

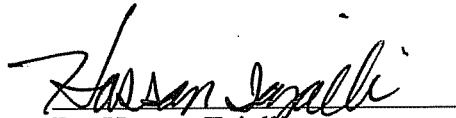
**A Practical Ideal Model for Effective Offender Interventions: An Assessment of the
Travis County Adult Probation Department**

By

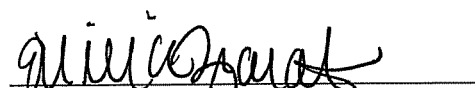
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Abstract

Purpose. The purpose of this research is threefold. The first purpose is to review the literature on a model composed of eight principles for effective offender interventions identified by the National Institute of Corrections. The second purpose is to find out to what extent the Travis County Adult Probation Department (TCAPD) is currently practicing each of these principles. Finally, this research makes recommendations on further development of the supervision methods used by this agency. *Method.* This applied research project utilizes a survey as the sole method of data collection. The survey was sent to 200 probation officers at the TCAPD to find out the degree of adherence of this agency to the principles of effective offender interventions. *Results.* The results indicate that this department adheres to most of the principles of effective offender interventions in the model.

About the Author

Agustin Marquez was born in Matamoros, Mexico in 1978. He earned a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Saint Edward's University in Austin, Texas in May of 2001. He has been a probation officer for the Travis County Adult Probation Department since July of 2001. For additional information, please contact him at eljefedejefes_2000@yahoo.com

Dedication

I dedicate this Applied Research Project to my beautiful wife Lucia, my adorable daughter Michaela, my loving parents Manuel & Martha, and God. Thanks to my wife for her unconditional love and trust. Thanks to my daughter for her lovely smile, my source of motivation. Thanks to my parents for truly being the best parents in the world. Thanks to God for His continuous blessings, for my wife, my daughter and my parents.

-Agustin

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Appendix A

Bibliography

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that violent criminals should be placed behind bars. The protection of society from future crimes by these offenders depends on incarceration. However, not all individuals who commit crimes are violent. The probation field, under the umbrella of the American Criminal Justice system, gives those nonviolent offenders a chance to correct their behavior without having to go to jail or prison. Probation is a form of community supervision which provides those convicted of a criminal offense the opportunity to live in the community while complying with certain conditions as set forth by the court. This applied research project will focus on the emergence of new interventions designed to rehabilitate those offenders on probation.

Research Purpose

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC)¹ has suggested that probation departments utilize “Evidence-Based Practices” to reduce recidivism. To accomplish this, the NIC has offered “a model or framework based on a set of principles for effective offender interventions within federal, state, local or private community corrections systems” (2004, 1). The purpose of this research is threefold. The first purpose is to review the literature on the eight principles of effective offender interventions as identified by the NIC. The second purpose is to find out to what extent the Travis County

¹ The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) is an agency within the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons. They “provide training, technical assistance, information services, and policy/program development assistance to federal, state, and local corrections agencies”
<http://www.nicic.org/AboutUs>

Adult Probation Department (TCAPD) is currently practicing each of these principles.

Finally, this research will make recommendations on further development of the supervision methods used by this agency. The following chapters discuss the background, the conceptual framework, the methodology, the results, the recommendations and the conclusion reached by this research project.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND/SETTINGS

Chapter Purpose

This chapter describes the background of the probation field and its development throughout the years. Further, this chapter sets the stage for this applied research project by identifying a need for change in this field.

Probation Development

According to Gibbons and Rosencrance (2005), probation began in 1841 when an ordinary boot-maker by the name of John Augustus persuaded a judge in Massachusetts to allow him to bail out a man accused of public drunkenness. He thought this individual could be rehabilitated and become a law-abiding citizen instead of going to jail.

Augustus took this offender “under his wing” and amazingly returned him back to court completely rehabilitated. Augustus’s results were so promising that judges allowed him to bail out more offenders with the condition that he would return them back to court for sentencing.

By 1860, probation had become part of the common law system in Massachusetts and started being utilized as an alternative to incarceration. Probation increased slowly during the next four decades. From 1925 to 1965, probation followed the medical model of social casework, which involved finding a cure and applying an appropriate remedy to those affected.

Michael J. Flatley, a senator for Suffolk County, sponsored the first adult probation law, which was introduced into the Massachusetts Assembly in 1978. This law

authorized the mayor of Boston to hire probation officers, who were supervised by the chief of police (Gibbons and Rosencrance 2005).

The initial optimism about rehabilitation waned however, during the mid 1970s, when new research claimed that criminal offenders could not be rehabilitated. Officials began to question the effectiveness of probation. This study (Martinson 1974) concluded that the rehabilitative efforts that reported thus far failed to provide an appreciable effect on offenders' recidivism. After 1975, the probation field took a different approach toward the supervision of those under its jurisdiction, moving away from rehabilitation. Critics of rehabilitation prevailed, forcing the field of probation more towards a "control" philosophy, setting aside its original belief in rehabilitation.

However, by the mid 1980s, the perception of probation as too lenient and prison as too harsh, led to the emergence of intermediate sanctions² and brought probation back as a popular sentencing option. Three events during the 1980s resulted in intermediate sanctions. First, federal courts had ruled that some southern prisons were overcrowded and therefore in violation of the eighth amendment and its protection against cruel punishments. Also, a felony study conducted by the RAND Corporation revealed that intensive supervision had been proven effective in some cases. Finally, the publication of a book on sentencing guidelines provided the courts with a new sentencing model and led to the emergence of intermediate sanctions (Gibbons and Rosecrance 2005).

Probation developed for pragmatic reasons as well. Immigrants from Eastern Europe overcrowded jails and prisons in the U.S., so probation directly benefited a strained prison system. Probation extended judges' discretion and authority as criminal

² "Sanctions that exists along a continuum of criminal penalties somewhere between probation and incarceration. Examples of intermediate sanctions, include community service, day fines, house arrest, and electronic monitoring" (see Gibbons and Rosecrance 2005)

offenders remained under their authority during their probationary terms. Prosecutors who relied heavily on plea-bargaining did not oppose probation as it was the perfect incentive for offenders to plea-bargain their pending cases.

Probation Today- The Need for Change

Following Martinson's (1974) conclusion that "nothing worked" in the rehabilitation of criminal offenders, the American criminal justice system has been focusing, primarily, on punitive approaches and ignoring rehabilitation. The field of probation has experienced wide criticism and dissatisfaction for the last thirty years (Garland 2001). According to Taxman (2002, 14), "meta-analysts have concluded that much in the correctional arena does not work (e.g., boot camps, intensive supervision, and case management)."

Probation is the branch of the criminal justice system with the most criminal offenders and has been widely criticized for its inability to develop a practical supervision method that could reduce offenders' recidivism. According to Taxman (2002, 14) "the field of supervision is one area where very little is known, primarily due to the scanty number of studies that have been devoted to measure the effectiveness of overall supervision." However, with over 4 million offenders under community supervision and more than one-third of these being sent to prison every year, the effectiveness of probation and parole is often questioned.³ The number of probation revocations per year only strengthens the public's belief that probation is nothing but a 'slap on the wrist' and less of a punishment than other interventions. More importantly,

³ See Taxman 2002

this failure reinforces the notion that probation departments are unable to reduce offender's recidivism.

Today, most probation departments concentrate their time and effort on managing inflated caseloads rather than finding new ways to target criminal behavior (Taxman 2002). Probation officers have taken a passive approach toward supervision by focusing solely on the probationer's compliance, or the lack thereof, and ignoring the offender's rehabilitation. Today's probation officers' chief function is managing paperwork, not attempting to change offender's anti-social behavior. A bulletin by the Crime and Justice Institute (2004) reported that the typical approach to probation emphasizes accountability to the officer by the offender but does not provide either one with the skills, tools, and resources that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism. The reason, according to Gelb (2006), is because officer performance evaluations measure areas of compliance such as the number of contacts between the officer and the offender, not reduction of recidivism.

In November, 2006, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, a division of the U.S. Department of Justice, reported that "during 2005 the total federal, state, and local adult correctional population – incarcerated or in the community- grew by 60,800 persons to over 7 million" (Glaze and Bonczar 2006, 1). The report, issued via a bulletin, stated that "Texas and California accounted for more than 1 million adults supervised in the community, or about 1 in 5 probationers and parolees. Each State had at least a half million adults on probation or parole: Texas with 532,228, and California with 500,003" (Glaze and Bonczar 2006, 1). Of the 2.2 million offenders removed from probation in

2005, only 59 percent “successfully” completed probation; the rest were discharged by other means including revocation of their probation terms (Glaze and Bonczar 2006).

