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**Probation Practice, Leadership and Effective Service
Delivery: A Qualitative Study of the Perspectives of
Probation Officers and Service Managers in the New
Zealand Probation Service**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree

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Abstract

The primary goal of this thesis is to consider probation practice and the contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery in the New Zealand Community Probation Service during a period of major change.

In relation to this goal, the objectives are: (a) to explore Probation Officers' and Service Managers' understandings of the political and managerial changes affecting the New Zealand Probation Service; (b) to ascertain Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of probation values, knowledge, skills and practice; (c) to understand Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of the assessment of service delivery; (d) to identify how Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership and effective service delivery; (e) to examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers; and (f) to determine the structures and processes that are necessary to maximise the contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery.

The research participants comprised a purposeful sample of 27 Probation Officers and 8 Service Managers (front-line staff involved in service delivery) recruited from among those employed in the northern and southern administrative regions of the Probation Service. Qualitative data were collected via personal in-depth interviews and augmented by focus group discussions.

The key findings of the study are that:

- first, effective service delivery was not perceived to be limited to the reduction of recidivism alone, but to also include the client's broader social experience,

recognising that positive social benefit can extend beyond the simple measurement of offending behaviour.

- second, leaders must be seen to be credible if they are to create willing followers. This credibility rested upon the leader's possession of relevant practice knowledge and skills, their demonstrated commitment to professional practice, their ability to provide clear direction for practice and their ability to ensure that adequate resources are available to achieve service delivery goals;
- third, a positive association was drawn between a leader's professional experience, possession of personal power and ability to influence Probation Officer practice. In essence, the leader's experience and competence has a bearing upon confidence in the leader. Participants also posited a connection between positive leadership, the development of a 'team' culture, Probation Officer work performance and service delivery.

Overall, the linkage between leadership and effective service delivery was conceived of as being dependent upon the ability of leaders to enhance the practice of Probation Officers. From this perspective, five leadership challenges for senior managers in the Probation Service were identified. These included the challenges to: (a) establish the professional foundations of probation practice; (b) develop a clearer, integrated statement of purpose, values and beliefs that identifies probation as a distinct area of professional practice; (c) develop probation practice in a flexible manner, incorporating international influences while remaining responsive to features and events that reflect the dynamic character of the local environment; (d) to ensure that the integrative structures, processes and new roles/positions necessary to underpin and support probation practice are introduced or implemented, notably for the provision of professional supervision; and (e) to introduce a multi-dimensional approach to the assessment of service delivery that includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators of aspects other than recidivism alone. It is acknowledged that these challenges have significant resource implications.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

The primary goal of this thesis is to consider the contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery in the New Zealand Community Probation Service during a period of major change. The three main service delivery goals of the Probation Service are: to provide information and advice to assist judicial decision-making bodies with regard to appropriate sentences and interventions; to administer sentences and orders to ensure legal compliance; and to provide interventions which will reduce the likelihood of criminal re-offending (Department of Corrections 2000a). In relation to these goals, it is important to note that the Probation Service has a hierarchical line management structure and within this it is the Service Managers who are directly responsible for the operational implementation of policy surrounding service delivery. The Service Managers provide supervision and leadership to teams of Probation Officers who have direct contact with clients.

The Probation Service domain of practice is one that has historically been defined by the work of Probation Officers who are currently not required to possess any entry-level tertiary academic qualification or specific vocational training. However, the Probation Officer position has been oriented towards a predominantly social work role. While the Probation Service practice context has been subject to major political, legislative and policy changes since 1990 it remains an area of practice where the social work perspective retains a significant degree of influence.

The impact of economic rationalism upon service delivery in the Probation Service has been profound. There has been a separation of policy development from service delivery with the consequent imposition of initiatives by senior managers with limited effective consultation in the field. The adoption of monetarist management practices and reducing financial resources have seriously challenged fundamental assumptions regarding the

purpose of practice in the Probation Service. In particular, the demand for more with less has seen a shift to minimum practice standards with a greater emphasis upon the monitoring and containment of clients in comparison to the achievement of rehabilitative goals. The ability of the Probation Service to determine the construction of practice has also been affected by the politicisation of the practice context; notably, by changes in management philosophy and organisational structure. Furthermore, the tenets of New Public Management have challenged the level of professional autonomy that has previously been exercised by practitioners, and tension has arisen between the values and beliefs associated with management and those espoused by practitioners aligned with the social work profession.

My interest in this area stems from my practice experience over a period of twenty-three years as a Probation Officer, Programmes and Training Adviser and as an Area Manager in the Probation Service. I have personally observed and experienced changes that challenged the earlier foundations of the Probation Service in terms of: (a) the construction of practice; (b) the degree of influence previously enjoyed by those with front-line practice experience; and (c) the ability of senior managers to galvanise front-line staff in support of new policy and practice. My concern at the impact of the changes upon colleagues (for many an apparent sense of dislocation has resulted in them leaving the Service), the quality and the effectiveness of service delivery, and often negative media attention has led me to reflect on the issues and what might be possible solutions. The structural and policy shifts alone do not seem to offer sufficient explanation for the service delivery and staffing difficulties that have emerged, nor for the tensions and disjunctions that have developed between front-line practitioners and those in supervisory and/or management positions. The nub of the problem appears to be one of leadership. In the context of the organisation's service delivery goals, its management hierarchy, the personnel involved and the changes noted above, leadership may be the key management function which influences staff performance, and it appears to be crucial that it supports and facilitates the type of practice that is attractive to professional staff and will result in more effective service delivery.

Objectives and Key Themes

The six main objectives of the thesis and the four themes underpinning the study are outlined below.

Objectives

The objectives of the study are: (a) to explore Probation Officers' and Service Managers' understandings of the political and managerial changes affecting the New Zealand Probation Service; (b) to ascertain Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of probation values, knowledge, skills and practice; (c) to understand Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of the assessment of service delivery; (d) to identify how Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership and effective service delivery; (e) to examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers; and (f) to determine the structures and processes that are necessary to maximise the contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery.

Key Themes

The following four themes are considered to be relevant to both leadership and service delivery in the Probation Service. These themes are: (a) the influence of the practice context; (b) the construction of probation practice; (c) the construction of leadership; and (d) the inherent tension between the prevailing professional and managerial perspectives concerning the conception of practice and underpinning values and beliefs. Each theme comprises a number of secondary points which provide the sensitising concepts for the literature review and that inform the subsequent analysis of the research data. At this point, the principal assumptions that comprise each theme are only briefly introduced.

Influence of the Practice Context

The first theme concerns four ‘influences of change’ within the broader practice context that have affected the development of the Probation Service, namely: (a) the role of the state; (b) public sector reform; (c) New Public Management; and (d) constraints on resources.

First, the broader influence of political philosophy and the conception of the role of the state underpins the direction of public sector reform in New Zealand. An erosion of the traditional social democratic position has occurred due, in part, to the impact of economic constraints and this has affected demand-driven social service provision.

Second, the reform of the public sector that commenced in the mid 1980s in New Zealand has had a considerable impact upon state social service agencies such as the Probation Service. The benefits of public sector reform are evident in: increased levels of accountability for the use of resources and the achievement of outputs; and the specification of minimum practice standards that are intended to improve practice accountability and the quality of service delivery. However, concerns are also apparent in: the commodification of the client; a reduction in the professional autonomy of practitioners; and the uncritical reliance upon business models of management.

A third influence has been the influence of New Public Management which has been evident in: the separation of policy development from service delivery; the adoption of monetarist management practices and reducing financial resources; a shift to minimum practice standards with a greater emphasis upon monitoring and containment rather than rehabilitative goals; the impact of increased bureaucratic accountability systems; and the development of tension between the values and beliefs associated with management and those espoused by front-line practitioners, in particular those aligned with the social work profession. Furthermore, policy development within correctional agencies has become an increasingly politicised process characterised by differing degrees of emphasis upon offender containment, rehabilitation and public safety. The influence of government has

also been reflected in the level of direction provided regarding inter-agency co-operation that is intended to enhance the achievement of social policy objectives.

The final influence has been one of constraints on resources. The impact of economic considerations characterised by an increased emphasis upon resource constraint and the dual demands for the optimal, cost-efficient provision of services and greater accountability (for both the resources used and outcomes achieved) have exerted significant pressure upon state agencies such as the Probation Service. In particular, the application of an econometric rationale for determining levels of service intervention has influenced the definition of acceptable client outcomes.

The Construction of Probation Practice

The second theme concerns the argument that probation practice has a professional foundation (characterised by the application of specialised knowledge and skills). While other aspects of a profession may not be fully evident (e.g. entry qualifications, mandatory registration and membership of a professional association), the conception and enactment of probation as a professional endeavour is crucial to the ongoing development and viability of probation.

The construction of probation practice is presented in a framework that consists of four interrelated elements. The first element, which draws heavily upon the social work tradition, comprises the foundation values and beliefs that inform the purpose of probation. The relative emphasis that is placed upon the competing purposes of punishment, deterrence, rehabilitation, supervision and control reflects both the political environment and the development of the philosophy of probation practice. The second element in the framework is the knowledge and skills base that provides the foundation for practice. Social work and psychology are identified as providing core contributions to the development of probation practice. A statement of best practice should be accompanied and validated by a clear exposition of the relevant knowledge base that informs the practice. In the absence of clearly articulated professional knowledge to guide intervention,

it is likely that agency rules and procedures will be used to legitimise decisions. A third element of the framework is the core processes that underpin effective probation practice, notably professional supervision and performance management. It is through these mechanisms that the practitioner receives direction, support and the opportunity to develop. The fourth and final element of the framework concerns the assessment of practice effectiveness. There is often a lack of agreement regarding how practice effectiveness should be defined and assessed. This lack of agreement is a significant problem for the profession and the Probation Service given the relationship that exists between: (a) the goals of service delivery and the definition of service delivery effectiveness that is adopted; and (b) the selection of service delivery models, interventions and the range of indicators that are used in the assessment of service delivery.

Ideally, decisions regarding the selection of models, interventions and indicators should be mediated by the feedback received through the assessment process; in particular, assessment should provide direction for the ongoing improvement of service delivery. At present, the assessment of service delivery is based upon a narrow definition of effectiveness that does not recognise the complexity of probation practice. This is of critical importance because the acceptance of a narrow definition of effectiveness may contribute to the imposition and acceptance of a minimalist conception of probation practice.

The Construction of Leadership

The third theme concerns the construction of leadership. At issue here is the contemporary conception of leadership in the Probation Service – in particular, the role(s) and responsibilities of managers, and hence the knowledge and skills they require for probation practice and administration in the context of New Public Management. When managing professional workers it is important to provide professional leadership - i.e. leadership that develops and maintains reflexive practice. The Service Managers (as front-line leaders) play a crucial leadership role in the provision of supervision and professional leadership to Probation Officers, but in order to do this effectively they require relevant probation

practice experience which is important to their credibility with Probation Officers.

Tension Between Professional and Managerial Perspectives

The final theme concerns the tension that is evident between the professional and managerial perspectives with regard to probation practice. This tension stems from the shift from an earlier professional model (in which the content of services was mainly controlled by professional staff) to the new management model (where emphasis is placed on cost, efficiency and results) in the Probation Service. The redefinition of professional roles, through the introduction of technical rational models of practice, reflects a transfer of power and control from probation professionals (whose capacity to exercise practice autonomy has been curtailed) to managers. A disjunction exists between the two positions in regard to: (a) their underlying values and beliefs; and (b) their conceptions of probation practice.

Overall, the findings from this study will enable the identification of: (a) factors that influence/contribute to effective leadership and service delivery in the Probation Service; (b) the implications for policy, management and leadership in the Probation Service; and (c) issues that could form the basis for future research.

Thesis Structure

There are twelve chapters that can be divided into four parts: (a) the context/background and literature review that embraces Chapters Two to Five; (b) the methods, Chapter Six; (c) the presentation of findings, in Chapters Seven to Eleven; and (d) the conclusion, Chapter Twelve.

Chapter Two considers the development of probation policy and practice from the introduction of the First Offenders Probation Act of 1886 to the major changes associated with the 1985 Criminal Justice Act. In Chapter Three, the impact of Public Sector Reform

upon the Probation Service is considered from 1985 to 2001. In Chapter Four the focus turns to how probation practice has been constructed in the Probation Service and the implications of this for leadership and service delivery. Then Chapter Five provides a consideration of leadership, with particular attention to the provision of leadership to professionals.

Chapter Six details the interpretivist research methods used which are considered best suited to support the thesis focus. The data collection methods and procedures were more structured than in a purely inductive approach, and the framework used to analyse and interpret the original accounts and observations of the participants was more explicit and more strongly informed by a priori reasoning. The primary research tool used was the personal in-depth interview, augmented by focus group discussions.

The data are presented in the next five chapters. Chapter Seven considers the participants' knowledge of changes in the Probation Service delivery context; Chapter Eight reviews the participants' construction of probation practice; Chapter Nine considers the participants' knowledge of effective service delivery; Chapter Ten focuses on the participants' knowledge and experience of leadership; and, Chapter Eleven examines the relationship between leadership and Probation Officer practice.

Finally, Chapter Twelve provides a summary of the findings, a discussion of the implications of the findings, and suggestions for future research.

Footnote

¹ The New Zealand Probation Service was fully established following the passing of the 1954 Criminal Justice Act. While the disposition of 'probation' was removed from the legislation in 1985 (and replaced by the supervision order) the identity of the Probation Service was not affected. In 1991 the agency was re-branded as the Community Corrections Service (reflecting a shift towards a 'correctional' ideology). However, in 1996 a further change resulted in the current Community Probation Service. In the interests of clarity and consistency, the term Probation Service is used throughout this thesis to refer to the agency in all iterations.

CHAPTER TWO

The Probation Service to 1985

In this Chapter the development of probation in New Zealand is considered. There are two sections that address: (a) probation policy development and legislation; and (b) the construction of practice.

Probation Policy Development and Legislation

Early legislation

Since the introduction of the First Offenders Probation Act of 1886, criminal justice policy regarding probation has placed varying degrees of emphasis upon punishment, deterrence, rehabilitation, supervision and control. The 1886 Act was passed in response to concern that young first offenders sentenced to imprisonment were subject to 'contamination' from older, recidivist offenders. This early provision of probation was not available to offenders convicted for more serious offences. A primary role of Probation Officers appointed under the Act was to investigate the circumstances of offenders and to report to the court as to whether the offender could reasonably be expected to reform without imprisonment and that a release on probation would also be in the best interests of the community. The term of probation was limited to the longest term of imprisonment that the offender would have been liable to serve and the offender was subject to statutory conditions regarding reporting, residence and employment. The court was further empowered to impose any other conditions that were considered to be required. It is of interest to note that while the early legislators were clearly motivated by humanitarian concerns, the promotion of probation also reflected their cognisance of the cost benefits associated with non-custodial penalties (Webb 1982:159-160).

Some thirty-four years later, the Offenders Probation Act 1920 clearly established the responsibilities of Probation Officers: to supervise offenders, to make enquiries regarding the character and personal history of offenders and to make a recommendation for probation where appropriate. The Act also extended the scope of probation to include all classes of offence punishable by imprisonment, while the Crimes Amendment Act 1920 extended parole from 'Reformative Detainees' only to also include all imprisoned offenders (Department of Justice 1981a: Webb 1982:163). This legislative base remained intact until the major revision in 1954, apart from a minor amendment in 1930 that extended the range of additional conditions of probation to include the payment of compensation (Webb 1982:165). The first full-time Probation Officers were appointed in 1926, however growth of this profession was limited, with only six staff in post by 1950 (Coyle 1986).

The 1954 Criminal Justice Act

At this time there was a clear shift in official policy that was articulated by the Department of Justice in 'A Penal Policy for New Zealand' (Department of Justice 1954). The central theme underlying the new policy provisions was acknowledgment of the inadequacy of a penal system based on deterrence and imprisonment alone (this position was substantiated through reference to higher imprisonment and recidivism rates in New Zealand in comparison with England and Wales). The prospect of reformation was advanced, with the Probation Service being the agency responsible for implementing this policy within the community.

The 1954 Criminal Justice Act reflected the philosophies of reformation and rehabilitation that had been developed by the Department of Justice and provided the framework for probation practice for the next thirty years. The probation disposition was developed extensively and the appointment and functions of Probation Officers were clearly specified. The term of probation was established as being between one and three years (the length was determined by the court). The rationale that was advanced for the duration of a probation order reflects the development of criminological thinking at the time. It was believed that little that was constructive could be achieved in less than twelve months, and that three

years was sufficient to achieve all that was likely to be accomplished (Webb 1982:175). The statutory requirements had not altered substantially since the 1886 Act with offenders subject to special conditions regarding reporting, employment, residence, associations and desistance from further offending. The court was further empowered to impose additional conditions that would assist in the rehabilitation of the offender and to order the payment of costs of prosecution and restitution to compensate for any loss incurred as the result of the offending. The primary duties of the Probation Officer (first enunciated in 1920) were clarified. First, to provide reports on the character and personal history of offenders. The purpose of these reports was to provide the judiciary with knowledge of the offender that would assist in criminal sentencing. Second, the Probation Officer should provide supervision to offenders with the intent of assisting rehabilitation and preventing re-offending. These two roles have remained the cornerstone of probation practice (Criminal Justice Act 1954).

There were two significant extensions of the 1954 Act with regard to the management of offenders in the community. The first was the introduction of the sentence of periodic detention in 1962 (Criminal Justice Amendment Act 1962). Periodic detention was intended to fill the gap that existed between fully custodial sentences and the alternatives of a fine or probation. This sentence was initially only available to offenders aged between 15 and 21 years who could be ordered to attend for up to twelve months. The focus of the sentence was primarily upon the completion of work, either at the centre or in the community, however educational programmes were also undertaken; by 1966 there were four residential centres operating.

In 1966 the scope of periodic detention was extended in two significant ways. The first change was the removal of the upper age limit on those who could be sentenced to periodic detention, while the second change allowed for the establishment of non-residential centres where a detainee would be required to attend on a Saturday and on one other occasion during the week, usually in the evening (Webb 1982:183-190). Attendance at a periodic detention centre allowed the offender to maintain employment and family relationships while making general reparation to the community. The introduction of periodic detention

represented a shift in emphasis for the Probation Service from the primarily rehabilitative probation order (Campbell and Marra 2001).

The second significant extension to the 1954 Act was the introduction in 1981 of the sentence of community service¹. This sentence replaced the existing practice of ordering an offender to complete community work as a special condition of probation (a practice which was considered to be of doubtful legality) (Report of the Penal Policy Review Committee 1981:24). The sentence is unique in requiring the offender's consent to its imposition and involves the 'community servant' completing a specified number of hours (between 8 and 200) under the supervision of an approved community sponsor. While still an alternative to imprisonment, community service was intended to minimise the offender's involvement in the criminal justice system in comparison with either probation or periodic detention (House of Representatives 1981:20). The introduction of both periodic detention and community service were consistent with the prevalent criminal justice philosophy that sought to reduce the rate of imprisonment through the provision of community-based alternatives.

While the analysis of official documentation provides a sense of the direction of criminal justice and probation policy during this period it seems that this intent may not have been communicated effectively to those responsible for service delivery. Duell (1997:1) suggests that those accountable for funding the Probation Service did not articulate their expectations clearly, particularly in relation to quality and outcome of services. A sense of ambivalence regarding the direction of the Probation Service at this time was also noted by Coyle (1986:5) who refers to criticisms made by the Penal Policy Review Committee in 1981 regarding ambiguity concerning the role of the Service. The work of the 1981 Penal Policy Review was to lay the foundations for the subsequent 1985 Criminal Justice Act that was to reshape the work of the Probation Service.

The 1981 Penal Policy Review

During the 1970s community concern at levels of violent crime resulted in the

establishment of a Select Committee on Violent Offending in 1977 and in 1981 a Report on Gangs stressed the need to find alternatives to custodial sentences. In 1981 the Penal Policy Review Committee was established in response to increasing public concern regarding crime rates and the apparent ineffectiveness of existing policies to reduce rates of offending. The terms of reference of the Committee were confined to policy (they did not include the administration of legislation) and were directed towards the treatment of offenders on and after sentencing (Report of the Penal Policy Review Committee 1981:10). The Committee identified a set of principles that they considered should guide penal policies and activities (Report of the Penal Policy Review Committee 1981:35-36). In 1985, the Department of Justice summarised these principles as follows (Department of Justice 1985:4):

- Judicial discretion and an independent judiciary must be maintained.
- There must be a range of measures available to the courts. Regard should be paid to the effect of crime on the victims and the community.
- Penal policy and practice must be worthy of citizens' confidence and support.
- Offending should not be profitable to offenders.
- The Criminal Justice system should make use of existing community organisations rather than establish parallel services.
- Measures available should enable the strengthening of ties offenders may have with a community which are likely to exert a positive or restraining influence upon them.
- Offenders should serve their custodial sentence as close as possible to their community.

It was against the backdrop of these principles that the Penal Policy Review Committee examined the community-based penalties administered by the Probation Service. No substantive recommendations regarding either periodic detention or the recently introduced sentence of community service were made. In reviewing probation, the Committee reached a number of conclusions that challenged conventional probation practice and made recommendations for change that were ultimately to be implemented through the 1985

Criminal Justice Act.

The Committee received a wide range of submissions regarding the probation order (from Probation Service staff and external observers) that revealed a lack of consensus regarding both the goals of the order, and how the goals should be achieved. It was noted that Probation Officers were increasingly identifying with the social work profession,² but the Committee was critical of the fact that many probation officers placed undue emphasis upon 'care' and insufficient emphasis upon 'control' (the Committee also observed, accurately, that social work practice inherently contains a degree of social control). In addition to what was labelled as 'ambiguity' regarding objectives, criticism was also levelled at the lack of evidence regarding the effectiveness of probation as a criminal justice sanction. The Committee concluded that in light of evidence that probation did not appear to have a significant impact on recidivism the current use of probation was not an efficient use of resources from a cost/benefit perspective. The reference to evidence was presumably based on the Lipton, Martinson and Wilks (1975) critique of the effectiveness of criminal justice interventions³. Further, the Committee criticised the prevalent one-to-one casework model as being inappropriate to the needs of a majority of offenders. It was suggested that a move away from 'treatment or therapy' was desirable and that this mode of service delivery be augmented (if not replaced) by the provision of tangible services by community agencies (Report of the Penal Policy Review Committee 1981:116-118). Emerging politicisation and the influence of empiricism marked the development of Criminal Justice policy and legislation during the early 1980s.

The Committee formed the opinion that Probation Officers should be regarded more as 'brokers of services' rather than as social workers, and also proposed a change of name from Probation Officer to 'supervisor of offenders' (a suggestion that was not implemented). The establishment of three new orders to replace the existing probation order was recommended, namely: treatment orders, community care orders and supervision orders (Department of Justice 1981b: 118). A treatment order was intended for offenders who required medical or similar treatment for an addiction or other problem and would be an alternative to formal committal. The principal aim of a community care order would be

to expose an offender to 'beneficial influences and examples'. The offender would be placed in the care or supervision of an approved person or agency in the community in accordance with a programme developed jointly by the offender and the supervisor of offenders. The proposed supervision order, while closely resembling the existing probation order, would place emphasis upon surveillance and control of the offender while in the community (Ministry of Justice 1999). These proposed orders presented a greater degree of clarity regarding the relative emphasis that should be placed on rehabilitation and surveillance. The subsequent 1985 Criminal Justice Act, discussed below, was based substantially on the recommendations of the Penal Policy Review Committee.

In 1983 the New Zealand Association of Probation Officers (NZAPO) published a critique of the report of the Penal Policy Review Committee. Coyle (1986:5) observes that while this report received media attention and was circulated to politicians and the judiciary it was dismissed as 'a pointless exercise' by the then Minister of Justice. The substance of the NZAPO paper was to challenge the validity of a number of criticisms that had been made by the Penal Policy Review Committee. It was noted that the basis for the observation regarding the lack of efficacy of probation in reducing recidivism was research (completed in 1964 and 1974) that NZAPO regarded as being dated and methodologically flawed. In defence of the prevalent one-to-one casework approach it was argued that the Committee's opinion was only one construction of the nature of probation practice that, in addition to working with the individual offender, also involved family members, employers, doctors, lawyers and allied professionals.

A final observation made was that while the Committee had promoted the proposed new sentences as providing greater clarity in role definition, these recommendations were not researched and it was not clear what the introduction of the proposed sentences would achieve (Coyle 1986:5-7).

The 1985 Criminal Justice Act

The 1985 Criminal Justice Act repealed the 1954 Act that had guided the administration of

criminal justice for thirty years. The 1985 Act incorporated many of the recommendations of the Penal Policy Review Committee and the provisions reflected concern that rehabilitation should be balanced with public protection and the establishment of a more cost-effective criminal justice system. In particular, emphasis was placed upon community involvement and compensation for victims of crime (Ministry of Justice 1999).

Three new sentences were introduced: supervision, community care and reparation ⁴. First, supervision (that replaced the previous Probation Order) could be imposed for any period between six months and two years with the offender being subject to statutory conditions relating to reporting, accommodation, employment and association with others. The consent of the offender was not necessary unless the court imposed a condition requiring the offender to undertake a specified course of training or education in order to meet identified criminogenic needs (Department of Corrections 1999; Ministry of Justice 1999; Department of Justice 1985:12-13).

Second, the community care order (subsequently amended to community programme in 1993) was one where the offender was required to complete a programme designed to address their specific needs under the sponsorship of an individual or organisation. The offender was required to consent to the programme that could be up to six months duration if residential, and up to twelve months if non-residential (Department of Corrections 1999; Ministry of Justice 1999; Department of Justice 1985:13-14).

Finally, reparation, where the offender is required to make financial compensation to the victim. Its introduction (intended as the sentence of first resort where appropriate) reflected concern at the lack of effective redress that was available to victims. In cases where the value of the loss was not clear and could exceed \$250 there is provision for the judge to obtain a report. The report considers the nature and value of the loss and the amount that the offender should be required to pay (Department of Justice 1985:8). In practice, Probation Officers prepare most reparation reports although the legislation enables other persons to do so.

The 1985 Act also contained specific provisions regarding violent offences and property offences that reflected the general penal principles established by the Penal Policy Review Committee. First, Section 5 of the 1985 Act required that imprisonment be imposed in all cases involving serious violence unless there are special circumstances. Second, property offenders should not be imprisoned if the offence was one punishable by a term of seven years imprisonment or less, except in special circumstances (Department of Justice 1985:5).

The emphasis that the 1985 Act placed upon community participation was reflected in changes in the roles of Probation Service staff. In particular, the general principle that parallel systems of service provision should not be established in competition with existing community resources resulted in a greater emphasis being placed upon community liaison activities and less upon the traditional one-to-one casework model. The role of the Probation Officer was officially promoted as involving 'brokerage', which has a focus on linking offenders with appropriate agencies or programmes in accord with the offender's assessed needs (Duell 1997:4; Ministry of Justice 1999).

Construction of Practice

Prior to the reforms of the late 1980s and early 1990s state social service agencies such as the Probation Service were organised in accord with what Harris (1998) has labelled 'Bureau Professionalism'. The prevalent model of agency management was characterised by the rational administration of bureaucratic systems, while staff that had professional expertise largely controlled the content of services. With regard to this concept and model the Probation Service was co-coordinated by a small national Head Office comprising: the Assistant Secretary (Probation); an Inspector of Probation and Community Services; a Training Officer and an Executive Officer (with all support services being provided from a central pool within the Department of Justice) (Duell 2001). The operational delivery of service at the local level was the responsibility of the District Probation Officer. A typical staff structure comprised the following positions: District Probation Officer, Senior Probation Officer, Probation Officer, Clerical Officer, Staff Typist, Warden and Deputy

Warden (Periodic Detention). A feature of the Probation Service throughout this period was establishment of a Probation Officer career-path with promotion from within the service (from Probation Officer to Senior Probation Officer to District Probation Officer). By the late 1970s increased work pressures were noted, particularly in the larger probation offices. These pressures were associated with the combination of increased volumes, the introduction of periodic detention and greater practice complexity. In 1977, a survey conducted by the New Zealand Association of Probation Officers (NZAPO) found that Probation Officers could not carry out all statutory duties due to heavy work-loads, only 20 percent of required home visits to offenders had been completed, and 50 percent of Probation Officers were preparing pre-sentence reports in their own time. Staff turnover was considered to be high with the average length of service for Probation Officers being 22 months (Coyle 1986:4-5).

Probation Practice as Social Work

The promotion of probation as a viable rehabilitative alternative to imprisonment was clearly (if briefly) enunciated by the Department of Justice (1954) as 'The Probation Method'. The primary goals were to ensure that the offender completed the term of probation 'satisfactorily' and to ensure 'so far as possible' that the offender did not re-offend once probation had ceased. Probation practice was seen to involve the provision of assistance with immediate problems such as employment and accommodation, while individual guidance would encourage positive attitudinal change in the offender. It was recognised that Probation Officer practice would need to be varied from case to case in order to address the unique character and circumstances of the offender. The relationship between Probation Officer and offender was identified as the primary mechanism of service delivery and the importance of the offender being "known intimately as an individual" was stressed (Department of Justice 1954:9-10).

While clear documentation regarding the foundations of probation practice is scant, in 1960 the need for Probation Officers to receive social work training was noted (House of Representatives 1960:23). Further reference to the development of the role of the

Probation Officer is found in various official reports. For example, in 1968, record is made of two Probation Officers being sponsored to complete a Certificate in Criminology at Auckland University (Department of Justice 1968:14). Similarly, in 1970, the increasing complexity of probation work led to a call to recruit more academically qualified staff, and reference was made to a bursary scheme for Probation Officers in support of both the Diploma in Social Science and Certificate in Criminology (House of Representatives 1970:15). Probation Officers were employed under the Social Workers Occupational Class and upon recruitment were required to complete a three-month generic social work training course provided by the Department of Social Welfare.

Campbell and Marra (2001) note that the development of social work programmes at universities and other institutions, from the mid 1970s, resulted in both direct recruitment of social work qualified staff into the Probation Service and significant numbers of existing staff receiving support to gain social work qualifications. The influence of the social work perspective was further evidenced through the establishment of special 'student units' in four districts in 1978. Specialist Student Unit Supervisors managed these units and they were responsible for providing fieldwork training and placement experience for students undertaking both degree and diploma courses at universities and other tertiary institutions. A significant number of staff were recruited into the Probation Service on the basis of their placement performance.

The predominance of what can be labelled the therapeutic casework model (based substantially upon the offender-centered and psychodynamic approaches) continued through to the late 1970s (Campbell and Marra 2001; Duell 1997:1). However, by 1980 the tide of public opinion had begun to change with regard to criminal justice (as reflected in the Penal Policy Review of 1981 discussed above) and a greater expectation of individual responsibility for offending developed within the Probation Service (Duell 1997:1). The influences of the empirical-practice movement and behavioural psychology were evident in both the curricula of social work courses and within probation practice (Campbell and Marra 2001).

In the report on the Probation Division presented to the House of Representatives in 1981, attention was drawn to the control or supervisory function in comparison with the treatment or rehabilitative function of the Probation Service. This distinction was drawn in order to clarify what were considered to be the “realistic and measurable objectives” of the work of the Probation Service (i.e. both offender compliance and offender reformation). While the primary mode of service delivery was still described as the “traditional social work activity of counselling and the provision of practical and material help”, the development of programmes that targeted specific offender needs was also noted. Significantly, the first developments were made jointly with Maori Affairs community officers and these programmes sought to assist Maori offenders to “discover and strengthen ties with family and tribal social groupings to improve their sense of identity and self worth” (House of Representatives 1981:19). Other offender needs were identified as employment, alcohol abuse and social skills. This report on the Probation Division suggests that the focus was shifting away from the individual casework mode of delivery towards that of targeted programme provision.

Conclusion

Key influences in the development of probation and probation practice in New Zealand up to 1985 have been considered in this chapter. There are three aspects of this development that warrant final comment.

First, it is significant that the work of the Probation Service has historically been aligned with social work. The identification of probation practice as a form of social work was officially promoted before the wider availability of social work training within tertiary educational institutions; and the evolution of probation practice during the period reviewed was consistent with mainstream developments within social work. The influence of an offender-centred therapeutic casework model was evident; the hallmarks of this approach were the importance of the relationship between the probation officer and offender, and the belief that intervention should be adaptive to the needs of the unique individual. This

alignment with social work is of significance in relation to developing an understanding of the current debate surrounding the status of probation as a profession. The values and ethics, which inform current probation practice, are inextricably linked to ideological and practice foundations that draw heavily upon the social work tradition. The question of probation values and the relevance of the social work perspective are addressed in Chapter Four when discussion focuses upon the construction of probation practice.

Second, the legislative base both reflects Government thinking regarding criminal justice policy and defines the parameters within which this policy is administered. The development of criminal justice policy in New Zealand has evidenced concern with punishment, control and reformation of offenders. The Probation Service developed throughout a lengthy period when anti-custodialism was a pervasive philosophy that was actively promoted. The prospect of achieving a reduction in the rate of imprisonment was contingent upon the successful promotion of community-based alternatives that offered the prospect of rehabilitation. While the reduction of recidivism had been a constant objective, the primacy of the need to protect the community had not been diminished. By 1980 forces of change were evident (articulated by the influential report of the Penal Policy Review Committee) that resulted in legislation and policy that simultaneously placed greater emphasis upon surveillance and control (on the part of the Probation Service), while promoting a greater degree of community involvement in the treatment of offenders.

Finally, policy and legislative processes surrounding the introduction of the 1985 Criminal Justice Act evidenced the political weakness of the Probation Officers' professional association. The ineffectiveness of the NZAPO to make any significant contribution to the legislative debate can be attributed to two interrelated factors. First, while the NZAPO was the official 'professional' organisation, the role of the Probation Officer lacked those characteristics that can be used to define a profession (e.g. a pre-entry qualification or registration) and because the opinion of the NZAPO lacked the 'weight' of other professional organisations it could more easily be discounted. Second, while there was clear evidence of critical thinking in the submission made by the NZAPO regarding proposed legislation, there was an absence of alternative research evidence to challenge the

validity of some of the fundamental assumptions articulated by the Penal Policy Review Committee report and embraced by government. The status of probation practice as a profession was clearly problematic and the implications for practice development is considered more fully in Chapter Four.

The above review of the development of probation in New Zealand up to 1985 has provided an initial frame of reference that will assist our understanding of the contemporary debates surrounding probation. The next chapter considers the period from 1986 to 2001, in particular, the influence of changes in central government management that became manifest in the mid 1980s and their implications for the Probation Service.

Footnotes

1 The sentence of community service was replaced (along with that of periodic detention) in 2002 by the sentence of community work.

2 Nash (1998) notes the early development of social work qualifications in New Zealand and the influences of academics with probation experiences in the United Kingdom.

3 In 1975, Robert Martinson, with co-authors Douglas Lipton and Judith Wilks, published research results concluding that some correctional programmes achieved modest successes, but that mainly the field of corrections had not found satisfactory ways of achieving significant reductions in recidivism. This view remained influential until the mid 1980s.

4 The Criminal Justice Act 1985 was replaced by the Sentencing Act 2002 and Parole Act 2002.

5 In the mid 1950's Bill Minn, Probation Officer and academic came from the United Kingdom to be head of social work at Victoria University of Wellington.

6 Relationships between the tertiary institutions and the Probation Service have proved to be enduring (even following the disestablishment of the student units in 1993) with probation still being regarded as a social work 'field of practice' – evidenced through the placement of social work students in Probation offices as part of their degree requirements.

CHAPTER THREE

Forces of Change – the impact of Public Sector Reform upon Probation in New Zealand 1985 to 2001

In Chapter Two the development of Probation in New Zealand from 1896 to 1985 was outlined. During this period the seminal criminal justice philosophies of reformation, rehabilitation and public safety found expression in Government policy and legislation. The administration of community based criminal justice policy had been the responsibility of the Probation Service, and it was concluded that the development of probation practice was strongly influenced by social work. However, in the early 1980s the direction of criminal justice policy and the role of the Probation Service was questioned by the Penal Policy Review committee and the major legislative reform of 1985 reflected the increasing politicisation of the public sector.

This chapter focuses upon the impact of what are labelled the ‘forces of change’ on the development of the Probation Service from 1985 to 2001. The discussion addresses four forces: first, the general conception of the role of the state; second, the reform of the public sector; third, the emergence and impact of what has been labelled New Public Management upon public sector agencies; and finally, the particular impact of constraints upon the resources available to public agencies, such as the Probation Service. Then, in light of the influence of these forces, the development of probation in the criminal justice sector in New Zealand is considered.

Forces of Change

The Role of the State

The conception of the role of the state is closely linked to the reform of the Public Sector that commenced in the mid 1980s in New Zealand. In particular, two key influences affected the response of Government to demand driven social services: first, the impact of economic constraints; and second, the ethos of individual responsibility and accountability.

Two dominant perspectives emerge from commentary surrounding the role of the state and social justice. The first of these is the libertarian or 'New Right' position that promotes both the primacy of individual liberty and the operation of the free market. It is argued that state intervention is justified only under certain conditions; for example to ensure the maintenance of law and order, or when the collective majority rejects market outcomes. The idea of the existence of a set of collectively determined social goals is rejected by libertarians; in a free society agreement can only be reached in terms of conduct (rules for social action) not ends (material distribution) (Upton 1987:10). The state should only address the consequences of inequality to the degree that the free order is threatened or the efficiency of the market is impeded, and the state should only be involved in social policy if more optimal results are likely than through reliance on the free market (Boston, Martin, Pallot and Walsh 1996; Hayek 1982; Pierson 1991; Treasury 1984).

The second perspective, the traditional social democratic position, views the welfare state as a vehicle for redressing inequalities that have resulted from the excesses of capitalist development (Pierson 1991). This position places emphasis upon the collective nature of the social order and the existence of a shared consensus regarding the definition of social well-being and the institutional framework that provides the parameters for social action. The libertarian emphasis upon the primacy of the individual is rejected, and the form of distributive justice is shaped by the shared understandings of members of society regarding social goods (Teuber 1984; Walzer 1990). The state becomes the principal directing authority and more equitable social redistribution can be achieved through the adoption of

Keynesian economic policy and the promotion of the expanded welfare state. In western social democracies, post World War Two, there emerged a consensus regarding the role of the welfare state in ensuring the provision of a 'social wage' involving guaranteed access to education, health, housing and income assistance on a more universal basis (James 1998:1). The principle of 'universality' (that all should have access to the same level and standard of services) was a foundation stone of the welfare state (Maharey 1999:16).

As indicated above, the 'New Right' and social democratic perspectives are predicated on differing conceptions of the desirable level of state intervention in civil society. While the provision of services that are necessary to ensure the maintenance of law and order are accepted by both positions, the construction and delivery of these services are likely to be different. A significant moderating factor in relation to the delivery of services by central government is the cost of provision. The social democratic conception of the role of the welfare state was initially underpinned by sustained economic growth and a continuously expanding economy (James 1998; Pierson 1991). The capacity of the interventionist welfare state to continue to implement expansive social policies, however, has been significantly impaired by economic instability over the past thirty years. While the notion may still persist that social services should be demand-driven, the reality is that Government funding has been increasingly unable to meet demands (James 1998:1; Lawler and Hern 1995:8).

In New Zealand in the early 1980s, recognition that previous levels and modes of delivery of state services were unsustainable resulted in an unprecedented level of public sector reform that reflected the ascendancy of the 'New Right' position. The notion of social justice that has been endorsed by a succession of policy decisions is one that focuses upon equality of opportunity or access, not equality of outcome or equity. There has been a reduction in the role of the state in providing services and the free market has been espoused as the preferred mechanism to provide such services (James 1998:1; Dominelli and Hoogvelt 1996:45; Lawler and Hern 1995:8). In New Zealand, policies such as targeting income assistance, the introduction of user charges and the contracting out of services to non-state agencies are examples of this change in emphasis.

The notion of individual liberty that underpins 'New Right' thought has an important corollary, that of individual responsibility and accountability. In New Zealand this ethos has exerted significant influence in the criminal justice sector. This has been evidenced in the legislative process that has reflected pressure exerted by an increasing range of 'stakeholders' including advocates for the rights of victims and the media. For example, citizen pressure was the driving force behind a referendum on sentencing for violent crime that was held in conjunction with the 1999 General Election. The outcome of the referendum was that a significant majority favoured more stringent measures, including penalties, for violent offenders.

State funded social service agencies, including the Probation Service, have been increasingly challenged to demonstrate their effectiveness and efficiency, and have been forced to employ far more complex and sophisticated political strategies (including the development of measures of effectiveness and efficiency) to justify their existence (Hasenfeld 1989). For example, the Probation Service has embraced a psychological aetiology of offending, one that places responsibility on the individual offender and that has led to the introduction of prescriptive risk assessment, intervention and monitoring requirements that are thought to enhance community safety through management of the offender's risk of re-offending. It is against this backdrop that the influence of New Public Management has developed (this is discussed in the following section).

While there has clearly been a challenge to the fundamental assumptions upon which the social democratic post-war consensus has been built (i.e. sustained economic growth and a continuing expansion of the welfare state) the ascendancy of a minimalist conception of the welfare state does not represent complete dominance. Boston (1992:14) comments that while the social policy changes:

Go well beyond those pursued by other neo-liberal governments in other OECD countries... they do not, however, represent the complete abandonment of a rights-based approach to social policy or the full adoption of the residualist model.

In summary, the role of the state as the ubiquitous provider of welfare services faced increasing challenge from the dual influences of: first, the economic reality that universal provision was economically unsustainable; and second, the emergence of an ethos of individual responsibility and accountability. It is argued that these influences have shaped the development of probation over the past twenty years.

Reform of the Public Sector

The second force to exert an impact upon State agencies such as the Probation Service has been the broader reforms that have occurred in the New Zealand public sector. This reform has been based upon a set of beliefs regarding the role and organisation of state agencies that have been articulated in policy documents and codified through legislation.

Since the early 1980s, Governments both in New Zealand and abroad have implemented policies (involving reform of the role and operation of state agencies) that present a challenge to the earlier consensus regarding the role of the welfare state. Boston et al. (1996) provide a succinct summary of the broad goals of government restructuring "...to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public sector, enhance the responsiveness of public agencies to their clients and customers, reduce public expenditure, and improve managerial accountability" (Boston et al. 1996:2). In New Zealand, the Treasury briefing papers to incoming governments ('Economic Management' 1984 and 'Government Management' 1987) advanced a number of themes regarding social policy and the role of the public sector. The dominant themes from this policy advice (individual free-choice and market efficiency) can be clearly seen in the major legislative reforms (State Sector Act 1988, Public Finance Act 1989) that effectively reshaped the face of the state.

Changes in reporting systems

There has been a significant change in government expectations regarding the assessment and reporting of state agency performance. The traditional method of measurement and assessment of both public and private sector organisational performance had been primarily financial (accountability for expenditure in the case of public agencies, and profit

maximisation in private organisations). However, interest has developed in examining the relationship between organisational activities and social well-being. Ramanathan (1976) argues that philosophical justification for this interest can be found in the notion of the social contract. All social institutions are seen to operate by virtue of a social contract whereby the institution's survival is based upon the delivery of socially desirable goods and services to the groups from which they derive power. Further, an institution must "constantly meet the twin tests of legitimacy and relevance by demonstrating that society requires its services and that groups benefiting from its rewards have society's approval" (Shocker and Sethi 1974:67, cited in Ramanathan 1976:518). Ramanathan advocates the development of "social performance criteria" that will allow evaluation of corporate performance relative to a social contract.

Since 1990 there has been growing interest in the measurement of social performance within the Public Sector in New Zealand. The statutory reporting requirements of the Public Finance Act 1989 include both financial and non-financial measures. Matheson (1993) argued that, while there had been improvements in public sector planning, appropriation and reporting processes, the measurement systems did not provide reasonable assurance that outputs produced by public agencies in the social area contribute in the best ways to national goals. He advocated a "collective interest perspective", maintaining that an effectiveness of outcome approach could be incorporated in measurement processes. This approach would assist government in macro-decision making by ensuring that the activities of government departments remained effective and worthwhile (Matheson 1993:1).

This interest in social performance measurement has seen the development and extension of conventional auditing methods to incorporate non-financial activities. Adams (1987:29) proposes a definition of "performance audit" as involving "assessing the management and operational performance of an organisation in using financial, staffing and other resources". While formal auditing has addressed questions of legal compliance and financial regularity (using the mechanism of annual financial statements) the new performance auditing addresses performance, effectiveness, economy and efficiency of administration, i.e. how

well the intended purposes were served by the money spent (Adams 1987:30; Robertson and Busch 1992:1).

In the Probation Service, performance was historically defined in terms of activities completed at the micro level of the deliverer, rather than at the broader institutional or organisational level. Reporting to Parliament was confined to financial accounting and volumes of work completed. This measurement was largely input oriented, with little or no management information regarding actual performance in terms of output quality or effectiveness.

The report of the Audit Office titled 'Performance Reporting in the Public Sector' (1991) provided guidelines, including evaluative criteria and auditing expectations, for both Crown agencies and local government entities regarding reporting requirements under the Public Finance Act 1989. The Act requires Statements of Objectives and Statements of Performance to include both financial and non-financial information. According to the Act, the Statement of Service Performance (SSP) should report on classes of outputs produced compared with the classes of outputs described in the Statement of Objectives.

The Act dictates that the SSP should report on five bases of performance relative to specified targets. They are: quantity (how much of the activity/service/product was provided); quality (how well the activity/service/product was provided); timeliness (was the activity/service/product provided on time?); cost (how much the activity/service/product cost) and location (where the activity/service/product was provided).

The SSP is of crucial significance because the funding base of the Probation Service is directly linked to the volume/cost projections that are supplied to Treasury. For example, in the event of failure to meet specified targets the Probation Service may be required to return funding. This requirement has been problematic because of difficulties involved in producing accurate long-term volume forecasts. The outputs of the Probation Service (volume of information provided and numbers of offenders managed) are essentially dependent variables that are affected by a range of other factors (e.g. crime rates,

seriousness of offending, level of Police activity, judicial preferences). In light of fluctuating demand for services there has been what may be termed an 'availability cost' associated with the provision of services, i.e. certain fixed costs that are linked to the capacity to provide services (e.g. permanent staff salaries and accommodation costs) and that cannot be varied easily in response to changing demands. This has the effect of producing variability in unit costing. A consequence of this mode of funding has been moves towards greater flexibility in the provision of services in an effort to control costs; for example, contracting out of services and the use of fixed-term employment contracts.

The Impact of New Public Management

There has been considerable debate over the past decade regarding the type of management structure and practice that will produce optimal results in the public sector. In short, this debate surrounds the relevance, suitability and applicability of private sector management theory and practice, 'New Public Management', to the management of public sector organisations. The New Zealand experience has been particularly illuminating with major legislative reforms underpinning changes in central government management ². New Public Management presents as the third significant influence that has shaped the probation practice context. The following discussion considers first, the relevance of the business model to public sector organisations, then changes that have been evident in management practice.

The relevance of the business model

It is important to critically evaluate the relevance of business oriented values and practices that have been applied in the social services. Rees (1991) challenges the values promoted by political libertarians and argues that there must not be an uncritical, passive acceptance of the tenets of economic rationalism. He argues that the goals of efficiency, productivity and accountability have been borrowed from a set of business-oriented values and "...that the relevance of these goals to ideals of welfare and justice has not been evaluated" (Rees 1991:14). This caution is shared by Gummer (1997) who contends that the private and

public sector have different organisational and managerial requirements, and suggests that in the public sphere the tenets of management should be embraced judiciously (Gummer 1997:87-91).

There are differences in context, values and accountability between the private and public sectors. Public sector organisations typically have a broader range of stakeholders than purely commercial enterprises and these stakeholders often have conflicting interests (Lawler and Hern 1995:8). The Probation Service is required to respond to a diverse range of stakeholders that exert varying degrees of political and professional influence, including: the Minister of Corrections, members of the Judiciary, other criminal justice agencies (Courts, Police, Prison Service, Psychological Service), community interest groups (e.g. Prisoners Aid, Victim Support), Iwi and other cultural groups. In particular, Iwi are guided by a set of values and beliefs that are at variance with the positivist individualism that underpins the managerialist agenda upon which current correctional policy is predicated.

A further point of critique surrounds the degree of congruence that can realistically be expected to occur between the business ethos of cost-efficiency and social policy concerns with equity (Boston et al. 1996:15; Lawler and Hern 1995:9). Ryan (1999:132), commenting upon the model of contracting out the provision of services to the private sector, suggests that it would be naive to expect organisations that are seeking to make a profit to voluntarily prioritise the interests of the common good. Both public sector organisations and private sector providers will rationalise the delivery of services through the use of targeting mechanisms in order to meet commercial objectives. For example, in the correctional environment, clients' eligibility to attend intervention programmes is controlled by using a risk rating scale that can be adjusted in accordance with the level of available resources.

Changes in management practice

In Chapter Two it was noted that prior to the reform of the public sector state social service agencies such as the Probation Service were bureaucracies in which professional staff

enjoyed a significant level of control over the content and delivery of services. From the perspective of New Public Management these agencies were considered to be inefficient and wasteful. The 'new management' model placed greater emphasis upon cost-efficiency, accountability and the achievement of results (Dominelli and Hoogvelt 1996:45-46; Lawler and Hern 1995:9; Nash and Savage 1995:5-6; Raine and Willson 1997:82-83).

In the Probation Service, concern with statutory accountability (the enforcement of legal sanctions) has been augmented by an emphasis upon accountability for the use of resources (both financial and personnel). In an effort to contain and control costs gate-keeping mechanisms have been introduced, such as targeting interventions on the basis of risk (Evans 1996:196-197; Harris 1998:856-858). The introduction of internal markets through the separation of purchaser from provider within the same organisation represents a further mechanism that is designed to both control costs and increase accountability (Lawler and Hern 1995:9). The Department of Corrections is organised into operational divisions that provide direct services (Probation Service, Psychological Service and Public Prisons Service) and corporate divisions responsible for finance, strategy, internal contracting for services, auditing and compliance monitoring 3.

The emphasis upon contractual arrangements has been extended through greater reliance on sub-contracting of service delivery to both the private and voluntary sectors. This is evident in the Probation Service where external programme provision is preferred when internal options are considered to be inefficient, for example in the provision of specialist services such as the electronic surveillance of offenders subject to the sentence of Home Detention.

Considerable effort has also been expended on the development of data collection and workload management systems that enable the use of time and resources to be monitored (Dominelli and Hoogvelt 1996:50; Harris 1998:856; Nash and Savage 1995:5-6). The Department of Corrections has made a substantial investment in developing an integrated data management system, activity analysis reporting and workload allocation mechanisms that all utilise quantitative measures and controls.

The management of staff performance has been characterised by the establishment of discrete, measurable, competence-based performance indicators that are linked to remuneration (Evans 1996:196-197; Lawler and Hern 1995:9; Raine and Willson 1997:82-83). This trend is evidenced in the Probation Service Performance Management System and staff competence framework.

In summary, therefore, it can be said that the influence of New Public Management, characterised by the tenets of the business model and changes in management practice, represents a key challenge to the autonomy and influence of professionals within public sector agencies.

The Influence of Resource Constraints

The fourth force exerting an impact upon state sector agencies has been that of resource constraints. The social democratic conception of the interventionist welfare state has been curtailed in the light of economic crises and the ascendancy of 'New Right' political philosophy. In particular, the dual demands for optimal, cost-efficient provision of services and greater accountability (for both the resources used and outcomes achieved) have exerted significant pressure upon state agencies such as the Probation Service. Commenting upon probation in the United States, (Vernon and Byrd 1996:21) suggest that such pressure has resulted from the example of private sector business management models.

Managers within the corrections setting face demands from stakeholders to demonstrate increased efficiencies with diminishing budgets (Chavaria 1994:18; Markiewicz and Vanyur 1994:51). The decentralisation of fiscal responsibility and staffing reductions can be identified as additional features of the impact of resource constraints (Vernon and Byrd 1996:21). These pressures are evident in New Zealand where managers in the Probation Service have variously been required to implement a range of 'savings strategies' from the reduction in service delivery specifications to staff retrenchment through natural attrition.

Other commentators articulate concern with what can be identified as the dominance of an econometric model (with a focus on cost/benefit analysis) that is used to determine the level of social service intervention that should be funded by the state. The significance of fiscal authority and accountability in case management practice is acknowledged, however tension is evident when this is juxtaposed against the responsibility of social service agencies to provide services to vulnerable and at risk populations (Austin 1992:452-457). Netting (1992:162) comments that case management is challenged to maintain a client-centred perspective and quality provision in a "cost obsessed environment". This theme is also engaged by Rothman (1991:520) who identifies the influence of proponents of a minimalist welfare state in their demand that social services be reduced and welfare spending cut. Furthermore, practitioners face the dilemma of the requirement to provide high quality and effective services when resources are constrained, and in the light of increased demands for bureaucratic accountability; for example, documentation and audit trails (Bowers, Esmond and Canales 1999: 35-36).

The practitioner's relative focus upon client or organisational needs will affect both responses to and interpretation of resource constraints. A significant corollary is that the definition of acceptable client outcomes may change, depending upon resource availability. Toch (1995:43) observes that while comprehensive assessment and intervention strategies may represent an ideal, in reality limited resources often result in a triage process which directs more detailed assessment on complex cases. This observation is evidenced in current Probation Service practice guidelines where the level of intervention is indexed to assessment of offender risk of recidivism. A further impact of resource constraint upon agencies such as the Probation Service is evident in what Moore (1992:418-419) labels the "downward substitution of services"; that is, the development of community-based, non-institutional programmes that are cheaper.

The preoccupation with accountability and cost-effectiveness in service delivery will continue to have a significant impact on the shape of Probation practice. The challenge to meet system demands, while maintaining therapeutic integrity and professionalism, is formidable but one that must be engaged if Probation professionals are to resist 'capture' of

their field of practice. However, proponents of alternative approaches to the construction of practice must also be realistic regarding resource levels and accept that compromise and balance are features of practice.

Criminal Justice Sector Development

The following discussion considers four aspects of development in the criminal justice sector that reflect the influence of the public sector reforms, namely: the requirement for increased accountability; the disestablishment of the Department of Justice; the re-organisation of the Probation Service; and amendments that have been made to the 1985 Criminal Justice Act.

Demand for Accountability

The increasing demand for greater accountability within the public sector is also evident in the corrections environment that has become increasingly politicised (Larivee 1996:9; Vantour 1991). A distinguishing feature of the influence of both institutional and community political forces has been a call for tougher measures to both deter and punish offenders. Correctional services have responded by placing emphasis upon measures that reflect a concern with public safety and surveillance (Wright 1991). For example, in New Zealand a new sentence of Home Detention was introduced in 1993, which has an emphasis on incapacitation of the offender at a reduced cost relative to imprisonment (discussed later in this Chapter).

There has also been an increasing emphasis upon the management of external stakeholders and pressure groups. The past decade has witnessed increased media attention on the performance of criminal justice agencies, particularly in association with a number of 'high profile' offenders, and management of the media is identified as a key activity for correctional managers (Markiewicz and Vanyur 1994:51; Wright 1991:6). In New

Zealand, correctional managers are required to undertake specialist media training and communication with the media is subject to strict protocols.

A final area where greater accountability is sought from correctional managers surrounds the issue of effectiveness. Larivee (1996) suggests that the public has three expectations of correctional services (and the broader criminal justice system): enhanced public safety; increased offender accountability; and rehabilitation of offenders. These desired outcomes parallel the competing output goals of the New Zealand Department of Corrections that focus upon safe and humane containment of offenders, the appropriate management of individual and public risk, and the rehabilitation of offenders. The determination of the mix of correctional policies (which place differing degrees of emphasis upon offender containment, rehabilitation and public safety) presents as a complex and highly politicised process.

The Disestablishment of the Department of Justice

In the late 1980s, in keeping with the overall pattern of reform in the state sector, the then Department of Justice was split into the areas of Operations, Policy Analysis, and Development and Support, signalling the beginning of the purchaser/provider split and the deconstruction of the Department of Justice (O'Donoghue 1999:30). The separation of policy and advice from service delivery has been identified as a distinguishing feature of the implementation of New Public Management (Boston et al. 1996; O'Donoghue 1999:30). The Department of Justice was disestablished in October 1995 and was replaced by the following entities; Ministry of Justice, Department for Courts, Office of Treaty Settlements and the Department of Corrections.

The Ministry of Justice was established to provide "policy and strategic advice, including advice on the allocation of resources across the justice sector" (Ministry of Justice 1995:1). The Criminal Justice Policy Group within the Ministry has responsibility for providing advice, information and ministerial services on the policies and legal frameworks affecting: the definition, investigation, prosecution and adjudication of crime; sentencing policies;

and the administration of sentences. The separation of policy development from operations that underpinned the disestablishment of the Department of Justice was replicated in the structure of the Department of Corrections that provides criminal justice services and comprises a corporate office and three operational entities. The corporate office has five sections. First, the Finance Group that provides financial and property advice and support services to the Department, and incorporates Corraland Inmate Employment, which manages inmate employment in prisons throughout New Zealand. Second, the Service Purchasing and Monitoring Group is responsible for purchasing corrections services from both internal and external providers. This group also establishes and monitors compliance with key operational and strategic standards. Third, the Policy Development Group provides strategic analysis and policy advice. It evaluates and develops effective corrections services and establishes quality standards for service delivery. Fourth, the Strategic Development Group provides specialist advice and services including information technology, human resources, planning and communications. Finally, Internal Audit provides assurances to the Chief Executive on key statutory accountabilities and oversees the implementation of a risk management framework.

The three operational divisions of the Department are first, the Probation Service that provides information and reports to judges and to the National Parole Board, District Prisons Boards and prison management, and manages community-based sentences. The Probation Service also administers funding to providers of community-based programmes. Second, the Public Prisons Service that is responsible for the safe, secure and humane containment of sentenced and remand inmates, and is also responsible for managing the sentence needs of each offender. Third, the Psychological Service provides specialist clinical treatment and advice for offenders, training and education for departmental staff and also undertakes research projects (Department of Corrections 2000a:148-149).

While a key rationale behind the separation of the purchasing and service delivery functions has been the avoidance of provider 'capture' and the introduction of contestability, it should be noted that this separation has generated a different set of consequences. In particular, the corporate model has resulted in a greater sense of

separation between staff in 'the field' and those responsible for planning and strategy. Furthermore, the imposition of an increased range of accountability mechanisms has contributed to a deepening sense of alienation, to which one reaction has been the adoption by staff of a more individualistic stance based on their individual conceptions of professionalism.

The Re-organisation of the Probation Service

In 1988 greater emphasis was placed upon the management structure within the Probation Service with the establishment of four Regions. Operations in each Region were overseen by a Regional Manager, supported by an Executive Officer (responsible for support services) and a Regional Adviser (responsible for quality assurance, the development of professional practice and co-ordination of training). Within these four Regions there was a total of thirty-nine Districts, each controlled by a District Probation Officer, Senior Probation Officer(s) and a Warden (Periodic Detention). In 1991 the Probation Service was 're-branded' as the Community Corrections Service and the district management positions were redefined with a greater emphasis being placed upon management (all reference to 'probation' was removed from management roles). During this period also, the Head Office structure was altered to reflect a more corporate model and specialist financial, operations and human resource sections were established.

On 31 December 1996 the then Community Corrections Service completed an internal restructuring process that was intended to place greater emphasis upon service delivery to clients and customers. The previous organisational structure (Figure 1) was replaced by one characterised by: fewer management and administrative positions; greater devolution of managerial responsibility to new Area Managers; and an increased emphasis upon reporting systems and accountability (Figure 2).

Figure 1: Community Corrections Service Organisational Structure to 31 December 1996

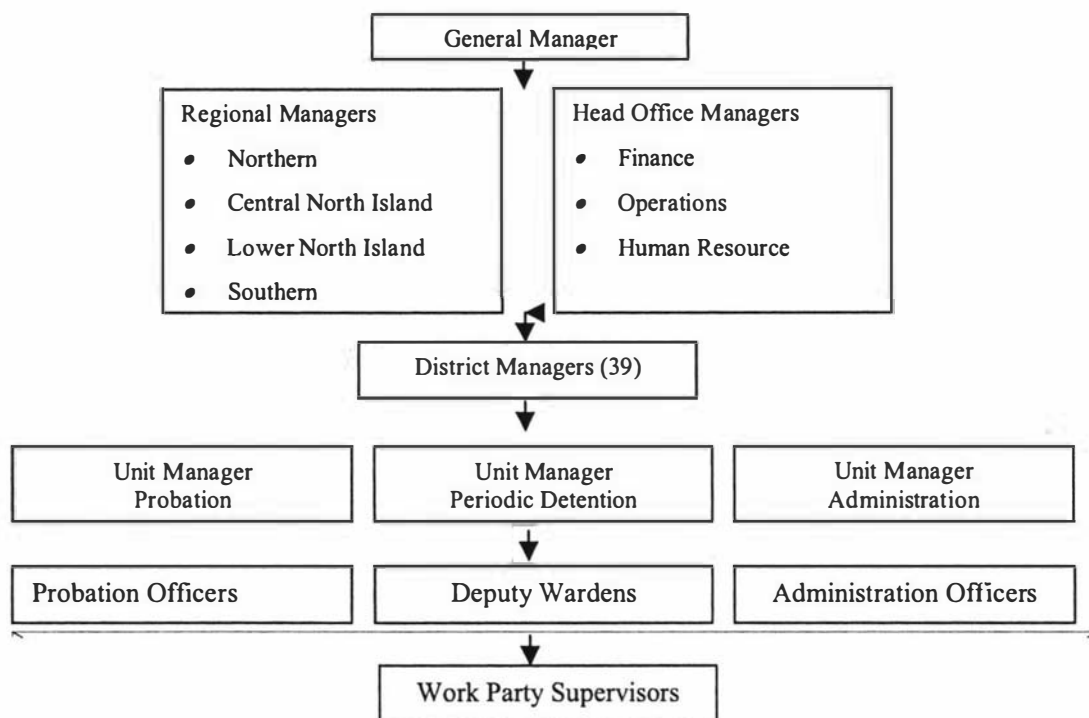
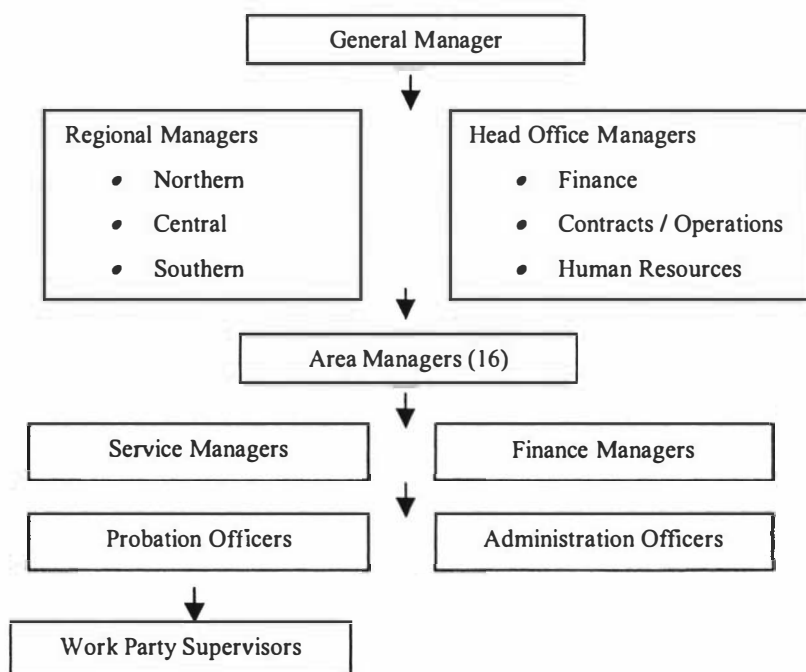


Figure 2: Organisational Structure from 1 January 1997



The previous thirty-nine Districts were amalgamated into sixteen Areas and the number of Regions was reduced from four to three. The staffing of each Regional Office was reduced with the removal of the Executive Officer and Regional Adviser, and the Regional Manager position was intended to have more emphasis upon a mentoring and coaching role in relation to Area Managers. The Area Managers, in turn, were given greater levels of financial and personnel delegation than the previous District Managers. A stronger focus upon business management was evident with the establishment of a specialist Finance Manager position in each Area. The newly appointed Service Managers (see Figure 2) were to be responsible for all operational matters at a particular site there emphasis was placed upon the need for Probation Officers to become 'self-managing'. The previous Unit Manager (Periodic Detention) and Deputy Warden positions were disestablished and the roles incorporated into an expanded generic Probation Officer job description; the intention of this was to create a more flexible, multi-skilled workforce.

Criminal Justice Act Amendments

The 1985 Criminal Justice Act was amended in 1993 by the inclusion of the new provisions of Habilitation Centres and Home Detention. Residential centres for inmates released on parole and clients on community-based sentences, Habilitation Centres provide programmes designed to address causal or contributory factors related to offending behaviour and to assist with reintegration into society. Home Detention, which did not become available until 1 October 1999, allows eligible offenders to serve their sentences outside prison under electronic and physical surveillance, and with intensive supervision by a Probation Officer. Only offenders who have been sentenced to two years imprisonment or less, and who have the sentencing Judge's approval, may apply for Home Detention. In particular, Home Detention can provide an alternative for eligible offenders with special needs, such as parents with young children, pregnant women, or offenders with disabilities, and can help to maintain stable family relationships. Offenders can be directed to participate in rehabilitative programmes as a condition of Home Detention. Non-violent serious offenders (but not serious violent offenders) serving determinate sentences may also apply to be released on Home Detention up to three months prior to their parole eligibility

date; either the District Prisons Board or the Parole Board considers these applications (Department of Corrections 2001).

While the intent of Home Detention seems clear, a contradiction exists between the Department of Corrections' endorsement of a risk-based targeting model designed to ration services and the rules governing eligibility for Home Detention that result in lower risk offenders receiving the most intensive (and expensive) form of community-based intervention (Gibbs and King 2003). This practice might also be interpreted to contradict one of the cornerstones of the Department of Corrections' evidence-based Integrated Offender Management model, i.e. that unwarranted intervention with lower risk offenders is likely to increase their rate of recidivism.

Conclusion

The focus of this chapter has been a consideration of the impact of key contextual influences on the construction of probation practice. Four 'forces of change' have been identified. First, it was argued that the dual pressures of the sustainability of meeting demand-driven social services and the ascendancy of a libertarian philosophy have been instrumental in reshaping the structure and direction of central government. In the criminal justice arena this will influence the development of policy and legislation; these in turn will have an effect on the organisational structure and models of practice implemented by the Probation Service. The second and third forces have involved reform of the public sector, characterised by the introduction from the private sector of new management practices that placed emphasis upon the effective, efficient and accountable use of limited resources in the provision of social services. Finally, for agencies such as the Probation Service, it was noted that resource constraints have affected the definition of need and the choice of intervention strategies. The impact of these changes upon the criminal justice sector has also been reviewed and key developments were noted regarding; accountabilities, changes in organisational structure, policy direction and legislation.

What benefits have derived from public sector reform and the introduction of New Public Management? There are two major issues to consider. First, the level of accountability for both the use of resources and the outputs achieved has increased. At the organisational level, reports detailing the Statement of Service Performance (SSP) have ensured that state agencies measure and report activities and results more accurately. The emphasis upon reporting outputs and outcomes has replaced the previous model of reporting on processes involved in delivering services. Individual managers are now held to be more accountable for operational decisions regarding the use of resources and the achievement of performance targets. The dual mechanisms of the individual employment contract and performance payments have been applied to ensure managerial compliance with strategic objectives. Financial management practices have been enhanced through the introduction of accrual accounting and the establishment of specialist financial management positions. The concern with cost efficiency has reformed an earlier culture that had been characterised as being careless and having weak financial accountability (Raine and Willson 1997:84-86).

The second issue relates to the development of practice, which is examined in detail in the following chapter. At this point, however, the following benefit can be noted. The establishment of minimum practice standards (codified in manuals and linked to competence systems) represents an effort to improve accountability, consistency and service effectiveness (Evans 1996:197). Notwithstanding criticisms levelled at the emphasis upon technical rational models, the introduction of standard assessment and case management approaches within the Probation Service can be seen to represent an advance on the previous reliance upon individual discretion. It is important to note that in the past not all practice was 'best practice'.

In the next chapter the focus moves to the construction of probation practice and how this has been influenced by the sea change that has occurred in the New Zealand public sector.

Footnotes

1 The maintenance of the free order is secured through laws and institutional arrangements that guarantee both the freedom of the individual and the maintenance of social order.

