Leadership Roles in Police District Management

Rune Glomseth, Petter Gottschalk &
Åse Storhaug Hole

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to present results from a survey of police managers in Norway on leadership roles. A questionnaire was developed and administered among a convenience sample of police managers in two police districts in Norway. Six leadership roles were defined and measured in terms of their role importance, actual role time, ideal role time, and role competence. The survey research achieved a response rate of 69 percent. Respondents emphasized the role of personnel leader where the manager is responsible for supervising, hiring, training, organizing, coordinating, and motivating a cadre of personnel to achieve the goals of the organization.

Keywords

Managerial Roles, Survey Research, Personnel Leader, Resource Allocator, Leadership Styles

Introduction

Policing is the most apparent aspect of the criminal justice system, and a well-regarded police service is a prerequisite for the positive perception of law enforcement and justice (Dean and Gottschalk, 2007; Gottschalk, 2010; Schafer, 2009; UNODC 2006). Leadership is one of those obvious elements required for integrity and accountability in policing, but how to generate and maintain professional leadership is a difficult question (Prenzler, 2009). One approach to answer this question is to study the job of a police manager that consists of several parallell roles.

At a certain point in time, a police manager may perceive one role as more important than other leadership roles. Yet, the manager may spend most of his or her time on less important roles, and the manager may perceive himself or herself as more qualified for some roles than other roles. Mintzberg (1994) found that it is a peculiarity of the management literature that its best-known writers all seem to emphasize one particular part of the manager's job to the exclusion of the others. Together they cover all the parts, but even that may not describe the whole task of managing.

Leadership of police departments, large and small, consists of several parallel management roles. Sewell (2008) found that some of the most important lessons learned in police management is that command hurts, change is difficult to implement and often not desired, politics are everywhere, and the police chief is a public figure.

The purpose of this paper is to answer research questions related to leadership roles and professional culture in the police: *What leadership roles are considered most important? What leadership roles require most time? What leadership roles require more ideal time? How competent is the leader in the leadership roles?* These are very broad research questions that are answered only exploratory in this paper based on a convenience sample of two police districts in Norway.

Police Leadership

Policing has become more complex, more knowledge based, and more professional in the last decade. These challenges are felt across the world - a fact recognized by a growing national and international sharing of practice and personnel. Policing in the twenty-first century is a potpourri of sectors, levels, systems, and models that coexist in a whirlpool of continual interaction. Policing is a social process and as such it spans both public and private sectors (Dean and Gottschalk, 2007).

At the top of any police organization there will be one chief officer presiding over a hierarchy consisting of strong lines of authority with clearly defined roles and responsibility at each level. This will often take the form of a central headquarter with a web of subordinate, locally based branch offices, sometimes called districts or divisions. The point of delivery for almost all police services is the local police station that can draw on knowledge resources from central units. Organizational structure, organizational culture, attitudes and behavior of local officers will have a significant effect on the success of the whole criminal justice system (UNODC, 2006).

Police leadership is important in a number of policing areas including community policing. Case studies of community policing cited by Schafer (2009) have highlighted the role of leadership as a mechanism to facilitate rapid, and sometimes radical, organizational transformation. Leadership concerns how groups can be influenced and/or induced into compliance through the personality, power, persuasion, and behavior of key individuals. These efforts are generally intended to create needed structure and/or coordinate efforts toward the achievement of goals.

Mostovicz et al. (2009) argues for a definition of leadership as the ability to act authentically according to one's worldview, either Theta or Lambda. Leadership characteristics of Theta versus Lambda worldviews include:

• Motivation: Socially oriented versus Personally oriented

• Behaviour: Communion versus Agency

• Goal: Seeking unity and certainty versus Seeking challenge and creation

- Benefit: Building respect versus Looking for personal freedom

- Principle: Truthfulness versus Genuineness

- Inclination: Toward choice versus Toward contrast

- Truth: Objective versus Rules

- Responsibility: Security versus Freedom

These two approaches clash fundamentally because the drive for achievement ends in separating oneself from others (or making oneself unique), while its counterpart seeks to affiliate itself with others and work in unison. As a consequence, this tension can lead to personal bias or distortion of the paradox of leadership (Mostovicz et al., 2009).