During a “National Community Corrections Forum” in 2004 held by the Department of Justice, “forum participants agreed that probation systems across the country [were] struggling to deal with staggering workloads, lack[ed] innovation to address changing community expectations about probation and [had] difficulty dealing with defining, measuring and sustaining effectiveness” (Fabelo 2006, 2). Correctional leaders continue to face budget reductions as the number of offenders placed on probation rises. In order to meet this challenge, correctional leaders must spend their money wisely in areas proven to reduce offenders’ recidivism. Today, probation has become the most widely used sentencing option in the United States.⁴ Effective offender interventions targeting a reduction in offenders’ recidivism continue to emerge, but few probation departments are willing to implement them.

⁴ See Shearer and King 2004

CHAPTER 3: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Based on the subsequent literature, this research presents a conceptual framework connected to its relevant sources in **Table 3.1**. The conceptual framework utilized is the practical ideal type. According to Shields (1998, 215), “practical ideal types can be used as standards or points of reference.” According to the National Institute of Corrections, the following eight principles have been linked to reduction of recidivism and together form a model for effective offender interventions.

- assess actuarial risk and needs;
- enhance intrinsic motivation;
- target interventions;
- skill train with directed practice (using cognitive behavioral treatment methods);
- increase positive reinforcement;
- engage ongoing support in natural communities;
- measure relevant processes and practices and;
- provide measurement feedback.

Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs

Offender classification relies on the premise that not all offenders are identical in reference to their risk and needs (Clements 1996; Kropp and Hart 2004). The first principle in the model of effective offender interventions is an actuarial assessment of -

Table 3.1: Conceptual Framework Linked to the Literature

| CATEGORIES | SOURCE |
|--|--|
| Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offender classification • Identify the offender's risk of recidivating • Identify the offender's Criminogenic Needs | Andrews et al. 1990; Bonta 1996; Bonta 2002; Clements 1996; Evans 2006; Grove et al. 2000; Kropp and Hart 2004; Lowenkamp and Latessa 2004; McGuire and Hatcher 2001; NIC 2004; Simourd et al. 2006 |
| Enhance Intrinsic Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview the offender using Motivational Interviewing (MI) • Provide training to officers re: MI | Clark et al. 2006; Colwell and Pollock 1997; Harper and Hardy 2000; Kear-Cowell and Pollock 1997; Knopp 1984; Langeving and Laing 1985; Miller and Rollnick 1991; Prochaska et al. 1992; Robinson and Raynor 2006; Ryan and Deci 2000; Taxman 2002; White 2005 |
| Target Interventions (match offenders with treatment programs taking into account the principles below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Principle • Criminogenic Need Principle • Responsivity Principle • Dosage of Treatment • Treatment Principle | Andrews et al. 1990; Andrews and Bonta 1998; Evans 2006; Ferguson 2002; Lowenkamp and Latessa 2004; McGuire and Hatcher 2001; Miller and Rollnick 1991; NIC 2004; Thanner and Taxman 2001; White 2005 |
| Skill Train with Directed Practice (using cognitive behavioral treatment methods) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate social learning techniques to programs offered to the offender • Implement treatment programs that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism | Andrews and Bonta 1998; Ferguson 2002; Lipsey and Wilson 1993; McGuire and Hatcher 2001; NIC 2004; White 2005; |
| Increase Positive Reinforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize a 4:1 ratio approach offering four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement in order to sustain behavioral change | Bandura 1996; Ferguson 2002; Higgins and Silverman 1999; Meyers and Smith 1995; NIC 2004; White 2005; |
| Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realign and actively engage pro-social supports for the offender | Meyers et al. 2002; Meyers and Smith 1997; O'Connor and Perryclear 2003; Rhine 2002; White 2005; |
| Measure Relevant Processes and Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of the offender's progress • Measurement of Outcomes • Measurement of officers' performance of the application of EBP | Gelb 2006; Henggeler et al. 1997; Hogue et al. 1998; Milhalic and Irwin 2003; NIC 2004; Pettway 2008; White 2005; |
| Provide Measurement Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide verbal/written feedback to offenders • Provide feedback to officers on their performance through case audits | Agostinelli et al. 1995; Alvero et al. 2001; Baer et al. 1992; Ludeman 1991; NIC 2004; |

the offender's risk and needs. An assessment that takes into account the offender's risk and needs is the first step in determining his or her appropriate supervision (Clements 1996). To accomplish this goal, it is necessary to have an assessment tool that combines the offender's risk and needs. This combination will produce a better prediction of the offender's likelihood to recidivate and a better way to identify the treatment interventions that will target his or her needs (Bonta 1996). According to the National Institute of Corrections (2004, 3), "screening and assessment tools that focus on dynamic and static risk factors, profile criminogenic needs⁵, and have been validated on similar populations are preferred."

Probation departments shoulder an enormous responsibility in keeping communities protected from those offenders under their supervision. Risk, as defined by Lowenkamp and Latessa (2004, 3), "refers to the probability of re-offending." For this reason, each jurisdiction must have in place a system of offender classification to identify those individuals at greater risk of re-offending. Once their risk is identified, probation departments must apply the majority of their resources to high-risk offenders because with this group, treatment interventions prove most effective (Andrews et al. 1990; Evans 2006; Lowenkamp and Latessa 2004). Researchers argue that it makes better sense to direct treatment programs to high-risk offenders because they require a greater level of intervention than their lower risk counterparts. In addition to identifying the offender's risk, departments should also identify the offender's criminogenic needs. Therefore, any probation department that is concerned with reducing offenders' recidivism should have in place a 'reliable' assessment tool to better identify their probationers' needs. Proper

⁵ "Aspects of individuals' lives that are conducive to or supportive of offensive acts" (e.g. substance abuse, asaultive behavior, dysfunctional families, etc.). See McGuire and Hatcher 2001

identification is crucial in choosing effective treatment interventions (Andrews et al. 1990; Bonta 1996; Clements 1996).

There are two categories of assessment tools used to evaluate offenders; they are the clinical assessment tool and the actuarial assessment tool. Clinical assessments are “those in which an opinion is formulated based on a variety of subjective information such as intuition, wisdom, experience or ‘gut feeling’” (Simourd et al. 2006, 7). These assessments are usually completed through interviews with the offender or information in his or her case file such as criminal history. Despite being widely used, this type of assessment tends to be biased because of the method by which information is obtained. On the other hand, in an actuarial assessment, “opinions are formulated on the basis of client scores from standardized instruments” (Simourd et al. 2006, 7). More important, “actuarial instruments have empirically established relationships with outcomes of interest (recidivism is a prime outcome in corrections), and, thus, specific scores on the instrument are directly linked to probabilistic prediction estimates” (Simourd et al. 2006, 7). Although there has been some debate over which assessment tool better identifies the offender’s risks and needs, some researchers have agreed that actuarial assessments are better than clinical assessments (Bonta 2002; Grove et al. 2000; Simourd et al. 2006).

Enhance Intrinsic Motivation

Ryan and Deci (2000, 70) wrote: “ Perhaps no single phenomenon reflects the positive potential of human nature as much as intrinsic motivation, the inherent tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one’s capacities, to explore,

and to learn.” It is the enhancement of the offender’s intrinsic motivation that constitutes the second principle in the model of effective offender interventions.

Prochaska et al. (1992) formulated a model of “stages of change” based on similarities amongst groups of individuals, who were in the process of changing an addictive behavior. The researchers noticed that most individuals visited six stages of change in a circular form (pre-contemplation, contemplation, preparation, action, maintenance and relapse). See **Figure 3.1 and Table 3.2**. It should be noted that not all individuals moved through the stages in a clockwise direction. Some went back and forth from stage to stage, and others did not visit the relapse stage. However, the lack of motivation by individuals to buy into treatment, along with their resistance and defensiveness to change, were all blamed for the treatment failure.