2 Boston (1997) provides an excellent discussion of the impact of the State Sector Act 1988 and the Public Finance Act 1989 that place emphasis upon efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in government agencies.

3 The Probation and Psychological Services were amalgamated under the newly formed Probation and Offender Services Division in 2002. This division also included a newly established Service Delivery Organisation that is responsible for the co-ordination and delivery of all offender programmes.

CHAPTER FOUR

The Construction of Probation Practice

The construction of probation practice is relevant to the relationship between leadership and effective practice. Leadership involves providing direction to staff and a successful leader must be able to actively engage staff to work towards the achievement of organisational goals. The positions regarding the construction of practice that are adopted and promoted by both the Service Managers (as leaders) and Probation Officers are likely to influence their understanding and expectations of leadership. It should be noted, therefore, that the following discussion is underpinned by the argument that probation practice has a professional foundation. The work of the Probation Service has historically been aligned with the discipline of social work that has made a seminal contribution to the development of probation practice, and this influence remains evident in current debate surrounding probation as a profession.

The demonstration of expertise that is based upon specialist education, training and skills presents as a core characteristic of a professional. This expertise is applied in a reflexive manner that enables professionals to continuously develop their knowledge and skills and to complete work tasks that require judgement and creativity (Anderson 1997; Beneviste 1987; Raelin 1992). Professionals have traditionally enjoyed a high level of operational autonomy that includes discretion in designing and carrying out tasks (Beneviste 1987; Dawson 1994). In the social service practice context it is professionals who are closest to clients and who require sufficient practice autonomy to work with clients in order to resolve problems (Raelin 1989). Most professional workers require little direct supervision from managers and the professional's right to operational independence should be matched by their obligation to demonstrate performance accountability, which includes self-regulation and self-discipline (Anderson 1997; Mintzberg 1998; Raelin 1985). The professional usually demonstrates commitment to a profession through membership of a

formal association that sets and enforces standards of accreditation, training and conduct through registration procedures and a code of ethics. While some of these features may not be fully evident within the Probation Service (e.g. entry qualifications, mandatory registration and membership of a professional association), the conception and enactment of probation as a professional endeavour is crucial to the ongoing development and viability of probation practice.

A construction of probation practice can be developed through reference to two interrelated spheres of discourse. The first discourse is one that includes the contributions of academics, researchers and policy analysts that can be found in academic publications, journals, papers, research reports and policy documents. The second discourse emanates from the operational practice of the Probation Service that is shaped by both the policies and procedures of the agency and the praxis that characterises interaction between the practitioner and client.

In this chapter the construction of probation practice is developed through reference to the above discourses and the discussion is presented in a framework that consists of four interrelated elements. The perception of what probation practice is and what practice ought to be will be determined by the relative degree of emphasis that various stakeholders in the construction of practice (policy makers, managers, practitioners and clients) are able to place upon the four elements concerned.

The first element comprises the foundation values and beliefs that inform the purpose of probation. Probation values provide a foundation for the construction of intervention and are a source of social legitimacy. The values and ethics, which inform current probation practice, are inextricably linked to ideological and practice foundations that draw heavily upon the social work tradition. The relative emphasis that is placed upon the competing purposes of punishment, deterrence, rehabilitation, supervision and control reflects both the political environment and the development of the philosophy of probation practice. It should be noted at this point that practitioners and managers have differing values bases and conceptions of the purpose and nature of practice and therefore, as one would expect,

{ tension has arisen between the values and beliefs associated with management and those espoused by practitioners aligned with the social work profession. These key themes are examined in this chapter and suggestions are made regarding the challenge that probation will face in the future.

The second element in the framework is the knowledge and skill base that provides the foundation for practice. Social work and psychology are identified as providing core contributions to the development of probation practice. This discussion includes the concept of best practice and how practitioners make choices regarding the use of different practice theories. More recent practice developments that reflect the influence of the different theoretical orientations are noted.

Professional supervision and performance management, core processes that underpin effective probation practice, constitute the third element of the framework. It is through these mechanisms that the practitioner receives direction, support and the opportunity to develop. They serve complementary roles for the agency, ensuring practice consistency and accountability.

The fourth and final element of the framework concerns the assessment of practice effectiveness. Discussion of this element considers the significance of goals, delivery systems and the choice of indicators that are used to assess effectiveness.

Probation Purpose, Values and Beliefs

In this section, initial discussion addresses the definition and purpose of Probation Services. A set of beliefs that provide a rationale for probation and core principles that can guide practice are identified, then an understanding of probation values is developed and issues facing probation are outlined. Finally, possible directions for the development of probation values are considered in light of the challenge for the Probation Service to maintain credibility within an increasingly politicised criminal justice sector.

Definition and Purpose of Probation

The following definition from Latessa and Allen (1999:105-106) captures the essence of probation as a conditional sentence:

A sentence not involving confinement that imposes conditions and retains authority in the sentencing court to modify the conditions of sentence or to re-sentence the client if the client violates the conditions.

A rationale for the use of probation is based upon the following beliefs that, to a greater or lesser extent, have informed the development of criminal justice policy surrounding probation. First, that the grounds for excluding clients from society should be related, in some measure, to the degree of risk which they present to other members of the community. Imprisonment should be reserved for those who present unwarranted levels of risk and those who have committed serious offences that command incarceration. The second belief rests on a lack of confidence in the efficacy of imprisonment (short-term confinements in particular) to reduce the rate of recidivism. Imprisonment is seen to be unlikely to assist in the rehabilitation of clients and it might have a negative impact. A third basis for probation relates to an expectation of reform on the part of the client who should give evidence of the ability/motivation to desist from further offending. The fourth belief suggests that the use of probation can be in the best interests of the broader community. Probation will enable the client to maintain employment and family and other social relationships; whereas, if imprisoned, the community would bear the cost of both the imprisonment and often provision for dependants (Department of Justice 1954; Latessa and Allen 1999:106).

The beliefs that provide the rationale for probation also give direction regarding its purpose. Broadly, probation practice involves two interrelated tasks. The first consists of client assessment as the basis of providing information and advice to assist judicial decision-making bodies with regard to appropriate sentences and interventions. The second involves the management of sentences and orders imposed on clients by courts and prison boards. While both sets of activities have discrete objectives, against which performance

can be assessed, they contribute to a broader set of overarching or super-ordinate goals of probation services.

A review of international literature regarding the core principles that guide probation services reveals a high degree of consensus (for example, Department of Corrections 1998a; Harding 2000; Latessa and Allen 1999). In particular, there are two interrelated expectations: first, that probation interventions will result in a reduction in the rate of re-offending; and second, that the provision of these services must be consistent with protection of the community (Harding 2000:135). A second tier set of principles is linked to the achievement of these expectations. First, that probation options are an alternative to custody. Second, a belief that rehabilitative efforts are more likely to be positively associated with a reduction in the rate of re-offending than are punitive sanctions. Third, that it is possible to identify clients who are more likely to respond positively to rehabilitative efforts, thereby enabling scarce resources to be used more effectively. Fourth, that mandated intervention is justified. Finally, that the community - through surveillance and social control - forms a legitimate part of the probation function. *

The Contribution of Social Work

Social work theory and practice has exerted a significant influence on the construction of professional practice in the Probation Service. Gibbs and King (2001:13) observe that probation practice “traditionally, has been social welfare orientated and client-centered – hallmarks of social work” (features noted in Chapter Two).

Souflee (1993) reflects that social work ideology has historically been linked to egalitarian social philosophy and political doctrine. This ideology is characterised by a belief in the welfare state, in society’s moral obligation to ensure social justice and to meet the social needs of all of its members (Souflee 1993:318-324). Social work practice is considered to have the mandate and capacity to challenge social injustice and to empower clients who have been constrained and limited (Peile and McCouat 1997:357; Robbins, Chatterjee and Canda 1999:380). Individual social workers can be seen to act as moral agents seeking to effect good, their value orientations predisposing their choice of theories and models of

practice (Nai 1998:173-175).

The following concerns of social work practice reflect the core values that are commonly articulated. The social worker should seek to (Carpenter 1996:165; Gray 1995:58; Pray 1991:80; Robbins et al. 1999:380):

- empower clients
- assist clients to achieve self-determination
- display respect for the inherent dignity and worth of all people
- challenge social injustice
- assist the client in achieving health and well-being

Goldstein argues persuasively that social work practice should be regarded as an ethical and moral endeavour. The ethically grounded social work practitioner will be guided by a Code of Ethics that establishes norms regarding appropriate attitudes and behaviour (Goldstein 1998:241-246). Social work's core ethical mandates require the practitioner: to be trustworthy and to act with integrity; to be competent; and to use the best available knowledge to guide practice and not to act in a way that might harm the client (Klein and Bloom 1995:804; Robbins et al. 1999:382). However, while clear expression of professional standards for social work practice can be located within an ethical code, these standards are subject to individual interpretation by the practitioner and ethical guidelines cannot guarantee ethical practice (Gray 1995:69).

The above core values and ethical mandates reflect what can be regarded as the primary purpose of social work practice; that is, the empowerment of the client to achieve self-determination; for example, in the Probation context, to desist from offending. The concept of empowerment involves two core dimensions; first, the notion of client self-determination that concerns the client's development of self-awareness and the acquisition of behavioural skills to effect change in their lives; second, a political dimension that encompasses concerns regarding the relative distribution of power and resources within society.

The development of client self-awareness is directly related to the ability to engage in positive, direct action (Gutierrez, DeLois, and GlenMaye 1995a:250). Client self-awareness involves the development of both a more positive and potent sense of self (including feelings of self-efficacy) and a critical awareness regarding factors that

contribute to oppression or lack of access to resources (Bricker-Jenkins and Hooyman 1991, cited in Gutierrez et al. 1995a:249; Henry 1995:155; Lee 1996:224). A further component of self-determination concerns clients' acquisition and development of skills for change that will enhance their ability to take direct action to achieve their goals. The capacity to act is essential if the clients are to gain greater control over their lives and be able to improve their situation (Breton 1994:24; Lee 1996:224; Rees 1991:66).

The argument that social work should be liberatory and concerned with social equality, social justice and reform underlies the political dimension of empowerment (Jones and Novak 1993:211; Lee 1996:221). The empowerment tradition encompasses concern with the consequence of inequalities in the distribution of power and resources. Empowerment practice is concerned with assisting clients who experience discrimination and oppression and with promoting non-exploitative social relationships (Henry 1995:155; Rees 1991:66; Robbins et al. 1999:381). The social worker's role is to assist the client in developing consciousness regarding power discourse. This involves gaining both the knowledge and the capacity to adopt a more critical perspective surrounding social and political realities (Lee 1996:224; Rees 1991:23). Breton (1994:26) suggests that this process will often involve politicisation that is facilitated through participation in group activity.

The nature of the relationship between the client and practitioner is the crucial foundation of effective practice. It is the establishment and maintenance of this relationship that is the main instrument of service with the client (Payne 1991:27; Egan 1986; Reid 1978). A concern with a more egalitarian client/practitioner relationship is characteristic of empowerment practice, with emphasis being placed upon mutuality, reciprocity and collaboration. The practitioner engages in dialogue with the client, seeking to understand and accept the client's definition of the problem, and should have a well developed self-awareness and be able to be explicit regarding their personal assumptions and values (Dean and Rhodes 1998:261; Henry 1995:155; Lee 1996:234). The collaborative nature of the client/practitioner relationship is evident through emphasis being placed on encouraging clients to make their own assessments of their experience. The practitioner seeks to avoid assuming the role of the 'expert' who independently assesses the client's 'problem'. While

the client is at the centre of decision-making, this does not preclude intervention by the practitioner (Breton 1994:30; Cohen 1998:434; Rees 1991:23).

Breton (1994) contends that empowerment practice must involve praxis (i.e. the process of action-reflection and return to action) as this process enables both client and practitioner to participate within and to own and control the interactive process (Breton 1994:24). The key practice methods and techniques that support praxis are educational (e.g. consciousness raising) and participatory (e.g. collaborative action achieved through dialogue with a problem solving focus). Adams (2003) draws attention to the relationship between the level of empowerment (ranging between self, interpersonal, group, organisation and community) and the extent to which practice is critically reflective (ranging between disempowering technical/rationality and empowering reflection-in-action). He uses the term "empowerment-in-practice" to "indicate the synergy between critically reflective practice and empowerment" (Adams 2003:40). A strengths perspective is consistent with the goals of empowerment. This approach focuses upon the client's strengths and rejects models which label and classify the client in relation to deficiencies and problems; the client is challenged to accept responsibility and to take action regarding areas of concern (Cohen 1998:433; Gutierrez et al. 1995a:538-540; Lee 1996:22). It should be noted that the achievement of individual and political dimensions of empowerment practice might be curtailed in agencies that are engaged in mandated intervention with clients where the client's capacity for self-determination can be limited.

The New Zealand Experience

While many of the core concerns of social work (as noted above) are evident in commentary regarding probation, the recent New Zealand experience reveals a lack of clarity regarding underlying probation values. In New Zealand the loss of a public service ethic has been noted as a consequence of broader public sector reform, and the probation experience should be considered within this context. Robertson (1991) cautioned that these changes in the public sector could result in the diminution of ideals previously held by public servants regarding public service and public interest. In particular, the emphasis

upon cost efficiency, contractual obligations and output assessment might result in decreased sensitivity to the public expectation of justice and fairness. Similarly, Pusey (1991) expressed concern regarding diminishment of the ethics and social insight that had been characteristic of public servants before the reforms (Pusey 1991, cited in Webster 1995:45). This theme is also engaged by Maharey (1999:19) who identified the need for state services to develop a cohesive culture that promotes the service role. Professionals in social service agencies characteristically subscribe to ethical codes that promote issues of equity and empowerment, and these have been diminished in favour of the management driven demand for results.

A notable feature of the New Zealand probation context is the absence of any clear articulation of probation values. Accordingly, it is necessary to develop an understanding of the values that inform the Probation Service via a review of: official statements of organisational values contained in strategic plans and annual reports; the Probation Service Client Charter; the Department of Corrections Code of Conduct; and the Code of Ethics of the New Zealand Association of Probation Officers. In 1997 the organisational values of the Probation Service were defined as (Community Corrections Service 1997:2):

- Honesty/Integrity - at all levels of the organisation at all times we tell the truth, we use resources for the purposes they were given and we are fully accountable for our actions
- Professionalism - we ensure that all activities meet or exceed the standards expected by clients, customers and stakeholders. We have an organisation that learns from success and mistakes through evaluation and review in order to continually improve our products and services
- Respect - in carrying out our work we use responses that protect the rights of individuals and enhance our ability to work with diverse cultural and ethnic groups

While in the Department of Corrections 2000 Forecast Report the following values were identified (Department of Corrections 2000a:90):

- Fairness – acting with impartiality and integrity at all times
- Innovation and business performance excellence

- Demonstrating an innovative and business-like approach
- Responsiveness – enabling and ensuring individuals take personal responsibility for their actions
- Safety and being humane – having safe and humane environments for clients and staff
- Teamwork – being responsive to others and enhancing relationships, both internally and externally, to maximise effectiveness in reducing re-offending

The above value statements display a strong organisational emphasis and there is little that distinguishes the Probation Service as a distinct field of professional practice. For example, the 1997 definition of professionalism reflects the influence of New Public Management and could equally apply to any business enterprise. Nevertheless, the following concerns that are evident are also consistent with the broad purpose and goals of probation: respect for individuals (including their culture); the emphasis upon reducing re-offending; and a recognition of the importance of the role of the broader community in achieving both restoration and reparation.

The Probation Service introduced a Client Charter in 1999 that defines the standard of service that a client can expect to receive. The Charter specifies that a client is entitled to (Community Probation Service 1999):

- respect and honesty
- be treated as an individual
- be treated in a culturally appropriate way
- fairness
- professional and competent attention
- a healthy and safe environment and service which recognizes the client has rights granted through law

There is also specific reference in the Charter to the client's right to privacy, disclosure, to be fully informed and to raise any concerns either directly with the Department of Corrections or through the Human Rights Commission, the Ombudsman or a Member of Parliament. Furthermore, the client is advised that Probation Service staff are required to work in accord with set guidelines and standards contained in the Department's manuals and Code of Conduct. Overall, the Client Charter reflects an underlying set of ethical standards that are congruent with those of social work; however, these standards are not

formally encoded to guide the practice of Probation Officers. The Probation Service does have an organisational Code of Conduct that touches on standards for staff contact with clients, but this is a code designed to enforce behavioural standards in relation to an employment contract. It is not a code of ethics and does not reflect the core concerns of the social work perspective.

A review of the Code of Ethics of the New Zealand Association of Probation Officers provides a sense of the ethical principles that might underscore professional practice. This document locates Probation Officers within the occupational class of social workers and indicates that members should subscribe to the values, skills and practices of social work. The Probation Officer should have a special concern for justice and should promote a just society and community responsibility for justice. The relief and prevention of hardship and suffering are goals that reflect a concern for human welfare and in particular for the needs of victims of crime. A final point to note is the Probation Officer's stated commitment to work with integrity and skill that involves examining his/her attitudes, and making a contribution to the total body of professional knowledge (New Zealand Association of Probation Officers 1994) 1.

The Challenge to Develop a Viable Set of Probation Values

While there is a consensus regarding the overall purpose of probation the relative emphasis that is placed on the goals of client rehabilitation and protection of the community can vary, as was observed in Chapters Two and Three. In New Zealand the foundation for probation values is characterised by a lack of coherence.

Debate in the United Kingdom surrounding the values that should both inform probation practice, and that are necessary to confer 'social legitimacy' upon the role of the Probation Service, has relevance to the New Zealand context. Spencer (1995) suggests that Probation Service 'values' can be defined as rehabilitation, reformation, hope for the individual, care for the person and an understanding that people have the capacity for change and growth (Spencer 1995:344-5). Nellis critically observes the emergence of a managerial culture in the Probation Service that is characterised by "business-like, centralised, bureaucratised and efficiency oriented policies in which financial and

quantitative considerations loom larger than the philosophy of resocialisation” (Nellis 1995a:23).

Similarly, James (1995) noted the influence of criminological theory and describes the emergence of a “new penology”. This is characterised by: first, the pursuit of systemic rationality and efficiency within the Criminal Justice system with associated mechanisms such as performance indicators and prediction tables; and second, by a concern with groupings of clients that are classified and managed in terms of their dangerousness, reflecting a shift in emphasis from rehabilitation to control (James 1995:336-7).

Chavaria (1994) and Larivee (1996), commenting on the United States experience, note like concerns. Chavaria argues that changes in public expectations (for example, a demand for greater protection from the actions of clients) have exerted pressure upon the existing value-system held by correctional organisations (Chavaria 1994:18). This point is also noted by Larivee (1996:9) who comments that in seeking to satisfy changing public interests, community corrections organisations risk losing a vital defining characteristic, their focus on rehabilitation and treatment.

New Public Management, with its essential emphasis on hierarchy and enforcing obedience to policy and procedure, is seen by Nellis (1995a) to be at heart, coercive. The managerial model creates a regulatory culture that “imprisons” practitioners and managers in a hierarchy of policies, guidelines and monitoring arrangements that rob lower level staff of the last remnants of discretion, turning them into “competent functionaries”. The implementation of technical-rational practice methods (which place less emphasis upon psycho-social casework, the strengths and empowerment models) and competence frameworks are examples of such measures. In deriding the qualities of practitioner autonomy, self-determination and discretion, New Public Management may be seen to be incompatible with the traditional approach to social work values with the liberal and humanitarian assumptions that underpinned it (Nellis 1995a:28).

Nellis (1995a) identifies a developing tension within probation between the promotion of the traditional welfare ethic and an emerging emphasis upon probation as punishment in the

community. He criticizes the failure of the 'social work school' to incorporate criminological theory in defining a value-base for probation practice that would be regarded as legitimate within changing criminal justice policy. The traditional concern with the client and rehabilitation has been refocused in probation practice (notably Integrated Offender Management) to emphasise the notion of individual responsibility; the client should be held accountable for his/her behaviour (consistent with the goals of social work). This increased emphasis on individual responsibility has been at the expense of alternative explanations of offending and reflects the influence of the libertarian view that identifies the importance of the choices that clients make and therefore of free-will in offending behaviour. From this perspective, when individuals choose to offend they are breaking the social contract and consequently must relinquish some or all of their rights as citizens. It is, however, also contingent upon society to provide those who offend with the opportunity to regain their citizenship (Harding 2000:134; James 1995:329).

In order for probation to regain its diminished credibility, a set of values is required that can provide direction to ongoing practice development. Nellis (1995a:26) argues persuasively that:

Rehabilitation alone is insufficient as a value base for probation, not only because the service undertakes a range of worthwhile activities which are not essentially or primarily rehabilitative but also because the placing of client's needs above, as opposed to alongside, the rights of victims and the requirements of public safety lacks moral justification and, in the 1990s, political credibility

James contends that New Public Management has been able to occupy a vacuum left by the rejection of social work values (with a focus upon empowerment of the client) that had become a liability because of their inability to respond to a changing conceptualisation of the criminal justice system and the associated policy agenda (James 1995:326).

Nellis proposes three bases upon which probation values can be developed. The first, anti-custodialism, rests upon the arguments that: only those clients who present a significant risk to public safety or who have committed serious offences should be imprisoned; and that imprisonment lacks efficacy as a sanction that can reduce the rate of imprisonment. Nellis

notes that anti-custodialism has not been incorporated into statements of social work values and identifies anti-custodialism as potentially a unique probation value (Nellis 1995a:31).

Second, Nellis suggests that there is potential for probation to promote restorative justice, particularly in terms of victim/client mediation. It is considered to be important that the rights of victims be respected and their needs met before pursuing a socially reintegrative approach with those who have offended (Nellis 1995a:32). Spencer (1995) concurs in suggesting that an increased awareness of and concern for victims has been an important recent development in criminal justice; however, he questions the appropriateness of Probation Service involvement in this arena. The critical issue is whether the Probation Service, which has experience and expertise in working with clients, would be able to successfully balance a concern with victim issues and restoration with a proper concern for the person who has offended. The final base for the development of probation values involves the Probation Service being promoted as a community justice agency that demonstrates commitment to community safety. For Nellis this offers a greater prospect for enhancing the credibility of the Probation Service; failure on the part of the Probation Service to project this focus is likely to render other Service ideals, such as anti-custodialism, more difficult to sustain (Nellis 1995b:351).

Summary

The New Zealand Probation Service lacks an integrated statement regarding the definition of unique values that engage probation as a distinct area of professional practice. This failure may have implications for the sense of professional identity that exists among front-line practitioners and how they act upon their self-perception. This issue is engaged in this thesis – what values are held by Probation Officers and how do these values influence practice?

The tendency to fall back upon social work may be reasonable as a foundation for the development of probation values but if probation is to develop as a distinct field of practice then a unique conceptualisation and articulation of values is required. However, any such development of values must be viable and take into account the politicised nature of the

practice environment. The influence of both New Public Management and the 'new penology' have been identified and a pejorative tenor is evident in much of the commentary. However, it is important to note that this perspective is not inherently or philosophically antithetic to either rehabilitation or reintegration (James 1995:336-7). The managerial direction can be viewed as an alternative approach that reflects the present political reality of the criminal justice environment.

It is against the backdrop of ambiguity regarding what constitutes an appropriate values base for probation that this discussion now moves to the second element in the framework for the construction of practice – the knowledge and skills base upon which probation can be based.

Concept of Best Practice

The concept of best practice, which offers the prospect of providing clear direction regarding service delivery, rests on the belief that practice should be: based upon relevant, validated knowledge; incorporate reflexivity; and be effective and accountable. Practitioners should be able to articulate the knowledge that informs and underlies their practice. While this view of best practice is consistent with the perspectives articulated by social work educators, in reality the construction of practice is a complex process that is mediated by epistemological and contextual influences.

A useful distinction can be drawn between two levels of discourse, the scientific and the practical. The theorist/academic is primarily engaged in scientific discourse that is characterised as "talking about" practice, and which contributes to a "community of discourse" (Fox 1997:32; Walter-Busch 1995:152). This scientific discourse is located in academic literature and is part of the social work knowledge base that informs the development of practice. The practical level of discourse, on the other hand, is engaged by practitioners and is more concerned with the application of methods and skills in direct practice. Obviously the relationship between the two levels is vital for the development of

practice. Fox (1997:21), for example, suggests that it is through the processes of education (that tends to emphasise a body of knowledge) and training and development (that tends to be more practical with an emphasis on skill acquisition) that a connection is made between the scientific and the practical. This position rests, of course, upon the assumption that the social work practitioner will be engaged in both educational and training/developmental activities.

The influence of the social service agency in determining the definition and nature of best practice represents a significant contextual factor. In particular, a concern with accountability and control reflects the influence of New Public Management, the goal of which is to manage and monitor social service practice in keeping with the directives of social policy and budgetary constraints (Elliot 1995:19). Stakeholders want to know why intervention decisions are made and practitioners are justifiably required to articulate their professional rationale for any recommended intervention. The technical-rational approach is currently favoured in statutory agencies where practice models such as task-centred casework meet bureaucratic requirements for transparent, measurable processes. The growing demand for greater accountability and scientific validity in social service practice has shifted the emphasis from process and relationships (that involve practitioners and clients) to outcomes and technologies (Klein and Cnaan 1995:203). There is also a tendency for best practice to be codified in procedural manuals that require the practitioner to follow prescriptive processes without articulating the knowledge base that underpins the practice. Cohen (1998:441) comments that agencies are now able to dictate the rules by which practitioners can select and implement models of practice. However, Turner (1996:13) cautions that when practice theory becomes mechanistic, placing emphasis upon classification and organisation rather than gaining an understanding of the unique client situation, it risks becoming an end in itself. As such the goals of management can become corrosive with an emphasis upon legal and procedural correctness, and Rosen (1994:572) argues that agencies that do not have well developed professional practice protocols are likely to be characterised by normative, highly programmed activities that take precedence over unprogrammed tasks (those more likely to be guided by professional considerations). The point at issue here is that in the Probation Service context, the influence of New Public

Management and reliance upon bureaucratic rules has created tension for practitioners between: (a) the exercise of professional autonomy and practice discretion; and (b) the requirements of administration and management. In the absence of clearly articulated professional knowledge to guide intervention, it is likely that agency rules and procedures will be dominant and used to legitimise decisions.

The interpretivist/constructivist paradigm informs a type of knowledge that is often labelled as 'practice wisdom' and this provides the basis for an alternative conception of best practice. Schon (1995:48-49) argues the case for the development of an epistemology of practice that can account for the intuitive processes that practitioners may bring to a practice context often characterised by "...complexity, instability, uniqueness and value conflict". This view is supported by Goldstein (1998:242) who suggests that, while theoretical and practical skills are useful, at critical decision points the practitioner will draw upon the experience-based reflective wisdom. The focal point of this type of practice is the nature of the relationship between practitioner and client, a relationship that Schon (1995:295) characterises as a "reflective conversation". The reflective practitioner seeks to develop insight and understanding of a particular client situation through a reflexive process in which both participants have the capacity to know, understand and construct meaning (Schon 1995:295). While the reflective practitioner should be professionally qualified and technically competent, it is the ability to develop a practice approach that is a synthesis of empirical theory, client knowledge and inductive reasoning that distinguishes the reflective approach (Klein and Bloom 1995:801-809; Pray 1991:82-84; Schon 1995:296; Scott 1990:565; Souflee 1993:320).

The concept of informed eclecticism (wherein the practitioner combines different theories and practices and knowing what he/she is choosing between and why) provides the framework for an individual practice perspective. Payne (1991:52), commenting on social work practice theory, argues that the exercise of the eclectic option must rest on a clear knowledge base regarding explanatory theory (an amalgam of theories which describe the role of social work, the activities and aims of social work and which explain or describe personal and social behaviour) and practice theory (which prescribes how social work

theory can be applied by social workers in their interactions with clients). The importance of an informed eclecticism is also recognised by Carew (1979:354) who contends that “eclecticism requires the critical consideration and understanding of the available theories before a decision is made about what should be used”. Similarly, Robbins et al. (1999:375) caution that any choices should be made with:

a full appreciation of the philosophical and ideological differences that underlie disparate positions about the nature of knowledge and the essential knowledge for practice.

The range of available theories, models and techniques therefore represent a resource from which the practitioner can make a considered selection in order to meet the unique features of the particular practice situation.

Fook, Ryan and Hawkins (1997) sound a warning note regarding the expectation that a competent practitioner should be able to articulate theory in practical use. They suggest that expert practice is a distinct skill, separate from the ability to explain a theoretical perspective, and point to the seemingly intuitive development of practice wisdom that represents an alternative way of using social work knowledge (Fook et al. 1997:407-409). However, while this reflective process (involving a synthesis of knowledge and experience) may result in ‘effective’ practice, the practitioner may not necessarily be able to clearly articulate the process.

A final point to note regarding the development of best practice is the question of validity. Sheppard (1998) argues that while social work knowledge may be considered valid if it meets epistemological and methodological criteria (theoretical validity), this knowledge will achieve practice validity only to the extent that it is consistent with the nature and purpose of social work. He asserts that if academic discourse fails to take into account the construction of practice, then such discourse is unlikely to have any significant impact upon the conduct of practice. In short, practitioners in the field will not recognise the utility of such theory as a guide to their practice (Sheppard 1998:772-773). This argument is equally relevant when considering probation practice.

In summary, a professional construction of best practice should be made based on valid and relevant knowledge and the utility of any knowledge and practice theory will be dependent upon it being congruent with the purpose of probation. The challenge to develop scientifically validated practice knowledge is important in the Probation Service context where social work and psychology can be seen to be competing for ascendancy in their capacity to inform both policy and practice. In the following sections, attention moves to the contributions of social work and psychology.

Contribution of Social Work

Social work has, arguably, provided the most significant and influential body of practice theory that has informed probation practice over the past thirty years – a feature already signalled earlier in this chapter. Substantive issues regarding the definition and understanding of the discipline of social work are also relevant to probation practice. Social work knowledge provides an understanding of human behaviour that can be used to inform practice, and social work theories provide a frame of reference upon which to base effective, accountable practice that will decrease the uncertainty of a practitioner's work with clients (Bong Ho Mok 1993:334; Goldstein 1986:352; Pray 1991:81; Robbins et al. 1999:378; Nai 1998:173; Turner 1996:10).

A distinction was drawn above between technical-rational models and practice wisdom, approaches reflective of positivist and interpretivist/constructivist epistemological orientations respectively, which warrant further comment. In social work the influence of positivism is evident in the empirical practice movement that emerged during the 1970s as an attempt to build a scientific, credible, and politically acceptable knowledge base for the profession (Epstein 1995:153). In this tradition the primary purpose of social work knowledge is to provide guidance for accurate assessment, diagnosis and problem-solving activity (Pray 1991:81; Scott 1990:565; Trotter 1999:8). Schon (1995) identifies “technical-rationality” as a dominant epistemology for professional practice that is reliant on the scientific paradigm. In the model, the professional practitioner should first acquire practice knowledge that is scientifically derived before developing skills of knowledge application. The application of practice skills involves instrumental problem-solving techniques that

have been validated through scientific theory and research (Schon 1995:21-27; Nai 1998:170).

Positivism retains a strong influence within social work with its promise of scientifically-based knowledge upon which causal relationships can be identified and effective interventions developed. The technical-rational model enjoys currency with the interests of government where emphasis is placed upon identifiable, measurable and cost-effective 'technologies' in areas of social work practice (Peile and McCouat 1997:348; Souflee 1993:320). However, there are three substantive criticisms of the technical-rational model. The first concerns the accurate prediction of individual behaviour. Many theories and models have been developed based on aggregated data. They provide practitioners with both assumptions and interventions and many of the models claim predictive validity (based on actuarial probabilities). However, all such measures will have an error rate and there are inherent dangers in placing reliance on predictive instruments when making decisions regarding an individual (Creamer and Williams 1996:99-100). A second critique identifies negative consequences stemming from the adoption of an individual problem focus. In placing emphasis on the resolution of client problems or 'deficits', the practitioner develops and maintains a negative frame of reference. A consequence of problem-oriented practice is a propensity to group clients in terms of their 'problem', which can inhibit the practitioner from attending to the client's individual uniqueness (Pray 1991:81-82). Pardeck, Murphy and Jung (1994) argue that intervention that focuses upon pathological individuals is reductionist because broader political, economic and environmental factors that might contribute to a problem receive less attention from the practitioner (Pardeck et al. 1994:1345). Finally, it can be argued that technical-rational models pay insufficient attention to the ethical, moral and humanistic dimensions of social work practice. For example, Goldstein (1998:244) suggests that in an effort to reduce the complexity of "the opaque and multiplex nature of the human state" social work theories based on the scientific method result in mechanistic approaches characterised by a concern with effectiveness.

These critiques of the technical-rational perspective support an alternative epistemology for

the development of social work theory, one that places greater emphasis on the need to understand the subjective experience of clients considered within the context of broader social, economic and political influences. Social work theories that derive from an interpretivist/constructivist epistemology exhibit concern with the client's frame of reference and with the nature of the relationship between practitioner and client. The centrality of the client's perspective is evident in the assessment principle of attending to issues identified by the client; it is the client who determines the context within which the nature of the issues requiring resolution is determined (Carpenter 1996:156; Pardeck et al. 1994:345). An essential characteristic of the practitioner/client relationship is one of collaboration and mutuality (Carpenter 1996:156-157). It may also be noted that the narrative approach to social work practice (in which meaning is developed through a dialectic process of questioning, revision and expansion) is consistent with an interpretivist/constructivist orientation, as the practitioner seeks to avoid translating the client's narrative into preconceived explanatory models (Dean and Rhodes 1998:256-257; Greene, Jensen and Jones 1996:173).

Robbins et al. (1999:374-375) point to the primacy of scientific and empirically-based knowledge in comparison with knowledge derived from an interpretivist/constructivist position and suggest that a "polemic schism" exists between the two that may be counter-productive to the ongoing development of social work knowledge (Klein and Bloom 1995:803). A trend towards acceptance of a wider variety of paradigms can be identified with a more moderate position that accepts and advocates a combination of the two approaches (Peile and McCouat 1997:347). Values and ideological positions are inherent in all knowledge and the perceived relevance or utility of any theory will be influenced by the purpose for which the theory is to be used, the context within which the theory is to be applied, and the value perspective of the user (Robbins et al. 1999:375).

Contribution of Psychology

In this section, discussion centres upon the psychological framework underpinning the

Department of Corrections' model of Integrated Offender Management (IOM). It was noted in Chapter Two that the IOM model prescribes probation policy for assessment and case management.

The term Psychology of Criminal Conduct was first advanced in 1994 by Andrews and Bonta (1998) and now refers to the professional psychological literature regarding criminal offending (Brown 1998:1; Department of Corrections 1998a: 6-7). This literature integrates psychological opinion about the characteristics of clients, and the role of these characteristics in relation to crime (Department of Corrections 1998b: 16), a perspective that has been of considerable utility in providing direction for policy development surrounding the assessment and management of clients. In particular, influence has derived from the practicality of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct in addressing substantive questions regarding who should receive rehabilitative services, what issues should be engaged and how interventions should be provided (Department of Corrections 1998a: 6-7).

The distinctive characteristic of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct is a focus on individual pathology, based on the foundation assumption that it is the individual who offends. The individual's temperament, attitudes and situational factors are held to be the primary factors associated with offending behaviour, but this emphasis does not preclude interventions that might involve others (e.g. family members) who are significant to that individual. In addition, other factors, such as an individual's choice of associates, are accepted as playing a part in how a client acquires deviant attitudes and beliefs (Department of Corrections 1998a: 50-52).

This discussion is presented in four sections: first, the foundation concepts of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct theoretical framework are outlined; second, the development and application of methods to assess criminal clients' risk of re-offending are reviewed; third, the challenge to make the Psychology of Criminal Conduct relevant to cultural difference is considered; and finally, issues surrounding actuarial assessment and professional discretion are noted.

The Assessment of Risk, Need and Responsivity

The capacity to accurately predict an individual's risk of committing future offences is one of the foundations of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct framework. Risk prediction involves both the identification of factors associated with the probability of re-offending and the differentiation between individuals who present either a higher or a lower risk of re-offending (Bonta 1997; Department of Corrections 1998a). The risk prediction methodology is based upon an actuarial approach in which data are collated from large samples of clients. Specific features associated with recidivism are identified and those most highly correlated are assigned weightings, and the differential weightings allow a probabilistic indication of risk to be determined. Actuarial scales draw upon characteristics from the individual's offending history to complete re-offence calculations. These characteristics, associated with risk, are typically static and include: age at first conviction (younger age, higher risk); age at first sentence of imprisonment (younger age, higher risk); number of previous convictions (higher number, higher risk); number of previous prison sentences (higher number, higher risk); level of seriousness calculated in part from sentence length (more serious sentences, higher risk); and present age (younger age, higher risk) (Department of Corrections 1998a; Bonta 1996).

The utility of being able to identify levels of client risk has been enhanced through the development and application of the risk principle which maintains that the level of intervention or treatment that a client receives should match their level of risk. This has significant implications for correctional services in determining the allocation of resources and in the development of case classification systems. In accord with the risk principle, higher risk cases require (and are more likely to benefit from) intensive levels of control and treatment. It is therefore considered to be more cost-effective to provide programmes to higher risk clients in comparison with lower risk cases (Andrews and Friesen 1987; Bonta 1996; Department of Corrections 1998b:17). The development and use of objective, empirically-based systems of assessment of client risk are discussed below.

The differentiation between general need and criminogenic need is identified as a second conceptual foundation of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct approach to the assessment of clients. A criminogenic need is a feature of a client's personality, lifestyle or social circumstances associated with a risk of re-offending. The major criminogenic needs identified are: antisocial attitudes and beliefs; criminal associates/companions; alcohol and drug abuse/dependence; low self-control and impulsivity; propensity for anger, aggression or violence; sexual interest in children/sexual violence; low educational achievement; and poor financial management (Bonta 1996; Department of Corrections 1998a). These needs may change over time (unlike static risk factors) and are potentially changeable through interventions. When criminogenic needs are reduced there is a corresponding reduction in recidivism, and criminogenic needs may therefore be regarded as dynamic risk factors (Bonta 1996:23-24; Department of Corrections 1998a; Department of Corrections 1998b).

A major principle underpinning this second conceptual foundation is the needs principle, which suggests that only some potential treatment targets are relevant to the future probability of reconviction (Bonta 1996; Bonta 1997). The identification of criminogenic needs allows appropriate targeting of interventions. It is the use of risk and need assessment in combination that enhances the efficacy of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct as a framework for guiding practice with clients. Risk assessment indicates who most needs to change, while needs assessment indicates what should be changed! (Department of Corrections 1998a:54-56).

The accurate assessment of the client's likely responsiveness to interventions (the responsivity principle) is a third defining characteristic of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct. The term responsivity refers to the client's general amenability to rehabilitative programmes and change. Criminogenic needs are potentially changeable, however many clients will not make the necessary changes to reduce their risk of re-offending due to the influence of individual personality and cognitive-behavioural characteristics that have been labelled as responsivity issues. These characteristics are poor social skills and/or problem-solving abilities; low intelligence; poor verbal ability; illiteracy; antisocial personality; and a low level of motivation to change (Bonta 1996; Department of Corrections 1998a).

Responsivity issues can interfere with the effectiveness of interventions matched with the characteristics of a client and designed to reduce the severity of an identified criminogenic need (Department of Corrections 1999; Serin and Kennedy 1998).

In summary, the Psychology of Criminal Conduct approach to risk assessment involves using objective, empirically-based actuarial methods that produce probabilistic calculations of the likelihood that an individual will re-offend. The risk calculations also enable differentiation between higher and lower risk cases. On the basis of research evidence using actuarial risk assessments the risk principle has been identified. This has practical applications in guiding resource allocation through targeting controls and interventions in relation to identified levels of risk and the likelihood that the client will benefit from such actions. The Psychology of Criminal Conduct framework is built upon the interrelated concepts of risk of re-offending, criminogenic needs and responsivity. This framework provides not only a theoretical explanation of criminal behaviour but also direction for both criminal justice policy makers and practitioners who work directly with clients. The targeting of clients for intervention on the basis of risk/needs assessments is a central feature of sentence management systems that draw upon the Psychology of Criminal Conduct. In particular, client responsivity is significant when considering programme delivery issues. The identification of the highest risk clients (who are most likely to benefit from intervention) is consistent with the prevalent management concern to utilise limited funding in the most cost-effective manner (Department of Corrections 1998b:7-14).

The Development and Application of Risk Assessment

The primary contribution of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct to correctional practice has been the development of methods for assessing client risk and needs that provide direction regarding appropriate interventions and controls. In 1999 the Department of Corrections established a multi-disciplinary project team to evaluate current offender assessment systems and to design a system that would become the foundation of the Integrated Offender Management System ². The project team concluded that the most influential assessment instrument was the Level of Supervision Inventory (LSI) that was

developed for use in Canada in the early 1980s and that has undergone several revisions. The revised LSI (LSI-R) has been considered to be the most useful actuarial measure of recidivism (Gendreau, Little and Goggin 1996, cited in Department of Corrections 1998a).

The Department of Corrections decided to develop a New Zealand normed assessment instrument. This work was undertaken by the Department of Corrections Psychological Service and the instrument developed was the Criminogenic Needs Inventory (CNI). The CNI was designed to be incorporated within the standard pre-sentencing reporting process and combines the identification of criminogenic needs with an assessment of the severity of those needs (using a methodology which draws upon responsivity and relapse prevention frameworks). The CNI investigates the offending behaviour in order to determine whether or not a functional relationship exists between an area of need and risk of re-offending (Department of Corrections 1999). The new 'Level Two' assessments (incorporating the CNI) provide sentencers with a risk of re-conviction assessment, clearly identified criminogenic needs that have been rated according to severity, and advice regarding the likely response of the client to sanctions involving intervention designed to address those needs and thus reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

Cultural Issues

The integration of assessment and intervention strategies based on the Psychology of Criminal Conduct presents a significant challenge in the New Zealand cultural context. In particular, attention has focused upon the question of the criminogenic needs of Maori clients. Risk/needs instruments such as the LSI-R did not include assessment of the potential role of culturally-bound needs. The Department of Corrections CNI project developed the construct of Maori cultural need that was thought to offer the potential to provide an explanation of the risk of re-offending for Maori clients. Negative effects of the process of colonisation (evidenced in bi-cultural tension) and the erosion of traditional cultural values were identified as contextual factors that provide a theoretical framework within which the over-representation of Maori in client statistics can be examined. The foundation proposition advanced was that cultural deficits may represent areas of need that,

if not met, could predispose Maori clients to cognitions and behaviours that are supportive of offending.

Three key Maori culture-related needs have been identified and an inventory developed that has been validated in the field. First, the lack of a positive cultural identity can lead to Maori clients seeking to meet this need in anti-social and pro-criminal ways. It is suggested that the development of positive pro-social cultural identity is important. This can be facilitated through access to Maori institutions and knowledge. A second need surrounds the acquisition of skills to cope with bi-cultural tension. It is argued that the dominance of Western values, beliefs and norms in contemporary New Zealand society may generate maladaptive responses in Maori clients that can increase the risk of re-offending. The final potential Maori culture-related need is identified as arising from a lack of collective reciprocal commitment. A tendency for Maori clients to join gangs is seen to be indicative of the need for membership of a large group. Maori collective social structures (whanau, ³ hapu, ⁴ iwi ⁵ and marae ⁶) offer clients pro-social values and provide the individual with a sense of identity, belonging and collective responsibility (Department of Corrections 1999; Maynard 1999).

While considerable effort has been expended upon issues relating to Maori, scant attention has been paid by the Department of Corrections to cultural issues that might be specific to other cultural groups, in particular Pacific Peoples. This represents an area for future research and the development of assessment and intervention strategies.

Practice Development

The influence of policy, organisational and legislative change has provided a significant challenge to the construction and implementation of probation practice over the past decade. In keeping with the dominant themes of cost-efficiency, accountability and the increasing politicisation of the criminal justice sector a higher level of prescription has marked the development of practice. This stands in contrast with the more eclectic

approach that had characterised previous advances in practice. The following discussion addresses three areas where there has been significant change: required qualifications; practice models; intervention programmes and strategies targeted at Maori offenders.

Staff Qualifications

In 1993, the Probation Service introduced a qualifications policy intended to increase the professionalism of Probation Officers. There had previously been no requirement for them to hold a specific professional qualification and recruitment had been conducted largely on an ad hoc basis. In the 1970s there had been a preference to recruit staff with a tertiary qualification (predominantly from the social sciences), however during the 1980s the emphasis shifted towards the recruitment of staff possessing skills to work with Maori and community groups who could act as sponsors to offenders. By the early 1990s the influence of the empirical practice movement was evident and it was considered important to establish a sound professional foundation for probation practice.


In keeping with developments within the broader social service sector the Probation Service introduced an entry requirement of a 'Level B' social work qualification⁷. A policy was also introduced requiring staff without a relevant tertiary qualification to enrol in an approved social work education programme (a fixed number of staff were sponsored on either full- or part-time study programmes). This policy was controversial on a number of grounds. First, the introduction of an educational entry pre-requisite effectively excluded many applicants who would previously have been considered. In particular, there was significant opposition from iwi who perceived the policy to be discriminatory because of Maori under-representation in terms of formal academic achievement. Second, some staff resisted the compulsory requirement that they complete a study programme (many had been recruited on the basis of other competencies and lacked any formal academic qualifications). Third, the policy was not considered viable for existing staff because there was insufficient funding available to achieve full implementation within a realistic timeframe. Finally, there was ongoing debate regarding the choice of the 'Level B' social work qualification (an alternative 'Level A' certificate programme could have been

implemented more easily). In 1995, following the appointment of a new General Manager, the 'Level B' policy was summarily abandoned and later replaced by an internal competency framework.

Practice Models

Another area of change involved the development and implementation of practice models drawn upon approaches that had proven to be successful in work with offenders. Successful implementation, however, depends upon two interrelated factors; the level of organisational commitment and the degree of support from practitioners. Key indicators of the level of organisational commitment include: (a) having the models set within a clearly articulated client access policy which reflects the underlying values that inform the practice of the Department of Corrections, & (b) the practice models should be incorporated in national performance standards that are monitored and enforced (Bonta 1997; Cavadino 1997); and (c) the provision of adequate resources to ensure that the planned levels of service delivery can be achieved, as a failure to do so is likely to result in uneven implementation and the subversion of the intended practice models. Practitioner support would be enhanced and/or the level of any potential resistance minimised if appropriate training and professional supervision is provided. For example, practitioner resistance to the use of actuarial risk assessment may be based on a lack of understanding of how the risk scores are calculated. Any new model should also be promoted as a way of enhancing current practice and points of congruence with the existing body of practice knowledge and practice experience should be emphasised (Barter 1997; Brown 1998; Wilmot 1995).

Five practice approaches relevant to the New Zealand Probation Service are briefly discussed: the Integrated Model of Supervision; CRIMPS an internal staff training programme; Integrated Offender Management; criminogenic intervention programmes; and strategies targeting Maori.

 The Integrated Model of Supervision (IMS) was introduced in 1996 and represented an attempt to manage offender risk through use of a standardised practice model. Developed

in Victoria (Australia) by Trotter (1999), IMS is based upon a combination of four approaches: targeting high risk offenders; the use of structured problem solving processes; the use of pro-social modelling and rewarding offenders' pro-social expressions and actions; and the use of empathy and reflective listening by the Probation Officer (McLaren 1996:18-23; Raynor 1996:184; Trotter 1999:29).

CRIMPS is a training programme for Probation Officers, developed by McMaster (1998), that identifies interventions which are effective in reducing re-offending. The programme draws together from an interdisciplinary knowledge-base; cognitive skills, relapse prevention and motivational interviewing, "three distinct but inter-related clusters of skills that have a logical and complementary relationship with each other" (McMaster 1998:10). Standardised training and the expectation that they would be integrated into the Probation Officer's everyday practice and be reinforced through the mechanism of professional supervision, supported the implementation of both IMS and CRIMPS.

By far the most significant practice development has been the introduction of Integrated Offender Management (IOM), a practice framework designed to co-ordinate the work of the three operational divisions of the Department of Corrections (Probation Service, Public Prisons Service and Psychological Service) in order to have a systematic and consistent approach to the management of offenders throughout the criminal justice system. Initial development commenced in 1998 with staged implementation following from 1999 to 2002. The IOM framework is an approach to practice that is considered both theoretically and empirically valid, and that provides a clear rationale for decisions to be made regarding the most effective use of scarce resources (Department of Corrections 2001).

Proponents of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct argue that IOM offers a complementary perspective to the sociological/criminological paradigm that has been dominant in providing explanations of criminal behaviour (Department of Corrections 1998a). However, this view is not shared by Brown (1998) who argues strongly that the sociological perspective (that clients are part of their wider social structures and that offending behaviour must be addressed within the frameworks of social structure and

culture) stands in direct contradiction to the Psychology of Criminal Conduct theoretical model. Brown (1998:11-12) labels the latter framework as “reductionist”, identifying the rejection of social, structural and cultural explanations as a feature that generates both theoretical and practice tension within the New Zealand correctional context, particularly given Maori over-representation in crime statistics. For example, the highly individualised focus of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct may not fit well with efforts to establish cross-cultural therapeutic programmes. The emphasis placed on the individual client differs also from the broader, more inclusive perspective of restorative justice. There is growing interest in restorative justice that involves the client(s), victim(s) and the wider community in mediation processes that are held to be primarily healing and reintegrative (Consedine 1999; Masters 1997) and which are more sympathetic to cultural processes of atonement (e.g. Maori muru ⁹ and Samoan ifonga ¹⁰). Brown’s concerns are shared by Gibbs (2000:29) who comments that the approach promoted by the Psychological Service “excludes the many alternative theories or intervention options, including indigenous, community and networking approaches”.

The third significant practice development has been the implementation of intervention programmes to assist offenders to break their pattern of offending. ‘Straight Thinking’ (an intensive cognitive skills approach), introduced in 1998, is designed to help offenders recognise the consequences of their actions and make changes to their beliefs, attitudes and behaviour in order to reduce their likelihood of re-offending. The programme has its origins in a cognitive skills programme implemented in prisons and by the Probation Service on a pilot basis in 1994. Based on the work of Ross and Fabiano (1985) in Canada, the pilot was further developed to be responsive to the diverse cultural needs of New Zealand offenders. Further, a core suite of criminogenic programmes has also been implemented as part of the IOM framework and includes programmes in sex-offender treatment, violence prevention and driving offender treatment ¹¹.

Finally, three strategies have been introduced to address the specific needs of Maori offenders, a distinguishing feature of which is an attempt to integrate Maori and Western epistemologies. First, the Psychological Service developed a Framework to Reduce Maori

Offending (FReMO) that provides an analytical tool designed to guide the development of policy, interventions and research (Department of Corrections 2000b). Second, the Probation Service introduced tikanga Maori ¹² programmes that aim to increase Maori clients' levels of motivation and readiness to change in order to enhance their response to other interventions and programmes that target specific criminogenic needs. Behind this approach is the belief that increasing knowledge of Maori tikanga (identity, history and beliefs) can assist Maori clients to make positive changes to their attitudes and behaviours (Potiki 2001:7). Finally, the IOM offender assessment process includes the identification of Maori culture-related needs (MaCRNs). Developed by Maori correctional staff in consultation with Maori mental health experts, MaCRNs are not considered to be criminogenic needs but are defined as cultural dimensions of more general needs that may contribute to an understanding of Maori offending (Department of Corrections 2001). The core assumption is that MaCRNs increase the predisposition to offending for some Maori ¹³.

Processes That Support Probation Practice

Two core integrative processes that are essential to the development and maintenance of practice comprise the third element in the framework for the construction of probation practice. Discussion regarding these processes - professional supervision and performance management - is directed towards the New Zealand probation experience. Key components of the Probation Service professional supervision and performance management systems are identified and issues with implications for this thesis are noted.

Professional Supervision

The academic/professional literature on professional supervision in social work practice reveals a high degree of consensus regarding its purpose and scope. Professional supervision emerges as a process that should facilitate the practitioner's acquisition, consolidation and continuing development of knowledge and skills required to provide effective service to the client. There is a concern with: administrative requirements that

focus on management and agency accountability; the professional development of the practitioner; and the provision of personal support (Clare 2001, O'Donoghue 1999).

Reviewing the development of professional supervision within the New Zealand Probation Service, O'Donoghue, Baskerville and Trlin (1998) noted the influence of the organisational environment. They observed that the impact of New Public Management has been reflected in a greater concern with managerial accountability (emphasised by output measures and performance targets) in comparison with process accountability (O'Donoghue et al. 1998:2), also highlighted a shift in emphasis from the professional dimensions of supervision to the administrative aspects (O'Donoghue 1999:24-25). The establishment of the role of specialist professional supervisor within the Probation Officer occupational group offered the prospect of an increased focus upon professional supervision (O'Donoghue et al. 1998:5). However, the level of organisational commitment to the implementation of this policy was not high, and the requirement that operational costs be internally funded in a cost neutral manner resulted in insufficient numbers of supervisors being recruited and trained.

In 2003, the Probation Service completed a second review of the professional supervision policy that essentially endorsed the earlier model. This review contained the following definition (Community Probation Service 2003a:4):

Professional Supervision: Formal process to support an individual in their knowledge development and personal and professional growth, to assist them to work effectively and in a manner promoting safe and ethical practice.

The preferred delivery mode for professional supervision is through internal supervisors because they have a working knowledge of the clients, models of practice, operational systems and the Probation Officer role (Community Probation Service 2003a:16). Nevertheless, in practice there is often a mix of internally and externally provided professional supervision, a mix that may be the optimal delivery system. The revised policy also reaffirmed commitment to the provision of cultural supervision for Probation Officers in order to assist them to enhance: their knowledge of tikanga Maori and

culturally appropriate behaviour; their competence in understanding Maori attitudes, behaviours and responses to crime; and their ability to link cultural knowledge to practice (Community Probation Service 2003b:6).

Regrettably, not all aspects have been as positive or as welcome as those noted above. A less favourable characteristic of the development of professional supervision in the Probation Service between 2000 and 2005 has been the centralisation of decision-making and the exercise of increasing levels of control of the implementation of practice. This has eroded the capacity of local management and practitioners to be innovative and responsive to the practice context.

Performance Management

The New Zealand Probation Service has a performance management system based upon individual performance plans for Probation Officers. Each plan identifies a set of agreed and measurable objectives that establish clear performance expectations for the employee. Performance assessment mechanisms are also specified, and the employee receives regular feedback both orally and in a written performance appraisal (Department of Corrections 2003c: 2-3). Responsibility for this management system rests with Service Managers who provide regular management supervision to Probation Officers. The key components of this supervision are: performance planning and appraisal; assessment of competence and coaching skill development; time and workload management; monitoring and quality assurance. The Service Manager also ensures that the professional behaviour of the Probation Officer and the work produced meets departmental standards with regard to quality and timeliness (Community Probation Service 2003b:5)

Competence assessment is a pivotal component of performance management. First, because 'competence' is the indicator that a Probation Officer has the knowledge and skills required to provide services in accord with best practice and the ability to apply these on a daily basis. Second, because salary advancement is indexed to the achievement of competencies. The competency system is built around core elements of the Probation

Officer role, namely: the provision of information, sentence management, programme facilitation, professional supervision, relationship with Maori and the delivery of training (Community Probation Service 2003b). A Probation Officer's Service Manager assesses the demonstration of competence through the review of written work and direct observation of practice.

Performance management is also intended to address the training and development needs of staff. The goal of the Probation Service's training and development policy is to ensure that staff are able to meet the competence requirements of their position (Department of Corrections 2003c). The ongoing enhancement of Probation Officer competence is considered a shared responsibility between Service Manager and Probation Officer. In addition to in-house training and development provision (e.g. training courses, workshops and seminars, individual coaching and feedback, experiential learning, completion of special projects) Probation Officers who wish to complete long-term study or gain work-related qualifications are able to develop a study assistance plan that must demonstrate the relevance of the study/qualification to their role and the benefit to the work team. It is expected that they will invest their own time and the Probation Service may grant study leave and contribute towards fees ¹⁴. A further developmental opportunity is available to Probation Officers through the broader Department of Corrections 'Future Leaders' programme. This course identifies and develops staff with the potential to become leaders ¹⁵.

Overall, the processes of professional supervision and performance management are important for the development and maintenance of effective probation practice. In particular, if appropriately conducted and resourced, they should promote probation practice as a professional enterprise. This can be achieved: (a) through reinforcement of the purpose of probation, and of the values that underpin and define practice; and (b) by consolidation of the knowledge and skills that constitutes best practice, in particular the enhancement of the reflexive capacity of the practitioner.

Assessment of Practice

The assessment of service delivery in non-profit, public sector agencies presents difficulties. Chor-fai Au (1996), for example, identifies the following set of difficulties associated with measuring effectiveness in welfare organisations: they do not generally operate in a free market situation; they are more susceptible to the influence of external constituencies (for example, politicians); and welfare agencies are often characterised by conflicting values, unclear goals and uncertain technology (Chor -fai Au 1996:8-9). Gummer (1997) makes the pertinent observation that many activities (such as the administration of the criminal justice system) are in the public sector because of difficulties associated with measuring performance and effectiveness. He suggests that if measurement in these spheres was "crystal clear" they would have already been privatised (Gummer 1997:91-92). Grasso (1993) comments that the narrow conception of efficiency and productivity (advanced by the proponents of scientific management), which still dominates thought surrounding organisational effectiveness, poses particular problems for non-profit organisations. He argues that, historically, human service organisations have adopted a human relations approach as the dominant model of management, a model that places emphasis on the central worth of the human (both client and worker) as the most important aspect of organisational functioning (Grasso 1993:17-18). However, the impact of business-oriented management practices has given rise to more demanding internal reporting processes and greater accountability.

The assessment of practice is the final component of the framework for the construction of probation practice and is important for two main reasons. The first reason concerns the need for the Probation Service to demonstrate to the Government that the services purchased meet the standards established in the purchase agreement and that they are fit for purpose (i.e. they deliver the intended results). Second, assessment is essential for the ongoing development of effective practice (assuming, of course, that assessment of the efficacy and practice validity of particular interventions will contribute to the revision and improvement of service delivery).

Raynor (1996) raises two interrelated issues that should be addressed when considering the assessment of practice effectiveness: it is important to identify the criteria against which

effectiveness is to be assessed (for example, a reduction in the level of recidivism can be assessed as complete desistance from further offending or as a reduction in the relative seriousness or frequency of offending); and definitions of effectiveness should be linked to stakeholder interests that are clearly identified. There is a need for clarity in defining what is being measured and for whose purposes as different stakeholders (clients, agency managers, practitioners, sentencers and members of the community) have different conceptions of success. Both Chor-fai Au (1996) and Edwards, Faerman and McGrath (1986) concur and suggest the adoption of a multi-dimensional approach that incorporates the perspectives of the different constituencies. Different indicators of success can be developed therefore, and the validity of these indicators will depend upon whose perspective is adopted.

With regard to the New Zealand Probation Service, the relative emphasis placed upon the dual goals of protection of the public and the rehabilitation of the client will influence the type of measures that are chosen to reflect the effectiveness of service delivery. This is of critical importance because the definition of effectiveness will also influence the development of practice that will adapt to fit the measures used to assess the conception of effectiveness. For example, if the primary focus is upon community safety then risk containment and minimisation strategies are likely to be prevalent. Conversely, skill acquisition and educational goals are more likely if the focus is on the social reintegration of clients.

Assessment of Outcomes

Roberts (1995) suggests that the assessment of practice outcomes will be inextricably related to issues surrounding the effectiveness of service delivery systems and identifies three key aspects that should be considered. First, at the agency level, there is a need to locate the range and type of provision that a service might reasonably be expected to provide for effective work with clients. Guidelines are also required regarding who will manage and deliver the various elements of the service delivery system. Next, at the operational level, there is a need for a clear framework for the delivery, monitoring and

assessment of effective practice. This involves the development of policy regarding: the selection, assessment and allocation of clients; the maintenance of quality and consistency of service provision; and the assessment of inputs, processes and outcomes. Finally, at the practice level, there is a need for a clear definition of the knowledge and skill base required by staff to deliver the intended level of service (Roberts 1995:222-223). These features are interdependent and the degree to which they are complementary and well integrated will have a significant impact upon the achievement of organisational outcomes. The three aspects can also serve as useful criteria against which a service system can be assessed.

In the New Zealand context, the IOM model provides a definition of the requisite knowledge and skill base, and a framework for the selection, assessment and allocation of clients. However, the assessment of effective practice presents a number of challenges. As previously noted, the interpretation of the relative success or failure of probation intervention depends upon the perspective and objectives of the particular stakeholder making the assessment. Furthermore, the contribution of probation intervention to any reduction in recidivism is difficult to determine in light of the impact of independent variables; for example, the level of policing (including 'targeting' operations, detection and clearance rates), and the availability and use of alternative criminal justice processes such as diversion and restorative justice. At present (2006) these factors are not taken into account, for example, when comparing recidivism rates between different geographical localities.

The Department of Corrections has developed two measures of the reduction of re-offending (the organisational objective) that are used to assess the effectiveness of correctional services, including probation. First, the Recidivism Index (RI) that measures (Department of Corrections 2003a:33):

The rate of proven re-offending of a specified group of clients over a 12 and 24 month follow-up period, following release from a custodial sentence or the beginning of a community-based sentence.

For the purpose of this index, proven re-offending is measured through either a further sentence of imprisonment or reconviction to a sentence that is administered by the

Department of Corrections. The second measure is the Rehabilitation Quotient (RQ) that evaluates the effectiveness of rehabilitative and other interventions (i.e. programmes or services) in reducing re-offending. The quotient is obtained by measuring the difference between the RI of treatment and control groups (Department of Corrections 2003a:33).

Although quantitative measures of recidivism are often used to assess the effectiveness of interventions, it is also important to consider alternative methods of assessment. An example is provided by Leibrich (1993) who completed qualitative research on desistance from crime that considered the experience of clients who had been convicted of a criminal offence, sentenced to supervision (probation) and had subsequently remained conviction free. The substantive finding of this research surrounds the notion that change in offending patterns is often graduated; clients may not completely desist from further offending but might alter the frequency, degree of seriousness, or type of subsequent offending. From this perspective, the assessment of effectiveness rests on the construct of moral relativism, with success able to be defined from a variety of standpoints (including that of the client). Leibrich acknowledged that her research findings were representative of only one interpretation of the social reality of offending behaviour and that the legitimization of any perspective is dependent on the relative power of different stakeholders in the criminal justice system (Leibrich 1993:239).

The construct of practice effectiveness should also involve the assessment of practice quality; that is, the degree to which an organisation is competently implementing methods and techniques considered necessary to achieving its service objectives. While it is possible to identify what works with regard to available behavioural technology, it is more difficult to implement these interventions within routine service delivery systems and the consistent implementation of any intervention model by practitioners in the field often presents difficulties. Another means of service quality assessment is the use of process measures that consider how any practice model is implemented and the quality of the interaction or relationship between practitioner and client. The relationship between the Probation Officer and the client is the foundation of professional service delivery in the probation practice context. Dale (1997), investigating probation intervention with violent

men, found that clients become actively engaged in interventions when their interaction with the Probation Officer is personalised and characterised by empowerment. Under these circumstances clients also demonstrate the ability to reflect upon their behaviour because they feel they have ownership of the process. At present (2006) the Probation Service relies on relatively unsophisticated ways of assessing practice, such as ex-post facto compliance checklists. Obviously, more needs to be done, for as Roberts (1995:229) observes praxis requires that practitioners be committed to the idea that assessment is in itself a critical and inseparable part of being an effective practitioner. The reflective model of practice development offers the prospect of developing a mechanism for the resolution of obstacles and the enhancement of interventions.

In summary, the assessment of service delivery in the Probation Service upon a narrow definition of effectiveness (recidivism) does not recognise the complexity of probation practice. This disjunction is of critical importance because the acceptance of a narrow definition of effectiveness contributes to the imposition and acceptance of a minimalist conception of probation practice. The construction of a framework for the assessment of probation practice effectiveness should incorporate both quantitative and qualitative indicators and be capable of responding to a range of stakeholder positions. Three different sets of service delivery goals are relevant for such assessment. First, at a community level, the result of Probation Service intervention should be a reduction in further offending by the client. This can be measured by reconviction rates. Second, the Probation Service has agency goals, such as managing client risk by enforcing a sentence and reducing the risk of further offending by ensuring that the client completes an intervention programme. These types of goals can be measured by client compliance with the conditions of a sentence. Finally, the third level addresses individual client goals, including: risk reduction goals (involving the acquisition of skills to effect positive behavioural change) and educational goals (involving the development of understanding regarding behavioural patterns related to offending) (Dale 1997:180-181). When combined, the three types of goal (community, agency and individual) and the associated interventions and measures offer a more comprehensive perspective from which to assess service delivery.

Conclusion

In Chapter One the potential for tension between professional and management perspectives was identified and it was argued that the Probation Service's construction of practice would influence both leadership and service delivery. The framework proposed in this chapter for the construction of practice provides a conceptualisation of the range of factors that influence probation practice. It also provides a way to order and assess the research participants' knowledge and experience of practice and related tensions, in relation to their expectations of leadership.

Discussion in this chapter has considered the construction of probation practice and has been underpinned by the belief that probation practice has a professional foundation. Professional practice has been presented as involving judgement, creativity, the exercise of discretion and autonomy within the parameters of an ethical code. This requires a continuous development of knowledge and skills on the part of the Probation Officer.

A rationale for probation was advanced and a related set of principles was identified. (see Table 1). It was argued that values form an important foundation for probation practice and that operational decisions made by Probation Officers should be based on organisational and professional values, rather than on rules and policies. However, a high degree of value congruence between managers and staff is desirable. Changes in public expectations have exerted significant pressure on the traditional probation value system, and it is considered important for probation, both organisationally and professionally, to be responsive to changes in the practice environment that might be seen as threatening.

Table 1 - Rationale and Principles for Probation Practice in New Zealand

Rationale for probation			
Exclusion from society should be based on risk	Recognition of the lack of efficacy of imprisonment	Expectation of client reform and motivation to do so	Probation is in the interests of the wider community
Principles that form the cornerstone of community-based criminal justice policy			
Probation intervention will reduce re-offending		Probation services must be consistent with the protection of the community	
Rehabilitation is likely to be more effective than punishment	Mandated intervention is justified	Targeting clients more likely to respond to intervention will be more cost-effective	Surveillance and social control forms a legitimate part of probation practice

The need was identified for the Probation Service to develop an integrated statement of unique probation values; one that recognises the centrality of client/practitioner praxis and that empowerment can be consistent with mandated intervention. Probation practice was also thought to require a set of ethical mandates that establish clear standards and expectations regarding appropriate attitudes and behaviours. Finally, it was suggested that it is important to recognise that the managerial agenda does not exclude rehabilitation and reintegration, however an emphasis upon efficiency, effectiveness and risk-management pose a significant challenge to probation practice and this must be engaged in a positive manner.

A number of issues were identified surrounding the practical development of best practice and four aspects were of particular significance. First, the practitioner should be seen as an active agent in the process of practice development (not merely a functionary to implement a particular approach). Second, that the social and political context exert influence on the construction of practice. Third, that the successful implementation of any practice approach will require commitment from both the practitioner and the organisation. Finally, that it is important to adopt an inclusive construction of practice and to avoid over-reliance on any one perspective.

A review of the contribution of social work identified the epistemological foundations of the dominant practice perspectives and the centrality of the client/practitioner relationship. The strengths of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct approach have been noted, namely: theoretical and practice validity; and utility to provide direction for policy development and guidance to management faced with the task of achieving optimal benefit from restricted

resources. The concern of management to ensure that probation services are delivered in an accountable and cost-efficient manner has resulted in the introduction of prescriptive practice guidelines. The IOM system reflects the desire for a transparent, integrated system of service delivery based on empirically validated practice methods. The benefits associated with IOM have included the introduction of minimum practice standards, higher levels of practitioner and management accountability, and more efficient service delivery. These benefits are consistent with a professional conception of probation practice. That said, however, a key question can be asked as to whether or not the IOM approach provides the optimal structures and processes that will achieve the service delivery goals of the Probation Service.