A distinction is often made between transformational leadership and transactional leadership (Fitzgerald and Schutte, 2010; Gong et al., 2009; Michaelis et al., 2010). Transformational leadership includes direction and goal setting, boundary spanning and management, empowerment, and staffing and resource acquisition. Transformational leadership tends to be focusing on the moral development of the followers and naturally lead to ethical decision-making (Dion, 2008). Transactional leadership is characterized by transactions between supervisor and subordinate, where the supervisor makes decisions that the subordinate carries out because the subordinate is paid for it.

Schafer (2009) finds that the importance of police supervisors (formal leaders) in shaping organizational contexts and outcomes in police organizations is generally accepted. Although external pressures and the culture of a police organization can be powerful forces shaping and influencing officer conduct, the tone set by supervisors throughout the organization seems to play a key role in these processes.
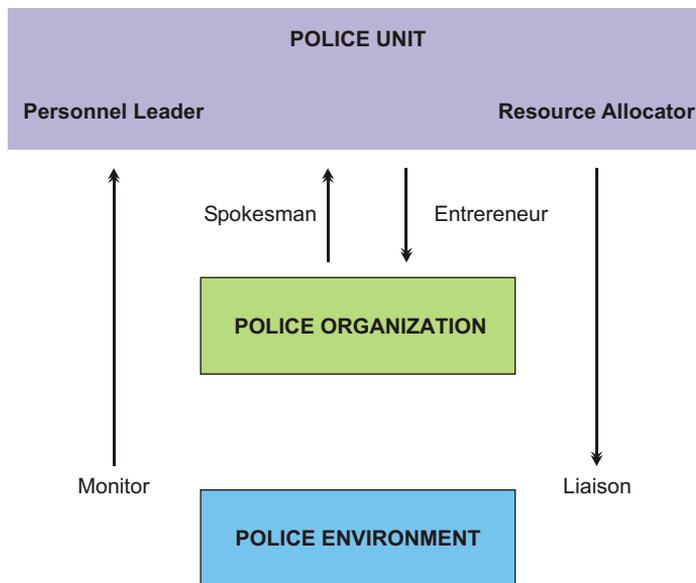
Leadership Roles

Mintzberg's (1994) role typology is frequently used in studies of managerial work (Andresen et al., 2007; Glomseth et al., 2007). An important strength of the Mintzberg typology as a leadership instrument is its ability to be generally unbiased. It is unbiased because there is not one role in general, which as such seems better than another role. Rather, the appropriate or preferred role depends on the situation. Hence, the contingent approach to management is applied by making role importance dependent on the situation.

In the context of police management, Glomseth et al. (2007) applied six roles from Mintzberg's role typology: personnel leader, resource allocator, spokesman, entrepreneur, liaison and monitor. In this research, the same six roles are applied. The role terminology is commonly in use and is genderless. We will employ the following role descriptions for leadership roles:

1. *Personnel leader*. As a leader, the manager is responsible for supervising, hiring, training, organizing, coordinating, and motivating a cadre of personnel to achieve the goals of the organization. This role is mainly internal to the police unit. It is argued that transformational leadership is a motivational leadership style most appropriate for the personnel leader (Fitzgerald and Schutte, 2010).

2. *Resource allocator*. The manager must decide how to allocate human, financial and information resources to the different tasks of police work. This role emphasizes planning, organizing, coordinating and controlling tasks, and is mainly internal to the police investigation unit. Administrative tasks are included in this role. An important resource in policing is knowledge among police officers (Leszczynska, 2010; UNODC, 2006). It might be argued that transactional leadership is a leadership style most appropriate for the resource allocator, as decision-making in terms of allocation represents transactions on resources and policing tasks.

3. *Spokesman*. As a spokesman, the manager extends organizational contacts to areas in the police force outside his or her own unit. This role emphasizes promoting acceptance of the unit and the unit's work within the organization of which they are part. For the manager, it means contact with the rest of the organization. Frequently, he or she must move across traditional departmental boundaries and become involved in personnel, organizational and financial matters.

4. *Entrepreneur*. The manager identifies police needs and develops solutions that change situations. A major responsibility of the manager is to ensure that rapidly evolving policing methods are understood, planned, implemented, and strategically exploited in the organization. An important element of the entrepreneurial leadership role is creativity (Lin et al., 2010).

5. *Liaison*. In this role, the manager communicates with the external environment, and it includes exchanging information with government agencies, private businesses, media and the public. This is an active, external role.