Figure 3.1: Stages of Change Model

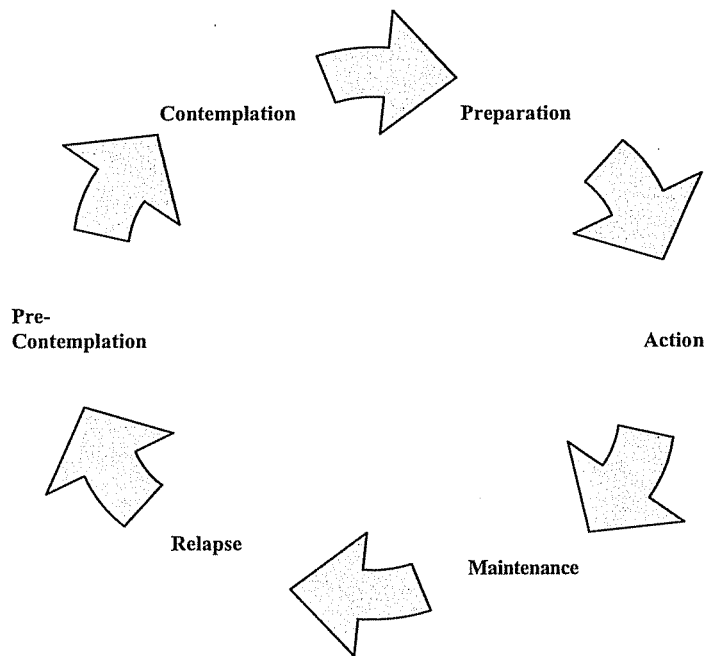


Table 3.2: Prochaska and DiClemente's Stages of Change Model

| Stage of Change | Characteristics | Techniques |
|-------------------|--|---|
| Pre-contemplation | Not currently considering change: "Ignorance is bliss" | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validate lack of readiness• Clarify: decision is theirs• Encourage re-evaluation of current behavior• Encourage self-exploration, not action• Explain and personalize the risk |
| Contemplation | Ambivalent about change: "Sitting on the fence" Not considering change within the next month | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Validate lack of readiness• Clarify: decision is theirs• Encourage evaluation of pros and cons of behavior change• Identify and promote new, positive outcome expectations |
| Preparation | Some experience with change and are trying to change: "Testing the waters" Planning to act within 1 month | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify and assist in problem solving re: obstacles• Help patient identify social support• Verify that patient has underlying skills for behavior change• Encourage small initial steps |
| Action | Practicing new behavior for 3-6 months | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on restructuring cues and social support• Bolster self-efficacy for dealing with obstacles• Combat feelings of loss and reiterate long-term benefits |
| Maintenance | Continued commitment to sustaining new behavior Post-6 months to 5 years | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan for follow-up support• Reinforce internal rewards• Discuss coping with relapse |
| Relapse | Resumption of old behaviors: "Fall from grace" | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate trigger for relapse• Reassess motivation and barriers• Plan stronger coping strategies |

http://www.cellinteractive.com/ucla/physician_ed/stages_change.html

The good news is that this model of the “stages of change” can be applied to the field of probation. Research suggests that if a motivational approach is utilized, then offenders will contemplate the need for change and commit to treatment (Harper and Hardy 2000; Kear-Colwell and Pollock 1997; Knopp 1984; Lagenving and Laing 1985). Through Motivational Interviewing (MI) techniques, offenders become aware that their criminal behavior conflicts with their personal goals and well-being. MI techniques include open-ended questions, affirmations, reflective listening and summarizations which are aimed at helping offenders move through the “stages of change” (Miller and Rollnick 1991). Colwell and Pollock (1997, 20) state that “motivational interventions produce dissonance and then direct the change process in a more productive direction, with a greater probability of offenders taking responsibility for, and engaging in, active treatment.” MI techniques that work are those that “challenge people to think for themselves...and...motivate [them] to overcome obstacles and take charge of their own lives” (Robinson and Raynor 2006, 342). These interviewing techniques are more effective than the technical⁶ language currently used by probation personnel.

Motivational interviewing is a method of talking with people about change (Miller and Rollnick 1991). This method was recently introduced to the criminal justice system and is expected to bring promising results in offenders’ rehabilitation. Clark et al. (2006) gives eight reasons why a probation department should consider motivational interviewing practices. They are listed as follows:

- Motivational interviewing aligns with evidence-based practices.
- It can help the officer get "back into the game" of behavior change.
- It suggests effective tools for handling resistance and can keep difficult situations from getting worse.

⁶ Refers to procedural and bureaucratic language, which focuses mainly on compliance issues and completely disregards offender rehabilitation.

- It keeps the officer from doing all the work and makes interactions more change-focused.
 - Interactions are more change-focused when the officer understands where change comes from.
 - Change-focused interactions place the responsibility for behavior change on the offender.
 - Motivational interactions create an appetite for change in offenders by amplifying their ambivalence.
- Motivational Interviewing changes who does the talking.
- It helps prepare offenders for change.
 - Asking questions that raise interest.
- Motivational Interviewing changes what is talked about.
 - Eliciting “change talk” (self-motivational speech).
- It allows officers to enforce probation orders and deliver sanctions without leaving a motivational style.
 - Addressing lying and deception.
 - Addressing violations and sanctions.

According to Taxman (2002, 15), “supervision services are built on the framework that ‘contacts,’ or the relationship between the offender and the supervision agent, are the cornerstone to managing and/or changing offender behavior.” For this reason, the purpose of contact between the probation officer and the offender should be to motivate the probationer to make changes to the behavior that caused him or her to violate the law. Research suggests that “sustained change in an offender’s behavior is more likely to occur when the offender is motivated to change” (White 2005, 9). Therefore, probation officers should receive the necessary training in the critical area of MI if results of changing behavior are to be expected (Harper and Hardy 2000; Taxman 2002).

Target Interventions

The NIC calls the third principle in this practical ideal model “Target Interventions”. Research by Andrews et al. (1990) suggests that selected treatment

interventions, if matched with certain characteristics of the offender, reduce recidivism. Five principles must be considered when matching offenders to treatment programs. They are the offender's risk, needs, responsivity⁷, dosage and treatment. Simply stated, probation departments should move away from the conventional "one size fits all" approach and match offenders with the appropriate treatment interventions.

The "risk principle" states that supervision and treatment resources should target those offenders at higher risk to re-offend (Andrews et al. 1990; Evans 2006; Lowenkamp & Latessa 2004; McGuire and Hatcher 2001). By the same token, the "need principle" states that an appropriate delivery of treatment must target the offender's criminogenic needs (Andrews et al. 1990). Targeting the offender's criminogenic needs with the appropriate treatment intervention means focusing on the issue that caused the offender to commit the crime (Andrew et al. 1990; Ferguson 2002; McGuire and Hatcher 2001). Researchers believe that altering criminogenic needs results in a change in offenders' behavior. Subsequently, the "responsivity principle" states that officials should consider certain offender characteristics such as culture, gender, and learning styles when assigning them to treatment programs (Andrews et al. 1990; Miller and Rollnick 1991).

Dosage of treatment is key in offender rehabilitation, as it makes better sense to provide more intensive treatment interventions to those offenders at higher risk than to those at lower risk (Andrews et al. 1990; Andrews and Bonta 1998; Lowenkamp and Latessa 2004; Thanner and Taxman 2001). Specifically, placing low-risk offenders in intensive treatment programs proved counterproductive as it actually increased their

⁷ See Ferguson 2002, 473, as it explains that "the responsivity principle suggests that characteristics of the offender, such as personality and learning styles, influence how he or she responds to different types of treatment."

probability to recidivate (Lowenkamp and Latessa 2004). Dosage of treatment also dictates that “interventions should be administered to provide the proper length of each individual treatment session, the right frequency or number of treatment sessions each week, and the correct duration or length of the treatment service” (White 2005, 10). Finally, the treatment principle dictates that “cognitive-behavioral types should be applied as an integral part of the sentence/sanction process” (NIC 2004, 5).

Skill Train with Directed Practice (Using Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment Methods)

Research suggests that treatment that addresses the offender’s cognitive-behavioral function is key in reducing recidivism (Andrews and Bonta 1998; Ferguson 2002; McGuire and Hatcher 2001). According to McGuire and Hatcher (2001, 565), effective programs are those in which “contents and methods are empirically based and are more likely to involve the application of social learning, cognitive-behavioral models of changes.” Therefore, if the probationer is able to utilize learned problem-solving skills in his or her life, then he or she will be able to act appropriately in a real life situation.

According to the National Institute of Corrections (2004), staff and treatment providers must understand antisocial thinking, appropriate communication techniques, and social learning. There are two types of cognitive interventions: cognitive restructuring and cognitive skills training. Cognitive restructuring requires offenders recognize the destructive attitudes and thinking that reinforce their criminal behavior. If that criminal behavior is replaced with pro-social values, then recidivism rates will be reduced. On the other hand, cognitive skills training teaches offenders through role-playing how to improve their problem-solving and coping skills (White 2005).

Increase Positive Reinforcement

Research has found that the most effective programs are those that offer more positive reinforcements than punishments (Bandura 1996; Ferguson 2002; Higgins and Silverman 1999; Meyers and Smith 1995; White 2005). The literature shows that human beings retain more information about new skills and behavioral change when they are offered positive reinforcement rather than punishment for their mistakes. Offenders respond positively “when they are approached with *carrots* rather than *sticks*” (NIC 2004, 6). Also, research indicates that in order to sustain change in the offender’s behavior, a 4:1 ratio is recommended, offering four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement.