The main concerns are raised regarding IOM. First, the design and implementation of its assessment and sentence management procedures has been highly prescriptive and subject to rigorous monitoring for compliance with business rules in order to maintain the integrity of the model. A consequence of this approach has been a reduction in the autonomy of the Probation Officer and the development of reflexive practice has been inhibited. Second, the commodification of practice has been driven by senior management in response to the purchasing model that controls the definition of service and allocation of resources. The IOM model is based substantially upon the identification and management of the offender's criminogenic needs. This emphasis, in combination with a business driven need to ration resources, has resulted in the conception of clients as aggregates rather than as individuals. A critique has emerged regarding the reduction in emphasis on the client-practitioner relationship, with the client now likened to a commodity. Commentators express concern that with the predominance of the business model, cost has become the primary driver determining practice.

The assessment of practice was identified as crucial to the Probation Service's ability to secure ongoing funding, political support and to continue the development of practice. Significantly, the effectiveness of the service delivery system will have an impact upon assessment. A central feature of an effective system is clarity: at the agency level this relates to the specification of service delivery; operationally a clear framework for practice

delivery, monitoring and assessment is required; at the practice level an integrated framework that identifies required knowledge and skills is important. Discussion regarding outcome assessment identified stakeholder influence as a factor that can determine what is assessed. A relationship was also identified between assessment criteria and the adjustment of practice in order to meet the standards, rather than client need. It was concluded that a comprehensive perspective should be used in the assessment of probation practice and this should include quantitative and qualitative indicators to assess goals at the community, agency and individual client levels.

Professional supervision and performance management were identified as the core processes that represent the final element in the framework for the construction of practice. These processes were considered to play an integrative role in the development and maintenance of practice. In particular, professional supervision is associated with the development of probation practice as a profession.

In conclusion, it has been proposed that social institutions such as the Probation Service derive their legitimacy by virtue of: first, their ability to deliver outputs that are required by the broader society (the implementation of criminal justice policy contributes towards community safety); and second, society's approval of groups benefiting from services that are provided (offenders receiving rehabilitative interventions). Bearing these points in mind, two important questions arise. How can a model of practice be developed that does not leave probation practice exposed to a lack of credibility due to inadequate attention to the need for public accountability? How can the social work concern with caring and a rehabilitative and protective function be integrated and wider accountability also demonstrated? The key assertion that probation should be viewed as a profession is crucial to the ongoing development and viability of probation practice. A significant challenge facing the Probation Service is how to make a meaningful contribution to both the definition and assessment of the purposes of service delivery – one that is based on professional expertise. Failure to recognise this and to develop practice accordingly, exposes probation to the risk of the imposition of a reductionist, prescriptive rules based approach that will fail to meet the fundamental aspirations of probation. It is important to

combine concern with risk management with a perspective that is based upon the worth of the individual and that offers the prospect of empowerment and change to the client.

Footnotes

- 1 The New Zealand Association of Probation officers Code of Ethics addresses the core issues also contained in the Code of Ethics of the New Zealand Association of social workers.
- 2 The researcher was the project leader; the team comprised Probation Officers, Clinical Psychologists and Prison Officers.
- 3 Extended Family
- 4 Sub Tribe
- 5 Tribe
- 6 Courtyard – the open area in front of the ‘wharehuni’ (meeting house, large house).
- 7 ‘Level B’ refers to the National Qualifications Framework accreditation standard. This standard has been replaced by a numeric system ranging from 1-10 with a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work rated at 7.
- 8 The importance of organisational commitment to the philosophy of rehabilitation and the universal availability of treatment are promoted by Bonta (1997) and Brown (1998). This position is likely to create tension for management if required to operate in an environment characterised by resource constraint and an emphasis upon cost-benefit analysis to guide decision-making regarding expenditure.
- 9 Historically a compensatory plundering or property-stripping expedition against those who have offended in some way against the community.
- 10 A process of atonement.
- 11 The foundation for these programmes was a research report commissioned by the Department of Corrections that provided: a review of the international literature on offender treatment; analysis of New Zealand programmes that have been evaluated and an economic rationale for the delivery of programmes (Department of Corrections 1998a).
- 12 Maori culture.
- 13 The client’s thoughts and feelings about a MaCRN may have either a direct or indirect influence upon their emotions that might impact on their personal and social functioning; failure to cope with negative emotions may contribute to offending.
- 14 Probation Officers may also apply for a Chief Executive’s Scholarship that is awarded annually and supports full-time study
- 15 The programme is completed over a two-year period and the participants are provided with: personal development coaching; managerial training; projects, assignments and work opportunities that assist in managerial skill development (Department of Corrections 2003a).

CHAPTER FIVE

Leadership

The aim of this chapter is to develop an understanding of the concept of leadership that will inform both the research design and data analysis. Because the literature on leadership is so extensive, the selection of material for this task has been governed by the substantive area of research interest and the significant influences that have been identified as having an impact upon the Probation Service practice context, namely: organisational change; business management methods; changes in the construction of probation practice; and tension between managerialism and professionalism.

The discussion is presented in five sections. The first considers the concept of leadership - how it is defined and the relationship between leadership and management. Next, the characteristics of leaders are reviewed through consideration of: the qualities and behaviours of leaders; leaders in the social services; and a review of trait, behavioural and situational leadership theories. The third section addresses leadership and change, with a particular focus upon transformational leadership theory. In the fourth section attention is given to the relationship between organisational vision, values and leadership, and the implications for service delivery. Finally, the type of leadership that is most likely to be effective in leading professionals is considered.

The Concept of Leadership

In this section, the concept of leadership is considered through an examination of: how leadership is defined; power as a foundation concept that underpins leadership; and the distinction between leadership and management.

Definitions of Leadership

Definitions of leadership provided by commentators writing in a correctional context (Cohn 1998; Powls 1990; Wright 1991) share the core characteristics of definitions within the generic management literature (Bartol, Martin, Tein and Matthews 1995; Fiedler 1996; Northouse 1997; Parry 1999; Yukl 1998). Yukl (1998:5) provides the following comprehensive definition of leadership:

The process wherein an individual member of a group or organisation influences the interpretation of events, the choice of objectives and strategies, the organisation of work activities, the motivation of people to achieve objectives, the maintenance of cooperative relationships, the development of skills and confidence by members, and the enlistment of support and cooperation from people outside the group or organisation.

Yukl's identification of the importance of processes and objectives/goals represents an initial theme surrounding the definition of leadership. Bartol et al. (1995:13-14) define leadership as the process of influencing others to work towards goals. Influence is also emphasised by Northouse (1997) who defines leadership as a process whereby an individual influences others to achieve a common goal; indeed, influence is perceived to be "the sine qua non of leadership. Without influence, leadership does not exist" (Northouse 1997:3). A similar argument is advanced by Wright (1991, citing Gardiner 1990), who emphasises leadership as a process involving the use of persuasion to engage followers to pursue jointly held objectives.

A second major theme regarding leadership concerns a distinction that can be drawn between leaders and followers. Parry (1999:17) defines leadership as:

The presentation by a leader of some identifiable goal or vision or future state that people can desire; and the generation of a willingness within those people to follow the leader along a socially responsible and mutually beneficial course of action, toward that goal.

Parry's definition places emphasis upon the relationship between leader and follower and he amplifies the importance of following through a discussion of the concept of "willing

following”, a characteristic that enables a distinction to be made between genuine leadership and the “mere exercise of power to exert influence over others” (Parry 1999:17). In order for followers to be sufficiently motivated to act, however, the goal set by the leader must be considered to be achievable and the outcome of the action should be of mutual benefit to both leader and follower.

Further definition of the leader/follower relationship is provided by Wright (1991) who emphasises the importance of a mutual, interactive relationship. The leader is dependent upon followers working cohesively in order to achieve identified objectives, and will use a combination of challenge and inducement, while followers are more likely to be committed towards organisational objectives if they are actively involved in setting them (Wright 1991:5). The importance of engagement is also noted by Powls (1990:32) who suggests that followers are more likely to accept leadership from management if they have a clear understanding of what to expect from the manager. It is the leader who has the primary responsibility for initiating and maintaining the relationship (Northouse 1997:4).

To sum up, the concept of leadership rests upon the relationship between leader and follower. This relationship involves a dynamic process between the leader (using influence and persuasion) and follower in pursuit of a set of goals and objectives. The notion of the willingness of the follower to be led is linked to the level of follower motivation, commitment and involvement.

Power – a Foundation Concept

Leadership has been defined above as an interactive process between leader and follower involving the leader’s use of influence. This influence is underpinned by different types of power. Erchul and Raven (1997) draw a distinction between the concepts of social influence and power. The term social influence refers to a change in the belief, attitude or behaviour of a person (the target of the influence) resulting from the action or presence of another person (the influencing agent). French and Raven’s (1959) typology of six potential social power bases (see Table 1) is commonly recognised as the primary

framework for studying social or interpersonal power (Bartol et al. 1995:448-449; Erchul and Raven 1997:138; Fairholm 1998:6; Yukl 1998:178).

Table 2 - French and Raven's Power Typology

Legitimate Power	Power stemming from a position's placement in the managerial hierarchy and the authority vested in it.
Reward Power	Power based on the capacity to control and provide valued rewards to others.
Coercive Power	Power dependent on the ability to punish others when they do not engage in desired behaviours.
Expert power	Power derived from the possession of expertise that others value.
Informational Power	Power resulting from access to and control over the distribution of important information about organisational operations and future plans.
Referent Power	Power resulting from being admired, personally identified with, or liked by others.

Adapted from Bartol et al. (1995: 448-449)

Yukl (1998) provides a further conceptualisation of the sources of power in drawing a distinction between position power (that which derives from opportunities inherent in a particular position within an organisation) and personal power (that which is derived from personal attributes of the position holder and the nature of their relationships with followers). Yukl also suggests that these two sources of power can be differentiated from a third type of power that is drawn from political processes within organisations involving efforts to increase and protect the power that is held. These processes include forming coalitions, assuming control over decision-making processes, the co-opting of potential rivals and institutionalising existing power differentials (Yukl 1998:178-179).

The use of different types of power can result in at least three different reactions and levels of motivation among followers. First, there is commitment, where the target person may internally agree with a request or action of the agent and respond by exerting a high degree of goal-directed effort. Second, there is compliance, where the target may be willing to follow a request or direction from an agent but will exert minimal effort and deliver only average performance. Finally, there is resistance, where the target is opposed to the request

or direction from the agent and will actively attempt to avoid complying (Bartol et al. 1985:449; Yukl 1998:176).

In summary, leadership can be seen to rest on a process of social influence in which the leader seeks to effect changes in the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours of followers. Leadership also involves the differential use of power that can have either positive or negative effects upon followers' reactions and levels of motivation.

Leadership and Management

What are the defining characteristics of leadership and management? Distinctions between leadership and management have been made by both general management commentators (Fairholm 1998; Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson 1996; Northouse 1997; Yukl 1998) and corrections-focused writers (Bryans and Walford 1998; Chavaria 1994; Cohn 1998; Siegel 1996; Wright 1991). For example, Fairholm provides an initial proposition that leadership is not management. Management has a focus on performance, productivity and system. The emphasis in management is to make every system, activity, programme and policy accountable and, therefore, controllable (Fairholm 1998:54). Fairholm also suggests that the focus and content of management influences the characteristics of managers who tend to "prefer security, take only calculated risks, relate to people in role terms and focus on control, accounting and accountability" (Fairholm 1998:56). Chavaria (1994), with a somewhat different perspective, argues that management involves being in charge of or being responsible for conduct that is directed at accomplishing a task or goal. He identifies the command authority management approach as being characterised by: a clear division between management and staff; management being responsible for thinking and planning; staff following orders; and each worker handling specific work assignments (Chavaria 1994:20). Similarly, Wright (1991:9) advances the view that traditionally managers have directed, planned and coordinated: these are formal and often impersonal activities.

Leadership (as noted earlier) involves the process of attempting to influence the behaviour of someone else (Cohn 1998:24). However, Wright (1991:8-9) argues that leaders will be

more successful if they make others feel strong, capable and committed; by strengthening others' influence, leaders in turn strengthen their own influence. In addition, Glisson (1989) introduces the relationship between leadership and vision, arguing that the primary purpose of leadership is to affect the climate of the organisation so that workers are empowered, excited, and inspired about the goals and mission of their organisations. This point is amplified by Siegel (1996) who adds that the creation of a team environment and the empowerment of employees are characteristics of leadership. A final point is made by Hollingsworth (1999:22-23) who argues that leaders are innovative, inspirational and forward thinking; leadership should have a focus on people (followers) and their development.

How useful is this distinction between leadership and management? Yukl concludes that while it may be useful to identify managing and leading as distinct processes this does not mean that managers and leaders are different types of people. He adds that the management and leadership processes may not be mutually exclusive and suggests that they can be effectively integrated (Yukl 1998:5). Similarly, Northouse (1997:9-11) suggests that while differences between management and leadership can be identified, there is also a high degree of overlap between the two functions within organisations; this overlap concerns how both influence goal attainment.

Leadership Characteristics

What are the personal qualities and behaviours that differentiate effective leaders? To answer this question the discussion in the following pages begins by considering trait, behavioural and situational leadership theories; drawing as appropriate upon seminal contributions regarding leadership. Building on this base, observations are then presented regarding leadership in the social services.

Leadership Trait Theories

A key assumption underlying trait theory is that common traits, if identified in recognised leaders, can provide the foundation for the development of leadership capacities in others (Bryans and Walford 1998:11; Fairholm 1998:50-51). Stogdill (1948) and Mann (1959) remain influential to the development of trait theory. Each surveyed the research literature surrounding personality and leadership and developed a classification of personality factors thought to be associated with leadership (see Table 3 below). Both also identified the situational nature of leadership. Stogdill (1948:64) commented that “leadership must be conceived in terms of the interaction of variables which are in constant flux and change”, while Mann (1959:247) concluded that “an individual’s leadership status in groups is a joint function of his personality and the particular group setting”.

More recently, Northouse (1997) completed a concise review of significant studies of leadership traits and concluded that five major traits are central to the literature - namely intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability - but cautioned that the list is not all-inclusive.

Yukl offers a detailed examination of research on managerial traits associated with leadership – some of the traits identified are the same as those identified for leadership by others. He suggests that personality traits which are relevant to managerial effectiveness include: energy level and stress tolerance; self-confidence; internal control orientation; and emotional maturity and integrity (Yukl 1998:260). Yukl notes that most trait studies have not established a clear relationship between possession of a trait and how this is linked to managerial effectiveness. He further comments that the relationship between traits and how traits interact to influence leader behaviour has not been fully examined (Yukl 1998:260).

The trait approach has utility in developing an understanding of leadership. However, it is also important to note the importance of the interrelationship between a leader's personality and situational variables, in particular characteristics of followers.

Table 3 - A Comparison of Traits Associated with Leadership

Stogdill (1948)	Mann(1959)	Northouse (1997)	Yukl (1998)
Capacity	Intelligence	Intelligence	Energy level
Achievement	Adjustment	Self-confidence	Stress tolerance
Responsibility	Extroversion	Determination	Self-confidence
Participation	Dominance	Integrity	Internal control
Status	Masculinity	Sociability	Orientation
Situation	Conservatism		Emotional maturity
	Sensitivity		Integrity

Behavioural Leadership Theories

The behavioural perspective rests on the assumption that certain behaviours may be associated with successful leadership. These behaviours, if identified, can be learned by individuals in leadership roles in order to enhance their effectiveness.

Northouse (1997) succinctly summarises the general behavioural perspective in identifying two general kinds of behaviour that are associated with leadership: first, task behaviours (that focus on goal achievement); and second, relationship behaviours (that focus upon assisting followers to adjust to peers and the work environment). Hersey and Blanchard (1996) provide the following definitions of task and relationship behaviour. Task behaviour concerns the extent to which leaders are likely to organise and define the roles of the members of their group (followers) and to explain what activities each is to do and when, where, and how tasks are to be accomplished. It is characterised by endeavours to establish well-defined patterns of organisation, channels of communication, and ways of getting jobs accomplished. Relationship behaviour, on the other hand, involves the extent to which leaders are likely to maintain personal relationships between themselves and members of their group (followers) by opening up channels of communication, providing

socio-emotional support, active listening, and facilitating behaviours (Hersey, Blanchard and Johnson 1996:134). Obviously, the concepts of task and relationship behaviour are similar to those employed by Blake and Mouton (1964) who developed a two-dimensional leadership matrix based on the constructs of “initiating structure”, the degree to which leaders define roles in terms of unit goal or task achievement (i.e. task behaviours) and “consideration”, the degree to which leaders build mutual trust with followers and demonstrate respect and concern (i.e. relationship behaviours).

These constructs were not conceived as being at opposite ends of a continuum, but rather as independent behaviours operating on separate continua with many leaders displaying characteristics of both types.

One weakness of this model was its inability to take into account the influence of situational factors such as the nature of the task and the expectations of subordinates (Bartol et al 1995:456; Fairholm 1998:51). Furthermore, Yukl comments that while there is considerable overlap between the various leadership behaviour taxonomies, many of the earlier frameworks did not take into account behaviours relevant for transformational leadership theories. This capacity has particular utility in a practice environment such as the Probation Service that has been characterised by frequent and significant change over the past twenty years. Yukl (1998) proposes a three factor model which takes change into account: task-oriented behaviour, relations-oriented behaviour and change-oriented behaviour. He argues that while all three types of behaviour are relevant for the majority of leaders, the optimal mix at a given time will be influenced by both environmental factors and the success of organisational strategies for achieving goals (Yukl 1998:61). The significance of change and the transformational approach to leadership are discussed in the following section.

Situational Leadership Theories

Situational theory is based on the view that different circumstances require different forms of leadership and contingent leadership styles can be identified for specific situational

variables (Bryans and Walford 1998:11). Situational theory concerns itself with the cluster of forces at work in an organisational environment (for example, organisation size, worker maturity, task complexity), any of which may affect leader activity. The underlying assumption is that different leader behaviour patterns will be effective in different situations and that a given leadership behaviour will not be optimal in all situations (Fairholm 1998:53; Starbuck and Gamble 1990:84; Yukl 1998:10).

Hersey and Blanchard developed the “Life-Cycle Theory of Leadership”, based upon the notion that managers needed to alter their leadership styles when managing staff who are at different stages in their career cycle (new, developing and experienced) (Hersey and Blanchard 1996). Hersey and Blanchard’s model proposes a two dimensional matrix based upon task and relationship behaviours that identifies four basic leadership styles. The factor that determines the effectiveness of any leadership style is the degree of ‘fit’ between the style and the environment, which includes both followers and structural factors (both of which are continually changing). They also identify a repertoire of core skills which they argue are necessary (in a variable mix) for each of the leadership styles: telling or directing; persuading or coaching; participating or supporting and delegating. They further argue that the primary focus of situational leadership should be about meeting followers’ needs. A focus on followers is more likely to improve leadership skills than attempting to teach a model or leadership style (Hersey and Blanchard 1996).

Yukl (1998) and Northouse (1997) observe that research evidence surrounding situational leadership theory does not support any strong conclusions regarding causality. The complexity of organisational structures, the pace of change and the influence of numerous potential intervening variables result in managers being able to exert only a relative degree of control. In this context, it is problematic for situational theory to provide clear direction regarding optimal leadership behaviour in any particular circumstance (Northouse 1997:59; Yukl 1998:290).

Leadership in the Social Services

A consensus (with an emphasis upon relationship behaviour) emerges from commentators

regarding the qualities of successful leaders in the social services. The creation of values is perceived as a primary behavioural dimension of leadership (Cohn 1998; Fairholm 1998; Mintzberg 1998; Pawar and Eastman 1997), with effective leaders developing and consolidating organisational values through the use of excellent communication skills, the generation of group spirit and identity, and by inspiring a shared vision (Cohn 1998; Joseph 1990; Mactavish 1997).

Chavaria (1994:19) suggests that effective probation managers should lead by coaching and teaching in contrast to traditional management practices of controlling and supervising. The enabler/teacher role can be enacted through a range of leadership behaviours. For example, Cohn (1998:28) and Mactavish (1997:60) identify modelling appropriate behaviour as an important process in generating follower commitment, and Wright (1991:9) suggests that leaders can strengthen their followers by assisting them to develop and reach their potential in contrast to focusing upon limitations and faults. Allied to the coaching and teaching approach, Joseph (1990:3) identifies the importance of motivating followers while Vantour (1991:56) as well as Wright (1991:9) emphasise building trust.

Moran (2001) conducted survey research to investigate leadership practices in the New Zealand Probation Service, noting that staff:

...do not believe their managers place sufficient emphasis on defining expectations in the first instance nor do they provide them with sufficient constructive feedback on their performance.

And concluded that there was a:

Need to place an emphasis upon effective transformational elements of leadership being displayed more frequently in the workplace in order to ensure the current disconnection between the perceptions of staff and management are minimised.

Moran (2001:43) proposed a “Leadership Behavioural Practice Model” that placed emphasis on both qualities required by leaders and on the “processes that leaders must create in order to have an emotional impact on their team members”. The model placed emphasis on the creation of vision, change, and on relationship management.

Finally, Irurita (1992), investigating nursing leadership, has identified the process of “optimising” as a critical factor in leader effectiveness. This process involves making the most effective or optimal use of all available and potential resources, including: the leader’s and others’ human attributes (knowledge, skills, attitudes/values, beliefs and energy); and organisational factors (structures, policies, procedures and finances).

How can the various leadership perspectives outlined above be used to inform leadership research? The simple, direct answer to this question is that the different perspectives provide some useful investigative and analytical constructs. First, trait theory with its relatively straightforward emphasis, alerts the researcher to the importance of the leader’s possession of certain traits that may be crucial to achieving leadership success. Second, task and relationship behaviours emerge as two categories of leadership behaviour that can be conceptualised either as occurring in two separate continuums, or as intersecting axes which can be combined to create a two-dimensional matrix. Finally, situational leadership theory directs the researcher’s attention to the impact of change (in both individuals and the environment) upon leadership. There is also a consensus that an interrelationship exists between leader behaviours, follower behaviours and the impact of situational factors (which include environmental influences and current organisational strategies). Yukl’s (1998) observation that any “optimal mix” of leadership behaviour will be dependent upon a combination of these factors seems apposite. To be effective, therefore, leaders should exercise a degree of flexibility in their leadership behaviour, taking into account both their own and their subordinates’ individual characteristics and situational factors when selecting a leadership approach.

Leadership and Change

Hasenfeld (1989) cautions that while leadership is often seen as a key variable to effective transformation and adaptation in social service agencies, there is danger in adopting the simplistic notion that leadership alone can result in more responsive and effective practice. Leadership is intrinsically linked to the influence of environmental (including cultural,

technological, economic, political and societal forces) and organisational factors (such as size, complexity, management practices, culture and stability) which have been noted by Irurita (1994) as important moderator variables. Such variables are rarely (if ever) static in nature as shown in Chapter Three. Significant changes have occurred in the Probation Service practice context, in particular: changes in organisational structure, the pre-eminence of a business model of management, and a shift in the construction of probation practice. Accordingly, transformational leadership theory offers the prospect of a leadership approach that will be effective during periods of organisational change.

Transformational Leadership

Northouse (1997:30) provides a succinct definition of transformational leadership that serves as a useful starting point in considering this approach:

Transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms individuals. It is concerned with values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals. Transformational leadership involves assessing followers' motives, satisfying their needs, and treating them as full human beings. It is a process that subsumes charismatic and visionary leadership.

The contribution of Burns (1978), who identified the transformational and transactional leadership types, is acknowledged as a primary influence upon the development of the transformational leadership perspective (Pawar and Eastman 1997). Transactional leadership focuses upon the nature of exchanges between leaders and followers, with the latter motivated through an appeal to self-interest; they receive rewards in return for their committed effort and compliance with organisational requirements (De Vries, Manfred, Loper and Doyle 1994; Pawar and Eastman 1997; Yukl 1998:325). In contrast to transactional leadership, Burns characterised transformational leadership as a process involving the mutual engagement of both leader and follower in a way which raises the motivation of both to pursue collective goals (Parry 1999:148; Pawar and Eastman 1997; Northouse 1997:131).

Bass (1985, 1990) outlined a "New Paradigm" of transformational leadership that amplifies the foundation established by Burns. Bass (1990:30) noted that while the transactional

approach can be satisfactory during periods of stability, it is the transformational model that offers a greater prospect of affecting organisational success during turbulent periods of change. In contrast to the transactional approach, the transformational approach can result in the follower achieving more than expected. Bass identifies three ways in which followers are influenced. First, the individual follower's level of consciousness regarding the importance and value of desired outcomes is raised. Second, followers are convinced to transcend their self-interests in order to benefit the organisation. Third, the individual follower's need level (on Maslow's hierarchy) is raised; for example, from the need for security to the need for recognition (Bass 1985:31).

Bass completed research with staff at various levels in industrial and military organisations and initially identified five leadership factors – later increased to seven - that form the foundation of his model of transformational leadership. He grouped these factors in line with the conceptual division between transactional and transformational leadership. The transactional factors are : (a) "Contingent Reward", the exchange process between leader and follower involving the use of incentives and rewards to obtain follower motivation; (b) "Management by Exception", where the leader either actively monitors follower performance to identify deviations and then takes corrective action, or intervenes only if standards are not achieved (passive); and (c), introduced in a revision to the model, a factor labeled "Laissez-Faire" which is characterised by the leader's abdication of responsibility (Bass 1990:22). The transformational factors identified are: (a) "Charismatic Leadership", the most important component of the transformational model, which results in increased follower enthusiasm, faith, loyalty, pride and self-confidence; (b) "Individualised Consideration", evidenced through the leader sustaining a developmental and individualistic orientation towards followers, communicating openly, and acting as a role model and mentor to followers; (c) "Intellectual Stimulation", where a leader enhances the followers' problem-solving capabilities; and (d), introduced in his revised model, a factor labelled "Inspiration", characterised by the communication of high expectations, the use of symbols to focus follower effort and the uncomplicated expression of significant objectives (Bass 1990:22).

Bass noted a higher correlation between unit effectiveness and the transformational factors. In comparison with transactional leaders, transformational leaders were characterised as being proactive, creative and innovative (Bass 1985:33-38; Bass 1990:23).

The concept of moral leadership was also introduced by Bass (drawing on the position articulated earlier by Burns 1978). He argued that the moral transformational leader will subscribe to universal ethical principles such as respect for human dignity and equal rights. He contended that organisational well-being will be enhanced by moral leadership and that leaders should be guided by an ethical code (Bass 1985:38-39). Bass finally suggested that, since transformational leadership practices can be identified, measured and learned, they should be incorporated in human resource programmes (managerial assessment, selection) and in management training and development (Bass 1990:26-27).

It was noted above that charismatic leadership can be regarded as part of the broader concept of transformational leadership. House (1977) developed a theory of charismatic leadership which, Yukl (1998) observes, is more comprehensive than many earlier theories because of the inclusion of leader traits, behaviour, influence and situational conditions. House identified the following characteristics of charismatic leaders: (a) they typically exhibit a need for power, high self-confidence and conviction in their own beliefs and ideals; (b) they are likely to try to create the impression that they are competent; (c) they will articulate ideological goals and link the mission of the organisation to deep-seated values and ideals shared by followers; (d) they will act as positive role models; and (e) they will communicate high expectations to followers, while also expressing confidence in the followers' abilities (Yukl 1998:299; Northouse 1997:132).

The characteristics proposed by House are also identified by Parry in a discussion of what has been labeled the "new leadership", which includes transformational, charismatic and visionary leadership. Parry (1999:147) suggests that charismatic leaders communicate high expectations to followers and arouse in followers affiliation and achievement motivation. Similarly, De Vries, et al. (1994:76) suggested that charismatic leaders "envision, empower, and energise in order to motivate followers". Overall, the charismatic perspective

places emphasis upon the leader's ability to communicate, project confidence, act as a role model and to tap into the underlying values held by followers at an emotional level in order to develop follower motivation. Charismatic theories provide an explanation for the exceptional influence some leaders have on followers, recognise the importance of followers' emotional reactions to leaders, and note the importance of symbolic behaviour and the role of the leader in creating meaning for followers.

What is the utility of the transformational perspective? The distinction that has been drawn between transactional and transformational processes adds a measure of conceptual clarity. However, it should be noted that these groupings are not mutually exclusive, with leaders exhibiting various "mixes" of both transactional and transformational behaviours. The balance of "mixes" is dependent upon a range of factors including the characteristics of the leader and followers, and various contextual or situational influences.

Leadership, Organisational Vision and Values

In Chapter One, it was suggested that: tension exists between managerial and professional belief systems in the Probation Service; that the organisational goals and values of the Probation Service have been redefined by senior managers; and that the latter definition may be at variance with those held by Probation Officers and Service Managers. Against this background, the focus of this section is to consider the relationship that might exist between organisational vision, values and leadership.

Cohn (1998), drawing upon the work of Collins and Porras (1996), suggests that the future vision of an organisation rests upon two key components: first, a core ideology, which is composed of a set of core values (with associated principles and tenets); and second, a core purpose, the organisation's most fundamental reason for continuing its business. If we proceed with the suggestion that organisational vision is based in part upon a set of core values, then what is the role of leadership in developing and promoting both vision and values? A clear consensus emerges from commentators that in order to be effective,

leaders must recognise and actively promote the connection between vision and values. The enunciation of a clear future vision will both provide direction for organisational development and serve as a focus for staff (Vernon and Byrd 1996:22). Visionary leadership rests upon the leader's capacity to communicate a vision of the future for the organisation and to actively engage followers to act in order to achieve that vision. A compelling vision will be based upon deeply held beliefs regarding the core purpose of the organisation that are accepted by most organisational members (Parry 1999:148; Fairholm 1998:69). Obviously, the statement of core purpose must be inspirational if it is to engage and motivate followers to act in order to achieve the goals of the organisation (De Vries et al. 1994:74). A values-based leadership perspective represents a philosophical model; values serve as standards to guide actions and define what is acceptable; they also act as latent influences on the behaviour of the individual. The values-based leadership approach seeks to link leader and follower through the articulation of a set of common values (Fairholm 1998:56; Pawar et al. 1997).

Staff commitment to an organisational vision via visionary, values-based leadership is more likely to be achieved when there is alignment between organisational values and those held by constituent professional staff (Vantour 1991:52). This congruence is not only essential to the development of staff commitment to an organisational vision but is also likely to exert a significant influence upon staff performance in terms of effective service delivery. Going one step further, Turem (1986:15) suggests that in order for management goals (and therefore policies) to be accepted as valid, the goals (as an expression of the organisation's core purpose) should also be congruent with the professional values of staff that are expected to implement the goals.

Leading Professionals

In Chapter One it was noted that the organisational structure of the Probation Service has changed from a professional model (in which management positions had typically been held by professional Probation Officers and where Probation Officers were able to exercise

considerable practice autonomy) to a new management model (that has seen the advent of the generic manager, streamlined management structures, prescriptive practice regimes and an emphasis upon control and reporting on service delivery). A substantive argument regarding the nature of leadership in the Probation Service is that it should support and facilitate professional practice. The type of leadership that is most likely to be effective in influencing the performance of Probation Officers to achieve effective service delivery is central to the current enquiry.

In this section, discussion will focus upon the provision of leadership to Probation Officers based upon the construction of probation practice as a profession. First, the characteristics that are associated with professionals are considered. Then follows a review of issues surrounding the leading and managing of professionals within organisations. Finally, strategies for managing professionals that could be applied within the Probation Service are presented.

What is a Professional?

A profession may be defined as an occupation requiring special training, and as the body of people in such an occupation. The term professional refers to a person engaged in a profession, and there is also a connotation of the professional being competent in the tasks associated with the profession.

The demonstration of expertise, based upon specialist education, training and skills, presents as a core characteristic of a professional. This expertise is applied in a reflexive manner that enables professionals to continuously develop their knowledge and skills and to complete work tasks that require judgement and creativity (Anderson 1997; Beneviste 1987; Raelin 1992). Professionals have traditionally enjoyed a high level of operational autonomy that includes discretion in designing and carrying out tasks (Beneviste 1987; Dawson 1994). In the social service practice context, it is the professional who is closest to the client and should have sufficient autonomy to meet the client's needs (Raelin 1989).

The question of autonomy and accountability is addressed by Mintzberg (1998) who observes that most professional workers require little direct supervision from managers. A professional typically demonstrates commitment to a profession through membership of a formal association that: controls entry to the profession; and sets and enforces standards of accreditation, training and conduct through registration procedures and a code of ethics. The right to operational independence should be matched by a professional's obligation to demonstrate performance accountability (that includes self-regulation and self-discipline) (Anderson 1997; Raelin 1985). Professionals are also expected to serve the public good and to demonstrate a calling and commitment that extends beyond economic incentives (Benevise 1987; Raelin 1985, 1992).

Leadership of Professionals in Organisations

In the Probation Service practice environment the tenets of managerialism have challenged and eroded the levels of professional autonomy that have previously been exercised by Probation Officers. Von Glinow (1988) asserts that professionals are predisposed to resist organisational control and identifies a set of critical tension points that commonly arise for professionals within organisations. In Table 4 the requirements that are typically expected of employees within organisations are juxtaposed against a set of typical expectations held by professionals who might be employed in an organisation.

Table 4 - Potential Tensions for Professionals in Organisations

Organisational requirements	Professional expectations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hierarchical/organisational control ▪ Rules of the organisation ▪ Organisational secrecy ▪ Organisational loyalty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expert evaluation and control • Professional standards ▪ Dissemination of information ▪ Commitment to the field

Adapted from von Glinow (1988)

A central concern for professionals surrounds the manner in which management exercises control. Managers act as the agents of stakeholders (who control the strategic direction and resourcing of the organisation) and have the responsibility of co-ordinating the activities

required to achieve the goals of the organisation (Dawson 1994; Raelin 1992). While professionals will generally accept that essential activities must be managed if they are to be supported in their work, they will object to process constraints (for example, prescriptive technical instructions regarding process steps) that negatively affect their capacity to exercise professional autonomy in service delivery. In organisations where professionals have been unable to retain autonomy regarding the content and process of service delivery, the managerial presence tends to be stronger.

The tension that emanates from the conflict between the professional and bureaucratic modes of working is likely to have a foundation in differences that exist between professional and managerial values and belief systems (Raelin 1992). In situations where non-professional managers are required to exercise a leadership role with professional staff, they may lack sufficient credibility to be able to do so effectively. In such circumstances, the professionals are likely to regard peer assessment and endorsement more highly than approval by management (Anderson 1997; Raelin 1992).

Strategies for Managing Professionals

The core characteristics of professionals (i.e. their expertise, operational autonomy and accountability) suggest that most professional workers require little direct supervision from managers. It is the culture of the profession itself that will to a considerable degree enable organisational service delivery goals to be met. This culture needs to be channelled and enhanced rather than created by leadership from managers (Mintzberg 1998:145). Shapero observes that management must be aware of the differences between managing professionals and the management relevant to the assembly line if they are to optimise the professional's performance potential (Shapero 1985:23). In other words, the manager should be responsible for creating the conditions within which the professional can work effectively.

Four strategies can serve to align the professional within the structure of an organisation. The first involves the promotion of professionals to management roles. This strategy has

two distinct benefits: (a) it avoids probable resistance to direct supervision from non-professional managers; and (b) the 'professional' manager is able to relate to the body of knowledge shared by the staff (Anderson 1997). A second strategy concerns situations where there are non-professional managers and where use is made of professional peer supervision and mentorship to ensure that professionals are supported and evaluated by those who understand their work. A third strategy involves staff, not in management positions but who possess expert knowledge and genuine commitment, assuming a professional leadership role to accomplish service delivery goals (Raelin 1989). Finally, there is the strategy of covert leadership (Mintzberg 1998) which refers to situations where leadership is provided by a manager who is also a member of the profession. The 'covert' style of leadership is unobtrusive and not overtly identifiable; the leader orchestrates rather than directs, leads by example and the leader's professional expertise underpins and infuses all of his/her actions (Mintzberg 1998:141-144). This concept of covert leadership draws upon the characteristics and behaviours that Goleman (1998) labels as "emotional intelligence"; namely, self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill. Emotional intelligence can be observed through a range of competencies such as the ability to work with others and effectiveness in leading change. Goleman's (1998) findings suggest that emotional intelligence is twice as important as technical skills or cognitive abilities in relation to achieving organisational results. Professional workers are more likely to be inspired by leaders who treat them with respect and trust, and not as detachable "human resources" (Mintzberg 1998:145).

Conclusion

Leadership is usually defined by researchers according to their individual perspective and the aspects of leadership that are of most interest to them. Consequently, they will investigate different phenomena and will interpret research results in accord with their perspective (Yukl 1998:2-3). In undertaking research involving leadership it is important, therefore, that the researcher should not rely exclusively on a priori assumptions and should retain an open mind regarding which constructs are likely to be of the greatest utility.

In this chapter leadership has been examined from five different angles, each contributing to our understanding. Drawing upon the ideas presented in the preceding pages the following key points regarding leadership are proposed as a framework that can be used to inform both research design and data analysis.

First, leadership involves the relationship between a leader and follower or (more typically in an organisation) a group of followers, which rests on an interactive process that involves the leader's use of influence or persuasion in the pursuit of organisational goals and objectives. The creation of a team environment and the empowerment of followers impress as relevant criteria to gauge the impact of leadership, while the differentiation between types of power and the relationship between the use of power and follower reactions (commitment, compliance and resistance) are useful for examining the perspectives of participants involved in the research for this study.

Second, a distinction can be made between management and leadership in relation to tasks, roles and behaviours. However, although management has an emphasis upon planning, control and results, while leadership focuses upon people, process, vision, values and direction, it is more useful to conceive of leadership and management as overlapping constructs rather than as mutually exclusive processes. For the present study, the trait and behavioural perspectives offer a framework for consideration of the responses of research participants regarding their understanding of the characteristics and behaviours associated with effective leadership. In particular, the distinction between task behaviours (that focus on goal achievement) and relationship behaviours (that demonstrate respect, and focus on the development of trust) appears to be particularly useful when considering leadership in a social service agency such as the Probation Service. The point at issue here, as suggested in this review of leadership research, is that leadership which places emphasis on coaching, teaching and modelling, is more likely to generate follower commitment than an approach reliant on controlling and supervision.

Third, situational leadership theory posits the existence of an interrelationship between leader behaviours, follower behaviours and the impact of situational factors (including

personal characteristics, environmental influences and current organisational strategies). A critical assumption of the situational approach is the need for flexible and adaptive leadership; leaders need to understand that different situations require different types of leadership, and the needs of followers are liable to change. This assumption, and the understanding required of leaders, is salient to the analysis and interpretation of the views and experiences of research participants in an organisation subject to powerful forces of change. Indeed, the explanatory capacity of the transformational perspective is of particular relevance here, as is charismatic leadership theory, which provides a set of assumptions against which leadership in the Probation Service can be assessed.

Fourth, the willingness of followers to accept leadership direction is likely to be related to the degree of follower motivation and understanding, and the level of value congruence between leader and follower. The creation of willing following was thought to be related to the promotion of achievable goals, notably goals of mutual benefit to leader and follower. That said, it is important to remember that a values-based leadership approach seeks to link leader and follower through the articulation of a set of common values. In light of the construction of practice as a professional enterprise, the degree of values congruence that exists between leaders and followers in the Probation Service is likely to exert a significant influence upon service delivery (i.e. goal achievement).

Finally, it has been proposed that the provision of leadership that supports and facilitates professional practice is most likely to be successful in achieving organisational service delivery goals. The issue of probation's status as a profession (encompassing the duality of autonomy and accountability) and the strategies proposed for managing professionals, comprise a sound set of constructs with which to consider the participants' experience and expectations regarding leadership.

CHAPTER SIX

Research Methods

Introduction

The overall goal and objectives of the thesis were outlined in Chapter One as follows:

- The goal of the thesis is to consider probation practice and the contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery in the Probation Service.

The six objectives of the study are:

- First, to explore Probation Officers' and Service Managers' understandings of the political and managerial changes affecting the New Zealand Probation Service.
- Second, to ascertain Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of probation values, knowledge, skills and practice.
- Third, to understand Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of the assessment of service delivery.
- Fourth, to identify how the Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership and effective service delivery within the Probation Service.
- Fifth, to examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers in the Probation Service.
- Sixth, to determine the structures and processes that are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery.

With the above in mind this chapter sets out the research methods used in the processes of data collection and analysis. There are four sections. First, the theoretical perspectives that underpin the research methods are discussed, including the positivist and interpretivist traditions, grounded theory and sensitising concepts. Second, the research design is outlined, including in-depth interviewing, the interview schedule, focus groups, ethical considerations, participant selection and recruitment, and a profile of the participants. Third, data collection procedures are described, including pilot testing, interviewing, focus

groups and the field research journal. Finally, the processes of data organisation and analysis are discussed, including issues in qualitative analysis and a description of procedures.

Theoretical Perspectives

Positivist and Interpretivist Research Traditions

Mishler (1986:139-140), commenting on the work of Runciman regarding the philosophy of method in the social sciences, provides the following succinct statement regarding the positivist and interpretivist paradigms:

Runciman frames the debate as one between positivists, who recognise that human behaviour is complex but see no obstacle in principle to the search for general laws and causal generalisations, and the proponents of the hermeneutic perspective. The latter view the contextual grounded meanings of human action as central and as requiring methods different from those in the natural sciences, that is, methods that are more appropriate to such questions as understanding the meaning of particular actions.

McNeill (1986:60) differentiates between positivist and interpretivist traditions in terms of their different perspectives on the nature of society, individuals and the relationship between them:

The positivist will tend to see society as the object of study, and the individual as a relatively passive product of it. The interpretivist sociologist regards the individual as a conscious, active, choice-making being, and society as the outcome of their collective action.

Positivist epistemology finds expression in the aims and methods of 'scientific' enquiry and it is only scientifically verified experience that is considered to accurately reflect objective reality (Eastman and Bailey 1994:314; Schon 1995:32; Souflee 1993:325). This 'scientific' approach rests upon the assumption that explanatory theory is generated through empirical research (using mainly quantitative methods) and this theory can be deductively applied in practice. The purpose of developing theory is to establish causal connections between phenomena in order to gain a greater degree of control over the environment (Peile and

McCouat 1997:344; Scott 1990:564). However, Rubin and Rubin (2005:23) draw attention to a particular weakness of the positivist approach; namely, the failure to account for context that is socially constructed:

The language of positivism is a numeric one; the goal is a series of statistical equations that explain and predict human behaviour. Because positivists seek rules that apply uniformly, they extract simple relationships from a complex real world and examine them as if context did not matter and as if social life were stable rather than constantly changing.

In contrast, the interpretivist perspective is based upon epistemological relativism, a position that contends that the social world cannot be defined through universal truths; there are only alternative interpretations of social phenomena (Carpenter 1996:149; Greene, Jensen and Jones, 1996:172; Scott 1990:564). The meaning attributed to social facts is context dependent and represents the subjective constructions that people have about their situation (Peile and McCouat 1997:345; Robbins, Chatterjee and Canda 1996:375). Interpretivist research seeks to understand 'social facts' through inclusion of the perspective of the subject involved in the social situation.

The distinctions between positivist and interpretive methods are, however, not clear-cut and it is useful to view the different methods as being placed on a continuum. At the quantitative end are methods such as social surveys and the use of aggregated data involving large numbers of respondents, typically selected via a sampling procedure from a particular population and deemed to be 'representative' of that population. The collected data is then evaluated using appropriate measures (for example, statistical tests of significance) to identify patterns and relationships between specific variables that can be generalised to the population from which the sample of respondents has been drawn. At the opposite, qualitative end of the continuum, the methods employed such as personal in-depth interviews, case studies and participant observation involve fewer respondents, typically selected via a non-random purposeful sampling strategy. The information collected is evaluated using techniques such as content and thematic analysis.

Allen-Meares (1995:5) observes that during the mid 1980s the social work research field "witnessed a very interesting and lively intellectual exchange about the relative merits of

quantitative and qualitative research methods". Critics of the quantitative (positivist) tradition pointed to: a preoccupation with the desire to attain greater respectability in the academic community; a failure to recognise the subject-subject rather than the subject-object relationship that existed between the researcher and subject; and the complicated nature of research in social work with uncontrollable environmental conditions and the influence of extraneous variables. Advocates of the qualitative (interpretive) approach "maintained the superiority of their approach to delve beneath the surface of aggregate data and important phenomena and to formulate theories to inform practice and research" (Allen-Meares 1995:5). The result of the debate has been a levelling of the relative importance of quantitative and qualitative methodology, with each research tradition being able to meet the requirements of 'scientific' validity. Each approach is also recognised for its value in contributing to our understanding of the world or society in which we live or a particular social phenomena. McCracken (1988:18) articulates this point succinctly:

The qualitative and quantitative approaches are never substitutes for one another. This is so because, necessarily, they observe different realities, or different aspects of the same reality. This distinctness must be honoured.

It is important, therefore, that any research methodology be congruent with both the subject and purpose of the enquiry. In these terms the present research seeks to obtain information regarding the knowledge and experience of the participants, and the interpretivist methods that have been utilised are better able to address this research focus.

Grounded Theory

The theoretical perspective that informs this research is inductive or 'grounded' theory. Babbie (1989) provides a clear distinction between the use of inductive reasoning (from facts to theories) and deductive reasoning (applying a theory to a particular case). The inductive construction of theory moves from concrete observations to a general theoretical explanation. Glaser and Strauss use the term "grounded theory" in reference to the inductive method of theory construction (Babbie 1989:35-56).

A grounded approach involves "being open to what the site has to tell us", and slowly

evolving a coherent framework rather than “imposing” one from the start (Miles 1983:119). The inductive process, however, is not linear and there is a role to be played by a priori concepts. Bulmer (1984:256) cautions that there is an “interdependence” of observation and concepts rather than the temporal priority of one or the other. This point is reinforced by Miles who refers to a tension between the need to develop grounded theory and the need for clarity and focus, and he adds that “research projects that pretend to come to the study with no assumptions usually encounter much difficulty” (Miles 1983:119). Babbie reinforces this dialectic between induction and deduction in his comment that “theory and research interact through a never-ending alternation of deduction, induction, deduction” (Babbie 1989:44).

Sensitising Concepts

A priori reasoning is evident in the use of sensitising concepts (brought by the researcher to the data) that provide a sense of reference and direction for enquiry. These concepts come generally from the literature, the researcher’s theoretical perspective, experience and involvement in the area under study. Sensitising concepts should be used inductively in the interpretation of the participants’ perspectives and should not dominate the analysis but should facilitate the reader’s understanding (Patton 1990:391).

The primary aim and objectives of this study have been determined on the basis of my knowledge and experience gained from employment in the Probation Service field of practice. A researcher who did not have any prior experience of the practice context would have greater difficulty in directing the research process toward the substantive issues. In the introduction to the thesis, four themes were outlined that influence the construction of both leadership and effective practice in the Probation Service: the influence of the broader practice context; the construction of practice; the construct of leadership; and tensions between professional and management perspectives. These key themes represent the sensitising concepts that informed the design of the interview schedule and the analysis of the research data. These concepts are articulated in the core documents ‘Interview Schedule – Arguments’ and ‘Research Questions – Master’ (see Appendix 2 and 3), that

were part of the iterative development of the research questionnaire.

Sensitising concepts play a significant role in 'orienting' the researcher to the subject under consideration; however, the researcher should be careful not to approach the investigation from a 'closed' position. For example, as pointed out in the previous chapter, leadership is usually defined by researchers according to their individual perspectives and the aspects of leadership that are of most interest to them. Consequently, as Yukl (1998:2-3) points out, they will investigate different phenomena and will interpret the results obtained in accord with their different positions. In undertaking research surrounding any concept, therefore, it is important that the researcher should not rely exclusively on a priori assumptions and should retain an open mind regarding which constructs are likely to be of the greatest utility.

Research Design

The primary research tool used in this study was the in-depth interview. This tool was augmented by focus group discussions.

The In-depth Interview

In comparison with an unstructured interview, the in-depth interview is a more efficient qualitative data collection method that is characterised by a sharper and more intense focus (McCracken 1988:7). This approach is most useful when seeking to "obtain interviewees' interpretations of their experiences and their understandings" (Rubin and Rubin 2005:36). For Seidman (1991:103) the main strength of in-depth interviewing is also the capacity to "discover the interconnections among people who work in a shared context".

Another key strength and a potential weakness of the in-depth interview is the nature of the relationship between the researcher and the interviewee. The method allows the development of a meaningful relationship between them that will be influenced by the

personality, style and beliefs of the interviewer. It is contingent upon the interviewer to minimise risk to the respondent, to be flexible and adapt to situations as they arise during the interview, to be sensitive and aware of the potential impact of his or her opinions, and to not allow intimacy to obscure or complicate the relationship. In particular, the researcher must avoid the risk of “over collaboration”, where the interviewee provides the answers that the interviewer is thought to want (Rubin and Rubin 2005:36).

The Interview Schedule

McCracken (1988) argues that the use of a questionnaire (i.e. an interview schedule) is “indispensable for [the] purposes of the long qualitative interview” and identifies the following key functions of the questionnaire. First, its use assists the interviewer to achieve consistency by establishing an order in which issues will be covered and through the scheduling of prompts. Second, it provides direction and scope to the likely range of discourse. Third, it can be used later to order data. Finally, the framework established by using a questionnaire will free the researcher to attend more fully to the respondent (McCracken 1988:24-25). While the advantages of the questionnaire are apparent, it is very important that the interviewer is aware of the risk of imposing it on the respondent and using it to control the interview rather than facilitate the collection of data.

The interview schedule was developed to gather information to meet the six key research objectives; the following process was used in developing each section of the schedule.

First, a series of sub-headings were developed, drawing upon the literature review and a priori concepts. For example, the first research objective was “To identify how the Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership and effective service delivery within the Probation Service”. Three main sub-headings were developed: (a) ‘Understanding of Leadership’, (b) ‘Understanding of Effective Service Delivery’, and (c) ‘Assessment of Effective Service Delivery’. Then second level headings were developed to elaborate each of the main sub-headings. For example, in the case of ‘Understanding of Leadership’ there were five headings; the

relationship between leadership and management, the relationship between leader and follower, characteristics of leaders, behaviours of leaders, and leadership effectiveness. Second, key arguments and concepts were identified under each sub-heading and references to supporting literature were noted. This resulted in the production of the document 'Interview Schedule – Arguments' (Appendix 2). In the case of the first sub-heading under the research objective, 'Understanding of Leadership', seven key points were identified and linkages were noted to references in the literature review chapters (see Appendix 2, page 1).

The final step involved identifying key questions that would elicit the participants' views regarding the substantive themes, concepts and arguments. The document linking the 'Interview Schedule – Arguments' with key questions was produced, titled 'Research Questions – Master' (Appendix 3). In regard to the example cited above, 'Understanding of Leadership', the following six questions were identified:

- How do you define the term management?
- How do you define the term leadership?
- What would you identify as the similarities/differences between management and leadership?
- To what degree do you consider that the concepts of management and leadership overlap?
- Who do you identify as leaders in the Community Probation Service?
- What roles do you consider that leaders play in the Community Probation Service?

The development of the interview schedule was an iterative process; changes were made based on information gained during the pilot testing (discussed below). Care was taken to ensure that questions were 'open' in order to facilitate a free flow of responses from the participants. At various points in the interview schedule prompts were included; these were used by the researcher to provide clarity and direction to participants. For example, the following questions and prompts were included in the first section of the Interview Schedule concerning the participant's views regarding effective service delivery:

What do you consider to be the important indicators of the effectiveness of service delivery?

[Prompt: re-offending, compliance with sentence, behaviour and attitude change, victim empathy, impact on others, meeting other needs of the offender]

Focus Groups

Morgan (1997:6) defines a focus group as:

A research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher. In essence, it is the researcher's interest that provides the focus, whereas the data come from the group interaction.

It is generally understood that this "group interaction" will involve "an in-depth, open-ended group discussion of 1-2 hours duration", and that the issues explored will be "on a pre-defined and limited topic" (Robinson 1999:905). While a focus group can be used as the primary research approach, in the case of this research the method served as a supplementary source of data, allowing the exploration of issues identified during the analysis of data collected in the in-depth individual interviews.

The role of the researcher is central in establishing direction to the focus group. While this provision of direction represents a strength of this approach, it should be noted that the combination of pre-selected content and the presence of the researcher could result in the data "leaning" toward this direction (Morgan 1997:16). A further feature of the focus group is the potential to generate critical comment and insight as a consequence of group interaction (Robinson 1999:906). However, while the researcher should endeavour to create a non-threatening environment that encourages the participants to engage freely in an authentic discussion, it is likely that the presence of others, the composition and tenor of the group, as well as the researcher's discussion facilitation skills, will affect what individual participants elect to disclose.

The purpose of the focus group meetings was to obtain clarification of key points that emerged from the initial mapping and interpretation of the individual interview transcripts.

The following process was used at each meeting (see Appendix 4):

- (a) The researcher established ground rules regarding the operation of the group, in particular regarding confidentiality.
- (b) The researcher provided an overview of the key research objectives and the field research process (i.e. the steps taken to gather and interpret the participants' views regarding the research objectives).
- (c) The researcher outlined the initial data mapping and interpretation regarding key sensitising concepts: the influence of the broader practice context; the construction of practice; the construct of leadership; and tensions between professional and management perspectives.
- (d) The focus group participants' were then invited to respond. A free-flowing dialogue was established between the group members and researcher.

Ethical Considerations

The full application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee is attached as Appendix 1. At this point reference is made to the principal ethical concerns arising from the research proposal.

Access to participants

Participants were recruited from Probation Service staff at two locations in New Zealand. These locations were outside the area where the researcher had duties/responsibilities as an Area Manager. Prior written permission to contact potential participants was obtained from the General Manager of the Probation Service. The researcher then wrote to selected Service Managers and Probation Officers inviting them to register their interest in participation; all envelopes were marked 'Confidential' and 'Staff in Confidence'.

Informed consent

The principle of written informed consent can be regarded as the lynchpin to ethical decisions. All participants were sent an Information Sheet, Registration of Interest form

and a copy of the General Manager's letter of approval. Prospective participants were informed of: the purpose of the research; their possible role in it; the protection they would be given regarding anonymity and confidentiality; how the data would be used; their right to decline participation and withdraw without prejudice; and to ask any questions at any point in the process. It was the researcher's responsibility to provide additional information and to clarify any questions raised by participants. Those who registered their interest in participation were sent an Informed Consent form. Once individuals had indicated an interest in participating and had completed an Informed Consent form the researcher interviewed them.

Anonymity and confidentiality

Participant anonymity could not be ensured once they had disclosed their name, been interviewed or participated in a focus group. The bounds of confidentiality were explained to all participants, and the researcher contracted not to disclose any personal information provided by a participant without the participant's prior permission. All participants were also appraised of the procedures that would be implemented to ensure confidentiality with respect to the storage, collection and handling of research data and related materials. First, all records (tapes, CDs, transcripts, consent forms, background questionnaires, field notes) would be stored in a secure, fireproof cabinet to which only the researcher had access. Second, that a confidentiality agreement would be imposed on members of focus groups. Third, that the typist employed to transcribe interview tapes would complete a confidentiality agreement. Fourth, that there would be no use of participant names or other identifying details of individuals in the presentation of the results. And finally, that access to research material would be restricted to the researcher and the official PhD supervisors approved by Massey University, and thesis examiners, if required.

Conflict of interest

To avoid the potential conflict of interest that could have arisen from occupying dual roles, clear distinctions were established between the role of researcher and the other role performed by the researcher as a Probation Service Area Manager. The research sites were

at different locations from that where the researcher worked, and selection criteria excluded any potential participant who had either previously worked or was currently working directly with the researcher at the time of the fieldwork. Hence, the researcher was not involved in the research as a Probation Service Area Manager with participants who were Probation Service staff for whom he had managerial control.

The interests of the Probation Service did not inhibit the aims and principles of the project and did not take precedence over the interests of the participants. Although the Probation Service was a stakeholder, by virtue of the research topic and through sponsorship of the researcher and the provision of resources to enable the research to be completed, the Probation Service did not have any direct influence on either the design or implementation of the research project.

Potential harm to participants

The procedures that were developed and implemented regarding informed consent and confidentiality were designed to avoid or at least minimise potential harm to participants. By not using the names or other identifying characteristics of the participants, the findings have been presented in this thesis in such a way that they cannot be used to harm individual participants. The Probation Service has access only to the final research report and not to any information regarding any individual participant that could prejudice a person's right to receive fair and impartial treatment from their employer.

Participant Selection and Recruitment Procedures

As noted above the goal of the thesis is to consider the contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery in the Probation Service. Accordingly, the decision was made to interview Probation Officers and Service Managers for two reasons: (a) because these two groups are directly engaged in practice with the primary clients of the Probation Service; and (b) because it is therefore by examining the perceptions and issues experienced by these two groups that an understanding can be developed with regard to the

contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery. On this basis, an associated decision was made not to include senior managers as research participants. That is not to say that the perceptions and experiences of senior managers are unimportant. Indeed, it became evident during the research that leadership from more senior managers presented a number of issues and challenges that could form the basis for a future research project.

The Probation Service is divided into three administrative regions - Northern, Central and Southern – and the researcher was employed as an Area Manager in the Central Region where he had worked almost exclusively for twenty-five years prior to the commencement of the research project. It was decided, therefore, that the research sites should be selected from those located in the Northern and Southern regions in order to minimise the likelihood that potential participants would need to be excluded on the basis of prior professional association with the researcher. The two sites selected, one in the Northern and one in the Southern Region, were located in urban areas and were considered to be representative of Probation Service offices in each region.

Participant recruitment began with a letter to the General Manager of the Probation Service to secure access to and authority to use staff lists for the two selected sites. The General Manager authorised the release to the researcher of the staff lists concerned. These lists were provided by the office of the relevant Regional Probation Manager and contained the names, positions and team identifier of Probation Officers and Service Managers at each site. A standard letter of invitation to express interest in participating in the research project was then sent to all Probation Officers and Service Managers at each site. The following enclosures were sent with the letter: a copy of the General Manager's letter of approval; the Information Sheet; a background questionnaire; a Registration of Interest form; and a return envelope.

The background questionnaire sought information from each potential participant on their: age, gender, ethnicity, length of service, work experience, educational qualifications, training and membership of professional organisations. This information served two main

purposes: it provided the researcher with a means of assessing how ‘representative’ the sample of participants was relative to the broader Probation Officer and Service Manager population; and it alerted the researcher to possible themes to explore during the individual interviews (for example, issues surrounding membership of a professional association).

Table 5 provides details regarding participant recruitment and selection. The initial response rate at Site 1, two weeks after the letters of invitation were sent, was low (10 percent) and follow up letters were therefore sent. A total of 20 staff (14 Probation Officers, 6 Service Managers) eventually indicated an interest in participating. At Site 2 the response rate was higher with 21 staff (18 Probation Officers, 3 Service Managers) indicating an interest in participating (33 percent) and follow up letters were not required. It will be noted that there is a discrepancy between the numbers accepting the invitation to participate and the numbers actually interviewed. The reasons were quite straightforward. At Site 1 one Probation Officer was on annual leave and the second did not attend and did not give any reason, while the ‘missing’ Service Manager contacted the researcher regarding an inability to attend and was not able to reschedule the interview time. At Site 2, the three Probation Officers who had agreed to participate but were not interviewed, all contacted the researcher and cited competing work priorities as the reason for not attending.

Table 5: Participant Recruitment

Recruitment		Site One	Site Two	Total
Probation Officers	Invited	54	59	113
	Accepted	14	18	32
	Interviewed	12	15	27
Service Managers	Invited	11	7	18
	Accepted	6	3	9
	Interviewed	5	3	8

There were insufficient responses to allow for purposeful selection on the basis of qualifications, experience, gender and ethnicity. However, the ‘mix’ obtained suggests a sample that reflected reasonably well the characteristics of Probation staff at the sites

selected (see Table 6 and associated discussion below). It should be noted that qualitative purposeful sampling does not aim to capture a statistically representative set of respondents but to engage the participation of those best suited to the topic at hand (Pope, Ziebland and Mays 2000). Indeed, any bias that might have arisen as a consequence of this type of selection is likely to make the findings more rather than less valuable because all of those interviewed conveyed a strong sense of interest in the substantive research topic.

Profile of Participants

Of the 27 Probation Officers who attended for interview 26 completed the background questionnaire, as did 7 of the 8 Service Managers. The results obtained are summarised in

Table 6: Characteristics of Participants

Characteristics		Probation Officers		Service Managers	
		No.	%	No.	%
Age	20-29	6	23.0	-	
	30-39	7	27.0	3	43.0
	40-49	6	23.0	2	28.5
	50+	7	27.0	2	28.5
	Total	26		7	
Gender	Male	10	38.0	4	57.0
	Female	16	62.0	3	43.0
	Total	26		7	
Ethnicity	Pakeha	17	52.5	4	57.0
	Maori	2	7.4	-	-
	Other	2	7.4	1	14.0
	Not Stated	5	22.2	2	29.0
	Total	26		7	
Experience in Probation Service					
Less 1 year		4	15.3		
1-5		9	34.6	1	14.3
6-10		3	11.5	3	42.8
11+		10	38.4	3	42.8
Total		26		7	

The age distribution of the two groups of participants was more or less as expected; while the Probation Officers were spread over all four of the specified age groups (with half under age 40), the Service Managers were slightly older with none under 30 years of age.

Overall, 58 percent of participants were female and 42 percent male. However, it should be noted that whereas the majority of the Probation Officers were female (62 percent) the majority of the Service Managers were male (57 percent). Significantly, in light of the ethnic composition of the client population (48 percent Maori), only 8 percent of Probation Officers and none of the Service Managers identified themselves as Maori. A high proportion (70 percent) of the participants held a tertiary qualification; and 26 percent held a Social Work degree or diploma. Somewhat surprisingly, only four participants (15.4 percent) were members of a professional association; all were Probation Officers, with three belonging to the New Zealand Association of Social Workers and the other affiliated as a counsellor. This low rate of professional association membership probably reflects the impact of the recess of the New Zealand Association of Probation Officers. Finally, there were two distinct clusters of Probation Service experience; 50 percent of participants had up to five years experience, and 38 percent more than eleven years. In comparison, only one Service Manager had less than five years experience. Overall, it stands to reason that those appointed to the position of Service Manager would be persons with more experience of employment in the Probation Service, and therefore somewhat older as noted above.

Data Collection

Pilot Testing

A pilot of the interview schedule and interview process was completed one month prior to commencement of the fieldwork. Two Service Managers known to the researcher were interviewed. A typist contracted to transcribe the interview tapes found the audio quality variable and experienced difficulties with regard to voice tone and inflection. To overcome these technical difficulties an external microphone was purchased for use in subsequent fieldwork.

A copy of the transcript for their own interview was given to each of the two pilot test participants and the researcher conducted a debriefing meeting with each of them individually. Overall, they advised that: they would have appreciated prior notice

regarding the range of topics/themes to be covered; some of the topics were very conceptual and difficult to formulate responses to; some questions were confusing; and that the researcher should provide an introduction or contextual comment for each section of the interview schedule. Taking the above points 'on board', together with other points arising from the review of the transcripts and observations made in the course of the pilot interviews, the interview schedule and procedure was revised. One of the pilot participants considered the amended schedule to be an improvement on the first version, and noted that the questions were shorter and more precise.

Interviewing

Individual interviews were held with Probation Officers and Service Managers at each site in March 2001. Although one was conscious of the need to control interview pace, especially when participants displayed a tendency to digress, each interview was generally completed within 80 to 100 minutes. The semi-structured interview format was successful. An ability to be flexible with the ordering of questions within each section allowed participants to follow their own line of thought, and they made frequent use of anecdotal evidence to support points being made. On some occasions prompts were used in order to obtain a fuller range of observations and/or to clarify some responses.

Overall, the participants appeared to be interested in the research topic, highly motivated, immersed in their daily practice, acutely aware of the complexity of their work and the enormity of the task of reducing re-offending. Their responses seemed to be considered and they provided feedback regarding the benefit of having the time to reflect on the issues to be discussed.

Focus Groups

Held six months after the initial interviews, once the interview tapes had been transcribed and analysed, the purpose of the focus groups was to review the initial charting, mapping and interpretation completed by the researcher. At Site 1, 9 of the 12 Probation Officers initially interviewed indicated an interest in attending the group meeting. However, only 3

of the 9 attended; 4 advised the researcher prior to the meeting that they would be unavailable, and the other 2 failed to make contact. At Site 2, 10 of the 15 Probation Officers initially interviewed indicated an interest in attending the group meeting. Only 6 of the 10 finally attended; 1 advised the researcher prior to the meeting that she would be unavailable, and the other 3 failed to make contact. The attendance rate for the Service Managers was similarly disappointing with only 3 of the 7 participants attending the scheduled meeting (1 in Site 1 and 2 in Site 2). This low attendance reduced the potential contribution of the focus groups; however, those who participated did so enthusiastically and made useful contributions.

Field Research Journal

A journal was kept that recorded the field research process, including: the pilot testing; participant selection and recruitment; interviewing; interpretation and analysis of data; and focus groups. This included the researcher's observations and reflections regarding issues and events that were later used to inform analysis, interpretation and the final data presentation chapters.

Data Organisation and Analysis

The transcription of the individual interview tapes presented two main issues. First, the typist engaged for this task was not available to work for as many hours each week as initially indicated. Second, an effort to engage additional typists met with limited success. The researcher therefore decided to complete the transcription process himself. While this did indeed prove to be time consuming there was the benefit of achieving a higher degree of familiarity with the data. The transcripts varied in length from 4,000 to 19,000 words, with most between 8,000 – 12,000 words. The proceedings of each focus group were also taped and later transcribed by the researcher. For the Probation Officer Focus Groups the transcripts comprised 21 pages (5,500 words), and the Service Manager transcripts

comprised 10 pages (2,000 words).

Prior to describing the post-transcription procedures followed in organising and analysing the data collected, it is necessary to consider (albeit briefly) issues surrounding qualitative data analysis. For example, a potential concern arises regarding how themes that are used in data analysis come into being; the extent to which they are deductively given, emerge as a consequence of the data or represent a combination of the two approaches. Patton (1990:372-373) poses the challenge involved in qualitative analysis succinctly:

The purpose of qualitative enquiry is to produce findings. The process of data collection is not an end in itself. The culminating activities of qualitative enquiry are analysis, interpretation, and presentation of findings. The challenge is to make sense of massive amounts of data, reduce the volume of information, identify significant patterns, and construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal.

A defining characteristic of the qualitative approach is the interpretation of action, events and perspectives through the “eyes of those being investigated” (Bryman, Bresnan, Berdsworth and Keil 1988:16). Interpretation involves going beyond description, with the researcher attaching significance, offering explanations, drawing conclusions and attaching meaning (Patton 1990:423; Rubin and Rubin 2005:13). For Patton, interpretive explanation in qualitative analysis does not yield knowledge in the same sense as quantitative explanation; the emphasis is upon understanding, rather than causal determination (Patton 1990:425).

The skills and abilities of the researcher are important in qualitative analysis (McCracken 1988; Patton 1990; Pope, Ziebland and Mays 2000). Mishler (1986) suggests that the basic requirement for reliable and valid analysis and interpretation is accurate description, which is dependent upon tape recordings and the careful transcription of interviews. However, the researcher also acts as an “instrument” in data collection and analysis; he or she will be reliant on their own intelligence and judgement, and draw upon a broad range of personal experience when making a decision regarding the significance of an observation or pattern (McCracken 1988:18; Patton 1990:372). In these terms it is asserted that the author of this thesis has exercised (as outlined above) considerable care in the collection and transcription

of interview material, and brings to the task of analysis and interpretation a wealth of experience gained in the course of 27 years of employment in the Probation Service. Finally, Patton enjoins the researcher to act responsibly to “monitor and report their own analytical procedures and processes as fully and truthfully as possible” (Patton 1990:372).

It is asserted that both Patton’s injunction and a potential concern noted above about the origin(s) of analytical themes are answered through the adoption of the ‘Framework Approach’ to data analysis (Pope, Ziebland and Mays 2000). In this approach the data collection method and procedure tends to be more structured than in a purely inductive approach, and the analytical process more explicit and more strongly informed by *a priori* reasoning. The data collected reflects the original accounts and observations of the participants (i.e. grounded and inductive) but starts deductively from pre-set aims and objectives. When identifying the thematic index to be used in data analysis and interpretation the researcher reviews: first, the sensitising concepts and questions that emerge from the aim and objectives of the study; and second, issues raised by respondents that are evident in the data. The outcome of this process is knowledge that enhances our understanding of probation practice and leadership with respect to service delivery. Such knowledge, in turn, has the potential to contribute to positive change in probation practice and leadership in order to improve the effectiveness of service delivery.

