There is a lot of talk about burnout in law enforcement, becoming jaded and cynical. Based on your personal experiences and observations of others, how do you guard against burning out? Guard against changing from a suitable Member to an unsuitable Member?

- Change in specialty (e.g., moved from K-9 to Internal Affairs)
- Change in posting (e.g., moved from small town Saskatchewan to Surrey, BC)
- Change in family situation (e.g., family gets fed up with the work hours)
- Change in personality (e.g., becomes emotionally hardened)
- Change in attitude (e.g., no longer feels he/she is making a difference)
- Change in skills (e.g., no longer as fit, doesn't practice shooting)
- Change in rank (or lack of change in rank)

8. If burnout does happen or someone does become jaded and cynical, what would it take for them to become a suitable again?

- Change in specialty (e.g., moved from K-9 to Internal Affairs)
- Change in posting (e.g., moved from small town Saskatchewan to Surrey, BC)
- Change in family situation (e.g., family gets fed up with the work hours)
- Change in personality (e.g., becomes emotionally hardened)
- Change in attitude (e.g., no longer feels he/she is making a difference)
- Change in skills (e.g., no longer as fit, doesn't practice shooting)
- Change in rank (or lack of change in rank)

9. Often I've been told that policing isn't just a job, it's a way of life...you can't just pretend you're a regular citizen on your time off. I would think that this would have an effect on their family. What attributes would a Member need in order to deal with this and help their family survive (deal with the demands of the job)?

    E.G., Have to work a lot of overtime. Family can't plan on you being there. If working vice may have to go around looking like a dirtbag, called out at any hour.

SECTION V: EFFECT OF SETTING

It strikes me that there may not be any such thing as a "typical" police officer, that individual differences might in fact be very important to consider when selecting people who would be most suitable for police work. For instance, it seems like different skills and attributes might be suitable for different locations of RCMP work.

1. What skills and attributes would be essential if the Member were posted to a Northern detachment?

2. What skills and attributes would be essential if the Member were posted to a detachment in BC's Lower Mainland?

3. What skills and attributes would be essential if the Member were posted to a rural detachment?

SECTION VI: EFFECT OF SPECIALTY

We've talked about the basic attributes and skills that are need for effective police work. Now, based on your own experiences and observations, do any specialties stand out as needing a different type of person in order to do the job well?

E.g., K-9, Vice, Commercial crimes, Interrogation, Blood Splatter analysis.

- Character traits and other personality attributes (e.g., dealing with feelings; common sense)
- Attitudes (e.g., job vs. way of life; emotional hardening; handling stress)
- Family situation (e.g., marital status; children)
- Skills (e.g., good with details and technicalities; physical fitness; firearms)

SECTION VII: THE SYSTEM

Now that we've talked about suitable and unsuitable Members and what factors may influence their suitability (e.g., job location), I'd like to find out how, or if, this is taken into account within the established RCMP hierarchy.

1. Are different skills and attributes required at different ranks? For example, a supervisor vs. a front line Member.
- Character traits and other personality attributes (e.g., dealing with feelings; common sense)
- Attitudes (e.g., job vs. way of life; emotional hardening; handling stress)
- Family situation (e.g., marital status; children)
- Skills (e.g., good with details and technicalities; physical fitness; firearms)

2. How do promotion procedures and processes take these suitability elements into account?

3. How do transfer procedures and processes take these suitability elements into account?

SECTION VIII: CHANGES IN POLICING

There appears to be a change in emphasis on how policing should be done. Some researchers who have never been police officers claim that the police must show the victim "that society does care and that the criminal justice system will treat them with respect, with understanding, and with sensitivity". These researchers also claim that "the police were not comfortable with and were generally ill prepared" to offer these services to victims and imply that legislation is required to ensure that law enforcement officers will treat victims of crime with respect and sensitivity. (Normandeau & Leighton, 1992)

1. This seems to have become the 'party line' in a number of police forces. What do you see as the implications of the first claim (repeat if necessary)? How realistic is the second claim (repeat if necessary)? How do you see police reacting to this being 'legislated'?