Furthermore, research by White (2005) claims that new behaviors and new acquired skills not appropriately reinforced are not retained. Thomas White (2006, 26) wrote “the way to change individual behavior is to provide them with the required skills, set achievable goals, positively reinforce their efforts, and celebrate their accomplishments.”

Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities

This principle states that probation department must include community support groups in the offender’s plan of supervision. According to Rhine (2002, 40), probation officers “must reach well beyond the management of individual caseloads to devote a significant portion of their time to connecting offenders with pro-social peers, mentors and other adults in the neighborhoods where probationers live.” A clinical study

conducted by Meyers et al. (2002) revealed that the engagement of so called “concerned significant others” had a “significant” effect in offender participation in treatment.

Involving family members, spouses or other support systems, such as twelve-step programs or religious activities has proven beneficial in the rehabilitation of offenders because these influences reinforce positive behavior (Meyers and Smith 1997; O’Connor and Perryclear 2002). According to White (2005) the involvement and training of family members, friends, and employers is crucial as they help reinforce pro-social behavior and may recognize triggers leading to offender relapse.

Measure Relevant Processes and Practices

This principle suggests that probation departments ought to have in place a reliable mechanism for measuring outcomes (Gelb 2006; NIC 2004). Departments should be able to document and measure the offender’s progress in cognitive and skill development (White 2005). In order to measure outcomes, “all programs should have identified outcomes and integrated methods for measuring progress toward objectives” (Pettway 2008, 3). Also, reviewing periodically offenders’ re-arrests and revocation rates is important because it provides departments with an overview of where they stand in the implementation of effective offender interventions.

In addition, measuring staff performance is a crucial step, as implementation of new practices hinges on staff fidelity (Henggeler et al. 1997; Milhalic and Irwin 2003). The literature reveals that officers that are regularly evaluated on their performance are more prone to program implementation (Henggeler et al. 1997; Hogue et al. 1998; NIC 2004).

Provide Measurement Feedback

As noted in the seventh principle, once a mechanism for measuring outcomes is established, feedback should be given to both offenders and officers. Feedback, both verbal and in writing, will help offenders make adjustments and correct problem behavior (Baer et al. 1992; Ludeman 1991). On the other hand, feedback will help officers remain focused and loyal to new program implementation.

Research involving heavy-drinking young adults, randomly chosen to receive feedback about their drinking, revealed that feedback caused a reduction in their alcohol consumption (Agostinelli et al. 1995; Baer et al. 1992). According to the NIC (2004, 7) guidelines, “Providing feedback to offenders regarding their progress builds accountability and is associated with enhanced motivation for change, lower treatment attrition, and improved outcomes (e.g., reduced drink/drug days; treatment engagement; goal achievement).” Feedback is the best technique so far utilized to effectively change behavior (Alvero et al. 2001). Probation departments should provide feedback to their staff through regular performance audits if the principles of effective offender intervention are to remain successful (NIC 2004).

Chapter Summary

This literature review outlines the model of effective offender interventions as developed by the National Institute of Corrections. Each principle is supported by relevant sources as shown in the conceptual framework table. The following chapter describes the methodology used to accomplish the second objective of this study.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

Chapter Purpose

This chapter describes the methodology used to assess the degree of adherence of the Travis County Adult Probation Department to the principles of effective offender interventions. In this chapter, the research method is described and operationalized for the purpose of data collection. Additionally, this chapter describes in detail the unit of analysis, the sample population, the research method, the research technique, the statistics, and the human subjects protection implicated in this research project.

Unit of Analysis

The study's unit of analysis is Travis County probation officers. This research surveyed probation officers because, as frontline employees, they are familiar with this department's currently utilized offender interventions. In addition, they were surveyed because they provide a method by which to determine if any of the principles of the practical ideal model are currently being practiced in Travis County.

Sampling

Surveying the sampling frame rather than selecting a population sample is preferable as the sampling frame gives the researcher a more accurate representation of the population (Babbie 2004). Therefore, every probation officer in this agency was selected for the survey. In addition to regular and specialized officers, unit managers,

senior officers, and officers at the TAIP⁸ unit, officers at the Diagnostic unit and SMART⁹ Program received the survey. Although these individuals hold different positions and work in different units, all are probation officers acquainted with the offender interventions utilized in Travis County. A total of 200 surveys were distributed.

This research project focused only on the Travis County Adult Probation Department, which is the fifth largest probation department in Texas. “In 2005, Travis County had 4% of the statewide probation population under direct supervision with 11,333 offenders” (Fabelo 2006, iii).

Method

This applied research project assessed the application of the principles of effective offender interventions in Travis County Probation using a survey questionnaire. According to Shields and Tajalli (2006, 324) “one way to gauge the efficacy of program processes is to develop criteria for this judgment and then to collect empirical evidence to contrast the reality of the program against the criteria.” The questionnaire assesses the adherence of Travis County Probation to the model of effective offender interventions. Statements were derived from the sub-categories in the framework. These statements were created by an analysis of the literature pertaining to each principle of the model. For example, two statements were formulated from the first sub-category under the principle of “Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs” which states that the offender’s risk of recidivating should be identified. These statements were created with the intent to gauge

⁸ Operated by Travis County Probation and funded by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice-Community Justice Assistance Division (TDCJ-CJAD), the TAIP office provides for assessment and outpatient or residential treatment services for offenders with alcohol and/or drug problems.

⁹ Operated by Travis County Probation and funded by TDCJ-CJAD, the SMART Program is community corrections based for substance abuse treatment and offender rehabilitation.

Travis County's compliance with this principle and to determine its degree of adherence to it. **Table 4.1** shows how each principle and its sub-category(s) in the conceptual framework was operationalized into a survey statement(s) for the purpose of data collection. Survey statements are measured on a nominal scale with responses of never, rarely, sometimes, most of the time, and always.

Table 4.1: Operationalization of the Conceptual Framework Table

| CATEGORIES | QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS |
|---|--|
| Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offender classification | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department utilizes assessment tools that classify offenders into categories according to their risk levels. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the offender's risk of recidivating | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department utilizes assessment tools that identify the offender's probability to re-offend. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the offender's Criminogenic needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department utilizes assessment tools that evaluate the offender for substance abuse. My Department utilizes an assessment tool that indicates if the offender has a dysfunctional family. My Department utilizes an assessment tool that determines if the offender indicates assaultive behavior. |
| Enhance Intrinsic Motivation | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview the offender using Motivational Interviewing (MI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department evaluates its officers on the use of Motivational Interviewing techniques during performance evaluations. In all my contacts with my clients, I always include Motivational Interviewing techniques. I believe Motivational Interviewing can change the offender's behavior. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training to officers re: Motivational Interviewing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department provides mandatory Motivational Interviewing training for its officers. |
| Target Interventions (matching offenders with treatment programs taking into account the principles below) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Principle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In my Department, high-risk offenders receive more intensive supervision than low-risk offenders. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminogenic Need Principle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department orders treatment for offenders with substance abuse problems. My Department orders treatment for offenders with assaultive behavior. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsivity Principle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's mental health needs. When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's culture. When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's gender. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dosage of Treatment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department requires offenders with higher risk levels to complete more intensive counseling. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment Principle | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department utilizes a progressive sanctions model which includes treatment/counseling interventions. |

Table 4.1: (Continued)

| CATEGORIES | QUESTIONNAIRE STATEMENTS |
|---|---|
| Skill Train with Directed Practice (using cognitive behavioral treatment methods) | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate social learning techniques to programs offered to the offender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department offers counseling where the offender is able to role-play the skills he is introduced to during class sessions. My Department offers treatment where the offender is taught problem-solving skills. My Department offers treatment where the offender is taught how to improve his coping skills. My Department offers counseling that addresses the offender's thinking errors. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement treatment programs that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department utilizes treatment programs that are based on scientific evidence. My Department utilizes treatment programs that are aimed at reducing recidivism. My Department offers Cognitive-Behavioral Programs for offenders. I have received sufficient Cognitive-Behavioral training for treating offenders. |
| Increase Positive Reinforcement | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize a 4:1 ratio approach offering four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement in order to sustain behavioral change | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department promotes the use of positive reinforcement among officers. My Department offers incentives to offenders who do well on probation. I always offer four positives reinforcements for every negative reinforcement to my clients. |
| Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realign and actively engage pro-social supports for the offender | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If needed, I encourage my clients to surround themselves with pro-social family members. If needed, I include participation in Alcoholics Anonymous groups to serve as pro-social supports in the offender's supervision plan. I believe that collateral contacts in the community is important for my client's success. |
| Measure Relevant Processes/Practices | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of the offender's progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I assess/reassess the offender's case at least once a year. I utilize the information obtained from the assessment/reassessment to develop supervision plans for the offender. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurement of Outcomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department regularly reviews revocation rates. I think my supervision has a positive impact on offenders' recidivism. I think that offenders who complete treatment programs are less likely to commit another crime. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measurement of officers' performance in the application of EBP | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> My Department evaluates my performance on the application of Evidence-Based Practices through case audits. |
| Provide Measurement Feedback | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide verbal/written feedback to offenders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I give verbal feedback to offenders in reference to their supervision. I give written feedback to offenders in reference to their supervision. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide feedback to officers on their performance through case audits | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I receive feedback on my performance through case audits. |