Description of Data Analysis Procedures

The framework approach to data analysis outlined by Pope, Ziebland and Mays (2000) was utilised. As shown in Table 7, this framework comprises the five stages of familiarisation, identification of a thematic index, indexing, charting and mapping and interpretation. These stages are briefly outlined below.

Table 7: Outline of the Framework Approach

Stages	Explanation of Stages
Familiarisation	The researcher selects a number of data rich cases and listens to the tapes, reads transcripts, reviews field notes in order to identify key ideas and themes.
Identification of a thematic index	The key issues, concepts and themes that will be used to examine the data are identified. The researcher reviews first, the sensitising concepts and questions that emerge from the aim and objectives of the study and second, issues raised by respondents that are evident in the data. The researcher compiles a detailed index that labels data into manageable categories for analysis.
Indexing	The thematic index is applied to the data by annotating the transcripts with codes from the index.
Charting	The data is reordered into the appropriate part of the thematic index, forming charts.
Mapping and interpretation	The charts are used to map the range and nature of the data to create typologies and draw associations between themes. Mapping and interpretation is influenced by both the original research objective and assumptions and the themes that have emerged from the data.

Adapted from Pope, Ziebland and Mays (2000)

Familiarisation

Five data rich cases (three Probation Officers and two Service Managers) were selected and the following steps were then completed. First, an interim analysis was conducted by listening to the interview tapes, reading the interview transcripts, and studying observational notes recorded in the research journal. Next, key ideas and recurrent themes were listed and these were used to annotate the transcripts. Finally, a summary of issues and themes was prepared.

Identification of thematic index

The researcher identified key issues, concepts and themes from the transcripts that could be used to examine and reference the data. Reference was also made to the a priori conceptual

framework that had informed the design of the questionnaire. The final step was to combine the familiarisation data and the a priori framework to develop a thematic framework/index to be used during the indexing process.

Indexing

Initially, the thematic index was applied to the individual transcripts and each transcript was annotated and linkages established with the thematic index using numerical indicators. Data files were created for Probation Officers and Service Managers based on the thematic index. Notes made during the indexing process were entered on the data files to create a record of all responses. Next, the data files were reviewed, all 'other' categories eliminated and codes developed for sections not already coded. Superfluous material was removed and data reassigned to more logical locations. Finally, the thematic index was revised to create separate indexes for Probation Officers and Service Managers.

Charting

A picture of the data as a whole was developed and data were rearranged from each case in accordance with the thematic index. The participant's views and experiences were abstracted and synthesized into notes, and illustrative passages for possible quotation were identified. All notes were coded to identify the participant's ID number and the transcript page reference. Finally, charts of significant themes were developed. The Probation Officer charts comprised 140 pages of notes (38,000 words); and the Service Manager charts comprised 63 pages (18,000 words).

Mapping and interpretation

The Service Manager and Probation Officer charts were reviewed to produce data analysis files for each group. These files contained a description of the range and nature of phenomena, associations were also identified and potential explanations were noted. Following the focus group meetings for Probation Officers and Service Managers, final data analysis files were completed. The Probation Officer file comprised 81 pages of notes

(30,000 words), while the Service Manager file comprised 46 pages (16,000 words). The data analysis files provided the basis for the data presentation chapters (Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten and Eleven).

CHAPTER SEVEN

Knowledge of Changes in the Service Delivery Context

In Chapter Three it was argued that changes in the broader probation practice environment are likely to have influenced how practice is constructed and implemented, and four changes were identified. The first concerned the role of the state; it was suggested that the influence of the Libertarian notion of self-responsibility, the reality of resource constraints and the requirement for state expenditure to be socially legitimated, have resulted in limits being imposed upon demand-driven social service provision such as that of the Probation Service. Second, reform in the public sector has increased accountability for the use of resources and the achievement of outcomes, while minimum practice standards associated with service provision have been more clearly identified. However, concern was expressed that the client has been reduced to the status of a commodity, the level of practitioner professional autonomy has been reduced, and there had been an uncritical reliance on the business model. New Public Management was identified as the third force that has influenced agencies such as the Probation Service. In particular, the following changes were noted: a separation of policy development from service delivery; a challenge to the fundamental assumptions underlying the purpose of practice that resulted in a shift in emphasis from rehabilitation to monitoring and containment; and the emergence of tension between the values and beliefs associated with management in comparison with those espoused by practitioners who hold a social work orientation. Finally, the reality of resource constraints resulted in the adoption of an econometric rationale for determining the type and level of intervention that is available, which has influenced the definition of acceptable outcomes for clients.

In this chapter the perceptions, understandings and experiences of the research participants are presented regarding changes in the Probation Service practice context during the period 1996-2000. The participants' views and experiences have been grouped into three parts.

The first concerns change observed in the organisational culture of the Probation Service; that is, the increased emphasis upon management, the impact of resource constraints, change in the requirement for accountability, and the extent and rate of change. Next, service delivery issues are considered, including: change in the meta-narrative that underpins probation; and the introduction of Integrated Offender Management (IOM). The third part concerns professional issues that impact upon the practitioners, namely: increased work pressure, training, and the provision of professional supervision and support.

Change in Organisational Culture

Emphasis on Management

Both the Probation Officers and Service Managers identified an increased emphasis upon management as a dominant characteristic of recent change in the Probation Service. Probation Officers identified change in the broader political climate as exerting an impact upon Probation Service practice and made particular reference to the language used and where emphasis is placed. The political programme of New Public Management was identified as influencing the major restructuring of the Probation Service, and most Probation Officers regarded this as a positive move. For example, one participant observed that “[restructuring] trimmed the service down and probably got rid of the dead wood” (1-2:3). The General Manager (in 1996) was thought to have a very strong agenda to implement a market model in the management of the Probation Service. While it was acknowledged that the adoption of a business approach had been of benefit in ensuring the Service’s ongoing viability it was nevertheless thought that greater balance was required between the interests of management and those of practitioners. There was a sense that power and control were clearly vested with senior management and the Service was seen to be very hierarchical, with management handing down edicts. By way of example, one Probation Officer observed that while “*consultation appears to occur generally staff have little option other than to comply*” (1-7:1). A managerial emphasis was also evident in the

observation that “often Service Manager[s] don't know what to do because they are focused on managing allocations business rather than leadership” (2-6:5). Service Managers shared the view that the move to the business model had been positive, and some changes were considered to be excellent. For example, business planning and change were thought to have been needed:

Restructuring of the Department, moving from an emphasis on practice to much more [of a] business model were excellent and were needed. Prior to restructuring there were a lot of people working very hard but in such an individual way and to their own preferences that they might not necessarily be contributing to an overall goal of the Department, a scattered approach. We became very clear about the strategic direction. (2-18:4).

This resulted in a shift of emphasis in the role of the manager from a concern with practice to a concern with business management. It was also thought that the impact of New Public Management, with its emphasis on generic management skills, was reflected in appointment practices. On the other hand, most criticism centred on the difficulties associated with applying a business approach to probation practice, where the focus had traditionally been on people and their linkages with other social systems. Hence there was some negative perception regarding the application of what were described as “franchising” models that are typically used in the market, an application referred to by one Service Manager as the “McDonaldisation” of probation. A view was also expressed that having been given licence to operate in a market model, senior managers were preoccupied with the measurement of outputs.

The Service Managers offered a range of opinion regarding the impact of restructuring in 1996 that resulted in decentralisation and a flattening of the Service’s management structure. For example, there was a consensus that the Probation Service’s strategic direction had become clearer through the development of key result areas. In an effort to achieve these results, greater emphasis was now placed upon the internal provision of client services rather than reliance upon external providers (a feature of the earlier ‘brokerage’ model). However, one participant noted a lack of congruence between this new approach and the broader Government objective regarding inter-agency co-operation to address social problems:

Changes in practice – much more offender focus as opposed to a community focus. We're supposed to be looking externally, working in conjunction with other departments, [such as] WINZ, Education, and Health etc. But what the Department has done is actually narrowed [the focus] so there is very little inter-agency work; there was a reasonable amount prior to restructuring (2-18:4).

There was also criticism of a lack of coherence in planning within the Department of Corrections; for example, a Service Manager commented that the Probation Service should be planning for the provision of parole services on the basis of information regarding the prison population, in contrast to what was described as the current “knee-jerk” response to individual cases. A final observation on restructuring related to the apparent contradiction between the organisational structure that reflected decentralisation and the perception that operational policy development had become increasingly centralised – there was a sense that there was little scope for local initiatives.

Resource Constraints

There were three main concerns regarding constraints placed upon resource levels. First, Probation Officers considered that at times they were unable to make appropriate and mandated client referrals for interventions. There was either insufficient funding to pay for external provision of the required service, or the level of service required was not available internally. This situation was frustrating for them and was thought to sometimes have a negative effect on the client's motivation to address his or her criminogenic needs.

The second concern related to staffing levels. In some instances there were not enough permanent staff to cope with the expected workload. A response from management had been to employ contract staff; however, they were often inexperienced and untrained. Staffing levels were also considered to be inadequate to cover for scheduled leave, illness and training - although it was acknowledged that there had been an improvement regarding the most recent (2001) Integrated Offender Management training.

A third concern related to the inability of staff to cope with the full range of service

delivery requirements. Probation Officers expressed concern that they did not have sufficient time to spend in direct contact with clients. They considered some time allocated to particular work tasks to be inadequate to meet the risk and need status of the clients involved. Moreover, when they worked extra hours they often felt that they did not receive recognition for their effort. Unfortunately, the increased administrative requirements associated with new practice standards and a reduced level of administrative support staff were seen to compound this situation.

Accountability

An increased requirement for accountability was identified as a factor associated with the heightened emphasis upon management by both groups of participants. For Probation Officers, increased accountability in the Service Manager role was considered to be evident through increased levels of checking and monitoring of the work of Probation Officers. Most Service Managers shared this view, identifying a shift in emphasis from Probation Officer practice to management control, which was thought to be evidenced through more prescriptive organisational policies and procedures. There was a high degree of agreement that their role had shifted from coaching and supervising Probation Officers with regard to practice to quality assurance through monitoring and measurement, with an emphasis upon returns and statistics. One Service Manager went so far as to suggest that the increasing levels of prescription resulted in less opportunity to initiate leadership at a local level.

Probation Officers expressed concern that accountability did not appear to extend beyond administrative systems to include practice accountability. It was noted that many managers had no experience as a Probation Officer and this was thought to limit their ability to provide advice regarding practice and to confine their role to an auditing function. As one Probation Officer observed, *"they're only interested in whether everything was ticked"* (1-10:4). The time that Probation Officers and Service Managers spent meeting accountability requirements was seen to be at the expense of more important tasks involving the provision of service to the client.

The Extent and Rate of Change

Both Probation Officers and Service Managers expressed concerns with respect to the extent and rate of change. Amongst the former, there was a sense that change had not been well planned, “[the] left hand doesn’t know what the right hand is doing” (2:9). For example, it was argued that IOM should have been piloted and tested more rigorously, then consolidated, step by step. Instead, the pace of change had been too rapid with staff having insufficient time to consolidate one change before another was introduced. Consequently their experience of the introduction of new programmes had been negative for many Probation Officers, while the Service Managers as a group thought that the pace of change had impeded the successful implementation of programmes.

Probation Officers considered communication regarding change to be important. In particular, it was thought that staff needed the opportunity to give feedback and to feel that they had been listened to, a situation they considered likely to have a significant impact upon the acceptance of, and commitment to, any new policy. According to one Probation Officer:

You start to question why the change is occurring, especially if you are not really in on what the overall vision is if you have an understanding of what it is all for, you have an appreciation of it (2-20:5).

Poor communication was identified as a contributing factor to staff misunderstanding and their resistance to change. As one Probation Officer put it “*I wonder how much communication there is from the top down because everybody seems to be confused as to what the requirements are*” (2-2:3).

There was a perception that the Probation Service lacked the degree of organisational coherence required to provide staff with clear direction; “*It feels like this organisation is [operating in a mode] of going from one crisis to another*” (1-10:4). A lack of management stability, poor decision making and at times little constructive support for staff were factors associated with low staff morale. Service Managers also identified the need for clearer communication from senior management. The example given was that the move

away from social work to psychology, as a foundation for practice, could have been managed more effectively, with a clearer exposition of the rationale for the change.

Service Delivery Issues

A Change in the Meta-narrative Underpinning Probation

Some participants in both groups noted a change in the philosophical and theoretical base underpinning probation practice. The shift was identified as being from a predominantly social work perspective to one grounded in psychological theory, and the prescriptive use of the latter seemed to require the exclusion of other practice models. This concern was expressed clearly by one Probation Officer who said that there was:

Tension between how I would professionally identify myself, and the knowledge base and skill base and the ethics on which I base my practice – tension to what level I am recognised as a professional person and am able to implement that profession in my work, and to what extent I've become a departmental lackey who follows a manual without question (2-15:4).

However, the opportunity to retain a level of autonomy was also identified. A Probation Officer expressed this as follows:

It's quite interesting because the psychological flavour that's coming through is prescriptive and [yet] coming from a social work background and social work qualifications here I am doing my social work thing. It sort of takes away some of my autonomy as a worker. But then again to combat that I'm still able to do my work the way I want to do it. It is just a prescription and it is still something I can still have my own influence on in terms of my role (2-6:5).

One Service Manager observed that the Probation Service seemed to be uninterested in any alternative commentary on criminal justice matters. The new meta-narrative informed IOM and was thought to place undue emphasis on the individual client and insufficient focus on social factors such as education, inequality or culture conflict. Concern at the emphasis placed upon psychological intervention with the individual client was expressed by another

Service Manager as follows: *"IOM burdens the criminal with his criminality, he's the reason for his situation and also the fix for it" (1-15:6)*. In contrast, a Probation Officer expressed a positive view of the change in emphasis and considered it to be complementary to a social work perspective: *"The move from social work to the psychological tools ...I'm not completely against that, I think that there is quite a good mix" (2-17:4)*

Service Managers noted that the strong psychological emphasis in the IOM model was a particular source of tension for those Probation Officers who identified with a social work perspective. For some of these Officers the shift in emphasis represented a challenge to their professional allegiance. They held the clear view that probation work was a field of practice within social work and expressed concern that some colleagues and managers held social work in low regard. *"What is my profession worth to this organisation?" (2-19:4)* asked one Probation Officer. A Service Manager who expressed concern at the abandonment of the Level B recruitment policy (see Chapter Four) noted this to be further evidence of the diminishing relevance of social work.

Professional Issues

The Impact of Increased Work Pressure

There was a strong consensus among the Probation Officers that workloads were too high. While there are areas of work where demand can be variable, it was observed that any reduction in workload pressure had been only temporary. The Probation Officers were often trying to balance competing demands on their time and felt that the organisation placed greater priority on documentation rather than direct contact with the client. They were concerned about the lack of an objective measure of workload, and made reference to the advantages of an earlier formula that had been used to determine both individual workloads and required staffing levels.

However, work pressure was associated not only with volumes but also with changes in

expectations of service delivery. Service Level Agreements that the Probation Service had with a range of agencies were considered to be unrealistic and standards of service were thought to have been set without adequate consultation with front-line staff. The Probation Officers believed that they were expected to accommodate increases in task specifications despite their already high workloads, and in order to meet some timeliness standards the quality of work was often compromised. There was a perception that senior managers were nevertheless determined to drive through the required changes, which led one participant to observe that the message coming down to Probation Officers was basically “*adapt or die*” (2-1:9).

Some Service Managers were considered to have unrealistic expectations regarding the workload of Probation Officers, a number of whom reported pressure to achieve performance targets, including implementing changes. With such pressure thought to be linked to the Managers’ remuneration bonuses, it was not surprising to find one Probation Officer who was “*determined not to burn-out for somebody’s bonus*” (2-21:4). The general tenor of the Probation Officers’ attitude towards workload was expressed by one of them as follows:

There has always been an unwritten expectation that staff will work extra hours to support the organisation. [This has been] a bit one way and in some ways there has been a backlash against that (2-3:11).

The Probation Officers identified two main consequences of high workloads: the quality of their work could be compromised, and they were subjected to stress. Taken together, the consequences for both clients and staff could be negative.

Our remand people [Probation Officers writing reports] have something like 60 reports waiting; they can’t be allocated because we don’t have enough people. I don’t know how well it works when people keep writing under stress all the time (1-10:4).

According to one Probation Officer, a number of colleagues and Service Managers were “barely coping” in their positions: “*People are sinking and nobody notices*” (1-4:4).

Service Managers shared the concerns of Probation Officers. Workload demands on both groups were considered to have increased without the allocation of any extra resources, and cuts in service delivery (volumes and standards) had occurred as a consequence. They reported that Probation Officers who were considered competent, intelligent and committed to providing good service to the client were unable to manage the required workload. But Service Managers indicated that they also had additional responsibilities that eroded the time available to manage staff successfully. Strategies adopted to cope with this situation were candidly described as being dysfunctional; some were restricting their level of access by Officers, while others were working extended hours, a strategy which created tensions with respect to family and personal interests.

Training

Both groups indicated that the planning and delivery of Probation Officer training had largely been centralised and focused upon major national initiatives, such as IOM and the IOM System. There was a perception that following the disestablishment of previously dedicated regional training positions, there had been reduced training at regional and local levels. Service Managers also believed that senior managers assumed that local managers could provide appropriate training and education of new staff. It was noted, however, that this assumption had developed within the context of less recruitment of staff with social work qualifications and limited training programmes. Probation Officers, for their part, identified induction training, 'core' training and prosecutions as training areas requiring improvement. In one location, action had recently been taken to address these concerns through the establishment of a training unit.

Lack of Adequate Supervision and Support

A further source of tension identified by Probation Officers was that of inadequate provision of supervision and support. The following issues were identified in relation to supervision and support provided to them by Service Managers: supervision often irregular; poor feedback regarding work; a lack of recognition of effort; the negative attitude of some

Service Managers; and their lack of understanding of the core Probation Officer role. These concerns were acknowledged by most Service Managers; for example, one commented that:

Service Managers now have to be all things to everyone but because of the multitude of tasks and the fact that they do not necessarily come from within the Service they aren't necessarily able to answer a lot of the professional stuff (1-14:4).

There were also criticisms of the delivery of professional supervision (e.g. the frequency of supervision was often inadequate, the skill level of peer supervisors could limit the quality of supervision) and there was thought to be only a tenuous link evident between professional supervision and the performance management system.

Discussion

In this chapter the participants' perceptions, understandings and experience of changes and associated tensions within the Probation Service delivery context have been presented under four headings relating to changes in organisational culture, service delivery issues and professional issues. A recurrent theme that emerges from the concerns expressed by participants is their frustration regarding the scope and pace of changes that they have experienced. Notwithstanding the pervasiveness of this sense of frustration, there have been a number of observations that also suggest that changes were required and that some of the staff resistance to change reflects either an inability or unwillingness to engage with the new direction. The aim here is to review and discuss the results presented in terms of their alignment with the nature and intention of changes in the probation practice context outlined in earlier chapters. Where appropriate it will be indicated if the participants' perceptions and experiences support anticipated difficulties and notes of caution sounded with regard to the possible effects of changes implemented.

Both the Probation Officers and Service Managers identified the introduction of a style of management that drew heavily upon the private sector 'market' model. Characterised by a

'business' approach that placed a high degree of emphasis upon accountability and results, this shift in management style reflected broader changes in the political domain and the public service bureaucracy. In Chapter Three two positive consequences of increased accountability were noted: first, the provision of more robust information upon which to base a business case for resources; and second, the development of more clearly defined practice standards that, when implemented to criteria, provide a high degree of assurance regarding the quality of service delivery. While a number of participants identified positive changes associated with the increased emphasis on management, most focused upon the perceived and/or experienced negative consequences, particularly the emphasis upon compliance reporting.

The role of senior managers within the Probation Service attracted particular mention. They were perceived to hold significant power and control that was exercised in a hierarchical and directive manner. A coercive approach was thought to be reflected in policy decisions that were developed centrally and imposed on operational staff with little consultation. These observations are consistent with discussion in Chapter Three where New Public Management was shown to be characterised by an emphasis upon hierarchy and obedience to policy and procedure. The participants conveyed the feeling that staff have had limited opportunities to influence policy development and decisions. This theme of disempowerment was recurrent in their responses and seemed to be associated with a view that probation lacked status as a profession and that senior management did not value the opinions of probation staff.

While there was some agreement amongst participants that more efficient administration is desirable (and that some needed improvements had been made) a clear sense of unease emerged. This unease stemmed from a feeling that the primary focus of the Probation Service had changed from a concern with practice (i.e. service delivery to clients) to a concern with management (interested in risk, cost and measurement). It was also noted that an emphasis upon generic management skills was evident in appointment practices and that many Service Managers no longer had Probation Officer experience.

The Service Managers were aware of the dissatisfaction of the Probation Officers. In particular, those who still held a strong practice orientation were concerned that their professional credibility could be compromised when they were required to make choices between the management and professional aspects of their role. The Service Manager role was also described as one that was increasingly prescribed and controlled by senior management, a trend that eroded a Service Manager's capacity to exercise autonomy. These insights from participants reflect an awareness of the Probation Service's ability to define and dictate what constitutes practice, and also reflect the substantive thematic argument regarding tension between the professional and New Public Management constructions of probation. These issues are further examined and discussed in Chapter Eight.

Participants' comments regarding change in the meta-narrative that informs probation practice indicate their awareness that the historic social work foundations of probation had been seriously challenged by a perspective that drew heavily upon both business management and psychological theory. Their concern regarding the diminution of social work is indicative of the tension generated when management promotes a practice framework no longer fully congruent with values drawn from the previously dominant social work model. Comment was made that IOM could be seen to 'burden' the client with his/her criminality by looking to the individual for both the explanation and resolution of offending behaviour. This view reflects a degree of support for the caution raised in Chapter Four that over-emphasis upon the pathology of the individual client is reductionist and that over reliance on one approach is likely to exclude alternative narratives regarding practice that might also have validity.

The practice context during the 1990s was characterised by ongoing change in the Probation Service's organisational structure and operational policies with flow on effects upon the nature of practice. Participant observations regarding the need for change were generally consistent with discussion in Chapter Three, where the requirement for the Probation Service to meet the pressures associated with the increased politicisation of the practice context was noted. In particular, there was the requirement for correctional

services to demonstrate a high degree of accountability for services delivered and resources used. This concern found expression in more rigorous quality assurance mechanisms designed to demonstrate adherence to prescribed policies and procedures. That said, however, the majority of the comments made by participants were critical of the role of senior managers in the Probation Service and the style of change management adopted. In particular, the pace of change was considered too rapid and inadequate communication and consultation contributed to the perception that the Service lacked a coherent strategic direction. It was also noted that there had been insufficient time for staff to consolidate new practices before further changes were introduced, and that there had been inadequate resource levels and support mechanisms for staff.

A surprising feature of the results was that the participants failed to articulate any significant awareness of the political exigencies facing senior management; for example, an appreciation of the pressures involved in managing the expectations of multiple external stakeholders and interest groups in order to maintain the credibility and viability of the Probation Service. Only a few participants made any comment indicative of a more strategic perspective regarding organisational issues facing the Service. Although afforded the opportunity to comment more widely, it appears that they were pre-occupied with their experience of change. The predominantly negative tenor of the responses, and the relative absence of more critical commentary, suggests that senior managers had been unsuccessful in engaging staff commitment to the changes and in ensuring that the structures and processes necessary for successful change were in place.

Some Probation Officers expressed the view that many senior managers were prepared to drive through changes because the achievement of performance targets was associated with the manager's performance pay. While this analysis appears to be rather simplistic (and cynical) this point of view does reflect the impact of the performance payment system, one of the new accountability mechanisms introduced under the aegis of New Public Management. While comments made by Service Managers (in this and in subsequent chapters) provide clear evidence that a number of them experienced a significant level of tension regarding some of the changes they were expected to implement, the influence of

the performance payment system cannot be easily dismissed (i.e. managers' remuneration could vary from a nominal 100 percent salary by plus or minus 10 percent on the basis of results that included staff compliance with new policies and procedures). In Chapter Four the performance payment system was described as being potentially coercive and certainly some Service Managers would have experienced it in this way. However, many managers who received a performance 'bonus' would probably have viewed the system in a positive light.

A final theme relates to the level of commitment from the Service to ensure that organisational goals can be achieved. In Chapter Four, it was noted that Bonta (1997) and Brown (1998) have argued that commitment to the universal availability of treatment is central to the successful implementation of correctional services; the corollary being the provision of adequate resources to ensure that the identified services can be delivered (in the case of the Probation Service this must include all mandated interventions). Further, it was suggested that the integrative processes of professional supervision and performance management are crucial to creating and sustaining the conditions under which professional practice can develop.

The tension between fiscal pressure and the responsibility of social service agencies to provide a service to at risk clients was highlighted in Chapter Three. In particular, it was noted that Rothman (1991) suggested that reductions in social service funding are a direct consequence of the influence of proponents of a minimalist welfare state, and this underlying philosophy finds expression through corporatisation. Toch (1995) further argued that the level of resource availability is likely to have an effect upon the definition of acceptable client outcomes; for example, the concept of triage has gained currency in a wide range of settings with access to service based upon both clinical and actuarial assessment.

This tension between available resources and demand for services was clearly identified by the participants who noted two major consequences of a disjunction between work demand and level of resources. First, the Probation Officers exhibited awareness of the requirement

for balance between resource levels, system demands and the maintenance of therapeutic integrity; they accepted that compromise will at times be necessary, and acknowledged that there is a limit to the level of service that can be delivered. However, they also noted that when the quality of service delivery is compromised there can be potentially negative consequences for the client; for example, the client will not be provided with the required assistance to effect positive behavioural change. Significantly, participants stated that at times the mandated intervention could not be delivered. This inability to discharge a statutory responsibility to provide the client with the required service placed the participants in an invidious position and the resolution of such tension was clearly a responsibility of management. Second, staff were thought to be experiencing unacceptable levels of stress and there was a tenor of distress in the descriptions of how staff were reacting to work pressure.

The Probation Officers identified a lack of adequate supervision and support from Service Managers and professional supervisors as an additional factor that contributed to their level of work stress. This situation was in part a consequence of Service Managers and professional supervisors having insufficient time to attend to the needs of Probation Officers. But it was also suggested that some Service Managers, by virtue of their lack of practice experience, were either unable to respond or not interested in the needs of Probation Officers. The Service Managers, on the other hand, acknowledged that they often did not have time to support staff with regard to practice because of the increased range of their own management responsibilities.

Taken together, these three concerns with regard to service delivery, stress and supervision suggest that for many of the participants the Probation Service has failed to demonstrate sufficient organisational commitment and support for practitioners. Participants' views on the integrative process that supports best practice are examined further in Chapter Eleven.

The points raised by the participants also provide some direction to later discussion regarding their expectations of leadership. In Chapter Five, discussion addressed the potential contribution of leadership to the effective implementation of organisational

change, such as that experienced in the Probation Service. In particular, the capacity of leadership to affect the organisational climate and to achieve directional change in staff through the development of a higher degree of motivation and commitment was emphasised by Glisson (1989), Northouse (1997), Siegel (1996) and Yukl (1998). In this respect the concern expressed by Probation Officers at their need for supervision and support echoes Chavaria's (1994) contention that effective probation managers should lead by coaching and teaching rather than by employing the traditional management practices of controlling and supervising. It is a clear management responsibility to address the issues that have been identified by staff. More specifically, clear direction is required on how to manage clients when insufficient resources are available to meet statutory requirements, and action must be taken in response to signs that staff are experiencing stress. These concerns pose a challenge to the type of leadership provided by managers and this will be examined further in Chapters Eight, Ten and Eleven.

Conclusion

The results presented and discussed in this chapter concern the participants' perceptions, understandings and experience of changes in the Probation Service practice context during a five year period (1996-200), changes that they considered to exert an influence upon service delivery. The potential influence of the practice environment was outlined in Chapter Three and four forces of change were identified (and summarised in the introduction to this chapter). It was argued that changes in the broader probation practice environment were likely to have influenced how practice is constructed and implemented with consequences for service delivery.

Clear evidence has been presented in this chapter of the participants' awareness of changes that occurred in organisational structures and practices. First, their awareness of a difference between underlying belief systems is evident in the consensus that there has been a shift in focus by senior managers from a concern with practice to a concern with control, a change reflected in an emphasis upon policies and procedures. Second, the participants

demonstrated their insight regarding change to the foundations of practice construction. There was an awareness of change in the meta-narrative, with and both positive and negative consequences identified. In particular, the introduction of IOM was thought to offer a clear rationale for practice, and for some participants the psychological foundation of IOM was thought to complement a social work perspective.

Third, there was a strong awareness that with the advent of New Public Management senior managers were able to exert considerable power and control, notably in the implementation of IOM. In particular, it was thought that these managers had ignored feedback from practitioners, and displayed a negative attitude towards staff who questioned policy decisions. Furthermore, the participants believed that non-professional managers (i.e. those without previous experience as Probation Officers) had been able to define the role of the Probation Officer, and that the professional knowledge of probation staff had been devalued through reliance upon external advice regarding practice development. Concern was also expressed that, at times, senior managers did not possess sufficient understanding and insight regarding the implications of their decision-making. Fourth, the majority of the participants suggested that the level of practice autonomy had been challenged and reduced through the introduction of the prescriptive IOM model, and this was associated also with a feeling that any previous sense of professional identity (in particular, alignment with social work) had been challenged. However, for some participants the change in the practice model was associated with an increased level of autonomy, and it is suggested that staff who already possessed a clear practice framework had been able to integrate the changes and were consequently less threatened. These issues are discussed further in Chapter Eight, when participants' views on the construction of probation practice as a profession are examined.

A significant feature of the results presented in this chapter is the degree of congruence between the perceptions and understandings of the Probation Officers and Service Managers. This feature suggests that those engaged in front-line service delivery share a common ground of practice experience and values. A sense of professional identity is also evident in the participants' responses. This commonality of practice experience, values and

professional identity is vital to the discussion in the next chapter where arguments regarding the status of probation practice as a professional endeavour are examined, and rests at the heart of developing: first, an understanding of the challenges that face leadership in the Probation Service; and second, some viable options for the future development of leadership.

Footnotes

¹ The Probation Service had previously utilised workload guidelines that provided a rational basis for work allocation. These guidelines were based on standard time allocations for core tasks such as report writing and case management.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Participants' Construction of Probation Practice

In Chapter Four a framework for the construction of probation practice was developed through reference to four interrelated elements: the values and beliefs that inform the purpose of probation; the knowledge and skill base that provides the basis for practice; integrative processes that underpin practice (performance management and professional supervision); and the assessment of effectiveness (to be considered in Chapter Nine). This framework was underpinned by the argument that practice has a professional foundation. It was proposed that relationships between these elements are not linear or mechanical, but dynamic and mediated by organisational considerations such as the management of political risk, finite resource allocations and accountability via compliance reporting.

The focus of this chapter is on the views of the research participants regarding: first, their understanding of the professional foundation of probation; second, the values and beliefs that inform their practice; and finally their concept of best practice, which embraces their understanding of the knowledge base, the models they use in everyday practice, and their views regarding the construct of practice wisdom. This understanding is relevant to the relationship between leadership and service delivery in two ways. First, how practice is defined and understood (the purpose, values, knowledge and models, and in particular whether a Probation Officer should be considered to be a professional) has significant implications for the type of leadership that will best enable that practice to be implemented successfully. Second, because the participants' views regarding the construction of practice are based upon their experiences within the Probation Service. This narrative also reflects their experience of leadership and provides insight regarding their expectations of leadership. The data presented in this chapter are drawn from the participants' responses to specific questions regarding the construction of practice, while their responses to questions directly relating to leadership are examined in Chapter Eleven.

Probation as a Profession

In Chapter Four it was argued that a distinguishing characteristic of a profession is the existence of a professional organisation. The Probation Officers thought there would be benefit from membership of a professional association but that the role and parameters of any association must be well defined. There was a perception that senior managers do not recognise the professional status of Probation Officers and it was suggested therefore that membership of a professional organisation would enhance the credibility of probation:

You would start to get credibility for being a professional currently not taken seriously you are a social worker, a do gooder, one of those sorts of people (1-4:14).

A further characteristic of a professional organisation highlighted by the participants was its political role. The Probation Officers argued that with significant membership an organisation would have influence and power, and could advocate on behalf of the profession. For example, in order for Probation Officers to have influence regarding policy and practice development they needed a more formal link to senior management. One Probation Officer observed that such a formal mechanism would ensure that the 'truth' was reported to senior management directly from the field regarding practice issues and organisational performance. That said, it was also noted that senior managers might view a professional association as another union with the potential to challenge managerial control, a problem given that the Probation Service was perceived as being defensive regarding other opinion entering debate around the development of criminal justice. Indeed, one Probation Officer expressed concern at a lack of tolerance on the part of management:

If you raise issues, you are buying into an argument and you have got to be a very, very strong individual to carry it through because of the repercussions (1-16:15).

In response to this possible opposition from management it was nevertheless suggested that the Probation Service should actively encourage the development of a Probation Officer professional body. For example, one Probation Officer commented that "if it [Probation

Service] can't handle a professional body then it lacks the internal management competence to be a robust organisation" (1-3:19).

The Probation Officers suggested that a professional organisation would define, promote and facilitate the implementation of professional practice standards. The requirement for Probation Officers to be accredited to a professional body and to have a practising certificate would give credibility to probation as a profession. Service Managers, for their part, maintained that a process of registration with a professional organisation would ensure greater transparency regarding practice. For example, members would be required to attend professional supervision; be subject to a regular audit of their practice; and to comply with guidelines in a code of ethics.

Both the Probation Officers and Service Managers identified professional peer control as a positive outcome of membership of a professional organisation. It was thought that the organisation would play a role in monitoring practice standards, resolving practice issues through a complaints process, and that the organisation would be able to exercise professional discipline of members. This role for an organisation was considered to be analogous with that of other professions. As one Probation Officer commented, *"you're willing to be subject to professional discipline. That's the key thing for me, and that is what we have with lawyers and doctors" (1-6:4).*

There was agreement between both groups that a professional organisation would have a key role in promoting education, training and professional development. Members would have the opportunity to link with other practitioners to gain information, debate issues surrounding values, beliefs and the development of practice and to attend conferences. A significant advantage of an organisation outside of employment was thought to be its ability to provide an impartial critique of practice (in comparison with the internal review processes used by the Probation Service).

It was suggested that a professional organisation would enjoy only limited effectiveness in New Zealand because the Probation Service is the only employer of Probation Officers and

therefore enjoys a monopoly over the development of probation practice. It was thought that senior management would not support professionalising Probation Officers because this could result in a loss of management control if Probation Officers became more accountable to the profession than to the organisation. One Service Manager had raised the notion of professionalising probation with a team of Probation Officers and this idea had met with some resistance because they did not believe the Probation Service would either allow a true professionalism to emerge or provide the necessary infra-structural support, such as the establishment of dedicated practice consultant roles.

The Service Managers and Probation Officers viewed current probation practice as reflecting more an organisational role (determined by prescribed operational requirements set out in manuals) than a professional role (characterised by specialised knowledge, skills and practice autonomy). Probation practice was thought to fail to meet two essential criteria that characterise a profession: there was no pre-requisite entry qualification and Probation Officers did not have a professional organisation or reference group external to the Probation Service.

Service Managers advanced the view that probation practice should be guided by a set of professional standards and argued that the current generic management influence actually heightens the need for professionalism. While it was observed that the Probation Service was moving towards the definition of a unique set of knowledge and skills through the implementation of IOM, this model was considered to be both too rigid and to have too narrow a theoretical foundation to provide a basis for probation practice.

Summary and Discussion

In Chapter Four two core arguments were advanced regarding probation as a profession. First, it was suggested that the conception and enactment of probation as a professional endeavour is crucial to the ongoing development and viability of probation practice within the current contestable environment. It was argued that it is important for probation, both organisationally and professionally, to be responsive to changes in the practice environment

that might be seen as threatening; probation must actively engage political and societal support. Second, failure on the part of practitioners and managers to recognise this and to develop practice based upon a professional conception could expose probation to the risk of having a reductionist, prescriptive 'rules based' approach imposed that is likely to fail to meet the fundamental aspiration of probation which is to reduce re-offending in a way that is consistent with the protection of the community (Harding 2000; Latessa and Allen 1999).

The distinguishing characteristics of professions as examined in Chapter Four, were: the requirement for pre-entry qualifications; registration and accreditation with a professional body; possession of expertise based upon education, training and skill; practice autonomy and reflexivity. In these terms, the predominant view advanced by the Probation Officers and Service Managers was that probation is not considered to be a profession per se, in particular because the employer (not the practitioners) largely determines the work of the Probation Service (including choice of practice models) without reference to any external organisation or professional body. However, notwithstanding their reservations, the participants evidenced a significant degree of alignment with many of the distinguishing characteristics of professions. Both groups evidenced a high degree of commitment to the work undertaken with clients and there was a sense that they felt constrained if unable to apply their expertise in a reflexive manner. The Probation Officers attached importance to basing their relationships with clients upon professional standards and were also concerned that they should be able to exercise a degree of practice autonomy that should be balanced by the requirement for professional accountability.

These views are consistent with the arguments (see Chapter Four) by Anderson (1997), Benevise (1987) and Raelin (1992) that professional practice should involve judgement, creativity, and the exercise of discretion and autonomy within the parameters of an ethical code; and that this type of practice requires continuous development of knowledge and skills on the part of the Probation Officer. Both groups of participants identified practice autonomy and the ongoing development of practice as core characteristics of being professional; with a note of caution being raised against the adoption of an overly technocratic approach to practice in favour of a degree of practice discretion.

There was consensus in both groups that senior managers in the Probation Service should be fostering the development of probation as a profession, however, the senior managers' desire for control of practice was identified as the main reason for an apparent lack of support. The promotion of a distinctive probation profession that would encourage practice diversity was thought to be incongruent with the objective of the senior managers to implement a consistent model of practice throughout the Department of Corrections. There is a sense of disempowerment in the responses; that the Probation Officers and Service Managers are unable to act in opposition to the dictates of senior managers.

Many of the longer-serving participants had previously experienced a higher degree of practice autonomy and conveyed a sense that their professional identity had been undermined through the imposition of IOM. While the IOM approach was considered a positive attempt to establish practice standards within the organisation, it was seen to be too rigid and to rest on too narrow a theoretical base to form the foundation of a probation profession.

In Chapter Four it was argued that one of the hallmarks of a profession is membership of an association that articulates expected standards of practice and behaviour through a code of ethics. This raises a question about the clarity of Probation Service expectations regarding ethical standards and the relationship between such standards and operational policy; for example, whether operational policies should be subject to an approval process to ensure that they are consistent with a set of agreed ethical principles and standards. At the time of writing (2006) Probation Officers are still not required to belong to any professional body and the Probation Service does not have a code of ethics to guide Probation Officers (other than a Code of Conduct).

There was support for the establishment of a professional organisation that would promote practice standards, support the development of practice and assume a political role on behalf of members of the profession. However, in light of the indication of support for a professional organisation, it is surprising that there was no mention amongst the participants of the NZAPO 'Statement of Principles' as providing a potential foundation for

a set of ethical guidelines. Perhaps this was because, as shown in Chapter Two, the NZAPO was seen to lack the political and professional credibility required to successfully engage in debate regarding the development of new criminal justice policy in the early 1980s. Twenty years later it is apparent that the Probation Officers had not developed a more cohesive professional and political consciousness.

Values and Beliefs that Inform Probation Practice

In Chapter Four arguments were advanced regarding the relationship between values, beliefs and probation practice. First, it was suggested that values and beliefs inform the purpose of probation and provide a foundation for the construction of intervention. Second, that the development of probation practice has been heavily influenced by the social work tradition. Third, that both the political environment and developments in the philosophy of probation have influenced the relative emphasis that is placed upon the differing and often competing purposes of punishment, deterrence, rehabilitation, supervision and control.

These issues are considered here through the examination of the participants' understanding of the values and beliefs that inform probation practice. The participants' views are presented in three parts concerning their understanding of: the official values of the Probation Service; the core values held by managers; and of the values, beliefs and characteristics associated with probation practice (as a distinct field within the social services).

Understanding of the Official Values of the Probation Service

The Probation Officers identified professionalism, respect and rehabilitation as core, official Probation Service values. Professionalism was understood to involve working in an ethical way, striving to be effective in producing change in clients and not abusing power over clients. This understanding was expressed by one Probation Officer as follows:

One should be working within the law and the sentence in an ethical way and one should always be striving to be effective in producing the desired outcome of change in individuals (1-3:14).

Respect was thought to be demonstrated through the recognition of employees, clients and all cultures. The concept of rehabilitation was thought to connote responsibility: to the wider society to reduce the societal cost of crime, to accept that clients have the potential to change and to offer them options for change. A sense or feeling of altruism was also expressed; that is, a desire to make the world a better place to live in for everybody and a genuine desire by Probation Officers to do their best for the client. This sense or feeling was conveyed by a Probation Officer who commented that: *"We also need to value our client or else what are we doing here? Why are we here?" (1-2:12).*

Some Probation Officers indicated that there was a lack of clarity surrounding the values of the Probation Service. They had experienced contrasting and contradictory values and did not consider the organisation's performance to be congruent with the stated values. The Probation Service was described by these officers as a dysfunctional organisation, with this reflected in a lack of clarity at site level of the ethics and values that should be promoted.

The Service Managers made only brief reference to the values of honesty, integrity, professionalism, respect, accountability and efficiency. However, there was a sense among them that the organisational values have changed. In particular, one participant made reference to a perceived shift from a concern for people to a concern with measurement:

Another value is measurable/material it's [the Probation Service] clearly an agent of social control rather than social work. So it's here to fit you into society. Gone from a needs driven thing, which I suppose social workers are intrinsically drawn to (or certainly were traditionally). Less and less interested in the emotional aspects of human behaviour in terms of feelings more about thinking and action (1-15:13).

Another Service Manager observed that some staff had left the organisation because of a lack of tolerance of any dissention from the official interpretation of values:

I think there's been quite a bit of movement of staff because people have

discovered that the organisation doesn't particularly mind what your values are as long as you leave anything contrary to what the organisation wants at home (2-18:10).

Understanding of the Core Values held by Managers

The Probation Officers presented a wide range of opinions regarding the values they thought were demonstrated by managers at different levels in the Probation Service. Some had no clear sense of management values, while others expressed firm opinions, both positive and negative as illustrated in the following examples:

The positive side is that I have worked for two and seen in other Service Managers leaders who come from an ethos [that] we're here to serve the people that we work for but that service includes challenging everybody has a chance of changing and we need to be a vehicle [to facilitate that] (2-21:13).

I don't always see our management living by those values that they espouse (2-4:9).

I worked for a little while for a Service Manager who promoted [the view that] anything goes to get what we need done and that honesty isn't particularly important and that the targets have to be met and Head Office rules (2-21:13).

Both groups of participants noted that managers demonstrated a heightened interest in accountability and emphasis upon outcomes, an interest identified as being a consequence of public service restructuring. The emphasis upon accountability was seen to be consistent with the application of business principles in the management of the Probation Service, and also as a strategy used to manage risk in light of increased levels of public interest and awareness of corrections. A further aspect of accountability centred upon the need to maintain records, which was thought to be motivated primarily by the desire of managers to be able to be audited without negative consequences and to satisfy higher-level managers. Service Managers, for their part, defined accountability in terms of: financial prudence, unit costing and obtaining value for money (reflecting the influence of the commercial model); the management of risk to the Probation Service; and ensuring the integrity of data systems.

Probation Officers identified a strong management emphasis on outcomes - in particular reducing re-offending. This was thought to be evidenced by the level of commitment the Probation Service has given to IOM (this model was also considered to reflect an interest in providing clients with the opportunity to change). A more cynical view, however, interpreted the strong outcomes focus as the desire of Service Managers to satisfy the requirements of more senior managers: *"they are more concerned with getting their boxes ticked than the actual quality"* (1-16:11). Service Managers, who identified efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery as overarching values for the management hierarchy, supported this perspective to some degree.

The desire to maintain control was portrayed by the Probation Officers as a strong management value that reflected the hierarchical nature of power within the Probation Service. Senior managers were thought to be concerned with political containment. The consequence of this orientation was thought to be the high level of prescription and direction that came from Head Office. Area and Service Managers were described as being *"just the next cog in the wheel"* (1-4:10). As one would expect, the emphasis on control was linked to the need to be accountable. The observation was made that some managers *"probably have to leave their [personal] values behind for the policy, party line"* (1-4:10). A degree of Service Manager support for this view was evident; one participant, for example, expressed the opinion that senior managers use the performance pay system in order to achieve compliance and that other managers were *"playing the game"* (i.e., implementing policy as directed in order to ensure they received their full salary payment).

Senior managers were described as operating in, and being influenced by, the broader political climate. They were described as being prescriptive in implementing policy and to be highly committed to their own careers. The Probation Officers' views on the degree to which manager's value staff drew a mixed response. There were comments suggesting that some managers are concerned about staff stress levels and recognise the importance of having a high level of team morale. However, other comments suggested that there was a lack of respect for staff and for staff welfare. In regard to honesty, however, there was a degree of doubt regarding how much this value actually drives the behaviour of senior

managers. One participant commented:

I've noticed that it seems to be impossible for department managers ever to admit that they've made a mistake or that they've been wrong in any way. Certainly at the top level there's just a "let's not admit that any criticism is ever justified" approach. Which I think goes against [the] values of honesty and integrity (2-15:11).

Few comments were made regarding Area Managers. There was a sense that Area Managers were also "stuck in the middle" and that their primary role was to service the needs of more senior managers and not those of Service Managers.

A Service Manager expressed the view that management values (referring to New Public Management) are largely held by Head Office and Regional Managers (it was also noted that some Area Managers, Service Managers and Probation Officers share these management values). Further, it was observed that the Probation Service was an organisation in transition and that recently recruited staff were able to adapt to the senior management values more easily.

Understanding of the Values, Beliefs and Characteristics Associated with Probation Practice

A dominant belief shared by the respondents was the client's responsibility to change; a belief consistent with the official statement of Probation Service values discussed in Chapter Four. There was a consensus amongst both groups of participants that the focus of probation practice was now firmly fixed on the individual client and the notion of the individual's responsibility for their own actions. The Probation Officers (working collaboratively with the client to attempt to reduce re-offending) exhibited concern about the reintegration of the client, but most articulated the core belief that clients have the potential to change in a positive manner. The notion of empowerment was also associated with the client's capacity to change. Comments made by three Probation Officers are illustrative of these views:

People can change and it's motivating them to change [that] is [probably] the most powerful value that I have (2-17:18).

This has got something to do with the expectation that the person can change and that they'll be instrumental in that change (1-9:18).

I try to empower; I believe in empowerment of the individual to make their own choices. I try to encourage people to work in the system how they can best succeed through it. (1-12:9).

A number of the Probation Officers also maintained that the focus of intervention should include the strengths and abilities of the client (in addition to the deficits-based focus of IOM). This was expressed clearly by one participant who said that:

A unique value of probation work is looking at the [client's] strengths, we tend to be strengths focused, or ability focused more than deficit focused. Which is quite interesting because a lot of the models we work with are deficit focused, but we are constantly searching for the strengths in our clients (2-6:16).

Both groups of participants identified the protection of the community as a core underlying belief. The Probation Officers in particular expressed concern with creating a safer community and with the well-being of the public, observing that the public expected to be safe. Accordingly, the probation role was seen to involve balancing the best interests of society with the best interests of the client. In addition, a Service Manager expressed concern for the victims of crime, commenting that "*Sometimes we lose the victim in the process and need a wake up call on that one*" (2-13:9).

The mandated nature of probation practice was identified as a further defining characteristic. The fact that all probation clients are involuntary was thought to form the foundation for practice. Clients attend for interview or complete a sentence at the direction of a court or prison board, a feature seen by some Probation Officers to set the tone of the whole relationship between Probation Officer and client which occurs within set legal parameters. In particular, the client should be made aware of the Probation Officer's responsibilities and obligations as both an enforcer of legal orders and as a professional in a helping role. The Probation Officers indicated acceptance of the dual nature of their role, with the primary focus being on obtaining the client's compliance with the conditions of sentence. Indeed, for some participants, the focus on rehabilitation or reducing re-

offending was considered contingent upon the enforcement of the sentence.

A fundamental value identified by the Probation Officers was respect for the individual. For example, one commented:

The basic values are still the same pretty much: valuing other human beings; respecting their rights and their abilities to manage their lives. Just an honesty and an openness in our approach to people (2-4:10).

It was considered important to separate the offending behaviour from the client who should be treated fairly and valued as a human being irrespective of culture or sexual orientation. For example:

I try to treat people with a degree of respect. I don't need to like what they've done; I can respect them as a human being (1-1:15).

I guess my main ethical standard is that I see everyone I work with as my equal as a human being (1-12:9).

Another core professional value associated with respect for the individual was a high degree of compassion and empathic understanding for clients and victims. As one participant put it:

You have to espouse basic human values and ethics and compassion towards helping and assisting other people. That's the basic value. I have rarely come across anybody who does not hold that - [otherwise] they don't last long in the job (1-12:9).

Service Managers, for their part, identified a responsibility to ensure that staff treated clients with respect and dignity in accord with Probation Service standards and articulated a clear understanding of their need to ensure that staff acted in an ethical and professional manner. This responsibility involved encouraging, enthusing, challenging and coaching staff. A leadership obligation to make decisions and to take risk away (i.e. to be ultimately accountable) from the Probation Officer was also identified.

It was noted by Service Managers that many of the Probation Officers who achieve sound

outcomes with clients align themselves with professional social work practice. While not unique to probation practice, the dignity, integrity and worth of human beings, and empathy towards clients, were identified as fundamental values.

It was considered important that both Probation Officers and Service Managers act with integrity. Both groups of participants identified a range of characteristics that were thought to demonstrate integrity: honesty and truthfulness with self and others; acting as a positive role model; accountability; preparedness to admit and learn from mistakes; the ability to maintain confidentiality; acting in accordance with a professional ethical framework even when this is in conflict with Probation Service policy; and pro-social modelling at work and in private life. By way of illustration one Probation Officer clearly framed an understanding of honesty in relation to interaction with the client:

Honestly I think [clients are] really good readers of human [nature] a lot of them are survivors so they've had to learn that quite early. Be honest about boundaries and expectations and roles, and then your practice will be quite secure (1-4:11).

A Service Manager observed that Probation Service employees are public servants and maintained that Service Managers should be supportive of the organisation in its public service presentation:

I'm a public servant first and foremost, I've got a public duty to perform I'm able to work within the law and what's required of me (1-13:10).

A further standard of probation practice identified by both Probation Officers and Service Managers was the responsibility to use best knowledge to inform practice. Many Probation Officers emphasised that a colleague should have the requisite knowledge to undertake any specific task and should be willing to continue learning. Among the Service Managers, on the other hand, there was a consensus that a Service Manager requires knowledge and understanding of the technical nature of Probation Officer practice in working with offenders. However, many acknowledged that they experienced difficulty in maintaining the necessary operational knowledge and practice skills.

The practice environment was characterised as being in a state of flux. It was observed that

the Probation Service was in the middle of a paradigm shift from being a traditional social work occupation (with Level B requirements) to one defined by an in-house practice model (IOM). The currency of the traditional probation value/goal of reducing the rate of imprisonment was questioned by a Probation Officer, in light of the fact that programmes in prisons now offer rehabilitation in custody:

Even the traditional value of reducing the rate of imprisonment – are we still about that anymore? I don't know. It used to be that the judges could choose between sending someone to gaol or [placing them] on supervision and ordering them to [undertake] some kind of rehabilitation programme. Now with the programmes going into prisons they can have their cake and eat it too. Is the way the Department is going actually going to drive up the rate of imprisonment? (2-15:12).

Summary and Discussion

The participants' views have been presented regarding: the official values of the Probation Service; the core values held by managers; and the values, beliefs and characteristics associated with probation practice. Seven themes have emerged, namely: the influence of social work; a lack of clarity regarding an ethical code of practice; increased politicisation of probation; a decline in the influence of anti-custodialism; concern with rehabilitation and an expectation of client responsibility; the mandated foundation of probation; and the influence of managers' values and the significance of value congruence between managers and practitioners.

First, the participants' responses support the assertions made in Chapter Four that probation practice draws heavily upon the social work tradition. Many of the Probation Officers' responses evidence alignment with the core ethical mandates of social work. In particular, the strong client focus (based upon the recognition of the individual's potential to achieve positive change) reflects commitment to the empowerment of the client to achieve self-determination.

In Chapter Four it was argued that it is important to combine a concern with risk management with a humanistic perspective based upon the worth of the individual that offers the prospect of empowerment and change to the client. The client should be valued

as an end in himself or herself, not as a means to achieving an end. The object of probation intervention should be to address the needs of the individual client (consistent with reducing re-offending) and the client should not be likened to a commodity that is manipulated in order to achieve organisational objectives such as volume targets for programmes (Dominelli and Hoogvelt 1996). The emphasis on individual responsibility was complemented by the belief that the client has the capacity to change and a strengths perspective was advocated (Cohen 1998; Gutierrez et al. 1995a) in addition to the deficits-based focus of the IOM approach. A strengths focus redefines the acquisition and development of skills in a positive way; the client is viewed as striving to achieve positive goals (that are consistent with the alternative focus of redressing deficits).

In relation to the above points, both groups of participants identified respect and concern for the worth of the person as fundamental values underpinning probation practice. Both groups framed the understanding of respect in relation to interaction with the client, with the Probation Officers noting the importance of separating the person from their behaviour. It is of interest that some Service Managers identified a relationship between Probation Officer alignment with social work practice and the achievement of sound outcomes. The views of the participants are similar to the 'values' proposed by Spencer (1995); hope for the individual, care for the person and an understanding that people have the capacity for change and growth.

The second theme concerns what Benevise (1987) and Raelin (1985) argued is one of the hallmarks of a profession; membership of an association that articulates expected standards of practice and behaviour through a code of ethics. Few of the participants claimed that a professional ethical framework should take precedence when this might be in conflict with Probation Service policy. This raises a question about the clarity of Probation Service expectations regarding ethical standards and the relationship between such standards and operational policy. Probation Officers are not required to belong to any professional body and the Probation Service does not have a code of ethics to guide Probation Officers (other than a Code of Conduct). There was no mention amongst the participants of the NZAPO 'Statement of Principles' as providing a potential foundation for a set of ethical guidelines.

The absence of any requirement for Probation Officers to practise in accordance with a formal set of professional ethical standards contributes to what may be termed an 'ethical vacuum' within which they may be susceptible to an array of pressures that could have a detrimental influence on both practice and client outcomes.

A third theme concerns the increased politicisation of probation. It is apparent that changes in public expectations have exerted significant pressure on the traditional probation value system. Nellis (1995a) identified tension between the welfare ethic that has been predominant throughout the development of probation and an emerging emphasis upon the management of risk and community safety. The acceptance of this perspective by the participants endorses the argument advanced by James (1995), Nellis (1995a) and Spencer (1995); namely, that the value-base informing probation practice must incorporate current thinking from other disciplines in order for probation to retain credibility and engage political support within the context of changing criminal justice policy.

Fourth, it was noted in Chapter Two that the Probation Service in New Zealand developed over a lengthy period when anti-custodialism was a pervasive philosophy and actively promoted. The corollary of this foundation probation value (based on the belief that only those who present a significant risk to public safety should be excluded from society) was the successful promotion of community-based alternatives that offered the prospect of rehabilitation. In these terms there was no evidence of concern amongst the participants that probation should reduce the rate of imprisonment or of any lack of confidence in the efficacy of imprisonment. This represents a fundamental shift away from the traditional conception of probation as an alternative to imprisonment and suggests that concern with risk and protection of the community (previously a less explicit goal) has supplanted the earlier emphasis upon anti-custodialism. The importance of anti-custodialism as a driving value has clearly diminished and was identified directly by only one participant. This is of interest given that anti-custodialism has retained currency in probation debate in the United Kingdom, and Nellis (1995a) identified anti-custodialism as potentially a unique probation value. Since the late 1990s in New Zealand, the use of actuarial assessments (to identify risk of re-offending) and the Criminogenic Needs Inventory (to target intervention) has

resulted in a reduction in the numbers of clients sentenced to supervision in the community. A partial explanation of this change was provided in the observation that rehabilitation programmes (previously predominantly provided in the community) are now available in prisons. The inference that can be made is that because rehabilitation is ostensibly now available as part of a term of imprisonment, Probation Officers are more likely to recommend incarceration as a sentencing option and the judiciary are more likely to impose custodial sentences. This change in orientation seems also to be linked to the need for probation to retain its credibility with a wider range of stakeholders.

Concern with rehabilitation and an expectation that the client accept responsibility for his or her behaviour mark a fifth theme from the participants' account. Their responses indicate support for the foundation belief regarding rehabilitation that has been advanced in support of probation (Harding 2000; Latessa and Allen 1999). In particular, the expectation of reform on the part of the client and the belief that efforts directed towards rehabilitation are likely to be more effective than punishment in reducing re-offending. The emphasis placed by both groups on the client's responsibility reflects the influence of both the psychological base of the IOM theoretical framework and the libertarian notion of individual responsibility and accountability.

The mandated nature of probation practice emerged as a sixth theme and defining characteristic (consistent with the cornerstone principles of probation identified by Harding 2000). There was a consensus amongst the participants that mandated intervention is justified and the client/Probation Officer relationship is ultimately based upon legitimated authority exercised by the Probation Officer. Moreover, the argument that probation services must be consistent with the protection of the community was identified as a key belief and rationale for probation. The participants' acceptance of the enforcement and control dimension of the Probation Officer's role is congruent with the articulated belief that the risk a client may present to the community must be managed. Both groups of participants noted that the legally mandated nature of practice imposes some restriction upon the client/practitioner relationship; however, neither group identified this as a significant limitation.

Finally, it was noted that values held by managers are influential and value congruence between managers and practitioners was considered important. Senior managers were generally not thought to demonstrate a strong practice emphasis (other than to introduce practice changes in a prescriptive manner). The Probation Officers considered that senior managers exert considerable influence and control over Area and Service Managers, notably through the performance payment system, and Service Managers themselves acknowledged that the performance payment system was a powerful mechanism used to achieve their compliance with the implementation of operational policy. The observations of the Probation Officers and Service Managers suggest that senior managers are reliant upon the use of positional power (i.e. power inherent in their particular position within the Probation Service) in contrast to personal power based upon recognition of their professional knowledge and expertise (Yukl 1998).

While the Probation Officers thought that some managers valued staff, a strong element of self-interest amongst the managers was also identified. A variation in the values exhibited by individual managers and between managers at different levels can be expected, nevertheless from the accounts of the participants there emerges a sense of a lack of cohesion in the values held and articulated by managers in the Probation Service. The participants' characterisation of the values held by senior managers is consistent with that of the managerial culture described by Nellis (1995a) and James (1995), one dominated by the pursuit of systematic rationality, efficiency and control. In particular, the Probation Officers' observation of the division between the business orientation (thought to be held by senior managers) and the practice orientation (thought to be held by most Service Managers) provides evidence that supports the earlier assertion that an underlying schism might exist regarding the philosophical foundations of probation practice.

In Chapter Four the separation of policy and advice from service delivery was identified as a distinguishing feature of the implementation of New Public Management (Boston et al. 1996), the new management ethos embraced by senior managers. A consequence of this separation has been a reduction in the degree of influence that frontline managers are able

to exercise upon policy development, which may in turn have had the effect of both reinforcing the practice orientation of Service Managers and weakening their alignment with any new direction set by senior managers in Head Office. This disjunction is likely to continue in the absence of mechanisms that could mediate potential differences between the field perspective and that held by staff in Head Office. The participants' responses validate the relevance of values as a significant influence upon staff service delivery, and value incongruence between management and frontline staff has been identified as a potential obstacle to the development of staff commitment to organisational direction. Further consideration of this issue occurs in Chapter Eleven, where discussion addresses the views of the participants regarding potential structures and processes that are thought to support effective leadership.

The Concept of Best Practice

The participants' views on what constitutes best practice are the third element contributing to the construction of probation practice. The data are presented in three sections: first, the participants' understanding of the professional knowledge base; second, their understanding of practice models; and third, their understanding of practice wisdom.

Knowledge Base for Probation Service Delivery

The participants' understanding of the knowledge base upon which effective service delivery can be based is presented in two parts. First, the participants' views regarding the components of a professional knowledge base for probation are reviewed. In the second part, the participants' understanding of how this knowledge can be used to inform direct client practice is examined.

Understanding of knowledge base

Participants in both groups identified social work knowledge and training as relevant to practice. Comments made by two Probation Officers illustrate this point:

I personally think that if you are the oil that keeps the machine going in terms of the actual interaction between the Probation Officer and client there's got to be a social work dimension social work skills and a model of practice are critical (1-6:11).

I do think that probation is a specialist form of social work rather than a separate entity in itself. I think that social work should provide a certain knowledge and skill base for working with individuals (2-15:5).

A range of basic interpersonal skills were identified as pre-requisites for effective practice: interviewing techniques; rapport building; empathic understanding and 'micro skills'. The ability to relate effectively to clients was seen to underpin effective practice:

It's about coming alongside people and being able to understand and communicate that understanding about people's processes [while] at the same time understanding yourself (1-11:5).

Many (though not all) of the participants observed that social work training prepares the individual for practice. In particular, the applied nature of such training was thought to bridge the potential gap between theory and practice:

The social work training is practice based so there is no vacuum between the practice and the theory social work [training] has held me in really good stead for coming to probation (1-4:6).

However, it was also noted that social work courses might not provide a sufficient criminal justice component such as an understanding of legislation and Probation Service policies and procedures. Moreover, some Service Managers identified potential difficulties for staff with social work training, observing that Probation Officers with this background often experienced greater difficulty in accepting the enforcement component of the Probation Officer role. It was also thought that these staff have greater difficulty in accepting the targeting principle involved in IOM because this created tension for Probation Officers who sought to meet all needs presented by the client.

The following quotations from three Service Managers illustrate a more sophisticated level of engagement with the topic that is not representative of the majority of the participants. The first Service Manager commented that the General Manager of the Probation Service at the time of the interview did not appear to see the value of social work training for Probation Officers and that the Probation Service no longer offered encouragement for staff to study social work. The Probation Service was seen to be moving toward a narrower range of knowledge and skills that was likely to exclude full consideration of the social and cultural context of offenders:

It seems that probation is no longer an evolving tradition. It's sort of a 'one stop shop' explanation of crime, [a]cure for crime. It's a kind of intellectual totalitarianism around deviance. They don't encourage people to do a Diploma in Criminology or social work degree it's a McDonaldisation of the Probation Service; we've got it as long as it is on the menu (1-15:7).

The second Service Manager demonstrated an awareness of the politicisation of practice and expressed caution that the knowledge-base should not be restrictive:

We've been through a period of right wing governments with very many individual rights, individual responsibility type philosophies over all policies. In the Probation Service we've come into this time of psychologically-based individual treatment, individual responsibility, totally ignoring other social factors. I believe in the individual's responsibility for their own behaviour; we don't want to get into explaining it totally by the fact that they're poor or unemployed. However, I think we do need to redress the balance so what's the impact of social issues on crime? On people's behaviour? (2-15:6).

The third Service Manager framed probation practice as a specialism within the broader field of social work:

This notion of forensic social work is where I'm heading at the moment. There's a foundation body of knowledge in social work and our speciality is probably going to have a significant emphasis on the psychology of criminal conduct. We would be employing qualified social workers who when they come to us do further study on the psychology of criminal conduct and it's application (2-14:7).

The contribution of social work to the development of probation practice in New Zealand

was discussed in Chapters Two and Four. Social work achieved legitimacy as a professional foundation for practice, albeit briefly, in the early 1990s with the introduction of the Level B entry qualification and in-post sponsorship of degree and diploma courses. It was strongly supported by the participants. In particular, social work was identified as offering applied training and was seen to be especially relevant in relation to the development of the client/practitioner relationship that provided the nexus for effective practice (Egan, 1986; Payne, 1991; Reid, 1978). As one would expect, therefore, concern was expressed by the participants at a perceived lessening of emphasis on social work training by the Probation Service. The foundation of this concern was located in the argument for a broader perspective and basis for practice, in particular noting the relevance of social context in explaining client deviance and in the understanding of practice validity (i.e. probation is not just about a clinical treatment model).

A second core component of professional knowledge and skill to be identified by the participants was psychology. There was a strong consensus amongst the Probation Officers that psychological models are particularly relevant to probation practice and that the influence of psychology is clearly evident in the IOM framework. The status of psychology was described by one Service Manager as the current professional attribute “*de jour*”. Both Probation Officers and Service Managers advanced the view that an effective Probation Officer requires some form of psychological training, although not necessarily at the tertiary level. The current in-house training (regarding IOM processes) was thought to provide the knowledge and skills required for practice.

The view was also advanced that while psychologically-based models such as IOM are useful and important they are insufficient on their own as a basis for probation practice. A limitation identified regarding the psychological treatment model was the high degree of emphasis upon the individual and insufficient attention to the client’s social circumstances and the impact of societal structures. This point of view is illustrated in the following comments by a Service Manager and a Probation Officer, respectively:

The psychological knowledge I’m not so sure about and I know this is the whole new thrust while I go along with that to a certain degree it can be a bit

over emphasised. The social context of people's backgrounds has been overlooked a little in this new thrust (1-14:5).

I think a pure psychological treatment model is far more based on the psychologist as a practitioner treating the individual as a client and that's it. I think that social work does provide a far sounder base for what we do (2-15:6).

The responses of both Service Managers and Probation Officers indicated a high degree of acceptance of the relevance of the psychological model underpinning the new IOM initiative; the empirical foundation of this approach was considered to be a significant factor conferring validity upon IOM. The emphasis placed by participants on the relevance of behavioural knowledge was probably associated with their heightened awareness of the cognitive /behavioural approach (that is a foundation for IOM). A further identified strength of the new psychological approach was the availability of 'in house' training for staff, without the need for any formal tertiary qualification. This view lends support to the argument that a tertiary qualification is not required in order to undertake effective probation practice (a view promoted by senior management, as evidenced by the abandonment of the Level B policy). Acceptance of this perspective seems to rest upon the assumption that probation staff have a foundation practice framework within which they can integrate any new practice approach (such as the CNI assessment process). A significant question to be addressed by the Probation Service concerns how this practice framework is defined and what evidence is gained during selection that prospective staff possess such a framework? This is of vital importance to the development of probation practice, as staff must be capable of engaging practice models in a critical and reflexive manner.

Cultural knowledge was the third component identified by the majority of the participants, a significant point given that Maori comprise almost half of the probation client base. However, amongst the Service Managers there was no clear consensus regarding the nature of the cultural knowledge that is relevant to the Probation Service or how that knowledge should be acted upon. One participant advanced the view that human needs are universal and that the similarities between people are more common than differences. Another commented that while some issues are beyond the scope of the Probation Service alone, the

Service has a role in contributing to the development of broader social policy. The following quotation from a Service Manager (made in relation to Maori cultural knowledge) identifies a potential tension between rational, scientific knowledge (endorsed as legitimate) and customary knowledge:

I'm aware that our knowledge in the world is quite limited, so we only know what we know and there is other customary knowledge which people may have had experience of, and they'll be able to tell you that this actually works. But no one has actually written it up in a journal article and published it. So the credibility of that sort of knowledge may not be given in the Western world the authority that it might otherwise deserve. You and I are raised in the Western tradition, monocultural values systems where certain types of knowledge, 'scientific' knowledge for example, [are] really very much valued (2-18:6).

It was further commented that practice knowledge based on insights made from different cultural perspectives might not be accessed easily by euro-centric, scientific methods.

The Probation Officers considered cultural knowledge and training to be essential in order for a Probation Officer to practice effectively. It was noted that a significant proportion of probation clients are Maori or Pacific people; hence, the significance of the Treaty of Waitangi and the status of Maori as tangata whenua ¹ was acknowledged. Likewise, the importance of cultural awareness, Te Reo ² and the correct pronunciation of clients' names was highlighted by one Probation Officer:

As a Maori, from my point of view it is very important. To have an understanding and be able to pronounce a person's name correctly is a common courtesy. Maori values are very different; to give someone a better understanding you need to know a wee bit of those values. Things that are important to some people mean absolutely nothing in Maoridom (2-12:6).

Accordingly, it was thought that Probation Officers ought to incorporate cultural insights in their practice. One Probation Officer commented that:

I don't believe I could do my job effectively unless I've done some training in cultural issues and I've done quite a lot over the years. I feel like that's probably the most important because of our client group. I mean if I just do

something culturally inappropriate the first time I meet somebody, well, all our interaction for the rest of the time is out the window (2-21:6).

