The Revised Community Corrections Officer Orientation Scale[[1]](#footnote-1)

Introduction

Two officers have been discussing their work with a new officer in training. During the conversation, the following statements were made. Please show how much you relate to each statement pair by placing a mark above one of the seven points between them.

Instructions

On the following pages you will see two statements an officer might make about a particular aspect of his or her job. You will notice that the two statements stress different values in an officer’s role. You can agree with one of the statements completely, while disagreeing with the other completely, or you can agree with each to some degree. If you agree partially with both statements, you can select a point between the two that shows you agree with some characteristics of one and some of the other statement.

With this in mind, please rate yourself on the spectrum. If you completely agree with the statement on the left, but completely disagree with the statement on the right, place a check over point -3. If you completely agree with the statement on the right, but completely disagree with the statement on the left, place a check over point +3.

If you agree with both statements, but agree with the statement on one side more than the other, place the check closer to the side you agree with more. And, if you agree with both statements equally, place a check over point 0. See an example on the next page.

Example Item

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| Statement A |  | Statement B |
| Everybody knows right from wrong.  |  | Right and wrong are relative value judgments, and depend on a number of factors. |

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In this example, the respondent agrees with both the statement on the left and the statement on the right, but she agrees slightly more with the statement on the left, so she selected the “-1”.

Now read each statement below and mark where your level of agreement lies between the two.

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| A person *decides* to break the law due to psychological pressures and social circumstances.  |  |  | A person is predisposed to break the law by things he cannot control. These include genetics, psychological, and social circumstances. |
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| The causes of crime are internal to the offender. These include personality and choice.  |  | The causes of crime are external to the offender. These include things like neighborhood poverty and lack of resources. |

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| In the first meetings, you should find how the offender feels about his past behaviors. Then talk about where they’ve gotten him, and ask if he would behave differently now. |  | The first meeting with an offender should focus on confidence that he can adjust, while making realistic, clear goals. You should avoid talking about the past. |
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| As problems come up during supervision, it is useful to point out bad decisions and selfish behavior. You can compare these to past problems the offender had. |  | Encourage the offender to reach reasonable goals, and help him to be strong in handling himself. Try not to talk about past behavior unless he suggests it.  |
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| Always remember that each offender has the potential to violate. Even so, treat them in a way that does not decrease your confidence that you can help other offenders.  |  | Concentrate on helping the offender develop work and adjustment skills. Increase his confidence that he can live in an acceptable way. Although rule violations are possible, avoid bringing up your concerns about them.  |

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| Within ten years of release, more offenders will commit another crime than those who become productive people. |  | If you do good work helping him reform his behavior, you can help reduce an offender’s chances of committing another crime. |

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| We can classify criminals into types because they identify tendencies to behave in certain ways. An offender’s type should be considered in supervision. |  | Crime type is a label that does not necessarily reflect the many personalities and problems that cause crime. |

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| Seeing the offender through his type of offense(s) keeps the officer from getting too involved with him as an individual. It enables the officer to be more effective in relating to him. |  | It is important to get involved in a case, because the more we do, the more we see the offender as an individual with needs we can attend. |

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| It is best to approach supervision by asking: What problems seem to be a behavior pattern we should work on? |  | It is best to approach the supervision relationship by asking: what are the offender’s needs we can help with? |

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| Narcotics users are very difficult to deal with, because so many seem to enjoy using drugs. |  | Even though narcotics users are a problem, modern treatments can help. We need to determine which program fits the parolee's needs - i.e., tailor a program for him. |

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| We should focus on keeping the community safe from offenders’ potential to commit crimes. |  | If we focus on rehabilitation, we will not need to focus on protecting the community. It will naturally follow. |

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| It is most important to maintain control. This is done through monitoring and other frequent contacts with the offender. |  | Main focus should be on providing services to the offender, such as counseling, job skills, psychological referrals and assistance. Control measures should be minimal. |

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| If an offender has a hard time being accepted by others, it is probably a sign that he’s not ready to reenter society. |  | When an offender feels rejected, it adds to the sense of alienation and anti-social thinking. This makes him more of a criminal. |

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| At best, probation and parole should help the offender lead a law abiding life. This is so that he can continue good behavior without supervision. |  | The offender should gain insight into himself and his behavior during probation and parole. This happens while working with officers through problems. |

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| Rules and regulations help to prevent offenders from doing things that are dangerous. This is because they require officers’ approval for requests. |  | Requiring officer approval for requests makes the rules a learning tool. This helps the officer and offender discuss the pros and cons of important decisions. |

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| The rules of supervision should be viewed as the lowest acceptable standards of living in society. |  | Rules and regulations should be used as a guide, giving the offender experience living in an orderly, acceptable manner. But these rules may reflect a middle-class morality not all offenders agree with. |
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| Rules and regulations help to evaluate if the offender plans to be a useful citizen. |  | Rules help to check if the offender can fulfill important responsibilities to himself and others. |

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| Curfews and structure are helpful because they can keep offenders from being places at times they are likely to get into trouble. |  | Curfews and structure are extra restrictions, and show offenders you do not think they can take care of themselves. Restrictions should exist only if the offenders’ behavior warrants them. |

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| The rules and regula­tions are an offender's contract with the community. Breaking the contract should mean punishment. |  | Rules and Regulations are a contract, and should be interpreted in context with the offender. If we have the option to punish, we should consider the offender's intent and needs. |

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| Rules and regulations should be enforced the same for everyone without exception. Otherwise, offenders might think you are using favoritism. |  | Even if they suspect favoritism at first, offenders will come to respect the officer’s judgment over time.  |

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| No matter what he says, the best way to guess an offender’s current and future behavior is by watching how well he follows rules. |  | What the offender says is important in evaluating if he can live up to his responsibilities. |

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| An offender misses two appointments in a row without telling you about them beforehand. Even if he had been doing well before, you should request sanctions. |  | If an offender has been doing well but misses two consecutive appointments, you should find out what has been going on before requesting sanctions. |

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| Officers should not work extra hours unless they are being paid by the State for overtime. |  | Officers should deal with the offender's needs and provide services, even if it means working extra hours without pay. |

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| Schedules can and should be adjusted so that paperwork can be completed, and offenders’ needs can be addressed in that time frame. |  | There is not enough time in the present day pay period to complete paperwork and offender services. |

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1. Ricks, E. P., & Eno Louden, J. (2015). The relationship between officer orientation and supervision strategies in community corrections. *Law and Human Behavior, 39*(2), 130-141. doi:10.1037/lhb0000098 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)