“It is an agency far ahead its time and one for which others should aspire to become. Anyone who says it can 't be done should visit Tempe.”

So said a team of on-site assessors in their recent report recommending that the Tempe Police Department be re-accredited. The assessors were clearly taken by what they called the “corporate culture” of the agency, which is characterized by a striking "level of commitment and knowledge with regard to accreditation, community-based policing and delivery of quality police service."

Since 1988, this forward-looking police department has been led by Chief Dave Brown, but Brown’s leadership is but one element of what makes the organization tick. The Chief’s own favorite buzzword for the department is “empowerment,” and he utters the word with the kind of enthusiasm that can quickly captivate a listener. For Brown, empowerment of employees is the driving force that has enabled the department and its personnel to take community policing one step beyond the rest of the pack.

Brown has presided over a process of decentralizing and flattening the Tempe PD, with three ranks eliminated from the organization chart and majors and captains combined into the rank of division commanders. Some of the ranks that were discarded were, predictably, ranks that Brown himself had held at one time during his 12 years with the Tempe force, which he entered as a patrolman in 1968. In 1980, by which time he had risen to the rank of major in charge of administrative services, he left the department to become the Police Chief in Yuma, Ariz., where he served for eight years.

His knowledge of Tempe and its Police Department helped to forge the type of customized community policing that now exists - and continues to evolve - in the city: geographic deployment. Started as a pilot project five years ago with nine officers and one sergeant assuming 24-hour responsibility for one beat, geographic deployment proved so successful that it went citywide last July. That's not to say there weren't bumps along the way. As Brown puts it, “We couldn't find anybody else who was doing it, we didn't have a blueprint.... [We knew] we were going to run into obstacles and we ran into them.” Much of the difficulties involved scheduling since the sergeant and officers for each beat had to design their own shifts. At present the department has 15 different patrol schedules.

One would think that, with some 340 employees (241 sworn) and a city population of about 147, 000, the Tempe PD would be stretched to the limit by the labor - intensiveness of geographic deployment. Fortunately for Tempe, the department augments its staff with a gung-ho corps of volunteers. The volunteer cadre currently numbers 170, who feel critical roles in such areas as victim assistance, motorist assistance, parking enforcement, and fingerprinting. The key to making the program work ,says Chief Brown, is treating the volunteers with the same respect shown to paid employees.

In just six years, Brown has moved the Tempe Police Department into the front ranks of progressive American police agencies. Numerous ingredients-such as community and employee empowerment, self-directed work teams, and accreditation-make up his recipe for such advancement, and he adds that they are properly seasoned by generous amounts of trust, training and patience. (It also doesn't seem to hurt to have a non-unionized department, and one that is completely computer literate.)

As Brown describes the Tempe PD, its mission and values, his talk is laced with direct and indirect reference to various catch phrases and touchstones of policing over the past 20 years, such as “hot spots,” “team policing,” and much more. Quite clearly, what he and his subordinates have done is taken major advances in the body of knowledge in law enforcement over the past two decades and synthesized them in an elective operational format for policing the city of Tempe.
"Traditional policing is a lot like Vietnam. You send the officers out to the beat, they try to keep crime out for the 8- or 10-hour shift that they're there, then they go home and it's somebody else's problem."

Motivational Climate

Handout

Law Enforcement News interview
by Marie Simonetti Rosen

LAW ENFORCEMENT NEWS: For the past five years or so, the Tempe Police Department has been going through a rather dramatic metamorphosis. I'd like to begin by looking at some of the changes and what prompted them. . . .

BROWN: It started in 1988 out of a sense of frustration. The Tempe Police Department was a very professional organization, a very efficient organization, with a lot of support from the community and from elected officials, and a lot of respect from other law-enforcement agencies. We had all the bells and whistles, computers in the cars, all the equipment, brand-new police station, but there was a frustration that we weren't really accomplishing anything. It seemed as if the more people we locked up, it had little impact. For everyone that went into jail, somebody came out the other end. We were "treading water, so to speak - the harder we worked, it didn't seem to accomplish anything. That's when we decided that it was time to stop and take a look at who we are, what we're supposed to be doing and how to do it. We turned to some degree to the private sector and looked at some of the programs that were taking place there. At that time there was a real movement out there to maintain competitiveness on an international marketplace by making some drastic changes in the way they did their job. So we mirrored a lot of that, with things like empowerment, decentralization, pushing decision-making farther down into the organization, teams, etc.