6. *Monitor*. This role emphasizes scanning of the external environment to keep up with relevant changes, such as politics and economics. The manager identifies new ideas from sources outside his or her organization. To accomplish this task, the manager uses many resources, including professional relationships, media and the public. This is a passive, external role.

Figure I. Leadership Roles for Police Managers

Six leadership roles are applied in this research as framed in Figure 1. The original set of leadership roles by Mintzberg (1994) consists of three main categories and ten managerial roles. Within the category of informational management, we find the monitor, the disseminator, and the spokesman. Within the category of interpersonal management, we find the figurehead, the leader, and the liaison. Finally within the category of decisional management, we find the entrepreneur, the disturbance handler, the resource allocator, and the negotiator.

The illustration of six leadership roles in Figure 1 is adopted from the works by Glomseth et al. (2007). The personnel leader and resource allocator are roles internal to the unit for the unit manager. The spokesman and entrepreneur are roles directed towards the base police organization, while the liaison and monitor roles are external to both the unit and the base organization for the unit manager.

Research Design

A convenience sample of two police districts in Norway was selected for empirical study of leadership roles. In Norway, there is only one police force. The organization of the Norwegian Police is largely based on the principle of an integrated police, where all functions of the police are collected in one organization. There are 27 local police districts, each under the command of a Chief of Police. In addition to the police districts, there are five central police institutions in Norway.

About 13,000 persons work in the Norwegian Police force in some capacity. About 9,000 are trained police officers, while almost 800 are trained lawyers, and about 3,200 are civilian employees. The Norwegian police and prosecuting authority follow a parallel track system, where responsibility for combating crime is shared between the Police Directorate and the Public Prosecution, both linked to the Department of Justice.

The Chief of Police in each police district has full responsibility for all kinds of policing in the district. A police district has its own headquarter as well as several police stations. All police officers Norway are trained to be generalists, able to fulfill every aspect of ordinary police work, including criminal investigations, maintaining public order and community policing.

Two police districts were selected for this survey research. They are Follo and Hedmark police districts in the southern part of Norway. Both of these districts have several towns and rural areas, and they have similar geography, demography and crime statistics. In both police districts, executive training programs were carried out in 2008/2009/2010. Participants in these programs were selected for this survey research as a convenience sample. Follo police district and Hedmark police district had a total of 130 participants in these programs with 60 managers from Follo and 70 managers from Hedmark.

A questionnaire was developed to measure leadership roles based on previous research by Glomseth et al. (2007). The questionnaire was first tested on 15 police managers at different leadership levels and from different police districts. Seven of them provided written comments, and some others made comments on the telephone. All comments from the pretest were considered, and several changes were made to the questionnaire.

The web-based survey research was carried out in March and April 2010. 90 out of 130 managers responded to the questionnaire, thereby representing a response rate of 69 percent. Most of the respondents had worked in the police for more than twenty-five years. 53 percent of the respondents were from Follo, while 47 percent were from Hedmark police district. 44 percent were working at a local police station, while 49 percent were working in a functional unit.

Among the respondents, 50% were first-line managers, 31% were middle managers, while 19% were top managers. In terms of leadership position, 35% had 0 to 5 subordinates, 20% had 6 to 10 subordinates, 20% had 11-20 subordinates, and the remaining 23% had more than 21 subordinates.

Among the respondents, 34% had been in a management position for more than 11 years, while 53% had been in a management position for less than 2 years. 83 percent were trained police officers, while 6 percent were trained lawyers and 11

percent were civilian employees. 81 percent were men and 19 percent were women. Most respondents were in the age ranges of 41 to 45 (29%), 46 to 50 (27%), and 51 to 55 (21%) years old. Retirement age for police officers is 57 years in Norway.

Many respondents (35%) had 3 years of college education. Some had less, and some had 4 years (12%), and some had 5 years (12%). Police education in Norway is 3 years in terms of a bachelor degree, and lawyer education is 5 years in terms of a master degree.

Research Results

Table 1 lists results for leadership roles on a scale from 1 (not important) to 7 (very important). The complete set of six leadership roles was repeated four times in the questionnaire to measure: (i) leadership role importance as perceived by the respondent, (ii) actual time spent by the respondent on the leadership role, (iii) desired time spent by the respondent on the leadership role, and (iv) the respondent's perception of his or her own competence in the leadership role.

