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Investigative Skills Education Program (ISEP) Case Study on Competency Based Learning

Carol Glasgow - (Manager of EPS In-House Training)

ISEP...The Beginning

- Concept began in 2007
- Internal performance gaps/training needs identified
 - Junior promotions - members feeling unprepared
 - Lack of experienced members on the frontline – mentoring gap
 - Investigative methodology failures

Drivers For Change

- The level of complex investigative knowledge required by police officers has increased significantly and continues to increase as officers advance in their careers
- Consequences of investigative failures;
 - Case dismissal to wrongful conviction
 - Hill Vs. Hamilton-Wentworth
- 2006 to 2009 the EPS hired 712 new police officers. With a sworn compliment of 1447, meant that almost 50% had less than 3 years of service
- Multiple Municipal police agencies, First Nations Police Agencies, RCMP and S.G.'s Public Security Sheriffs
 - Inter-agency investigations a reality

Existing Training

- Existing Training was:
 - Based on Crime Type not Competency
 - Reactionary
 - Not effective

The Training Needs Analysis

- Lacking an education program based on investigative competencies
- Lacking the necessary mentors to guide our new investigators
- Difficulty to allow members the opportunity to take the time for training
- Need for effective practical training that would support investigative integration and partnerships with other police agencies
- Need for progressive training that was delivered at the appropriate time in their career and throughout their career

Where to Start?

- The highest risk to the public, the investigators and the police organization
- Consequences of investigative failures;
 - Case dismissal to wrongful conviction
 - Hill Vs. Hamilton-Wentworth
- Police Officers needed to know what was required of them as criminal investigators

What are Competencies?

- Competencies “...describe what the employee needs to know or be able to apply in order to perform effectively in that function.” Hay Group for EPS
- Wanted to know what made a superior investigator

Identifying Competencies

- Subject Matter Experts from all investigative areas
- Conducted Task analysis
 - The tasks, processes and responsibilities of investigations
- Critical Trait approach
 - The behaviours, skills and methodologies that distinguish a superior investigator from an average investigator

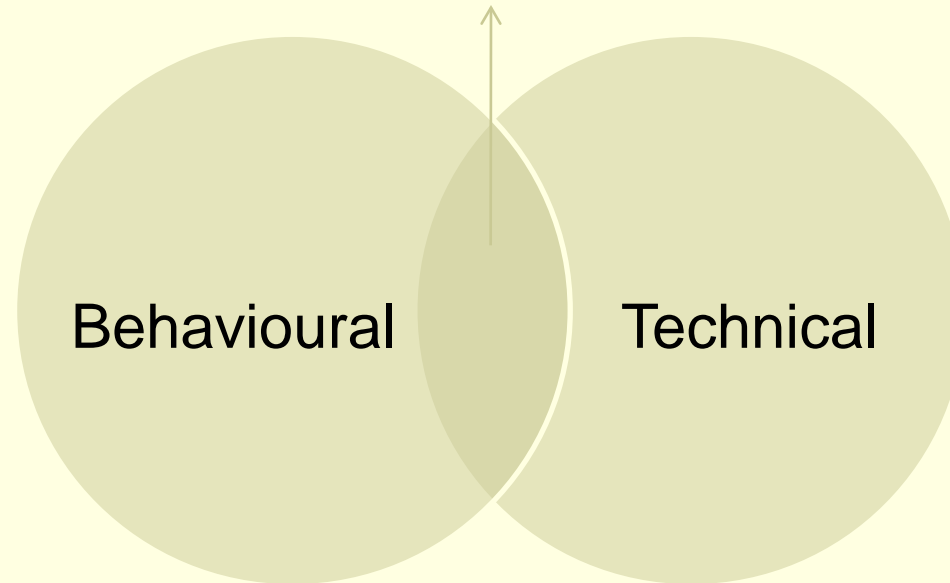
Dubois, 1993

Core Competencies of Investigations

- Risk Effective Decision Making
- Case Management
- Note Taking
- Report Writing
- Criminology
- Crime Scene Management
- Interviewing
- Photographic Lineup
- Source Handling
- Authority to Search & Search Warrant Drafting
- Judicial Administration
- Court Testimony