LEN: I was reading about your geographic deployment, in which you apparently allow officers to bid on their assignments, and make officers responsible for a place rather than a shift. Has that been successful?

BROWN: When we started moving toward community policing back in 1988, we were told that we could expect a lot of resistance from our officers and our employees. This was the experience of some other departments, I guess, where they looked at it as social service work or a "wave and grin" squad. To be perfectly honest, we didn't find that. We found that the officers were just as frustrated as we were and the citizens were, and they didn't feel good about not being able to make an impact. To some degree that helped us move toward community policing a lot.

The geographic deployment came about with an idea that started and 1989. We got a Federal grant that allowed us to take one of our 16 beats in the city and rather than sending officers out to that beat in a normal traditional way, we took that beat and gave it a sergeant and nine officers, and asked them to assume the responsibility within that beat 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They do their own shift schedules and they develop a relationship with the people in that community. We encouraged them to be a part of anything that was happening - PTA meetings, church socials, even birthday parties if you get invited to one.

We promised to keep the officers in the beat, known as Beat 16, for two years. This was a low-income area, with a high minority-group, Spanish-speaking population. It's our busiest beat, and it was an area where it was well known that the citizens really didn't see anything, didn't hear anything, and didn't tell us anything. About three months into the program we had a homicide out there. An elderly lady was robbed and killed at about 3 o'clock in the morning. By 5 or 6 that same morning, some of our officers started getting calls at home telling us who was probably involved in it. By about 9 we had enough information to develop arrest warrants, and by 11 we got calls from people telling us where the suspects were in an adjoining city. This was a complete turnaround within that beat and in the relationships we had with the
citizens in that beat in the past. The officers became very enthused in it. They enjoyed the attention they were getting; they enjoyed the fact that they were making an impact.

The program was so successful that we started two other beats without Federal funding, and then this past July 12, we implemented it citywide. All of our deployment is now done geographically. We now have 15 beats - we combined two beats into one - and we have 15 patrol schedules. The sergeants have a great deal of control over their officers. They make decisions about where and how to deploy them, whether they're on bicycles, in cars, in plainclothes assignments. They have access to some of our centralized groups that haven't been decentralized yet, such as traffic, detectives, narcotics, and they can bring them in - although we find that there's a great deal of initiative to do a lot of that work themselves without bringing the outside people in. The sergeants have a great deal of flexibility and autonomy in doing their beats.

**Cultivating confidence**

LEN: How do they feel about what would seem to be a dramatic increase not only in their workload, but in their responsibilities?

BROWN: It's an individual thing. I think most of them like the idea that they have control over a great deal of their job and their responsibility. We were a very top-down driven organization prior to this change in 1988, so there were concerns about direction. In the past, almost daily direction was given out of the Chief's office. That has changed, and for the most part I think the sergeants enjoy it. It was a learning process, the development of self-confidence. The department has always placed a great deal of emphasis on selection processes, promotion processes and training, so the quality of the sergeants was just perfect for this empowerment type of program because there was a great deal of competence at that level.

LEN: With 15 different work schedules, it would seem a lot to keep track of . . . .

BROWN: It is. We walked into the geographic deployment recognizing that we had an opportunity to see it on an individual beat, and then two beats and then three beats. But what we didn't have the opportunity to do is see it citywide and what kind of impact that would have on places like Communications, Records and other support units. We ran into some problems where the communications weren't as good as in the past. Fortunately, most people recognized that because we couldn't find anybody else who was doing it, we didn't have a blueprint or map to follow, so we were going to run into obstacles - and we ran into them. We worked on them; we got a lot of people involved in cross-functional teams, in self-directed teams to address those types of problems. So it's kind of a growing process.

LEN: You flattened the department by eliminating four ranks. How has that worked out?

BROWN: One of the things I recognized when I came back to the Tempe Police Department was this top-down-driven management. As an example, officers would do something out on the streets and they would come in and tell the corporals, who'd brief the sergeants, who'd brief the lieutenants, who'd brief the captains, who'd brief the majors, who'd brief the assistant chief and the assistant chief would brief the chief. And whatever comment the chief had would go back down the same way.

LEN: Like playing telephone!