Research Technique

Survey research is the sole method of data collection utilized in this research project. Babbie (2004, 243) suggests that “surveys may be used for descriptive, explanatory and exploratory purposes.” The principles of effective offender interventions were the blueprints for the formulation of a closed-ended questionnaire. This survey was created utilizing the online survey engine “SurveyMonkey.com” and was sent out electronically to every probation officer in Travis County. According to Babbie (2004, 245), closed-ended questions provide “a greater uniformity of responses and are more easily processed than opened-ended questions”. The survey consists of a self-administered questionnaire composed of forty statements derived directly from the principles that create the practical ideal model. All the survey responses were compiled and analyzed and will be discussed in the “Results Chapter”.

A major strength of survey research is its unobtrusive nature, as respondents can complete the survey at their convenience (Salant and Dillman 1994; as cited in Sparks 2007, 57). Surveying officers was the most viable method of data collection considering time constraints. As frontline employees, officers have extensive first-hand knowledge about the application, or lack thereof, of the principles of effective offender interventions in Travis County.

However, the survey method is not immune to weaknesses. In this case, one of its limitations is due in large part to the sole reliance on a survey instrument as the only method of data collection. Another weakness is the possibility of a low number of responses. Babbie (2004) recommends that the researcher should “follow up” on the survey in order to protect against a low response rate. In this instance, respondents had

one week to complete the survey and send it back electronically. The “friendly reminder” sent out one day before the due date, nearly doubled the number of responses received.

The survey instrument was pre-tested prior to its distribution. Administrators with Travis County Adult Probation Department granted special permission for this researcher to access the department’s email list.

Statistics

Descriptive statistics were utilized to summarize the survey findings. Percentages of responses for each survey statement were calculated. These percentages represent Travis County’s degree of adherence to the practical ideal model and provide a snapshot of the survey results for recommendation development.

Human Subjects Protection

This research involved the participation of human subjects through surveys with no anticipation of harm. This research project received a formal exemption from full or expedited review by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Texas State University-San Marcos; exemption request number: 25-44363.

Information pertaining to the identity of the respondents cannot be revealed, as the survey did not ask the respondents to provide any identifying information. Also, this researcher assured the respondents, in the form of an opening statement, that their anonymity would be protected, and their participation was completely voluntary. The following chapter describes the survey results in detail.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS

Chapter Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the survey results in fulfillment of the second objective of this applied research project. The results will be analyzed to show the degree to which the Travis County Adult Probation Department adheres to the practical ideal model of effective offender interventions.

Response Rate

The survey's response was 46 percent. Out of the 200 surveys that were sent out, ninety-one were returned. However, out of the ninety-one surveys received, only sixty-nine respondents completed the survey in its entirety; twenty-two surveys were returned incomplete. Ninety-one respondents completed the survey to the end of the first category, eighty-eight to the second category, seventy-five respondents to the third one and ultimately only sixty-nine respondents completed the survey all the way to the end. See **Table 5.1** for a summary of responses per each category.

Tale 5.1: Reponses per Category

| CATEGORIES | RESPONSES |
|---|-----------|
| Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs | 91 |
| Enhance Intrinsic Motivation | 88 |
| Target Interventions | 75 |
| Still Train with Directed Practice | 73 |
| Increase Positive Reinforcement | 72 |
| Engage Ongoing Support In Natural Communities | 72 |
| Measure Relevant Processes/Practices | 69 |
| Provide Measurement Feedback | 69 |

The percentages were based on the actual number of responses for each category. These percentages provide a more comprehensible snapshot of the results. For instance,

in the statement “My Department utilizes assessment tools that classify offenders into categories according to their risk levels,” zero respondents answered “never” and “rarely”, one respondent answered “sometimes” (1.1%), twenty-four respondents said “most of the time” (26.4%) and sixty-six answered “always” (72%). The overall score of each category is the sum of the “most of the time” and “always” columns’ totals and can be found at the lower left-hand side of each table.

Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs

The literature regarding this principle requires that offenders’ risk and needs should be identified through an initial assessment. **Table 5.2** illustrates the responses in this principle. Ninety-one respondents answered this category completely. Surprisingly, 99 percent of the respondents reported their department always or most of the time utilizes assessment tools to classify offenders according to risk levels. Eighty-seven percent said Travis County always or most of the time identifies the offender’s probability to commit another crime. These high percentages strongly suggest that this agency has a method of assessment in place that classifies probationers and identifies the offender’s risk as suggested by the practical ideal model.

In reference to the identification of criminogenic needs, in the second sub-category of this principle, 58% of the respondents said their department identifies the offender’s criminogenic needs always or most of the time. The overall adherence rate for this category is 72%.

Table 5.2: Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|---|---|--------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Offender classification 99% | My Department utilizes assessment tools that classify offenders into categories according to their risk levels. | % N | 0% 0 | 0% 0 | 1.1% 1 | 26.4% 24 | 72.5% 66 |
| Identify the offender's risk of recidivating 87% | My Department utilizes assessment tools that identify the offender's probability to re-offend. | % N | 0% 0 | 2.2% 2 | 11% 10 | 29.7% 27 | 57.1% 52 |
| Identify the offender's Criminogenic needs (58%) | My Department utilizes assessment tools that evaluate the offender for substance abuse. | % N | 0% 0 | 1.1% 1 | 14.3% 13 | 50.5% 46 | 34.1% 31 |
| | My Department utilizes an assessment tool that indicates if the offender has a dysfunctional family. | % N | 7.7% 7 | 22% 20 | 38.5% 35 | 18.7% 17 | 13.2% 12 |
| | My Department utilizes an assessment tool that determines if the offender indicates assaultive behavior. | % N | 5.5% 5 | 7.7% 7 | 28.6% 26 | 26.4% 24 | 31.9% 29 |
| 72% | Totals | | 2.64% | 6.6% | 18.7% | 30.34% | 41.76% |

Enhance Intrinsic Motivation

Under this principle, the literature shows that offenders should be motivated to overcome obstacles in their lives and move forward through the “stages of change model”. Using Motivational Interviewing (MI) techniques, probation officers can help offenders understand how their behavior is “dissonant” with their goals and welfare.

Table 5.3 summarizes the findings for this principle category.

Only 55 percent of the respondents revealed their department always or most of the time adheres to the Motivational Interviewing (MI) sub-category of this principle. However, the vast majority of the respondents said their department provides mandatory training on MI, demonstrating that Travis County is moving the right direction in

reducing offender recidivism according to the model of effective offender interventions.

The overall score for this principle is 65 percent.

Table 5.3: Enhance Intrinsic Motivation Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|---|--|--------|-----------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Officers interview the offender using Motivational Interviewing (MI) (55%) | My Department evaluates its officers on the use of MI techniques during performance evaluations. | % N | 2.3% 2 | 5.7% 5 | 25% 22 | 33% 29 | 34.1% 30 |
| | In all my contacts with my clients, I always include MI techniques. | % N | 3.4% 3 | 3.4% 3 | 31.8% 28 | 54.5% 48 | 6.8% 6 |
| | I believe MI changes the offender's behavior. | % N | 2.3% 2 | 13.6% 12 | 48.9% 43 | 28.4% 25 | 6.8% 6 |
| Provide training to officers re: MI (98%) | My Department provides mandatory MI training for its officers. | % N | 0% 0 | 0% 0 | 2.3% 2 | 9.1% 8 | 88.6% 78 |
| (65%) | Totals | | 2% | 5.67% | 27% | 31.25% | 34.07% |

Target Interventions

Under this component of the model, the literature states that effective offender interventions are more efficient if they take into consideration the following principles when matching offenders with treatment programs: risk, criminogenic needs, responsivity, dosage, and treatment principle. **Table 5.4** describes the responses pertaining to this component of the model.