Personnel leader is reported as the most important role where managers spend most time. Ideally, managers would like to spend even more time on this role. Respondents feel most competent in the role of resource allocator, followed by personnel leader and spokesman.

From a statistical point of view, the role of personnel leader is significantly more important to respondents than the role of resource allocator. This significance was established when applying the statistical t-test for the means (Hair et al., 2010). Similarly, the ideal time spent on the personnel leader role is significantly longer than the ideal time spent on the resource allocator role at a significance of $p < .01$. However, the actual time spent on the personnel leader role is not significantly longer than the actual time spent on the resource allocator role, thus making rank 1 and rank 2 in the second number column not significant. Respondents feel slightly more competent in the resouce allocator rather than the personnel leader role, but this difference in number means is not significant.

Leadership Role	Role Importance	Role Time Actual	Role Time Ideal	Role Competence
Personnel leader	5.9	4.7	5.7	4.9
Resource allocator	5.2	4.7	4.7	4.9
Spokesman	5.2	4.3	5.0	4.6
Entrepreneur	5.1	4.2	4.9	4.5
Liaison	5.0	4.2	5.1	4.5
Monitor	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.4

Table 1. Measurement of leadership roles (importance: 1 - not important, 7 - very important; actual: 1 - little time, 7 - very much time; ideal: 1- not important time, 7 - very important time; competence: 1 - not competent, 7 - very competent)

Discussion

Both police districts have been through turbulent times in terms of frequent organizational changes. This might have influenced managers to become more people oriented in the personnel leader role. Also, newly promoted leaders seem to have more focus on personnel management than their predecessors. As Norwegian Police develops from a semi-military organization to a knowledge organization, more attention is paid to leadership and knowledge management.

However, it is interesting to note that respondents select the personnel leader role as most important while they select the resource allocator role as the top regarding their own competence. A possible explanation is that traditional police management has been concerned with decision-making where the police manager makes decisions about who should do what and when. This is very much in line with the resource allocator role. More recently, police officers in Norway have experienced empowerment, causing police managers to shift their main focus away from resource allocation over to personnel leadership. This recent shift from resource allocation to personnel leadership is also in line with the more recent thinking of transformational leadership rather than transactional leadership in modern organizations.

An important challenge in police management is to promote police integrity and accountability and to prevent police misconduct (UNODC, 2006). Integrity is defined as the quality of being honest and morally upright (OPI, 2007). Police integrity is an important element of what is called public integrity (Fijnaut and Huberts, 2002). According to Cossette (2004), the intention to deceive, even if difficult to determine, is a key element in this conception of misconduct. Accountability refers to situations in which someone is required or expected to justify actions or decisions (OSJI, 2005). Leadership roles that focus on integrity and accountability include personnel leader and also monitor, because the monitor role emphasizes scanning of the external environment to learn how the police and police service is perceived in society.

This study focuses on leadership roles, while other studies focus on leadership styles. Leadership roles emphasize tasks to be carried out, while leadership styles emphasize behavioral modes and approaches in carrying out those tasks. In leadership style research, distinctions can be made between three different kinds of leadership styles (Joseph and Winston, 2005; Reinke, 2004; Russel and Stone, 2002; Sendjaya and Sarros, 2003; Smith et al., 2004; Spears, 2004, 2010; Washington et al., 2006):

- Servant leadership is a people-oriented style. The leader is motivated to help employees achieve goals and objectives in the service of the public. The focus is upon the establishment of positive relationships based upon mutual respect and trust. Subordinates are consulted and their ideas are considered and drawn upon.

- Autocratic leadership is concerned with obtaining and maintaining power, which is the foremost goal of the leader. They make all decisions and give orders rather than invite group participation.

- Laissez-faire leadership is a hands-off approach to organizational leadership. The leaders abandon and abdicate their main function and serve largely as a conduit of information when exercising little or no control. As a result, the organization runs itself with little or no input from management.