The majority of the participants identified knowledge of Maori culture to be important. However, there was a lack of clarity regarding the composition of relevant cultural knowledge or how any such knowledge should be incorporated into practice. A more radical critique of probation policy regarding culturally appropriate practice was made by one Probation Officer who supported the concerns raised by Brown (1998) regarding the dangers inherent in imposing a reductionist framework that fails to integrate social, structural and cultural explanations of offending behaviour. In particular, it was suggested by a Maori Probation Officer that the requirement to practice in accordance with the prescribed IOM processes limited the level of Probation Officer autonomy, making it difficult to respond to clients in a culturally appropriate manner.

Service Managers believed that the IOM model offered the prospect of making a positive contribution to address Maori offending interventions; specifically the inclusion of the MaCRN in the assessment process. However, the need to build a link between the assessment process and the provision of intervention programmes for Maori was also noted.

More critical comment observed that it is difficult to respond to clients in culturally appropriate ways because the Probation Service is a controlling agency that also controls its staff regarding their practice. One Probation Officer, familiar with a range of Maori models for working in the social services, tried to develop an approach to practice that reflected a Maori perspective. However, she found a lack of fit with Probation Service requirements and did not feel able to work from a tikanga base:

I have a range of Maori models which I can use [for example] poutama model, but increasingly found I couldn't use it because it didn't fit with what we were meant to be doing. I'm still a Maori Probation Officer but I'm not working from a tikanga base, so it doesn't really fit with the Probation Service, as much as they have a commitment to reducing Maori re-offending (2-9:5).

While the Probation Service had developed a Maori strategic plan that focused upon issues

relating to offending by Maori, this was seen to have been developed by the organisation 'on their own terms'. Indeed, it was suggested by some that the Probation Service approached cultural practice as a little "tack on" when what was required was a true devolution of power to Maori.

The discipline of criminology was identified as a fourth potential source of professional knowledge. Many Probation Officers observed that criminology could make a significant contribution to the theoretical knowledge base for probation practice, however few had studied criminology formally and no substantive commentary was provided. Service Managers, on the other hand, made few comments, for while knowledge of criminology was considered to be useful it was not regarded as essential. One Service Manager made the observation that the Probation Service no longer encouraged staff to study criminology. Participants in both groups advanced the notion that an eclectic amalgam of knowledge provided a sound basis for the development of probation practice, thereby supporting the informed eclecticism promoted by Carew (1979) and Payne (1991). There was agreement that a generic Probation Officer requires a considerable breadth of knowledge that will draw upon a range of disciplines and sources, all of which are important:

The psychology of criminal conduct; having social work and psychology, a mixture of both use all the strategies that are around (2-17:7).

It's important to understand all of them. The model I feel most comfortable with at the moment is a holistic model, which accounts for all perspectives in equal portions, including a spiritual, which you could reframe into cultural (1-7:4).

Indeed a cautionary note was offered by a number of participants regarding the selection of one approach at the expense of others. For example, two Probation Officers said:

I'd hate to put it in a box and say that everyone must have a social work degree or have a sociology or psychology degree we run courses for things that fill the gaps (2-13:5).

I think that you need to have some evidence to back up your decision to use a particular model. But at the same time I think you need to be quite flexible in terms of your approach so like one model doesn't fit all [cases] (2-18:6).

This view was shared by a Service Manager who observed that the Probation Service ran the risk of placing too much emphasis upon a technocratic approach, based on one model, at the risk of not engaging clients in meaningful interaction that can require the use of a range of strategies.

There was support for a degree of practitioner autonomy regarding the use of practice models; different models were thought to be more or less relevant depending upon situational variables, including practitioner preference. Clearly the practitioner must have appropriate education and training, and an understanding of the principles that underpin a practice approach. As one participant put it:

You need to have various aspects available so that a person can consult or have access to those areas in order to utilise them, you need to have the knowledge to be aware that you need to access it (2-1:16).

There was a consensus that Probation Officers should understand human behaviour and specifically offending behaviours. Suggestions for training included: anger management; alcohol and drugs; gambling; human development; and relapse prevention. It was also argued that Probation Officers should have an understanding of how individuals respond to different environmental impacts and be able to track patterns of behaviour.

The need for Probation Officers to continue to develop their practice knowledge was stressed. One Service Manager commented that Probation Officers recruited from diverse backgrounds brought different strengths and abilities; what therefore were required were courses that could fill the gaps. It was suggested that the required education and training could be provided through accredited institutions such as universities and polytechnics, and that any training should include some fieldwork and practical component.

Knowledge of the organisation was identified by Probation Officers as a final component of professional knowledge. This organisational knowledge was linked to having a sense of direction, a point expressed clearly by one participant who commented that:

Knowledge of the organisation, the macro and micro components, [is] also

important. I think the impact on me for not actually having an awareness of the bigger picture is that sometimes I feel like I'm working in a vacuum (2-20:7).

This particular observation suggests a lack of effective communication and points to a possible disjunction between field staff and management. Similarly, it was also argued that Probation Officers “need to be able to work within the framework of the Probation Service” (2-9:4) and this requires “*firm knowledge of statutory work, the ability to interpret legislation and enforce it*” (2-19:5).

Understanding of the Process of Using Theory to Inform Practice

In Chapter Four practice validity was identified as a key concept with regard to the use of theory to inform practice (Sheppard 1998). It was argued that the work of the Probation Officer is grounded in reality; and therefore the theoretical knowledge that is used must be relevant to practice. Further, it was stressed that Probation Officers should have a clear understanding of the theoretical background of any practice model that they are required to implement. This understanding of practice validity was supported strongly by Probation Officers whose acceptance and commitment to any new idea or approach was considered important before it could be used effectively. As put by one Probation Officer “*it doesn't matter how good the product may be, if it is not understood and agreed with, it won't go anywhere*” (1-1:5). The Probation Officer should also understand how any particular knowledge/model has been tested and validated. One Probation Officer expressed the relevance of practice theory as follows:

I strongly believe that I, as an individual practitioner, need to have that intellectual, academic, philosophical basis for my work. So I know about cognitive behavioural theory, I have practice that is based on understanding and I have a few other things that I can pull out when that reaches its limits (2-15:6).

A range of observations made by the Probation Officers suggest that using theory to inform practice involves an integrative, reflective process. Therefore the Probation Officer requires the opportunity to trial any new approach and to be able to reflect on it. The

following comments illustrate this process:

By doing it, by practising, failing and doing it and revisiting it, by constant revisiting of the same set of circumstances (1-7:4).

Then you try it and if it works you ask more questions and practice it yourself and get better at it (2-2:7).

I think it's a matter of ongoing critical reflection on your own practice. Comparing it with what you've gained in the past through training courses and qualifications...it's also a matter of keeping up to date... (2-15:6).

Some Probation Officers described this as an almost automatic or intuitive process, drawing upon practice theory all the time and not necessarily being aware of it:

I think it happens quite subconsciously in the way I practise is influenced by the knowledge I have. The more I practise the more knowledge, different types of knowledge I get, and really I do think it happens subconsciously. I don't think "I'm going to use this theory now" (2-20:8).

On the other hand, others were conscious that they were using various techniques such as motivational interviewing or relapse prevention:

So the theoretical to have that in your head the whole time you are actually practising with a client or intervening with a client is very effective (2-17:9).

Following training in a particular practice model, one Probation Officer established a group where colleagues could meet to discuss issues encountered in the implementation of the model. This process enabled colleagues to share experiences and insights into the practical application of the model.

Many Probation Officers described the process by which they establish their own practice framework within which various approaches and tools can be understood. It was considered important to be able to personalise the use of knowledge by selecting those models or practices that they considered useful and with which they felt comfortable:

When I was training they gave us quite a broad view of the theories I very quickly gelled with systems theory and with humanistic theories. Those would

be my base (1-4:6).

I take the bits that I particularly like and I use them. The bits I think are going to be effective I tend to put together my own way of practising (2-9:4).

The development of a practice framework was also thought to be based on the individual Probation Officer's values and experiences:

Some of that's trial and error its experience and its other things outside of the theory and practice too. It's who you are, its values, a whole raft of things really. It's also being taught and hearing from clients (2-16:5).

I think you live it first, I think it becomes part of you as in everyday life and then you put it into your practice (2-21:7).

The individual framework was seen to provide the Probation Officer with a range of tools and interventions that could then be matched to the particular client and situation. It was observed that Probation Officers must be prepared to apply their knowledge, to make decisions and stand up for those decisions.

Almost all of the Service Managers shared the opinions offered by the Probation Officers. It was considered to be important that knowledge be able to be translated through education and training into something that could be used in practice on a daily basis. One Service Manager did, however, suggest that Probation Officers were pragmatists, driven more by the reality of their day-to-day practice than by formal knowledge or the organisational culture. They were perceived to be constantly seeking ways to adjust, enhance and add to their practice in response to daily experience.

Both groups of participants identified professional supervision as playing a vital role in the critical/reflective practice development process. In supervision, the Probation Officer is challenged and encouraged to consider linkages between theory and practice and to develop a more conscious practice of reflection. Drawing upon experience as a fieldwork teacher, one Service Manager identified a cluster of questions that can be used in supervision:

How does that fit? What theory did you use? What kind of things were you thinking about? Where do you think they might fit? (2-13:5).

It was also suggested that the professional supervisor should observe practice directly. However, amongst the Probation Officers, the record of the Probation Service in providing effective professional supervision was considered to be poor.

Summary

The participants advanced the argument that theoretical knowledge should be both relevant to and viable in daily practice. It was considered important that practitioners should understand why a particular approach is considered valid, be able to determine the limitations of any model, and be able to draw upon alternatives. These observations provide support for the arguments advanced by Payne (1991), Carew (1979), Robbins et al. (1999) and Schon (1995) regarding the conscious use of theory in practice.

The participants advanced the argument that theoretical knowledge should be both relevant to and viable in daily practice. It was considered important that practitioners should understand why a particular approach is considered valid, be able to determine the limitations of any model, and be able to draw upon alternatives. The Probation Officer was described as an active agent in the theory/practice link and this interaction was understood as being both a conscious and sub-conscious process. The Probation Officers' description of the development of an individual practice framework reflects a relatively sophisticated construction of practice based upon their direct experience of the practice environment. This perspective sheds light on the concerns they expressed regarding the imposition of any prescriptive practice model. Overall, the views of the participants indicate support for the argument that a professional's practice autonomy is based upon the attainment and application of professional knowledge.

It is significant that both the Probation Officers and Service Managers identified professional supervision as a mechanism for exploring the linkage between theory and practice (professional supervision is considered in Chapter Eleven). Their description of

professional supervision indicates a parallel process that models the critical reflection employed by individual practitioners in work with the client.

Practice Models

In Chapter Four, three approaches that informed practice in the Probation Service at the time of interviewing participants were identified: the Integrated Model of Supervision (IMS), CRIMPS (a model that draws together cognitive skills, relapse prevention and motivational interviewing) and IOM. The participants' were invited to comment on their experience of the following aspects of each model: the training that they had received; the usefulness of the model in practice; and the obstacles that might have affected the implementation of the model. Because of the empirical foundation of the models most Probation Officers and Service Managers regarded them positively. The models were thought to have been "*tried, tested and found to work*" (1-2:7).

Integrated Model of Supervision and CRIMPS

Possibly reflecting the fact that both approaches had been 'normalised' in comparison with IOM (that had only recently been introduced), the participants made few comments regarding IMS and CRIMPS. Probation Officers indicated they would like to have sufficient time to focus on the use of the models "on an everyday basis"; and that they would also like managers to offer encouragement and to support the use of these approaches.

Most participants had either completed or were scheduled to receive training in IMS. Few comments were made regarding the training but those made were positive. The IMS was considered to be a useful model that gave direction and structure to many practices that the Probation Officers were already using. The observation was made that clients are more likely to become engaged when challenged and offered something constructive.

Cited as an example of the successful integration of theory and practice, and thought to fit

well with existing practices, providing a foundation for uniform “best practice” the CRIMPS model was also regarded positively. Specific aspects of the model that were mentioned included: offence mapping, motivational interviewing and, as indicated in the following quote, the distinction between pre-contemplative and contemplative stages:

The best thing I ever got out of CRIMPS was the contemplative vs. pre-contemplative, and that's really crucial in terms of where I work, in terms of assessment (2-6:10).

Indeed, one Probation Officer had become a CRIMPS trainer because it was a practice that she could relate to and endorse.

Integrated Offender Management

Both groups were more forthcoming regarding IOM. There was a strong consensus among the Probation Officers that the concept and theoretical base of the model were relevant to probation practice. In particular, IOM was seen to offer a sound framework for practice and to promote consistency in service delivery through the introduction of standardised work practices (e.g. the use of checklists).

There was clear evidence of Probation Officer commitment to the concept of IOM. For example, the following comment was made regarding the criminogenic programmes that are a core component of the model:

They're making a difference in these people's [clients] lives in that they are feeling more empowered in being able to take their path away from offending and I guess if I didn't believe in the ability of the programmes and myself to deliver to them to make a difference I wouldn't be doing it...(2-3:7).

The Service Managers were also positive regarding the potential of IOM. A key factor behind the appeal of the model was the clear direction provided regarding practice, with a focus upon clear-cut goals and achievable tasks. The model is empirically based and provides a rationale for practice that is easy to promote to staff. Further, it offers the

prospect of a more co-operative approach between the operational divisions of the Department of Corrections (i.e. the Probation Service, Public Prisons and Psychological Service).

The Probation Officers' responses regarding the training they had received were varied. Their general view of the initial Level Two assessment training was positive, while their perception of the later CNI assessment and sentence planning training was less favourable. The mode of training (short block courses) was typically described as inadequate as preparation for the successful integration of the model in practice. Similarly, while Service Managers made positive comments regarding their special manager training (which provided an overview of IOM and concentrated on quality assurance processes), a lack of full training and familiarity with the practical application of the model created difficulties in relation to their responsibility to supervise and check the work of Probation Officers. Some Service Managers expressed a preference to complete the full training.

Although the overall level of support was high, a number of comments were made regarding limitations of the IOM model. First, concern was expressed that the assessment model excluded clients impaired due to head injury; the reality of practice requires Probation Officers to work with any client sentenced by the Court, and there was a sense of frustration at the apparent lack of recognition that not all clients 'fit' the IOM approach. A second criticism was linked to the model's narrow psychological foundation that places undue emphasis upon the individual and individual responsibility for offending behaviour. While this focus was considered relevant and appropriate, the model was nevertheless thought to pay insufficient attention to the social context and the client's background. One Probation Officer observed, for example, that the exclusion of social history information from pre-sentence reports and the greater focus on the offence had resulted in a higher rate of imprisonment. Service Managers also expressed reservations, noting that the CNI assessment was of limited utility as a sentencing tool (moreover, feedback from the judiciary indicated that the model took insufficient account of sentencing precedent). The third limitation identified, by both groups of participants, was the high level of prescription that was seen to inhibit the Probation Officer's ability to be flexible and respond to each

client as an individual (although it was acknowledged that 'professional override' allowed for a degree of practitioner discretion).

Both the Probation Officers and Service Managers identified a number of obstacles to the successful implementation of IOM. Their views have been grouped here around the following themes: planning and communication; professional capacity and support of staff; and resources. On the poor level of planning and communication, it was observed that the Probation Service was implementing IOM because it was seen to be a good idea, not because it had been tested in the field. There was agreement among the Service Managers that IOM should have been piloted in one location and then fully evaluated. While the assessment of some aspects had been completed, the model as a whole was not tested in the field before national implementation.

Both groups of participants identified a lack of staff commitment to the model because of poor planning and implementation. Probation Officers commented that a lack of consultation with staff had reduced their level of 'buy in' to IOM. Indeed, some felt bewildered by the whole change process and a measure of staff resistance was attributed to a lack of opportunity to discuss professional issues surrounding IOM. The need to communicate effectively was extremely important for, as one Probation Officer observed, *"the selling of the model is probably, from the Department's perspective, the most important thing of all"* (2-7:20). Similarly, the Service Managers thought that a lack of Probation Officer 'buy in' was linked to a perception that their existing practice has been devalued, that IOM had been imposed on them, and the fact that the Psychological Service and not staff from the Probation Service had been engaged to 'champion' IOM.

The second theme concerned issues relating to and affecting the capacity of Probation Officers to implement IOM. Service Managers considered that effective application of the IOM model required both intellectual ability and commitment. Hence, reservations were expressed regarding the capacity of some Probation Officers to cope with the model. A related issue surrounded the Probation Service's ability to recruit suitable staff, which would require higher salaries and better leave provisions. For example, one Service

Manager commented that:

The major obstacle, in a nutshell, for me would be have we got the capacity to recruit staff of sufficient calibre to do the job? (1-6:14).

The Probation Officers who had been trained in the initial assessment model said that the training did not contain sufficient opportunity to practise the new skills that they received little feedback regarding their performance, and some of them remained confused about the concepts and the philosophy behind the model. It was of concern to them that some trainers discredited the Probation Officers' existing practice:

We were told that what we had always done was rubbish, that we couldn't write a report to save our lives. (1-1:18)

Moreover, the trainers were alleged to have made comments that were interpreted as a threat to job security:

The trainer we had for level one said the Department said we had to do it. If you don't like it you know, you are in the wrong job (2-7:20-21).

Upon return to their workplace, however, a number of Probation Officers were either not required to use the model or there was a lengthy delay in doing so. This combination of criticism and delay had a negative effect upon their confidence and level of commitment to the new processes.

Participants in both groups were critical of the levels of ongoing professional support following training. It was suggested that any training received should be integrated with regular practice in a structured manner; otherwise individual practitioners would make their own adaptations that could result in practice variance. Psychologists from the Department of Corrections Psychological Service provided specialist professional supervision in relation to the use of the Criminal Needs Inventory (CNI) and they were also responsible for assessing Probation Officer competence in the application of IOM processes. A potential conflict of interest was identified in this dual role that could affect the level of Probation Officer disclosure regarding their practice during CNI professional supervision, thus compromising the effectiveness of the process. Many of the participating Probation

Officers identified the need for support from a supervisor conversant with the daily realities of practice. For example, one observed that:

The biggest thing is people feeling supported in what they're doing to have someone to go to who knows the business and can support them in a practical way (1-14:6).

In this respect, the majority believed that the efficacy of the then current model of professional supervision was limited by the relative lack of power of peer supervisors. One Probation Officer commented:

I think it would be good if my professional supervisor and manager was the same person. It seems like the professional supervisor isn't the person who has power, so it seems that your professional practice isn't as important as ticks [in boxes for compliance] because they are done by managers. What sort of message is that giving me? (1-10:6).

Furthermore, many Service Managers were considered to be either uninterested in professional practice (being more concerned with auditing), or inexperienced and not understanding the nature of best practice.

The third obstacle to effective implementation of IOM was a perceived lack of adequate resources. A fundamental concern was, of course, the level of staffing relative to the required work volume and specification. Staffing was considered inadequate by many Probation Officers, though there was considerable variance in the staff shortage level reported at the different locations. Frustration at having insufficient time to implement the new model in accordance with specifications was widespread amongst the Probation Officers. Some staff were reported to be working in excess of fifty hours a week in order to try to meet requirements. A negative consequence of this pressure was the 'short circuiting' of best practice in order to meet volume and performance targets. Unrealistic performance expectations were also thought to provide those Probation Officers resistant to change with the justification to become entrenched in their opposition to IOM. It was suggested that a realistic workload guideline should be introduced. However, in order for this to be effective there would need to be adequate resources, including the required

number of staff. Inadequate physical resources and conditions were also identified. For example, a Probation Officer declared:

We haven't got the physical facilities to see people. We've got four interviewing rooms and we have to book them, so people are now being seen in the stairwell, or outside in the car park (1-1:9).

Another source of dissatisfaction, identified by the majority of Probation Officers, concerned the performance of the in-house computer system. Issues noted were: the lack of server speed; overly complex processes; a lack of functionality, which resulted in too many time-consuming 'work arounds'; and the excessive time required for inputting data.

A number of the Service Managers suggested that the obstacle of inadequate resources reflected a lack of appreciation by senior management of the reality of implementation. The need to provide realistic resources and to calculate all costs were seen to be vital if the Probation Service was serious about high quality professional service delivery.

The participants identified a number of alternative approaches they considered valid and that were already part of their practice. Strengths-based practice, for example, was advocated by a Probation Officer who identified this approach as the opposite of those that focus upon client deficits, such as offence mapping. Service Managers, on the other hand, noted that crisis management was a significant feature of contemporary probation practice, which not only provided an insight into the nature of the practice milieu but was one which suggests that models of practice must be flexible and adaptive.

Perceiving no opportunity to consider other approaches, a degree of frustration was expressed by a number of Probation Officers at the primacy given to cognitive/behavioural theory. Concern was expressed that the IOM model placed undue emphasis upon the individual and a strong consensus emerged that intervention focusing only on the client was unlikely to be completely successful if the client remained isolated from his or her family which should be involved in the intervention. It was also argued that to prevent re-offending it is necessary to consider the whole person (for example, basic needs must be met such as housing and food) and to take a broader social perspective since some

communities were so well entrenched in a criminal culture that the solution was more complex than Probation Service intervention alone. One obvious reason for this view was that the values and norms held by clients are often quite different from 'pro-social' ones, and there was therefore a need to engage a whole family if issues of intergenerational offending were to be addressed. For example, a Probation Officer advocated:

...a community development way of working. Let's look at working with the 'X' community. What are we going to do with the overall level of crime in the area? How can we work together on this? What does the community want of us on a local level as opposed to what ... the supposed community of the nation... as represented in parliament want[s] of us? That's a dimension that's lacking at the moment (2-15:8).

It is of interest that little mention was made by the participants of cultural issues, given the cultural composition of the client group. Comments made by one Probation Officer (of Maori descent) regarding the lack of fit between the requirements of the Probation Service and her Maori practice perspective (subsequently abandoned) illustrate the dominance of the current IOM paradigm and the potentially disempowering impact that this can have upon the individual practitioner.

Summary and Discussion

There was a high degree of congruence between the observations of the Probation Officers and Service Managers. The empirical foundation of the practice models was considered to be a major strength and they were thought to provide a useful framework for probation practice. Knowledge was considered more accessible through the development of models, that draw together a range of useful concepts and skills (within some boundaries and rules) that the Probation Officer can use to work effectively with the client. Both the IMS and CRIMPS approaches were endorsed as relevant in the field, thus meeting Sheppard's (1998) criterion of practice validity (i.e. the models are consistent with the nature and purposes of probation and influence the conduct of practice).

A high level of support was evident for the IOM model, both in terms of its relevance to practice and as an integrative mechanism within the Department of Corrections. Bonta

(1996) identified differences between individual practitioners regarding 'data' gathering and interpretation as a central weakness associated with subjective 'professional' assessment. The participants' endorsement of IOM evidenced their engagement of this concern that practice should be consistent and their acceptance of standardised work practices as a means of achieving this objective.

However, the participants also made perceptive observations (based upon practice experience) regarding the limitations of IOM. The first observation concerned the importance of possessing the requisite professional knowledge base upon which practice decisions can be based. Second, they identified the need to be able to exercise a degree of professional discretion with regard to the choice of intervention that is the most appropriate in order to work effectively with the client. To be effective, intervention often needs to be based on a more expansive practice base and not confined to one approach. It was argued that as practitioners develop their practice skills, the use of models becomes seemingly intuitive. Finally, they noted the importance of taking into account the requirements of the customers of the services provided. In relation to IOM, it was argued that in addition to providing a clinical criminogenic assessment, the Level Two report should also meet other information needs of the court.

The participants identified three clusters of obstacles that were thought to impede the successful implementation of IOM. Taken together they reflected poor planning, organisation and resourcing. As such they reflected a lessening of the credibility of those managers responsible for implementation planning, and the poor understanding of decision-makers regarding the reality of practice. Concerns were also raised regarding negative messages from trainers that devalued Probation Officers and their existing practice, and the perceived lack of professional leadership by many Service Managers either uninterested in or unable to understand the nature of best practice. The Probation Officers identified a lack of consultation and limited opportunity to debate the proposed changes associated with IOM as significant factors that affected their degree of commitment, while the reliance of senior management on external change agents was interpreted as reflecting both their lack of confidence in Probation Service staff and their lack of professional leadership. In a

sense, senior management was seen to have abrogated responsibility for the development of professional practice and to have focused on the administrative elements surrounding implementation.

The more limited training and unfamiliarity of Service Managers with the practical application of IOM presents as a practice risk, in light of their quality assurance role. Further, any perception on the part of a Probation Officer that the Service Manager lacks practice competence may undermine the Service Manager's credibility as a leader.

The joint construction of practice that emerges from the responses of both groups again emphasises the importance of the nature and quality of interaction between the client and Probation Officer. Probation practice is conceived of as a process that involves ongoing development, and Probation Officers should be able to contribute to the development of new ways of working with a client. The uniformity involved in following a prescriptive model could reduce emphasis on the importance of human interaction qualities - that is, matching clients and Probation Officers, making use of the individual Probation Officer's personal attributes, style and demeanour.

The participants' suggestions regarding practice approaches are firmly based upon their experience of the current practice environment and indicate support for an eclectic position. Particular emphasis was placed on approaches that located the client within a broader social framework; this parallels the concern expressed by Brown (1998) that social, structural and cultural explanations of deviance are particularly important in the New Zealand probation context.

Understanding of 'Practice Wisdom'

In Chapter Four an epistemology of practice was noted, one based upon knowledge (acquired through reflective practice experience) often labelled as 'practice wisdom'. The participants identified the combination of knowledge with experience in the field as a foundation of practice wisdom. However, experience was not equated simply with length

of time in a position; it involves the cumulative development of knowledge, skill and insight expressed by a Probation Officer as follows:

Practice wisdom is about a person being experienced in dealing with a multitude of different people in different contexts and having some hunches and ideas that are informed by their training and their experience and acting on that (2-16:6).

For example, another Probation Officer had developed expertise in working with sexually deviant clients through her broad range of experience with victims of sexual abuse, inmates in prison and clients in the community. Practice wisdom was further defined as involving the intuitive application of understanding developed as the result of practice experience. This point is well illustrated by two Probation Officers in the following quotes:

From practice wisdom I sort of know some of the questions to ask and how to ask them and maybe how to put someone at their ease and the whole engagement thing comes more easily because you've done it all before...you've tried things out and you know what's going to work. It becomes not an automatic thing but more intuitive. I don't have to think consciously about a lot of things because it just sort of happens (2-4:7).

Despite the theories, the models, the Departmental imperatives, there are some things that are quite intangible, that you can only learn from actually doing (2-2:9).

There was a consensus that the Probation Officer should keep learning and developing, try new tools, deal with clients in repeat situations and crises, and be experienced in a range of issues. At the heart of the above quotes is the idea that practice wisdom is developed through a reflective process in which the Probation Officer continually re-evaluates his or her work, refining practice by building up a 'common story' based upon an understanding of what has been successful in the past and by appraising new approaches:

[You] have the educative part, it's through the process of interaction that you start to understand, a reflexive process. Knowledge, experience and practice is like a diamond; when rough it doesn't look much, [but] when you get some facets into it, it starts to change. Best practice only comes with some type of experience (1-7:5).

A Service Manager described the exercise of practice wisdom as the difference between assessing something on paper and assessment that includes a 'gut level' knowledge or reaction based on experience. An example provided was that of experienced Probation Officers who are able to integrate their practice knowledge into the new IOM model and prepare clear, concise reports in comparison with inexperienced Probation Officers "regurgitating" what the client has said to them and "slotting" this information into the categories of the model. It was suggested that associated with the exercise of practice wisdom a Probation Officer should have both the confidence and competence to use his or her initiative; for example, to make a decision that a 'rule' doesn't apply in a particular situation or to select techniques from models and to integrate them into practice.

A further observation, shared by the participants, concerned the validity and reliability of practice wisdom. The high level of credibility given to IOM, a predominantly psychological model, was interpreted as in some way diminishing the practice wisdom and institutional knowledge accumulated within the Probation Service. A core argument advanced in support of the development and implementation of IOM, in preference to reliance on practice wisdom, rests upon the perceived need for greater reliability and validity in the assessment of clients. However, in relation to CNI-based assessment it was argued that the clinical decisions required (based on a set of rules) could not be made without the Probation Officer having sufficient practice wisdom. For example, one Probation Officer pointed out that she:

Couldn't have made those clinical decisions based around the rules, the psychological rules...without my practice wisdom...I could not have walked in off the street and made those decisions (2-17:11).

Practice wisdom, in other words, was identified as a key component in the decision-making process, along with the use of rules.

However, a degree of caution was also noted regarding the concept and exercise of practice wisdom. A Service Manager, for example, observed that while practice experience can be something that is cumulative and adds to a particular approach or theoretical base, experience per se is no guarantee of enhanced service delivery. This point of view was

shared by a Probation Officer who commented: *"there are some Probation Officers who have practiced for fifteen years that make you want to crawl under the desk"* (1-4:7). A number of others went a step further and identified resistance to change as a characteristic of some longer serving colleagues. For example, one Probation Officer commented that over reliance upon intuitive knowing might impede the practitioner's ability to be open to new ways of working, while another observed that: *"You can't beat having someone around who's got that knowledge, but it doesn't tend to [lend] itself to change"* (1-9:11).

Finally, there was a sense among the participants that the potential for practice wisdom to contribute to the maintenance and development of practice had not been recognised by senior managers. Some suggested that the place of practice wisdom had actually diminished as illustrated in the following quotation from a Probation Officer:

Over the past five years I have felt practice wisdom and accumulated information in our culture hasn't been valued in the Department. I've heard some managers and leaders say almost that "Are you still here?" after five years. I haven't felt that wisdom is altogether valued (1-11:7).

It was hardly surprising, therefore, that a number of the participants took the opportunity to point out the positive role that was or could be performed by staff with practice wisdom:

People with experience should be encouraged to contribute their experience to making some of the systems and processes much more robust and providing a leadership role in some of the training (1-3:9).

...at the moment in the organisation it is probably the thing that keeps things going because there's institutional wisdom by people who've been around a long time and who therefore have a background and knowledge base on which to carry on (1-14:6).

I think this is where you get the natural type leadership coming in, where people will learn that one of their colleagues has this knowledge and is able to share and will share it. I think that is the role to encourage because obviously it will produce a better result with the team overall (1-16:6).

Summary

There was agreement between the Probation Officers and Service Managers that practice

wisdom is based on the integration of knowledge and experience gained in the field of practice. The development of practice wisdom was seen to involve a reflective process and was thought to be applied at times in a seemingly intuitive manner. The participants also understood practice wisdom to encompass and to be characterised by the development of autonomy, practice discretion and the use of initiative based upon confidence and competence.

The participants' offered observations regarding what may be taken to be a misconception regarding practice wisdom and a note of caution was evident in their recognition that the notion of experience based upon length of service is not necessarily correlated with increased competence. Of interest is the relationship noted between practice wisdom and clinical decision-making; it was suggested that practice wisdom represents a vital foundation upon which new approaches are mediated and enhanced in order to achieve practice validity. While there was a sense that senior managers in the Probation Service had overlooked the contribution of staff with practice wisdom, the participants identified a potential leadership role for these staff.

Conclusion

The participants' views have been presented regarding the following core elements of the framework for the construction of probation practice: the professional foundation of practice; purpose, values and ethics; and the concept of best practice (incorporating knowledge base, the use of theory to inform practice, practice models and practice wisdom).

In Chapter Four a set of criteria was proposed representing the professional foundation for probation practice. These included: the possession of specialist knowledge; reflexive practice that is based upon autonomy, accountability and the centrality of the client/practitioner relationship; and commitment to a set of values that underpin the purpose of probation, and to ethical mandates that establish clear standards regarding appropriate

attitudes and behaviours for practitioners. The professional foundations of probation (in conjunction with changes in the broader service delivery context) influence the participants' experience and expectations of leadership and their views as to the type of leadership that is likely to support and develop staff performance. It was argued that the conception of professional practice rests upon the core premise that practice decisions should be based on relevant and valid knowledge, and that the failure to use such knowledge challenges (and ultimately undermines) any professional aspirations.

With the above in mind, the results presented in this chapter indicate a consensus among the Probation Officers and Service Managers that a key strength of the psychological foundation of IOM is empirical validity. However, although the participants' responses point to a high level of acceptance of the evidence-based CNI model, there is also evidence that psychology alone is not seen to provide a sufficient base for the development of probation as a profession. Both groups of participants expressed concern at the lessening emphasis placed on the relevance of the broader social context, and they were also concerned at the lack of engagement by the Probation Service of alternative explanations of deviance, particularly social, structural and cultural explanations. However, they made few comments regarding the relevance of cultural knowledge to inform practice. It was thought that practice development within the Probation Service was controlled; for example, the one Probation Officer who endeavoured to integrate a Maori perspective had abandoned her efforts because she had not felt able to practice in accordance with a tikanga base. A possible reason for the apparent absence of cultural explanations of criminal behaviour is that they may not be easily accessed through the dominant Western scientific epistemology.

The change in the meta-narrative, from one informed predominantly by social work to one resting upon a psychological framework, was viewed critically as being reductionist. Staff that held a strong allegiance to social work as a profession felt as though they had been devalued and their practice perspective had been discounted. There was a perception that the IOM approach was being imposed in an overly prescriptive manner, which reflected a lack of understanding, by senior managers, of the nature of practice in the field. There was also a strong sense that the manner in which this change has been implemented displayed a

disregard for (and possibly a lack of understanding of) alternative constructions of practice. The IOM model was considered to place undue emphasis upon the individual client (for understanding and resolving deviant behaviours) and to diminish the importance of social factors. This relative lack of a broader social emphasis may have significant practice implications; for example, practitioners might not develop the level of understanding of the client's behaviour that is required in order to provide an adequate level of risk management.

The responses of many of the Probation Officers evidenced a relatively sophisticated construction of individual practice frameworks. They were perceptive regarding the limitations of models and the need to exercise practice discretion, the practical application of knowledge was thought to be important, and significance was placed upon the nature and quality of interaction between client and practitioner, in particular the reflexive quality of this relationship. The IOM model was perceived to detract from the development of the client/practitioner relationship as the foundation of probation practice and to place emphasis upon a technical-rational approach. This change was clearly a source of disquiet. Concern was expressed that the targeting of intervention based upon the assessment of risk of re-offending, criminogenic need and responsivity has at times excluded clients who would have previously received service; for example, those who are mentally ill. On the other hand, there was no evidence of concern among the participants that mandatory intervention detracted from the development of an effective client/practitioner relationship. The only issue to be identified was that at times resource constraints resulted in a client not receiving the service or intervention that had been ordered as part of his/her sentence. Finally, practice autonomy and the ongoing development of practice (key elements of a professional approach) were thought to be based on the attainment and application of professional knowledge. The concept of practice wisdom was considered to encompass the development of autonomy and practice discretion, and to contribute to the practitioners' clinical decision making.

Implications for Leadership

In reply to questions regarding the conceptualisation of probation as a profession, some

participants projected a self-deprecating view of the status of probation practice. Perhaps reflecting their rational comparison of probation practice against an ideal-type construction of a profession, this view was largely contradicted by their self-identification as professionals. Nevertheless, a key influence upon this negative perception was the role of senior managers, who emerged as a coercive force seeking to exercise control over practice. The lack of both probation practice experience and understanding amongst senior managers was thought to be evident in decisions regarding policy selection and policy implementation with inadequate resources. Similarly, the desire of senior managers for uniformity within the broader Department of Corrections was thought to be incongruent with the development of a distinctive probation profession. A sense of disempowerment was also noted, and many of the longer serving Probation Officers conveyed a sense that their professional identity had been undermined.

It was apparent that many of the participants experienced tension as a consequence of being unable to practice in accordance with their professional beliefs and standards. Notwithstanding their feeling of disempowerment, both groups identified a close association between their self-conception as professionals and their standard of work performance, stressing the importance of congruence between values, beliefs and action. This connection between professional identity and work performance is important and has implications for the relationship between leadership and service delivery.

The Probation Officers considered the reliance on external change agents to reflect first, a lack of confidence in probation staff and second, an abrogation of responsibility on the part of senior managers to provide professional leadership. In regard to Service Managers, the Probation Officers identified the importance of practice competence and this was linked to leadership credibility. Inadequate supervision and support from both Service Managers and professional supervisors was identified as a factor that contributed to the work stress experienced by Probation Officers. Finally, the Service Managers suggested that their professional credibility can be compromised when they are required to make choices between management (with a focus on results) and professionalism (with a focus on the client). The comment made by one participant regarding a "leadership obligation" (to act

decisively and “take away risk” from the Probation Officer) provides direction regarding the type of leadership that could be provided. The notion of a leadership obligation is congruent with strategies for managing professionals noted by Irurita (1992, 1994) - in particular, optimising the performance potential of the professional and creating conditions that facilitate effective practice.

The substantive issues that have emerged from this chapter both inform and are in some measure addressed by the data that follows in Chapter Eleven where the focus is directly upon the participants’ understanding of leadership. In the next chapter, however, attention moves to the participants’ views regarding the assessment of service delivery, the fifth element in the framework for the construction of probation practice.

Footnotes

1 The Maori People; literally ‘the people of the land’

2 The Maori language

3 Culture (usually Maori).

CHAPTER NINE

Perspectives on the Assessment of Service Delivery

In Chapter Four, it was argued that within the probation field of practice there is often a lack of agreement regarding how effectiveness should be defined and assessed. It was suggested that a relationship exists between: (1) the goals of service delivery and the definition of effectiveness that is adopted by the Probation Service; and (2) the selection of service delivery models, interventions and the range of indicators that are used in the assessment of the service delivery. Ideally, these decisions should be mediated by the feedback received through the assessment process; in particular, assessment should provide direction for the ongoing improvement of service delivery. This development should also take into account advances within the broader domain of knowledge and practice that underpins service delivery and interventions.

The decisions made by senior managers, in regard to assessment, represent a further key aspect of their professional leadership. There is a potential for tension between the perspective adopted by management and that of practitioners. In particular, the acceptance and implementation of a narrow definition of effectiveness might contribute to the imposition and acceptance of a minimalist conception of practice (one resting on a restricted theoretical base and characterised by prescriptive models and manual procedures) that fails to recognise the complexity of probation practice.

The focus of this chapter is the research participants' knowledge of the assessment of service delivery and the following themes are examined: the importance of how practice is implemented and how this is assessed; knowledge of causality; and the outcomes that are considered appropriate for assessment. In the conclusion to the chapter, the responses of the participants are examined in relation to the earlier discussion (in Chapter Four) surrounding assessment. The implications for leadership that emerge from the assessment

of service delivery are also identified.

The following points were highlighted in earlier discussion of the assessment of practice (Chapter Four). First, the assessment of performance and effectiveness in human service organisations presents difficulties that do not fit easily with the models advanced by business-oriented, scientific management. Second, assessment of practice is important for organisations such as the Probation Service in order to demonstrate to the Government (as funder) that services purchased meet established standards and deliver the intended results. Third, practice assessment relates to the ongoing development of effective practice, in terms of both individual practice and the efficacy of interventions. Finally, it was noted that the selection of assessment criteria is likely to be linked to stakeholder interests and that probation practice is characterised by multiple stakeholders.

Together the above points provide the context within which the views of the participants are now considered in three sections. The first section considers the importance of the way in which a practice model or procedure is implemented and how this implementation can be assessed. In the second section, the participants' observations regarding effectiveness and causality are presented; finally the focus shifts to developing an understanding of the participants' views on the assessment of outcomes.

The Importance of How a Practice Model is Implemented and Assessed

The participants' responses regarding implementation of practice models reflect their interest in four issues, namely: implementation in relation to process criteria; the quality of interaction between client and practitioner; other factors affecting implementation; and how processes can be assessed.

With respect to the first issue 51 percent of the participants maintained that Probation Officers should practice in accordance with the required processes and procedures of any model, provided the model has validity and its application is likely to achieve the desired outcome. The establishment of process criteria (business rules in IOM terms) in a model was thought to provide structure to practice, a view well illustrated by one Probation

Officer who made the following comment:

I think in order to have effective outcomes you've got to have good procedures working to procedures that are well made is good, so that you get those outcomes that are expected (2-6:13).

A Service Manager noted that consistency in the application of the model was significant because each client should have broadly similar experiences in terms of the processes completed. Indeed, a concern shared by participants in both groups was that failure to follow a model correctly could potentially disadvantage the client. This point is illustrated in the following observation by a Probation Officer:

I think it is really important how we go about something if there is a procedure to follow, and we don't [follow it], we disadvantage people and ourselves (2-21:10).

Notwithstanding the relatively high degree of support for practice criteria, three Probation Officers made the pertinent observation that models are seldom implemented in exactly the same way in all cases because of differences between practitioners and the influence of external factors, most importantly the behaviour of clients. It was also considered important that the practitioner should retain the ability to exercise practice discretion within the parameters of the model or procedure. This point of view was illustrated by a Probation Officer who made the following comment:

I always think that there is room in procedures to do what needs to be done to meet client needs or get the right service, or to challenge at an appropriate time if I was following a rigid procedure then I wouldn't have that ability (2-21:10).

The quality of the Probation Officer/client relationship, is the second issue concerning implementation, was generally considered (81 percent of Probation Officers and 50 percent of Service Managers) to have a significant impact on the client's response to any intervention and/or the achievement of the intended results of any procedure (for example, an assessment). If the Probation Officer can develop rapport, form some sort of trust and allow the client to feel part of the process, then the client is more likely to be open and less resistant. The Probation Officer's behaviour was considered to affect both the

client/practitioner interaction and the development of understanding with the client. Quotations from two Probation Officers illustrate this viewpoint:

It's actually more important than the procedure. The procedure could only happen if the interaction had that quality about it. (2-21:10).

I see myself as modelling what I talk about. In that sense the process, at times how I act, is more powerful than what I say (1-11:8).

Seven of the Probation Officers described process as providing a quality dimension as to how Probation Officers treat clients. For one of these Probation Officers process was:

Incredibly important. Our ability to engage a client is hugely significant in terms of the journey they go on. If we haven't got good engagement skills we can't meet the person in a way that enables them to form some sort of trust (2-16:8).

The client should have a sense of being treated with respect and dignity and should be satisfied with the service received. The Probation Officer must have respect for and belief in the client. A connection was posited between this respect and the client's capacity for self-belief. Half of the Service Managers expressed similar concerns, observed a need to make the client/practitioner process more dynamic (particularly in reference to the IOM approach) and suggested that use be made of good social work practices (with social work education being re-introduced) in order to develop the capability of Probation Officers.

Participants in both groups identified a number of other factors that affected the implementation of practice. Four Probation Officers identified their professional values and beliefs as a major determinant of how a practice model is implemented as well as the level of Probation Officer 'buy in' to any model. Similarly, the Probation Officer's level of commitment to best practice and possession of the appropriate theoretical and practice base were noted by two Service Managers as key factors affecting a model's implementation. The education and training associated with any model was thought to be important by two Probation Officers and one Service Manager, and related to the level of Probation Officer confidence; if Probation Officers understand and are in favour of a model, then they are more likely to try to make it work.

The unique characteristics of each client and the particular practice situation were identified as further factors associated with effective implementation. Two Probation Officers commented that both Probation Officer and client responses can be influenced by a variety of factors on the day: for example, their attitude towards the interview/intervention or preceding events. It was also noted that being required to complete an unfamiliar task could be very stressful for both parties. Two Service Managers said that the characteristics of each client should also be taken into account, and that the process followed might change in response to the particular client. For example, some offenders are manipulative and it was considered to be important for the Probation Officer to retain some control over the process. In light of potential variations in practice, therefore, practitioners must be clear about their process decisions.

Finally, most participants in both groups regarded the assessment of process to be important. One Service Manager expressed his concern at an apparent lack of process assessment as follows:

I believe that the New Zealand state sector really measures outputs, so numbers of people through programmes, numbers completed we don't actually know what we're delivering I think that's quite dangerous really it's easy to be accountable in terms of outputs because that's just counting. It is much more resource intensive to find out what people are actually doing, what the process is about (2-18:8).

This comment reflects concern with both the integrity of practice, with how well a particular intervention is provided, and also with the apparent decision to assess those actions that are easy to assess. Another Service Manager thought that any assessment of process should be made within the context of an outcome measure; otherwise, any focus on process could be seen as self-serving.

Two Probation Officers identified issues regarding what is assessed and how the assessment is undertaken. The first drew attention to the lack of direct observation of practice by Service Managers who ultimately assess the Probation Officer's level of competence declaring that: *"the people who mark the competencies don't really know exactly what work is being done"*. She also suggested that Service Managers were unsure

with regard to “*what is the most vital part of the work process that should be checked*” (2-17:15). The second Probation Officer commented on the use of audiotapes to assess practices:

In terms of competencies we are not actually assessing the interaction, we are assessing the evidence. You can hand over a tape of an interview but you can't actually see the interaction (2-9:7).

A Service Manager made a similar point, noting that:

Most of the audit systems that we now have are measuring how well someone completes the requirements of the audit system, for example, competencies. We can assess whether certain criteria have been met via records, but it might be that it is the quality of the interaction which is the vital causal link which facilitates the specific intervention being successful (2-14:11).

Participants in both groups acknowledged that the assessment of practitioner/client interaction and other processes posed difficulties, however various suggestions were made that were thought to be viable in the probation practice context. First, it was proposed that assessment should occur at different stages in any process; for example, at the completion of a specific task such as an induction interview, and at the termination of the sentence. Second, feedback should be sought directly from the client to increase the client's sense of having some control over the process. Third, feedback should be obtained from colleagues who develop an understanding of a particular Probation Officer's practice through their interaction with clients and other stakeholders; for example, feedback from court staff regarding performance in court. Fourth, it was suggested that multiple methods could be employed, including observation of practice (e.g. direct observation, video or audio recording and review). Case records might also be used as a source of information to assist in assessing process, and client compliance and engagement could be demonstrated through case notes.

Finally, in addition to the above suggestions, a note of caution was sounded regarding some practices in use at the time of the interviews. The use of performance rulers (completed on the basis of written records) as a starting point for quality assurance was singled out by a Service Manager who as quoted above observed that most audit systems used by the

Probation Service measured how well the audit system was completed rather than the actual subject under review. Another Service Manager observed that the Probation Service should be conducting its own research regarding service delivery, rather than continuing to rely upon the Psychological Service or external contractors. This viewpoint foreshadows comments made in Chapter 10 that the Probation Service's professional credibility was compromised by the decisions of senior managers to 'contract out' the responsibility for significant developments in practice, such as client assessment.

Knowledge of Causality

From the account of the participants, the issue of causality was a complex one; it was considered difficult to link probation interventions directly to a reduction in re-offending, and the impact of other variables was recognised. These variables ranged from internal factors affecting the organisation's capacity to provide service (e.g. staffing levels, workloads and training), to external factors such as client maturation, significant life-cycle events, the client's level of family support and employment. One Probation Officer neatly framed the issue of causal inference as follows:

If they haven't gone back [to crime] great, but I can't necessarily say it's because of how I worked with them. May have met a new partner, all sorts of other influences. Equally I don't know if they do go back to court - that I can say it's because of how I did and didn't work (1-11:8).

Another Probation Officer conveyed a sense of the depth and complexity of the goal of reducing recidivism when he questioned the ability of the Probation Service to ever "get ahead of the game", observing that the "game is too big" (1-7:6). He thought that intervention by the Probation Service was occurring at the wrong point in the lives of many clients and he suggested that to be effective in making change intervention should occur earlier in the life cycle. Of course, what the participant was getting at was not that probation intervention is occurring at the wrong point - it cannot be any earlier but that the 'life chances' of clients point to the need for appropriate interventions from various agencies at an earlier stage. In relation to experiences in facilitating programmes with

clients he also made the following comment:

You might get one out of ten who will make a change. I think that's a reasonable expectation. If ten of those people have heard one of the things that I've said and make some progressive change, then I've also been effective (1-7:6).

Causality was considered by only two of the eight Service Managers, one of whom expressed concern that:

The best you can do is to implement interventions that have been shown to make a difference, on the basis of the literature or experience (2-18:8).

She drew attention to the fact that the Probation Service was internally focused upon the delivery of contracted outputs, and suggested the adoption of a broader perspective concerning the contribution of government and non-government agencies to the larger government vision of safer communities. She thought this perspective would enable a better understanding of the contribution of probation policy and practice to broader social objectives. The second Service Manager identified the need for the Probation Service to engage in research and suggested longitudinal studies around maturation and crime as areas warranting attention. He also observed that an opportunity existed to complete a comparative assessment of existing and new IOM interventions, arguing that if this were not undertaken then in time there would not be a body of past offender experience on which to base a comparison.

Knowledge of Outcomes that are Appropriate for Assessment

The final component of the participants' understanding of service delivery assessment concerns the identification and selection of outcomes appropriate for assessment. Participants in both groups acknowledged that any definition of effectiveness (including choice of indicators) is likely to be influenced by political considerations, and will vary depending upon whose perspective has been adopted (e.g. the views of victims, the judiciary and the client are likely to differ).

There was general acceptance that recidivism is a legitimate indicator of the success (or failure) of intervention with the client, and the goal of reducing recidivism was interpreted as seeking to reduce either the overall incidence of re-offending or the relative rate of re-offending. However, the need for a more sophisticated definition of what is understood by 'recidivism' was also noted and a number of variables were identified that could assist in developing a clearer understanding of this measure. First, the recidivism rate will be affected by the time-period selected within which any assessment is made and any change in this timeframe is likely to affect the results of the measurement. Moreover, the duration of the 'window of risk' (for further offending) was thought to differ both between individual clients and according to the type of offence committed; for example, sex offenders were perceived as being typically at risk of relapse. Second, the type of re-offending by the individual client was considered significant to the assessment of the relative success or failure of intervention. The re-offending may be the same as the original offence, a more serious or less serious offence of the same type or re-offending of a different class (for example, dishonesty rather than violence). Third, it was observed that a client's patterns of offending can change (for a variety of reasons) and that interventions might be offence specific and therefore unlikely to influence offending behaviour of a different type. Fourth, the issue of causal inference was raised by a Service Manager who noted - with regard to using re-offending as a measure - that: *"This information is not useful because offenders have had a multitude of different interventions, you can't interpret this measure"* (2-18:8). Finally, a Probation Officer observed that each client should be considered as an individual and that change is relative to the individual's previous rate of

offending; in other words, there may be changes in the frequency of a client's offending which represent a gain on the part of that client but may not be interpreted as success for all clients.

Client compliance with the mandated requirements of a sentence was identified by 26 percent of Probation Officers and 37.5 percent of the Service Managers as a valid outcome that can be assessed. When the client fails to meet such requirements (for example, attendance at an intervention programme) the Probation Officer is expected to take enforcement action. Selection of this outcome was considered by one Probation Officer to be associated with holding the client accountable for their behaviour. There was no suggestion that compliance with the conditions of probation per se is associated with a reduction in recidivism. However, compliance is an indicator of the achievement of other intended sentencing outcomes; for example, punishment or incapacitation.

The development of client insight and a positive change in attitudes and beliefs towards offending behaviour (for example, a client developing an awareness of the destructive nature of his/her aggressive behaviour) were identified as valid indicators of successful intervention. However, the process of changing a client's attitudes and beliefs was not considered to be easy, for as one Probation Officer pointed out:

Sometimes it's a matter of planting the seeds and maybe it's not going to be effective this time they're on a sentence of supervision but it might be the next time (2-2:14).

There was widespread support amongst both groups for the goal of behaviour change in clients, an outcome that has validity independent of any measurement of re-offending. Client self-reporting and corroboration from other persons, such as family members, were identified as possible sources of evidence of behaviour change. One Service Manager advanced this argument by suggesting that it is possible for a client to have positive behaviour changes and intermediate outcomes; for example, (as the result of Probation intervention) a client:

Stops violence but is still dishonest, if he's got kids, in terms of role modelling [this is] a vast advance. There is value in knowing that three kids have a less traumatic experience at home (1-15:12).

In other words, such a change can still be regarded as a successful outcome, particularly if a broader perspective of social benefit is adopted. Among the Probation Officers, 33 percent demonstrated a similar concern with assisting clients to make changes in behaviour associated with a pro-social life style (changes regarded as worthwhile in themselves) and not necessarily the offending behaviour. The following quotations are illustrative of this broader viewpoint:

If that person has made a behavioural change then you can measure that from when you first met him to when they are leaving you and if that person acknowledges that something changed for them I would count that as successful (1-2:10).

I do accept feedback from other sources, the family may say they think [the client] has experienced change (1-11:8).

I'm looking for a lift in the client's overall well-being, achieving a more healthy, productive and satisfying life (2-15:10).

[it's] not just if they offended or not having feedback from them and being able to judge what they've learned, what changes they've made and knowing I was a small part of that (1-10:8).

One Probation Officer, in particular, highlighted a shift that has occurred from an emphasis on the achievement of other behavioural goals that were considered a sign of positive change to the focus on reducing re-offending as the primary outcome:

When I started in this job it was often said you might not stop them from re-offending but if they are not beating their partner as often or they are achieving this in their life that's good. We've moved beyond that and are [now] saying we are actually here about stopping re-offending but [those other behaviour changes] are still indicators that what you are doing may be having a positive effect (2-4:9).

Some of the Probation Officers made comments regarding changes in the type, frequency and severity of offending. The following quotes are typical of the views held regarding relative success:

Even if they [the client] re-offend but they're not re-offending to the same degree of severity (2-9:6).

Clients either stop offending or even that they offend less frequently or less seriously, or move from rapist to shoplifter (2-15:10).

The reconviction may be for a different type of offending, they may have reduced the severity of their offending (2-14:12).

While the attention of participants focuses upon offending behaviour as the primary indicator of probation effectiveness, there was nevertheless a firm belief that meeting other client needs was a valid indicator of the positive value of intervention. A case was made to consider the relationship between offending and broader societal factors such as education, housing, race and gender. It was observed that other government departments are interested in broader social indicators, so why isn't the Probation Service? A clear association was inferred by many participants between developing the whole person and a reduction in crime. It was argued that just as the client's mental health and general social stability are behavioural determinants, so factors such as secure employment and an improvement in their family situation (for example, stable housing) also contribute to the reduction of re-offending.

Only one participant, a Probation Officer, referred to a need to consider cultural factors when specifying outcomes and selection of indicators for assessment. She noted that within the Te Wairua programme (a non-IOM programme for Maori offenders based on tikanga Maori) it is considered to be important for the client to develop positive relationships with a partner and wider whanau. And she further observed that if the Probation Service were truly bi-cultural, then more culturally valid criteria would be developed for the assessment of effectiveness; for example, an increase in the client's cultural knowledge.

Finally, Community Service and Periodic Detention were cited as sentences where a specified outcome, making general reparation to the community, was being achieved. However, the quantum of this reparation is not currently assessed; for example, the number of hours of work completed could be counted, or a dollar value placed on the work

undertaken.

Summary

The understanding of what is meant by reducing re-offending is central to the broader definition of effective service delivery. The Probation Service definition of reducing re-offending appears to lack sophistication; simple recidivism emerges as a relatively crude indicator that does not fully explain the phenomenon in question. Participants in both groups identified a range of factors that should be taken into account, including: the incidence or rate of re-offending; the impact of the timeframe within which re-offending is assessed; and the type and relative severity of any re-offending.

There was concern that expectations of change should not be based solely upon information drawn from the aggregation of clients by their offence type. The participants did not conceive of the client as a member of a criminogenic category or as a commodity to be managed in accordance with a risk management framework. Indeed, it was asserted that any assessment of re-offending should be personalised to the unique individual client. The participants' discussion of attitude and behaviour change advances the notion of incremental progress or steps that a client might pass through in order to attain the ultimate goal of being offence free, a viewpoint that is similar to the perspective offered by Liebrich (1993).

There was considerable support from both Probation Officers and Service Managers for change in the behaviour of the client to be identified as an outcome that could be independent of any measurement of re-offending. It was considered possible for a client to have behavioural changes that do not result in a reduction in re-offending but which contribute to a safer community. Members of both groups also identified positive change in the client's attitudes and beliefs regarding their offending behaviour as a valid outcome of intervention. This view rests upon a conception of social benefit that places value on the contribution of the client within multiple spheres (e.g. as partner, parent or employee). These observations lend support to the discussion in Chapter Four regarding the construct

of moral relativism. From this perspective, 'success' may be defined from a variety of standpoints (including that of the client), with each representing only one interpretation of the social reality of offending behaviour, and the legitimisation of each standpoint being dependent upon the relative power of different stakeholders.

Client compliance and the enforcement of individual sentence conditions were presented as a legitimate outcome of probation practice because this is a legally mandated expectation. While it may be difficult to establish a causal link between compliance and any other desired outcome, such as reducing re-offending, nonetheless compliance per se and enforcement are presented as valid outcomes that can be assessed.

Participants in both groups raised the issue of the type of intervention that should be taken regarding client needs classified as non-criminogenic. A fundamental difficulty previously identified with the IOM model is that in embracing the psychological paradigm, other explanations of deviance appear to have been discounted. There was a general consensus among the participants that factors such as income, housing and employment are associated with offending and/or re-offending and the importance of alternative constructions of effectiveness that place emphasis upon the concrete social experience of the client was stressed. This argument has particular relevance when considering the cultural implications of IOM. One participant argued that tikanga Maori programmes have other outcomes that are considered valid; the Te Wairua programme, for example, addresses the client from a social systems perspective and emphasises the importance of family relationships.

Finally, the observation was made that it is more difficult to assess the outcomes of information provision than those associated with sentence management. While the participants did not elaborate upon this point, earlier comments made regarding the purpose of information provision provide direction as to the issues that are likely to be involved. The first purpose of probation reports to be identified was to assist judicial decision-making; the views of the judiciary regarding the usefulness of reports would provide assessment from the direct customer. A second purpose of probation reports was linked to the internal process of assessment to inform decisions made regarding sentence

management. The initial assessment determines the type of intervention regime that will be provided to the client and it follows that the efficacy of sentence management and subsequent intervention will be affected by the quality of that assessment. At present there is no assessment of the relationship between these two core probation practices other than compliance measures (i.e. whether a particular report meets the standards detailed in the internal service specification).

Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter has provided insight into the participants' knowledge of assessment of service delivery.

Participants stressed the importance of having a clear understanding of the desired outcomes of service delivery. In Chapter Four it was suggested that the definition of effectiveness should be based on the core mandate of the Probation Service and that this could be understood as reducing re-offending. Both groups identified reducing re-offending as a primary organisational objective, however the construction of this concept (in terms of general recidivism) was considered simplistic. It was suggested that the issue of causal inference is complicated and that the influence of intervening variables compromises the validity of recidivism as a measure of effectiveness. There was support for a more inclusive view of success and effectiveness, one that incorporates a wider concept of social benefit. This view also reflects the concerns of participants with regard to the dominance of the psychological paradigm (with an emphasis upon criminogenic assessment) that has led to the diminution of other indicators of practice effectiveness.

A consequence of over-reliance on the measurement of re-offending as the primary indicator of effectiveness is that the Probation Service may be under-reporting success. There was no mention by the participants of the rehabilitation quotient (see Chapter Four) that is used by the Department of Corrections. This absence is likely to reflect the fact that this indicator is used in reporting at departmental level against Statement of Intent targets;

the results are not currently filtered to the individual client level. It was suggested that in addition to the use of recidivism the assessment of the success of intervention should also include the client's broader social experience, recognising that positive social benefit can extend beyond the simple measurement of offending behaviour. This inclusion reflects interest in the individual level indicators, such as those that were identified in Chapter Four (risk reduction, acquisition and the achievement of educational goals).

The participants considered the implementation and assessment of practice to be extremely important. A distinction was drawn between two criteria that can be used to assess processes: first, adherence to set procedures and performance guidelines; and second, the nature and quality of the interaction between the client and Probation Officer. In Chapter Four it was suggested that the construct of practice effectiveness should include the assessment of practice quality (understood as the degree to which an organisation is competently implementing methods and techniques that are thought necessary to achieving its service objectives). It was suggested by the participants that the implementation of any practice model or procedure can be assessed through the application of a set of criteria, such as following procedures or timeliness. This approach to the assessment of processes was thought to reflect concern with the management of risk through objective verification of discrete actions. It was also argued that it is often difficult for practitioners in the field to implement any intervention model in a consistent manner. Roberts (1995) proposed that the reflective model of practice development provides a foundation for the resolution of obstacles that are likely to be encountered when using any particular approach in the field; the responses of the participants support these observations. It was noted that practice models are seldom implemented mechanistically in exactly the same way in all cases and that the nature of practice requires the Probation Officer to continually adjust and adapt practice in response to contextual influences. Concern was expressed that an overly prescriptive practice model that restricts the Probation Officer's capacity to exercise practice discretion could interfere with the interaction between a Probation Officer and a client in a negative way.

Participants also emphasised the importance of practice credibility and the relationship

between client and practitioner. In order to ensure practitioner commitment, any outcome should be seen to be credible and achievable from the perspective of the practitioner. The nature of client/practitioner interaction was identified as a crucial variable that can determine the relative success or failure of an intervention. In Chapter Four it was proposed that the relationship between the probation officer and the client is the foundation of professional service delivery in the probation practice context. The participants' views support the assertions of Payne (1991), Egan (1986) and Reid (1978) that the establishment and maintenance of the client/practitioner relationship is the main instrument of service with the client. Comments made by participants regarding the importance of treating clients with respect and dignity, and the connection between this and the client's development of self-belief, provide evidence of support for the empowerment of clients. Such comments and support are consistent with the arguments advanced by Henry (1995) and Lee (1996) regarding the importance of the client's development of a sense of self and feelings of self-efficacy.

There was also evidence of a view that clients should be treated as unique individuals and not as commodities to be managed in accordance with the business rules of the organisation. This view suggests participant alignment with the human relations perspective that values and emphasises the importance of both client and worker in relation to organisational functioning (Grasso 1993). The participants suggested that a multi-dimensional approach to assessment could provide both assurance that the service is being delivered to the required specification, and information that can inform the development of more effective practice. This interest in the assessment and ongoing development of practice indicates that the participants are conscious of both the complexity of practice and of the need to incorporate feedback based upon the reflexive development of practice.

Of note was the participants' lack of significant consideration of two arguments advanced in Chapter Four. First, they did not identify stakeholder interest as either influencing the legitimisation of any definition of effectiveness or as determining what is assessed. Second, there was little awareness of the politicisation of probation practice and the relationship between assessment (such as performance auditing that focuses upon economy and

efficiency) and the need for the Probation Service to secure ongoing funding and support.

Given the views expressed by the participants with regard to the goals and assessment of service delivery, what are the implications for leadership in the Probation Service? Three possible implications have been identified and are briefly presented below. First, as stated above, leadership credibility is associated with the promotion of outcomes and interventions that are considered both realistic and achievable by front-line practitioners. An increased level of leader credibility is likely to translate into greater trust between Probation Officers and managers, and to increase the level of Probation Officer adherence to required policies and practices. This increased leader credibility is also related to the existence of a co-operative working relationship between managers and practitioners. With these points in mind, and on the basis of the evidence presented here, the opportunity exists for managers to gain a higher level of practitioner commitment by adopting an approach that values and places emphasis upon the worker/client relationship as being central to effective practice and organisational functioning. Second, the opportunity also exists for managers to put in place mechanisms to receive feedback from practitioners regarding their understanding of practice credibility (based upon their reflexive practice experience) and to adjust policy in response to this feedback. Finally, from the accounts of the participants a clear challenge can be inferred to the current prescriptive approach to practice (one that is minimalist, with a narrow focus on criminogenic needs) in favour of a holistic construction of effectiveness based upon a more inclusive conception of social benefit. There is a leadership opportunity to promote a multi-dimensional approach to assessment that: includes quantitative and qualitative indicators to assess goals at the community, agency and individual client levels; provides assurance that the service is being delivered to the required specification; and which also provides information that can inform the development of more effective practice.

CHAPTER TEN

The Participants' Knowledge and Experience of Leadership

The previous data presentation chapters have provided an analysis of the participants' views regarding changes in the service delivery context, the construction of probation practice and the assessment of service delivery. In each of these chapters the implications of the participants' understanding for leadership have been identified, and together they provide the necessary context within which the participants' knowledge and experience of leadership can be examined.

The data presented in this chapter are drawn from responses elicited from participants regarding their knowledge of the concept of leadership and their recent experience of leadership. Both groups (Probation Officers and Service Managers) framed their responses within the context of their experiences in the Probation Service. There are two sections. In the first section, the participants' knowledge of leadership is considered; in particular, their views regarding the relationship between leadership and management, the relationship between leader and follower, and characteristics associated with effective leadership. This provides a foundation for the second section that focuses upon the participants' experience of leadership. This discussion includes whom the participants identified as leaders, their experiences of leadership from managers, and their understanding of professional leadership.

Knowledge of Leadership

In this section the participants' knowledge of leadership is developed through a consideration of their views regarding: the definition of leadership and management; the

relationship between leader and follower, and the characteristics of effective leaders.

Participants' Knowledge of Leadership and Management

Three key themes were identified regarding leadership: leadership involves the leader providing direction and vision; leadership involves influence and is important in achieving change; and leadership involves a group or a team.

With regard to the first theme, 55.5 percent of the Probation Officers agreed that managers had a leadership responsibility to provide direction and vision to staff. In terms of this responsibility: the Chief Executive of the Department of Corrections was considered to have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that Government policy is implemented, and to provide strategic direction to the various divisions within the Department; while the General Manager and senior managers were identified as having responsibility for setting organisational direction within the Probation Service. As illustrated in the following quotation from a Probation Officer, it was felt that leaders must themselves be clear about what they are leading others towards and how goals will be achieved:

One of the most important things about leadership is having a vision and knowing where you want to go. Being really clear about the goal. Working with people to get them to achieve your goal (2-18:1).

The majority of the Service Managers (62.5 percent) displayed a similar concern that a leader should establish direction for the team and seek to align staff with that direction. Development of a clear vision was considered to be essential if a leader is to be able to lead change, and must enable staff to develop a common sense of where the team is going. One Service Manager identified a number of different sources of influence regarding direction (from the organisation, from the team and from the profession) and noted that these sources could often be at variance. It is the leader who is required to make the final decision regarding direction. Another Service Manager commented that she used situational leadership in order to "pull" her team towards the achievement of goals. She described situational leadership as, *"the notion of changing your style depending on where your team is at. I try to gauge people's hearts and minds, what they are doing, what they are about"*

(2-14:2). The importance of direction was summarised succinctly by yet another Service Manager as follows:

Leadership is more to do with establishing directions, developing vision...about aligning people to the direction of the organisation. Leaders motivate and inspire people (1-6:1).

The second theme identified concerned the relationship between leadership, influence and change, a relationship noted by 52 percent of the Probation Officers and all of the Service Managers. For the Probation Officers an effective leader is able to inspire or influence staff to act in order to achieve the goals of the organisation. The following observations support this contention:

Leadership is about taking initiative, be it by ...providing the lead out front or by getting others to take a lead (1-3:1).

Leadership to me means to influence or to inspire people to act (2-2:1).

Leadership is that different additional quality inspiring people forward, maximising their skills to achieve something (2-4:1).

There's a certain 'X' factor that goes with being a leader and I suppose in some ways that's oriented around an ability to inspire those they're working with (2-3:1).

A leader would be someone that I would look up to as having an ideal[sic] that I would want to follow, having a purpose that I would want to identify myself with (2-15:1).

To sum up, the effective leader was seen to take the initiative, to have an ideal (regarding the purpose of probation) that others would want to follow and to be able to influence people to act.

The Service Managers for their part observed that effective leaders create opportunities for staff to be innovative; they do not seek to control staff but work with staff through a process of influence to achieve change. The following comments are illustrative of these views:

Leadership is about commitment, loyalty, taking people with you (2-13:1).

It's a very people-oriented thing, it involves a great deal of enthusiasm, energy, modelling. It's about influencing others to draw them along (2-18:1).

If you are going through change then you need leadership. Most of our staff seem to be quite change averse, so it's about leading them through that and making it seem safe and comfortable (1-9:1).

Leadership is about taking risks, letting go of control, trusting, creating opportunities and allowing innovation (1-15:2).

This type of leadership was characterised by one Service Manager as being transformational, while another noted that this was not as necessary during periods of stability within an organisation.

The third theme to emerge among both Service Managers and Probations Officers drew attention to leadership being enacted within a group or team. For example, one Probation Officer noted that an effective leader was one who demonstrates an understanding of the individuals in the team and who is able create a sense of bonding that draws the team together. The importance of a shared philosophy was also noted; *"the leader should have a very strong philosophy which needs to be shared by the whole team"* (2-1:1). Another Probation Officer noted a relationship between the leader's ability to bring out the best in staff and the achievement of goals:

I see good leadership as an enabling role, it's using the skills and abilities of people to achieve goals. A good leader needs to consult or work with people in order to achieve the result (2-4:1).