About 90 percent of the respondents said their department always or most of the time takes into account the risk principle when matching offenders with treatment programs. Also, when asked if their department ordered treatment for offenders with substance abuse and assaultive behavior, thus, addressing their criminogenic needs, 85 percent responded always or most of the time. In order to address the responsivity principle under the umbrella of this larger principle, respondents were asked if their

department takes into consideration the offender's mental health needs, culture and gender when matching offenders with treatment programs; thirty-eight percent said always or most of the time. Only one statement was developed to address the dosage principle, and just over half of the respondents said their department takes this principle into account always or most of the time. Finally, the treatment principle was addressed by asking officers if their department utilized a progressive sanctions model with treatment/counseling interventions, to which 85 percent of the respondents said their department always or most of the time does. This category had a 64 compliance rate.

Table 5.4: Target Interventions Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|-----------------------------------|---|--------|-------------|--------------|---------------|------------------|---------------|
| Risk Principle (89%) | In my Department, high-risk offenders receive more intensive supervision than low-risk offenders. | % N | 0% 0 | 0% 0 | 10.7% 8 | 41.3% 31 | 48% 36 |
| Criminogenic Need Principle (85%) | My Department orders treatment to offenders with substance abuse problems. | % N | 0% 0 | 0% 0 | 9.3% 7 | 50.7% 38 | 40% 30 |
| | My Department orders treatment to offenders with assaultive behavior. | % N | 0% 0 | 1.3% 1 | 18.7% 14 | 48% 36 | 32% 24 |
| Responsivity Principle (38%) | When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's mental health needs. | % N | 0% 0 | 9.3% 7 | 18.7% 14 | 42.7% 32 | 29.3% 22 |
| | When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's culture. | % N | 20% 15 | 44% 33 | 25.3% 19 | 8% 6 | 2.7% 2 |
| | When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's gender. | % N | 9.3% 7 | 29.3% 22 | 30.7% 23 | 17.3% 13 | 13.3% 10 |
| Dosage of Treatment (51%) | My Department requires offenders with higher risk levels complete more intensive counseling. | % N | 1.3% 1 | 4% 3 | 44% 33 | 34.7% 26 | 16% 12 |
| Treatment Principle (85%) | My Department utilizes a progressive sanctions model which includes treatment/counseling interventions. | % N | 0% 0 | 0% 0 | 14.7% 11 | 44% 33 | 41.3% 31 |
| 64% | Totals | | 3.8% | 10.9% | 21.51% | 35.83% | 27.82% |

Skill Train with Directed Practice (using cognitive-behavioral treatment methods)

According to the literature, effective offender interventions utilize cognitive-behavioral treatment programs that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism. Table 5.5 describes the responses for this principle.

Table 5.5: Skill Train with Directed Practice Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|---|---|--------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Incorporate social learning techniques to programs offered to the offender (42%) | My Department offers counseling where the offender is able to role-play the skills he is introduced to during class sessions. | % N | 5.5% 4 | 16.4% 12 | 58.9% 43 | 15.1% 11 | 4.1% 3 |
| | My Department offers treatment where the offender is taught problem-solving skills. | % N | 1.4% 1 | 4.1% 3 | 43.8% 32 | 39.7% 29 | 11% 8 |
| | My Department offers treatment where the offender is taught how to improve his coping skills. | % N | 1.4% 1 | 2.7% 2 | 49.3% 36 | 32.9% 24 | 13.7% 10 |
| | My Department offers counseling that addresses the offender's thinking errors. | % N | 1.4% 1 | 5.5% 4 | 39.7% 29 | 38.4% 38 | 15.1% 11 |
| Implement treatment programs that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism (53%) | My Department utilizes treatment programs that are based on scientific evidence. | % N | 6.8% 5 | 2.7% 2 | 43.8% 32 | 37% 27 | 9.6% 7 |
| | My Department utilizes treatment programs that are aimed at reducing recidivism. | % N | 0% 0 | 0% 0 | 21.9% 16 | 54.8% 40 | 23.3% 17 |
| | My Department offers Cognitive-Behavioral Programs for offenders. | % N | 1.4% 1 | 5.5% 4 | 27.4% 20 | 39.7% 29 | 26% 19 |
| | I have received sufficient Cognitive-Behavioral training for treating offenders. | % N | 23.3% 17 | 23.3% 17 | 32.9% 24 | 12.3% 9 | 8.2% 6 |
| 48% | Totals | | 5.1% | 7.52% | 39.71% | 33.73% | 13.87% |

Four statements were developed from the first sub-category, in which 42 percent of the respondents said their department always or most of the time incorporates social learning techniques in programs offered to the offender. Still under the principle of Skill Train with Directed Practice, over half of the officers said their department always, or

most of the time, has implemented treatment programs that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism. The overall positive score for this principle category is 48 percent.

Increase Positive Reinforcement

The literature reveals that departments should utilize a 4:1 ratio approach by offering four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement in order to sustain change in the offender's behavior. Three statements were formulated to address this issue. 38 percent agreed that Travis County utilizes a 4:1 ratio approach. The overall score for this category is also 38 percent. **Table 5.6** summarizes the responses.

Table 5.6: Increase Positive Reinforcement Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|--|---|--------|-----------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Utilize a 4:1 ratio approach offering four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement in order to sustain behavioral change (38%) | My Department promotes the use of positive reinforcement among officers. | % N | 5.6% 4 | 8.3% 6 | 34.7% 25 | 36.1% 26 | 15.3% 11 |
| | My Department offers incentives to offenders who do well on probation. | % N | 1.4% 1 | 13.9% 10 | 38.9% 28 | 34.7% 25 | 11.1% 8 |
| | I always offer four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement to my clients. | % N | 9.7% 7 | 23.6% 17 | 50% 36 | 16.7% 12 | 0% 0 |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | |
| 38% | Totals | | 5.6% | 15.9% | 41.2% | 29.2% | 8.8% |

Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities

This principle suggests that departments should realign and engage pro-social supports in the community. One sub-category was developed from the literature and two statements were formulated. The statements were developed to find out if probation officers encouraged offenders to surround themselves with pro-social supports and if they

included pro-social supports in the offender’s supervision plan. Eighty-one percent said they always or most of the time do so. The overall score for this category is 81 percent.

See **Table 5.7** for a summary of the responses.

Table 5.7: Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|---|---|--------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Realign and actively engage pro-social supports for the offender (81%) | If needed, I encourage my clients to surround themselves with pro-social family members. | % N | 0% 0 | 1.4% 1 | 13.9% 10 | 36.1% 26 | 48.6% 38 |
| | If needed, I include participation in Alcoholics Anonymous groups to serve as pro-social supports in the offender’s supervision plan. | % N | 1.4% 1 | 4.2% 3 | 16.7% 12 | 43.1% 31 | 34.7% 25 |
| 81% | Totals | | 7% | 2.8% | 15.3% | 39.6% | 41.65% |

Measure Relevant Processes/Practices

The NIC states that “accurate and detailed documentation of case information, along with a formal and valid mechanism for measuring outcomes, is the foundation of evidence-based practices” (2004, 7). Eighty-six percent of officers said Travis County always or most the time adheres to the first sub-category and 66 percent to the second sub-category. To address the last sub-category of this principle, a survey statement was formulated from the literature to find out if this department measured officers’ performance on the application of Evidence-Based Practices (EBP) through cases audits. 74 percent of officers said always or most of the time. **Table 5.8** shows the responses to this principle in which the Travis County Adult Probation Department scored a 74 percent adherence rate.

Table 5.8: Measure Relevant Process/Practices Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|--|--|--------|-----------|-----------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Documentation of the offender's case information (86%) | I assess/reassess the offender's case at least once a year. | % N | 7.2% 5 | 1.4% 1 | 2.9% 2 | 5.8% 4 | 82.6% 57 |
| | I utilize the information obtained from the assessment/reassessment to develop supervision plans for the offender. | % N | 5.8% 4 | 0% 0 | 11.6% 8 | 39.1% 27 | 43.5% 30 |
| Measuring Outcomes (66%) | My Department regularly reviews revocation rates. | % N | 1.4% 1 | 0% 0 | 4.3% 3 | 36.2% 25 | 58% 40 |
| | I think my supervision has a positive impact on offenders' recidivism. | % N | 0% 0 | 5.8% 4 | 27.5% 19 | 56.5% 39 | 10.1% 7 |
| | I think that offenders who complete treatment programs are less likely to commit another crime. | % N | 0% 0 | 5.8% 4 | 56.5% 39 | 34.8% 24 | 2.9% 2 |
| Evaluation of officers' performance in the application of EBP (74%) | My Department evaluates my performance on the application of Evidence-Based Practices through case audits. | % N | 5.8% 4 | 0% 0 | 20.3% 14 | 29% 20 | 44.9% 31 |
| (74%) | Totals | | 3.3% | 2.16% | 20.51% | 33.56% | 40.33% |

Provide Measurement Feedback

The eighth and last principle of effective offender interventions suggests that probation departments should provide feedback to both offenders and officers if the principles in the practical ideal model are to remain successful. **Table 5.9** summarizes the responses pertaining to this principle. Just over half of surveyed probation officers said they always or most of the time give verbal and written feedback to offenders. Further, 88 percent of probation officers said they always or most of the time receive feedback on their performance through case audits. The overall compliance score for this category is 64%.