IF THEY SAY WE'VE ALWAYS DONE COMMUNITY POLICING
1. Then why all the fuss about community policing?
2. What are dinosaurs?

IF DON'T SAY WE'VE ALWAYS DONE COMMUNITY POLICING
1. Those who haven't or won't "get with the programme" are sometimes referred to as "dinosaurs". What's to become of these 'dinosaurs' and is there still a role for them to play these days?

SECTION IX: THE FUTURE OF THE RCMP

We've talked about your experiences in the past and the present, now I'd like to find out what you think will happen in the RCMP in the future.

1. What changes do you foresee for the future of RCMP work?

2. What people will be most suitable for this new type of work?

APPENDIX C

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Cover Letter sent to "F" Division

January 18, 1999

Dear Assistant Commissioner Busson:

The question "*what makes a suitable law enforcement officer?*" is an extremely important one. Law enforcement agencies do their best to ensure that only top-quality applicants are accepted for training and social scientists have conducted numerous research studies to discover who becomes a suitable law enforcement officer and who becomes an unsuitable officer.

I believe that there are many different combinations of characteristics that make some people more suitable law enforcement officers than other people. For example, two officers may be perceived as equally suitable, but for different reasons. I call these combinations "basic suitability profiles."

Under the supervision of Dr. Cannie Stark (Professor of Psychology, University of Regina, telephone: (306) 585-4221) I am conducting research with law enforcement officers as part of my Master's thesis work. The purpose of my study is to identify the behaviours, attitudes, lifestyles, and personality traits that are perceived as characteristic of suitable and unsuitable Canadian law enforcement officers. Since the officers themselves are exposed to a wide variety of behaviours and attitudes of other officers, they represent a potentially excellent source of information about these characteristics. With that in mind, I am currently contacting commanding officers from Western Canadian RCMP detachments to find out whether they would allow senior Members from their detachments to be notified about my study.

Members' participation in this study will involve a brief, one-on-one interview designed to allow them to express their personal understanding of the characteristics that make up suitable and unsuitable law enforcement officers. Since confidentiality is an important consideration, I have several safeguards in place to keep Members' responses anonymous. Details of these safeguards are found in the attached description of my proposed research. In addition, I have attached copies of consent forms and the University of Regina's ethical approval of this study.

I hope that after reviewing the attached information you decide that this project is a worthwhile one. Hopefully some of the senior Members in your detachment will volunteer to participate. Your detachment may also receive a summary of the study results if you wish. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact either Dr. Stark or me.

The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Regina (telephone: [306] 585-4775). I look forward to meeting with you and discussing any questions that you may have about permitting Members in your detachment to be notified about this study.

Sincerely,

Kathy Lewis, B.A.
Graduate Student
Department of Psychology
University of Regina
(306) 585-5326 phone
(306) 585-4827 fax

cc: Dr. C. Stark
Attachments

Cover Letter sent to Depot Division

January 18, 1999

Dear Dr. Bell:

Under the supervision of Dr. Cannie Stark (Professor of Psychology, University of Regina, telephone: (306) 585-4221) I am conducting research with law enforcement officers as part of my Master's thesis work. The purpose of my study is to identify the behaviours, attitudes, lifestyles, and personality traits that are perceived as characteristic of suitable and unsuitable Canadian law enforcement officers. Since the officers themselves are exposed to a wide variety of behaviours and attitudes of other officers, they represent a potentially excellent source of information about these characteristics. With that in mind, I am currently contacting commanding officers from Western Canadian RCMP detachments to find out whether they would allow senior Members from their detachments to be notified about my study.

I intend to interview 10 senior Members for the project. For the purpose of this project, I am defining "senior" as twenty or more years of experience with the RCMP. However, Members with fewer years of experience are also welcome to participate. Members' participation in this study will involve a brief, one-on-one interview designed to allow them to express their personal understanding of the characteristics that make up suitable and unsuitable law enforcement officers. The length of the interview will vary, depending on how much Members decide to say. However, I think an estimate of 60 minutes per interview is reasonable. The interviews would take place on Members' own time at a location acceptable to both Members and myself and thus would not interfere with their work duties.