The importance of the leader being able to work effectively with a team was also emphasised by two Probation Officers as follows:

Leadership implies drawing a team together, drawing on the strength of the team...allowing the team to make the decision (1-16:1).

Leaders will act on your behalf and challenge and find ways to work with their team (1-4:1).

Two Service Managers similarly developed the theme of leadership within a team and the role of the group in establishing direction:

Leadership is where you get people on board in more of the group setting so that you are the leader of the group and so that a lot of the decisions are made in the group through discussion and open communication (1-13:1).

Leadership is about working with a group of people towards something. Leadership incorporates having a common sense of where you are going, direction can be established by a team "this is where we want to get to". Leadership is around looking at the different leaders in the team, at what they are leading towards, what are they pulling the team towards and how ... that fit[s] with the organisational goal of reducing re-offending (2-14:1).

Management, on the other hand, emerged as an activity involving the responsibility to make decisions regarding the establishment and achievement of organisational goals, a task requiring the efficient and effective organisation of both physical and human resources. Seventy-four percent of the Probation Officers and 75 percent of the Service Managers commented on three primary activities associated with management; planning, control and organisation.

For the Probation Officers, managers were considered to be responsible for: the implementation of organisational policies and procedures; the work undertaken by subordinates; the allocation of budgets; and the achievement of expected results. The following quotations are illustrative of their views:

Management requires efficient and effective organisation of resources...of where everyone's going and how to achieve it and the process to be achieved. Implicitly it should be in support of the organisational systems (1-3:1).

Management is also wanting to achieve a result, wanting to manage things so that certain ends are achieved. I think management...it's organising something that's getting something done (2-4:1).

Managers have the role of planning certain administrative tasks for those who are working under them. It is naive to suggest that everyone's on a level playing field, [although] I guess that's an ideal that we strive for as much as possible. With regard to the power differential – there's a certain

amount of control that managers have over staff. Requests for resources, requests for decisions [regarding practice] rest with the manager because they have power vested in that role (2-3:1).

The Service Managers held similar views:

Management has to do with planning...the classic management, things like planning, controlling and co-ordinating. Managers organise and they fill staff vacancies and they control and problem solve. In other words, they're perhaps more concerned with the transactional approach (1-6:1).

Management is about organising outputs. There is management upwards which is providing information and it also involves receiving orders and putting those into place (2-13:1).

Management is more about manipulating resources. It's about being a cog in a wheel. There's somebody, a policy developer, who has developed some sort of policy or procedure, for a business – a manager's job is to operationalise that. Management is implementing policy with integrity (2-18:1).

Although a distinction was made between leadership and management, it was nevertheless evident in the course of interviews that there was agreement amongst both groups that the concepts of leadership and management are interrelated, with 81 percent of the Probation Officers and 50 percent of the Service Managers making comments on this topic. In one third of the responses made by Probation Officers, leadership was considered to be a component of management. Two Probation Officers expressed this as follows:

Leadership is part of good management. A certain amount of leadership is required to be a good manager – but on its own it is not enough (2-19:1).

Leadership is a component of management, rather than management being a component of leadership (2-20:2).

Notwithstanding this broad sense of leadership being a subset of management there was an expectation that leadership should have a professional focus - for example in the provision of practice support. This aspect was evident in the following comments from three Probation Officers:

Management I think of as being a function of where it's a resource allocation job; you actually have control over people's work but there is not

necessarily the allegiance with them as people following your professional example (1-6:10).

I think that in order to be a really good leader in a team that person needs to be experienced in practice (2-1:3).

What I'm personally looking for in a leader, is somebody who is supportive of what I'm doing. A manager is somebody who is much more remote from that (1-1:1).

Half of the Service Managers considered that their role required both leadership and management (the other Service Managers did not make any specific comments). For one Service Manager effective leadership was considered to be likely to enhance and facilitate effective management: *"If you do the leadership stuff well the other becomes easier"* (2-13:1). This view was amplified by another participant who commented that he could *"use leadership to achieve management requirements"* (1-15:1). He further maintained that it is important to exercise flexibility in leadership style, citing the example of implementing IOM where he needed to balance the ideal with what would be practical.

Summary

While the questions that were put to the participants were framed in relation to leadership and management per se, their responses were almost exclusively made in reference to managers (particularly Service Managers) as leaders in the Probation Service.

Overall, the views expressed were consistent with definitions of leadership within the generic management literature (e.g. Fiedler 1996; Northouse 1997; Parry 1999; Yukl 1998); leadership emerges as an activity based upon the leader's use of influence upon others. The Service Managers noted that leadership often involves a focus on change and that in order to achieve change the leader requires clear vision and should seek to influence rather than control staff. The effective leader can engage and inspire staff to act in accordance with the purpose or vision that they promote, and has a responsibility to provide clear direction in the face of often competing expectations from different sources. Leadership was also thought to rest upon the relationship between the leader and a group or team; the leader should seek to establish group cohesion. The Probation Officers made the salient point that

there should be the foundation of a shared philosophy between the leader and staff if staff are to be engaged to achieve organisational goals. Leadership was further associated with the provision of direction and support regarding practice with clients. Finally, Service Managers noted the importance of the leader retaining a degree of flexibility in how they achieve management requirements, a quality thought to be associated with the degree of staff acceptance or resistance to change. This view reflects an awareness of what was identified in Chapter Five as a critical assumption of situational leadership; namely, that leaders need to understand that different situations require different types of leadership (Hersey and Blanchard 1996; Starbuck and Gamble 1990). Overall, the participant's views support the point made by Parry (1999) regarding the development of 'willing following'; that is, the goals set by the leader must be both achievable and mutually beneficial to leader and follower. While the term "transformational" was noted directly by only one participant (a Service Manager) the emphasis placed by participants on vision, influence, direction and shared purpose indicate sensitivity to the construction of transformational leadership as articulated by Bass (1985), Burns (1978), Northouse (1997) and Yukl (1998).

Both groups defined management in relation to the achievement of the goals of the organisation and identified the core management activities of planning, organising and controlling. The Probation Officers considered that management was seen to be concerned with policy and procedures. While different styles of management were noted, the participants' responses suggest that management is predominantly task focused and characterised by transactional interactions. These views are consistent with those of Chavaria (1994), Fairholm (1998) and Wright (1991) who maintain that management is traditionally concerned with directing, planning, co-ordinating and achieving results. Implicit in the account of the participants is a controlling dimension to management that rests upon a hierarchical 'chain of command' sense of accountability; managers at various hierarchical levels interpret and implement the directives of senior management. Management was seen to be about 'getting the job done' and this involves putting strategies in place and managing staff to achieve the desired outcomes. The views of the participants indicate an awareness that managers within the Probation Service exercise positional power in contrast with personal power (consistent with the definitions provided by Yukl 1998).

There was a high degree of consensus among the participants that the constructs of leadership and management are interrelated; however, in general, leadership was thought to be a component of the management role. This perception may, in part, be influenced by the nomenclature associated with organisational positions in the Probation Service. The earlier positions of District and Senior Probation Officer (with their clear emphasis upon the role of the Probation Officer) have been replaced by those of Area and Service Manager. The use of the term 'manager' may therefore be a factor that has shaped the participants' perception of these positions. In contrast to the Probation Service, the Child Youth and Family Service has the position of Practice Leader (in addition to that of Site Manager). In this case the combination of the terms 'practice' and 'leader' provides clear direction regarding the primary emphasis of the position.

Participants' Knowledge of Effective Leadership

The participants were asked to comment on the relationship between leader and follower, and to identify traits and behaviours associated with effective leadership. Both groups framed their responses in the context of the Probation Service.

Eighty one percent of the Probation Officers and 87.5 percent of the Service Managers noted the important of relationship behaviours. For the Probation Officers, effective leaders were described as having the ability to engage with staff, gain trust and lead by example. One Probation Officer commented that "the follower will only accept the leader if there is trust", if the leader knows what he or she is talking about and provides a good role model (2-10:2). A second Probation Officer suggested that under such conditions the follower is more comfortable being led:

I'm quite happy to follow directions as long as I'm given breathing space for my own initiative, as long as there is consultation and feedback (2-6:2).

The expectation that a leader will lead by example was expressed by two Service Managers as follows:

Lead by example, a two way process (1-13:1).

Would follow a leader who demonstrates personal integrity, a personal skill (1-6:3).

People will follow a leader who both knows the practice and can generate feelings based on integrity of character and knowledge of what they are doing (1-6:4).

An ability to lead was also associated with self-confidence, as noted by one-third of the Probation Officers. This quality was described as follows:

They are confident in themselves without being brash about it...in their skills and abilities (2-4:2).

Just an aura of confidence to begin with, that's always really good (2-6:3).

The people who are good leaders are confident in themselves. They are able to listen to people's ideas and at the same time don't feel as if their power and authority has been undermined. So they are able to delegate and they are able to keep the team together in a more collegial way (2-17:3).

Probation Officers also observed that the relationship between leader and follower should be interactive and characterised by communication and openness. This perception is captured in the three following quotations:

A robust, healthy staffing relationship where everything can be questioned and challenged and where there's a clear response to questions. It should be robust both in terms of relationship and expectations; if there's something to be achieved it should be achieved (1-3:2).

A leader is someone who has a vision but who is open to that vision being debated and scrutinised and isn't [totally] attached to something being done his or her way (1-11:2).

It's a very reciprocal arrangement where one is supported. There are obviously times when you also need to get in and support your team leader/manager (2-12:2).

Thirty-seven percent of Probation Officers identified personal integrity and credibility as a core component of successful leadership. For one Probation Officer integrity was associated with ethics and values: *"I'm looking for someone who has integrity, sound ethics. It's no good doing all the leadership things if in actual fact you've got shonky ethics and values" (2-16:2).* Another Probation Officer noted that integrity involves having the

capacity to challenge existing policy and practice, “to be able to manage effectively and be able to challenge things, not to toe the party line, to think outside the square and have integrity” (2-10:3). Leaders who demonstrate integrity are likely to be respected and trusted.

Similarly, the possession of integrity and determination was identified by 75 percent of Service Managers. For one Service Manager, a leader is someone who the follower “looks up to and respects” and who will “practice what they preach” (1-13:2). The following quotations are illustrative of the views expressed:

I think I go back to some of the comments I made earlier on personal integrity. I think that the fundamental issue for a leader is do they keep their word? Are they committed to what they say they will do? So they're people who have integrity in their actions and their words (1-6:4).

They are focussed; the drive is keeping at stuff even beyond the point where other people would give up (1-9:3).

In their own personal habits exemplary qualities of hard work, being dedicated to what they are doing (1-14:2).

The provision of support emerged as a further characteristic of effective leadership. One Probation Officer asserted that:

Leadership carries a huge responsibility. If you want to be a leader then you've got to be prepared to walk that extra mile to support the people who've supported you (1-7:2).

Probation Officers valued receiving support from Service Managers and considered it important that Service Managers take an active interest in staff, provide encouragement and be sensitive to, and take action to relieve, excessive workload and stress. This point is illustrated by the comment that the effective leader “will go out to bat for their staff. Even if unsuccessful, staff morale will improve; they will feel recognised and valued” (1-4:2). Such support was considered to include both positive feedback and confrontation regarding errors or inappropriate behaviour. The importance of providing support to staff was also noted by Service Managers, two of whom illustrated this view as follows:

A leader is willing to listen and weigh up what people have to say (1-13:2)

Willing to let people be creative and make mistakes and not clobber them for it (1-6:4).

For the Probation Officers, sociability emerged as a further characteristic; an effective leader was described as having *"a human touch, warm and engaging"* (2-3:1), with the *"ability to get people on board"* (2-6:1) and to *"build rapport quickly"* (2-20:3). Other aspects of sociability included having a sense of humour, a degree of humility and sensitivity to the experience of the Probation Officer, *"a sense of knowing what it is like down through the levels"* (2-16:2).

Interestingly, in light of its significance as noted in Chapter Five, the possession of charisma was identified by only one Service Manager and three Probation Officers. The Service Manager referred to a leader having *"personal magnetism or qualities"* that allows the leader to inspire followers. In reference to someone who was considered to be a very good leader, one Probation Officer added that *"They did have a very charismatic personality and cared about their staff"* (2-1:5). A second Probation Officer expressed the following: *"There's charisma, it's an X factor, something that draws a team together in a communal way and they are guided by this person"* (2-17:3). The final reference to charisma was made by a Probation Officer when describing traits and characteristics associated with an effective leader: *"Definitely personality and confidence. They have to be charismatic, articulate and they obviously have to be a people person"* (2-20:3).

Summary

There was accord between the Probation Officers and Service Managers regarding core characteristics associated with an effective leader. The relationship behaviours and traits identified provide a foundation for effective leadership. The participants' identification of traits such as self-confidence, integrity and sociability support the findings of earlier studies; for example, Stogdill (1948), Northouse (1997) and Yukl (1998). There was also

strong evidence that the participants valued relationship behaviours in leaders, ones that reflect consideration, such as building mutual trust with followers and demonstration of respect and concern – features noted by (Hersey et al.1996).

The participants did not identify the creation of organisational values as a discrete characteristic of leadership behaviour in the Probation Service. However, in keeping with the views of Cohn (1998), Fairholm (1998), Mintzberg (1998) and Pawar and Eastman (1997), they did note the importance of activities that are thought to support the development and consolidation of these values: that is communication, provision of direction, and modelling appropriate professional behaviour.

The notion of charisma was mentioned by four participants who identified the following characteristics of charisma: first, that it relates to the personality of the individual; and second, that it is associated with the quality of interaction between the leader and followers (i.e. they inspire staff, care about staff and are able to draw a team together). These characteristics noted by the participants parallel those discussed by De Vries et al. (1994), House (1977) and Parry (1999).

Experience of Leadership

This section focuses on the participants' experience of leadership and comprises discussion regarding: whom the participants' identified as leaders; their experiences of leadership from managers; and their understanding of professional leadership.

Identified Leaders in the Probation Service

The participants identified Service Managers and other Probation Officers as the two groups of staff that provide leadership in the field. Fifty-five percent of the Probation Officers made reference to Service Managers as leaders, while 70 percent considered other Probation Officers to be leaders. In comparison, only 25 percent of the Service Managers referred to other Service Managers as leaders, and 37.5 percent considered Probation

Officers to be leaders. This practice leadership differed from organisationally focussed leadership that the participant's thought should be provided by senior managers.

While there was an expectation of leadership from Service Managers, two Probation Officers were explicit in stating that some, but not all, Service Managers display leadership abilities. Explaining this view, one Probation Officer attested that:

Even though you may have leadership qualities the pressures of work and demands of the business type side mean that they [Service Managers] don't have the energy or time to actually do the good [practice-based] leadership (2-10:1).

Probation Officers from the basic grade were identified as a potential source of practice leadership, and peer recognition was identified as a basis for such leadership:

I think natural leaders will be sorted out by peers and you would find that natural leaders have their peers coming to them for advice, guidance and comment (1-16:1).

I do see a lot of leadership coming from my peers. Particularly the more experienced ones who have been in the job a long time, who know what they are doing (1-12:1).

Professional competence was also identified as a foundation for this leadership. For example, one Probation Officer commented: *"There are very skilled and experienced basic grade Probation Officers working in specialist areas who are able to have that leadership role" (2-4:1).* Further characteristics associated with leadership from Probation Officers were a willingness to offer advice and assistance and a demonstrated ability *"to think outside the square and come up with initiatives for more effective practice" (2-9:1).* One Probation Officer associated leadership with those peers who provide professional supervision to their colleagues: *"I see a new breed of leaders coming through as being the professional supervisors. They tend to be the motivators" (2-17:1).*

One Probation Officer and one Service Manager identified the Psychological Service as providing practice leadership. For the Probation Officer this influence was of concern:

It is the Psychological Service that has got the academic high ground. We

are following the Psychological Service instead of having our own professional identity and direction as the Probation Service (2-15:1).

The Service Manager, on the other hand, observed that:

A lot of the changes in anger management and assessment are coming out of the Psychological Service. So, if you're talking about who are the leaders, the people who are actually changing the way we work, which I think is a leadership issue, those would be the people I would identify (1-6:2).

External consultants were also thought to be influential. For example, a Probation Officer observed that “*consultants who capture the imagination of the senior management group*” are possibly the leaders as it is their “*ideas and systems that senior management adopt*” (2-7:2). Another Officer noted the positive influence of a consultant, qualified as a social work practitioner, who “*has his own vision for working with offenders*” (1-11:1).

While the participants identified expectations of leadership from managers there was nevertheless a sense of disillusionment in comments made by 23 percent of Probation Officers and 25 percent of Service Managers regarding the leadership provided. The following quotations illustrate this feeling:

I have no sense of the General Manager as a leader. No real sense of leadership. It feels like a dog's breakfast as an organisation (2-16:1).

I can't think of people who have those qualities who really inspire change. So you have to demonstrate a great deal of enthusiasm and passion and the leadership part is the X factor in that. I can't think of people in the top echelons of the Probation Service who demonstrate (1-14:1).

At the moment the key leaders would be the General Manager and maybe the Regional Managers. I don't see them articulating a lot of vision for Community Probation Service (2-15:1).

Indeed, the style of leadership exhibited by senior managers was described by one Service Manager as being more transactional than transformational:

They're just saying, "This is the way it's going to be". Clearly they're leaders because they're driving the change but I don't think that they're

necessarily transformational leaders (1-6:2).

Summary

While leadership was not considered to be confined to a particular organisational role or position, an expectation of leadership was associated with certain structural positions. Senior managers (Head Office managers and Regional Managers) were identified as being responsible for organisational leadership, although it was observed that this type of leadership is not always evident. One Service Manager made direct reference to transactional and transformational leadership and other comments identify an expectation that leaders should possess transformational qualities and abilities. Clearly there was an expectation that senior managers should provide direction regarding practice, however their reliance on individuals and organisations external to the Probation Service for advice and practice development (in preference to in-house staff) was thought to detract from their leadership credibility amongst staff. What emerges is a sense that senior managers rely upon their legitimate, positional power rather than expert or personal power (Erchul and Raven 1997); and while this was accepted as being rightful by participants, it reflects a disjunction between the values and orientation of business management (linked to the foundation of New Public Management) and those of professionals (located in probation practice).

Both groups of respondents identified Service Managers as having an operational leadership role that involves both professional practice and business management. The Probation Officers suggested that at times the impact of work pressure and management requirements detract from the ability of the Service Manager to attend to practice issues. Practice support was provided by individual Probation Officers with particular reference to those who provide professional supervision and/or training to other staff. The basis of this expression of leadership was professional competence and an understanding of and ability to articulate the Probation Officer role. The provision of peer support was not criticised by the Probation Officers however this should be in addition to (not as a default for the absence of) that provided by the Service Managers.

Experience of Leadership from Senior Managers

The Probation Officers' recent experience of leadership from senior managers was predominantly negative. The 'style' of management depicted by the Probation Officers was one characterised by directive and controlling behaviours. While there were some exceptions, the following quotations illustrate the general tenor of the views expressed:

We have not had a lot of leadership, particularly in the last two years, and that's where I think a lot of cynicism comes from (1-1:1).

Under the current regime things are imposed and staff feel unsupported. It is because of this constant fear (held by managers) that staff are going to muck up that staff have more and more checks to complete which stops them from actually doing the job (2-1:34).

For other Probation Officers, the senior managers had failed to provide clear direction:

In terms of the overall philosophy of the organisation I don't really have a clue of it. I'm working in an organisation, I really should know about it' (2-20:20).

There is no real strategic direction from senior management, direction is really influenced by consultants and ideas come from outside the department (2-7:4).

The harshest critique, however, concerned a lack of honesty:

On occasions some [senior managers] are just out and out liars that immediately poses a problem. I find that the person tends to lose a lot of credibility (2-12:2).

Eighty-eight percent of the Service Managers made observations regarding their immediate manager and senior managers. They identified four main points of tension regarding the leadership relationship that exists between staff in the field and senior management and Head Office staff. First, there were comments made regarding senior managers that reflected both disappointment and a lessening of confidence. As one Service Manager put it:

A lot of people were swept up in the restructuring and saw the GM as strong, clever and capable but over time have become disillusioned and disappointed (1-15:19).

Another referred to the “*dissonance and incongruity between what's being said and what's actually happening*” (1-6:6). For example, while it had consistently been claimed that there was a lack of financial resources in the Probation Service, there had been salary rises for management but not Probation Officers, and this was a source of discontent. Second, a disjunction was noted between the messages contained in official Probation Service and Department of Corrections publications and the reality perceived by some staff:

Official publications depict a positive organisation, but this does not reflect reality for some staff. The Probation Service is seen as mean; for example, controlling salaries via competencies reflects a penny pinching attitude (1-6:1).

Here also a lack of honesty on the part of senior management was perceived for not allowing a more balanced picture to be portrayed. Third, concern was expressed regarding the behaviour of some senior managers. When visiting Head Office, for example, one Service Manager had overheard Head Office staff discussing other Probation Service staff in a manner considered to be disrespectful. Finally, it was felt that some measures are implemented and instructions issued without consultation and/or consideration of the practice perspective regarding feasibility. This point was illustrated through discussion of the management of risk. In addition to clinical decision making there was an increasing emphasis upon reputational risk - in other words “*What's going to be on the front page of the Herald?*” (1-13:11). Similarly in the construction of risk, differences between senior managers and front-line managers were seen to:

Come down to expediency which results from outside pressures. For example the policy on recall [to imprisonment] is a public safety concern; there is an expectation that the practitioner must do something. But professionally there may be no reason to do so because the offender is already in custody (1-14:9).

This increased emphasis upon risk management and control was seen to be in conflict with the implementation of new policy, when practitioners are likely to require a greater degree

of flexibility and discretion as they adjust to new practice requirements.

In contrast to their sentiments about senior managers, the Service Managers related a more positive experience of leadership in relation to Area Managers and were sensitive to the pressures that Area Managers experienced. For example, a Service Manager, describing the impact of the management style adopted by senior managers, said: "*My [Area] manager was beaten around too much to want to lead any more, manage anymore*" (2-13:13).

Experience of Leadership from Service Managers

Seventy-four percent of the Probation Officers commented on their experience of leadership provided by Service Managers. While there was variation in the responses, the following substantive themes were identified. These themes, each of which is presented in more detail below, related to: (a) the emphasis placed upon results and compliance in comparison with staff and practice; (b) concern regarding a lack of professional leadership; (c) the abuse of positional power; (d) the relationship between effective leadership and staff performance; and (e) the impact of stress upon Service Managers and staff.

One third of the Probation Officers made comments regarding the emphasis that Service Managers placed upon administrative compliance as opposed to practice. The Service Manager role was described as having been reduced to an administrative one, rather than one that provides practice leadership. For example, one participant declared that:

There is very rigorous checking of the person's address, phone number, home visits, records in the computer – have these things been done? Not how well have these things been done, [there is] little emphasis on actual casework. (2-19:15).

Service Managers were also perceived as being focused upon results and their own performance, a situation attributed to the influence of the Probation Service performance management system.

Because of their system, the way they are set up on individual contracts with a bonus attached, they are looking for outcomes and that is what matters most of all to them – the volume of work that comes through and the compliance rate. So actually the value of the field worker is minimised by this overriding need to get their bonus at the end of the day. The Service Manager hasn't got time to help the field worker get their competencies. It's huge – its right across New Zealand (1-2:2).

I think they're between a rock and a hard place most of the time. They're so focused on their own Service Manager practice and making sure [it] looks OK that yours doesn't really come into it to some degree. Working on bonus systems is dodgy, [with] people playing off against one another. The fighting between teams to keep people in their teams becomes very underhanded. If you're a good worker, they'll literally lie to keep you in their team (1-4:16).

Sixty percent of the Probation Officers expressed concern at the level of support received from their Service Manager. In one case it was claimed that there was inadequate consultation regarding the decision made by a manager to rotate the Probation Officer into a new role:

My immediate thought was they don't give a toss about me and who I am and where I'm at in my growth. There were a whole lot of things withheld from me. I didn't know the truth and I was virtually lied to and manoeuvred into the situation (2-21:20).

The second theme concerned professional leadership. Thirty-three percent of the Probation Officers indicated that professional leadership is not well defined or co-ordinated in the Probation Service. This perception was shared by 50 percent of the Service Managers, one of whom observed:

I think it's sadly lacking... Service Managers are really the only people involved and we are employing more people who don't have the practice experience – that could quickly erode our professionalism (1-13:13).

Another was sensitive to Probation Officer perception of the Service Manager role as being more organisational than professional:

Until we have it structured and provided – it's a vacuum. We haven't got professional leadership. When you move into a Service Manager role it's a

departmental position. Things that you may present and believe are professional issues are interpreted as organisational issues (2-14:17).

This attitude on the part of Probation Officers presents as a potential impediment to the ability of Service Managers to actively promote practice. One Service Manager observed that a prerequisite of professional leadership is practice knowledge and he suggested that there was little evidence of this amongst senior managers. Significantly, 62.5 percent of the Service Managers noted that Probation Officers might exert professional leadership at a team or service centre level and this leadership was thought to rest on a particular individual's professional expertise, experience and credibility amongst peers.

Overall, only 37 percent of the Probation Officers expressed satisfaction with the current level of professional leadership. In contrast 62.5 percent of Service Managers were satisfied with the level of professional leadership received. Among those who were dissatisfied, one observed that "regrettably" there was no professional leadership at the organisational level and suggested that, "to an extent it is up to the staff, to do something about it" (1-14:12).

The Probation Officers as a whole did not identify a particular organisational role in the Probation Service that entailed responsibility for the provision of professional leadership. Indeed, as illustrated in the following quotes, 67 percent of them identified experienced and respected colleagues who demonstrated an interest in maintaining professional standards as the primary source of such leadership:

People who I respect. People who are not abusive. People who I hear talking about their clients in a compassionate manner. They are the people I will go to every time (1-5:12).

Various individuals who are respected by others or who are information givers. People who have experience and knowledge (1-2:16).

At the moment I think it comes from the Probation Officer level, from experienced staff that have got particular interest in maintaining professional standards. I think that's where the energy for it comes from (2-10:18).

Such views were consistent with what one Probation Officer identified a “*long tradition*” (2-15:7) in the Service of practitioners leading and developing models of practice.

Do Service Managers have a professional leadership role to play? According to 44 percent of the Probation Officers they do. It was noted that many have the requisite practice knowledge and experience, however “competing work demands” (2-1:38) were thought to detract from their ability to fulfil this role.

Abuse of positional power was disclosed by two Probation Officers who had experienced unprofessional Service Manager attitudes and behaviours that reflected a capacity to impose their personal philosophies of practice. The first Probation Officer said she would rather not approach her Service Manager because he “*is going to get me every time... I dread it when I actually have to approach him about something I want for a client, because his ethical beliefs and mine are so far [apart] that he just says no*” (1-4:17). The second one had encountered prejudicial attitudes:

They are not prepared to let in any other knowledge like feminist, Maori or Pacific Island – anything those groups want to do. I see Service Managers just knocking it, but they don't do it in front of the people, they do it behind their backs...I feel quite repressed because I can't say what I wanted to say (1-5:13).

A further theme concerned the relationship between effective leadership and staff performance. One participant felt that:

The level of leadership from Service Managers is very patchy, it depends on the skills and abilities and the motivation and attitude of the Service Manager as to how well a team operates or meets criteria (1-2:1).

The importance of Service Manager leadership was emphasised by another Probation Officer who described a situation when her superior was on secondment and there was no adequate replacement. In this situation, Probation Officers did not have performance plans, team meetings did not occur, and they experienced a lack of support that led them to become more independent and autonomous, with some colleagues described as becoming “loose cannons”.

In contrast, some Probation Officers made positive comments. For example: *"I reckon it's been very positive. I feel like the leaders are getting what they need and I'm getting what I need – it's a two way street"* (2-21:20). Another Probation Officer said: *"I think it's been pretty good. Whenever I've needed help it's been given"* (2-2:24).

One quarter of the Probation Officers expressed concern at the stress they observed in Service Managers. One, for example, was concerned that Service Managers openly expressed their own doubts and criticism of the Probation Service at team meetings:

Two or three of the Service Managers ...make it quite transparent to their team that they are feeling overwhelmed, that they are finding it really difficult. For me the Service Manager is totally unaware of how his team is feeling in terms of his talking about his own feelings (2-17:20).

This viewpoint was supported by another participant who said regarding her Service Manager, *"I don't need him telling me all the reasons why he's stressed out and why he can't help me"* (2-20:21).

A linkage was made by one Probation Officer between the performance of the Service Manager and the leadership provided to them:

I think that the Service Managers are barely coping with the way the system is at the moment. Their direction comes from their Area Manager and from the Regional Manager and having experienced our Regional Manager frequently I also question his ability to project leadership (1-2:1).

Not surprising was the observation that some Service Managers were known to be searching for alternative employment, not always with any success: *"I can think of a couple who are going to have to grit their teeth and put up with it because their heart really isn't in what they are doing"* (1-1:22).

There was an appreciation that Service Managers may be caught between the competing demands of senior managers and Probation Officers. However, this did not mitigate the

sense that the results focus has been at the expense of valuing the field worker.

What I find with Service Managers [is that] the role in itself [is] huge and it's bogged down by administrative detail; a lot of paper pushing and box ticking . Someone said when at a certain time of year you see the Service Managers running around getting their boxes ticked you know it's bonus time. But never at any other time during the year do you see them exerting themselves with such fervour. It's almost like crisis management or reactive management rather than pro-active management. I don't classify that as leadership, I don't have any respect for it. ...I think there's a loss of human value in that and a loss of respect for the workers (1-12:8).

One of the problems I have with the Service Manager role is that management rolls onto them in the sense of returns, budgeting and staff disciplinary matters. My manager is often unable to act in a supportive role because he's busy with management functions (1-1:2).

Of course, not all of the experiences reported were as critical or as negative as those noted above. Positive comments were made by 36 percent of the Probation Officers and these focused on the personal support received. One Service Manager, for example, was described as “nurturing...showing appreciation and positive feedback” (2-19:15). For another participant the leadership provided by the Service Manager was identified as the primary reason for remaining in the job.

The question inevitably arises as to how one can explain the concerns, criticisms and negative comments made by the majority of the Probation Officers. Possible answers to this question can be gained from comments offered by two Service Managers and a former Service Manager on their own experience. Frustration and concern is evident with regard to the tension between management requirements and professional issues or aspirations:

I feel very sorry and disappointed in terms of my experience – it's becoming a very personal experience. Service Managers seem to be held responsible for everything that can't be cured basically (1-13:15)

I'm a half-pie manager, but I'm not really a bloody manager, everything is so prescriptive. I feel less and less a leader, my leadership is more around approximation and legitimation. I'm thwarted in terms of new ground because the ground has been defined. I'm expected to do enough management things to significantly distract me from where I'd like to be – primarily a team leader, educator, case work supervisor (1-15:215)

A lack of role clarity for Service Managers was also identified as well as insufficient training:

Leadership styles depend upon the person. There is a lack of clear direction regarding the Service Manager role therefore Service Managers adopt a style that suits them (2-14:19).

I don't know I received sufficient training to be a manager. I found it very discouraging [as] decisions couldn't be made and stuck to (2-10:20).

Summary

The performance of the Service Manager emerged as a factor that can directly influence the Probation Officers' ability to practice effectively with clients. The most significant issue raised by the Probation Officers related to a lack of clarity regarding the role of the Service Manager. There was evidence amongst both groups of respondents that clear direction regarding professional leadership was lacking. The enactment of leadership within the Probation Service was characterised as occurring at diffuse points that lacked co-ordination, and participants drew a clear association between practice experience and knowledge on the one hand and the ability to provide professional leadership on the other. Some Service Managers, possessing the requisite professional knowledge and skills, were deemed able to provide professional leadership, but their capacity to do so was thought to be compromised by the other demands of their role.

The impact of the New Public Management philosophy was apparent with Service Managers being seen to place greater emphasis upon tasks, results and organisational performance at the expense of practice. In essence, the belief held by Probation Officers that the Probation Service's management is more concerned with business requirements negates the perception of Service Managers as professional leaders. A negative impact of this was that some Probation Officers did not feel valued in their role. In part, this is undoubtedly a consequence of the appointment of Service Managers who lack relevant experience and training in probation work. Unfortunately, this has resulted in both a loss of

credibility and respect for Service Managers on the part of many Probation Officers. In particular, there was concern at the manner in which some Service Managers exercise their positional power.

It was not surprising, therefore, that Probation Officers clearly identified other Probation Officers as the primary source of professional leadership. The qualities exhibited by such Probation Officers - practice experience, expertise and credibility, a client focus, and the ability to develop practice in a reflexive manner - in effect define the nature of professional leadership.

Probation Officers demonstrated a degree of insight into the role tensions experienced by Service Managers and the impact this has on Service Manager behaviour (negative role modelling and an inability to project leadership). This perception was reinforced by the experience of Service Managers, notably with regard to their lack of autonomy and increased sense of responsibility. Notwithstanding the sympathy expressed by some Probation Officers, there was a sense of frustration that their needs were not being met. However, some positive comments were made regarding Service Manager performance and these comments reinforce the consistent message that Probation Officers are seeking leadership that has a focus upon practice and that provides professional support.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on an examination of the participants' views and experience of leadership. In the first section, the participants' understanding of leadership was considered, in particular their views regarding leadership and management, and the characteristics that they associated with effective leadership. In the discussion, the participants' views have been considered in relation to the literature presented in Chapter Five. The participants' experience of leadership was explored in the second section, including: whom they identified as leaders; their experiences of leadership from managers, and their knowledge of professional leadership.

Four features of the participants' responses regarding leadership warrant further comment: the relationship between leader and follower; the question of professional leadership; perceptions of senior managers; and the tension that is evident between the professional and management perspectives.

Three substantive themes emerged from the preceding consideration of the participants' views regarding the relationship between leader and follower. First, the participants' held that effective leadership rests upon the relationship that is established between the leader and a group or team and that the leader should seek to establish group cohesion. There was support for the argument advanced by Northouse (1997) that the leader should assume primary responsibility for initiating and maintaining a relationship with followers. Both groups of participants placed emphasis on personal power and there was evidence that they valued relationship behaviours in leaders. Notwithstanding the concerns expressed by the participants the positive experiences of leadership reflected an emphasis upon reciprocity, trust and a focus upon the quality of the relationship between follower and leader. Second, the Probation Officers emphasised the importance of receiving support from leaders in relation to their work with clients. The accounts of the Probation Officers provided a consistent message that they are seeking leadership that has a focus upon practice and that provides professional support. Third, Bartol et al. (1985) identified the development of greater follower commitment as a potential reaction to the exercise of power by a leader. From the account of the Probation Officers the performance of the Service Manager emerged as a factor that can directly influence the Probation Officers' commitment to their work and their ability to practice. In particular, a positive association was drawn between the Service Manager's professional experience, their possession of personal power and their ability to influence Probation Officer practice. The above characteristics of the relationship between leader and follower are firmly located in a construction of probation practice as a professional enterprise; one based upon knowledge, experience and commitment to working with clients.

The Probation Officers maintained that a key role of the Service Manager should be the

provision of professional probation leadership. It was also argued that a leader who sets a professional example is more likely to inspire trust and loyalty, and will engender confidence in the follower. This type of leadership was associated with the provision of direction and support regarding practice with clients.

The question of the leader's professional credibility (one based upon expertise in the field of practice) emerged as an important element in the construction of effective professional leadership in the Probation Service. Based on their practice experience, both groups drew a clear association between practice experience, knowledge, and the ability to provide professional leadership. In addition to the credibility that comes with practice experience and expertise, the characteristics associated with effective professional leaders were: a client focus; and the ability to develop practice in a reflexive manner. This view of professional leadership reinforces the emerging theme regarding the centrality of the client/practitioner relationship as the foundation of probation practice.

Both Probation Officers and Service Managers noted a lack of clear direction regarding professional leadership and its development in the Probation Service. This emerged as a challenge for both managers and field staff. However, the ability of staff to be pro-active in this regard will be affected by the level of organisational commitment to provide the structures and processes that support professional leadership. This issue is taken up in the next chapter.

When questioned regarding their knowledge of management, the participants' responses suggested that management is predominantly task focused and characterised by transactional interactions. It also emerged, from the participants' perspective, that senior managers within the Probation Service exercise positional power in contrast with expert power. The Probation Officers' experience of senior managers was predominantly negative; they were characterised as directive, controlling and not valuing staff. Service Managers who expressed a lessening of confidence in senior managers shared this perception.

Of significance was the association of a low level of follower confidence in senior managers with the view that the senior managers lack the practice credibility that comes with professional knowledge and experience; and this lack was identified as being evident in the decisions they made. In particular, the participants were sensitive to decisions made regarding the development of practice that were thought to diminish the professional standing of practitioners in the Probation Service. There was a sense that senior managers had failed to take responsibility for professional leadership within the Probation Service.

This perception regarding senior managers presents as a significant obstacle to the development of effective leadership in the Probation Service and is linked to the final feature of the participants' responses regarding leadership. That is, the identification of tensions that reflect a disjunction between professionalism and the influence of New Public Management. In the accounts of the participants' there is support for the argument that the ability of professional staff to determine the content of services has been eroded. Both Probation Officers and Service Managers noted a disjunction in the emphasis that has been placed upon the business model at the expense of practice involving clients. These views lend support to the argument that has been advanced regarding the tension that exists between conceptions of practice developed on the basis of social work education, training and practice experience and the prescriptive practice models that are based upon a technical rational paradigm that draws substantially upon psychological theory. This situation undoubtedly reflects the positional power of senior managers who, lacking relevant practice experience, have implemented the New Public Management model with an emphasis upon cost, efficiency and results.

The Probation Officers identified the importance of leader and follower having a shared philosophy of practice. The leader's ability to articulate and demonstrate concern with values, ethics, standards and long-term goals was associated with improved follower motivation and performance. Both groups of respondents identified Service Managers as having an operational leadership role that involves dual responsibility for professional practice and business management. For the Service Managers, the impact of work pressure and management requirements (with an emphasis upon tasks, results and performance) can

detract from their ability to attend to practice issues. The Probation Officers demonstrated a degree of insight into role tensions that are experienced by Service Managers and the impact this has on Service Manager behaviour. Overall, this shared experience lends support to the arguments regarding practice tension that were outlined in the introduction to the thesis; and which will be examined further in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Leadership and Probation Officer Practice

In this chapter, the views of the participants regarding the relationship between leadership and Probation Officer practice are considered. The data are presented in three sections. The first section considers issues surrounding the provision of leadership to a professional workforce and discussion centres upon three sub-themes: the relationship between professional autonomy and accountability; the importance of professional values; and the practice credibility of the leader. In the second section, the participants' knowledge of how leadership influences the practice of Probation Officers is explored with particular reference to four concerns: the importance of a professional and supportive relationship between leader and follower; the need for decisive leadership and clear direction to followers; the relationship between leadership and effective team functioning; and the importance of staff developing self-confidence and responsibility for their practice. Finally, the participants' expectations and suggestions regarding future leadership are considered, including: both positive and negative expectations; and suggestions regarding structures and processes thought necessary to enhance leadership.

Leading Professionals

The type of leadership that is most likely to be effective in influencing the performance of Probation Officers to achieve effective service delivery is central to the thesis. A substantive argument that has been advanced regarding leadership in the Probation Service is that it should support and facilitate professional practice.

Seventy percent of Probation Officers and 87.5 percent of Service Managers articulated

expectations regarding the type of leadership considered likely to exert a positive influence upon the practice of Probation Officers. A high level of agreement was evident amongst the participants that in order for any leadership contribution to be optimal the leader should regard the role of the Probation Officer as a professional one. In general, the views of the Probation Officers are well illustrated in the following quotations:

I believe that professional people require support. I guess the criterion is an acknowledgement of people's skills as professionals (1-1:17).

Leaders need to realise that we are professionals, that we trained, that we spent quite a lot of time and effort and money training and that you don't go into this work...unless you want to make it a career rather than a job (1-4:13).

There are two things [the leader should do]. One, give a strong message about the importance of being professional, focus on the important things. Two, [demonstrate] the power of being actually able to do something. The outspoken challenging, stimulating, inspiring, all that which can be done on a professional level. To make changes you need power (1-10:11).

For another Probation Officer this recognition and support included the leader establishing professional standards and requiring staff to work in accordance with those standards.

Service Managers also advanced the conception of probation practice as a profession. The following comments were made regarding the type of leadership that was thought to support Probation Officers as professionals:

The most effective way that you can lead a team of professionals is to take a very flexible approach to leadership (2-18:12).

In the past I've tried to see my self as a leader in a kind of facilitative collegial kind of model. (1-15:16).

Two Service Managers emphasised ongoing professional development as an important characteristic of being a professional. The first argued that, "Implicit in the word professional is ongoing learning and development" (2-18:12), while the other pointed to the importance of having professional structures (such as the senior practitioner role) in support of professional practice.

Professional Autonomy and Accountability

The first sub-theme with respect to leading professionals concerns the participants' views on professional autonomy and accountability. From the account of the participants, there is interdependence between professional autonomy and accountability. The following quotations from a Service Manager and Probation Officer, respectively, are representative of this point of view:

I think that autonomy and accountability are simply two sides of the same coin. I really do believe that people who want to exercise responsible, professional interaction will also want to be accountable (1-6:4).

Having autonomy is like having the respect and the trust to be able to get on with the job and do it effectively and efficiently. My own sense of professionalism won't allow me to work in any other way. I implicitly trust myself absolutely to do the job. And I also believe to validate that, particularly in terms of the work I do with clients, that I must be accountable. The two go hand in hand for me (1-12:12).

The participants' comments concerning autonomy and accountability are presented around two themes: the level of autonomy enjoyed by Probation Officers; and the professional foundation for practice autonomy and accountability. Forty-four percent of the Probation Officers commented that the role of Probation Officer involves a high level of autonomy and practice discretion. Significantly, the foundation of practice autonomy was located in the practitioner's experience and adherence to professional standards. The following quotations are illustrative of these points:

I think there's quite a lot [of autonomy] and certainly I have to exercise a reasonable amount because I have to make decisions all the time on the spot over matters before the court. I think that there is a place for acting in an autonomous way, but that also implies that you are acting in an ethical and responsible way, and that whoever you are working for has to have the confidence that you are doing that and it has to be there for an element of trust or mutual respect (1-1:18).

I'm totally autonomous in the role I do at the moment. As you acquire experience and expertise you have to know what you are doing to exercise autonomy safely. But anything tricky, difficult or serious I always get it checked (regardless) by other people (1-12:12).

Practice autonomy was juxtaposed with compliance to agency rules, and there was also a sense of the importance of reflexivity:

My sense is the Department would like to think that we're not [autonomous], that we have to follow the prescription by the letter. The reality is that at a practice level, on the job day by day, there is a lot of room for that discretion. By and large we exercise it in an appropriate way. Exercise our own judgment on what will be beneficial for the client and effective for the community. Despite what the Department would like, the reality is that we do have autonomy and that is a good thing (2-15:14)

Obviously you still have to comply with ticks...have a case plan...but at the same time you can run the sentence the way you want to. You can decide how often you will see people...you can write reports your own way, present things your way, be quite innovative...you can still organise your day, how you work with your clients (1-10:11).

In contrast, only one of the eight Service Managers noted that Probation Officers have a high level of autonomy and this comment contained a negative connotation: *"Right now, quite a bit. In time to come quite a bit less. At the moment probably too much" (2-13:11).*

Fifteen percent of the Probation Officers and 37.5 percent of the Service Managers associated a lessening of Probation Officer autonomy with the introduction of more prescriptive practice such as Integrated Offender Management. For example, in response to a question about the level of autonomy that Probation Officers have, one Service Manager commented:

A lot less now than they used to have. When I started in the seventies there was much less prescription. That has gradually changed as more accountability has come in, in an administrative sense. Now administrative supervision is more important to the Department than the professional aspect. Integrated Offender Management is inevitably leading to an erosion of Probation Officer autonomy (1-14:11).

A second Service Manager sounded a note of caution that overly prescriptive practice might diminish professionalism and have a negative affect on staff recruitment:

I believe that when IOM in its finality kicks in it will be so incredibly prescriptive that the notion of professionalism will cease. The danger is that we could head to a very mechanical application of a practice model

and you will typically attract people who will like that remote mechanical way of working,[but] repel people who want to come in and be colourful and try their own thing (1-15:16).

The Probation Officers expressed similar concerns regarding the impact of more prescriptive practice. In contrast to the view expressed earlier regarding autonomy, one commented that practice was becoming increasingly rigid and she is less able to determine the conduct of a client interview:

Now the requirements are becoming much more rigid to practice in certain ways and to record what you've done, to have everything open to scrutiny and to be told you're not doing it quite right. It feels a lot more rigid now...Now, when I go into an interview, I have a bundle of forms that I have to get through and get people to sign. I feel less able to just do the interview in the way that feels good for me (2-4:11).

For a second Probation Officer the influence of IOM compromised the autonomy she associated with her social work orientation:

The psychological flavour that's coming through is prescriptive and (coming from a social work background and social work qualifications) here I am doing my social work thing and I get a prescription and that's quite interesting, It sort of takes away some of my autonomy as a worker (2-6:5).

However, a third Probation Officer associated increased supervision with accountability and observed that some Probation Officers were not accustomed to a high level of scrutiny:

IOM and the supervision supporting that training is going to mean that people will be a lot more accountable in terms of how they're practicing. I think it will be something to shock a few of us (2-3:12).

Notwithstanding the accord concerning the professional requirement to exercise practice autonomy, both groups of participants also noted that probation practice is defined by legal and organisational boundaries (including prescribed practice models). Two Service Managers highlighted the importance of Probation Officer compliance with legal orders. The first commented that practitioners have no discretion regarding court sanctions, while the second identified the "need to ensure that Probation Officers know they're accountable

in law for their reports,” and commented that “there is not enough emphasis placed upon our legal requirements in the Act. We need more training” (1-13:12). Probation Officers also noted the influence of legal restrictions, however there was no pejorative tone in their comments. For example: “I feel like there are some restrictions. The overall one is that we work within the law. I have to work within the bounds of the Criminal Justice Act” (2-20:17).

Turning now to the theme concerning the professional foundation for practice autonomy and accountability, the participants suggested that Probation Officers should be able to exercise discretion around professional analysis and decision-making, subject to two prerequisites. The first prerequisite related to having relevant professional knowledge, skill and experience upon which choices can be made. Two Service Managers took up this issue and both suggested that the level of autonomy enjoyed by a Probation Officer should be relative to the Probation Officer’s work standard and competence. The following quotation illustrates this point:

I think there’s a reasonable amount of discretion but depending on the standard of the person’s work. That comes back to clear expectations and competence (2-18:12).

The second Service Manager placed emphasis upon professionalism when he expressed concern at the lack of competence of some staff:

There are a lot of Probation Officers who basically don’t know how to do the job; I wouldn’t like to think of them being a member of a professional body – no training, no professional qualifications (1-9:22).

Probation Officers also acknowledged that the balance between autonomy and accountability is dependent upon the practitioner’s ability and adherence to a professional framework. To illustrate this point consider the two following quotations:

The values and ethics, which underpin your practice, should mean that you would be accountable. Professional ethics mean that you see yourself as requiring to be accountable (2-16:11).

There’s a framework to work inside and it’s not crossing any of those

ethical, professional or practice boundaries. You can use discretion to a great degree but always within that best practice boundary (2-21:16).

The second prerequisite associated with the use of discretion requires the practitioner to be able to justify the choices they make. One Service Manager identified this as a “*need to be transparent about what you are doing*” (2-18:12). The capacity for the practitioner to take into account new knowledge and practice and make adjustments was noted by one Probation Officer, and this was linked to accountability as follows:

I think it's healthy that there is that flexibility, there's always going to be accountability for whatever is chosen. You have to be willing to accept responsibility for the decision you make and be able to justify it (2-10:17).

Notwithstanding their support for practice autonomy and discretion, two Service Managers and two Probation Officers expressed a note of caution about the need for practice consistency and the risks associated with unrestricted practice discretion. For example, one Service Manager was critical of the low level of scrutiny applied to the work of Probation Officers, and drew a distinction between the professional and departmental standards that are applied:

I think there is room for discretion but it carries a risk. Currently group facilitators are the only group in the Community Probation Service whose work is exposed to any real scrutiny. Autonomy should be linked to demonstrated competence. In the Community Probation Service we pretty much bring people in off the street – we've got autonomy. There are no clear professional standards only criteria, current manual formats [and] performance rulers; they are departmental standards not professional standards (2-14:16).

The question of professionalism was also noted by the second Service Manager who observed that Probation Officers were not sufficiently professional to be allowed unrestricted autonomy. He commented that Probation Officers were not required to belong to any external professional organisation or (consequently) to adhere to a set of professional standards (1-9:21). Similarly, the two Probation Officers observed it is easier to exercise practice discretion if practice is informed by a set of professional standards. The first drew a comparison with other professions:

There are certain boundaries on the way people can act in other professions; other professional bodies, like lawyers, still have to be accountable. There are systems in place, so even though they are relatively autonomous there are still standards of practice (2-4:11).

The second Probation Officer promoted the standards of the Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers, commenting that these standards were:

...within my brief everyday. I think if you start reducing or if you start going away from some of those standards I think you need to go [i.e. leave the service] (2-17:22).

Relationship between Professional Values, Ethical Standards and Work Performance

Participants were asked: “What do you identify as the relationship between your professional values and ethical standards, and your work performance?” All Probation Officers and 6 out of eight Service Managers identified an interconnection. For example, some of the Probation Officers said:

Your standards are everything. It's very much what dictates where I go and what I do (2-12:8).

*They are both side by side – you can't have one without the other (1-5:10).
It just goes without saying, doesn't it? Very important (2-9:9).
They underpin everything that is said and done (2-16:9).*

Responses from three Service Managers evidence similar views:

I don't consciously say am I doing something ethically, its part of who I am as a person and therefore I think it is unconsciously transmitted. (1-6:1b).

I don't have them unless I do them in my job. It's not about what I say it's about what I do. You can't talk that stuff up. What I do is the values that I hold (2-14:14)

It's everywhere. Just everything I do (2-18:11).

The nature and quality of professional relationships with clients emerged as a concern for the Probation Officers. Professional values provide practitioners with meaning and a basis

for action, influencing the way they practitioner work with, and the expectations that they have of, the client. These points are articulated in the following comments:

I think they [professional values] impact on what you do at every stage really. Impact on which models you use. Impact on how you relate to the client and what you explore' (2-19:11).

Values would influence the way you work with people, treat people and the expectations you would have of the client (2-10:14).

The ability to maintain a non-judgmental position when working with a client, irrespective of the client's offence, was identified by another Probation Officer as an example of how her values made her "...work really easy. Having those values allows me to do my job really well" (1-12:10). Finally, having a set of values and beliefs provided one Probation Officer with confidence in his practice:

It's psychological. The belief of right or wrong I guess that you're doing the right job, the right way, the right thing, delivering a much more easy response and ability to get on with it, even if you are under stress (1-16:12).

Twenty six percent of the Probation Officers made specific comments indicating that they should be able to apply their individual professional values and standards to their work without significant compromise. The importance of being able to express their own values was emphasised. One Probation Officer, for example, expressed it as the ability "to work in a conscionable way which is congruent with self and own values" (2-3:10). A second participant was emphatic that: "It's everything – I'm who I am and I work because of who I am - I couldn't have different values and work the way I do" (2-21:14).

Similarly, for Service Managers there was a strong sense of personal and professional accountability to practice in accord with their own standards. This was expressed clearly by one participant:

Most definitely because as individuals we're accountable for the way we behave and whether we see those values through or not on a day- to- day basis (1-13:11).

A second Service Manager made the following association between her values and practice:

It's a harmonious relationship. You prioritise things according to your values. A client or worker's safety is always going to come first before a monthly return (2-13:10).

The Leader's Practice Credibility

The final sub-theme concerning the provision of leadership to professionals relates to the participants' views regarding the importance of the leader's practice credibility (an issue addressed earlier in Chapter Ten). Seventy-seven percent of the Probation Officers and all but one of the eight Service Managers identified the importance of practice credibility for Service Managers as front-line leaders. However, it should be noted that two participants, one Probation Officer and one Service Manager, suggested that this practice credibility might not be as important in more senior management positions:

Both groups drew an association between the leader's professionalism (encompassing expertise, level of practice competence and field experience) and the degree of follower confidence in and respect for the leader. Consider, for example, the following quotes from two Service Managers:

Generally, credibility is very important; the credibility of the person. Often that needs to come from them having been in the profession themselves (2-14:15).

In a professional sense - if you're known to be an expert or have worked in the field, can demonstrate that you do a good job – people will respect that and your view. Experience is all part of that (1-14:10).

Two other Service Managers made specific comments linking their level of technical practice knowledge with their performance. The first expressed confidence in her ability to engage with Probation Officers:

Integrity in terms of the fact that I know what I'm talking about. When it comes to basic stuff they can run it by me. Technical knowledge is important. I find it a lot easier to be able to sit down and talk the talk (2-13:10).

In contrast, the second Service Manager highlighted difficulties he experienced in maintaining the requisite level of professional expertise:

I think it's fairly important, that's why I feel a deficiency because I haven't been through the IOM assessment training for example. So I have to screen reports based on just a management tool, and it doesn't give you an absolute head for it really. You need to have technical knowledge of the job to be an effective leader. I would endorse professional training for managers and leaders (1-6:3b).

Endorsing this view, the importance of professional experience in probation to Service Manager Performance was expressed clearly by one Probation Officer who said:

Absolutely vital. They have to understand what the job is like – they have to have experienced it to have an understanding of some of the challenges. Also have to have the knowledge of the social work process and experience of being in a statutory role (2-19:12).

A quarter of the Service Managers and one third of the Probation Officers suggested that Service Managers should make decisions on the basis of their insight into operational requirements. This insight should include first hand knowledge of front-line practitioners and an understanding of the difficulties that Probation Officers can experience in practice with clients. For example, a Service Manager expressed this as follows:

As Service Managers, if we happen to hopefully function in a leadership style, you will actually understand what they're [Probation Officers] going through with those clients. You'll understand the hassles and the problems, I personally think it's quite important (1-6:3b).

Service Managers who have been promoted from the position of Probation Officer have experienced the Probation Officer/Service Manager interface; they are perceived to be supportive of the knowledge base of Probation Officers and to have an understanding of the Probation Officer role. This viewpoint is evident in comments made by two Probation Officers, who said:

I think it's pretty important. Without having that empathic understanding of what it's like to be a person [in the Probation Officer's role] it's hard to relate to people where they're at (2-3:11).

A huge advantage, because if a Probation Officer comes up and gets into a Service Manager role they have an in-depth knowledge of the job, they have first hand experience of being a Probation Officer in the face of management, they know the organisation inside out (1-12:11).

A slightly different emphasis was placed by two other Probation Officers who suggested that Service Managers should remember their own experience of front-line practice when interpreting policy decisions; this insight should enable them to include and understand the viewpoints of front-line practitioners.

Sixty-three percent of the Service Managers and one third of the Probation Officers commented on the leader's possession of appropriate professional knowledge. For one Service Manager, the possession of "*social work type skills, experience, qualifications, and preferably experience in the job*" (1-13:12) was associated with the ability to manage risk. On the other hand, a Probation Officer drew an association between the leader's understanding of practice realities and business management needs:

What it all comes down to is that leadership is effective if the leader knows what you are doing. And knows the processes that you need to go through in order to meet the criteria, the timeliness, and the business rules (2-6:19).

The inference that may be taken from this view is that a positive correlation exists between the leader's practice knowledge and their ability to effectively mediate the relationship between practice realities and business requirements.

The expectation that the Service Manager should have the skill and ability to assist a Probation Officer with front-line tasks was also identified. A correlation was noted by one Probation Officer between the leader's own practice capability and their ability to provide guidance:

Leadership requires a lot of skill and the ability to impart information. I had a manager who had come in from the outside and who had written only one pre sentence report. He was trying to teach me how to write custody reports. I had ten years experience doing assessments in a different form but not custody reports. He couldn't help me, so leadership didn't exist. I had to go to someone else (1-7:2).

The practice knowledge of the leader was also associated with the ability to support practice development. Two Service Managers, for example, said:

Being a good leader is about knowing how to support people whose main focus is on their clients to do the same, to take some of that leadership role (2-14:2).

They are people who are constantly challenging staff, colleagues and the organisation to actually raise their vision. They have the ability to get alongside people and create that coalition for change, which I think is a leadership function more than a management function. The atmosphere, the ethos, the willingness to take risks, the willingness to be challenged intellectually (1-6:4).

Alternatively, one Service Manager thought that the leader should possess a broad knowledge of the whole business, have a more strategic focus and that the leader only “needs ...that person needs to have sufficient business knowledge to make decisions” (2-18:2-3).

Aside from the possession of professional knowledge and skills, and an understanding of practice realities and management needs, there is also the matter of respect and/or trust. A clear link between Service Manager practice knowledge and respect from staff was made by a Probation Officer who said:

Obviously there are huge advantages; they know the practice, they often know the clients. There is a lot of knowledge. To be a Service Manager obviously you've got to have really performed well as a Probation Officer and I think there's a level of respect and mana that comes with that (2-2:21).

For two Probation Officers the development of trust in a leader was related to confidence in the leader's practice competence. It was observed that a Service Manager's inability to provide practical assistance could have a negative impact upon a Probation Officer's capacity to practice.

Summary

The participants' reinforced views expressed earlier that Probation Officers are

professionals and that leadership in probation work should be provided on that basis. Probation Officers suggested that they enjoyed a relatively high level of practice autonomy and this was identified as a positive aspect of their role. Practice autonomy was based upon a conception of professionalism that involved the possession and application of knowledge and skills, and an understanding of and compliance with legal and organisational boundaries. These views are consistent with those of Anderson (1997), Benevise (1987) and Raelin (1992).

While autonomy was valued, the Probation Officers also noted the need for a high degree of consistency in practice. This view was shared by the Service Managers who, in addition, promoted a risk management perspective by indicating that a lack of professionalism on the part of some Probation Officers was sufficient reason for restricting their level of autonomy. This illustrates the issue identified by Anderson (1997) and Raelin (1985) that the professional's right to operational independence should be matched by their obligation to demonstrate performance accountability (that includes self-regulation and self-discipline); failure to do so is likely to result in the imposition of organisational controls. However, the risk of over-prescription was also noted; in particular, the imposition of inflexible practice rules could lead to the mechanical application of any practice model and a reduction in reflexive practice.

Notwithstanding the conception of the autonomous professional, both groups identified the requirement for quality assurance systems that would both support and validate accountable practice. The process of professional supervision was identified as a mechanism that can provide assurance regarding practice standards, and the participants noted the core administrative, professional and personal dimensions of such supervision. Professional supervision was also conceived as occurring in relation to professional values and ethics, and for some participants the process contributes to their self-actualisation as a practitioner. However, it was also noted that the then current model of professional supervision placed reliance on practitioner self-disclosure, and that other monitoring systems (such as file review) were *ex post facto*.

In Chapter Eight there was evidence of the participants' concern with core social work values and these views were reinforced in their comments on the leading of professionals. The participant's comments also supported the arguments advanced in Chapter Four regarding values as a foundation for practice. Values are integral to the practitioner's self-conception as a professional and it is important to be able to act in accordance with those values; they provide a basis for action and influence the client/practitioner relationship. A key component of effective leadership of Probation Officers is recognition and support of the centrality of values to practice.

Both the Probation Officers and Service Managers placed importance on the need for a leader to possess and demonstrate practice credibility. The notion of practice credibility was based upon the leader having the requisite professional knowledge base, an understanding of practice and familiarity with the practice of the individual Probation Officer. It is from this perspective that the leader will be able to interpret the practice environment and make informed decisions. These views are consistent with those of Anderson (1997), who identified benefit in the professional manager being able to relate to the distinct body of knowledge shared by staff.

A linkage was also identified between the leader's practice experience and competence and the level of confidence that Probation Officers are likely to have in the leader. This perception on the part of the Probation Officers matches the argument advanced by Parry (1999) regarding the creation of 'willing following'. Parry emphasises the importance of the leader's ability to generate willingness within the follower to pursue a particular course of action. In the probation work context, the ability of the Service Manager to influence the practice of the Probation Officer rests in part upon the Probation Officer's belief that the Service Manager is conversant with practice and able to guide the Probation Officer. Practice credibility emerges as an example of French and Raven's (1959) 'expert power' and Yukl's (1998) later conceptualisation of personal power based upon expertise.

Leadership and Influence on Probation Officer Practice

How can leadership influence the practice of Probation Officers? The participants were asked to consider: how they are motivated/how they motivate others to achieve goals/be effective in their practice; and the relationship between their wishes regarding leadership and Probation Officer practice. All of the Probation Officers and seven of the eight Service Managers made comments in response to these questions..

The first key theme, noted by almost half of the Probation Officers, concerned the importance of a supportive and professional inter-personal relationship between leader and staff member. Service Managers should provide them with support, which included being empowered, receiving feedback, having decisions backed, effort acknowledged and concerns heard. The following quotations illustrate these expectations:

A leader will recognise the Probation Officer as a professional who is able to work in a professional, effective way to come up with their own creative ideas. The leader will empower that, not just dictate by the manual (2-15:2).

To be supported, guided, listened to, [and] you would expect to get some feedback on how your work was going; some of that feedback can be negative and positive (2-17:2).

Number one ingredient is support, backing. Everybody in the course of their employment makes decisions, at times some of them may not be correct, but having someone behind you who supports and backs your decisions creates a really good working relationship (2-12:2).

I'd expect to be respected and have my work and effort acknowledged, and concerns heard (2-10:3).

I suppose it comes down to the quality of the relationship between the manager and the Probation Officer. Maybe the quality of leadership is going to be restricted by the quality of the relationship (2-20:14).

Obviously, a leader must gain the Probation Officers' trust and respect in order to influence their work performance. This was thought more likely to be achieved if a leader develops a relationship based upon effective communication, recognition, acknowledgment and reciprocity. A leader should be supportive, caring and guiding rather than negative, critical

and not offer solutions to issues. As one Probation Officer asserted, the Service Manager *"almost needs to go in to battle for me"* (2-20:21). There was an expectation that Service Managers should be interested in and demonstrate an awareness of the Probation Officer's commitment to practice. This was clearly expressed by one Probation Officer as follows: *"They [Service Managers] can believe that what I'm doing is the best that I can do"* (2-9:9).

The Service Manager was seen to have a role "to protect the Probation Officer from being overwhelmed by the job" (1-4:1). For example, recognition is particularly important when stress is being experienced:

When things get me down a bit and there's a bit too much stress... for them to encourage me. I guess just feedback...I mean it helps a lot if he can just say "Hey you're doing really well", but being specific...that's all it really takes (2-20:16).

The benefits of such support included enhanced work performance. This point was well illustrated in the comment that:

I expect them to support me in my role and enable me to undertake my role to the best of my ability so that I can actually fulfil my potential as a worker (2-20:2).

Conversely, Probation Officers who are unhappy in their relationship with the Service Manager are likely to be affected negatively. As one participant put it, an unhappy relationship with the Service Manager *"can't help but impact on how effective [a Probation Officer is going to be] A happy worker is a productive worker"* (2-3:14). The relationship between effective leadership and performance was identified clearly by another Probation Officer who commented directly on how the absence of leadership affected her work:

A lot, it really does. It means that some days I've had to go home I've been [so] stressed out. It happened yesterday. It's added pressure to a workplace where you've [already] got enough things to deal with. I don't need it and definitely it hinders my work (2-20:20).

On the other hand, increased commitment or buy in was identified as a consequence of

effective leadership and staff retention was in turn identified as an indicator of staff commitment:

You would have people staying rather than leaving. The organisation wouldn't have to cope with high turnover. Expertise would stay in the organisation. People would be happier, loyal (1-10:14).

Finally, another Probation Officer commented that her peers “push the boundaries” and she believed that with improved support from the Service Manager animosity between staff and management would be reduced.

The Service Managers, for their part, indicated that the key role of the leader is to support practitioners in their service delivery:

The primary link is confidence; effective leadership provides and supports the development of confidence (2-13:13).

Everyone in management should be seeking to empower, up-skill, enthuse, coach and challenge staff (1-6:6).

The relationship between providing Probation Officers with support and achieving desired results was stressed. A Service Manager was thought more likely to achieve the goal of enhancing work performance, however, when, “*the manager is focused on supporting [his or her] Probation Officers as individuals and being aware of life and work-related issues they may be experiencing*” (2-3:2). The importance of this linkage was encapsulated in a comment made by one Service Manager in relation to the time he spent with staff; “*It's not an output, but it's heaps about outputs*” (2-13:10). This insight highlights a point that can be viewed as axiomatic to effective service delivery, i.e. that the achievement of results or outputs is dependent on the quality of the practice of the Probation Officer and, therefore, the provision of supervision and support to staff is extremely important. In this context, providing support was seen to involve letting staff know they are valued, demonstrating awareness of the staff situation, and sharing in that situation.

A second substantive theme concerned the leader being decisive and providing direction to followers. The Probation Officers identified a range of components of effective

communication and direction. For example:

To have a clearer more shared vision of the whole purpose and function of probation (1-11:2).

I'm looking for clear direction. Someone who has integrity, sound ethics, and who conveys a message which is clear and gives a sense of your direction and inspiration to the followers (2-16:2)

Another participant who articulated this viewpoint added that Service Managers should also anticipate issues and be prepared to make decisions accordingly:

Strong decision-making. I find it difficult when a Service Manager comes and approaches me for something that I think is their decision; I'd like to see more effective decision-making. Anticipate. That's the other thing that I find quite difficult, there's a real lack of anticipation (2-6:18).

Finally, three Probation Officers argued that direction is provided through a leader being a positive role model, which was identified as an important influence upon a follower. Of course, being a positive role model involves the leader demonstrating practice competence, recognising and sharing values, and behaving in a manner that is congruent with what they say (i.e. 'walk the talk').

The importance of consultation and an ability to engage staff in conversation regarding change were also noted as aspects of effective communication, along with the positive consequences:

A follower is looking for someone who will consult, be open about what's happening, talk through the process of changes (2-19:2).

While I may question a lot of amendments or changes brought forward by a manager, once we've agreed and sorted out what the changes should be then normally I will always implement those changes with absolute vigour and support (2-12:2).

The leader is able to think through relevant issues, has a professional understanding of things and is able to inspire confidence in what they are doing (2-25:2).

In response to being asked how he influenced Probation Officers in their practice, one Service Manager replied:

That's a hard one. What do I do? Positive role modelling regarding organisational goals. Apart from trying to put on a positive front on all occasions (1-14:9).

There was a sense of self-responsibility in the response from another Service Manager:

I set extremely high expectations of staff. I'm passionate about quality and about them practicing with integrity. Constantly challenging staff about what they're doing. I suppose I model that stuff. What I've found is that people who come into my team seem to adopt that standard. I think that stuff is quite powerful. I think the values of a leader, the way they model and what they do has an extremely important influence on those with whom they have contact (2-18:11).

The influence of leadership upon the workplace team was a third theme, one identified by 25 percent of the Service Managers and 15 percent of the Probation Officers. Their comments indicated that leadership is important to effective team functioning. The Service Manager was identified as the primary leader who should be enthusiastic, energetic, possess a unique vision for the team they are leading, and should act decisively and have responsibility for facilitating the development of leadership within other members of the team. In other words, leadership of the 'ideal' type would focus on developing a 'team' culture and a more collaborative workplace.

The nature of the relationship between effective leadership and teamwork was emphasised by many participants. For example, one Service Manager said:

I think for most good leaders it is a very democratising thing, working as a team, a good team. Leadership is at its best when [leaders] start to disappear. They come in and out of the frame like a kind of faint image, but a really good team becomes a kind of organic mass where everybody is playing their part and the leader is not apparent (1-15:2).

A Probation Officer commented that her team was currently "too individualistic" and there was a lack of accountability; she believed that a supportive Service Manager would develop a stronger team culture and this would lead to a higher level of group responsibility. A

second Probation Officer identified the need for the leader to:

Understand group dynamics, to have some knowledge of difficulties arising in the team. I expect them to take some time out of their day to just evaluate what is going on in the workplace (2-20:3).