BROWN: Exactly. Obviously that meant that our communications system was very antiquated; it allowed miscommunication at many levels. One of the concerns and problems with it is that people perceived that as their job: They'd come in and be briefed, they'd brief somebody later that afternoon, they'd get briefed going back down. So one of the first things we did is we implemented something in our electronic mail system so that the officer who inputs into the computer does something that goes throughout the department. We now have that one message being distributed in the same language to everybody.
Having said that, the question arose, "Okay, now what will we do with all these levels and managers?"
Empowerment was a real, key issue in making the flattening work. Over the five years, we've eliminated
the senior officer's position, we've eliminated corporals. We took the major and captain and combined
them into division commanders, and just this past year we eliminated the assistant chiefs' positions. The
only way we could do that is, number one, through the competence of the people that are left in the
positions to pick up more. Secondly, it was an empowerment issue, with people taking on more than what
they've done in the past. All those positions that we did away with have been factored back in and re-
budgeted into line positions or community service officers, which are civilian equivalents to police officers,
or line support such as crime analyst and trainers positions.

LEN: What happened with the detective’s function? Some departments around the country are
decentralizing the detective ranks and putting them out in district or mini-stations. Did that occur
in Tempe as well?

BROWN: Yes and no. We have taken over our detectives and reassigned them, not outside their area,
but reassigned their caseloads almost by geographic deployment as well. Our city is divided into
quadrants, so a detective would be assigned to all cases coming out of a given quadrant, and he would
work very closely with the patrol lieutenant who's over that quadrant and the various beat officers. So
we've done some decentralization without actually moving the detectives themselves. We'll be breaking
ground on a new substation this month, and it'll go in the southern part of our city. That station is being
designed to take decentralization another step further: we will have detectives working out of there; we
will have motor officers working out of there, and their deployment out of that station will closely parallel
the geographic deployment of quadrants and beats.

LEN: You already have one substation in a high school, one in a public housing development, and
another in a mobile trailer? Generally speaking, how effective are they? More importantly,
suppose a neighborhood doesn’t want a substation for some reason? Have you run into anything
like this?

BROWN: No, and maybe I should do a clarification. What we're talking about are beat offices. We set
up a program where, in exchange for a donation of space, we will create a beat office within a
geographical beat. We have a briefing station in a park that's kind of in our South Side substation - we're
moving out of that and into our new substation next year, and we will have only two stations, north and
south. But the rest of them will be the beat stations. We have one in a high school, one in a grade
school/junior high school complex, we have various apartment complexes that have donated space, we
have little strip malls or shopping centers that have donated office space to us. We haven't met any
resistance, but at the same time, it's always been on a volunteer basis. We pay no rent or anything; we
pick up the cost of putting the telephones and the computers in it. It's been really a hit both for the officers
and for the citizens. The citizens like the idea of the officers' presence there.

We have a very successful volunteer program, and the plans are to man these neighborhood beat offices
with volunteers. In this way, for example, people who live in a certain beat will know that the beat office on
Tuesdays and Thursdays will be offering crime prevention seminars presented by volunteers. Or it'll be
manned on Wednesdays by an officer, and they can come in and talk to a police officer about traffic
problems, or whatever problems are occurring. We're still doing some more formalizing of the programs
that are provided out of the neighborhood beat offices.

Helping hands

LEN: Some departments that use volunteers have had trouble with the program in terms of
people showing up today but not tomorrow, making it hard to know how many you have and how
to deploy them. . .
BROWN: We started looking at volunteers about the same time we were going through community policing. As we started trying to figure out who we were, what we did, and how we did it, the first realization that sunk in was that, alone, we weren't going to have an impact. We would continue throwing more police resources at the problem, but we were going to have very little impact on what was happening, and we had to get away from the we're--cops--and--you're--not mentality. That's when we developed community policing, which reaches out to the citizens themselves, and we decided to look at the volunteer program.

At that time we had three volunteers in the department. We tried to get a volunteer coordinator's position budgeted but were unsuccessful in doing it that first year. We did get a commitment where we could take some intern money we had and hire a part-time volunteer coordinator, and then come back to the Council with the results of it. We had an intern from the University of Arizona, I believe, and we asked her if she would research successful volunteer programs and try to develop some strategy that seemed to make those programs successful [See LEN, Nov. 30, 1991]. She put together and excellent study for us. One of the things we found in doing that research was that volunteers really wanted to be treated like employees. They did not want to come in and be told, "Oh, you're here today; why don't you go file those papers." They wanted actual job titles, and job assignments, and shifts, and so forth. so we put together a volunteer program that has selection processes, with interviews, oral boards, and other things such as we would do for our regular officers. For some of our volunteer positions, polygraphs are required -- they're dealing with sensitive work and sensitive paperwork. They're treated very much like other employees; time cards are submitted, evaluations are given.

