

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF POLICE OFFICERS

CHAPTER LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the variables affecting the high cost of the police recruitment process
2. Explain what strategies police organizations can implement to mitigate the costs associated with the recruitment process
3. Compare carefully planned versus quick and easy strategies for the recruitment process to determine the short- and long-term consequences
4. Identify some of the laws and regulations that effect the recruitment and hiring processes of police organizations
5. Describe the pros and cons associated with these laws and regulations
6. Identify the basic types of police officer selection requirements and then explain how each of these factors influences the process for promotion
7. Compare and contrast the pros and cons associated with the use of assessment centers for the hiring and promotion of police personnel
8. Discuss common methods used to recruit and hire police chiefs and explain the effect(s) of these methods on the professionalization of the field of policing



Every police department is faced with the necessity of recruiting and selecting personnel to fill the complex roles discussed in previous chapters. Personnel must be recruited and selected to fill positions at three different levels: the entry level, the supervisory level, and the chief's level. "With the prolonged economic downturn, there are a greater number of high-caliber candidates who are seeking employment opportunities" (Orrick, 2012, p. 1). This finding is a reversal from recent years when police agencies struggled to locate qualified recruits. Most agree that this increase is based on the downturn in the economy and the employee reduction in corporate organizations. And police chiefs expect that those victims of corporate reductions should be well suited for public safety positions since many have experience in the workforce, were a part of a team, and are more mature about the world of work (Johnson, 2009). Because recruitment and selection are critical to the success of any agency, and virtually all promotions in police agencies are internal, it is imperative that police administrators attract qualified applicants. This is particularly true with respect to women and minorities, an issue that is addressed in detail in Chapter 12. As we begin this chapter, several questions come to mind: Is there a group of traits that characterize the ideal police officer? Have these traits been identified? Can this group of traits be developed in recruits?

■ THE IMPORTANCE OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The importance of productive recruitment and selection procedures cannot be overemphasized, regardless of the level involved. Poor recruitment and selection procedures result in hiring or promoting personnel who cannot or will not communicate effectively with diverse populations, exercise discretion properly, or perform the multitude of functions required of the police. Even in the twenty-first century, questions still exist "about whether or not current pre-employment screening techniques are capable of identifying that police candidate who can successfully complete the training academy and perform in an admirable manner on police patrol" (Wright, Dai & Greenbeck, 2011, p. 626). Table 4.1 presents a list of the traits necessary to be an effective police officer.

Recognizing the need for candidates with such traits, most departments expend considerable time and money in the process. The extent to which such recruitment efforts are successful largely determines the effectiveness and efficiency of any department.



PHOTO 4.1

A group of new officers from the police academy, at graduation day.

Table 4.1 ■ Traits and Principles of an Effective Police Officer

Trustworthiness	Readiness to lend assistance
Honesty	Ability to compromise for greater good
Leadership	Ability to challenge unlawful orders or authority
Confidentiality	Obedience to lawful and reasonable orders
Acceptance of responsibility for self and others	Perspective
Acceptance of criticism	Intolerance of corruption
Acceptance of extra responsibility without compensation	Teamwork
Analytical, without tendency to jump to conclusions	Rejection of unearned personal praise

Source: From “Sixteen traits recruiters are looking for,” by P. Patti, 2009, *Police Link: The Nation’s Law Enforcement Community*. Available online at www.policelink.com/benefits/articles/7602.

■ **Baby Boomer Generation:**

People born between 1946 and 1964

■ **Generation X:**

People born between 1964 and 1984

■ **Generation Y:**

People born between 1979 and 1997

Many argue police departments are recruiting and selecting a new breed of police officer. “For the first time in history, we have four generations working side-by-side in the modern workplace. They consist of Traditionalists, Baby Boomers, Generation X and Millennials (also known as Generation Y or Nexters)” (Murgado, 2011, p. 18). As a result, police agencies have begun addressing issues related to retiring baby-boomer officers while experiencing the addition of Generation X and Y police officers. “There are differences between the old (traditional) police officer and the new, based on the experiences of the individuals of the *baby-boomer generation* and those of *Generation X and Y*” (McCafferty, 2003, p. 79). As an example, compare the following discussions provided by two police officers:

This new generation of cops just doesn’t get it...they want it all but they don’t want to work for it. All they do is text and play video games.

Damn this guy’s a dinosaur . . . will someone please tell him this isn’t the military and I don’t care how hard it was 20 years ago. (Murgado, 2011, p. 20)

While generation gaps are not new, they are much more complex today than those previously experienced (Sanders & Stefaniak, 2008). For example, many police officers who lived in the baby-boomer generation had been in the military and were used to discipline and a hierarchy of authority. They had the ability to cope with stress in the crucible of military training and service and fit readily into the paramilitary structure that defined police organizations (McCafferty, 2003). However, according to McCafferty (2003), the Generation X and Y recruits have been exposed to modern liberalism, the passage of affirmative-action laws, drug use, increased civil disobedience, and the breakdown of both the family and authority. These differences often create conflicts in values between generations or between the veteran baby-boomer officers and the Generation X and Y police officers. Notwithstanding these differences, Hubbard, Cromwell, and Sgro (2004) believed future generations could have a very positive role in police organizations.

The exciting news is that Generation Y behaviors and career choices are driven first and foremost by their quest for opportunities to play important roles in meaningful work that helps others. This is perhaps the most socially conscious generation since the 1960s and they are exhibiting strong signs of altruism already. (p. 44)

Of course, these differences should be considered in light of the fact that Generation X is now well established in the workforce (40%) compared to Baby-Boomer employees (45%) and Generation X employees are moving into positions of power and control (Eckberg, 2008). In other words, in many departments Generation X police officers are now supervising baby-boomer officers. This has resulted in several perceptual differences related to management style and organizational success. For example, according to Marston (2007), since World War II each generation has made two assumptions about the younger generation entering the workforce:

1. Senior generations assume that younger generations will measure “success” using the same criteria.
2. Senior generations believe that younger workers should “pay their dues” following the same paths to achieve the same levels of success (Marston, 2007, as quoted in Sanders & Stefaniak, 2008, p. 4).

However, most agree that new police officers are different and do not measure success in the same terms as previous generations, nor do they believe in paying their dues (Sanders & Stefaniak, 2008).

Raines (2002) identified the following generational differences of Generation Y: They have a different work ethic, are influenced by the digital media, regard the threat of terrorism as a fact of life, and live in a global community that is constantly connected. Furthermore, Lundborn (2002) concluded that Generation Y employees are confident, idealistic, eager, and passionate about their quality of life. Sanders and Stefaniak (2008) reported that Generation Y police personnel “who might value their lifestyle and personal time or commitments over work obligations and/or upward mobility” (p. 5) have the potential to pose a conflict for police organizations. Today’s police organizations never close and often require personnel to continue to serve beyond their shift, to replace missing personnel or to be recalled to duty because of an emergency. Israelsen-Hartley (2008) described the new generation of police officers’ desires as “to be efficient, get the job done and get on to the next part of their lives” (p. 1), but often this attitude clashes with police work, which does not follow an 8:00 to 4:30 schedule.

Beck and Wade (2004) argued that a systematically different way of working exists that is attributable to maturing with video games between Generation Y employees and the Baby Boomers (Sanders & Stefaniak, 2008). Harrison (2007), a retired police chief, believed the traits associated with video games will have a positive effect on policing and will allow those agencies that recruit and retain these new generation officers to thrive. Specifically, he cited the following characteristics associated with Generation Y police applicants:

- Work in teams
- Perform work of significance
- Have flexibility in their daily environment
- Engage in activities consistent with heroism (Harrison, 2007, p. 5)

The strong tradition of service by the police to the community could be a powerful motivator for the new generation of police officers. “Many police agencies, through the evolution of community policing, are seeking a new type of candidate to keep pace with their broadening responsibilities and the expansion of community partnerships” (Schapiro, 2008, p. 1). Schapiro (2008) believed it is important that police agencies market law enforcement as an “exciting profession that offers adventure and a spirit of service” (p. 2). Realizing many police agencies have been slow to recognize the changes that accompany today’s police applicant, Delord (2006) believed the new generation of police officers needs to feel they will be included in decision-making, be recognized for their achievements, and will work for an organization with high moral values.

■ THE PROCESS OF RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

It must be pointed out that in many cases the recruitment, selection and promotion of officers, chiefs, and supervisors is done in large part by those outside of policing. That is, police and fire commissioners, personnel departments, or civil service board members often determine who is eligible for hiring and promotion, and assessment teams, city managers, mayors, and council members typically determine the selection of chief. In the former case, police officials may select officers from among those on the eligibility list and, in the case of promotions, have a good deal of input—as we shall see later. Still, much of the recruitment and selection of police personnel is done by civilians with varying degrees of input from police administrators.

It is important to note that some form of the recruitment and selection process recurs throughout the career of an officer. Once selected for an entry-level position by a specific department, the officer is likely to be involved in selection procedures involving appointment to different assignments (detective, juvenile officer, crime technician, patrol officer, etc.), to different ranks (via promotional examinations), to different schools or training programs, and so on. For some, the process ends with their selection as chief; for others, the process continues as they seek the position of chief in other agencies; and for other individuals, the process begins and ends at the rank of patrol officer.