Since confidentiality is an important consideration, I have several safeguards in place to keep Members' responses anonymous. Details of these safeguards are found in the attached description of my proposed research. In addition, I have attached copies of consent forms and the University of Regina's ethical approval of this study. The Academy may receive a summary of the study results if you wish. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact either Dr. Stark or me.

The study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Regina (telephone: [306] 585-4775). I look forward to meeting with you and discussing any questions that you may have about permitting Members at the Academy to be notified about this study.

Sincerely,

Kathy Lewis, B.A.
Graduate Student
Department of Psychology

University of Regina
(306) 585-5326 phone
(306) 585-4827 fax

cc: Dr. C. Stark
Attachments

Study Proposal sent to "F" and Depot Divisions

The question *"what makes a suitable law enforcement officer?"* is an extremely important one. Law enforcement agencies do their best to ensure that only top-quality applicants are accepted for training and social scientists have conducted numerous research studies to discover who becomes a suitable law enforcement officer and who becomes an unsuitable officer. The current selection procedures of law enforcement agencies tend to focus on identifying and *screening out* unsuitable applicants rather than identifying and *selecting in* suitable applicants. This focus is understandable and advantageous given the potential damage that could be caused by accepting an inappropriate applicant. Researchers, on the other hand, are not constrained by the screening concerns that face law enforcement recruiters. Unfortunately, these researchers also focus on the identification of unsuitable applicants rather than suitable applicants. Furthermore, the vast majority of researchers have focused on American law enforcement agencies. Thus, their results may not apply to Canadian law enforcement officers given the different demands of Canadian policing.

Focusing equally on the identification of both suitable and unsuitable traits in law enforcement officers may enhance screening procedures and research studies. I believe that there are many different combinations of characteristics that make some people more suitable law enforcement officers than other people. For example, two officers may be perceived as equally suitable, but for different reasons. I call these combinations "basic suitability profiles." The purpose of my study is to identify the behaviours, attitudes, lifestyles, and personality traits that are perceived as characteristic of suitable and unsuitable Canadian law enforcement officers. However, I will not rely on psychological test scores like most previous researchers. Those studies were typically carried out by psychologists who have little or no law enforcement experience, so their definitions of "suitable" and "unsuitable" may not coincide with those of law enforcement officers. This is a weakness of conducting research *on* law enforcement officers rather than *with* them. I believe that law enforcement officers themselves are the best sources of information about what constitutes a suitable or unsuitable officer. In order to identify the characteristics of suitable and unsuitable Canadian law enforcement officers, I plan to conduct brief one-on-one interviews with senior RCMP Members to get their opinions. I would then compare my results with those of previous researchers to see how well psychological test results compare with real-life observations.

Why should research of this nature be carried out with the RCMP? First, the vast majority of researchers have focused on American law enforcement agencies or, much less frequently, non-RCMP Canadian law enforcement agencies. As a result, other researchers' results may not be applicable to the RCMP. Second, unlike most law enforcement agencies, the RCMP provides training for a variety of urban and rural settings. As a result of this focus on training for multiple settings, RCMP Members are more likely to witness a wide range of both acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from both RCMP Members and officers from other agencies.

I would like to interview at least ten active or retired RCMP Members with twenty or more years of service with the RCMP. To cut down on costs, I am limiting myself to Members who are currently working or living in Western Canada. If you, as the

Detachment's Commanding Officer, give permission for Members to be invited to participate in this project I hope that you will describe this study in a memo that can be issued to senior Members in your Detachment. Members who are interested in participating can then contact me for additional information.

I will tell all interested Members that the purpose of the study is to uncover the characteristics of suitable and unsuitable Canadian law enforcement officers, and that their participation involves a one-on-one interview with me in which they are invited to express their own ideas of what makes a suitable and an unsuitable law enforcement officer; in other words, there will be full disclosure of the purpose of the research and no deception is involved. The exact length of the interview would vary depending on how much the Member wishes to say. Furthermore, Members will be told that participation in the study is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time without penalty (even after the interview), and that participation or refusal to participate cannot and will not have any effect on their standing within the RCMP.