Servant leadership seems more appropriate for roles such as the personnel leader than roles such as the monitor. Sevant leaders serve their followers and focus upon satisfying their needs. Servant leadership seems appropriate mainly for the police unit in Figure 1. Servant leaders are less concerned with their personal power and devoted to leadership through the provision of service to others. Servant leaders put the needs of their followers above their own. It is sometimes claimed it is an ethical style of leadership. The purpose of the organization is the welfare of its members, not to gratify the ego or reputation of the leader. For this reason, the servant leader would never take advantage of followers. According to Reinke (2004), the servant leader is one who is committed to the growth of both the individual and the organization, and who works to build community within organizations. Humility is also a prime attribute of the servant leaders. Sendjaya and Sarros (2002) state that the primary intent of the servant leader is to serve others first, not lead others first, and that their selfconcept is one of servant and steward, not leader or owner.

The linkages and differences between servant and transformational leadership style have also been noted in the literature. Transformational leadership seems most closely aligned with the servant leader paradigm. Servant leaders tend to be more concerned about the emotional well being of followers while the transformational leader focuses upon their intellectual stimulation and willingness to challenge the external environment in an aggressive manner (Smith et al., 2004).

In police departments, Murphy and Drodge (2004) found that the way police officers perceive their treatment by the leader and the organization affect both the quality of their performance and the service they provide to the community. Thus, in a trasition from a semi-military to a knowledge-oriented organization in many countries all over the world, the role of the personnel leader might very well be applied with the servant leadership style to succeed.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to present results from a survey of police managers in Norway on leadership roles. A questionnaire was developed and administered among police managers in two police districts in Norway. Six leadership roles were defined and measured in terms of their role importance, actual role time, ideal role time, and managers' role competence. Respondents emphasized the role of personnel leader where the manager is responsible for supervising, hiring, training, organizing, coordinating, and motivating a cadre of personnel to achieve the goals of the organization.

An important implication for practice from this study is the necessary shift from resource allocation to personnel leadership. This shift needs to find its reality in the actual time spent on the role. Furthermore, police managers need to develop their competence in personell leadership as tranformational leadership becomes more important than transactional leadership in law enforcement organizations.

There are several limitations to this research that open up for future research. First, research questions presented in this paper are far too broad to be answered here with a convenience sample of two police districts in Norway. More survey data are needed from other countries and regions to find reliable answers to the research questions. Next, a 1-7 scale was used in this research to evaluate leadership roles. Respondents were only given guidance as to what 1 and 7 represented on the scale. Future research might improve the consistency in respondents' understanding of the scale by labeling each number on the scale with a relevant text.

There are more avenues for future research. For example, influences from demographic and position variables can be studied. The nature of management levels can be explored. Each finding needs to find its causal explanation. This is best done in exploratory research by interviewing some police officers at different ranks. Futhermore, findings from this study can be linked to normative approaches, i.e., what the situation in police roles should be.

References

Andresen, R., Ekker, K. and Gottschalk, P. (2007). Critical success factors from outsourcing theories as determinants of leadership roles in IT outsourcing projects. *International Journal of Management and Enterprise Development*, 4(4), 477-487.

Cossette, P. (2004). Research Integrity: An Exploratory Survey of Administrative Science Faculties, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 49, 213-234.

Dean, G. and Gottschalk, P. (2007). *Knowledge Management in Policing and Law Enforcement - Foundations, Structures, Applications*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, UK.

Dion, M. (2008). Ethical leadership and crime prevention in the organizational setting, *Journal of Financial Crime*, 15 (3), 308-319.

Fijnaut, C. and Huberts, L. (2002). Corruption, Integrity and Law Enforcement, in: Fijnaut, C. and Huberts, L., *Corruption, Integrity and Law Enforcement*, Kluwer Law International, The Hague, The Netherlands, 3-34.

Fitzgerald, S. and Schutte, N.S. (2010). Increasing transformational leadership through enhancing self-efficacy, *Journal of Management Development*, 29 (5), 495-505.

Glomseth, R., Gottschalk, P. and Karlsen, J.T. (2007). Leadership roles as determinants of criminal investigation performance: an empirical study of Norwegian police as value shop, *International Journal of Management and Enterprise Development*, 4 (2), 128-142.

Gong, Y., Huang, J.C. and Farh, J.L. (2009). Employee learning orientation, transformational leadership, and employee creativity: the mediating role of employee creative self-efficacy, *Academy of Management Journal*, 52 (4), 765-778.

Gottschalk, P. (2010). Police integrity surveys: a court-based survey approach, *International Journal of Management and Enterprise Development*, 8(3), 243-259.

Joseph, E.E. and Winston, B.E. (2005). A correlation of servant leadership, leader trust, and organizational trust, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 26 (1), 6-22.

