

Law Enforcement Recruitment – Challenges & Strategies



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Recruitment Challenges

- It's Not a Priority.
- Lack of Recruitment Strategic Planning.
- Advertising & Marketing Are Out of Touch & Out of Date.
- Poor Understanding of the Market.
- The Selection Process Undermines Effective Recruitment.
- Retention Problems – Other Side of the Coin.

Recruitment is a Problem ...

- 2004 – CA Chiefs and Sheriffs - One of top two most pressing issues.
- 2005 – Recruitment & Retention Symposium
 - 59% agreed or strongly agreed recruitment is a problem.
- 2005 – CA Departments
 - 91% recruitment is a problem.
- 2007 – CAPSA & Training Manager Surveys
- 2008 – Recruiter Survey by Alder Group

... but not a Priority

- 2005 – Recruitment & Retention Symposium
 - 14% agreed or strongly their agencies had developed a recruitment strategic plan.
- 2005 - Symposium Attendee Survey
 - 54% - Budget no money for recruitment.
 - 16% - Budget less than \$5,000.
- 2007 – CA Training Managers
 - Only 36% said they had developed a recruitment strategic plan.



Plan To Achieve Effective Recruitment

- “Failure to plan is planning to fail.”
- In general, we fail to develop plans.
- We aren’t the only ones!
- Poor recruitment planning and strategies results in poor recruitment outcomes.

Developing a Recruitment Strategic Plan

- How many do you need to recruit?
- Who is the ideal candidate?
- Is diversity important?
- Who are the stakeholders?
- What have we been doing right?
Wrong?
- What is your short and long-term hiring
time frames?

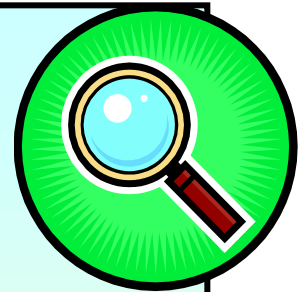
Strategic Plan Research Questions

- What has attracted employees to your agency?
- What has kept them?
- Why do officers leave?
- What's the ROI for each advertising effort?
- To what extent are all employees engaged in the recruitment process?

Reasons candidates chose an agency

Survey Results:

- Reputation
- Variety of assignments
- Location
- Willing to send recruit to academy



Recruit Survey: When Recruits Decided

50% or more decided they were interested in law enforcement by high school graduation