Competencies the Holistic Approach

Decision Making/Critical Thinking
Leadership/Teamwork
Ethics/Professionalism



Identifying Competencies

- Same competencies for all levels of experience
- Indicators, complexity of knowledge or task changed

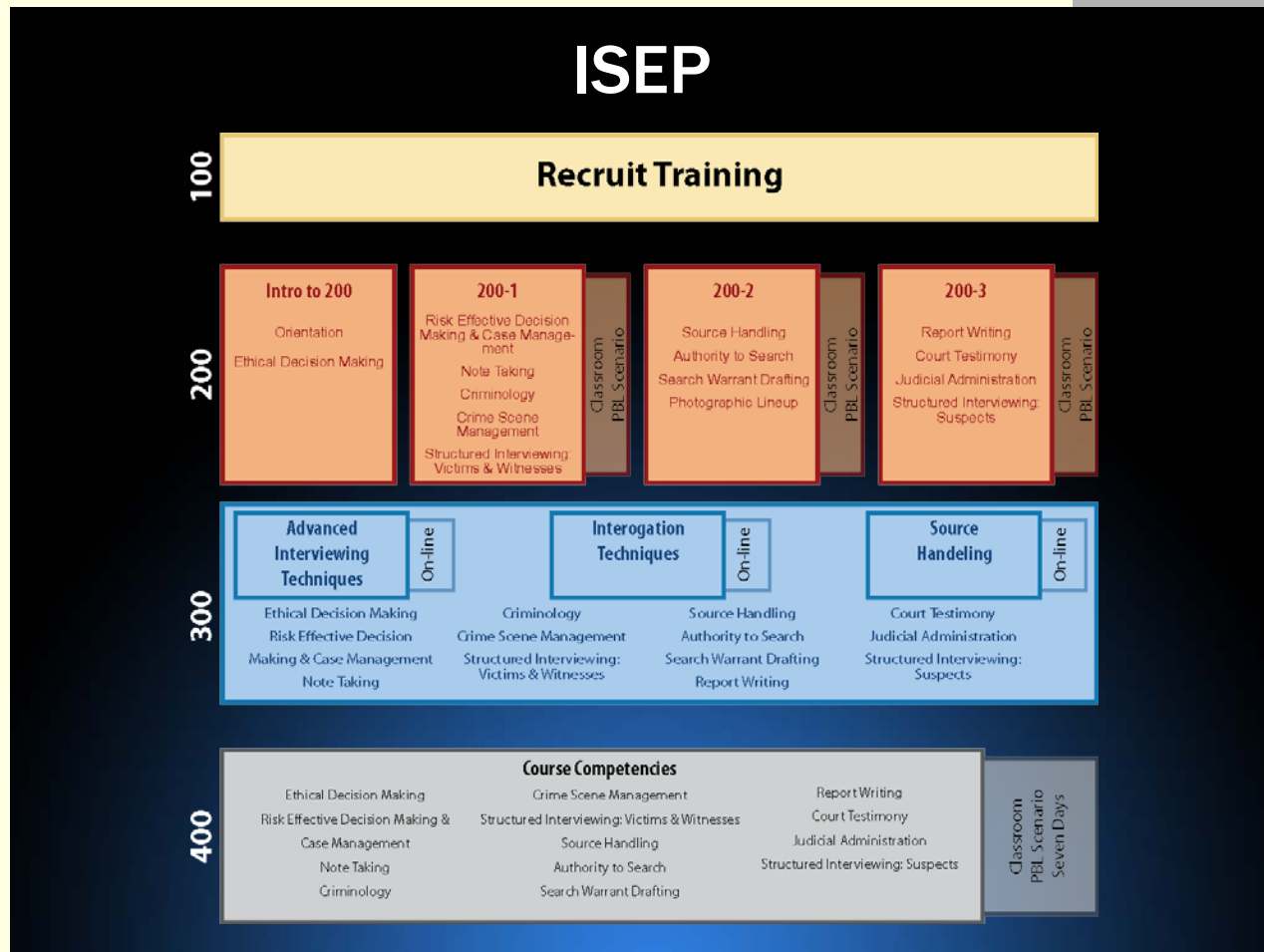
Validation

- Competencies were then validated
- Focus group research conducted
 - EPS and CPS members of all ranks
 - Stakeholders
 - Crown Prosecutors
 - Subject Matter Experts
 - Other police agency staff