The program is very successful, and right now we have about 170 volunteers. The City Council gave us the coordinator's position full time the following year because of our success. It's been widely accepted internally, and one of the reasons is that the programs have be designed to take workloads off of the officers --because you know, one of the key questions we continually get is, "How do you afford community policing?" Well for me, three ways come to mind. The first one was, obviously, flattening the organization and putting those resources back into it. The second one, obviously, is the use of volunteers. The third one, which is of our components of community policing, is problem-solving. Right now we estimate that 65 percent to 75 percent of our calls for service come from 10 percent of our addresses. So if we can apply problem-solving techniques and impact the 10 percent of our addresses, that in itself is a payback that will address the workload that we're asked to do.

Wake-up call

LEN: Some people are reluctant to say that community policing will reduce crime. How do you stand on that?

BROWN: It's hard to say. It will probably not reduce reported crime in the first couple of years because you're going out and establishing relationships with the community. You're putting officers out there asking questions that have never been asked before. You're asking for a level of support that's probably never been asked before. You're asking people to report more things. So most people who approach community policing from the standpoint of that partnership and that linkage with the community can expect an increase in reported crime. I don't necessary think that reflects an increase in crime; it's just that you have a more competent public sharing with you what they haven't shared in the past. Overall, though, community policing will demonstrate a reduction in crime. It awakens a sleeping giant out there, which is the citizens themselves.

LEN: Very often a community-policing philosophy does not get reflected in a department's promotional process - in other words, there's very little reason for a good community police officer to want to stay on the beat rather than seek promotion to a desk job. How does the Tempe PD address this?
BROWN: Empowerment was one of the critical components of our movement toward community policing. That, along with other components, certainly shouted to us that we had to change our selection processes. Community policing requires a lot of communication skills and a lot of facilitation skills. So we took a look at our hiring and promotional processes. We stopped looking for the person who could run the fastest and jump the highest and started looking for people who could deal with people, who could talk to people, who could facilitate people into talking when they normally wouldn't talk. Just recently we had promotions for division commander, lieutenants and sergeants. During a day of training, I told those people who were successful that they had been identified as have a uniqueness about them that the unsuccessful candidates didn't. Everybody knew the meaning of community policing. Everybody knew what empowerment meant. Everybody knew what decentralization meant. Everybody had a definition for teams. But these people were the ones who could demonstrate how to practice those variables. They could either talk about how they empowered others, or the were empowered and now they used that new empowerment, so to speak. They talked about geographic deployment and decentralization and how is positively affected them. They talked about how they used problem-solving skills in addressing day-to-day issues. So I think the biggest impact on our promotion processes is that it's taken us to one who demonstrates these traits for where community policing is taking us, the problem-solving, the decentralization, the empowerment, the working with teams.

Brown: “Tempe is unique city, and it would be foolish of us not to take advantage of that uniqueness.”

LEN: I take it that you don't have a Civil Service exam process?

BROWN: We work with the city's Human Resources Department to develop our own selection processes, and we're given a great deal of leeway in developing the most appropriate measures for those. We start off with developing new job descriptions, and once we do that, we look at the traits needed to be successful in that job. Then we develop selection processes to measure those traits.

LEN: Who actually gives the final approval on a promotion?

BROWN: Once again, the Police Department and Human Resources work together. We bring our command staff together, which is the division commanders and the chiefs. We take the top candidate, and we ask that candidate's supervisor to come in, make a short presentation to us describing his strengths, his weaknesses, what skills he would bring and an overall assessment of how he would be if he were promoted into that position. And we pretty much follow that list unless there is some sort of disparaging remarks made in that presentation. We've always tried to have community representation in the selection process along with some police representation and some other city government representation.

LEN: That sounds rather uncommon, involving "outsiders," if you will, in the promotional process for sworn officers . . .

BROWN: We're not that huge an organization we have 375 employees total. So there's a lot of known qualities about our people. So to simply put three of our own supervisors on there would be somewhat redundant, I think. The second thing is, we have to walk-the-talk, so to speak. If we're out here talking cultural relationships, developing partnerships asking the community what they want, what their priorities are, what their needs are, we certainly think that they should be included in our promotion processes. We need that input. One of our biggest allies and one of our main partnerships, for example, is with the school districts themselves. So to me it seems natural that we would ask them to be part of our selection process. And there's been a lot of reciprocation. We've had police supervisors who've been involved in selection processes out in the school areas also.
Can we cooperate?