Nonetheless, even for the latter, this recruitment/selection process is repeated over and over throughout their careers, even if they are not a direct participant in the process. That is, some officers make a conscious choice to remain patrol officers and to not seek opportunities for training. These officers are important in understanding the recruitment and selection process of promotions because they may become perceived as outside of the pool of candidates to be recruited for such advancement or training. In other words, promoted officers must learn to deal with career patrol persons and vice versa. An examination of the various requirements and strategies employed in the recruitment process reveals some of the difficulties involved in selecting personnel who will both fill the official vacancy and meet the situation-specific needs of various departments. However, we need to understand the legal context in which such processes occur before we turn our attention to recruitment and selection at the various levels.

Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action

For most of our history, American employers, both public and private, have felt relatively free to hire and promote employees according to whatever criteria they established and, similarly, to exclude from employment and promotion those they deemed, for whatever reason, to be unfit. This was true even though the U.S. Constitution, in the First, Fifth, and Fourteenth Amendments, prohibits deprivation of employment rights without due process of law. Further, the Civil Rights Acts of 1866, 1870, and 1871 (based on the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments) prohibited racial discrimination in hiring and placement as well as deprivation of equal employment rights under the cover of state law (Bell, 2004).

Still, it wasn't until 1964 and the passage of the Civil Rights Act of that year, specifically Title VII of the act, that many employers began to take equal employment rights seriously. It should be noted that the main motivation of employment discrimination laws is to prevent employers from treating applicants and employees adversely on the basis of several characteristics that in many cases were determined at birth or involve characteristics individuals should not be asked to change. "Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 protects individuals against employment discrimination on the basis of race and color as well as national origin, sex and religion" (Find Law, 2002, p. 1). Furthermore, "discrimination on the basis of an *immutable characteristic* associated with race, such as skin color, hair texture or certain facial features violated Title VII, even though not all members of the race share the same characteristic (Find Law, 2002, p. 1). In addition, the Office of Personnel Management has interpreted the prohibition of discrimination based on conduct to include discrimination based on sexual orientation.

■ **Immutable Characteristics:**
Characteristics determined at birth or characteristics individuals should not be asked to change

In fact, certain personnel actions cannot be based on attributes or conduct that does not adversely affect employee performance, such as marital status and political affiliation (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], 2009). The Equal Employment Opportunity Act (EEOA) established a commission (EEOC) to investigate complaints of discrimination. Following these changes in federal law, states also began passing such laws in the form of fair employment statutes (Bell, 2004).

In general terms, these laws hold that **discrimination** occurs when requirements for hiring and promotion are not *bona fide* (i.e., they are not actually related to the job) and when a **disparate impact** occurs to members of a minority group. A disparate impact involves an employment policy or practice that, although seemingly neutral, adversely impacts a person or group (U. S. Department of Commerce, 2010). Federal legislation requires that all employers with more than 15 employees refrain from policies and procedures that discriminate against specified categories of individuals (EEOC, 2009). The burden of demonstrating that requirements are job-related falls on the employer, while the burden of showing a disparate impact falls on the complainant. For an employer to be successfully sued in this regard, both conditions must be met. That is, it is possible to have job requirements that have a disparate impact but are nonetheless valid. For example, if it could be demonstrated that police officers routinely have to remove accident victims from vehicles in order to avoid the possibility of further injury due to fire or explosion, and if this job requirement also eliminated from policing women or other categories of applicants, the requirement would not be discriminatory under the law. If, however, these actions are seldom if ever required of police officers, the requirement would be discriminatory. We further discuss these requirements later in this chapter, but it is important to understand here the context within which charges of discrimination are filed and decided.

The combined impact of equal employment opportunity laws and executive orders eventually came to be realized by government agencies, among them the police. Prior to the early 1970s, most police departments employed predominantly white men, a practice that became the focus of numerous legal challenges. These challenges came in the form of both court actions and complaints to the EEOC alleging discrimination on the part of employers.

During this same period, the concept of **affirmative action** gained prominence. Affirmative action programs have two goals. First, they are intended to prevent discrimination in current hiring and promotional practices. Second, they may be used to help remedy past discrimination in hiring and promotion.

Equal employment opportunity and affirmative action programs may be implemented in a number of different ways. First, some employers voluntarily establish affirmative action programs because they recognize the importance of hiring without regard to race, creed, or ethnicity. Second, some employers implement such programs when threatened with legal action based on alleged discrimination. Third, some employers fight charges



PHOTO 4.2

Police forces across the country have diversified greatly since the 1970s in large part due to the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972.

■ **Discrimination:**

Treating people differently because of their race, gender, religion, or national origin; involves behavior that, in its negative form, excludes all members of a certain group from some rights, opportunities, or privileges

■ **Disparate Impact:**

Involves an employment policy or practice that, although seemingly neutral, adversely impacts a person or group

■ **Affirmative Action:**

Programs that are intended to prevent discrimination in present hiring and promotion practices and are used to remedy past discrimination in hiring and promotion

■ **Consent Decree:**
Agreement related to an employer achieving a balance in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender in the workforce

of discrimination in the courts and are found to be in violation. When this occurs, employers are in danger of losing federal financial support and often agree to develop and implement affirmative action programs in order to prevent this loss—with the use of a *consent decree* designed to achieve some sort of balance in terms of race or ethnicity and gender in the workforce. In other cases, the courts impose plans and timetables on employers and can impose severe sanctions (fines) if the goals of the plans are not met within the specified time period.

The use of consent decrees has led to a good deal of confusion and widespread ill feelings on behalf of employers and white, male employees. On the one hand, the EEOA prohibits discrimination based on race, creed, religion, sex, or national origin and states that employers will not be forced to hire less well-qualified employees over more well-qualified employees. On the other hand, as part of a consent decree or out of court settlement, quotas have been used as a remedy in discrimination law suits (Pincus, 2003). In most cases, there must be a compelling state interest to justify a quota, which is often only applied when no other policy is likely to work (Pincus, 2003).

The most recent decision by the United States Supreme Court concerning the issue of quotas was *Ricci v. DeStefano*, in which the Court found that employment law only rarely permits quotas to remedy racial imbalance (Thernstrom, 2009). The case involved 58 white, 23 African American, and 19 Hispanic firefighters who tested to determine eligibility for promotion to captain and lieutenant. The city of New Haven civil service board refused to certify the results, denying promotions to those who had earned them. The tests generated a disparate impact since the results of the African American and Hispanic applicants were below the white candidates for the open positions (Epstein, 2009). The Court ruled that the New Haven civil service board violated Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Burns (2009) believes *Ricci v. DeStefano* indicates that employers should carefully evaluate the likelihood that a test (or any method of selection) may have disproportionate adverse effects on certain groups, whether a less discriminatory method of testing or selection is available, and how accurately the test or method of selection is in correctly selecting those employees who are “best able to perform the required duties and responsibilities of the relevant job” (p. 3). This is particularly important for police agencies that require applicants to perform a variety of testing procedures prior to appointment as a police officer.

For years, police administrators complained that they had been forced to hire minority employees who did not meet the standards established to improve police services. Furthermore, thousands of white, male applicants for police positions complained that although their test results proved they were better qualified than minority candidates, the latter were hired or promoted. On individual consideration, both of these complaints are justified, but they must also be viewed in light of the goals of affirmative action—especially the goal of remedying past discrimination.

In essence, white men applying for police positions or promotions in some areas have suffered the same fate that their African American and Hispanic counterparts suffered over the past three centuries in American society. The shift from discriminatory employment practices in policing, as well as in many other areas, has been slow and sometimes painful, yet it is necessary in order to maximize the number of qualified applicants and to make police agencies representative of the communities they serve. As Cox and Fitzgerald (1996) noted, the police will not be viewed as understanding community problems unless they have members reflecting the community’s perspective.

Many agencies have made and are making deliberate attempts to hire and promote minority group members for the obvious advantages that result. The following list illustrates that certain requirements must be met to avoid charges of discrimination in employment.

- Requirements must be valid
- Requirements must be reliable

- Testing must be consistent
- Testing must accurately reflect the job
- Rating errors and bias must be monitored (Billikopf, 2006)

While several federal laws exist that prohibit discrimination in any aspect of employment, three are of particular interest to police agencies. We previously mentioned Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and will discuss additional aspects of this law. In addition, we also review the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Age Discrimination Act and how these laws apply to police organizations.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII prohibits job discrimination based on the specific characteristics of a person that are determined at birth and other characteristics applicants should not be expected to alter (race, gender, age, national origin, disability, religion). Besides these characteristics, a number of employer practices can also become violations of Title VII. For example, it is illegal to discriminate against an individual because of birthplace, ancestry, culture, or linguistic characteristics common to a specific ethnic group (EEOC, 2009). In addition, requiring that employees speak only English on the job may violate Title VII unless the organization shows that the requirement is necessary to conduct business. While police departments require English, many have also established minimum competency levels for Spanish.

With respect to religion under Title VII, employers are required to reasonably accommodate the religious beliefs of an employee or prospective employee, unless doing so would impose an undue hardship on the organization (EEOC, 2009). For example, in *Fraternal Order of Police Newark Lodge #2 v. City of Newark*, the federal appeals court held that the police department “could not enforce a no beard policy on two Muslim police officers who initiated an exemption request on religious grounds” (Ruiz & Hummer, 2007, p. 111).

Title VII also involves a number of broad prohibitions concerning sex discrimination. Agencies must ensure that pregnant applicants and employees are afforded the full protection of the law, policies, and practices with respect to evaluating applicants for positions within the department (District of Columbia, 2008).

Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)

The ADEA provides for a broad ban concerning age discrimination. An age limit may only be specified in the rare circumstance where age has been proven to be a *bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ)* (EEOC, 2009). A *bona fide* occupational qualification is a requirement that is necessary to the normal operation of an organization. As an example, Elk Grove Village, Illinois (2008) only hired police officers that at the time of application were between 21 and 35 years of age, or up to 40 years of age if the applicant was already certified as a full-time police officer. In most cases, police agencies are allowed to restrict the age of applicants if they pass the two-step test for analyzing BFOQs that pertain to certain age groups. In other words, “an employer must show that there is either (1) a substantial basis for believing that all or nearly all the employees above a certain age lack the qualifications for the position in question; or (2) that reliance on an age classification is necessary because it is highly impractical for the employer to insure by individual testing that its employees will have the necessary qualifications for the job” (Rhodes, 2002, p. 1). In most cases, the approach involved in restricting the age for police applicants or setting a mandatory retirement age requires the employer to “show a relationship, usually empirical, between age and increased risk to public safety; age and physical ability, agility, or decline; or age and risk of personal injury or trauma” (Landy & Salas, 2005, pp. 266–267).

■ Bona Fide Occupational Qualification:

Requirement that is necessary to the normal operation of an organization

The Americans With Disabilities Act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was enacted in 1990. A discussion of the ADA is in order because there is little doubt that many police agencies could be involved in litigation as a result of the act.

■ **Qualified Individual with a Disability:**

Interpreted to mean the job applicant must be able to perform the essential elements of the job with or without reasonable accommodation

■ **Reasonable Accommodation:**

Refers to new construction or modification of existing facilities and work schedules, as long as the modification does not cause the agency undue hardship

The ADA makes it illegal to discriminate against persons with certain categories of disabilities, limits blanket exclusions, and requires that the selection process deal with individuals on a case-by-case basis. To be protected under the ADA, the individual must have a disability or impairment (physical or mental), or must have a record of such disability, or must be regarded as having such a disability, and must be otherwise qualified for the position in question. **Qualified Individual with a Disability** means that the applicant must be able to perform the essential elements of the job with or without reasonable accommodation. **Reasonable accommodation** refers to new construction, modifying existing facilities, work schedules, or equipment, as long as such modification does not cause the agency undue hardship (significant expense or difficulty). In most cases, the ADA applies to persons who have impairments, and these must substantially limit major life activities such as seeing, hearing, speaking, walking, breathing, performing manual tasks, learning, caring for oneself, and working (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2002). For example, the Illinois State Police agreed to eliminate a policy that automatically excluded applicants for police cadet jobs who used assistive devices such as hearing aids, to attenuate hearing loss, or insulin pumps to control diabetes mellitus (U.S. Department of Justice, 2011). The state agreed to individually assess applicants who used hearing aids or insulin pumps to determine their eligibility for hiring. Additionally, a person with epilepsy, paralysis, HIV infection, AIDS, or a substantial learning disability is covered, but an individual with a minor, nonchronic condition of short duration such as a sprain, broken arm, or the H1N1 flu would not be covered. Examples of accommodation include building ramps to provide access to buildings or work sites, designating parking spaces for those with disabilities, installing elevators, and redesigning work stations and restrooms.

The ADA divides the employment process into three phases: the application/interview phase, the postconditional offer stage, and the working stage (Colbridge, 2001). During the first phase, the ADA limits inquiries to nondisability qualifications of applicants. Employers may not ask about prior drug addiction, for example, because that is covered under ADA. They may ask about current illegal drug use because that is not covered under ADA. Similarly, applicants may be asked how they would perform job-related functions, as long as all applicants are asked the same question. “Applicants indicating they would need reasonable accommodation to perform job-related tasks must be provided such accommodation unless doing so would create an undue hardship for the employer” (Colbridge, 2001, p. 25).

The psychological examination may be viewed as part of the medical examination if it is used to uncover recognized mental disorders and, therefore, violates the ADA because the ADA protects those with mental impairments who are otherwise job-qualified. In such cases, the psychological test, like the medical examination, should be delayed until after an employment offer is made. “Psychological tests dealing with honesty, tastes, or habits of the applicant are not considered medical examinations” (Colbridge, 2001, p. 26) and may be used at the application/interview stage.

Once a conditional offer of employment has been made, employers may ask about disabilities in order to determine whether reasonable accommodation is necessary and feasible. If it is necessary and reasonable, such accommodation must generally be provided. Medical examinations also may be required during the postconditional phase, and again, reasonable accommodation for disabilities must be provided (Colbridge, 2001). In most cases, police departments can administer tests that measure an applicant’s ability to perform job-related tasks or physical fitness tests before any job offer is made (U.S. Department of Justice, 2006). These tests are not considered to be medical exams; additionally, any test that screens out a police applicant with disabilities must be job

related and consistent with business necessity. Also, it is not a violation of the ADA to ask a police applicant to provide a certification from a medical doctor that he or she can safely perform the physical agility test. Following employment, the ADA requires that disability-related inquiries be made only if they are job related, and reasonable accommodation is again required.

The EEOC is charged with enforcing the ADA. If the commission determines that discrimination does not exist, the claim is dismissed (although the complainant still has the right to sue the employer). When the commission determines that there is reasonable cause to believe discrimination has occurred, it will seek a negotiated settlement or bring a civil action against the employer (Colbridge, 2000).

Let us now turn our attention to the entry-level requirements that have been established for police officers and the recruitment and selection process at this level.

■ ENTRY-LEVEL RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

According to Alpert and Dunham (1997),

It is difficult to emphasize sufficiently the importance of recruitment, selection and training. After all, a police agency is no better than those who perform the day-to-day tasks. Police work is a labor-intensive service industry, in which roughly 85 percent of the agencies' budgets are devoted to these personnel costs . . . the most significant investment police departments make is in the recruiting, selection and training of their personnel. (p. 40)

One important personnel expense for any organization is the cost associated with attracting qualified applicants to fill vacancies. As indicated previously, this is certainly true in policing, which is labor-intensive. The costs of recruitment begin with the advertising process and, hopefully, end with the successful completion of the probationary period. In other words, the objective of the recruitment process is to select potential police officers who can not only meet entry-level requirements, but also successfully complete training academy requirements and the probationary period. While recruit qualifications vary tremendously in different departments, some general requirements and concerns can be discussed.

The objective in advertising is to attract from the total pool of potential applicants for police work those, and only those, who are both qualified and seriously interested in policing. The more applicants attracted who do not meet both of these requirements, the more expensive the recruiting process. Let us assume, hypothetically, that the cost of processing one police recruit from application to placement on the eligibility list is \$1,000. Suppose the agency attracts 50 applicants for one available vacancy. And suppose that 40 of the 50 applicants pass all the tests given in the early stages of the selection process. When the agency conducts background investigations of those who have successfully completed the tests, however, it is discovered that 10 of the applicants have prior felony convictions. In essence, the municipality has wasted the money spent on processing these individuals because in most jurisdictions they could not be hired as police officers regardless of their performance on the tests. Again, suppose that 10 more applicants have no interest in police work once they discover something about its nature and would not accept a police position if it were offered. The time and money spent on these individuals is also wasted. Now there are 20 applicants remaining, but the agency has only one vacancy. As you can see, the cost of recruiting the one individual who is selected is quite high.

To some extent, these difficulties are inherent in the recruitment/selection process, and to some extent they may be offset by the establishment of an eligibility list (if there are other vacancies within a relatively short period of time). That is, those involved in the hiring process probably cannot determine at the outset who will and will not decide to

accept the position if it is offered, and if several of the people who qualify are hired, the costs may be reduced. Costs also may be reduced, however, by developing an advertising campaign that clearly states the requirements of the position and that, to the extent possible, accurately describes the duties to be performed. Thus, a statement that those with prior felony convictions need not apply might be part of the advertisement. While this does not guarantee that such persons will not apply, it at least indicates to them that they have no chance of being hired if discovered and probably prevents many with prior convictions from applying. The point is that the more accurately the qualities sought are described, the less likely it is that large numbers of unqualified people will apply, thus helping to keep recruiting costs as low as possible. At the same time, however, advertisements must be designed to attract as many qualified applicants as possible. Ashcroft, Daniels and Hart (2004) recommended “improving pay and benefits, recruiting officers with the right skills for community policing, changing job roles to enhance officers’ satisfaction, improving career development, changing residency requirements, and creating incentives for retirement-eligible officers to remain with the agency” (p. 9). Describing the benefits associated with the available position is important, but an advertisement should also indicate that the police department is an equal opportunity employer and women and minorities are invited to apply. Including these statements is especially necessary in police recruitment because police departments, for reasons detailed previously, have traditionally been viewed by both minorities and women as basically white, male domains. Advertising campaigns must take this fact into account, and advertisements should be placed in magazines and on Internet sites likely to be read by women and minorities as well as the more traditional professional journals and newspapers. Milgram (2002) believed police departments can counteract the negative messages women receive about policing careers with strong positive messages:

- We have women officers who are role models in the department
- We want women to apply
- We welcome women
- Women are leaders in the department and upward career paths are available
- Women have career opportunities in all areas of the agency, including special operations
- Law enforcement offers a good salary and benefits (Milgram, 2002, p. 2).

Further recruiting efforts may be directed at college campuses, high schools, and minority neighborhoods. Conducting orientation sessions for applicants that provide a realistic picture of police work in the different departments is another valuable tool in “selecting out” those who find they have no interest in such work. Many police departments utilize the Internet to advertise vacancies, and some allow applications over the Internet. Those seeking jobs as police officers can also use the web to learn how to take entry-level tests (Brandon & Lippman, 2000). Although those responsible for recruiting police personnel have made strides in these areas in recent years, there is still much to be done. The bottom line is that if those charged with hiring police officers want to have representative police departments in order to provide the served communities with the best services, they must attract the best qualified candidates.