Addressing the Other Identified Needs

- Lacking the necessary mentors to guide our new investigators = **Z.P.D. Vygotsky**
- Difficulty to allow members the opportunity to take the time for training = **Online Learning**
- Need for effective practical training that would support investigative integration and partnerships with other police agencies = **Adult Education Principles & Competency Based (Province wide)**
- Need for a progressive training that was delivered at the appropriate time in career = **Spiral Curriculum**

The Model



Program Results

- Provincial engagement in ISEP
- Funding commitment to sustain program
- 746 police officer from across Alberta trained since 2009
- Achieved the goal: “To teach police officers what they need to know to be superior criminal investigators”

Competency Linkages

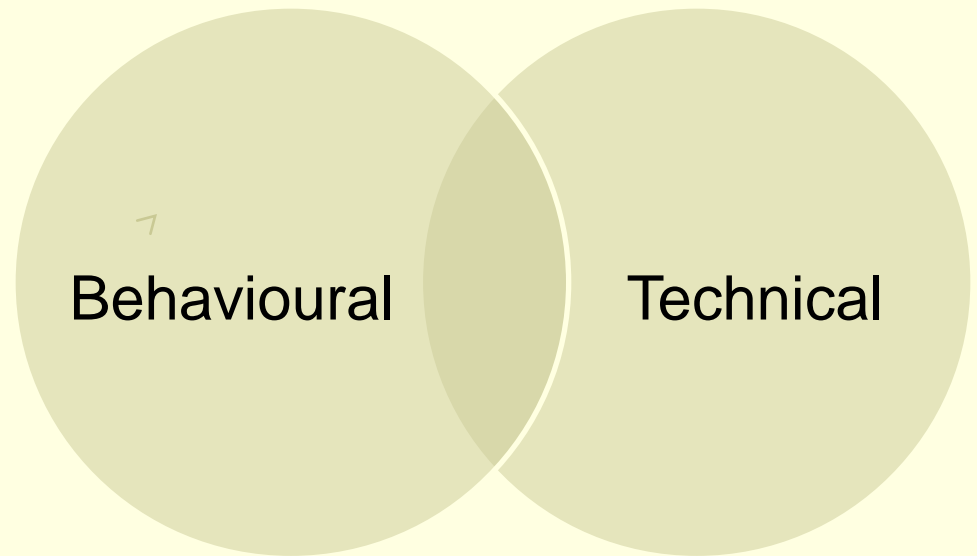
- “Installing competencies should result in a significant, lasting organizational change.” <http://www.schoonover.com/pdf/PDF>
- EPS
 - ISEP is common language
 - ISEP 400 mandatory for Detective rank
 - ISEP 200 required in order to engage in any Human Source Handling/Activities

Competency Linkages

- The program foundation is the competencies and these competencies can be linked to:
 - Performance assessment
 - Succession Planning
 - Secondments or lateral transfers
 - Addressing performance gaps
 - Promotion

Competencies the Holistic Approach

- Because the program foundation is competencies, these competencies can be linked to:
 - Performance assessments
 - Succession Planning
 - Lateral transfers
 - Addressing performance gaps
 - Promotion



Conclusion

- The investigative Skills Education Program will allow all Alberta police agencies the opportunity to access the investigative training
- This formal development program will lead to a higher level of professional investigative standards.
- This program will lead to consistent investigative procedures and practices throughout the province.
- Any potential liability risk will be mitigated by providing an investigative training program for police officers in Alberta. This will help provide a system of investigative training that is defensible, systematic, developmental and competency based.