Table 5.9: Provide Measurement Feedback Response Summary

| Principle Sub-Category | Questionnaire Statement | | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always |
|---|---|---|-------|--------|-----------|------------------|--------|
| Provide verbal/written feedback to offenders (51%) | I give verbal feedback to offenders in reference to their supervision. | % | 0% | 1.4% | 8.7% | 40.6% | 49.3% |
| | | N | 0 | 1 | 6 | 28 | 34 |
| | I give written feedback to offenders in reference to their supervision. | % | 11.6% | 31.9% | 43.5% | 10.1% | 2.9% |
| | | N | 8 | 22 | 30 | 7 | 2 |
| Provide feedback to officers through case audits (88%) | I receive feedback on my performance through case audits. | % | 2.9% | 0% | 8.7% | 37.7% | 50.7% |
| | | N | 2 | 0 | 6 | 26 | 35 |
| 64% | Totals | | 4.8% | 11.1% | 20.3% | 29.46% | 34.3% |

Summary of Results

Table 5.10 summarizes the results and offers a snapshot of the categories and their sub-categories' percentages. The principle with the highest adherence rate was the "Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities followed by the "Measure Relevant Process" and the "Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs". The principle with the least adherence to the practical ideal model was the "Increase Positive Reinforcement".

Table 5.10: Percentages of Categories and Sub-Categories

| CATEGORIES | PERCENTAGES |
|---|--------------------|
| Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs | 72% |
| • Offender classification | 99% |
| • Identify the offender's risk of recidivating | 87% |
| • Identify the offender's Criminogenic needs | 58% |
| Enhance Intrinsic Motivation | 65% |
| • Interview the offender using Motivational Interviewing (MI) | 55% |
| • Provide training to officers re: MI | 98% |
| Target Interventions (matching offenders with treatment programs taking into account the principles below) | 64% |
| • Risk Principle | 89% |
| • Criminogenic Need Principle | 85% |
| • Responsivity Principle | 38% |
| • Dosage of Treatment | 51% |
| • Treatment Principle | 85% |
| Skill Train with Directed Practice (using cognitive behavioral treatment methods) | 48% |
| • Incorporate social learning techniques in programs offered to the offender | 42% |
| • Implement treatment programs that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism | 53% |
| Increase Positive Reinforcement | 38% |
| • Utilize a 4:1 ratio approach offering four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement in order to sustain behavioral change | 38% |
| Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities | 81% |
| • Realign and actively engage pro-social supports for the offender | 81% |
| Measure Relevant Process/Practices | 74% |
| • Documentation of the offender's progress | 86% |
| • Measurement of Outcomes | 66% |
| • Measurement of officers' performance in the application of EBP | 74% |
| Provide Measurement Feedback | 64% |
| • Provide verbal/written feedback to offenders | 51% |
| • Provide feedback to officers on their performance through case audits | 88% |

CHAPTER 6: RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Chapter Purpose

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a conclusion to this research project along with recommendations on how to further improve the application of the principles of effective offender interventions in the Travis County Adult Probation Department.

The second purpose of this applied research project was to find out to what extent the Travis County Adult Probation Department is currently practicing each of the principles of effective offender interventions. Overall, the survey results indicate that Travis County Probation is currently practicing, to a significant degree, all of the principles of the model.

Summary of Findings and Recommendations

The percentages of the “always” and “most of the time” columns were combined and are shown in the “adherence to the model” column in the table below. Based on these findings, it appears that the Travis County Adult Probation Department is in significant compliance with the practical ideal model. However, there is room for improvement in some of the categories as noted below. Hopefully, these findings and recommendations will assist this agency in making changes to enhance its adherence to the model, or at the very least, encourage others to perform further research. See **Table 6.1** for a complete snapshot of this applied research project findings and recommendations.

Table 6.1: Findings and Recommendations Summary

| CATEGORIES | ADHERENCE TO THE MODEL | FINDINGS SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS |
|---|------------------------|---|
| Assess Actuarial Risk and Needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offender Classification Identify the offender's risk of recidivating Identify the offender's Criminogenic Needs | 72% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: Survey results strongly suggest that Travis County Probation utilizes an assessment tool that identifies the offender's risk and needs. RECOMMENDATION: Emphasize further training of officers on the identification of criminogenic needs to improve compliance. |
| Enhance Intrinsic Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview the offender using Motivational Interviewing (MI) Provide training to officers re: MI | 65% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: 65 percent of officers revealed they utilize MI techniques always or most of time, however, just over one third said they believed MI can change offenders' behavior. RECOMMENDATION: Continue to train officers on MI and provide factual information on how MI can change offenders' behavior. |
| Target Interventions (match offender with treatment programs taking into account the principles below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk Principle Criminogenic Need Principle Responsivity Principle Dosage of Treatment Treatment Principle | 64% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: Survey results strongly suggest that the department takes into account the principles of risk, needs and treatment, however, some important characteristics of the reponsivity and dosage principles are missing. RECOMMENDATION: To improve its adherence to the responsivity principle, Travis County should design treatment programs that take into account the offender's culture and gender and, to improve its adherence to the dosage principle, it should perform further research to determine what causes officers to believe that offenders with higher risk levels are not always receiving more intense supervision. |
| Skill Train with Directed Practice (using cognitive behavioral treatment methods) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate social learning techniques in programs offered to the offender Implement treatment programs that are scientifically proven to reduce recidivism | 48% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: Although more than half of the respondents believed that Travis County offers cognitive-behavioral treatment and utilizes programs aimed at reducing recidivism, less than 25 percent said they have received enough training on the area of cognitive-behavioral treatment. RECOMMENDATION: All officers should receive more training on cognitive-behavioral treatment in order to understand the concept. If possible, some officers should be trained to teach cognitive-behavioral classes themselves. |

Table 6.1: (Continued)

| CATEGORIES | ADHERENCE TO THE MODEL | FINDINGS SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Increase Positive Reinforcement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize a 4:1 ratio approach offering four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement in order to sustain behavioral change | 38% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: This is the area that needs the most improvement with only 38 percent adherence to the model. RECOMMENDATIONS: Travis County should begin by promoting the use of positive reinforcement among officers and publicly recognizing those who go “the extra mile” in their duties. Second, Travis County should promote the use of incentives to offenders who do well on probation; from verbal recognitions to early probation discharges. Finally, officers should be urged to offer four positive reinforcements for every negative reinforcement to those offenders in their caseloads. |
| Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Realign and actively engage pro-social supports for the offender | 81% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: Survey results show that Travis County Probation is in adherence with this principle, therefore, no recommendation for improvement is made other than to continue to encourage officers to include pro-social support groups in the offenders’ supervision plans. |
| Measure Relevant Processes and Practices <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Documentation of the offender’s progress Measurement of Outcomes Measurement of officers’ performance of application of EBP | 74% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: Survey results revealed that Travis County adheres very well to the seventh principle of effective offender interventions. Most of the answers had a positive response. RECOMMENDATION: Further research should be completed comparing recidivism rates of those offenders who complete treatment programs with those who do not. |
| Provide Measurement Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide verbal/written feedback to offenders Provide feedback to officers on their performance through case audits | 64% Compliance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FINDINGS: While a vast majority of officers give verbal feedback to offenders, only a few do so in writing. Also, a vast majority of officers revealed they received feedback on their performance through case audits. RECOMMENDATION: Travis County should recommend in officers’ performance evaluations the need for written feedback to offenders. |

Conclusion

The purpose of this research project was to measure the Travis County Adult Probation Department against the practical ideal model of effective offender interventions developed by the National Institute of Corrections. The sole method of data collection

was a survey instrument sent out to probation officers in this agency. The survey results were analyzed utilizing simple descriptive statistics, and recommendations were made on how to further improve the implementation of the model in Travis County. Overall, Travis County demonstrated a significant adherence to the practical ideal model.