When the application deadline indicated in the advertisements has been reached, the applications that have been filed must be analyzed. The better the application form, the easier the analysis. The form might request information on prior experience in policing, prior criminal convictions, educational background, reasons for the interest in police work, prior drug and alcohol use, and other information considered pertinent by specific departments. It should also provide some indication of the applicant’s writing ability. Some departments have found that charging a nominal fee for the application eliminates some applicants who might simply be testing the waters, and detailed application forms that request specific information probably also eliminate some who are using narcotics,

some who have prior felony convictions, and so on. The more of these applicants eliminated at this stage, the less costly the recruiting process. However, in today's tight market, charging an application fee, especially when not all agencies do so, may not be in the department's best interests.

As we have stated, standards of selection for police officers were virtually nonexistent in the early days of American policing. When standards did begin to emerge, they often required little more than allegiance to a particular politician or political party. The past two decades have seen an increase in the concern with establishing minimum entry-level requirements for police officers, and only in the past several years has what has been called the *Multiple-Hurdle Procedure* become common (Decicco, 2000). The term refers to a battery of tests or hurdles that must be successfully completed before a recruit can become a police officer. In the following sections, we critically analyze each of these tests, which are generally divided into the following categories:

1. Status tests
2. Physical tests
3. Mental tests
4. Tests of morality
5. Tests of ability to communicate

It should be pointed out that the different types of tests sometimes overlap, but we discuss each independently.

Status Tests

Status tests have to do with areas such as citizenship, possession of or ability to obtain a driver's license, residency, service in the military, educational level, and age. Police officers are required to be citizens in most cases, though some court challenges to this requirement are being made. Is citizenship a *bona fide* job requirement? For instance, can a citizen perform police functions better than a permanent resident who has passed a test covering the U.S. and state constitutions? As an example, in order to become a Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) police officer you must be a U.S. citizen or a citizen of the Northern Mariana Islands (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2009). And in order to serve as a Los Angeles, California police officer, a candidate is required to be a U.S. citizen or a permanent resident alien who, in accordance with the requirement of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service, is eligible and has applied for citizenship (Los Angeles Police Department, 2012). These requirements are consistent with The Immigration and Reform Control Act, which requires employers to assure that employees hired are legally authorized to work in the United States (EEOC, 2009). The requirement that the applicant has or is able to obtain a driver's license seems likely to be upheld for obvious reasons. Some municipalities and states require that newly hired personnel be residents, or be willing to become residents, of the jurisdiction involved. "This requirement, too, has been and continues to be subject to court battles, and a majority of jurisdictions have modified the requirement" (Gaines & Kappeler, 2008, p. 110). Many suburban police departments, for example, simply require that officers live no more than 20 or 30 minutes from their place of duty.

Questions concerning prior military service arise because bonus points (veterans' preference points) may be added to the test scores of applicants if they have such prior service, thus affecting the final eligibility list. For instance, the Philadelphia Police Department (2012b) will add 10 points to the raw score of a veteran's entrance examination. Most departments have minimum educational standards that must be met by applicants—typically possession of a high school diploma or its equivalent—and these standards have been upheld by the courts. Many departments recognize educational levels with preference points. For example, the Philadelphia Police Department (2012a)

Multiple-Hurdle Procedure:

A battery of tests or hurdles that must be completed before a recruit can become a police officer

Status Test:

Related to an applicant's citizenship, possession of or ability to obtain a driver's license, residency requirement, and age and education level

will add one point to the final test score if the highest degree attained is an associate degree, two points for a bachelor's degree and three points for a master's degree.

Finally, the vast majority of departments require that applicants be adults (the age of majority) at the time of employment and not be more than 36 to 40 years of age at the time of initial employment in policing. The minimum age requirement makes sense in terms of maturity and meeting statutory requirements for entering certain types of establishments. The upper age limit has been called into question as a result of the Age Discrimination Act of 1990, which prohibits age discrimination with respect to those over age 40. Consequently, the Memphis (TN) Police Department's minimum age for applicants is 21 years of age, however there is no maximum age limit (Memphis Police, 2012). Whether the applicant meets the status requirements can be determined largely from the application form.

Physical Tests

Physical tests include physical agility tests, height-weight proportionate tests, vision tests, and medical examinations.

Physical Agility Tests

Physical agility tests are used by about 80% of police agencies to determine whether applicants demonstrate appropriate agility, conditioning, strength, and endurance to perform police work (Decicco, 2000). These tests must be job-related, and many of these tests have been eliminated as a result of court challenges. Tests of coordination and actual agility can typically be shown to be job-related, whereas tests based on sheer strength are more difficult to validate. Cordner and Cordner (2011) recommended that physical standards be revisited "to ensure that advances in technology or changes in the way the job is done have not rendered some of them obsolete (and therefore not defensible as BFOQs)" (p. 221). Formerly, many departments required that applicants complete a precise number of pull-ups or push-ups in a specified time period. It is difficult to

justify such tests on the basis of job-relatedness, however. How often does a police officer have to do pull-ups in the performance of his duty? For example, Cordner and Cordner (2011) believed that "candidates (male or female) who lack sufficient upper body strength to pass the tests on the basis of strength alone may be taught techniques by which the same objectives can be accomplished by relying on lower body strength and/or better techniques" (p. 222).

As previously discussed, all testing of police applicants should be valid, reliable, consistent, and accurately reflect the required duties of today's police officer. However, when police agencies conduct research to validate physical agility testing protocol they usually employ job analysis

PHOTO 4.3

A candidate at the Police Academy attempts to scale a wooden fence during the agility portion of the Police Academy Entrance Training Test.



techniques that suffer from validity problems (Lonsway, 2004). “Research that documents what an officer does on the job does not tell us anything about whether the officer should have done it, what happens when the officer decides not to do it, and whether it could have been done with the assistance of another officer (Lonsway, 2004, p. 6).

Many police departments require applicants to complete a *simulation* or *work sample test*. These tests involve “measuring job skills by using samples of behavior under realistic job-like conditions” (Landy & Conte, 2009, p. 151). Police officer applicants often complete these tests, which involve pushing a police vehicle a required distance, firing an unloaded firearm a certain number of times, or searching a mock crime scene. However, in some cases these types of tests have been found deficient due to lack of adequate job analysis, lack of relationship between the job and test performance, and the arbitrary nature of the cutoff score (Med-Tox Health Services, 2009). Nonetheless, if properly constructed, these types of tests can be valuable in the screening of police applicants.

Currently in police applicant testing, those standards that prove to be job related and consistent with a business necessity and that represent the least discriminatory alternative to selection are likely to be upheld by courts (Lonsway, 2004).

■ Simulation or Work Sample Test:

Measures job skills of an applicant using samples of behavior under realistic job-like conditions

Height-Weight Proportionate Tests

Height-weight proportionate tests have replaced traditional height requirements, which eliminated most women and many minority group members from policing. Such tests make sense in the context of police work and the previously discussed agility requirements. As originally employed, these tests seemed largely superfluous because few departments required that proportionate height and weight be maintained after initial employment, but many, if not most, departments now test for proportionate height and weight on a regular basis. As an example, the New York State Police Recruitment Center (2012) provides a chart of height and weight requirements by gender, and those who do not fall within the acceptable limits must submit to a fat content test using a skin caliper.

Vision Requirements

Vision requirements vary greatly among departments and are the subject of controversy. When such requirements are for uncorrected vision, they are especially controversial. Most departments have established corrected vision requirements that may be justified on the basis of driving ability, ability to identify license plates or persons, or weapons qualification (Holden & Gammeltoft, 1991). In a related study, Good, Maisel, and Kriska (1998) concluded that police must be able to perform two essential tasks when visually incapacitated: identifying a weapon in a typical room and finding spectacles that have been dislodged. They showed that a noticeable performance decrement begins to appear at 20/125 level of acuity. Many of these earlier studies are used to justify the current vision requirements for police applicants. Accordingly, the city of Pittsburgh requires a “distant vision of at least 20/70, uncorrected, in the stronger eye, correctable to 20/20, and at least 20/200, uncorrected in the weaker eye, correctable to at least 20/40” with normal depth and color perception and no significant visual abnormality” (Pittsburgh Personnel and Civil Service Commission, 2012, p. 1). However, in reality, few police departments have performed a systematic study of the critical vision task required for police officer job performance and even fewer have “validated their vision requirements to ensure they meet the specifications imposed by the Americans with Disabilities Act” (Med-Tox Health Services, 2011, p. 1).

Because technology has provided a variety of alternatives for vision correction not mentioned in earlier studies, many police departments have adapted their current hiring requirements relating to vision. For example, the San Diego Police Department (2012) addresses corrective measures such as eyeglasses, hard contact lenses (semi-soft, semi-rigid, semi-permeable, gas permeable), soft contact lenses, orthokeratology, radial keratotomy, or similar procedures. In many cases, applicants must sign an agreement to wear the lenses or glasses at all times while on duty and in some cases must

wait up to one year following certain visual correction procedures before submitting to a department medical examination. Many are concerned that the visual acuity requirements are implemented at the time of hire but only enforced in the most extreme cases. As we know, numerous people suffer from visual acuity changes with age, and some police officers with more than 20 years of service may experience a reduction in uncorrected vision. Currently, few departments address these issues and enforce vision requirements for police applicants, even though new recruits and officers with over 20 years of service perform the same duties involving weapons, driving, and identifying license plates.