LEN: That speaks to another component of community policing, one that in some localities has been a trouble spot, namely cooperation with other city agencies, or with the private sector. Do you experience any such difficulty in Tempe?

BROWN: I think we all started off with higher expectations. We certainly didn't experience the levels of difficulty that I've heard other communities share. I think in Tempe it was more wait-and-see whether this was just another fad, just another buzzword, another program. Tempe is a unique city, and it would be foolish of us not to take advantage of that uniqueness of the community. They're somewhat demanding but very supportive of its law enforcement and the rest of city government. I can remember an editorial in the local newspaper that said, "You can't fight City Hall, except in Tempe." So I think we have a lot of advocates going for us. As far as the rest of the city departments are concerned, we have experienced enough successes that the Mayor and the City Manager have announced that there will be a movement toward community-based government. We're going to take some of the components of community-based policing and apply them on a citywide basis. So we didn't really experience a lot of resistance; it was more like hesitation. If there's a problem we can't handle, we turn to Public Works, or Building Safety, or the county Health Department, and we find them to be very receptive. And we find that the community is certainly supportive of that new role for the police officers.

LEN: We were told that you did away with roll calls, and in so doing caused a little tension, at least initially, because there was a perceived loss of officer camaraderie.

BROWN: That was one of the things I mentioned earlier that we hadn't anticipated. We knew there would be problems with total geographic deployment, and after about two months of geographic deployment we started hearing complaints that they didn't know who was working next to them in the beat, they missed that fellowship of the briefings and so forth. It was an obstacle that we just didn't anticipate. We're now trying to address that. We now have beat meetings once every two weeks, I believe. There is a better way of communicating who's working on what shift. Each sergeant might have officers coming in at a different time of the day; in one beat he might be coming in at 4 o'clock in the morning, the next beat it'd be five, the next beat it'd be six. They're now trying to pull them in closer together without sacrificing the schedule itself, so that there are three or four people coming to work at one time so there is this exchange of information.

Seeking better solutions

LEN: You have self-directed work teams making collective decisions as to how resources could be allocated. How did you go about implementing this?

BROWN: It's a concept that's been developed within the American workplace to be competitive with international markets. It's based on the idea that no one person has all the strengths or specialized skills or talents, but you can put together teams that will reflect all those skills or talents. In the manufacturing sector, if they have to knock off three minutes or production time to be competitive with an international rival, rather then turning to engineers and quality control experts, they now bring in teams of people who are actually from the manufacturing lines, who can give them ideas and suggestions about how to knock off three minutes of production time.
A model said to depict the focus of the Tempe Police Department and the elements that drive its community-based policing philosophy. (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies)

The same concepts can work within government. For too long we've walked around saying, "Well, we're the public sector, and we're different from the private sector." I don't think I'm ready to go out and tell the citizens that we don't worry about profits, that we don't have customers. If we want to address specific problems, department by department, one of the things we find is that the more people we get involved, the more creativity, the more imagination we get and the better solutions we get. So it's based on the concept of getting the people who have the most information about a problem together in a brainstorming situation so that more ideas come up and better solutions are identified. It's ludicrous for me to sit here in my office 8 to 5 Monday to Friday and try to develop solutions about what's happening out on the streets, what's happening on the midnight shift, what the detectives are doing. If you really want to address those problems get out and talk to the people who are experiencing them.

LEN: Suppose the problem was shaving a few minutes off response time to calls for service. How might you tackle that?

BROWN: First of all we would probably look at the type of call and see if there's a prevalence as to where it occurs. Then we'd get officers from those beats where it's occurring a lot, we'd get a supervisor involved, we would obviously get our communications people and dispatchers to play a part in it. And we would probably put a crime analyst on it so they'd have access to the facts and all the data information and so forth. We'd put together a team that would reflect those areas and ask them to see if there's a way we could reduce the response times for those calls. We would probably also pick a staff person who could access other departments to find out what they're doing. Basically, we would empower that team to take that on as a challenge and come back with various alternatives on how we could reduce that response time.