For another, an effective leader was one who can “transcend constraints”, engage team members and develop their level of commitment to practice and support of each other. In the absence of leadership, team cohesion weakens. For example, an instance was related by a Probation Officer where a Service Manager had failed to “recognise that she needed to bring those people along with her” and consequently the “atmosphere was so hard to live with and her team was suffering” (2-17:27).

A connection was posited between positive leadership, the development of a ‘team’ culture and Probation Officer work performance. It was suggested that if a team is functioning well: problems are more likely to be solved; Probation Officers will feel empowered and have greater confidence in their ability; and be motivated by the belief that they can make a difference in the lives of clients. An effective team environment was described by a Probation Officer as follows:

Really empowering. Where you have really clear agendas and goals about the way you practice. Where your practice is transparent to people within your team [and] they become very knowledgeable about how you work. Co-working, case discussions – very empowering and motivating - exposed to other opinions and styles (2-19:16).

The Service Managers, as a group, also demonstrated insight regarding the importance of team cohesion, and two thought they were responsible for ensuring the staff feel supported. For example, one observed that the “Service Manager has the overriding leadership role in the team” (2-15:2).

A final theme to emerge in the discussion on the influence of leadership concerned Probation Officers taking responsibility for their own professional practice. There was agreement among one third of the Probation Officers that their main source of motivation stemmed from an interest in working with people and a desire to be effective in that work.

They identified two primary reasons for this. The first, illustrated in the following comments, was associated with the self-conception as a professional:

I think it's an intrinsic internal motivation. It's really self-generated, based on my own values (2-15:13).

Probably my wanting to be excellent at my job and wanting to be the best I can be. It's personal motivation really (2-21:15).

The second reason, reflecting a client focus, was a desire to work effectively with clients:

Clients that make the changes probably motivate me the most. Which is why I went back to case management. It's not the money (1-4:12).

I love people. I enjoy people. I like working with people and its working with rather than dominating them (1-5:10).

Three Service Managers also noted that the majority of Probation Officers are intrinsically interested in practice and self-motivated towards the clients and the work of the Probation Service. One of these Service Managers noted the importance of recruiting staff who display a “passion” for probation work; he considered this characteristic to form the foundation for an effective practitioner.

These sentiments are in essence congruent with the substance of an earlier discussion (Chapter Four) wherein it was noted that previous research has shown that a high degree of self-determination and responsibility are distinguishing characteristics of being a professional. The importance of providing leadership that recognises and develops professionalism in Probation Officers was indicated by two Service Managers, who associated such leadership with a higher level of individual professional accountability. They thought that Probation Officers would benefit through increased self-confidence and empowerment, which would then be reflected in their practice:

I think it would simply empower people. The outcome would simply be that the staff at the coalface believed that they could do a good job and therefore they will do it (1-6:7).

Twenty six percent of the Probation Officers identified increased confidence as a likely

outcome of receiving effective leadership from a Service Manager. Confidence was associated with receiving positive feedback; for example, one of these Probation Officers drew a parallel with the IMS practice model, where a ratio of four positive comments to one negative is recommended, and suggested this could apply equally to Service Manager/Probation Officer interaction. Overall, the consequences of increased confidence identified by the Probation Officers were that they would be: empowered, less stressed, and able to work more effectively.

Summary

There was considerable agreement between the views expressed by the two groups of participants. The Probation Officers identified the relationship between the leader and the staff member as the mechanism through which leadership has an impact on the quality of service delivery; in particular, recognition by the Service Manager of the commitment of the Probation Officer to their practice. It was considered to be important that the leader attend to Probation Officers' professional and personal needs, and that the nature of this interaction be characterised by an emphasis on positive reinforcement. There was a sense that followers are looking for emotional trust in a leader. The importance of the quality of the leader/practitioner relationship was also recognised by the Service Managers. Overall, the views of the participants support arguments advanced by Hersey and Blanchard (1996) and Hersey et al. (1996) regarding the importance of relationship behaviours, and that a primary focus of leadership should be to meet follower needs.

Both groups suggested there would be positive consequences for service delivery if they were able to receive/provide effective leadership. Significantly, the linkage between leadership and effective service delivery was conceived of as being dependent upon the ability of the leader to enhance the practice of Probation Officers. Thus more effective leadership was thought likely to result in: enhanced Probation Officer commitment to the goals and practice requirements of the organisation; higher morale, less stress and lower rates of staff turnover for Probation Officers; and the development of a stronger team culture based on more collaborative relationships. It was noted that effective leadership

can, to some degree, transcend constraints; which suggests that participants have experienced the type of leadership conceptualised as optimising by Irurita (1992). However, there are factors that the leader cannot control, such as high workload demands, due to insufficient resources.

The importance of the development of commitment to professional practice emerged as a recurrent theme within the responses of the participants. The 'ideal' type of leadership promoted by both Probation Officers and Service Managers seems to be predicated upon the assumption that effective leadership is about recognising the competence of staff doing the core work; therefore a central focus of the role of the Service Manager should be the provision of support for staff engaged in direct service delivery to clients. This is consistent with the arguments advanced by Mintzberg (1998) and Shapero (1985) that the professional culture of an organisation should be enhanced by leadership from those in management positions, and that leaders have a responsibility to create the conditions that support effective professional practice. The Service Managers indicated that if they were able to provide a greater degree of professional leadership this would not only improve the quality of their leadership but it would also reinforce professional accountability for Probation Officers. This point supports the earlier observations that were made regarding role integrity for Service Managers, particularly the importance of being able to meet expectations of leadership surrounding the practice of Probation Officers.

Future Leadership

Expectations of Future Leadership

The participants were asked about their expectations regarding the leadership that they were likely to receive in the future. There was little expectation among the Probation Officers of positive changes; 44 percent thought no positive change was possible and 22 percent suggested that positive change was possible and the rest gave no clear indication one way or the other.

Twenty six percent of all of the Probation Officers associated their low expectations of future leadership with their recent experience of Service Manager performance. The following comments evidence a lack of confidence in the participants' current Service Managers and the likelihood of positive change:

I don't have high expectations of my current Service Manager (1-4:17).

I wouldn't see leadership; I wouldn't see any motivation or guidance from the Service Manager in the next six months (2-7:46)

I realistically expect that I'm going to be taking more self-management responsibility. I can see that the only reason I'll be going to him is if he's got a problem he'll want me to sort it out (2-20:21).

There is also an air of fatalistic resignation in the following comment: "*I have none [expectations] because it's easier*" (1-10:14). Thirty seven percent of the Service Managers were also pessimistic or at least lacking in optimism regarding expectations of future leadership, a view associated with change and work pressure. Failure on the part of senior managers to recognise the difficulties faced by Service Managers was thought likely to result in ongoing staff turnover. For example, one Service Manager expressed concern that competent managers would leave the Probation Service, a view representative of other Service Managers:

We're at risk of losing those people, which we desperately need to keep. Because they're not going to remain in an environment that's not supportive of them operating as comfortable, healthy safe individuals. Because the stress levels are so great and growing in terms of the more change there is the more pressure there is (1-13:16).

Another participant conveyed a sense of resignation:

I've got pretty low expectations. I don't expect that we're going to do a whole lot of leadership stuff. That might seem too negative but my expectations aren't high on that front (1-9:25).

A third Service Manager predicted there would be, "*More of the same because there is still a lot of change, staff turnover, secondments*" and believed it would be "*Quite a few years before we get into a consolidation phase*" (1-14:20).

Significantly, two Probation Officers noted Service Manager workload and stress as factors contributing to their own low expectation of any positive change in leadership:

The Service Managers tell us that they are really overworked all the time. So if that's the case, [if] they are tied up with paperwork and stuff, well obviously they've got less time to spend with the staff (2-7:46).

I think we are going to have less leadership. We are going to have more stressed managers, the ones who are charged with the leadership role because there's so much happening in the way of IOM training (2-10:21).

The Probation Officers, as a group, identified two positive expectations of future leadership. The first, associated with the potential impact of IOM, was noted directly by one Probation Officer who suggested that change in leadership “*may be driven to adjust to IOM*”, which has the potential to offer more robust practice (1-3:21). Another mentioned change in a general sense, linking this to her practice:

My expectation for the Probation Service is that it will develop a tighter ship out of this new IOM process, which will give me more confidence in the work I do (1-4:17).

The second positive expectation emphasised the importance of the Service Manager and was noted by two Probation Officers. The first of these two was confident she could receive the type of leadership she desired from a different Service Manager but not from her current manager. On the other hand, the second Probation Officer was currently satisfied with the leadership she received, but noted that this was dependent upon there being no change of Service Manager.

Comments from two Service Managers also suggested a degree of optimism regarding leadership. The first comment reflected alignment with the professional leadership role:

Some professional supervision training has been scheduled for Service Managers. If the Service manager role was more of a practice manager there would be some hope (1-13:16).

The second comment, made in relation to the capacity of local managers to exercise localised leadership in the face of pressure from Head Office, suggested that: “*(the) Area*

Manager is now prepared to take more risks" (2-14:20).

Suggestions for Change

A number of key suggestions were made regarding the structures and processes that could enhance leadership in the Probation Service, including: (a) the need for improved communication between the strategic and service delivery arms of the Probation Service; (b) the importance of taking steps to professionalise the Probation Officer role; (c) the need for ongoing training and professional development; (d) the critical role played by professional supervision; and (e) changes in roles within the Probation Service. Each of these suggestions is explored in the following pages.

First, concern was expressed at the perceived disjunction between macro level decisions regarding policy, structure and procedures and the practice reality of staff engaged in front-line service delivery. This concern was captured in the following observation by a Probation Officer commenting on the need to consider front-line staff:

Sometimes I think they are just completely overlooked with the ongoing drive to meet these macro expectations of what's going on because there are social and political and economic objectives that have to be met, but there are also certain things going on at this level that it all impacts on (2-6:25).

Similarly, concern that had previously been expressed regarding the predominance of the Psychology of Criminal Conduct was reiterated in the context of the need for improved communication; in particular, the importance of Senior Managers' ability to understand the implications of their decision making. This concern was illustrated by a Service Manager who said:

The Psychology of Criminal Conduct is very influential but it has been challenged; leaders need to have a grip on this stuff, they need to know the questions to ask and should take advice (2-18:18).

In regard to the implementation of IOM, a failure to anticipate issues and a subsequent reactive approach was identified because of inadequate consultation and communication. A

Probation Officer added that it was important to consider the international experience, and cautioned against being too insular.

There was a sense that senior managers do not value or acknowledge the viewpoints of field staff; indeed, a Probation Officer suggested that senior staff should visit practitioners in the field and listen to their suggestions. The desire for a higher level of recognition was based in the participants' belief that they have something to contribute. As one Probation Officer observed: *"The best people to come up with simple steps to getting something achieved are the people who actually do it"* (2-6:25). Lines of communication within the Probation Service were described as being 'top down' and some staff had not felt either engaged or empowered. For example, another Probation Officer described "mundane memorandums" as "alienating" and indicated that she deleted them almost without consideration.

Two Service Managers made comments regarding the organisational structure of the Probation Service. One was critical of the "artificial bureaucratic approach" to the formation of service delivery areas, which he described as administrative units defined on the basis of span of control rather than being aligned with communities of interest. Indeed, the decision to restructure the service delivery units on this basis is an example of the type of decision-making that diminished the credibility of senior managers. The second Service Manager advocated stronger regionally-based leadership and decision-making from staff with probation practice experience, with Head Office staff playing an advisory role. Both viewpoints reinforce earlier arguments by participants regarding the importance of practitioner autonomy and the need to foster conditions in which reflexive practice can develop.

The second substantive area of change suggested by participants in order to meet their leadership expectations concerned professionalising the role of Probation Officer. A sense that the professionalism of probation staff should be recognised, and that a failure to do so constitutes a significant business and practice risk to the Probation Service, was a constant thread evident in the responses of both groups. Twenty six percent of the Probation

Officers and half of the Service Managers identified a need to establish a professional basis for probation (see also Chapter Eight).

Two key themes were reiterated, the first of which concerned the question of minimum qualifications and registration. The majority of the Service Managers suggested that the Probation Officer role could be made more professional by the introduction of a minimum qualification and registration. For example, one Service Manager advocated staff having or attaining an appropriate tertiary qualification as a foundation for professional practice, and recommended the establishment of a specific qualification:

Something a little different from a social work degree...a mix of theoretical knowledge and organisational needs.... While [IOM] will teach Probation Officers a specific process, they require the theory first...background stuff (2-13:12).

Participants in both groups also suggested a greater level of support should be provided to encourage Probation Officers to engage in further formal professional education. The second theme concerned membership of professional bodies. For one Probation Officer, membership of a professional association was linked to the development of professional leadership:

I'm not affiliated with ANZASW [Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers] but I believe that if I was I'd be gleaming a lot of information from them in terms of integration of practice, practice knowledge and theoretical knowledge – that would certainly be a component of leadership (2-20:18).

However, another noted that while some Probation Officers are members of Aotearoa New Zealand Association of Social Workers, “*that association doesn't seem to have a wonderful handle on probation*” (2-15:15). She also observed that the demise of the New Zealand Association of Probation Officers had reduced the level of peer professional leadership

A third area of suggested change concerned opportunities for training and professional development; comment was made by 74 percent of the Probation Officers and 62.5 percent of the Service Managers. In one way or another the Probation Officers associated training

with skill development and service delivery. For example, one argued that staff needed “open access to a coherent training package, not so much an induction, on how to work with clients” (1-12:13). Another emphasised training that reinforces an underlying philosophy of practice:

As professionals we need training, not so much to learn new skills but to freshen you, to give you back something to make you understand why you're in the work and why you stay and why you want to stay. Training is not just the skill base; it's also about the refreshing about why I'm in the work (1-4:15).

Overall, one third of the Probation Officers expressed satisfaction with the quality and availability of training. For example:

In the main I am satisfied and I think that's due entirely to the solid base that I got when I first started (1-16:16).

I've been really satisfied with every bit of training I've been on – working with clients, IMS, CRIMPS, IOMS Level One, Alcohol and Drug Assessment for non-professionals; there's been just a whole range of different training (2-2:24).

Quite happy. If I choose to go and do something, I get to do it (2-9:11).

However, varying types of dissatisfaction were expressed by 37 percent of the Probation Officers. First, a need for greater awareness of the inherent stress associated with their role of was highlighted:

The work can get to you, undermine you. The organisation misses the aspect of this work which is our humanness. We're society's representatives at the front-line of offending. There's no training for recognising when things get difficult, when we stuff up, recognition that it's OK to stuff up - that's the bit that's missing for me (1-7:10).

Second, two Officers noted that the Probation Service exerted significant control over the training available to Probation Officers and that a level of determination is required in order to access other training to meet individual needs. One of these two said:

I know there are opportunities for training. But the training is all what the Department wants to know and anything I'm interested in I really have to fight for. Opportunities don't come, you have to really look for them, seek them out and put a case in to the Service Manager (2-7:42).

For the second, individual training opportunities had become more restricted:

I don't think there are any opportunities for personal development. Back in [the] old days there used to be a range of training courses offered. I'm now told what training to attend - no discussion or debate. There is a good level of training in terms of what the Department wants us to do. [It is] Doing well in terms of equipping us to implement the current programme. Good quality training. Except that it is very much dictated...no options for individual career paths regarding training (2-15:15).

On another tack, a Probation Officer who had been employed on a temporary contract was anxious about carrying out tasks without receiving adequate training:

I feel like I'm constantly having to justify why I'm going to training. I had to justify why I'm here today [to attend the interview]. Simply because the workload's very high, and I'm managing my workload effectively but I still have to explain why I'm going to training. I didn't get a lot of training and I am feeling the effects. It's caused a lot of stress for me (2-20:18).

A final concern related to staff not being able to attend scheduled training due to operational constraints. This situation was considered to be unacceptable and it was felt that the Probation Service should demonstrate greater commitment to training by ensuring that adequate resources were available to allow staff to attend training. For example, one participant, related her experience of being moved from a training programme in order to meet local work requirements, and the impact this had upon her:

From the time they put me back into the Training Unit until now it's been great. I've caught up on all the stuff I didn't know and I feel much more safe in my practice. I think my case was a huge example of them not considering me. You know, I was a pawn in what they needed to meet targets or to fill staffing vacancies but they actually - from my opinion - didn't give a shit about what I needed to learn to do my job effectively (2-21:19).

Sixty two percent of the Service Managers commented on their experience of training and

professional development. One of them advised that he had received support and resources from the Probation Service in order to complete personal study:

I've had a good experience. I think they've poured huge resources into management training. Leadership in Action comes to light obviously, a significant investment, to be commended. I've personally been given the dollars and the time to do further study, so I've now completed a Masters degree, which I greatly appreciate because the office has paid for it (1-6:5).

Another, who impressed as having a high level of self-determination, had completed a Diploma in Business Management and was enrolled in an MBA programme: *"I'm stimulated and I'm learning. I've met my own needs – I'm not sure that the organisation has a responsibility to meet those" (2-13:12).* Finally, a third Service Manager commented that:

I think our Area Manager has been quite good...has been supportive. Supported some mediation training. Most of it is driven by what the Department is promoting – IOM and IOMS. But there are opportunities to take courses for personal development if really keen – may be tempered by who your Area Manager is. Obviously resourcing has a bearing on it (1-14:12).

In contrast to the positive examples cited above, however, there were also more critical comments. For example, one Service Manager indicated a desire to develop his social work practice but had not been supported:

I'd like to be going on developing professionally but the environment that's existed in the last two years doesn't seem to have valued the type of development I would want. I'd prefer to be developing my social work practice and I'd like to do the Applied Diploma in Professional Supervision. I've done the Certificate but there doesn't seem to be that opportunity and most of my learning and effort seems to be going into IOM in order to function as a Service Manager at an adequate level (1-13:13).

Another, recently appointed, was dissatisfied with the induction into the Service Manager role, and suggested that the position's requirements should be reviewed:

My induction into the role was really poor; the Area Manager was under pressure. I had to organise my own training. I've had a lot of training

(Leadership in Action, Managing Misconduct, and IOM) but it feels quite disjointed. There needs to be a good job analysis, and then a good training needs analysis. I'm still unsure what the job really is, its way too big (2-14:18).

The need to strengthen professional supervision emerged as a fourth area where change was considered necessary in order to meet leadership expectations in the future. Eighty-five percent of the Probation Officers and all of the Service Managers identified professional supervision as a core process that supports effective and accountable practice. There was general agreement regarding the desirability of professional supervisors who possessed and demonstrated expertise and knowledge based upon relevant practice experience. One Probation Officer associated such a supervisor's knowledge and skills with referent power, commenting that this provided the basis for a non-coercive supervisor/practitioner relationship. The two groups also identified professional supervision as supporting the Probation Officers' practice development, which involved both knowledge/skill development and the provision of personal support when Probation Officers are experiencing pressure. These points are well illustrated in the two following quotes from Probation Officers:

Supervision...that is where I get confirmation of personal practice, whether I'm meeting standards of personal practice. I don't feel I get that from my Service Manager but I definitely get that from my supervisor in my professional supervision. So that is one of the most valuable things as a worker I can access in our department (2-6:20).

It frustrates me that I don't have any, but I've voiced my opinion many a time and it's not listened to and there's a bit of a compromise being bandied around as in group supervision or peer supervision ...I think it's quite dangerous [not receiving professional supervision] in terms of ...any ethical or boundary issues in terms of my working with clients...In terms of my own health. If I find that I'm being overloaded, and the Manager's too busy or not there to talk to, who the hell do I talk too? (2-20:18).

Twenty-six percent of the Probation Officers were critical of the Probation Service's record in providing professional supervision and identified limitations in the current peer supervision model (although one noted that newer appointees are more accepting of it). There were three main concerns. First, it was seen to be a "cheap option" as opposed to

establishing a dedicated position. Second, boundary issues were identified between the roles of professional supervisor and Service Manager. For example, the Probation Service professional supervision policy requires a supervisor to disclose to the Service Manager any concerns regarding the practice of a Probation Officer. This was thought to have a negative impact on confidentiality in a relationship with a professional supervisor. Third, the participants who were peer professional supervisors had experienced tension due to what they regarded as attempts by Service Managers to influence or direct the nature of their professional supervision with particular Probation Officers.

Service Managers also identified some limitations of the peer supervision model. For example, two of them noted a lack of clarity regarding the role of professional supervisors. The first had discussed the idea of an increased professional leadership role with professional supervisors and had encountered some reluctance on the grounds that they were peer supervisors and did not consider that they had a mandate to go beyond that role. Similarly, the second Service Manager declared:

Professional supervision lacks clarity regarding what it actually means... At the present time it is not transparent and managers don't know what's happening (2-18:14).

Participants in both groups noted that the previous organisational positions of Senior Probation Officer and Unit Manager had incorporated both the performance management and professional supervision roles, and it was suggested that if Service Managers possessed the requisite professional skills they could also provide professional supervision to Probation Officers. However, although the peer model of professional supervision was introduced in order to meet the needs of Probation Officers, an unintended consequence was the loss of Service Manager credibility as their role changed dramatically, away from professional supervision to administration and budget management. It was a shift acknowledged among the Service Managers. A touch of melancholy was evident in the voice of one of them when he made the following comment about professional supervision:

That's where the cutting edge stuff actually is in examining the practice of the staff which the Service Managers really haven't got the time to do because they're engaged in all the administration functions (1-6:7).

The establishment of new roles and revision of the current Service Manager position represented the final area for change that would support effective leadership. Twenty two percent of the Probation Officers and 37.5 percent of the Service Managers identified the need for a specialist role to provide professional leadership. Three position titles were suggested: Senior Probation Officer, Practice Manager and Practice Consultant. The key focus of such a position was summarised by a Service Manager as the *"compliance of high risk clients, training, case work and professional supervision"* (1-15:21). This summary reflected the views of other participants. A Senior Probation Officer/Practice Manager should have a social work background and preferably probation experience; however, it was noted that practitioners from other areas of social service delivery would also have transferable skills. A Probation Officer made the point that the establishment of such a role would represent an acknowledgement of the professional leadership contribution of practitioners, and would also provide a parallel career structure for Probation Officers. Obviously, as one Service Manager emphasised, it would be important to have a commitment from senior managers to resource and support any new role through regional and Head Office frameworks.

Seventy five percent of the Service Managers and 44 percent of the Probation Officers commented on the role of the Service Manager, and there was a consensus that the role should be reviewed. Two Probation Officers, for example, suggested that Service Managers should have a greater degree of operational autonomy, including more delegated power and authority. One of them claimed that:

Some times it seems to be the Service Managers who carry all the responsibility but someone further up has all the authority. Service Managers are very limited in what decisions they can make to manage but then they get all the flak if something goes wrong (2-15:17).

This theme was taken up by a Service Manager who drew a relationship between autonomy and his level of commitment to Probation Service policy. If he was supported by his managers and encouraged to be innovative then he would: *"feel a lot more comfortable in [his] job and more inclined to be more diligent around some of those things which [were]*

being pushed upon [him]" (1-15:17).

The Service Managers consistently identified the need to differentiate administrative responsibilities from practice management/professional supervision, and felt that they should spend more time on professional issues (e.g. implementing best practice, guiding Probation Officers). As one participant commented:

Leave people like me who've got the passion and who think of themselves as professional social workers to be more involved with risk management, professional standards, with interacting with stake-holders (1-6:9).

Probation Officers agreed with this view, and the importance of the practitioner/ supervisor relationship was emphasised by one Officer who observed that *"leaders need to have the confidence of the staff"* (1-1:25). Another evidenced similar concerns, commenting that a reduction in administrative tasks would:

...probably free their minds up to do the best practice training. I don't think they ever truly get the chance to implement it. It's just that unreal expectation that the Department has in general of all of us, including the Service Manager (1-4:18).

A sense of the pressure experienced by Service Managers is evident in the following comment:

I take professional supervision externally from someone who is very knowledgeable and helpful. But when I come back to the coalface I find the time is never there to actually do those things. What I'm doing is crisis management daily. I never get to the stuff that makes good leadership and management, which is planning and actually thinking about what we're doing, really analysing issues and making a good response to staff (1-13:16).

One response to the workload problem was to call for additional Service Managers. However, an alternative proposal involved extending the role of the Finance Manager to include greater responsibility for non-professional operational matters. This would enable Service Managers to focus upon practice and supporting Probation Officers.

Summary

The participants placed considerable emphasis upon actions that were thought to be associated with the development of higher levels of staff confidence in leaders. Suggestions for changes to meet the participants' expectations of leadership have been presented under five themes.

First, both groups identified the need for improved communication between macro and micro levels within the Probation Service as an essential foundation for the development of stronger, more viable leadership. This need for communication, based on genuine recognition and respect for the ideas and contribution of field staff, echoes Wright (1991) who argued that follower commitment will be enhanced if followers feel involved in setting organisational goals. There was a sense that the participants' reactions to the unilateral power exerted by senior managers were a mixture of compliance and resistance. Their comments also reflected the perceived change in the underlying meta narrative discussed in Chapter Seven; that is, a shift from a predominantly social work perspective to one grounded in psychological theory. The disjunction between managerial constructions (based on the imperatives of output, cost and result) and professional constructions (reflecting interest in clients and process) of practice was also evident in the concerns expressed.

A second change identified was the need to establish a professional basis for practice; in particular, the question of qualifications, registration and membership of a professional association. Notwithstanding the fact that only 26 percent of the Probation Officers commented on this issue, the points raised reinforced those made earlier. Indeed, the participants' alignment with the distinguishing characteristics of professions emerged as a consistent characteristic of their construction of probation practice.

The importance of ongoing training and professional development was the third area where the need for change was identified. In particular, disquiet was evident at the degree of managerial control over the content of training (and the direction of practice). Johnson and

Scholes (1997) suggested that organisational direction may ultimately reflect the power structure of an organisation, and in the case of the Probation Service it is the senior managers who exercise power. What is questioned by the participant's is the validity of many decisions. The fact that this level of tension exists suggests that senior managers have failed to create sufficient alignment between organisational direction and the views held by subordinate professional staff. It is of interest that in addition to skills-based training the importance of a philosophy of practice and values was also highlighted, which is indicative of concern regarding a need to articulate the professional foundation for practice.

The fourth area in need of change concerned professional supervision as an important process integral to supporting effective service delivery. The participants demonstrated an understanding of professional supervision consistent with the views of Clare (2001) and O'Donoghue (1999). There was evidence of insight into the importance of supervision in affirming practice, supporting and enhancing the critical-reflective process and ensuring practitioner accountability. Limitations of the peer model, paralleling those noted by O'Donoghue (1999), were identified. A sense of frustration was apparent in the views of some Service Managers that, as a consequence of competing management requirements, they have been 'deskilled' and are unable to engage more fully in the provision of professional supervision. This role limitation reflects the shift in emphasis from the professional to administrative dimensions identified by O'Donoghue (1999). Finally, it is interesting that there was no engagement of the issue of cultural supervision, particularly in light of the cultural composition of the client population.

Suggestions for change in professional supervision were linked to role changes, the final area of concern regarding leadership. The need for stronger practice leadership was a dominant theme for both Probation Officers and Service Managers and the points made reiterated concerns regarding professional leadership (Chapter Ten). Two substantive suggestions were made regarding changes in roles that would support professional practice. First, the establishment of a new role (such as a Practice Consultant) that would have a strong practice focus. The influence of a social work perspective was clearly evident in the

views of the Probation Officers, and there was a sense that such a position would provide tangible recognition of the importance of professional leadership. The second suggestion was for the Service Manager role to be reviewed to clarify the administrative and professional requirements of the role. The lack of operational autonomy and confusion regarding professional leadership expectations emerged as a source of role strain for Service Managers. Overall, the concern with respect to role changes lends support to the assumption proposed in Chapter Four that the redefinition of professional roles reflects a transfer of power and control from probation professionals (whose capacity to exercise practice autonomy has been curtailed) to managers. The Service Managers provided ample evidence of both passion and commitment to the ideal of providing effective leadership (to Probation Officers), and underlying this is the pervasive sense that they wished to be accorded respect as professionals.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused upon an examination of the participants' views regarding the relationship between leadership and Probation Officer practice. In the first section, the participants' understanding of three sub-themes was considered: the relationship between professional autonomy and accountability; the importance of professional values; and the practice credibility of the leader. The participant's views regarding how leadership influences Probation Officer practice were examined in the second section, namely: the importance of the leader/Probation Officer relationship; the leader's ability to provide direction to practice; the importance of the development of team identity; and, the promotion of professional self-responsibility. In the final section attention was directed to the participants' expectations regarding future leadership and their suggestions for changes to enhance leadership.

In general, the participants' views reflect support for the key points made in Chapters One and Five. First, it was suggested that leadership influences staff performance, and the importance of the relationship between leader and follower was noted. The participants

consistently identified the importance of the leader recognising the commitment of and attending to the Probation Officer's personal needs. The importance of leadership commitment to professional practice, a recurrent theme in this and earlier chapters, was identified and highlighted via potentially negative consequences of ineffective leadership (for example, inconsistent implementation of practice in the field). In Chapter Five the outcome of leader/follower interaction was identified as the pursuit of organisational goals and objectives. There was agreement amongst both groups of participants that there is currently a lack of clear, strategic direction regarding professional leadership. While senior managers were thought to have a responsibility to provide professional leadership, it was observed that this role had been assumed by the Psychological Service (in reference to IOM) and by external consultants. This situation was perceived to reflect negatively upon the capacity of the Probation Service to contribute to its own professional direction.

A second point regarding leadership concerned the importance of the leader supporting and facilitating professional practice; an issue engaged throughout this chapter. Effective leaders were thought to support professional practice by: providing clear direction for practice; reinforcing the Probation Officers' self-conception as professionals; and recognising the competence of staff engaged in front-line service delivery. That said, the findings presented in this chapter indicate:

- that the influence of managerialism has presented a challenge to the level of professional autonomy previously exercised by practitioners. However, a lack of professionalism on the part of practitioners (for example, a failure to implement best practice models) legitimates the introduction of prescriptive measures that restrict their level of autonomy. The participants' views support the argument that a practitioner's right to operational independence should be matched by an obligation to demonstrate performance accountability.
- support for the contention that leadership should contribute to the reflexive development of practice (see Chapter Ten). Furthermore, the need for ongoing training and development (a characteristic of being professional that the participants identified) in order for Probation Officers to attain, and maintain,
- level of professional competence was also evident in the suggestion made by

Service Managers regarding the establishment of a minimum qualification and registration process.

- the importance of values as a vital component of the participants' construction of practice. The participants in both groups demonstrated alignment and concern with core social work values that provide a foundation for practice. This alignment is important, as in Chapter Five it was argued that a follower's willingness to accept leadership direction is related to the degree of follower motivation and value congruence.

A third point, proposed in Chapter One, is that professional leadership is important in managing professional workers. The participants identified a close association between professional leadership and the professional development of staff. Among the Probation Officers, those who expressed satisfaction with professional leadership advised that they were receiving professional supervision, felt valued in their role and were supported by their peers. Professional supervision (valued because it addresses both practice issues and the need for personal support) was clearly identified as the primary process through which professional leadership is currently provided.

A final point regarding leadership was that Service Managers should play a crucial role in providing professional supervision and leadership to Probation Officers. Service Managers should enhance the professional culture and create the conditions that support effective professional practice. Unfortunately the ability of Service Managers to do so has been severely limited by a shift in responsibilities from practice leadership to administrative duties. Recognising this issue, it is not surprising that participants in both groups feel that the Service Manager role should be reviewed, that administrative duties should be reduced and/or a more practice dedicated role created. The participants have been consistent (in both this chapter and Chapter Ten) in their identification of the relevant traits and characteristics associated with the ability to provide effective professional leadership. In particular, leadership credibility and follower confidence have been associated with professional capability.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Conclusion

The primary aim of the thesis has been to consider probation practice and the contribution of leadership to effective service delivery in the Probation Service. Six research objectives were identified. First, to explore Probation Officers' and Service Managers' understandings of the political and managerial changes affecting the New Zealand Probation Service. Second, to ascertain Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of probation values, knowledge, skills and practice. Third, to understand Probation Officers' and Service Managers' views of the assessment of service delivery. Fourth, to identify how the Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership and effective service delivery within the Probation Service. Fifth, to examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers in the Probation Service. Sixth, to determine the structures and processes that are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery.

In accord with the above aim and research objectives, this chapter has three goals. First to present the key findings derived from the research investigation with regard to the participants perceptions of: (a) probation practice (including the influence of the practice context, the construction of practice, the importance of values, and the assessment of practice); and (b) leadership and effective practice (including the relationship between leaders and followers, and between leadership and effective practice). The second goal is to discuss the implications of the findings with respect to the perception and belief of participants in terms of: their contribution to knowledge; implications for future leadership in the Probation Service; and the strengths and weaknesses of the study. Finally, suggestions are made for future research regarding the Probation Service.

Findings Regarding Probation Practice

Influence of Practice Context

The potential influence of the practice context was outlined in Chapter Three. It was argued that changes in the broader probation practice environment were likely to have influenced how practice is constructed and implemented with consequences for service delivery. In support of this argument, evidence was presented in Chapter Seven of the participants' awareness of four key changes that have occurred in organisational structures and practices. First, their awareness of a difference between the underlying belief systems of senior managers and practitioners. Second, their awareness of change in the foundations of practice construction. Third, their perception that senior managers were able to exert considerable power and control. And finally, the awareness of the majority of the participants that their level of practice autonomy had been challenged and reduced with the introduction of the prescriptive IOM model.

In Chapters One and Three it was also argued that changes in the role of the state have affected demand driven social service provision in New Zealand agencies such as the Probation Service. The need for the Probation Service to be responsive to changes in the practice environment, to actively engage political and societal support and to create a viable set of values was noted in Chapter Four as being vital to the maintenance of organisational credibility. With regard to these matters, the findings presented have demonstrated the participants' awareness of public sector reform and how this has created an environment where economic considerations (characterised by an increased emphasis upon resource constraints) have continued to support the dominance of New Public Management within state funded agencies. However, in general, the participants (both Probation Officers and Service Managers) revealed little awareness of the politicisation of probation practice. For example, in Chapter Nine, the relationship between assessment (such as performance auditing that focuses upon economy and efficiency) and the need for the Probation Service to secure ongoing funding and support was not identified by most participants.

Furthermore, they displayed little awareness of political exigencies facing senior managers and few of them evidenced a strategic perspective (Chapter Nine). Based on these and other findings it was concluded that there was a lack of cohesive professional and political consciousness among the participants (Chapter Eight).

The Construction of Practice

The construction of probation practice is relevant to the relationship between leadership and effective practice; leadership involves providing direction to staff and a successful leader will actively engage staff to work towards the achievement of organisational goals.

The participants' construction of practice was based on their experiences within the Probation Service, and they demonstrated an awareness of change in the meta-narrative underpinning the construction of practice. Although some positive consequences were identified, the majority of their comments were expressions of concern with respect to the nature and effect of this change (Chapter Eight). They supported a construction of practice which: (a) recognises that an eclectic amalgam of knowledge provides a basis for the development of practice, consistent with the informed eclecticism of Carew (1979) and Payne (1991); and (b) that meets the standards of practice validity proposed by Sheppard (1998) – i.e. practitioners must recognise the utility of any model as a guide to their practice, and any such model must be consistent with the nature and purpose of practice (Chapter Eight).

In Chapter Two it was noted that the work of the Probation Service has historically been aligned with social work, and it was argued that the values and ethics that inform current practice are inextricably linked to ideological and practice foundations that draw heavily upon the social work tradition. In particular, the influence of a client-centred casework model was identified, one characterised by the importance of the relationship between the Probation Officer and a client and the belief that intervention should be adaptive to the needs of the unique individual. This construction of social work was also complemented by insights regarding the relevance of the client's social environment (for example, factors

such as income, employment and housing). Disquiet was expressed by the participants at a perceived lessening of emphasis on social work training by the Probation Service (Chapter Eight). There was support for a broader perspective and basis for practice, in particular one that acknowledges the relevance of social context in explaining client deviance and understanding practice validity (i.e. probation is not just about a clinical treatment model). Social work was identified as offering applied training and was seen to be especially relevant in relation to the development of the client/practitioner relationship that provided the nexus for effective practice (Chapter Eight).

The participants' responses indicated alignment with the core ethical mandates of social work and demonstrated a strong client focus (based upon recognition of the individual's potential to achieve positive change) that reflected a commitment to empowerment of the client to achieve self-determination (Chapter Eight). The findings provide clear evidence that the participants' held client-centred values and these influenced their interpretation and construction of practice. There was evidence of the participants' engagement of the empowerment prospectus advanced by Rees (1991) and they expressed concern that: the unique worth of each client be recognised; the client not be likened to a commodity to be manipulated in order to achieve organisational objectives (such as programme volume targets); and that respect for the client be demonstrated by separating the person from their behaviour. As noted in Chapter Nine, such concerns are consistent with the arguments advanced by Henry (1995) and Lee (1996) regarding the importance of the client's development of a sense of self and feelings of self-efficacy. The participants also expressed concern regarding the diminution of social work and there was a feeling that any previous sense of professional identity (in particular an alignment with social work) has been challenged by the introduction of more prescribed practice models such as IOM. It was concluded that these observations support the contention (Chapter Seven) that Probation Officers experience tension in practising within a framework that is not fully congruent with a social work model.

IOM, the predominant practice model identified by the participants, is firmly based upon

the psychology of criminal conduct. Theoretical and practice validity were a key strength of IOM that provided a clear rationale for practice; an advantage that extended to providing direction for policy development and guidance to the management of an organisation faced with the task of achieving optimal benefit from restricted resources. Significantly, some participants thought the psychological foundation of IOM complemented a social work perspective. A further strength of the new 'psychological' approach was the availability of 'in house' training for staff, without the need for any formal tertiary qualification. However, a degree of caution is warranted because this view seemed to be predicated upon the assumption that staff already have a foundation practice framework within which they can integrate any new practice approach.

A number of concerns regarding IOM were identified (Chapter Eight). First, the Probation Officers identified a lack of consultation and a limited opportunity to debate the proposed changes associated with IOM as significant factors that affected their degree of commitment to the model. Second, caution was expressed regarding over-reliance on actuarial risk prediction as a mechanism for determining client access to interventions. Third, the participants acknowledged that IOM placed greater attention on the individual client (this was consistent with their conception that social work encompasses a client-centred dimension). However, it was the narrow focus on the client's responsibility for his or her deviance that was questioned. The over-emphasis on the pathology of the individual, for both explanation and resolution of offending behaviour, was thought to be reductionist and to 'burden' the client with his/her criminality to the exclusion of other explanations of deviance (for example, cultural and structural explanations). Finally, the prescriptive nature of IOM was seen to challenge the professional autonomy and identity of practitioners (particularly those with social work training). Longer serving Probation Officers and Service Managers had previously experienced a higher degree of practice autonomy and conveyed a sense that their professional identity had been undermined by the imposition of IOM. Overall, therefore, the adoption of IOM was thought to be an insufficient base for practice and one likely to exclude alternative (and possibly valid) narratives regarding practice (Chapter Seven).

The construction of practice that emerges from the responses of both groups again emphasises the importance of the nature and quality of interaction between the client and Probation Officer and reflects a relatively sophisticated construction of practice based upon their direct experience of the practice environment. Probation practice was conceived of as a process involving ongoing development, and Probation Officers should be able to contribute to the development of new ways of working with a client. The uniformity involved in following a prescriptive model could reduce emphasis on the importance of human interaction qualities - that is, matching clients and Probation Officers, and making use of the Probation Officer's personal attributes, style and demeanour.

There was strong support for the mandated nature of the client/practitioner relationship with no evidence of concern among the participants that mandatory intervention detracted from the development of an effective client/practitioner relationship. The acceptance of the legitimacy of mandated practice, and the ability of Probation Officers to integrate this perspective with their strongly-held beliefs regarding client empowerment, emerges as a core characteristic of probation values that is congruent with the increased politicisation of practice and one which is likely to have earned a degree of credibility with stakeholders.

In Chapter Four the interpretivist/constructivist paradigm was noted as informing the type of knowledge that is often labelled as 'practice wisdom'. This was thought to provide the basis for an alternative epistemology of practice that may account for the intuitive processes that practitioners are able to bring to a practice context often characterised by "...complexity, instability, uniqueness and value conflict" (Schon 1995:48-49). From the account of the participants, there was support for this construction of practice (Chapter Eight). A relationship was drawn between 'practice wisdom' and clinical decision-making, and it was suggested that 'practice wisdom' represents a vital foundation upon which new approaches are mediated and enhanced in order to achieve practice validity. This view is congruent with the point made by Goldstein (1998) that at critical decision points the practitioner will draw upon experience-based reflective wisdom.

Overall, practice autonomy emerged as a cornerstone of the participants' understanding of effective practice. The participants' views support the argument that a professional's practice autonomy is based upon the attainment and application of professional knowledge. It was considered important that practitioners understand why a particular approach is considered valid, and be able to determine the limitations of any model and to draw upon alternatives. The dynamic character of practice requires practitioners to continually adjust and adapt practice in response to contextual influences, including the characteristics of the client. This view supports that of Roberts (1995), who proposed that the reflective model of practice development provides a foundation for the resolution of problems that are likely to be encountered when using any particular approach in the field.

In Chapter Eight it was noted that the participants made very few comments regarding the relevance of cultural knowledge to inform practice. Indeed only one Probation Officer offered a more radical critique of probation policy regarding culturally appropriate practice, and this was consistent with that offered by Brown (1998) regarding the dangers inherent in imposing a reductionist framework that fails to integrate social, structural and cultural explanations of offending behaviour. This Probation Officer, who had endeavoured to integrate a Maori perspective within her practice, had abandoned her efforts because she had not felt able to practice in accordance with a tikanga base. Her experience illustrates the dominance of the IOM paradigm and the potentially disempowering impact that this can have upon the individual practitioner.

The relative absence of discussion regarding cultural knowledge and practice is of concern given that nearly half of the clients of the Probation Service are of Maori descent. Although it is beyond the scope of this thesis to seek to explain this absence, the following observations can be made. First, it has already been suggested (notwithstanding efforts to incorporate MaCRNs in the IOM model) that the absence of cultural explanations of criminal behaviour may be because they are not easily accessed through the dominant Western scientific epistemology. Second, that the predominant non-Maori ethnic composition of the participants reflects that of the wider Probation Service, and that the development of a truly indigenous construction of practice, and the engagement of cultural

issues and explanations, is therefore unlikely to advance in the absence of staff who are conversant with other cultural epistemologies. This critique is significant, particularly when it is remembered that in the 1980s programmes were introduced that sought to assist Maori clients to “discover and strengthen ties with family and tribal social groupings to improve their sense of identity and self-worth” (House of Representatives 1981:19). A final observation (made in Chapter Four) bears reinforcement; little attention has been paid to cultural issues that might be specific to other cultural groups, in particular Pacific peoples. This point was not taken up and discussed by the participants.

Values

Values emerged as a vital element of the participants' construction of practice, and values were held to exert a significant influence upon practice. It is significant, therefore, that the participants' responses indicate the decline of anti-custodialism (which had previously been a pervasive philosophy of practice) as a cornerstone of probation. A shift away from the traditional conception of probation (as an alternative to imprisonment) suggests that a concern with risk and protection of the community (previously a less explicit goal) has supplanted the previous emphasis upon anti-custodialism. This shift is consistent with earlier commentary regarding the impact of the politicisation of practice; in particular, expectations of enhanced public safety, increased offender accountability and the rehabilitation of offenders.

Consistent with the views of Cohn (1998), Fairholm (1998), Mintzberg (1998) and Pawar and Eastman (1997), the creation of values was perceived as a key component of leadership; values-based leadership unites leader and follower through the articulation of a set of common values. All participants identified the desirability of developing a shared understanding of the core goals of the Probation Service, holding that the decisions regarding priorities amongst competing goals must be supported by a clear rationale. Diminished trust between Probation Officers and senior managers and a tendency for staff to adopt and act from the standpoint of their individual perspectives were identified as potentially negative consequences of a lack of value consensus (Chapter Eight). The

participants demonstrated their alignment with and concern for core social work values that provide a foundation for practice.

In Chapter Five it was argued that a follower's willingness to accept leadership direction is related to the degree of follower motivation and value congruence. From the accounts of the participants (Chapter Eight), there emerges a sense of a lack of cohesion in the values held and articulated by senior managers in the Probation Service. The participants' responses validate the relevance of values as a significant influence upon practice, and value incongruence between senior management and front-line staff was identified as a potential obstacle to the development of staff commitment to the organisation's declared path for operation and development.

The participants' awareness of differences between the underlying belief systems, a disjunction between professional and management perspectives (Chapter Eleven), was evident in their consensus regarding a shift in the focus of senior managers from a concern with practice to a concern with control. It was also noted that this has been reflected in an emphasis upon policies and procedures. The participants' characterisation of the values held by senior managers was consistent with that of the managerial culture described by Nellis (1995a) and James (1995), one dominated by the pursuit of systematic rationality, efficiency and control. However, as discussed in Chapter Three, the direction adopted by management can also be viewed as necessary in order for the Probation Service to remain viable in an increasingly politicised practice environment.

The Definition and Assessment of Effectiveness

In Chapter Four it was suggested that the assessment of performance was crucial to the Probation Service's ability to secure ongoing funding, political support and to continue the development of practice. Stakeholder influence was identified as a factor that can determine what is assessed, and a relationship was also identified between the criteria used in assessment and adjustments made to practice in order to meet the standards of assessment. It was noted (with concern) that a narrow definition of effectiveness may

contribute to the imposition and acceptance of a minimalist conception of practice. Accordingly it was concluded that a comprehensive perspective should be used in the assessment of probation practice and that this should include both quantitative and qualitative indicators to assess goals at the community, agency and individual client levels.

The participants offered their critique of practice assessment, and suggested that the issue of causal inference is complicated and that the influence of intervening variables compromises the validity of recidivism alone as a measure of effective practice. The intervening variables ranged from internal factors affecting the organisation's capacity to provide service (for example, staffing levels, workloads and training), to external factors such as client maturity, significant life-cycle events, the client's level of family support and employment (Chapter Nine). There was strong support for a more inclusive view of success and effectiveness, one that extends beyond the simple measurement of offending behaviour, placing value on the contribution of the client within multiple spheres (e.g. as a partner, parent or employee). These views reflect concern with regard to the dominance of the psychological paradigm (with an emphasis upon criminogenic assessment) that has led to the diminution of other indicators of practice effectiveness. A consequence of over-reliance on the measurement of re-offending as the primary indicator of effectiveness is that the Probation Service may be under-reporting success.

Findings Regarding Leadership and Practice

The type of leadership most likely to be effective in influencing the performance of Probation Officers to achieve effective service delivery is a central concern of this thesis. The participants' knowledge of leadership, their recent experience of leadership, and their views regarding the relationship between leadership and practice were considered in Chapters Ten and Eleven. The insights provided by the participants provide direction regarding the types of change in leadership that are likely to exert a positive influence on Probation Officer practice.

In Chapter One two key assertions were made regarding leadership provided to professionals. First, leadership should support and facilitate professional practice that will contribute to more effective service delivery. Second, professional leadership that contributes to the reflexive development of practice is important when managing professional workers. There was a consensus among participants in both groups (Probation Officers and Service Managers) that there was a lack of clear, strategic direction regarding professional leadership.

How does leadership influence practice? The participants' experiences and views regarding the relationship between leadership and performance were consistent with those of Grasso (1993) who asserted that human service organisational performance could best be improved by focusing on staff development and empowerment. The following substantive points emerged from the findings. In order to create willing followers, leaders must first be seen to be credible. Leadership credibility is likely to be enhanced when leaders promote an organisational vision and goals that are considered to be both realistic and achievable by front-line practitioners. Increased credibility, in turn, is likely to lead to greater trust between Probation Officers and managers, and to increase the level of Probation Officer adherence to required policies and practices (Chapter Nine). Second, the performance of the Service Manager emerged as a factor that can directly influence the Probation Officers' commitment to their work and their ability to practice. In particular, a positive association was drawn between the Service Manager's professional experience, their possession of personal power and their ability to influence Probation Officer practice (Chapter Ten). The participants identified a linkage between the leader's practice experience and competence and the level of confidence that Probation Officers are likely to have in the leader; as Parry (1999) maintained, an effective leader must be able to generate willingness within the follower to pursue any course of action. Third, the importance of the relationship between leader and follower was highlighted.

By way of elaboration on the latter point, the participants held that effective leadership rests upon the relationship established between the leader and a group or team. This relationship provides the foundation upon which the leader is able to influence follower behaviour and

the achievement of organisational goals. Bass (1990) and Hersey and Blanchard (1996) have stressed the importance of relationship behaviours (such as communicating, building trust, demonstrating respect and providing support) as the foundation of an effective relationship between leader and follower. Notwithstanding concerns expressed by some, the participants' positive experiences of leadership were consistent with the above viewpoints, reflecting an emphasis upon reciprocity, trust and a focus upon the quality of the relationship between follower and leader. A connection was also posited by the participants between positive leadership, the development of a 'team' culture and Probation Officer work performance. They maintained that the leader should assume primary responsibility for initiating and maintaining this relationship, and that the leader should seek to achieve group cohesion.

The linkage between leadership and effective service delivery was conceived of as being dependent upon the ability of the leader to enhance the practice of Probation Officers. The accounts of the Probation Officers provided a consistent message that they sought leadership with a focus upon practice, that contributes to the reflexive development of practice, and that provides professional support. The importance of leadership commitment to professional practice was a recurrent theme. Effective leaders were thought to support professional practice by: providing clear direction for practice; reinforcing the Probation Officers' self-conception as professionals; and by recognising the competence of staff engaged in front-line service delivery (Chapter Eleven). This type of leadership can influence and strengthen practice by making practitioners feel capable and committed.

Mintzberg (1998) and Shapero (1985) argue that the professional culture of an organisation should be enhanced by leadership from those in management positions, and that leaders have a responsibility to create the conditions that support effective professional practice. The participants' views regarding professional supervision were traversed in Chapter Eleven. They identified professional supervision as the primary process through which professional leadership was provided, and evidenced strong support for the arguments advanced by Clare (2001) and O'Donoghue (1997). The participants demonstrated insight into the importance of supervision in affirming practice, supporting and enhancing the

critical-reflective process and ensuring practitioner accountability.

In Chapter Seven it was apparent that many participants experienced tension because they were unable to practice in accord with their professional beliefs and standards. Both groups identified a close association between their self-conception as professionals and their standard of work performance, stressing the importance of congruence between values, beliefs and action. The Probation Officers identified the importance of leader and follower having a shared philosophy of practice. The leader's ability to articulate and demonstrate a concern for values, ethics, standards and long-term goals was associated with improved follower motivation and performance.

The participants' responses regarding their experiences of leadership (in particular from senior managers) pointed to tensions that reflected a disjunction between the professional culture (evident in the points raised above) and the influence of New Public Management. A key feature of the participants' accounts was their predominantly negative perception that senior managers in the Probation Service represented the philosophy and concepts New Public Management. There were four aspects to this perception. First, senior managers emerged as a coercive force seeking to exercise control over practice (for example, in relation to the implementation of IOM). It was thought that senior managers had ignored feedback from practitioners, displayed a negative attitude towards staff who questioned policy decisions, and that non-professional managers had been able to define the role of the Probation Officer (Chapter Seven). Second, senior managers failed at times to demonstrate sufficient understanding and insight regarding the implications of their decision-making (again the prescriptive implementation of IOM was cited). This lack of understanding was associated with the senior managers' limited knowledge and first-hand experience of probation practice. There was also a strong sense that the manner in which this change had been implemented displayed a disregard for (and possibly a lack of understanding of) alternative constructions of practice (Chapter Eight). Third, the senior managers' lack of practice credibility was linked to a lessening of follower confidence (Chapter Eight). In particular, the participants were sensitive to decisions regarding the development of practice (with an emphasis upon tasks and results) that were thought to diminish the

professional standing of practitioners who had been devalued by the reliance of senior managers upon external advice. Finally, there was a sense that in focusing upon administrative elements of practice, senior managers had failed to take responsibility for professional leadership (in particular, leading practice development).

The theme of disempowerment was recurrent in the participants' responses. As noted earlier, for many participants tension existed as a consequence of being unable to practice in accord with their professional beliefs and standards and there was a sense that their professional identity had been undermined (for example, through the change in entry-level educational requirements). This relative powerlessness on the part of front-line staff parallels the experience of Probation Officers in the early 1980s (Chapter Two); twenty years later, it was apparent that they had not developed a more cohesive professional and political consciousness (Chapter Eight).

The ability of a leader to mediate between professional constructions of practice and business requirements requires that the leader: (a) possesses an awareness of the professional and political issues; and (b) actively develop this consciousness in followers (for example, by supporting a professional association). While the development of such awareness could be perceived as a potential threat to management authority, a more positive view is that this also offers the opportunity for management to access followers' contributions regarding practice development in a positive way.

Implications of Findings

The implications of the findings presented in this thesis and summarised above are discussed below in terms of: their contribution to knowledge relating to leadership in probation and their significance for future leadership in the Probation Service.

Contribution to Knowledge

This thesis offers an original contribution to knowledge regarding leadership in four ways. First, the scope and focus of the study and the use of qualitative methodology have resulted in findings that offer a deeper insight into the participants' knowledge and experience of leadership in comparison with previous research that relied heavily upon the use of a survey instrument, and that excluded themes such as values and the construction of practice (e.g. Mactavish 1993; Moran 2001). In particular, consideration of the influence of the practice environment and the construction of practice has resulted in (a) an understanding of the participants' knowledge and experience within the context of their professional practice; and (b) an appreciation of the influence of their values and practice orientation upon their views of leadership.

Second, in addition to confirming the findings of previous research regarding the importance of values in relation to leadership, this study has also highlighted the need to reconcile differences between management and professional values and beliefs in the Probation Service. The high level of agreement amongst participants regarding a professional value base consistent with that of social work suggests that the differences cannot be easily explained as a lack of alignment with organisational values on the part of practitioners. A fundamental difference exists that must be addressed constructively if the divisions and tensions apparent in the accounts of the participants are to be resolved and if practitioners and managers are to develop the degree of agreement necessary to ensure commitment to a shared vision and goals.

The third point relates to cultural issues. Although the majority of the participants identified knowledge of Maori culture to be important, there was a lack of clarity regarding the composition of relevant cultural knowledge or how such knowledge should be incorporated into practice. Only one participant addressed the issue of culturally relevant practice in any depth. It was surprising that cultural matters did not feature in more responses, and an explanation of this 'silence' is vital if practice in the Probation Service is to be more responsive and effective for Maori.

Finally, the issue of leadership credibility - based upon the possession of practice knowledge and skills - has emerged as an issue not previously highlighted in relation to leadership in probation. While traits such as responsibility and integrity have been associated with effective leadership by many researchers (see Chapter Five), the possession of practice credibility emerged as an important leadership characteristic from the viewpoint of Probation Officers, particularly for Service Managers as front-line leaders. Practice credibility (encompassing expertise, level of practice competence and field experience) was associated with the degree of follower confidence in and respect for the leader. This insight offers senior managers the opportunity to take action to meet the expectations of Probation Officers in the knowledge that this will enhance the leader/follower relationship and, ultimately, practitioner work performance.

Implications of Findings for Future Leadership in the Probation Service

It has been argued that the practice context within which the Probation Service functions has become increasingly politicised since the early 1990s and this has found expression in the dominance of New Public Management which is characterised by a concern with risk management, cost-efficiency and reduced recidivism. This has resulted in the reconstruction of probation practice with a shift from a model based upon practitioner professionalism to one based on managerialism. There is a need to reconcile differences between these two perspectives in order for a more grounded and practice relevant probation discourse to develop. How this can be achieved? While the issue can be viewed as being essentially a political one, a series of leadership challenges are nevertheless identified that, if engaged, provide the means to create a new environment of dialogue. These challenges are framed within the construction of leadership operating inside the Probation Service and, as such, may be seen to represent an attempt to resolve issues via apolitical, administrative means. Obviously, these challenges may be influenced by political factors both within and outside the Probation Service. This prospect is acknowledged, however the challenges identified are considered to be pragmatically and politically viable and to offer the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogue within the current culture and structure of the Probation Service.

Five Leadership Challenges

First, there is a challenge to establish the professional foundations of probation practice. The participants suggested that there is a lack of clear, strategic direction regarding professional leadership. There was a sense that senior managers had failed to take responsibility for this within the Probation Service and that they should be fostering the development of probation as a profession and provide the structures and processes that support professional leadership (such as professional supervision). In particular, it is contingent upon senior managers to address the questions of qualifications, registration and membership of a professional association. There was also clear evidence that professional staff felt excluded from decision-making regarding the content of services. This being the case, an opportunity exists to establish a professional office similar to that of the Chief Social Worker in the Children and Young Persons Service (CYFS). In CYFS, the Chief Social Worker has responsibility for the development of practice initiatives, while operational management focuses attention on the provision of the infrastructure necessary to facilitate practice.

The second challenge is to develop a clearer, integrated statement of purpose, values and beliefs that identifies probation as a distinct area of professional practice. Significantly, the participants associated the leader's ability to articulate and demonstrate a concern with values, ethics, standards and long-term goals with improved follower motivation and performance. The level of perceived incompatibility evident between the values held by many of the participants and those of management presents a significant challenge to effective leadership within the Probation Service. There was a perception of a lack of cohesion in the values held and expressed by managers, and the participants themselves did not subscribe to a clearly articulated set of practice values and beliefs. Values congruence and a shared philosophy of practice are important in building alignment between the practice orientation of staff and the organisational direction set by management. This issue may have implications for the sense of professional identity that exists among front-line practitioners and how they act upon their self-perception. There is an opportunity for managers to gain a higher level of practitioner commitment by adopting an approach that

values and places emphasis upon the worker-client relationship as being central to effective practice and organisational functioning.

A third challenge surrounds the development of best practice. The argument was advanced (Chapter Four) that the construction of practice that has developed within the Probation Service forms part of the broader international engagement of both the academic/professional and practical levels of discourse. Practice development in New Zealand should be flexible and incorporate international influences while remaining responsive to features and events that reflect the dynamic character of the local environment. To achieve this desirable situation at least three things need to be done. First, there is the need to challenge and enhance the new meta-narrative. The positive contributions of business management and psychology should be retained; however, there is a need to include both social work and indigenous cultural perspectives. Second, professional staff should be empowered to contribute (drawing upon their reflexive experience) to the content of services and service development. This is particularly important in light of the participants' perceptions that they have been excluded and devalued. The advent of the prevalent 'correctional' ideology has resulted in a reduced focus on the distinctive character of probation practice in comparison with that of the Public Prison and Psychological Services. Paralleling the need to include the contribution of staff is a third requirement; namely, to address the empowerment prospectus and not reduce clients and practice to the status of commodities.

The fourth leadership challenge is for senior managers to ensure that the integrative structures and processes necessary to underpin and support practice are implemented. Improved communication between macro and micro levels within the Probation Service was identified as an essential foundation for the development of stronger, more viable leadership; this should be based on genuine recognition and respect for the ideas and contribution of field staff. Next, it is important for staff to be afforded opportunities for ongoing training and professional development. This point is germane to the professional leadership role of Service Managers, many of whom acknowledged that they experience difficulty in maintaining the necessary operational knowledge and practice skills. Of

course, a clearer exposition of what constitutes practice would assist in the identification of training needs and the selection of appropriate courses and training providers. A third integrative process is the provision of professional supervision (discussed above in relation to professional leadership). The final aspect of this challenge surrounds the introduction of a position and role that recognises the importance of and supports professional practice. For example, the position/role of a practice consultant that would focus upon providing coaching and advice and that would encourage practice development. Obviously, this position/role would be most effective if it were linked with the professional office proposed in the first leadership challenge above. This linkage would facilitate the implementation of new practice initiatives as well as feedback on the needs, concerns and perspectives of front-line practitioners.

The fifth and final leadership challenge (one associated with the development of a practice framework) involves the formulation and introduction of a multi-dimensional approach to assessment that includes both quantitative and qualitative indicators. The participants involved in this study endorsed a holistic construction of service effectiveness that could be based upon a more inclusive conception of social benefit. A revised service assessment model should: include goals at the community, agency and individual client levels; provide assurance that services are being delivered to required specifications; and also facilitate the provision of information that can inform the development of more effective practice. The opportunity also exists here to capture practitioner feedback regarding their understanding of practice credibility (based upon their reflexive practice experience) and to adjust policy in response to this information.

Implications of Meeting Leadership Challenges

What are the implications associated with meeting the above challenges? As indicated below each challenge has its own implications but it is important to bear in mind that: while these implications often relate to resources, they are not limited to resources alone; and in successfully resolving the implications to meet one challenge, the prospects of successfully

meeting another challenge are likely to be enhanced. With these points in mind, it can be said that one aspect of the first challenge, the introduction of policy regarding qualifications and registration, would have very substantial financial and human resource implications. Decisions would need to be made as to which qualifications would be recognised and how any policy would be implemented and monitored. The status of in situ staff without requisite or equivalent qualifications would need to be considered. For example, would they be required to undertake further education/training? Would they receive assistance? What would be the consequences for individual practitioners of failure to comply with any new policy regarding professional qualifications, training and registration? These matters are all resolvable. However, the experience of the Probation Service in the 1990s suggests that the introduction of any such policy requires a high level of organisational commitment (financial and staffing) if implementation is to succeed. That said, it should be noted that CYFS has implemented such a framework and has made a clear statement regarding the status of professional staff employed by the agency. The CYFS example and experience provides a template for action in the case of the Probation Service. Much the same might be said with regard to the establishment and responsibilities of a professional office similar to that of the Chief Social Worker in CYFS.

The second challenge - to develop a statement regarding probation's purpose and practice values - has few direct cost implications. However, this would require a high level of commitment from senior managers in the Probation Service (not evident to date) and any statement would inevitably be subject to a degree of scrutiny from a range of stakeholders. The latter would include other divisions of the Department of Corrections, the Department for Courts, the Judiciary, Police, Ministry of Justice and other groups such as the Prisoners' Aid and Rehabilitation Society and the Sensible Sentencing Trust. This reflects what has been described throughout this thesis as the politicisation of practice; indeed, it is because of the influence of such external constituencies that it is vital for the Probation Service to take the initiative and to lay claim to its domain of practice.

The third challenge (allied to the first) requires senior managers, as leaders within the Probation Service, to assume responsibility for the development of best practice in a way

that: (a) recognises the unique character of probation practice; (b) meets the requirements of practice validity; and (c) wins commitment from probation staff. To achieve this goal, challenges one and two need to be effectively addressed; in particular, senior managers will have to wrest a degree of operational autonomy from those groups within the Department of Corrections that currently enjoy control over policy and practice development. The groups in question are the Service Purchasing and Monitoring Group (which is responsible for purchasing corrections services from both internal and external providers, and for establishing and monitoring compliance with key operational and strategic standards) and the Policy Development Group (which provides strategic analysis and policy advice, evaluates and develops effective corrections services, and establishes quality standards for service delivery). Obviously any shift in the balance of power is unlikely to occur without a significant degree of 'political in-fighting' ¹. It remains a moot point whether such a struggle would be countenanced by the political masters of the Department.

In order for the fourth challenge to be met, senior managers must persuade government via the Minister of Corrections to increase resources to ensure that the required integrative structures and processes can be implemented and sustained. For example, a robust professional supervision policy cannot be implemented in a cost-neutral manner. This has been the expectation in the past and resulted in the diminished credibility of both the managers who made the unrealistic demand, and (more significantly) of the process itself. Transparency is required whenever a new initiative is implemented, and the legacy of IOM should provide senior managers with a salutary lesson. A business case for additional funding was not advanced and therefore the development and implementation costs associated with IOM were funded internally by the Department of Corrections. Consequently, other staff needs, for example core training, were not able to be met over a three to four year period.

Similar issues are associated with the final leadership challenge to develop a revised service assessment model. This is an area where new investment will be required to establish a suitably qualified and experienced team to assess comparable developments overseas and to then design, test and evaluate a range of potential ways (attuned to the New Zealand

context and any special requirements) of assessing practice and effectiveness.

Significantly, the common thread in the implications of meeting these leadership challenges is one of commitment from senior managers. The challenges do not require a legislative mandate for they essentially relate to policy, but they do require active leadership to attain the credibility necessary for follower support, and hence the power to win the backing of various stakeholders and the resources (financial and human) noted above.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

The interpretivist methods used in this study to obtain information regarding the knowledge and experience of the participants were well suited to the subject and purpose of the enquiry. The recruitment and unreserved cooperation of the participants is a positive reflection on the overall design and implementation of the research. Most of the participants displayed a high level of interest and a strong sense of purpose that is evident in many of their responses.

The potential for a conflict of interest between my roles of researcher and Probation Service Manager was discussed in the application to the Massey University Human Ethics Committee (Appendix One). The procedures outlined in the ethics proposal were adhered to during the research and there were no instances of an apparent conflict of interest. However, it is pertinent to observe that my institutional involvement and experience is evident in the research design and in my analysis and assessment of the findings.

There is a risk that that some of the findings and/or their interpretation might be considered to have been unduly influenced by the researcher's 'insider' status. In response to such a view, it is asserted: that a researcher who did not have any prior experience of the practice context would experience considerable difficulty in directing the research process toward the substantive issues; that the researcher exercised considerable care in the collection and transcription of interview and focus group material; and that the researcher executed the tasks of data analysis and interpretation mindful of the difficulties, lessons and procedures

that are well recorded in the annals of qualitative research. Needless to say, the researcher was also subject to and benefited from the regular supervision of two well qualified academic supervisors throughout the research process.

A potential perceived weakness of the study rests in the qualitative nature of the enquiry and findings that cannot safely be generalised to a broader population. The response to this potential criticism was noted in Chapter Six; qualitative research does not yield knowledge in the same sense as quantitative research. The emphasis in qualitative research is upon understanding, rather than causal determination and generalisation to a broader population.

Future Research

The findings presented in this thesis have raised a number of issues that could form the basis of future research. Five of these issues are considered here, relating to: the Probation Service delivery system; the development of a multi-dimensional approach to assessment; cultural issues; the leadership of senior managers; and the development of a leadership paradigm.

Probation Service Delivery System

The findings of this study indicate various points of disjunction that suggest a lack of clarity on the part of participants regarding the broader Probation Service delivery system. Roberts (1995) proposed that effective service delivery would be influenced by the degree to which key aspects of a service delivery system are complementary and well integrated. He identified three aspects that should be considered: (a) at the agency level, a clear specification of the service delivery likely to provide for effective work with clients is required; (b) operationally, a clear framework for practice delivery, monitoring and assessment is required; and (c) at the practice level, an integrated framework that identifies the practitioners' required knowledge and skills is important. Additionally, it is essential that adequate resources be provided to ensure that planned levels of service delivery can be

achieved.

The current Probation Service delivery system could be evaluated using criteria similar to those proposed above to confirm or identify points where a lack of 'fit' exists and to identify strategies that would achieve greater alignment. A comparative study of offices in the three existing Probation Service regions would ensure that all potential variables such as office size, geographic isolation, the cultural composition of clients, and community socio-economic status would be considered. In order to capture comprehensive data regarding the delivery system the study should, in addition to Probation Service staff, include both internal (e.g. other divisions of the Department of Corrections) and external stakeholders (e.g. clients, Iwi, Police, Courts and Judiciary).

Assessment

The leadership challenge to promote a multi-dimensional approach to the assessment of service effectiveness has been identified. This presents as a second area for future research and should include: (a) the broader concept of social benefit, because it has been suggested that in focusing (almost exclusively) on the indicator of recidivism the Probation Service has been under-reporting the positive impact of interventions; (b) the issue of causality which (while complex) is crucial to the assessment of service effectiveness, because it is imperative that probation services be assessed in terms of realistic, achievable goals that can be clearly associated with the interventions provided; and (c) the client's perspective, which is essential if the understanding of service effectiveness is to be developed beyond the macro indicator of re-offending rates.

In order to develop such an approach to assessment there is the need for carefully focused pilot studies – perhaps focusing on the types of clients that are of most concern in the volatile arena of public attention and political decision-making (e.g. sex offenders, serious violent offenders, or clients released on home detention). A series of pilot studies could also yield results that would be of value to research on the service delivery system.

Cultural Issues

In Chapter Three comment was made regarding culturally-based values; in particular, it was suggested that Maori are guided by a set of values and beliefs that are at variance with the positivist individualism that underpins the New Public Management agenda upon which current correctional policy is predicated. As noted by Irurita (1994), culture is a core environmental factor that influences practice. While there is some evidence of an effort to include cultural understanding in IOM and in the establishment of tikanga-based programmes, the results – at least from the viewpoint of participants involved in this research project - do not give rise to any confidence that this has been successful. A further example of this disjunction between policy statements regarding culture and the practice experience of the participants, relates to cultural supervision. Put simply, the policy has not been implemented adequately. The challenge to engage alternative cultural understandings is formidable, particularly in light of the epistemological foundations of current probation and broader correctional philosophy. However, failure to do so would represent an abrogation of responsibility on the part of those charged with the development of a responsive Probation Service consistent with the stated values of the Department of Corrections.