Medical Examinations

From the point of view of a police department, the medical examination is a critical part of the testing process. This is because an officer who becomes disabled as a result of injury or illness is often eligible for lifelong disability payments. To detect conditions that may lead to illnesses or injuries, virtually all police agencies require a medical examination that is intended to detect problems of the heart, back, legs, and feet, among others. These conditions may be aggravated by police work, and the department prefers to eliminate from consideration any applicants with such medical problems. As an example, the Pittsburgh Police Department's Personnel and Civil Service Commission (2012) uses a "combined cardiovascular-pulmonary test (treadmill test), hearing test, vision test and blood test" (p. 2). Due consideration must be given to the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which states that an employer may only ask about an applicant's disability or administer a medical examination after the employer has made a job offer. In most cases, police departments make passing the medical exam a condition to the job offer.

Mental Tests

Mental tests may be divided into two categories: (1) those designed to measure intelligence, knowledge, or aptitude; and (2) those designed to evaluate psychological fitness.

Tests of Intelligence, Knowledge, or Aptitude

Written tests are used by a majority of police agencies. The paper and pencil and computerized versions of these tests come in many forms and are intended to measure a variety of things. To be of merit, the tests must deal with job-related issues and must have predictive value; that is, they should be able to predict whether an applicant has the ability to perform police work well. The International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA) is a common resource for entry-level police tests and supports the tests by criterion-related validity studies and psychometric analysis. IPMA (2009) assesses critical abilities of entry level police applicants in the following areas:

- Ability to learn and apply police information
- Ability to observe and remember details
- Ability to follow directions
- Ability to use judgment and logic

These written tests have historically eliminated most minority group members. Millions of dollars have been spent in attempts to develop "culture fair" tests to avoid this bias, but with only moderate success (Winters, 1992). And perhaps for lack of a better screening device and in spite of their obvious inadequacies, the vast majority of departments continue to use written tests. In most departments where such tests are used, they are scored on a point system, and the score obtained becomes a part of the overall point total used to determine the eligibility list. Therefore, differences of one or two points might make the difference between hiring one applicant over another, even

though differences of five to ten points probably indicate minor differences between candidates. Although a score of 70 is often established as the cutoff point for passing, this score may be raised or lowered, depending on the candidate pool—indicating that there is nothing magical about the score itself. The very fact that there are many different tests and forms of tests available implies that there is no consensus about a best test or best form of test.

While there are some difficulties involved in conducting the research necessary to evaluate written entry-level tests, such research is essential if we are to develop a test with predictive power. This research requires that a department hire applicants regardless of their scores on the test (including those who failed), keep the test results secret from those who evaluate the officers' performance over a period of time (preferably at least 18 months to two years), and then compare performance evaluations over the time period with initial test scores. If those who scored high on the written test were also the best performers on the job, the validity of the test would be demonstrated, all other factors being equal (which they seldom are). Although the research required is relatively simple, questions of liability exist for a department choosing to participate in such research. What happens, for instance, if an applicant who failed the test is hired and performs so badly that someone is injured or killed as a result? In addition, the time period involved is quite long, and many agencies and test constructors are unwilling to wait the required time to obtain meaningful results.

Still, most police agencies continue to use written entry-level tests as screening devices in spite of their obvious shortcomings. Despite the intensive effort to improve written tests, there is little convincing evidence that test scores can predict an officer's performance over any extensive period of time. Bartol and Bartol (2008) argued that screening of applicants for police positions should go beyond simply using standardized intelligence tests. They believe what is needed is a multi-assessment procedure that involves standardized tests plus other measures and screening procedures. In the next section, we discuss the call to evaluate emotional stability and personality characteristics of police applicants.

Some agencies are considering the use of integrity tests, which unlike the cognitive ability tests, are designed to predict the same counterproductive work behaviors (drug usage, theft, etc.) screened by psychological evaluation and polygraph tests (Tawney, 2008). If administered early in the selection process, an integrity test could remove applicants likely to fail a polygraph test or psychological testing, thus saving the agency the costs of administering these two tests.

Psychological Tests

Psychological tests present even more difficulties than written tests of intelligence, aptitude, or knowledge. Psychological tests have increasingly been used to test police applicants, and the President's Commission in 1967 recommended they be used by all police departments to determine emotional stability (Meier, Farmer, & Maxwell, 1987). In spite of the many weaknesses discussed here, psychological tests continue to be employed both because of the liability that may result from hiring police officers without the use of such tests and because many police administrators believe that they at least screen out those applicants who are clearly suffering from emotional disorders. In most cases "preemployment psychological evaluations include medical (e.g., substance abuse and disabling mental conditions) and nonmedical matters (e.g., judgment, resilience, and integrity) (Ben-Porath, Fico, Hibler, Inwald, Kruml & Roberts, 2011, p. 2). Furthermore, Cochrane, Teft, and Vandecreek (2003) suggested that 90% of police departments require some form of psychological evaluation of applicants. The most frequently used personality measures are the revised Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (71.6%), the California Psychological Inventory (24.5%), the Sixteen Personality Factor (18.7%), and the Inwald Personality Inventory (11.6%) (Cochrane et al., 2003).

The task of predicting psychological stability—for short time periods, let alone the career of a police officer—is a formidable one. This is especially true because the psychological characteristics of the ideal police officer have not been, and perhaps cannot be, identified. The diversity in American policing discussed in the first chapter of this book, in combination with the complexity of the police role, makes obtaining a consensus about the characteristics of the ideal officer highly unlikely. According to Bartol and Bartol (2008), policing draws a wide spectrum of personalities, most of which do a commendable job of policing across a wide range of tasks and responsibilities. Consequently, they believe attempts to discover a particular type of personality best suited for policing are unlikely to be productive.

Benner (1989) discussed the extent to which psychological tests can select out police applicants who are either unstable or unsuitable (or both) and concluded,

It matters little that the field of psychology is only marginally capable of predicting 'bad' officer candidates. Psychologists and psychiatrists are expected, not only, to screen out the 'bad' but be able to screen in the 'good.' Unfortunately, consensus definitions of 'good' or 'suitable' have not been developed either among the professionals or members of the lay public. (p. 83)

Pendergrass (1987) indicated that psychological tests can make a contribution to the selection process but should not “replace other methods nor are the results of psychological assessment without error in prediction of success of candidates . . . selection based entirely upon psychological testing is likely to eliminate a number of good candidates and retain some poor candidates in error” (p. 29). Furthermore, many recommend that the psychological evaluation of police candidates include a face-to-face interview. According to Ben-Porath et al. topics typically covered in the interview include, but are not limited to, a review of the following areas:

- Educational history
- Employment history
- Compliance with laws and regulations
- Recent illegal substance use
- Interpersonal and familial interactions
- Financial difficulties
- Self-perceived strengths and weaknesses
- Reasons for wanting to work in a public safety position
- Professional goals
- Psychologically relevant medical history (any psychological or psychiatric treatment and medication history, alcohol use and abuse, legal and illegal drug use, trauma history, sexual misconduct, domestic violence, and suicidal ideation or attempts (Ben-Porath et al., 2011, p. 4).

While the literature on psychological testing of police recruits is confusing at best, it appears certain that such testing, unless used to supplement the other procedures discussed here is of limited value. In other words, “although many different assessment techniques and personality inventories are used in the screening, selection, and promotion of law enforcement officers, it is usually not known whether many of these testing procedures are valid predictors of effective on-the-job law enforcement performance” (Bartol & Bartol, 2008, p. 49).

Still, there is a question as to whether psychological testing done only at the time of application can ever be an accurate predictor of police officer behavior, because psychological problems may result from serving as a police officer even though they may not have existed at the time of hiring. (Alpert & Dunham, 1997, p. 55)

Tests of Morality

Tests of morality include background investigations, drug tests, and polygraph examinations. We refer to these requirements as tests of morality because they are used to evaluate the moral character of police applicants. Certainly drug testing also constitutes a physical test, but it is typically the use of drugs rather than the impact of the drugs on the physical well-being of the applicant that is of primary concern.

Background Investigations

Background investigations are used by almost all police agencies, but the extent and intensiveness of these investigations vary considerably. In some cases, listed references are simply checked by phone, while in other cases, a good deal of time and money are expended to verify the character of the applicant. In cases of the latter type, the investigation normally includes the types of information listed in Table 4.2, which are often public records created by government agencies. However, it is important to note that school records, bankruptcy reports, medical records, and workers' compensation records are often confidential and require written consent of the applicant or require that the information is relevant to the duties of the position (Find Law, 2012).

Driving records	Vehicle registration	Credit records	Criminal records
Social security number	Education records	Court records	Workers' compensation
Bankruptcy	Character references	Neighbor interviews	Medical records
Property ownership	Military records	State licensing records	Drug test records
Past employers	Personal references	Incarceration records	Sex offender lists

Source: From "Employment background checks: A jobseeker's guide," by *Privacy Rights Clearinghouse*, 2011, p. 2. Available online at: <http://www.privacyrights.org/fs/fs16-bck.htm>.