LEN: Given that such a massive amount of change has occurred in a relatively short time, how much genuine enthusiasm do you think there is in various quarters - in the community, among political officials, within the department itself?
BROWN: So far the support in the community is excellent. The support by the elected officials has been overwhelming. In fact, one of the strongest recommendations I'd make to other chiefs is to get your elected officials involved very early. What we did is we took them to our first community policing conference back in '89 when we got started. I remember the first day was the Problem-Oriented Policing Conference in San Diego. The first day they were walking around wondering why they were the only elected officials at that conference. By the end of the conference they were telling everybody how they were the only elected officials there, the only ones that were involved. The following year they were putting on a workshop at that same conference on the role of elected officials in community policing. So that has been very supportive and very helpful for us in our efforts.

LEN: All too often, once politicians have a hand in community policing, it seems to change - in may cases turning into a stream of political rhetoric for re-section purposes. Certainly politicians have to be sold on this idea, and involved in it, but what prevents them from turning it into a political device?

BROWN: I think it's in their own personal motivation to see that the Police Department and the community really address public safety concerns. Obviously, each politician might be different. We haven't experienced it here in Tempe. People like the results that our community policing has accomplished here, they're very supportive of the department. In the beginning, I think, there was some misunderstanding, there was this perception that they would get calls from constituents and they'd call me up and say, "Dave, can you go out there and do some of that community policing in this neighborhood?" I got this picture that they thought I had this big jar of sand to scatter on top of people. But it's part of the education process, and for the same reason that the community becomes excited about it, the elected officials become excited about it. They know the community likes community policing. Therefore, they feel better about the Police Department and they feel better about the government.

The ever-changing picture

LEN: What about the enthusiasm of the members of the department? In percentage terms, how would you size it up?

BROWN: This would be a wild guess, but I would say more than half or them are enthusiastic and totally supportive of it; maybe 60 percent. I'd say there's another 30 percent who aren't resistive, but who are still waiting to see if this is just another fad program. And 10 percent would probably say, "I don't like this, I don't like having speak to groups, I don't like some of the skills we have to do."

There are real keys to making changes in an organization, and that was built into our movement toward community policing. We had enough foresight to try and look at the impact of changes the organization is going through as we implemented them. That was one of the reasons we said community policing is going to be an evolution, not a revolution. We did not want to come in and say, "Effective next Monday, we will be a community policing organization." It's been a gradual change process for us, and it's growing every day. Six years ago I would never have been able to draw a picture of what our organization is today, and one of the reasons has to do with empowerment. If we're asking people, both internally and externally, what we should be, who we should be; what we should be doing, what we should look like, it would be silly for us to have drawn that picture six years ago and try to move toward it.
There are, other factors in implementing change as well. You have to develop thrust. People have to feel confident in what you are doing, that where you're going is best for them both individually and as an organization. You can't underestimate the amount of training you need when implementing change in an organization. Then there's patience, especially in light of empowerment. You take people who've been drivers, and you now ask them to be empowers and you ask them to develop patience where their subordinates might head off in a different direction. If it's not involving integrity issues or officer; safety, or citizen safety issues, then you have to be patient and allow those people to go off in that direction. Sometimes they'll make mistakes, but successes come from making mistakes. Other times their way will turn out to better than the way we would have originally gone. So patience plays a great part in it. So do listening and seeking input from people. Those are all key elements in implementing this degree of change that we have in the Police Department. Another one is that we felt very strongly that it's a philosophy, not a program, and therefore, we expect everybody to think community policing. We expect our dispatchers in doing their jobs to think in terms of community policing, the jailers, the sergeants, the chief, the officers, the detectives, everybody.

LEN: Is there such a thing as too much change? Is there a point at which the metamorphosis will be complete?

BROWN: I'm not sure if it will ever be complete. But I do think, too, that there is a possibility of too much change. If you get to the point that you're changing for the sake of changing without any purpose in mind, that's obviously a problem. That goes back to infringing on that trust that you're trying to develop. On the other hand, if we're constantly seeking input from all the employees throughout the department and from citizens throughout the community, then we have to be prepared for the possibility that we're not going to reach an end point so to speak. People's priorities change, problems change, issues change. If we want to be responsive to those changes, then we quite possibly will have to do some changing ourselves.

LEN: In March, the Tempe P. D. was re-accredited. As you're probably aware, there's been some criticism of the accreditation process for failing to incorporate community policing precepts . . . .