Despite this study's results, Travis County should continue to be open to the implementation of new offender treatment interventions, particularly to those based on scientific evidence. Research on effective offender interventions will continue and, hopefully, more and more probation departments across the nation will be willing to implement their findings. For now, further research should be conducted comparing Travis County to a similar jurisdiction, preferably another county in Texas with no adherence to the model, to see the actual effect of the practical ideal model on recidivism rates.

APPENDIX A

Evidence-Based Practices: An Assessment of Travis County Probation

| 1. My Department utilizes assessment tools that classify offenders into categories according to their risk levels. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 1.1% (1) | 26.4% (24) | 72.5% (66) | 4.71 | 91 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 91 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 0 |

| 2. My Department utilizes assessment tools that identify the offender's probability to re-offend. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer: | 0.0% (0) | 2.2% (2) | 11.0% (10) | 29.7% (27) | 57.1% (52) | 4.42 | 91 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 91 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 0 |

| 3. My Department utilizes assessment tools that evaluate the offender for substance abuse. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 1.1% (1) | 14.3% (13) | 50.5% (46) | 34.1% (31) | 4.18 | 91 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 91 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 0 |

| 4. My Department utilizes an assessment tool that indicates if the offender has a dysfunctional family. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 7.7% (7) | 22.0% (20) | 38.5% (35) | 18.7% (17) | 13.2% (12) | 3.08 | 91 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 91 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 0 |

| 5. My Department utilizes an assessment tool that determines if the offender indicates assaultive behavior. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 5.5% (5) | 7.7% (7) | 28.6% (26) | 26.4% (24) | 31.9% (29) | 3.71 | 91 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 91 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 0 |

| 6. My Department evaluates its officers on the use of Motivational Interviewing techniques during performance evaluations. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 2.3% (2) | 5.7% (5) | 25.0% (22) | 33.0% (29) | 34.1% (30) | 3.91 | 88 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 88 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 3 |

| 7. In all my contacts with my clients, I always include Motivational Interviewing techniques. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 3.4% (3) | 3.4% (3) | 31.8% (28) | 54.5% (48) | 6.8% (6) | 3.58 | 88 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 88 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 3 |

| 8. I believe Motivational Interviewing can change the offender's behavior. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 2.3% (2) | 13.6% (12) | 48.9% (43) | 28.4% (25) | 6.8% (6) | 3.24 | 88 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 88 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 3 |

| 9. My Department provides mandatory Motivational Interviewing training for its officers. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 2.3% (2) | 9.1% (8) | 88.6% (78) | 4.86 | 88 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 88 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 3 |

| 10. In my Department, high-risk offenders receive more intensive supervision than low-risk offenders. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 10.7% (8) | 41.3% (31) | 48.0% (36) | 4.37 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 11. My Department orders treatment to offenders with substance abuse problems. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 9.3% (7) | 50.7% (38) | 40.0% (30) | 4.31 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 12. My Department orders treatment to offenders with assaultive behavior. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Times | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 1.3% (1) | 18.7% (14) | 48.0% (36) | 32.0% (24) | 4.11 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 13. When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's mental health needs. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 9.3% (7) | 18.7% (14) | 42.7% (32) | 29.3% (22) | 3.92 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 14. When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's culture. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 20.0% (15) | 44.0% (33) | 25.3% (19) | 8.0% (6) | 2.7% (2) | 2.29 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 15. When matching offenders with treatment programs, my Department takes into consideration the offender's gender. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 9.3% (7) | 29.3% (22) | 30.7% (23) | 17.3% (13) | 13.3% (10) | 2.96 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 16. My Department requires offenders with higher risk levels to complete more intensive counseling. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.3% (1) | 4.0% (3) | 44.0% (33) | 34.7% (26) | 16.0% (12) | 3.60 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 17. My Department utilizes a progressive sanctions model which includes treatment/counseling interventions. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 14.7% (11) | 44.0% (33) | 41.3% (31) | 4.27 | 75 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 75 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 16 |

| 18. My Department offers counseling where the offender is able to role-play the skills he is introduced to during class sessions. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 5.5% (4) | 16.4% (12) | 58.9% (43) | 15.1% (11) | 4.1% (3) | 2.96 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 19. My Department offers treatment where the offender is taught problem-solving skills. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.4% (1) | 4.1% (3) | 43.8% (32) | 39.7% (29) | 11.0% (8) | 3.55 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 20. My Department offers treatment where the offender is taught how to improve his coping skills. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.4% (1) | 2.7% (2) | 49.3% (36) | 32.9% (24) | 13.7% (10) | 3.55 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 21. My Department offers counseling that addresses the offender's thinking errors. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.4% (1) | 5.5% (4) | 39.7% (29) | 38.4% (28) | 15.1% (11) | 3.60 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 22. My Department utilizes treatment programs that are based on scientific evidence. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 6.8% (5) | 2.7% (2) | 43.8% (32) | 37.0% (27) | 9.6% (7) | 3.40 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 23. My Department utilizes treatment programs that are aimed at reducing recidivism. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 0.0% (0) | 21.9% (16) | 54.8% (40) | 23.3% (17) | 4.01 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 24. My Department offers Cognitive-Behavioral Programs for offenders. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.4% (1) | 5.5% (4) | 27.4% (20) | 39.7% (29) | 26.0% (19) | 3.84 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 25. I have received sufficient Cognitive-Behavioral training for treating offenders. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 23.3% (17) | 23.3% (17) | 32.9% (24) | 12.3% (9) | 8.2% (6) | 2.59 | 73 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 73 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 18 |

| 26. My Department promotes the use of positive reinforcement among officers. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 5.6% (4) | 8.3% (6) | 34.7% (25) | 36.1% (26) | 15.3% (11) | 3.47 | 72 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 72 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 19 |

| 27. My Department offers incentives to offenders who do well on probation. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.4% (1) | 13.9% (10) | 38.9% (28) | 34.7% (25) | 11.1% (8) | 3.40 | 72 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 72 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 19 |

| 28. I always offer four positives reinforcements for every negative reinforcement to my clients. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 9.7% (7) | 23.6% (17) | 50.0% (36) | 16.7% (12) | 0.0% (0) | 2.74 | 72 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 72 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 19 |

| 29. If needed, I encourage my clients to surround themselves with pro-social family members. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 1.4% (1) | 13.9% (10) | 36.1% (26) | 48.6% (35) | 4.32 | 72 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 72 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 19 |

| 30. If needed, I include participation in Alcoholics Anonymous groups to serve as pro-social supports in the offender's supervision plan. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.4% (1) | 4.2% (3) | 16.7% (12) | 43.1% (31) | 34.7% (25) | 4.06 | 72 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 72 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 19 |

| 31. I believe that collateral contacts in the community is important for my client's success. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 6.9% (5) | 5.6% (4) | 31.9% (23) | 36.1% (26) | 19.4% (14) | 3.56 | 72 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 72 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 19 |

| 32. I assess/reassess the offender's case at least once a year. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 7.2% (5) | 1.4% (1) | 2.9% (2) | 5.8% (4) | 82.6% (57) | 4.55 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 33. I utilize the information obtained from the assessment/reassessment to develop supervision plans for the offender. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 5.8% (4) | 0.0% (0) | 11.6% (8) | 39.1% (27) | 43.5% (30) | 4.14 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 34. My Department regularly reviews revocation rates. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 1.4% (1) | 0.0% (0) | 4.3% (3) | 36.2% (25) | 58.0% (40) | 4.49 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 35. I think my supervision has a positive impact on offenders' recidivism. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 5.8% (4) | 27.5% (19) | 56.5% (39) | 10.1% (7) | 3.71 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 36. I think that offenders who complete treatment programs are less likely to commit another crime. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 5.8% (4) | 56.5% (39) | 34.8% (24) | 2.9% (2) | 3.35 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 37. My Department evaluates my performance on the application of Evidence-Based Practices through case audits. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|------------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 5.8% (4) | 0.0% (0) | 20.3% (14) | 29.0% (20) | 44.9% (31) | 4.07 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 38. I give verbal feedback to offenders in reference to their supervision. | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 0.0% (0) | 1.4% (1) | 8.7% (6) | 40.6% (28) | 49.3% (34) | 4.38 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 39. I give written feedback to offenders in reference to their supervision. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|------------|------------|------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 11.6% (8) | 31.9% (22) | 43.5% (30) | 10.1% (7) | 2.9% (2) | 2.61 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

| 40. I receive feedback on my performance through case audits. | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|------------|----------------|----------------|
| | Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Most of the Time | Always | Rating Average | Response Count |
| Answer | 2.9% (2) | 0.0% (0) | 8.7% (6) | 37.7% (26) | 50.7% (35) | 4.33 | 69 |
| | answered question | | | | | | 69 |
| | skipped question | | | | | | 22 |

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