In short, a major purpose of the background investigation is to determine the honesty of the applicant as reflected by the information provided on the application form and in subsequent communications with those in charge of recruiting and selecting. Departments tend to place an emphasis on the background investigation because an intensive background check helps to ensure departments hire only the most qualified applicants and also can indicate an individual's competency, motivation, and personal ethics (Decicco, 2000, p. 2). Background investigations may exclude, or highlight for further inquiry, applicants with prior felony convictions or currently wanted by the police; those with a history of serious employment, family, or financial problems; those dishonorably discharged from the military; and those determined to have lied during the application process. In addition, prior and current use of alcohol or other drugs is typically explored in the context of making reference contacts. Several recent events resulted in an increased concern for employment screening: child abuse and abductions, terrorist acts, false and inflated information supplied by applicants and the availability of computer databases that possess volumes of personal information (Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, 2011, p. 2). The rationale for excluding or further investigating applicants with problems in these areas is relatively clear. It makes little sense to hire as a police officer an individual who has serious drug-related problems; in virtually all jurisdictions, those with prior felony convictions are excluded from policing by statute. Those with histories of domestic violence or bankruptcy also present problems because they may be

corruptible or prone to the use of force in their positions as police officers. In short, the background investigation represents an attempt to select into policing only those with good moral character.

Drug Tests

The possession, manufacture, distribution, and sale of illegal drugs are all serious problems in our society, and applicants for police work are not immune to these problems. However, in the past decade, many police departments have modified their zero tolerance policy that disqualified all applicants who had previously used any type of drug. As Baxley (2000) indicated, due to increasing difficulties in recruiting, there is

a growing tendency to tolerate some history of drug use or criminal activity by recruit candidates. . . . Many agencies now take into consideration the type and amount of drugs used, the length of time since the last use, and the nature of the offense. Those who have merely ‘experimented during high school or college’ are often allowed to join the force. (p. 371)

As an example, the Santa Rosa Police Department (2009) considers the following factors when there is evidence of past abuse of controlled substances: patterns of use, how the drug was obtained, type of drug used, circumstances of the start of the drug use, and discontinuance and nature of treatment and prognosis. Evidence of the modification of prior zero tolerance drug use requirements for police applicants is presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 ■ Illegal Drug Use Guidelines

Substance	Minimum Years Since Last Use	Maximum Number of Times Used
Marijuana	3	50
Hash/hash oil	3	20
Amphetamine	5	5
Cocaine (powder)	5	5

Source: From “Illegal drug use guidelines,” by the Santa Rosa Police Department, 2009. Available online at http://cisanta-rosa.ca.us/doclib/Documents/Drug_Standard.pdf.

Although the issue of drug testing, usually accomplished through urinalysis, has led to a great deal of litigation, it appears that when such testing is done according to a schedule (as opposed to random testing) and when it is done in a reasonable fashion and on reasonable grounds, the courts allow the testing as it relates to policing. This appears to be because of police departments’ interests in protecting the safety of the public and other employees. The possibility of a drug-impaired police officer injuring a colleague or another person clearly exists, whether due to a vehicle accident, firearm discharge, or use of excessive force. Thus, drug testing is likely to become even more prevalent among police agencies than it is now, because the legal requirements for such testing are more clearly elaborated by court decisions and revisions of statutes.

Another drug use issue addressed by many police departments involves the restriction of the use of anabolic steroids by police applicants. Humphrey, Decker, Goldberg, Pope, Gutman, and Green (2008) indicated that anabolic steroids appeal to police officers who desire a tactical edge or an intimidating appearance to improve their performance. Currently, testing for performance-enhancing substances presents a myriad of challenges and is not as straightforward as discovering heroin in an applicant drug screen (Humphrey et al., 2008). See Case in Point 4.1 concerning steroid testing of police officers.



CASE IN POINT 4.1

After completion of contract negotiations, the city of Portland, Oregon began random drug testing on their police officers. The testing involved five different types of drugs: marijuana, cocaine, opiates, phencyclidine or PCP, and amphetamines. If a drug test from a police officer resulted in a positive test for “less than .08 blood-alcohol content; marijuana; or illegally used drugs and it’s a first offense” the officers could seek treatment, face a suspension, or assume a desk job with restricted police authority.

The city decided not to test for steroids since the cost of testing was deemed to be too expensive. However, a police commander from Phoenix believes “it’s steroids that police are more likely to abuse and other police agencies have been able to establish standards for steroid testing with local labs.” One physician at Oregon Health and Science University reported “steroid testing to me is more important than PCP. It is expensive. However, with steroids you can have uncontrolled aggression, and these guys have Tasers and guns. A law suit is expensive too.” Many police departments test police officers for steroids or other drugs based on a reasonable suspicion the officer is using a prohibited drug.

Source: From “Police face random drug tests” by Maxine Bernstein, 2011, *The Oregonian*. Available online at <http://infoweb.newsbank.com>.

Polygraph Examinations

Polygraph examinations are employed by many police agencies in the United States, although changes in federal legislation have already greatly restricted their use in the private sector and may eventually have the same impact on the public sector. Currently, a police agency can conduct a polygraph before a conditional offer of employment but must avoid asking any prohibited disability-related inquiries in administering the preoffer exam (U. S. Department of Justice, 2006).

The rationale behind the use of the polygraph for recruitment and selection appears to be twofold. First, the results of the examination are used as one indicator of the honesty of the job applicant. Second, the results are used to eliminate applicants whose responses are not acceptable to the police agency in question, regardless of the honesty of the applicant. As an example, during the polygraph exam, police applicants are often questioned about a variety of prior experiences (see Table 4.4).

Either or both of these reasons for the exam may be justified, but there is, and always has been, considerable controversy over the accuracy of polygraph tests, which raises the issue of rejecting some qualified applicants while accepting others who are deceitful (Decicco, 2000). Numerous Internet sites offer advice on how to beat the polygraph using deliberate attempts to alter the data through the use of physiological changes with body movements (Gordon, 2008). In response to this type of information, the

Table 4.4 ■ Polygraph Examination Areas

- Accuracy of information provided on the written applications and documents
- Honesty, integrity, and reliability of the applicant
- Criminal history, either previously detected or undetected
- Traffic history, either previously detected or undetected
- Involvement with illicit drugs

Source: From “Police officer exam process,” by the Arlington, Virginia Police Department, 2009. Available online at <http://www.arlingtonva.us>.

PHOTO 4.4

Police officers may undergo polygraph examinations as part of the selection process for being hired as a police officer.



polygraph profession has added a fourth parameter, which involves monitoring body movements associated with countermeasures. This change is in addition to the three basic physiological functions monitored today: blood volume and pressure, respiration, and sweating (Gordon, 2008). Currently, research is exploring a new generation of lie detection technology using functional magnetic resonance imaging, electroencephalography, near-infrared light, and other devices that permit access to brain function (Wolpe, Foster, & Langleben, 2005). The problem with polygraph tests is not with the machine, which simply measures heart rate, rate of breathing, and **galvanic skin response** (changes in electrical resistance in the skin) over time. The interpretation of the results and the way in which the test is administered depend on the polygrapher. The training, skills, and competence of polygraphers vary widely, and the conditions (anxiety and nervousness on behalf of applicants) under which employment and promotional polygraph interviews are conducted are less than ideal for ensuring accurate results.

■ **Galvanic Skin Response:**

Changes in electrical resistance in the skin over time

Tests of Ability to Communicate

As indicated earlier, many of the recruitment and selection procedures used by the police overlap. This interdependence of procedures is perhaps best illustrated by the tests of an applicant's ability to communicate. Properly conceived, these tests include the application form and the written tests taken by applicants and the oral interview typically required of potential police officers. Because we have already discussed the application and written tests, we concentrate here on the oral interview or *oral board*, as it is often called. Let us simply note that it is both possible and desirable to evaluate the written communications skills of applicants by requiring them to write a job history or autobiographical statement as a part of the application form, because a large measure of police work involves writing reports that demand accuracy and comprehensiveness. While a misspelled word or two is probably no cause for concern, serious defects in the ability to communicate in writing indicate, at the very minimum, the need for some remedial work in this area.

The Oral Board

Oral interviews of police applicants are used by most agencies. These interviews, or boards, are typically conducted by members of the fire and police or civil service commission or by the personnel department in larger police agencies, often in conjunction with representatives of the police agency. In some cases, the latter actually

participate in the interview, while in others, they simply observe. The number of interviewers varies, but three to five is typical.

The expressed purpose of the oral board is to select a suitable applicant to fill the existing police vacancy. However, there is often a second goal in these interviews: selecting a certain kind of person to fill the vacancy. In addition to demonstrating the skills necessary to fill the formal organizational position, the applicant's loyalty to the department, trustworthiness with respect to other police officers, and (although legally and formally forbidden), their race, gender, and general presentation of self may be considered (Cox & Fitzgerald, 1996). While it is undoubtedly true that efforts to reduce the amount of subjectivity in oral interviews have been made in the form of standardized questions and independent evaluation by the raters, it is equally true that the way a candidate looks (dress, skin color, gender, etc.) and acts (eye contact, handshake, degree of self-confidence expressed) affects our daily interactions. Despite attempts to minimize the impact of these variables on the scoring of the interview, these factors also affect the interviewers (Falkenberg, Gaines, & Cox, 1990). Having served on oral boards periodically over the past 35 years, it is the authors' definite impression from conversations with other board members that factors that are expressly forbidden from consideration, in terms of equal employment opportunity guidelines, do affect the judgment of interviewers in subtle, if not obvious, ways.



POLICE STORIES POLICE STORIES POLICE STORIES POLICE STORIES POLICE

Most police hiring processes involve numerous activities. For example, the specific elements of the physical agility test are no secret and allow a police applicant to prepare for the test either through running, lifting weights, or engaging in other forms of exercise. In addition, in most cases applicants have taken multiple choice tests in school and are prepared for the challenge of a department's written exam. However, as a merit commissioner for a sheriff's department, I have observed many applicants encounter problems at the oral board interview. The oral interview is stressful, and many applicants are eliminated from the hiring process based on their performance.