All Members who are contacted will be given the opportunity to receive a summary of the research results regardless of whether or not they decide to participate. All participants will be informed that at the end of the study the RCMP (including your Detachment should you so desire) will be provided with a summary of the results involving anonymised group data (no individual will be able to be identified in any reports or presentations of the data). Participants will also be informed that the data will be analysed for my Master's thesis and that there is a strong possibility that the thesis will be submitted for publication in a psychological journal. Once again, I would only report anonymised group data.

I will set up a mutually agreeable interview time and location with Members who are interested in participating. Before the interview begins, Members will be asked to sign two consent forms. On the first form Members indicate consent to participate in the study. On the second form Members will be asked to consent to having the interview audiotaped (to be certain that their comments are correctly recorded). If Members are not comfortable with audiotaping, I can make hand-written notes of their interview responses.

Since confidentiality is an important consideration, I have several safeguards in place to keep Members' responses anonymous. First, all potential identifiers will be removed from the transcripts of the Members' interviews. Second, as described above, no individual data will ever be published. Data will only be reported in an anonymised group data format. Third, I will not report the race, sex, or exact posting location of any participating Member. Fourth, no data will be left on RCMP premises. All data and forms will be stored in secure locked filing cabinets at the University of Regina. Only my supervisor and I will have access to the original data of this study. Fifth, Members' names will only appear on their consent forms and these are kept separate from the study data. Sixth, after interview responses have been transcribed, Members will be given the opportunity to review their own transcript, at which point they may make either additions or deletions to the transcript. The original interview responses (either audiocassettes or hand-written notes) will be destroyed after Members have approved their respective transcripts. Any additional identifying information

will be stored securely for five years after the publication of the data. After this time this information will be destroyed.

APPENDIX D

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UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Development of Basic Suitability Profiles for Canadian Law Enforcement Officers:

Perceptions of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police

The purpose of this study is to discover what characteristics (e.g., behaviours, attitudes, lifestyles, personality traits) may be common among suitable and unsuitable law enforcement officers. The resulting "suitability profiles" could be used as part of another screening device for future RCMP applicants. Participation in this study will involve participating in a brief, semi-structured interview designed to allow you to express your personal understanding of the characteristics that make up suitable and unsuitable law enforcement officers.

Participation in this study is voluntary, and you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty. Your decision to participate or not to participate will have no effect on your standing with regard to the RCMP. If you choose to withdraw from the study after you have completed the interview, please contact Kathy Lewis to inform her of your decision.

The identity of participants will be kept confidential in a number of ways. First, all information collected as part of this study will be held in strictest confidence. Your own **individual** interview responses will not be released to the RCMP, although a summary of the results of the study (involving anonymized grouped data only) will be made available to the RCMP for its records. Second, your name will only appear on this consent form. Only your participant number will appear on your interview data. Third, no research data will be stored on RCMP premises. All data will be stored in locked filing cabinets in the Organizational and Social Psychology Research Unit at the University of Regina. The list of participant names will be kept in a separate locked filing cabinet at the Research Unit.

This project is being conducted by Kathy Lewis (Department of Psychology, University of Regina, telephone: 585-5326), a graduate student in Psychology. The project is supervised by Dr. Cannie Stark (Department of Psychology, University of Regina, telephone: 585-4221). This project was approved by the Research Ethics Committee, University of Regina. If research participants have any questions or concerns about their rights or treatment as participants, they may contact the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee, Dr. Maslany, at 585-4775. If participants have additional questions regarding the procedures and goals of the study, they may contact either Ms. Lewis or Dr. Stark.

I consent to participate in this study, and realize that this requires participation in a brief interview. I understand I am free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, and I have been provided with a copy of this consent form. Furthermore, I understand that all information will be held in strictest confidence by the researcher.

_____

Signature of participant

_____

Name of participant (please print)

Participant Number: _____

Date _____

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Consent to be Audiotaped

We would like your consent to tape record this interview. The reason for this is that we want to make sure that we are as accurate as possible so that we don't end up coming to irrelevant conclusions and possibly making recommendations that may make things more difficult for RCMP Members. Your responses will be merged with responses from other interviewees in order to develop a better understanding of the characteristics that are common among law enforcement officers. Your confidential participant number will be put on the tape; your name only appears on the Informed Consent Form and will not be put either on the tape or on the transcript of the tape.

