**Psychological Factors**

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**Abstract**

This essay dives into the critical psychological factors that should be considered when recruiting individuals for roles in the law enforcement field. Law enforcement has a role in maintaining public safety and upholding the rule of law. As such, it is important to candidates who not only possess the skills and training but also portray specific psychological attributes that are necessary for their success in this challenging profession. Attributes such as empathy, emotional stability, good judgment, and cultural competence are of importance when assessing potential law enforcement officers. Empathy is crucial for officers to effectively relate to and engage with the diverse communities they serve, gaining trust and cooperation. Emotional stability is vital for managing high-stress situations and maintaining composure in the face of adversity, contributing to both individual well-being and public safety. Good judgment is essential for making sound decisions. Cultural competence is a factor that should not be overlooked. Understanding and respecting the cultural diversity within a community helps build positive relationships and ensures fair and unbiased treatment. Failure to consider these traits in the hiring process can have serious consequences and further push away the public's trust in law enforcement. Negative perceptions of law enforcement often stem from incidents involving officers who lack these essential qualities. Therefore, addressing these psychological factors in the recruitment and training of law enforcement officers can serve as a starting point to reform and strengthen a system that is perceived as broken. In conclusion, this essay emphasizes the pivotal role of empathy, emotional stability, good judgment, and cultural competence in shaping the future of law enforcement.

During the recruiting process, emotional stability should be investigated further. A crucial step in the hiring process for law enforcement should be an individual's emotional stability. Those who suffer from trauma and emotions can have a profound effect on their actions in the policing environment, it is important to recognize.  By understanding that emotion is an important part of one's actions, it could be possible to develop policies that are effective. An officer with higher emotional stability is less likely to act impulsively, which can result in better judgment and response in the field. It is important for law enforcement to remain calm and keep their composure and make rational decisions in tough events or dangerous situations. Officers with high emotional stability will be less likely to give in to unjust behavior, excessive use of force and aggression. Which is a part of having good sense of judgement and appropriate responses to things that will be experienced in the field.

Building off emotional stability, another factor that should be taken into consideration is empathy and compassion. Law enforcement deals with a lot of individuals who are in distress, diverse backgrounds etc. Those officers who may possess empathy and compassion can have the ability to defuse heated situations and provide support to those who may need it. It has also been many cases where police must work within sexual assault and or child abuse. Having such qualities can make a substantial difference in providing assistance to victims who suffer from trauma. When dealing with victims who are suffering from this trauma having empathy and compassion can lead to positive relationships within the community and build trust within law enforcement as well. Building relationships within the community can foster trust in law enforcement, ultimately strengthening the bond between officers and the communities they serve.

Stress tolerance is something serious to consider as well. Law enforcement officers face occupational stressors from things such as exposer to trauma, long hours of working, and high-pressured situations. It is common for policemen to suffer from health issues as well such as heart disease and high blood pressure. Working within this field is not an easy job so having the ability to handle stress is crucial to having a healthy well-being and great job performance. Identifying this factor within the process of recruitment will be able to tell you who will be able to handle themselves correctly when coming across tough challenges that will be faced.

Although working in this field can take a big toll on mental health there are ways to manages these stressors. One effective way to prevents these issues are by staying present in the moment and focusing on thought without judgment. Keeping a peace of mind taking deep breaths when there’s irritation or stress. Meditation is a good start to this another idea is physical exercise and healthy lifestyle choices. Having a good night’s rest, good diet, and less coffee and alcohol consumption. A healthy lifestyle will allow people’s ability to cope with life’s pressures in a better manner.

Ronald P. Dempsey states there are high cases of police violence in the us and the reason for this is their ethical practices decision making, lack of accountability, and racial disparities (Dempsey). These officers are making value-based decisions instead of stopping thinking logically before acting. This is one of many mistakes that law enforcement makes bringing the next factor into play, having good judgment. Working within law enforcement you will hold a lot of power. The problem with this is that the power often gets into the wrong hands so it should be important to check for one’s judgment and to see if they are good with decision making. Being able to think critically, making valid judgments, and considering potential consequences for actions are essential for this field.

The last factor is cultural competence. Cultural competence is a individual’s ability to understand and interact effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds. When working within law enforcement understanding cultural needs and beliefs within the community as whole is needed to be successful. The lack of understanding the community is where the tension and misunderstanding comes into play. This may not seem like something serious but not having cultural competence is often where law enforcement runs into issues which has led to many lives being lost. A training system called MILO, can provide these learning template for police departments so they may lean toward cultural competency. By evaluating a person’s cultural competence that is in the process of recruitment it can ensure that they are capable of building positive relationships within diverse communities.

By considering and assessing these psychological factors during the hiring process law enforcement can work toward selecting candidates who possess the necessary qualities to perform their job effectively. The essay discussed various factors that can lead to a effective way of hiring a person with the correct qualifications for working in this field. By having the mindset of serving and protecting the community, it is important to not take these factors lightly. They should be done through validated and reliable psychological evaluations administered by professionals to make sure of fairness and accuracy. In conclusion, this holistic approach to candidate selection ensures not only that the right qualifications are met but that individuals entering the field are equipped with the emotional and psychological resilience required to get through the complex challenges and responsibilities of law enforcement while fostering trust and security within the community.

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