The range of potential research projects is extensive. However, it is suggested that priority be assigned to three areas. First, the efficacy of tikanga-based programmes should be evaluated. These programmes fall outside of the IOM framework and offer the prospect of addressing the needs of Maori clients from a Maori cultural perspective. There is a significant challenge to integrate alternative modes of service delivery within the current Service Delivery system. Second, while the Probation Service has a clear policy relating to cultural supervision the participants' lack of discussion or consideration of cultural issues indicates that a study of the cultural supervision needs of Probation Officers is warranted. Such research could identify barriers to the implementation of the policy (e.g. staff resistance, inadequate resources) and propose solutions. Unless practitioners and managers tackle the issue of culturally appropriate practice it is likely that the status quo reflected in the participants' responses will remain. Third, Pacific Islanders and other cultural groups,

notably Asians, form an increasing proportion of the client population (particularly in the greater Auckland area). Studies are required to identify the unique needs of these groups, as it is unlikely that the dominant correctional practice approach is capable of responding to their requirements.

Senior Managers

Senior managers face a set of formidable and complex challenges (at times not fully appreciated by the participants in this study), particularly in regard to managing the strategic direction of the Probation Service in a highly politicised environment. While the focus of the present thesis has been upon the experience of front-line Probation Officers and their direct Service Managers, it became evident repeatedly that their negative perceptions and/or experiences stemmed from the leadership of more senior managers. For example, the question of organisational capacity to achieve goals set by senior managers warrants consideration. The reality that Government funding has been increasingly unable to meet the demand for social services has been noted (see Chapter Three) by other researchers such as James (1998) and Lawler and Hern (1995). The participants in the present study were accepting of the need for greater levels of cost-efficiency in service delivery, however senior managers were identified as setting goals regarding service volumes and specifications that were considered to be unrealistic and unachievable within present funding allocations. A significant feature of the participants' perception of senior managers was their apparent lack of understanding of probation practice. In 1996 only one member of the then newly appointed Probation Service Senior Management Team had relevant Probation Service practice experience. This brings to mind Mintzberg's (1998:146) caution that: "Managing without an intimate understanding of what is being managed is an invitation to disharmony". Drawing upon the results of this research, it would be useful to gain insight into both the background and current experiences and expectations of senior managers regarding their leadership and management responsibilities.

Development of a Leadership Model

The development and implementation of a model of leadership that is practice relevant and founded on a distinctive probation knowledge base is likely to enhance the achievement of Probation Service objectives. This view is consistent with that of Chor-fai Au (1994) who observed that the knowledge base of social welfare administration has been largely shaped by the practice context, and that many administrators now recognise the unique characteristics of human service in contrast to the characteristics of other organisations. This is a challenge that should be taken up by senior managers.

The Probation Service has previously implemented generic leadership training programmes², provided by external consultants, which did not take into account the practice environment of the Probation Service. The factors identified in this research that influence/contribute to effective leadership and the leadership challenges that have been established provide the basis upon which a relevant leadership model and staff development programme could be developed.

A nationwide survey of Probation Officers, augmented by focus groups, could be used to further develop and validate the present research findings (especially the concerns with practice relevant values, professional leadership and leadership credibility). Then a leadership model and pilot leadership training programme could be developed, implemented and evaluated. Clearly this would require a significant level of resourcing and those senior managers responsible for approving such an investment would need to be convinced of the benefits of this approach, in comparison with previous leadership training programmes. In light of the current findings, this is likely to be a considerable challenge to managers who, to date, do not appear to have acknowledged probation as a unique field of practice.

Concluding Comment

This thesis has considered the contribution of leadership (as the key management function that can influence staff performance) to the achievement of effective service delivery in the Probation Service. Three initial assumptions were advanced: (a) that the social work perspective exerted both an influence upon and a sound basis for the construction of practice; (b) that a correlation existed between the participants' constructions and their expectations of leadership; and (c) that leadership, which supports professionalism, will draw followers and will therefore be related to effective service delivery. On the basis of the findings presented in this study these assumptions have been supported.

The key findings of the study are that:

- a) Effective service delivery was not perceived to be limited to the reduction of recidivism alone, but to also include the client's broader social experience, recognising that positive social benefit can extend beyond the simple measurement of offending behaviour;
- b) Leaders must be seen to be credible if they are to create willing followers. This credibility rested upon the leader's possession of relevant practice knowledge and skills, their demonstrated commitment to professional practice, their ability to provide clear direction for practice and their ability to ensure that adequate resources are available to achieve service delivery goals;
- c) A positive association was drawn between a leader's professional experience, possession of personal power and ability to influence Probation Officer practice. In essence, the leader's experience and competence has a bearing upon confidence in the leader. Participants also posited a connection between positive leadership, the development of a 'team' culture, Probation Officer work performance and service delivery.

Key leadership challenges have been identified that, in combination, provide direction for future research regarding the Probation Service. This research includes the development of a contextually located leadership paradigm, consistent with service delivery goals within

the Probation Service that would provide the basis for the design of a staff leadership development programme.

The work of the Probation Service is demanding and significant. Probation enjoys a mantle of social legitimacy and the Probation Service is charged to work with clients in a manner consistent with the dual goals of rehabilitation and maintenance of public safety. This is a formidable challenge and one that can only be enhanced by the provision of leadership that facilitates and supports professional practice.

Footnotes

1 In 2002 (for a period of six months) the researcher was seconded as a Senior Operations Adviser at the Probation Service Head Office and observed first-hand the at times internecine relationships between the various divisions of the Department of Corrections.

2 For example, the researcher attended a proprietary 'Leadership in Action' programme that did not contain contextual material that related to providing leadership to probation professionals.

Appendix 1 – Ethics Proposal

MASSEY UNIVERSITY

APPLICATION TO HUMAN ETHICS COMMITTEE

NAME: Michael Philip Dale

STATUS OF APPLICANT: PhD Candidate

DEPARTMENT: School of Social Policy and Social Work

EMPLOYMENT: Area Manager, Community Probation Service

PROJECT STATUS: PhD Thesis

FUNDING SOURCE: Support is available from the Community Probation Service

TITLE OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT: Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

ATTACHMENTS: Information Sheet
Consent Form
Registration of interest
Confidentiality agreement for typist
Authorisation from General Manager, Community Probation Service
Letter of invitation to participants
Follow up letter to participants
Questionnaire
Interview schedule

SIGNATURES: Researcher: _____
Michael Dale

Supervisors: _____
Associate Professor Ruth Anderson

Associate Professor Andrew Trlin

DATE: _____

1. Description

1.1 Justification

The area of research interest surrounds the contribution of leadership to the achievement of effective service delivery in the Community Probation Service. My interest in this area stems from my own practice experience over the past twenty-three years as a Probation Officer, Programmes and Training Adviser and as a Manager in the Community Probation Service. Leadership may be identified as the key management function which influences staff performance in achieving effective service delivery.

The primary service delivery goals of the Community Probation service are: to administer sentences and orders to ensure legal compliance; to provide safe and humane containment of offenders; to provide interventions which will reduce the likelihood of criminal re-offending. In relation to these goals, it is important to acknowledge that the Community Probation Service has a hierarchical line management structure and within this it is the Service Managers who are directly responsible for the operational implementation of policy surrounding service delivery. The Service Managers provide supervision and leadership to teams of Probation Officers who have direct contact with offenders.

The Community Probation Service domain of practice is one which has historically been defined by the work of the Probation Officer who is not required to possess any entry level tertiary academic qualification or specific vocational training. However the Probation Officer position has been oriented towards a predominantly social work role. While the Community Probation Service practice context has been subject to major political, legislative and policy changes over the past fifteen years it remains an area of practice where the social work perspective retains a significant degree of influence.

The impact of economic rationalism upon service delivery in the Community Probation Service has been profound. There has been a separation of policy development from service delivery with consequent imposition of initiatives with little consultation in the field. The adoption of monetarist management practices and reducing financial resources have seriously challenged the fundamental assumptions regarding the purpose of practice in the Community Probation Service. The demand for more from less has seen a shift to minimum practice standards with greater emphasis upon monitoring and containment compared with rehabilitative goals. The tenets of managerialism have challenged the level of professional autonomy which has previously been exercised by practitioners. Tension has arisen between the values and beliefs associated with management and those espoused by practitioners aligned with the social work profession.

It is crucial that leadership within the Community Probation Service supports and facilitates the type of professional practice which will result in more effective service delivery.

1.2 Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

First, to identify how the Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership and effective service delivery within the Community Probation Service.

Second, to examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers in the Community Probation Service.

Third, to determine the structures and processes which are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery.

A proposed outcome of the research is the development of a contextually located leadership paradigm which is congruent with service delivery goals within the Community Probation Service. This paradigm would provide the basis for the future design of a leadership development programme for staff within the Community Probation Service.

1.3 Procedures for recruiting participants and obtaining Informed Consent

It is proposed to conduct the research at Community Probation Offices located within the Northern and Southern Regions of the Community Probation Service. The General Manager, Community Probation Service, has agreed to provide lists of staff from which a purposive sample of thirty (30) Probation Officers and ten (10) Service Managers will be selected.

Involvement will be voluntary. An information sheet (Appendix One) and written informed consent form (Appendix Two) will be mailed to the staff who are selected and registrations of interest (Appendix Three) will be invited. The staff who agree to participate will be invited to complete a written informed consent form as research participants.

1.4 Procedures in which research participants will be involved

Participants will be asked to:

- complete a survey questionnaire (it is estimated that it will take no longer than forty minutes to complete the questionnaire)
- participate in an initial audio-taped in-depth interview lasting between one and two hours
- participate in a focus group discussion (each focus group will comprise of five to eight participants and it is estimated that each discussion will be of two hours duration)

They will be advised that the research is focused on the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery and will be asked questions concerning:

- their understanding of leadership
- their understanding of effective service delivery
- their view of the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery
- their wishes and expectations with regard to the leadership which they receive or provide, and
- their recent experience of leadership

Each participant will be provided with a copy of the transcript of their individual interview.

1.5 Procedures for handling Information and Materials produced in the course of the research, including raw data and final research report(s)

Data will be collected from: survey questionnaires, structured interviews and focus group discussions.

Transcripts of interviews will be completed by a typist who will sign a confidentiality agreement (Appendix Four).

Hard copy (survey questionnaires, transcripts of interviews and focus group discussions, notes from interviews, researcher notes and research journal) and interview tapes will be held in secure filing cabinets (at the researcher's home). Computer data will be stored on floppy disk (two copies will be held, one by the researcher, one at Massey University). All computer disks will be held in secure containers. Access to this research material will be restricted to: the researcher and the official PhD supervisors approved by Massey University and thesis examiners, if required. Note: no access to data will be available to any other person(s), including staff of the Community Probation Service.

Classification and analysis of the data will be conducted by the researcher. Research participants will be assigned a code number. The researcher will complete analysis of the data. The research data, including the interview tapes, will be held by the researcher for five years after successful completion of the thesis before being destroyed. At the completion of the research, individual participants may request the return of the tape of their interview.

Information regarding any participant will not be divulged to any third party without the prior permission of the relevant participants.

Copies of the final research report in the form of a PhD thesis will be provided to Massey University for examination and, upon satisfactory completion of all examination requirements, the Community Probation Service. The research participants will be given a summary of the thesis.

2. Ethical Concerns

The research will meet the requirements of the Massey University Code of Ethical Conduct for Research and Teaching involving Human Subjects.

2.1 Access to Participants

Participants will be from Community Probation Service staff at locations in New Zealand. These locations will be locations other than those in which the researcher has duties/responsibilities as an Area Manager. Prior written permission to contact participants has been obtained from the General Manager, Community Probation Service (Appendix Five).

The researcher will write to selected Service Managers and Probation Officers inviting them to register their interest in participation (Appendix Six). They will be sent an Information Sheet, Registration of Interest form and the General Manager's letter of approval. The envelope will be marked "confidential" and "staff in confidence". If no response is received within two weeks after posting the above letter, a follow up letter (Appendix Seven) with the envelope also marked "confidential" and "staff in confidence" will be sent.

Upon receipt of registrations of interest the participants will be sent a questionnaire and the Informed Consent form. The questionnaire will be collected at the time of the interview and the Consent Form will be explained and participants will be invited to complete this before the commencement of the interview.

My responsibility as the researcher is to each participant. My role is to ensure that all participants' rights are fully observed and to ensure that participation in the research is not influenced by external considerations.

2.2 Informed Consent

Once participants have indicated an interest in participating in the research they will be interviewed by the researcher. At the commencement of each interview the researcher will verbally review the Information Sheet that specifies: the purpose of the research; their possible role in it; the criteria for selection; the protection they will be given regarding anonymity and confidentiality and how the data will be used. Participants will be informed of their right to: decline participation and withdraw without prejudice at any stage; refuse to answer questions without prejudice and to ask any questions at any point in the process; receive a transcript of their interview and to be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is concluded. It will be the researcher's responsibility to provide additional information and to clarify any questions raised by the participants.

All participation will be on a voluntary basis and all participants will be invited to complete a written Informed Consent Form. Interviews will not commence until the participant has completed the Informed Consent Form.

2.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

The bounds of confidentiality will be explained to all participants by the researcher. The researcher will not disclose any information provided by a participant without the participant's prior written permission. In the event that a participant discloses information regarding professional incompetence or misconduct the researcher will advise the participant that the researcher has formed this opinion and will consult with a Community Probation Service, Human Resources Adviser regarding appropriate action to be taken. Given the nature of this topic it is unlikely that this situation will arise.

All participants will be apprised of the procedures for handling information and materials produced in the course of the research which ensure confidentiality. The researcher will explain procedures to be followed to ensure that participant anonymity and confidentiality is retained during the research process and in the writing of the final research report.

All identifying information such as a participant's name and location will remain confidential to the researcher and transcript typist. Research participants will be assigned a code number and invited to choose a nom de plume which could be used in the thesis and any subsequent publication on the project.

2.4 Potential Harm to Participants

The procedures which have been developed regarding informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity are designed to minimise potential harm to participants. The findings will be presented in such a way that they cannot be used to harm individual participants.

2.5 Potential Harm to the Researcher

There is no potential harm for the researcher.

2.6 Potential Harm to the University

The researcher will communicate honestly and openly with the thesis supervisors as to the progress of and commitment to the project. If at any time it seems likely that any ethical code or academic requirement is not being adhered to the research student must discuss the problems and if necessary withdraw from the project completely.

2.7 Participants' Right to Decline

Participants will have the right to decline to answer any questions they do not wish to answer, to decline to provide an interview even if they have previously agreed to such an interview and to withdraw from the process at any stage.

2.8 Uses of Information

The information obtained will only be used for the purpose of thesis research and any academic publications arising from this project. The research findings may be used by the

Community Probation Service to inform future leadership development initiatives.

2.9 Conflict of Interest

The research roles are distinct from any other roles which participants' occupy. The researcher will not be involved in the research as a Community Probation Service Manager with participants who are Community Probation Service staff for whom he has managerial responsibilities, and can therefore avoid the potential conflict of interest which could arise from occupying dual roles. The researcher has entered into an agreement with the Community Probation Service and has received advice from the Community Probation Service regarding any legal implications of the research. Clear distinctions have been drawn between the role of researcher and other roles the researcher occupies within the Community Probation Service.

The research sites will be at different locations from that where the researcher works. Selection criteria for Service Managers and Probation Officers as research participants excludes those who have previously worked or are now working directly with the researcher. This will reduce the risk of researcher bias affecting the responses of participants or of participants' responses being influenced by previous association with the researcher.

The interests of the Community Probation Service will not inhibit the aims and principles of the project and will not take precedence over the interests of participants. The Community Probation Service is a stakeholder through sponsorship of the researcher and provision of resources to enable the research to be completed. However, the Community Probation Service does not and will not have any direct influence in the research design or implementation of the research project. The Community Probation Service will have access only to the final research report, which will not contain any identifying information regarding any participant which could prejudice a participant's right to receive fair and impartial treatment from the Community Probation Service.

2.10 Other Ethical Concerns

None identified.

3. Legal Concerns

3.1 Legislation

3.1.1 Intellectual Property Legislation

Copyright Act 1994

Copyright of the PhD thesis will belong to the researcher. Copyright of any publication which emerges as a result of the work undertaken during the progress of the research will belong to the researcher and associated writers and/or the publisher. Any sources will be clearly referenced and acknowledged. Written agreement must be made with particular

funding providers with regard to any specific stake they may have in ultimate ownership of material produced.

3.1.2 Human Rights Act 1993

There are no apparent implications for the research.

3.1.3 Privacy Act 1993

The researcher has received legal advice from the Community Probation Service. The requirements of the Privacy Act 1993 are met by the procedures specified regarding anonymity and confidentiality and the purpose for which the information is collected.

3.1.4 Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

There are no implications for the research.

3.1.5 Accident Rehabilitation Compensation Insurance Act 1992

There are no apparent implications for the research.

3.1.6 Employment Contracts Act 1991

There are no apparent implications for the research.

3.2 Other Legal Concerns

There are no identifiable concerns.

4. Cultural Concerns

There are no identifiable concerns. Should any research participant raise concerns which are culturally related the researcher will seek independent advice from the Department of Corrections Cultural Adviser.

5. Other Ethical Bodies Relevant to this Research

5.1 Ethics Committees

This application is not being submitted to any other ethics committees.

5.2 Professional Codes

The Department of Corrections' Code of Conduct will be observed, insofar as this relates to any participant who may divulge information regarding behaviour which is in breach of this Code.

The researcher is not subject to any other New Zealand professional code.

6. Other relevant Issues

There are no other relevant issues for discussion.

Appendix One

Information Sheet

Research Title: Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

Who is the Researcher?

The researcher is Michael Dale. Michael is employed by the Community Probation Service. He has worked in the Community Probation Service for twenty-two years, first as a Probation Officer and more recently as an Area Manager. He is completing a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and the research forms the basis for his thesis. Michael is being supervised by Associate Professor Ruth Anderson, Academic Director, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, Massey University and Associate Professor Andrew Trlin, School of Social Policy and Social Work, Massey University.

The contact numbers are:

Researcher	Michael Dale PO Box 360, Palmerston North Telephone: 021 606220 E-mail: michael.dale@xtra.co.nz
Supervisors	Associate Professor Ruth Anderson Academic Director, College of Humanities and Social Sciences Massey University Private Bag 11-222 Palmerston North Telephone: (06) 3505258 E-mail: R.H.Anderson@massey.ac.nz Associate Professor Andrew Trlin School of Social Policy and Social Work Massey University Private Bag 11-222 Palmerston North Telephone: (06) 3502835 E-mail: A.D.Trlin@massey.ac.nz

What is the study about?

The aim of the study is to develop an understanding of the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery in the Community Probation Service.

In order to achieve this aim the researcher is interested in obtaining the views of Probation Officers and Service Managers concerning:

- their understanding of leadership
- their understanding of effective service delivery
- their view of the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery
- their wishes and expectations with regard to the leadership which they receive or provide, and
- their recent experience of leadership

A proposed outcome of the study is to develop a contextually located leadership paradigm which is congruent with service delivery goals within the Community Probation Service. This paradigm could provide the basis for the design of a leadership development programme for staff within the Community Probation Service.

The Community Probation Service is meeting fees and incidental expenses associated with the research.

What will participants have to do?

If you agree to take part in this study you will need to: complete a background questionnaire, be available for an interview with the researcher and participate in a focus group discussion with other participants.

The background questionnaire is enclosed. A sample of participants will be invited to participate in the interview and focus group processes. If you are not invited to participate further the information which you provide in the background questionnaire will not be used in the data analysis.

The interview would take between one and a half to two hours to complete and would be held at an address independent of the Community Probation Service. You will be advised of location and time of the interview.

The focus group discussion would be held at an address independent of the Community Probation Service and would take about two hours to complete. The focus group meeting will provide a forum where the researcher can both provide participants information regarding themes which have been identified through the individual interviews and invite participants to comment and expand upon these themes. At the commencement of the focus group meetings some "ground rules" regarding process and confidentiality will be established. All participants and the researcher will be bound by these rules.

The interview and focus group discussion will be recorded on audiotapes, which will be transcribed by a typist who will sign a confidentiality agreement. The transcripts will be securely stored and accessible only to the researcher. Each participant will receive a copy of the transcript of their interview.

What can the participant expect from the researcher?

If you take part in this study you have the right to:

- refuse to answer any particular question
- withdraw from the study at any time
- ask any further questions during your participation
- ask for the tape recorder to be switched off at any time
- provide information on the understanding that it is confidential to the researcher. The only exception to this would be in the unlikely event that you disclose information regarding personal professional incompetence or misconduct. In such a case the researcher will advise you that he will consult with a Community Probation Service, Human Resources Adviser regarding appropriate action to be taken.

It will not be possible to identify you in any reports that are prepared from the study. You will be provided with an opportunity to choose another name which can be used in the research.

You will be given access to a summary of the findings of the study when it is finished. A copy of the final thesis will be held in the library at Massey University. A copy will also be provided to the Community Probation Service and will be available to staff employed by the Service.

[This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 00/126]

Appendix Two

Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

Consent Form

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I understand I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time and to decline to answer any particular questions.

I agree to provide information to the researcher on the understanding that my name will not be used without my permission (the information will be used only for this research and publications arising from this research project).

I agree/do not agree to the interviews being audio taped. I also understand that I have the right to ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

I agree/do not agree to participate in the focus group interview and will respect the confidentiality of the group.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

[This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, PN Protocol 00/126]

Appendix Three

Registration of Interest

PO Box 360
Palmerston North

I have read the information sheet regarding your research project:

Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

I am interested in participating in this research. I have completed the background questionnaire (copy enclosed). I am aware that if I am invited to participate in the research project I will be asked to complete a written consent form prior to any interview.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix Four

Confidentiality agreement for typist

I, _____ agree to maintain the confidentiality of all material I am given access to for the purposes of assisting with the transcription of information for the research project:

Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____



DEPARTMENT
OF CORRECTIONS

Community
Probation
Service

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Head Office
Mayfair House
44-52 The Terrace
Private Box 1206,
Wellington New Zealand
Telephone 64-4-499 5620
Facsimile 64-4-460 3203

2 August 2000

Michael Dale
Area Manager
Community Probation Service
PO Box 2041
PALMERSTON NORTH

Dear Michael

Ph.D. Research Project - 'Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A Study of the perspectives of Managers and Probation Officers in the Community Probation Service'

Your request for access to staff lists for both the Northern and Southern Regions and for permission to write to selected staff inviting their participation in the research project is approved.

This approval is on the understanding that you will conduct your research in accordance with the conditions which are approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee.

Yours sincerely

Ann Clark
General Manager
Community Probation Service

Appendix Six

Letter of invitation to participants

Dear ,

I am writing to invite you to express interest in participating in a research project which I will be undertaking in March and April 2001.

Research Title: Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

The aim of the study is to develop an understanding of the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery in the Community Probation Service. The research will form the basis of a thesis which I will be completing for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Massey University.

I have invited Probation Officers and Service Managers from the Northern and Southern Regions of the Community Probation Service to express interest in participating in this research project. A sample of participants will be purposefully selected in order to attain a broad mix of professional practice and/or leadership experience. The General Manager, Community Probation Service, has given written approval for me to invite selected staff to participate in the research (a copy of this approval is enclosed).

I have enclosed copies of: an Information Sheet (which provides further details regarding the research project); a background questionnaire; a Registration of Interest form and a Consent Form (if you agree to participate in the research project you will be invited to complete this form prior to any interview).

If you are prepared to participate in the research project please complete the enclosed background questionnaire and the Registration of Interest form and return to:

Michael Dale
PO Box 360
Palmerston North

Yours sincerely,

Michael Dale

Appendix Seven

Follow up letter to participants

Dear ,

On (date) I wrote to you inviting you to participate in a research project which I will be undertaking in (months).

Research Title: Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

In case you have mislaid my original letter I have included information regarding the research.

The aim of the study is to develop an understanding of the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery in the Community Probation Service. The research will form the basis of a thesis which I will be completing for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Massey University.

I have invited selected Probation Officers and Service Managers from the Northern and Southern Regions of the Community Probation Service to participate in this research project. Participants have been purposefully selected in order to attain a broad mix of professional practice and/or leadership experience. The General Manager, Community Probation Service, has given written approval for me to invite selected staff to participate in the research (a copy of this approval is enclosed).

I have enclosed copies of an Information Sheet (which provides further details regarding the research project) a Registration of Interest form and a Consent Form (if you agree to participate in the research project you will be invited to complete this form prior to any interview).

If you are prepared to participate in the research project please complete the enclosed Registration of Interest form and return it to:

Michael Dale
PO Box 360
Palmerston North

Yours sincerely,

Michael Dale

Appendix Eight

Background Questionnaire

Instructions:

- Please complete ALL sections.
- Where appropriate please print relevant information.
- Where appropriate please mark your choice clearly by ticking the appropriate box.

Surname:

First Names:

- ☐ Male
☐ Female

Date of Birth:

Day [/] Month [/] Year [/]

Country of Birth:

Ethnicity (please specify - e.g., Maori, Samoan):

Current Position in the Community Probation Service

- ☐ Probation Officer
☐ Service Manager

Length of Service in Current Position

- ☐ Less than 12 months
☐ 1-5 years
☐ 6-10 years
☐ 11-15 years
☐ 16 years plus

Previous Positions in Community Probation Service

Please mark all that apply

- ☐ Probation Officer
☐ Service Manager
☐ Administration officer
☐ Warden/Deputy Warden(Periodic Detention Centre)
☐ Work Party Supervisor
☐ Unit Manager

Specialist Roles held in Community Probation Service

Please mark all that apply

- ☐ Professional Supervisor (Length of time in the role: _____)
- ☐ Straight Thinking Coach
- ☐ Criminogenic Programme Facilitator
- ☐ Group Facilitator (Please specify type of programme: _____)
- ☐ IOMS trainer
- ☐ Other (Please specify _____)

Membership of Professional Organisations

Please specify:

E.g., New Zealand Association of Social Workers

Appendix Nine

Interview Schedule

Leadership and Effective Service Delivery: A study of the experience and perspectives of probation officers and managers in the Community Probation Service.

1.1 Understanding of leadership

1.1.1 The relationship between leadership & management

How do you define the term management?

How do you define the term leadership?

What would you identify as the similarities/differences between management and leadership

To what degree do you consider that the concepts of management and leadership overlap?

Who do you identify as leaders in the Community Probation Service?

What roles do you consider that leaders play in the Community Probation Service?

1.1.2 The relationship between leader and follower

What do you consider to be the nature of the relationship between a leader and a follower?

What do you consider to be the desired outcomes of the relationship between a leader and a follower?

[Prompt: from leader & follower perspectives]

1.1.3 Characteristics of Leaders

What traits/characteristics do you associate with a person who is an effective leader?

[Prompt: e.g., intelligence, integrity, determination]

1.1.4 Behaviours of Leaders

What follower needs do you consider that a leader should be able to meet?

What do you expect an effective leader to do?

1.1.5 Leadership Effectiveness

How does the Community Probation service currently assess leadership effectiveness?

How would you assess effective leadership?

[Prompt: What measures would you use?]

1.2 Understanding of effective service delivery

1.2.1 Understanding of the Community Probation Service context

What changes have occurred in the Community Probation Service in the past 5 years that have affected service delivery?

[Prompt: Positive & negative consequences]

What tensions exist for probation officer/service manager practice within the Community Probation Service?

[Prompt: e.g., resource constraints, work volumes, increased complexity, constant change]

1.2.2 Community Probation Service goals

What do you consider to be the key goals of the Community Probation Service?

[Prompt: What other goals?]

1.2.3 The purpose of service delivery - provision of information & sentence management

What do you consider to be the primary purposes of Provision of Information and Sentence Management?

[Prompt: What are the intended results?]

1.2.4 Knowledge base for service delivery

The argument has been advanced that probation practice should be based upon valid knowledge which is evidence-based

What do you consider should constitute professional knowledge for practice in the Community Probation Service?

[Prompt: knowledge of criminal behaviour, what works, counseling, addictions etc]

What do you consider to be the relative relevance of the social work, psychological, criminological & cultural perspectives?

How do you link theory to practice?

1.2.5 The concept of best practice

Best practice can be defined as: practice, which is based on evidence, which is likely to produce the desired results & which can be implemented]

What are the benefits of practice that is evidence-based?

1.2.6 Models of best practice

The following models are currently promoted in the Community Probation Service: IMS, CRIMPS & IOM

Have you received training in models?

How useful are the models?

What obstacles affect the implementation of the models?

What do you understand by the term 'practice wisdom'?

[Prompt - knowledge based upon experience]

What other models/approaches do you use &/ consider to be valid?

1.2.7 The effective Probation Officer

What do you consider to be the key personal & professional attributes needed to deliver effective probation?

What does an 'effective' probation officer do?

What are the main obstacles to your being an effective practitioner?

What structures & processes assist you in being an effective practitioner?

1.3 Assessment of effective service delivery

1.3.1 Process Measures

How important is the way in which a procedure/model is implemented?

[Prompt: to criteria, the quality of the interaction]

What factors influence how a model is implemented?

[Prompt: training, skills, and resources]

How would you assess the way in which a procedure/model is implemented?

1.3.2 Outcome Measures

What do you consider to be the important indicators of the effectiveness of service delivery?

[Prompt: re-offending, compliance with sentence, behaviour & attitude change, victim empathy, impact on others, meeting other needs of the offender]

1.3.3 Feedback regarding performance & effectiveness

What feedback do you receive regarding your service delivery?

What type of feedback would you like to receive?

What do you think would be valid indicators of the effectiveness of your performance?

2.1 The relationship between leadership and effective service delivery

2.1.1 Leadership and Values

a) Community Probation Service Values

What do you identify as the official core values of the Community Probation Service?

b) Management Values

What do you identify as the core values held by management in the Community Probation Service?

[Prompt - different levels of management]

c) Professional Values in Probation

What do you consider to be the unique characteristics of 'Probation' values cf. 'Social Work' values?

[Prompt - offender responsibility, provide opportunity to change, concern for victims, protection of the community]

What do you identify as the core professional values & ethical standards relevant to your role as probation officer/service manager?

[Prompt - act with integrity, use best knowledge to guide practice, do no harm, confidentiality]

What do you identify as the relationship between your professional values & ethical standards and your work performance?

d) The impact of Values Congruence & Dissonance

What is the degree of congruence between espoused organisational values and beliefs and your professional value system?

What tensions exist between espoused organisational values and beliefs and your professional value system?

What are the consequences of this tension for you?

How do any tensions impact upon your service delivery?

2.1.2 Leadership and Influence on Followers

How do you motivate others to achieve goals/be effective in their practice?

How are you motivated to achieve goals/be effective in your practice?

2.1.3 Leading Professionals

What type of leadership do you consider to be most effective in relation to the work of professional probation officers? What should the leader do?

What do you consider to be the advantages/disadvantages of leaders who are also experienced/qualified practitioners?

To what degree are probation officers able to exercise professional autonomy/use of discretion?

[Prompt: IOM 'override', deviate from the manual]

What is the relationship between professional autonomy and accountability?

What do you consider to be the purpose and role of a professional organisation?

[e.g. NZASW, NZAPO]

2.1.4 Professional Leadership

Leadership within a profession rather than leadership within an organisation

In your opinion what are the key structures & processes that are necessary to provide professional leadership?

[Prompt; role of a practice consultant or professional supervisor, training & personal development]

Who currently provides professional leadership within the Community Probation Service?

How satisfied are you with the current level of professional leadership that you receive?

[Prompt: the nature & quality of professional leadership]

How satisfied are you with the current level of training & opportunities for personal development?

2.2 Recent experience of leadership and the relationship to effective service delivery

What has been your recent experience of leadership in the Community Probation Service?

[Prompt – organizational leadership & professional leadership – SM/PO AM/SM Professional Supervisor/PO]

What do you consider to be the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery?

2.3 Wishes and expectations regarding the leadership received or provided and the relationship to effective service delivery

What would represent the 'ideal' regarding the leadership which you receive/provide?

What are your expectations regarding the leadership which you receive/provide?

What do you consider would be the relationship between your 'ideal' of leadership and effective service delivery?

What do you consider would be the relationship between your expectations regarding leadership and effective service delivery?

Objective Three

To determine the structures and processes which are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery.

What are your thoughts regarding the structures and processes which are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery?

What structures do you consider should be put in place? What changes should be considered?

[Prompt - organisational structures e.g. Regions, Areas, positions & roles, workload formula, resources]

What processes do you consider should occur?

[Prompt - professional supervision, training & development programmes]

Appendix 2 – Interview Schedule - arguments

Objective One

To identify how the Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership, and effective service delivery within the Community Probation Service.

1.1 Understanding of leadership

1.1.1 The relationship between leadership & management

Key Concepts & Arguments

Leadership is the dynamic function of management which offers scope for the individual manager to make a difference in implementing service delivery.

Management has an emphasis upon planning, control and results.

Management is defined as a process entailing the achievement of organisational goals.

Leadership focuses upon people, process, vision, values and direction.

Leadership and management are best viewed as overlapping constructs rather than as mutually exclusive processes (Yukl 97; Northouse 97)

The primary purpose of leadership is to affect the climate of the organisation so that workers are empowered, excited, and inspired about the goals & mission of their organisations (Glisson 89)

Leadership as “the influential element over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization (Glisson 89)

References: Fairholm 98; Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson 96; Northouse 97; Yukl 97

Corrections: Bryans & Walford 98; Chavaria 94; Cohn 98; Holligsworth 99; Siegel 96; Wright 91

Refer to: Leadership Chapter 23.7.00 pp.1-10; Leadership Notes 26.5.00

1.1.2 The relationship between leader and follower

Key Concepts & Arguments

Leadership involves the relationship between a leader and a follower or more typically in an organisation) a group of followers? (Parry 99; Wright 91; Powls 90)

The relationship between leader and follower(s) rests upon a dynamic, interactive process which involves the leader's use of influence or persuasion (Bartol et al 95; Wright 91; Northouse 97; Fiedler 96)

Concept of willing following (Parry 99)

1.1.3 Characteristics of Leaders

Key Concepts & Arguments

Traits associated with leadership: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability (Northouse 97)

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.00, pp.14-16

References: Bryans & Walford 98; Fairholm 98; Yukl 97; Bartol et al 95; Northouse 97

1.1.4 Behaviours of Leaders

Key Concepts & Arguments

Yukl - task behaviour, relationship behaviour, change oriented behaviour (Yukl 98)

A given leadership style will not be optimal in all situations. The primary focus of situational leadership should be about meeting followers' needs (Fairholm 98; Yukl 98)

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.00, pp.17-25

References: Bartol et al 95; Northouse 97; Yukl 97

1.1.5 Leadership Effectiveness

Relationship between leadership & measures of organisational performance - psychological outcomes (Parry 99)

Outcomes & methods of assessment - current CPS methods = results, 360 staff survey & organisational climate survey

1.2 Understanding of effective service delivery

1.2.1 Understanding of the Community Probation Service context

Key Concepts & Arguments

Notion of public service:

Decreased sensitivity to the public expectation of justice & fairness

Diminishment of ethics & social insight

State services need to develop a cohesive culture which promotes the service role.

Refer to Political Economy 16.6.00, p.12

References: Robertson 91; Webster 95; Maharey 99

Influence of changes in Central Government Management

Legislative Changes

Changes in Organisational Structure

Changes in Operational policies

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, pp.20-21

References: Dale 97

Increasing complexity of practice

Refer to Correctional Environment 23.7.99, pp.37-38

References: Ault & Brown 97; Chavaria 94; Vernon & Byrd 96; Markiewicz & Vanyur 94; Wright 91;

Debate regarding the application of private sector business management theories & practices in the public sector.

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, p.25

References: Boston 97; Gummer 97b

Impact of Managerialism

Organisational structure

Role of management cf. professionals

HR policies - managerial based models cf. professional models

Refer to Political Economy 16.6.00 pp.4-6

References: Boston et al 96; Lawler & Hern 95; Edwards et al. 86; Harris 98; Dominelli & Hoogvelt 96

Impact of resource constraints: differing practice perspectives will influence interpretation of resource constraints; definitions of acceptable client outcomes may change; targeting interventions - triage process; contracting out to cheaper programmes

Refer to Case Management 19.10.99, p.6

References: Bowers et al. 99; Schumacher 85; Toch 95; Moore 92

Refer to Correctional Environment 23.7.99, pp.38-39

References: Vernon & Byrd 96; Chavaria 94; Markiewicz & Vanyur 94

Statutory & professional accountability

Protection of the community

Mandated intervention
 Expectation of reduced risk of re-offending
 Social control & punishment

Refer to Case Management 19.10.99, pp.1-2.
 References: Wolk, Sullivan & Hartman 94; Dinerman 92; Netting 92; Schumacher 85; Toch 95

Bureau-professionalism: professional character informed by the social work perspective, professional membership & professional autonomy

Refer to Political Economy 16.06.00, pp.7-10
 References: Domenelli & Hoogvelt 96; Evans 96; Harris 98; Lawler & Hern 95; Nash & Savage;
 Raine & Willson

The interplay between these defining features creates a dynamic tension which is a distinctive feature of CPS practice.

1.2.2 Community Probation service goals

Key Concepts & Arguments

Protection of the Community
 Management of Risk - surveillance
 Safe & humane containment
 Rehabilitation & reduction of re-offending

1.2.3 The purpose of service delivery - provision of information & sentence management

1.2.4 Knowledge base for service delivery

Key Concepts & arguments

In the absence of clearly articulated professional knowledge to guide intervention it is likely that agency rules & procedures will be used to legitimise decisions (Rosen 94)

Refer to The Social Work Perspective 19.4.00, pp.15-23

1.2.5 The concept of best practice

Key Concepts & Arguments - Linking Theory and Practice

Refer to The Social Work Perspective 19.4.00

Levels of discourse: scientific & practical

Page 11

References: Fox 97; Walter-Busch 95

Practice validity

Page 12

References: Sheppard 98

Key Proposition = Practice should be based on relevant & valid knowledge

Influence of the rational, scientific, problem-solving paradigm

Page 16

References: Gambrill 99; Rosen 94; Rosen et al 95; Bartol et al. 95

An integrative process leads to the development of an individual practice framework

Page 17

References: Bartol et al. 95; Nai 98

The social worker is an active agent in the theory practice link

Page 17

References: Nai 98; Turner 96

Note the influence of values upon any theory.

Page 17-18

References: Souflee 93; Robbins et al. 99

Informed Eclecticism

Page 21

References: Payne 91; Carew 79; Schon 95; Robbins et al. 99

Expert practice is a distinct skill, separate from the ability to explain a theoretical perspective.

Page 21

References: Fook et al. 97

Intuitive development of practice wisdom is also based on the combination of knowledge and experience

Page 20

References: Schon 95; Goldstein 98; Klein & Bloom 95; Pray 91; Scott 90; Souflee 93

1.2.6 Models of best practice

Key Concepts & Arguments

Practice perspectives: client centred/systems approach.

A practice perspective underpins models of practice which will determine the nature of intervention. Links back to broader epistemological underpinnings of technical

rational and reflective models

Refer to Case Management 19.10.99, pp.4-5

References: Bowers et al. 99; Ryan et al. 99; Austin 92; Schmidt et al. 98; Schumacher 85

Psychology of Criminal Conduct, Integrated Model of Supervision & CRIMPS - models which are promoted by the Community Probation Service.

Refer to PCC paper 21.11.99; IMS manual; CRIMPS manual

1.3 Assessment of effective service delivery

Key Concepts & Arguments

Service effectiveness is the key criterion which ties direct practice & management together. Service effectiveness is more congruent with the values and purposes of social welfare professions.

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, p.18

References: Chor-fai Au 96; Turem 86

Subjectivity - notion that effectiveness is multi-dimensional

Page 16

Reference: Chor-fai Au 96

Issues for welfare organisations: they do not operate in a free market; are susceptible to the influence of external constituencies; are often characterised by conflicting values; often have unclear goals; uncertain technologies.

Page 16-17

References: Gummer 97; Chor-Fai Au 96

In the study service quality was used as the best available surrogate measure for service effectiveness.

Service quality is an indicator of service effectiveness.

Service quality = the degree to which the organisation is competently implementing methods and techniques that are thought necessary to achieving service objectives. Ezell 89

1.3.1 Process Measures

Positive impact of the competence movement = core skills are identified & broken down into discrete components which can be evidenced, monitored, recorded and rewarded - resulting in standardised practice

Refer to Political Economy 16.6.00, p.9

- Further sources required
1.3.2 Outcome Measures

Key Concepts & Arguments

Different levels of measurement:
Reoffending (rate & seriousness)
Change in offender attitude?
Change in non criminal behaviour?
Offender acquisition of knowledge?

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, p.18-19
References: Raynor 96; Dale 97

Objective Two

To examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers in the Community Probation Service.

- 2.1 The relationship between leadership and effective service delivery
2.1.1 Influence of Values Perspectives

What are the respective value perspectives of POs & SMs?

Key Concepts & Arguments

Instrumental and Emancipatory Perspectives: instrumental - focus upon performance & results; emancipatory - characterised by concern with social responsibility (Burgoyne & Reynolds 97)

Core Ideology - a set of core values with associated principles & tenets.
Core purpose - the organisations most fundamental reason for continuing its business

Leadership Chapter 23.7.00, p.30
Reference: Cohn 98

- 2.1.2 Management Values

[Refer to CPS statements/functions of management]

- 2.1.3 Professional Values in Probation

Key Concepts & Arguments

Refer to Social Work Perspective 19.4.00

Social work ideology is linked to egalitarian social philosophy and political doctrine.

Page 24 Souflee 93

Social worker conceived of as a moral agent

Page 24 Nai 98

Social work as an ethical and moral endeavour.

Page 24 Goldstein 98

Concerns of social work practice: to assist clients to achieve self-determination; to display respect for the inherent dignity and worth of all people; challenge social injustice; assist the client to achieve health & well-being

Empowerment involves:

Self-determination = development of self-awareness & acquisition of skills for change;

Page 25

References: Gutierrez et al. 95; Henry 95; Lee 96; Breton 94; Rees 91

Political Dimension = social work should be liberatory & concerned with social equality, social justice & reform.

Page 26

References: Jones & Novak 93; Lee 96; Henry 95; Robbins et al. 99

The relationship between client & practitioner is the vehicle of the continuity of the social work process - mutuality, reciprocity & collaboration

Page 26

References: Payne 91; Egan 86; Reid 78

Social work values emphasise service delivery effectiveness as the key goal of social administration

References: Tumen 86; Cor-fai Au 96

A key challenge in the CPS is the lack of professional accreditation/code of ethics

2.1.4 Ethical Standards

Key Concepts & Arguments

Social workers should: be trustworthy; act with integrity; be competent; use the best available knowledge to guide practice; not act in a way which might harm the client.
Refer to Social Work Perspective 19.4.00, p. 25
References: Klein & Bloom 95; Robbins et al. 99

2.1.5 Impact of Values Congruence & Dissonance

The degree of congruence between managerial & professional values is likely to influence organisational performance.

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.00, p.7

The influence of values & interpretations of operational staff is crucial to strategic success.

Refer to Definition of Area of Interest 4.3.00, p.16
References: Mintzberg 90

2.1.6 Leadership and Influence on Followers

Key Concepts & Arguments

The outcome of leader/follower interaction is the pursuit of goals and objectives (the object of the leader's use of influence).

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.99, p.9

The willingness of followers to accept direction is related to: the degree of follower motivation and understanding; the level of value congruence between leader and follower.

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.99, p.9

Leadership effectiveness reflects the 'fit' between leadership style and the environment.

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.99, p.24

2.1.7 Leading Professionals

Key Concepts & Arguments

Refer to Leading Professionals notes, 17.12.00

In the CPS the influence of managerialism & reliance on bureaucratic rules creates tension for practitioners regarding the exercise of professional autonomy & practice

discretion & the requirements of administration & management

How to lead professionals - Covert Leadership (Mintzberg 98); influence & empowerment of followers (Glisson 89); optimising (Irurita 92); mentoring, self-management, participation, dual career ladder (Raelin 92); Professional Autonomy & accountability (Anderson 97; Dawson 94; Mintzberg 98; Raelin 85, 89, 92)

Challenge to professional autonomy (Dominelli 96; Dominelli & Hoogvelt 96; Nash & Savage 95; Raine & Willson 97)

Conflict thesis - critical tension points between managers & professionals (Raelin 92; von Gilnow 88)

Professional associations & standards - accreditation, training, values, code of ethics, registration, professional peer control (Raelin 85, 91, 92)

Non-professional leaders - the relevance of practice knowledge and experience (Mintzberg 98) Employee credibility; advantages of professionals as leaders & managers (Anderson 97)

Management Control - management as facilitation (Dawson 94) Envelope supervision (Benveniste 94) Conflict re. Basic ethical questions (Raelin 89)

Impact of context - Bureacracy (Anderson 97; Dawson 94) Importance of structure & service supports (Ezell 89) Moderator variable (Irurita 96) Special nature of CPS practice (Hasenfeld 89; Raelin 89)

2.1.8 Professional Leadership

Who provides professional leadership in CPS & what does this involve? What distinction (in any) exists between the leadership provided by managers & professional leadership (which should involve the articulation of the knowledge & skills, the provision of training and the supervision of practice which are all necessary to achieve effective service delivery). This links closely to definitions of effective service delivery & 'best practice' which are considered in chapter

Relationship between leadership & measures of organisational performance - psychological outcomes (Parry 99)

Outcomes & methods of assessment - current CPS methods = results, 360 staff survey & organisational climate survey

Knowledge base for managers/leaders [4.3.99 p. 11 & 13 & 14

4.7.1 Professional Supervision [review KOD & identify questions]

4.7.2 Training

4.7.3 Competences

2.2 Recent experience of leadership and the relationship of this to effective service delivery

2.3 Wishes and expectations regarding the leadership which they receive or provide and the relationship of this to effective service delivery

Objective Three

To determine the structures and processes which are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery.

Appendix 3 – Research Questions - Master

Objective One

To identify how the Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership, and effective service delivery within the Community Probation Service.

1 Understanding of Leadership

1.1 Relationship between Leadership & Management

Key Concepts & Arguments

Leadership is the dynamic function of management which offers scope for the individual manager to make a difference in implementing service delivery.

Management has an emphasis upon planning, control and results.

Management is defined as a process entailing the achievement of organisational goals.

The primary purpose of leadership is to affect the climate of the organisation so that workers are empowered, excited, and inspired about the goals & mission of their organisations (Glisson 89)

Leadership as “the influential element over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization (Glisson 89)

Leadership focuses upon people, process, vision, values and direction.

Leadership and management are best viewed as overlapping constructs rather than as mutually exclusive processes.

References: Fairholm 98; Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson 96; Northouse 97; Yukl 97

Corrections: Bryans & Walford 98; Chavaria 94; Cohn 98; Holligsworth 99; Siegel 96; Wright 91

Refer to: Leadership Chapter 23.7.00 pp.1-10; Leadership Notes 26.5.00

How do you define the term management?

How do you define the term leadership?

What would you identify as the similarities/differences between management and leadership?

To what degree do you consider that the concepts of management and leadership overlap?

Who do you identify as leaders in the Community Probation Service?

What roles do you consider that leaders play in the Community Probation Service?

1.2 Leader/Follower Relationship

Key Concepts & Arguments

Leadership involves the relationship between a leader and a follower or more typically in an organisation) a group of followers? (Parry 99; Wright 91; Powls 90)

The relationship between leader and follower(s) rests upon a dynamic, interactive process which involves the leader's use of influence or persuasion (Bartol et al 95; Wright 91; Northouse 97; Fiedler 96)

Concept of willing following (Parry 99)

What do you consider to be the nature of the relationship between a leader and a follower?

What do you consider to be the desired outcomes of the relationship between a leader and a follower?

1.3 Use of Power

Key Concepts & Arguments

Concept of social influence: refers to a change in the belief, attitude or behaviour of a person resulting from the action or presence of another person.

French & Raven's Taxonomy: legitimate power, reward power, coercive power, expert power, informational power, referent power.

Yukl's distinction between personal & positional power

What types of power characterise leadership in the CPS?

Which types of power are linked to influencing follower behaviour (positive/negative)?

Which types of power do followers respond to emotionally (positive/negative)?

1.4 Characteristics of Leaders

Key Concepts & Arguments

Traits associated with leadership: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity and sociability (Northouse 97)

Components of Emotional Intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation,

empathy, social skill (Goleman 98)

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.00, pp.14-16

References: Bryans & Walford 98; Fairholm 98; Yukl 97; Bartol et al 95; Northouse 97

What traits/characteristics do you associate with a person who is an effective leader?

1.5 Behaviours of Leaders

Key Concepts & Arguments

Yukl - task behaviour, relationship behaviour, change oriented behaviour (Yukl 98)

A given leadership style will not be optimal in all situations. The primary focus of situational leadership should be about meeting followers' needs. (Fairholm 98; Yukl 98)

Competencies demonstrating emotional intelligence (e.g., ability to work with others, effectiveness in leading change) (Goleman 98)

Leadership is generally exercised on three different levels:
At the individual level, leaders mentor, coach and motivate.
At the group level they build teams and resolve conflicts
At the organisational level they build culture (Mintzberg 98)

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.00, pp.17-25

References: Bartol et al 95; Northouse 97; Yukl 97

What follower needs do you consider that a leader should be able to meet?

How can these needs be met?

What do you consider that followers would expect an effective leader to do?

1.6 Leadership Effectiveness

Relationship between leadership & measures of organisational performance - psychological outcomes (Parry 99)

Outcomes & methods of assessment - current CPS methods = results, 360 staff survey & organisational climate survey

What do you consider to be the desired results/outcomes of effective leadership for a follower?

How would you assess effective leadership?

1.7 Situational Leadership

Situational theory is concerned with the cluster of complex forces at work in an organisational environment - any of which might affect leader activity. The underlying assumption is that different leader patterns will be effective in different situations, a given leadership behaviour will not be optimal in all situations. The primary focus of situational leadership should be about meeting followers needs - emphasis upon the leader/follower relationship.

1.8 Transactional Leadership

Irurita 96

Key Concepts & Arguments

Bass identifies the exchange basis - followers receive rewards in return for compliance with organisational requirements. Motivation is based on an appeal to self-interest.

Three components: contingent reward, management-by-exception, laissez-faire

Need questions which will identify these types of behaviour - e.g.

1.9 Transformational Leadership

Key Concepts & Arguments

Transformational leadership is a process involving the mutual engagement of both leader & follower in a way which raises the motivation of both to pursue collective goals. This augments transactional behaviours.

The balance of the mix is dependant upon characteristics of the leader, followers & contextual/situational influences.

Transformational leadership places emphasis upon change. Ongoing change in CPS - structural & management (what about professional?)

Need questions that will identify key transformational behaviours
What is the impact of transformational behaviour?

1.10 Charismatic Leadership

Key Concepts & Arguments

Places emphasis upon the leader's ability to communicate, project confidence, act as a role model, to tap into the underlying values held by followers at an emotional level in order to develop follower motivation.

How/why is charisma important to leaders & followers?

2. Understanding of Effective Service Delivery

2.1 Understanding of the Community Probation Service Context

Key Concepts & Arguments

The Legitimacy Challenge

- Social services have always experienced precarious legitimacy: critiqued for either failing to fulfill their social obligations or being ineffective & fostering dependency
- The ascendancy of anti-welfare state ideology in the 1980s has tipped the political scale to the extent that undermines the institutional legitimacy of many social services
- Social services are challenged more than ever to demonstrate their effectiveness & efficiency
- Social service agencies are forced to employ far more complex & sophisticated political strategies - including measures of effectiveness & efficiency - to justify their existence

The Fiscal Challenge

- Changes in how funds are allocated:
- Contracting for social services has become a predominant mode for govt agencies
- Trend to privatise and commercialise social services Dramatic rise in profit-making social services Hasenfeld

The Social Needs Challenge

- Rise in needs of chronically mentally ill
- Deinstitutionalisation movement has put pressure on social service agencies to provide shelter & care

The Organisational Challenge

- Leadership is seen as a key variable to effective transformation & adaptation of social service agencies
- There is considerable danger in adopting a simplistic notion that leadership alone can transform organisations in general and social services, in particular, to become more responsive and effective.
- There is a temptation to see in leadership alone the “quick fix” to organisational ills
- leadership is a complex phenomenon that is intrinsically tied to organisational structure and processes as well as to the environment of the organisation (Hasenfeld 89)

Notion of public service:

- Decreased sensitivity to the public expectation of justice & fairness
- Diminishment of ethics & social insight
- State services need to develop a cohesive culture which promotes the service role.

Refer to Political Economy 16.6.00, p.12

References: Robertson 91; Webster 95; Maharey 99

Influence of changes in Central Government Management

Legislative Changes

Changes in Organisational Structure

Changes in Operational policies

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, pp.20-21

References: Dale 97

Increasing complexity of practice

Refer to Correctional Environment 23.7.99, pp.37-38

References: Ault & Brown 97; Chavaria 94; Vernon & Byrd 96; Markiewicz & Vanyur 94; Wright 91;

Debate regarding the application of private sector business management theories & practices in the public sector.

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, p.25

References: Boston 97; Gummer 97b

Impact of Managerialism

Organisational structure

Role of management cf. professionals

HR policies - managerial based models cf. professional models

Refer to Political Economy 16.6.00 pp.4-6

References: Boston et al 96; Lawler & Hern 95; Edwards et al. 86; Harris 98; Dominelli & Hoogvelt 96

Impact of resource constraints: differing practice perspectives will influence interpretation of resource constraints; definitions of acceptable client outcomes may change; targeting interventions - triage process; contracting out to cheaper programmes

Refer to Case Management 19.10.99, p.6

References: Bowers et al. 99; Schumacher 85; Toch 95; Moore 92

Refer to Correctional Environment 23.7.99, pp.38-39

References: Vernon & Byrd 96; Chavaria 94; Markiwicz & Vanyur 94

Statutory & professional accountability
 Protection of the community
 Mandated intervention
 Expectation of reduced risk of re-offending
 Social control & punishment

Refer to Case Management 19.10.99, pp.1-2.

References: Wolk, Sullivan & Hartman 94; Dinerman 92; Netting 92; Schumacher 85; Toch 95

Bureau-professionalism: professional character informed by the social work perspective, professional membership & professional autonomy
 Refer to Political Economy 16.06.00, pp.7-10
 References: Domenelli & Hoogvelt 96; Evans 96; Harris 98; Lawler & Hern 95; Nash & Savage; Raine & Wilson 97

The interplay between these defining features creates a dynamic tension which is a distinctive feature of CPS practice.

What do you consider to be the significant features/aspects of the Community Probation Service practice context which influence service delivery?
 What changes have occurred in the Community Probation Service in the past 5 years that have affected service delivery?
 What tensions exist for Probation Officer practice within the Community Probation Service?

2.2 Community Probation Service Goals

Key Concepts & Arguments

Protection of the Community
 Management of Risk - surveillance
 Safe & humane containment
 Rehabilitation & reduction of re-offending

What do you consider to be the key goals of the Community Probation Service?

2.3 The Purpose of Service Delivery - Provision of Information & Sentence Management

What do you consider to be the primary purposes of Provision of Information and Sentence Management?

2.4 Knowledge Base for Service Delivery

In the absence of clearly articulated professional knowledge to guide intervention it is likely that agency rules & procedures will be used to legitimise decisions (Rosen 94)

Refer to The Social Work Perspective 19.4.00, pp.15-23

What do you consider should constitute professional knowledge for practice in the Community Probation Service?

What do you consider to be the relevance of the social work, psychological & cultural perspectives?

2.4.1 Psychology of Criminal Conduct

Key Concepts & Arguments

Identified as the primary theoretical framework which underpins the new Integrated Offender Management policy.

Foundation concepts: assessment of risk, assessment of need, responsivity.

Effective interventions - core principles: social learning & cognitive/behavioural models; criminogenic needs focus; pro-social attitudes & values; motivation; relapse prevention

Actuarial Assessment cf. Professional discretion: concept of professional over ride [include A&B construct] [links to reflexive practitioner]

Do POs/SMs demonstrate knowledge of these concepts/principles?

2.4.2 Social Work

Key Concepts & Arguments

Epistemological orientations

Practice paradigm of social work

Practice validity

Reflexive

What is the understanding of the term 'social work'?

What is the relevance of the 'social work' perspective?

Do POs/SMs regard their roles to be social work roles?

2.4.3 Case Management

Key Concepts & Arguments

The case management process is the link between a theory/model of practice & service delivery.

Case management involves: assessment & case planning; co-ordination & brokerage of service; direct clinical intervention; monitoring and evaluation. The clinical role differentiates case management as a professional role of. an administrative activity.

What are the core processes/activities involved in case management?
What are the desired outcomes/results of the case management process?

2.5 Best Practice

2.5.1 Linking Theory and Practice

Refer to The Social Work Perspective 19.4.00

Levels of discourse: scientific & practical

Page 11

References: Fox 97; Walter-Busch 95

Practice validity

Page.12

References: Sheppard 98

Key Proposition = Practice should be based on relevant & valid knowledge

Influence of the rational, scientific, problem-solving paradigm

Page.16

References: Gambrill 99; Rosen 94; Rosen et al 95; Bartol et al. 95

An integrative process leads to the development of an individual practice framework

Page.17

References: Bartol et al. 95; Nai 98

The social worker is an active agent in the theory practice link

Page 17.

References: Nai 98; Turner 96

Importance of environmental influences

Note the influence of values upon any theory.

Page. 17-18

References: Souflee 93; Robbins et al. 99

Informed Eclecticism

Page 21

References: Payne 91; Carew 79; Schon 95; Robbins et al. 99

Need more recent references!

Expert practice is a distinct skill, separate from the ability to explain a theoretical perspective.

Page 21

References: Fook et al. 97

Intuitive development of practice wisdom is also based on the combination of knowledge and experience

Page 20

References: Schon 95; Goldstein 98; Klein & Bloom 95; Pray 91; Scott 90; Souflee 93

What are the benefits of practice which is informed by theory?

How do Probation Officers and Service Managers link theory to practice?

2.6 Models of Best Practice

Key Concepts & Arguments

Practice perspectives: client centred/systems approach.

A practice perspective underpins models of practice which will determine the nature of intervention. Links back to broader epistemological underpinnings of technical rational and reflective models

Refer to Case Management 19.10.99, pp.4-5

References: Bowers et al. 99; Ryan et al. 99; Austin 92; Schmidt et al. 98; Schumacher 85

Psychology of Criminal Conduct, Integrated Model of Supervision & CRIMPS - models which are promoted by the Community Probation Service.

Refer to PCC paper 21.11.99; IMS manual; CRIMPS manual

Do you consider best practice model concepts/principles to be valid & relevant to probation practice?

Do you utilise best practice model concepts/principles?

What do you understand by the term 'practice wisdom'?

Reflexive Approach

Key Concepts & Arguments

Practice wisdom - Reflective approach: based upon the interpretivist/constructivist conception of best practice.

Praxis - the process of action, followed by reflection, and return to action

Reflexivity

What is understood by PO/SM by the term practice wisdom?

What does this involve?

3 Assessment of Effective Service Delivery

Key Concepts & Arguments

Service effectiveness is the key criterion which ties direct practice & management together. Service effectiveness is more congruent with the values and purposes of social welfare professions.

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, p.18

References: Chor-fai Au 96; Turem 86

Subjectivity - notion that effectiveness is multi-dimensional

Page 16.

Reference: Chor-fai Au 96

Issues for welfare organisations: they do not operate in a free market; are susceptible to the influence of external constituencies; are often characterised by conflicting values; often have unclear goals; uncertain technologies.

Page 16-17

References: Gummer 97; Chor-Fai Au 96

In the study service quality was used as the best available surrogate measure for service effectiveness.

Service quality is an indicator of service effectiveness.

Service quality = the degree to which the organisation is competently implementing methods and techniques that are thought necessary to achieving service objectives. Ezell 89

3.1 Process Measures

Key Concepts & Arguments

Positive impact of the competence movement = core skills are identified & broken down into discrete components which can be evidenced, monitored, recorded and rewarded - resulting in standardised practice

Refer to Political Economy 16.6.00, p.9

Further sources required

What do Probation Officers and Service Managers identify as important aspects of effective service delivery?

How important is the way in which a procedure/model is implemented?

What factors influence this process?

3.2 Outcome Measures

Key Concepts & Arguments

Different levels of measurement:
 Reoffending (rate & seriousness)
 Change in offender attitude?
 Change in non criminal behaviour?
 Offender acquisition of knowledge?

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.99, p.18-19
 References: Raynor 96; Dale 97
 Further sources required

How would you define effective service delivery?
 What do you consider to be the most valid method of assessing the effectiveness of service delivery?

Objective Two

To examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers in the Community Probation Service.

4.1 Influence of Values Perspectives

What are the respective value perspectives of POs & SMs?

Key Concepts & Arguments

Instrumental and Emancipatory Perspectives: instrumental - focus upon performance & results; emancipatory - characterised by concern with social responsibility (Burgoyne & Reynolds 97)

Core Ideology - a set of core values with associated principles & tenets.
 Core purpose - the organisations most fundamental reason for continuing its business

Leadership Chapter 23.7.00, p.30
 Reference: Cohn 98

What do you identify as the core values of the Community Probation Service?
 What do you identify as the main purpose of the Community Probation Service?
 risk management, protection of the community, offender behavioural change?)

4.2 Management Values

What do you identify as the core values held by management in the Community

Probation Service?

4.3 Professional Values

4.3.1 Probation Values

Key Concepts & Arguments

Refer to Social Work Perspective 19.4.00

Social work ideology is linked to egalitarian social philosophy and political doctrine.

Page 24. Souflee 93

Social worker conceived of as a moral agent

Page 24. Nai 98

Social work as an ethical and moral endeavour.

Page 24 Goldstein 98

Concerns of social work practice: to assist clients to achieve self-determination; to display respect for the inherent dignity and worth of all people; challenge social injustice; assist the client to achieve health & well-being

Need to link in Probation material!

Empowerment involves:

Self-determination = development of self-awareness & acquisition of skills for change;

Page 25

References: Gutierrez et al. 95; Henry 95; Lee 96; Breton 94; Rees 91

Political Dimension = social work should be liberatory & concerned with social equality, social justice & reform.

Page 26

References: Jones & Novak 93; Lee 96; Henry 95; Robbins et al. 99

The relationship between client & practitioner is the vehicle of the continuity of the social work process - mutuality, reciprocity & collaboration

Page 26

References: Payne 91; Egan 86; Reid 78

Social work values emphasise service delivery effectiveness as the key goal of social administration

References: Tumen 86; Cor-fai Au 96

A key challenge in the CPS is the lack of professional accreditation/code of ethics

What do you understand by the term 'professional values'?

What do you identify as your core professional values?

What do you consider to be the unique characteristics of 'Probation' values of 'Social Work' values?

What do you identify as the relationship between your professional values and your work performance?

4.4 Ethical Standards

Key Concepts & Arguments

Social workers should: be trustworthy; act with integrity; be competent; use the best available knowledge to guide practice; not act in a way which might harm the client.

Refer to Social Work Perspective 19.4.00, p. 25

References: Klein & Bloom 95; Robbins et al. 99

What do you understand by the concept of ethical standards?

What do you identify as the ethical standards which guide their practice?

What do you identify as the relationship between your ethical standards and your work performance?

4.5 Impact of Values Congruence & Dissonance

The degree of congruence between managerial & professional values is likely to influence organisational performance.

Refer to Statement of Area of Research Interest 2.5.00, p.7

The influence of values & interpretations of operational staff is crucial to strategic success.

Refer to Definition of Area of Interest 4.3.00, p.16

References: Mintzberg 90

What is the degree of congruence between espoused organisational values and beliefs and your professional value system?

What tensions exist between espoused organisational values and beliefs and your professional value system?

What are the consequences of this tension for you?

How do any tensions impact upon your service delivery?

4.6 Leadership and Influence on Followers

Key Concepts & Arguments

The outcome of leader/follower interaction is the pursuit of goals and objectives (the object of the leader's use of influence).

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.99, p.9

The willingness of followers to accept direction is related to: the degree of follower motivation and understanding; the level of value congruence between leader and follower.

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.99, p.9

Leadership effectiveness reflects the 'fit' between leadership style and the environment.

Refer to Leadership Chapter 23.7.99, p.24

What do you identify as the primary goals of service delivery?

Who is responsible for articulating those goals?

How clear are the goals?

How do you motivate others to achieve those goals?

4.1.1 Psychological Outcomes (ref. Parry)

4.7 Leading Professionals

Refer to Leading Professionals notes, 17.12.00

In the CPS the influence of managerialism & reliance on bureaucratic rules creates tension for practitioners regarding the exercise of professional autonomy & practice discretion & the requirements of administration & management

How to lead professionals - Covert Leadership (Mintzberg 98); influence & empowerment of followers (Glisson 89); optimising (Irurita 92); mentoring, self-management, participation, dual career ladder (Raelin 92).

Professional Autonomy & accountability (Anderson 97; Dawson 94; Mintzberg 98; Raelin 85, 89, 92)

Challenge to professional autonomy (Dominelli 96; Dominelli & Hoogvelt 96; Nash & Savage 95; Raine & Willson 97)

Conflict thesis - critical tension points between managers & professionals (Raelin 92; von Gilnow 88)

Professional associations & standards - accreditation, training, values, and code of ethics, registration, and professional peer control (Raelin 85, 91, 92)

Non-professional leaders - the relevance of practice knowledge and experience (Mintzberg 98) Employee credibility; advantages of professionals as leaders & managers (Anderson 97)

Management Control - management as facilitation (Dawson 94) Envelope supervision (Benveniste 94) Conflict re. Basic ethical questions (Raelin 89)

Impact of context - Bureaucracy (Anderson 97; Dawson 94) Importance of structure & service supports (Ezell 89) Moderator variable (Irurita 96) Special nature of CPS practice (Hasenfeld 89; Raelin 89)

How would you describe the leadership which you consider to be most effective in relation to the work of professional probation officers?

What do you consider to be the relationship between professional autonomy and accountability?

What do you consider to be the purpose and role of a professional organisation?

What do you consider to be the advantages/disadvantages of leaders who are also experienced/qualified practitioners?

What other factors do you consider to have an impact upon the leadership of professionals in the Community Probation Service?

4.7 Professional Leadership

4.7.1 Professional Supervision [review KOD & identify questions]

4.7.2 Training

4.7.3 Competences

[Identify key arguments - who is responsible for driving, managing training & competences?]

What is your understanding of the concept of professional leadership?

What are the key structures & processes which are involved in the provision of professional leadership?

Who is responsible for defining what it is that should constitute professional leadership?

Who is responsible for the provision of professional leadership?

5 Recent experience of leadership and the relationship of this to effective service delivery

What has been your recent experience of leadership in the Community Probation Service?

What do you consider to be the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery?

6 Wishes and expectations regarding the leadership which they receive or provide

What are your wishes regarding the leadership which you receive/provide?

What are your expectations regarding the leadership which you receive/provide?

What do you consider would be the relationship between your wishes regarding leadership and effective service delivery?

What do you consider would be the relationship between your expectations regarding leadership and effective service delivery?

Objective Three

To determine the structures and processes which are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery.

What are your thoughts regarding the structures and processes which are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery?

A proposed outcome of the research is the development of a contextually located leadership paradigm which is congruent with service delivery goals within the Community Probation Service. This paradigm would provide the basis for the future design of a leadership development programme for staff within the Community Probation Service.

Appendix Four

Focus Group Meetings

Welcome and establish ground rules (note confidentiality)

Over view of meeting purpose and structure.

Review of research objectives and process:

To identify how the Probation Officers and Service Managers define and what they understand by the concepts of leadership and effective service delivery within the Community Probation Service. To examine how the relationship between leadership and effective service delivery is perceived and acted upon by Probation Officers and Service Managers in the Community Probation Service. To determine the structures and processes which are necessary to maximise the impact of leadership upon effective service delivery.

Description of data analysis process (Familiarisation, Identification of a Thematic Index, Indexing, Charting, Mapping and Interpretation)

Summary of key Sensitising Concepts: (1) the influence of the broader practice context; (2) the construction of practice; (3) the construct of leadership; and (4) tensions between professional and management perspectives.

Group discussion

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