We will provide you with a transcript of your interview so that you can check it for accuracy and make either additions or deletions. After you have approved the transcript, the original tape recording will be erased.

If you cannot give your consent to audiotaping, we would appreciate it if you would consent to me taking extensive notes during the interview—once again to ensure accuracy. These notes would be destroyed once you have approved the transcript.

I consent to having my interview audiotaped by Kathy Lewis. In addition, I understand that deciding not to consent to audiotaping of my interview does not automatically negate my involvement in this research and that my responses will instead be recorded as hand-written notes by the interviewer. Furthermore, I understand that the audiotape of my interview will be erased upon my approval of the transcript of the interview.

_____   _____
Signature of participant   Name of participant (please print)

_____
Date

UNIVERSITY OF REGINA

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

Request for Summary of Research Results

Please indicate below whether you would like to receive a summary of this research upon its completion. Requesting a summary of the research does not imply that you have consented to participate in this research. The projected completion date of this research is August 1999. If you would like a summary of this research but would prefer to provide a mailing address closer to the date of completion, please contact Kathy Lewis at a later date through mail, phone, or email as listed on the attached business card that is yours to keep.

Please feel free to give feedback of any kind to Kathy Lewis and/or Dr. Stark upon receipt of the summary.

_____ I am interested in receiving a summary of the results of this research but will contact Kathy Lewis at a later date to provide a mailing address.

_____ I am interested in receiving a summary of the results of this research and can provide a mailing address now.

Name & Mailing address: _____

_____

_____

_____

APPENDIX E

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Letter to Participants who Requested a Copy of Their Transcripts

[Date]

Dear [Member's name]:

As per our agreement, I am enclosing a copy of the transcript of our interview so that you can check it for accuracy. I encourage you to read over this transcript and make any changes that you see fit. I have already replaced identifying statements with more general ones. For example, if during the interview you mentioned an individual's name I replaced it with "(name)" or "(Brass)".

As we discussed before beginning the interview, you will never be connected, as an individual, to your particular interview. The precautions we are taking, such as removing names, are common practices in research of this nature – it isn't that either of us should be concerned about what was said.

If you have thought of any characteristics representative of suitable or unsuitable Members that we did not discuss during the interview, please feel free to write this information on the back of the transcript. As a transcript of a conversation, this document does not need to have perfect grammar and punctuation so don't worry about those aspects during your review.

When you have finished reviewing the transcript, please return it to me using the enclosed envelope. If you are able to do this within 2 weeks of receiving the transcript, I would greatly appreciate it. If at a later date you do think of something that should be added or deleted, you can always contact me at that time and I will make the changes.

I want to thank you again for agreeing to participate in this study. Your willingness to share your expertise and experiences with me is greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kathy Lewis
Department of Psychology
University of Regina
Office: (306) 585-5326
E-mail: lewisk@meena.cc.uregina.ca

Letter to Participants who did not Request a Copy of Their Transcripts

[Date]

Dear [Member's name]:

I want to thank you again for participating in the interview on [date]. Your willingness to share your expertise and experiences with me is greatly appreciated. I have now transcribed the interview (it's [number] pages long) but, as per your request, I will not be sending you a copy of the transcript.

Please remember that if you would like to make changes to your interview responses (either additions or deletions), you can contact me at any time and I will make the changes. If you have now decided that you would like to review the transcript, please let me know and I'll forward it to you.

As we discussed before beginning the interview, you will never be connected, as an individual, to your particular interview. The responses to all interviews will be grouped together during analyses and any identifying information (such as names of people or places) will be removed. The precautions we are taking, such as removing names, are common practices in research of this nature – it isn't that either of us should be concerned about what was said.

Again, thank you for your participation and if you should have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kathy Lewis

Department of Psychology
University of Regina
Office: (306) 585-5326
E-mail: lewisk@meena.cc.uregina.ca