- To be successful at the oral board, I tell students to dress professionally, leave cell phones in the car, and arrive early to locate the building, designated parking, and the specific room. I encourage them, upon entering the interview room, to introduce themselves to members of the board by shaking hands.
- I indicate to students that there may well be questions concerning ethics, such as those related to arresting off duty police officers or city officials that have openly committed criminal acts. I tell them I hope they will respond by indicating they would do the right thing and that I'm sure they know what the "right thing" involves.
- I believe applicants should know as much as possible about the department to which they are applying. At the conclusion of the interview, board members will often ask if the interviewee has any questions. Questions concerning the department and the community might be appropriate, but questions such as "What is the starting salary?" are generally unnecessary since this information is readily available on most police department's websites.
- Police applicants can expect questions from the board about background, future goals, and current police issues in the form of hypothetical scenarios. Finally, the board might conclude the interview by asking "Why should we hire you over all the other applicants?" This is the applicant's chance to hit a home run and convince the board that he or she is one of the top applicants immediately before they begin the process of calculating final scores. I also tell students to remember that the more oral board interviews they participate in by applying to different departments, the more comfortable they will become with the process.

The interview format varies a good deal. In most cases, general questions are asked about the applicant's background, experiences, education, prior training, and interest in police work in general and in the specific department in question. These may be followed by a series of questions to test the applicant's knowledge of some legal, moral, and ethical issues related to police work. For example, the applicants may be asked how they would respond to the apparent corruption of another officer, what response would be appropriate if a traffic violator turned out to be the mayor, or how much force is justified in a certain type of incident. Some of the typical performance dimensions addressed in a police applicant oral board interview are included in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5 ■ Police Applicant Performance Dimensions

- Problem solving
- Judgment and reasoning
- Decision making
- Teamwork orientation
- Interpersonal skills
- Oral communications and presentation skills
- Honesty and integrity
- Self-motivation and initiative
- Stress tolerance and composure

Source: From *Master the police officer examination*, by F. M. Rafilson and T. DeAngelis, 2008, Georgetown, CT: ARCO Publishing.

Questions may be asked slowly, with follow-up questions, or they may be asked in such a fashion that they create stress for the interviewee (see, e.g., Holloway, 2000). The responses to the questions are evaluated by each of the raters independently. If major differences in evaluations occur then they are discussed among the raters in an attempt to reach some consensus about the applicant's worthiness. The final scores for the oral board are then added to the scores from the other portions of the testing procedure to establish an eligibility list from which the chief of police or personnel department may select candidates to fill existing and future vacancies.

There is a definite irony here that needs to be pointed out. Although the selection process today is conducted under the guise of objectivity—including having the written tests sent elsewhere for scoring, scoring by identification numbers as opposed to names, rating interviewees independently, and calculating scores to the nearest point (or in some cases, tenth of a point)—when the process is completed, the final rank order based on the complex scoring system may be ignored by the chief or personnel department. That is, the applicant who scored third highest overall may be selected to fill the vacancy instead of the applicant who scored highest. Although there is perhaps nothing wrong with giving the chief some input at this stage of the selection process, it calls into question the value of all the apparent objectivity surrounding the process, specifically during the promotion process, which we soon discuss.

In the past, many police recruits have come from families with a history of involvement in policing or from military backgrounds (Baxley, 2000). This is perhaps less true today than at any time in the recent past. Recruits are most likely to be interested in a good salary and a good benefits package. They also may assess the state of departmental technology, opportunities for advancement, and equipment available before making a career choice. And such choices are increasingly made online through the Internet. Therefore, police agencies must be attuned to the goals of potential recruits in order to establish recruitment practices that meet their needs.



AROUND THE WORLD 4.1

New Zealand Police Selection Process Requirements

- No minimum height requirement
- Run 2.4 kilometres
- Vertical jump
- Grip strength test
- Physical competency test (every two years)
- 200 meter run, push a trailer, walk along a raised beam, crawl under hurdles, climb through a window
- Minimum vision test
- Verbal, numerical, and abstract reasoning tests
- PC/Keyboard skills test
- Swimming test

Source: From "Requirements," by the New Zealand Police, 2012. Available online at <http://www.newcops.co.nz>.

The recruitment and selection process does not end with the establishment of the eligibility list. Rather, it continues as those selected for hiring go to the training academy, as they return to the department to serve their probationary period, and as they proceed through their careers in policing. See "Around the World" for an example of a selection process for the New Zealand Police.

■ SUPERVISORY RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

As indicated earlier, the recruitment and selection process does not end with initial employment but continues as some individuals are promoted to supervisory positions and special assignments. If it is important to select prospective police officers carefully, it is equally important to promote carefully to ensure that those who supervise new recruits are well prepared to do so. As Baxley (2000) indicated,

Too often we promote persons to supervisory positions on the basis of their longevity with the department. A long-term employee does not always make a good supervisor. . . . Well-trained supervisors who make good decisions earn the respect of both their troops and their community. They also create an environment where the troops enjoy working—and happy troops are a department's best recruiting tool. (p. 371)

The same equal employment and affirmative action rules discussed previously apply when selecting and recruiting police supervisors, including chiefs. The vast majority of police supervisors are promoted from within the ranks of the department (with the exception of the promotion of police chiefs, which we discuss in the following section) because lateral entry is the exception rather than the rule in American policing.

As Bouza (1990) noted, there are two ways of shaping supervisory talent: formal education and on-the-job training. For the latter to produce a highly skilled supervisor, a wide variety of experiences and assignments should be included. Because the police

culture largely downplays the importance of theories of management and a liberal arts education, then on-the-job training is critical. However, on-the-job training often fails to provide the necessary breadth of training because the skills of the up-and-coming officer may be so valuable to the chief that he comes to rely almost totally on that officer for certain kinds of information or input. Thus, an about-to-be-promoted officer may remain in the same position for most of his or her career. This narrow focus makes it difficult for those promoted to understand the broader police picture and leads to scorn on behalf of line officers. Further, the testing procedure itself is almost always suspect from the perspective of both those applying for advancement and those who are affected by having new supervisors. Basically, observers tend to believe that it is who you know rather than what you know that leads to promotion.

Advertisements typically consist of position vacancy announcements posted within the police agency. Outside advertisement, although it may sometimes occur, is greatly limited (e.g., to other agencies that employ city workers).

Because most police departments retain paramilitary structures, promotional opportunities exist at the level of the field supervisor (typically at the rank of sergeant), shift or watch commander (typically at the rank of lieutenant or commander), division commander (typically with the rank of captain or above), and for a host of specializations in larger departments (juvenile, burglary, fraud, vice, and so on). As is the case at the entry level, the vacancy announcements should clearly state the qualifications for the positions and indicate how interested parties can apply. Individuals applying for these positions are required to pass status tests similar to those discussed for entry-level employees, with the additional stipulation that they have served a specified number of years in policing or at the level immediately below the one for which they are applying. In other words, to become a lieutenant, an officer has to meet the basic status requirements of the department and, in addition, might be required to have served three years at the rank of sergeant.

Typically, physical tests are not employed in the selection of supervisors. The assumption may be that they already passed any department required tests or that the position to which they aspire does not require the same degree of physical agility required of line officers. Neither of these assumptions is entirely justified, however, and some measures of physical fitness appear to be appropriate. At a minimum, a thorough medical examination should be required.

As we discuss in the next section, assessment centers are usually an important part of the process for police promotion. While the assessment center is costly to develop and implement, its record of validity and legal defensibility has justified its increased use (Love & DeArmond, 2007).

Assessment Centers

■ Assessment Center:

A formal process that involves a series of exercises (simulation and role playing) designed to test how well a candidate would perform in a job

The **assessment center** had its origins in the 1920s and was used by the military in World War II. The concept was furthered in the 1950s in private industry (Cosner & Baumgart, 2000). An assessment center is not a specific location but a formal process that involves a series of exercises designed to test how well a candidate would perform in a job using task simulations and role players to replicate real, on-the-job situations (Executive Office for Administration and Finance, 2009). As O'Leary (1989) indicated, prior to the 1970s, many police departments promoted people because they had

influential contacts, or did well in objective paper-and-pencil tests, or impressed a civil service board made up of a variety of people from law enforcement in neighboring departments, state highway patrol, private-sector managers, and perhaps representatives of the local department of human resources. (p. 28)

Such promotions often resulted in ineffective supervisors because the interviewers had an inaccurate picture of the duties and responsibilities accompanying the position. The



PHOTO 4.5

Today, many police agencies use sophisticated processes to select personnel, particularly with those seeking promotion to the supervisory ranks.

interview, as a predictive tool, proved to be only marginally effective. Paper-and-pencil tests also turned out to be poor indicators of supervisory performance.

To use the assessment center, first there must be a comprehensive, accurate job description of the position advertised. Second, a group of trained observers, usually three to five, must observe the candidates for the position as they go through a number of job-related activities. “By using a multiple-exercise process, candidates who often do not perform well in one exercise, such as an interview, may do very well in another exercise, such as an analysis and presentation exercise” (McLaurin, 2005, p. 2). This results in an objective process in which the assessors rate the applicants individually on each of the tasks assigned over a one- or two-day period. Examples of multiple exercises employed in a typical assessment center include the following:

- In-basket exercises: measures the person’s administrative and decision-making abilities through day to day administrative activities.
- Written problem-solving: tests the candidate’s ability to perceive a problem and gather sufficient data to document a solution.
- Group discussion: involves an exercise where candidates are involved in a timed group discussion in which they attempt to reach a joint solution to one or more problems.
- Oral presentation: candidates present ideas or tasks to the group with or without prior preparation.
- Counseling session: an exercise with an interview simulation that involves assessment of the following abilities: “motivate work performance, correct misbehavior, provide key information, direct actions towards an appropriate solution, develop an effective working relation, demonstrate flexibility, analyze problems and demonstrate effective oral communication” (Ohio Association of Chiefs of Police, 2001, p.1).