Advertising & Marketing

Major Sources of Recruitment -

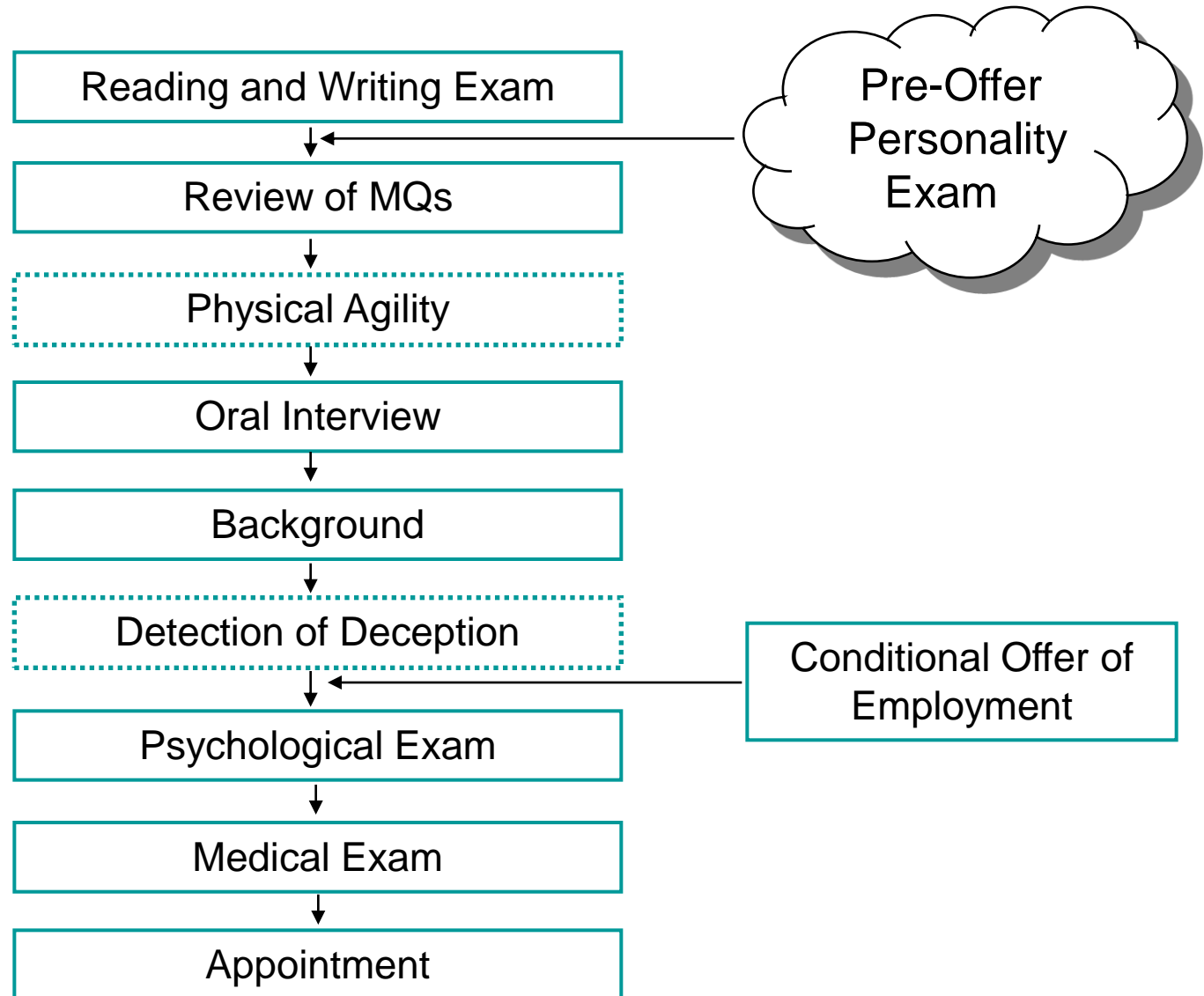
- Self referral/Word of mouth
- Website
- Agency employee who is a friend or relative
- Agency employee told me about the opportunity



The Selection Process

- Lengthy – up to nine months or longer
- Grueling
- Impersonal
- Redundant
- Intimidating

Peace Officer Selection Process



Maximize the Hiring Process

- Provide candidate pre-assessment – self-selection
- On-line assessments – UPS-type tracking
- Order assessments steps by cost and discrimination power
- Send candidates on in order of success likelihood
- Develop a clear understanding of each evaluators' shared & independent role in the process
- Review current bases for DQs

BASIS FOR EVALUATION

POST Screening Dimensions

Background

Psychological

Integrity

Integrity

**Impulse Control/Attention
to Safety**

**Impulse Control/Attention
to Safety**

**Substance Abuse & Other
Risk-Taking Behavior**

**Substance Abuse & Other
Risk-Taking Behavior**

Stress Tolerance

Emotional Reg./ Stress Toler.

Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness

Decision-Making/Judgment

Decision-Making/Judgment

Interpersonal Skills

Social Competence

Teamwork

Learning Ability

Assertiveness/Persuasiveness

Communication Skills

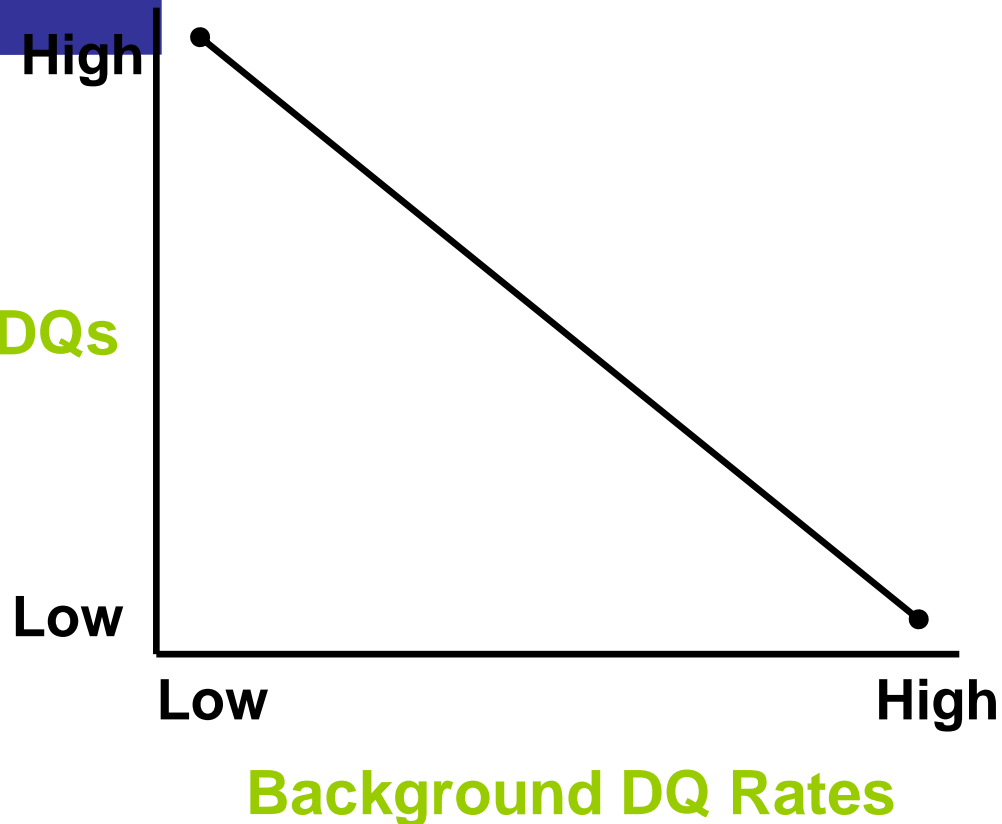
Adaptability/Flexibility

Most Common Bases for Psychological Disqualifications

1. Social Adjustment/Competence
2. Impulse Control/Anger Management (Spousal/ Child Abuse)
3. Emotional Control
4. Conscientiousness/Dependability
5. Defiance of Rules and Authority
6. Integrity
7. Judgment/Decision-Making (Maturity)
8. Substance Abuse
9. Racism/Sexism

Psychopathology < 1%

Psychological DQs



Relationship between Background Investigation and Psychological Screening Disqualifications (DQs)

Personalize the Hiring Process

- Make staff available to answer questions
- Send notices to keep candidates abreast of progress in the selection process - provide information regarding each step and what to expect
- Mentor selected candidates through the process
- Ensure evaluators know the difference between investigation and interrogation

Comments by Recruits

- “Become more interested in your applicants, and correspond with them, keeping them abreast...”
- “...Be a little more helpful during recruitment...give more info during application and be friendly.”
- “Keep in contact with people. It is very frustrating not knowing what is going on...”

Retention: The Other Side of the Coin

- 22.4% of CA officers have switched agencies; 3-4.3% have switched annually.
- 1979-2005: 23K+ officers with 1 -15 years of service left CA law enforcement.
- Direct & Indirect costs.
- Few CA chiefs & sheriffs have written retention plans.

To Recap

- Make recruitment a priority.
- Develop a plan.
- Update marketing methods.
- Do market research.
- Improve your selection processes.
- Determine to keep them.



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Recruitment & Retention – Best Practices Update

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EEOC Position on Peace Officer Background Investigations

Pre-Offer

- Request official documents that are not disability related (e.g., birth certificate)
- Review those documents that are acquired quickly

Post-Offer

- Review the documents that took time to acquire
- Request and collect disability-related information
- Conduct reference checks