Hair, J.F., Black, W.C., Babin, B.J. and Anderson, R.E. (2010). *Multivariate Data Analysis*, Seventh Edition, Pearson Education, NJ: Upper Saddle River.

Leszczynska, A. (2010). The concept of knowledge strategy process, *International Journal of Management and Enterprise Development*, 8 (4), 317-332.

Lin, M.J.J., Chen, C.C., Chen, C.J. and Lai, F.S. (2010). A study on the relationship among time pressure, job involvement, routinisation, creativity and turnover intentions, *International Journal of Management and Enterprise Development*, 8 (2), 184-197.

Michaelis, B., Stegmaier, R. and Sonntag, K. (2010). Shedding light on followers' innovation implementation behavior, *Journal of Management Psychology*, 25 (4), 408-429.

Mintzberg, H. (1994). Rounding out the manager's job, *Sloan Management Review*, 36 (1), 11-26.

Mostovicz, I., Kakabadse, N. and Kakabadse, A. (2009). CSR: the role of leadership in driving ethical outcomes, *Corporate Governance*, 9 (4), 448-460.

Murphy, S.A. and Dodge, E.N. (2004). The four I's of police leadership: A case study heuristic, *International Journal of Police Science and Management*, 6 (1), 1-15.

OPI (2007). *Report on the 'Kit Walker' investigations*, Office of Police Integrity, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, www.opi.vic.gov.au.

OSJI (2005). *Strengthening Oversight of Police in South Africa*, Open Society Justice Initiatives, with Open Society Foundation for South Africa, www.justiceinitiative.org.

Prenzler, T. (2009). *Police Corruption: Preventing Misconduct and Maintaining Integrity*, CRC Press, Taylor & Francis Group, Boca Raton, FL.

Reinke, S. (2004). Service before self: Towards a theory of servant leadership, *Global Virtue Ethics Review*, 5 (3), 30-57.

Russel, R.F. and Stone, A.G. (2002). A review of servant leadership attributes: Developing a practical model, *Leadership & Organizational Development Journal*, 23 (3), 145-157.

Schafer, J.A. (2009). Developing effective leadership in policing: perils, pitfalls, and paths forward, *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management*, 32 (2), 238-260.

Sendjaya, S. and Sarros, J.C. (2003). Servant leadership: Its origin, development, and application in organizations, *Journal of Leadership and Organization Studies*, 9 (2), 57-64.

Sewell, J.D. (2008). *Police management: what they didn't teach in management schools*, Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute, Tallahassee, Florida, www.totse.com/en/politics/police/manage.html.

Smith, B.N., Montagno, R.V. and Kuzmenko, T.N. (2004). Transformational and servant leadership: Content and contextual comparisons, *Journal of Leadership & Organization Studies,* 10 (4), 80-91.

Spears, L.C. (2004). Practicing servant leadership, *Leader to Leader*, 34, 7-11.

Spears, L.C. (2010). Character and servant leadership: Ten characteristics of effective, caring leaders, *Journal of Virtues & Leadership*, 1 (1), 25-30.

UNODC (2006). *Public Safety and Police Service Delivery: Criminal justice assessment toolkit*, United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Vienna International Center, Vienna, Austria, www.unodc.org.

Washington, R.R., Sutton, C.D. and Field, H.S. (2006). Individual differences in servant leadership: the roles of values and personality, *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 27 (8), 700-716.

The author Rune Glomseth is police superintendent and assistant professor at the Norwegian Police University College. He has many years of work experience in law enforcement including police patrolling, investigations, police intelligence, proactive work and administration. He teaches organizational development and leadership to undergraduate and graduate students as well as law enforcement executives. He can be reached at rune.glomseth@phs.no

The author Petter Gottschalk is professor of information systems and knowledge management in the department of leadership and organizational management at the Norwegian School of Management. Dr. Gottschalk has published several books and research articles on crime and policing. He can be reached at petter.gottschalk@bi.no

And the author Åse Storhaug Hole is assistant professor in the department of organizational studies at Hedmark University College. She teaches organizational development and leadership, service and innovation management. She has many years of work experience as manager in the public sector, mainly in the field of educational administration. Over the last years she has developed and run leadership-training programs for police forces, together with Rune Glomseth at the Norwegian Police University College.