In some cases, the applicants’ performances are videotaped and may be reviewed by the assessors at their convenience. Polygraph, drug, and psychological tests, as well as an updated background investigation also may be required for promotion. Tests of ability to communicate are incorporated into the assessment center when it is employed, or they

may be evaluated by an oral board in a fashion similar to that discussed for entry-level personnel. Candidates are interviewed by the assessors using a standardized format that provides latitude for assessors to raise questions concerning issues brought to light by the various exercises in which the candidates have engaged. In most assessment centers, the assessors evaluate candidates based on the following dimensions: “oral communications, command presence, technical and professional knowledge, decision making, judgment, planning and organization, work perspective, and problem analysis” (McLaurin, 2005, p. 3).

Finally, the assessors, usually under the direction of a team leader, meet to discuss their impressions of the applicants and their scores. Each assessor must be prepared to defend his scores, and discrepant scores often become topics of heated debate. In the ideal case, differences can be resolved through discussion, and the applicants are then listed in order of the assessors’ preferences. Final selection is accomplished by the personnel department, police chief, city manager, mayor, or council, or some combination of same.

As previously mentioned, while the costs of the assessment center are high, success in predicting good performance has been equally high, and when measured against the costs of making a bad appointment, the costs are less imposing than they might seem. Many police departments use assessment centers not only to determine who should be hired for top-ranking positions, but also as a promotional process and a way to identify strengths and weaknesses of an agency and its employees (McLaurin, 2005). In most cases, assessment center participants can identify their shortcomings and learn from the assessment process how to improve their own job performance and the training deficiencies of the individual as well as the organization (Hale, 2005). An assessment center can also have a positive effect on morale if the assessment center is viewed as an objective, reliable, and fair process wherein the most qualified person is promoted.

Evaluations based on past performance are also frequently used when considering applicants for promotion. The usefulness of these measures remains to be established because they are typically based on behaviors relevant to the current position of the applicant that may or may not be related to the position for which she or he is applying. That is, excellent performance as a street officer may be totally unrelated to performance as a supervisor. Nonetheless, in many departments, these evaluations account for 20% to 30% of the total score considered for promotion.

■ RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION OF POLICE CHIEFS

The skills required of a police chief are, in many instances, significantly different from those required of new recruits or lower ranking supervisors. The chief not only maintains general control over the department, but also serves as a representative in dealing with other municipal agencies, other police agencies, and elected officials. In some very small departments, the police chief must perform patrol and investigative functions and has few supervisory responsibilities. However, in police agencies with more than four or five employees, administrative and supervisory responsibilities become more important than street work.

Advertising for police chiefs is generally done through professional police publications as well as through the use of Internet sites, area newspapers, and bulletins. Recruitment for the position of chief may involve going outside the department, staying within the department, or a combination of the two (Kroecker, 2000). Thus, lateral entry, while seldom a possibility at other police ranks, is possible at the level of chief. This was confirmed by Piotrowski (2007), who found that in Illinois municipalities with between 5,000 and 11,000 residents, approximately 36% of the chiefs were hired from outside the agency.

The status requirements discussed for other supervisory personnel typically apply when selecting a chief; however, the level and extent of police experience required varies across communities. Hiring is done primarily by the mayor, city manager, or city council

(Piotrowski, 2007). As is the case with other supervisory personnel, written tests related to administrative and supervisory tasks are often employed, and in addition, attempts may be made to assess the extent to which the candidates view themselves as part of a management team. Education and training requirements also vary considerably, ranging from high school graduation and basic police training to possession of a master's degree and attendance at one of the more prestigious police management schools (such as the FBI Academy or the Southern Police Institute).

While many chiefs are hired based on interviews with officials of city government, performance on written tests, and background investigations, more and more are being processed through assessment centers designed to test their administrative skills. The vast majority of police chiefs come from the police ranks, and hiring those without prior police experience, though it does occasionally occur, is the exception. Unlike other police personnel, chiefs are seldom required to attend training academies after being hired, although the political and public relations skills required to be successful indicate the need for further training in many, if not most, cases.

While some improvement has occurred in this area, promotion to the rank of chief from within undoubtedly contributes to continuing resistance to change in many police agencies. Some chiefs are basically contract chiefs, serving for a specified period of time with periodic reviews. Others are essentially given tenure when hired, though almost all serve at the pleasure of the head of city government and the council, and job security is often a major concern (Frankel, 1992). When the chief reports directly to the mayor or council, political considerations are often extremely important. The city manager form of government provides some insulation from direct political ties, and from the perspective of promoting a professional, somewhat apolitical department is probably superior.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The recruitment and selection of entry-level police officers, supervisors, and chiefs of police is critical to the success of police agencies. It is important that these processes are performed within the requirements established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, Title VII, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act. The selection process for entry-level police officers involves many steps to ensure that only qualified applicants who are seriously interested in a career in policing are selected for the training academy.

These decisions are not easy, and the processes used to make these judgments can be quite expensive. Careful, thorough, and lawful hiring and promotion of qualified personnel should reduce the number of lawsuits, increase performance by personnel, and improve the overall professionalization of the agency. (See You Decide 4.1.)

Many factors influence recruitment and promotional practices, such as the use of valid and reliable test instruments and related materials, thorough background investigations, physical and psychological fitness tests, potential leadership capabilities assessments of applicants, and the implementation of proper performance evaluation techniques.

Police administrators must realize that with the passage of time, new demands are consistently being added to the list of police duties, and as such, new policies and shifts in philosophy regarding crime control and the overall functions and priorities of law enforcement agencies require a flexible organization. One significant issue that is germane to this organizational flexibility is the fact that there are three different generations working in police agencies: the baby boomers, who occupy the majority of high ranking positions, and Generation X and Y officers. The motivations and actions of officers from each of these generations are quite different and challenging, requiring departments to find ways to effectively supervise and accommodate the legitimate needs of each group. Not doing so can result in poor morale,





YOU DECIDE 4.1

The U.S. District Court of Connecticut decided a case in which a police applicant was denied the opportunity to become a police officer based on a score on the written examination. One part of the testing process for police officer required the applicant to take the “Wonderlic Personnel Test and Scholastic Level Exam. Wonderlic’s User’s Manual suggests a range of 20 to 27 for consideration as a patrol officer, and the City of New London followed that recommendation.”

The plaintiff in this case scored a 33 on the test, which was deemed to be too high for consideration as police officer. “Subsequent to notification of his ineligibility for the position of police officer due to his high test score,” a suit was filed against the city of New London.

The court concluded that the city “followed Wonderlic’s recommendation as well as reasonably relying on professional literature that concluded, ‘hiring overqualified applicants leads to dissatisfaction and turnover,’ they did not violate the Equal Protection Clauses.”

1. Should police applicants be denied employment based on a high score on a written examination?
2. Do you believe written examinations can accurately predict an applicant’s ability to perform the duties of a patrol officer? Explain.

Source: Reproduced from the *Journal of Applied Testing Technology* 1999–2010, Association of Test Publishers, 2000.

high turnover, and low overall performance, all elements that stymie the growth and development of any organization.

Finally, special attention must be given to the considerations used in the hiring of police chiefs. Should the chief be promoted from within the existing ranks or selected from outside the department? What minimum criteria should be used regarding the background of applicants with respect to formal education, past administrative accomplishments, specialized training, and leadership ability?

Conducting careful and legitimate recruitment, selection, and promotional practices is a necessity in today’s society.

KEY TERMS

- Baby Boomer generation
- Generation X
- Generation Y
- Immutable characteristics
- Discrimination
- Disparate impact
- Affirmative action
- Consent decree
- *Bona fide* occupational qualification
- Qualified individual with a disability
- Reasonable accommodation
- Multiple Hurdle Procedure
- Status test
- Simulation or work sample test
- Galvanic skin response
- Assessment center

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why are the costs of recruitment of police personnel so high? How can these costs reasonably be reduced?
2. Can you locate any websites dealing with police recruitment? What are they, and what kinds of information do they contain? Do any allow you to apply online?
3. Why is recruitment of qualified personnel so important to police agencies?
4. Discuss some of the changes in the selection of police officers that have occurred as a result of equal employment opportunity laws and affirmative action programs. What are some of the positive and negative consequences of EEOC and affirmative action programs?
5. List and discuss the five basic types of police officer selection requirements. How do such requirements apply to promotions?
6. What is an assessment center, why are such centers increasingly being used, and what, if any, disadvantages do they have?
7. What are the backgrounds of most police chiefs, and what implications do these backgrounds have for policing as a profession?
8. How do the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act affect the police?

INTERNET EXERCISES

1. Select one of the tests administered to police officer applicants discussed in the chapter (drug test, physical agility, polygraph, etc.). Go to the Internet and locate information about this test. How is the test administered? What method is used for scoring the test and interpreting the results? Is the test you selected a valid measure of a critical task performed by today's police officers?
2. Locate an advertisement for a police chief that discusses the selection requirements. How is the selection process for chiefs of police different from the process for the selection of police officers? Based on the advertisement, what knowledge, skills, and abilities should today's police chief possess?

STUDENT STUDY SITE

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