BROWN: A great deal of the success of community policing has to stem from the community opening up. They have to feel empowered, they have to take responsibilities, they have to become a partner with the police department. To do that, they need the same trust level that you need within the organization. They need to know that the way we're going is a better way. They need to know that they're dealing with a very professional organization. If they're going to be an equal partner in this, their confidence in the department has to be very high. I think the accreditation process leads to that. If you undergo the accreditation process and meet the standards, then I think that tells the community that, from an internal standpoint we're now ready to be very professional and ready to take it out into the community.

Invisible templates

LEN: So you think the two concepts can work together without accreditation standards having to change significantly. . . .

BROWN: We met some 800 standards and found little if any conflict policing. One of the ways we do it is using what we could almost call templates. They're invisible - there really is no such thing, but we use it as a terminology. Whenever we have a new program or a new process or a new procedure, we drop what we call the, accreditation template on it to make sure it fits within the accreditation standards. At the same time, we're also dropping a community policing template on it to make sure that it reinforces our community policing programs - that is has citizen involvement, that it has employee involvement all the way up and down the chain, that we are making the decisions at the lowest possible level of the organization. I think that helps to a certain degree in avoiding the conflict between accreditation and community policing.
LEN: Tempe is the only city in Arizona so far to get Federal funding for community police officers. What are you going to do with these officers once you get there. What was it about your proposal that got it funded as opposed to others?

BROWN: The success of our application, I think, can be attributed to our community policing success. I think BJA is quite familiar with our programs. I mentioned earlier that one of our initial programs, the Beat 16 program, was funded by BJA. The Federal Government has hired numerous groups to evaluate our community policing efforts. So I think to a certain degree it's the success we've had to this point that is the reason we got this new grant. We got seven new officers from this grant, and seven from a sales tax initiative, so we have 14 new officers in the academy right now. We've put together a team that has a field lieutenant on it, two or three sergeants, three or four officers, a crime analyst, some detectives, and I think a person from communications, and right now they are working out the question of how to allocate those 14 new officers. The only criterion they've got was that both on the Federal grant and the sales tax initiative, they were defined as being uniformed officers to further our community policing efforts. Beyond that, it's really left up to them, and we hope that they'll be back to us within the next couple of weeks with a series of alternatives and a recommendation on how to assign those new people.

From policies to values

LEN. As we often ask other police chiefs, if you were given a blank check and could write in any amount of money for use by the department, what would you do with the funds?

BROWN: Wow. I'm not sure how I'd direct the money. But I know one thing that we're not successful at yet, that we have to change, and that is the way our department is driven. We have to move toward values and get away from policies and procedures. Within the Tempe Police Department a lot of our policies and procedures are statements of what we can't do, what we don't allow our people to do. It's somewhat restrictive. In an empowered organization you really are challenged to take the community's values, the organization's values and the individual values of our employees, and create a set of values that we all can buy into, so that you can't see the difference between the three, nor do you want to see the difference. So if there's an area I'd like to throw more resources at or make a bigger improvement in, it's moving from this policy-and procedures-driven organization to one that's value-driven. Simply writing things down on paper does not insure compliance. It's got to be part of your employees' value system

LEN: Would that be at the eve of the many changes voter undergoing - the values, the geographic deployment, the empowerment, the team-building, or something else . . . .

BROWN: I know that geographic deployment is the thing we get so much attention on. But if your concept of community policing is like ours, it basically boils down to empowerment, and taking something that's unique to your community. We don't go out and take Houston's approach and stick it in Tempe. You take what your city wants, what it needs, what it's going to participate in and willing to pay for, and you develop a style like that. Geographic deployment allows us to take that one step further. It almost allows us to customize the policing style for a given beat. We have beats that have industrial complexes in them; obviously we should patrol that differently than we would our residential areas.

One of our division commanders made a comparison between geographic deployment and the old way, with its briefings and squads of officers, and likened it to a comparison of World War II and Vietnam. In World War II, people were drafted and were either sent to the Pacific theater or the European theater for an unspecified amount of time, basically to win the war and come home. During Vietnam, you were drafted for a two-year period, you were expected to serve a one-year tour in Vietnam, and right or wrong, the motivation was basically to survive that year and get back home. Traditional policing is a lot like Vietnam. You send the officers out to the beat, they try to keep crime out for the 8 - or 10 - hour shift that they're there, then they go home and it's somebody else's problem. With geographic deployment, the officers develop a sense of ownership of the beat, and they become offended when somebody commits crimes in their beat. They really develop that ownership of it.