A HYPOTHESIS TEST OF LEADERSHIP BEHAVIORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO BURLINGTON COUNTY CRIMINAL DIVISION OFFICE MORALE

MSA 699 Applied Research Project in Administration

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Executive Summary

The intent of this research aimed to assess if a relationship exists between management’s perceived behaviors and employee morale. The researcher worked to gain insight into the employees of Burlington Criminal Division’s view of internal office morale. By surveying all Burlington Criminal Employees, the researcher examined their views on various aspects of good morale as related to perceived leadership with special focus on communication, incentives and rewards, and feedback. Research has revealed that low morale is an undesirable situation for any organization but it is important to recognize that morale is not the problem but rather a symptom of other underlying problems in the organization. The Disney movie *Frozen* comes to mind when the great leader of the trolls states, “The heart is not so easily changed but the head can be persuaded.” Research shows that people improve their emotional intelligence most when they have strong motivation, practice new behaviors consistently, and seek feedback on their own behavior (Talent Smart Inc., 2015).

The results of this research indicate that employees of the criminal division do believe that their direct supervisors possess many benchmark leadership qualities such as flexibility, reliability and setting forth realistic expectations. The issues identified in the survey that can potentially be a cause of the perceived low morale in the division are poor communication between senior managers and employees as well as low recognition when employees provide strong job performance.

The researcher makes the following recommendations in order to improve conditions often associated with low morale such as lack of cooperation, increased turnover rates, overall poor performance and attitudes. Supervisors and managers provide recognition for individual and group achievements, senior leaders make time for “fun” in the office, as a few minutes a day
away from your desk can improve morale, change up the routine, lead by walking around and making themselves available. Employees are the force responsible for executing directions and making visions reality. After careful analysis of the data and literature, the researcher recommends that supervisors take the time to open up the floor, listen to their employees and to recognize and encourage positive productivity.
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CHAPTER I: Problem Definition

Background

Across many industries, professions and organizations the question is asked, “Does a relationship exist to management’s perceived behaviors and employee morale?” Leaders build culture (Whipple 2003). The culture of an organization is described in terms of structure, language, rituals, symbols, history, gossip, values and norms. Many texts and research define culture with several said elements and fail to include the emotions of people (Whipple 2003). Managers often consider negative or low performance employees as having bad attitudes but Whipple states that the culture created by the managers is often the root problem. Leaders can ensure the right culture is built and people have a sense of purpose in their work by providing their team with high ethical and moral standards, operating with high emotional intelligence, building trust, and creating a positive vision of the future, leading change well, building high performing teams, building moral and lastly recognizing and celebrating excellence.

How can the leadership in the Burlington County Criminal Division be developed to boost morale? According to the Burlington County Criminal Division website, the Criminal Division is responsible for processing and managing all indictable criminal cases. The team is tasked with handling all pre-adjudicatory functions of the Superior Court, Criminal Division, as well as Post Conviction Motions. The division is comprised of judges, a division Manager, assistant division managers, team leaders, probation officers, judiciary clerk staff, substance abuse evaluators, secretaries and law clerks.

Although the Superior Court of New Jersey Criminal Division in Burlington County is highly ranked compared to other vicinages in the State, the Burlington Criminal Division has
many employees and supervisors complaining of low office morale. It is a concern of senior management. There is not a defined timeline to pinpoint when the issue arose but it is clear that the problem of poor office morale in the criminal division has been evolving.

Several factors were hypothesized to be attributed to the tension and negativity in this work environment. Brief discussions with the staff and senior management indicate relevant factors contributing to poor morale may be poor management and supervision, lack of trust to get the job done, lack of overall employee development, continually changing targeted goals, lack of communication or recognition by office management and a need for individual emotional intelligence awareness.

The author has determined dependent variables hypothesized have led to a high tension, stressful work environment. While performance standards are still being met, it does not seem as though staff goes beyond to assist management in meeting overall goals. Participation in other events the Judiciary holds such as Vicinage Wide Diversity Day and Probation Department Summer Kick Off Bar-B-Q, and the county court holiday party is non-existent to low. The Judiciary upholds core values of Fairness, Independence, Integrity, and Quality Service while Burlington observes more specific core values such as communication, teamwork and knowledge. This lack of perceived high morale decreases the ability for staff to act as a team, share knowledge and communicate internally and externally with other divisions and stakeholders.

Low morale may be affecting the Burlington Criminal Division internally and seems to appear transparent to other members of the overall vicinage trickling down possibly resulting in lack of participation in outside events. Researcher discussions with members of all Burlington County Judiciary Divisions such as Family, Probation, Civil and Finance have identified the
problem of low morale in the Criminal Division. Members of these groups rarely seek promotional opportunities within the Criminal Division.

Research has revealed that low morale is an undesirable situation for any organization but it is important to recognize that morale is not the problem but rather a symptom of other underlying problems in the organization (Swartout 2016).

**Research Problem**

The intent of this research was to assess if a relationship exists to management’s perceived behaviors and employee morale. The researcher aimed to gain insight into the employees of Burlington Criminal Division’s view of internal office morale. By surveying all Burlington Criminal Employees, the researcher examined their views on various variables related to morale as related to perceived leadership. To assess the existence of low or high morale and to gain key techniques linked to better office morale the researcher compared differences in benchmark leadership qualities to see how these independent variables affect their views. The research findings and literature review are used to make recommendations to correct any identified low morale within the Burlington Criminal Division. If findings suggest poor leadership, the researcher hopes to prompt management to consider solutions identified to improve leadership and therefore overall morale and job satisfaction.

This study analyzed possible relationship between leadership styles of the managers and supervisors and the impact it has on office morale. The research questions guiding this study are:

1. What are some benchmark management techniques or styles that can assist in increasing morale in the Burlington County Criminal Division?
Hypothesis Test of Criminal Division Office Leadership Relationship to Morale

2. What possible relationship exists between effective leadership of supervisors and managers as well as employee satisfaction and the impact it has on office morale?

H1. A positive relationship exists between having a good working relationship with your supervisor and being inspired to meet your goals.

H2. A positive relationship exists between how effective training provided by supervisors are with how challenging employees perceive their job.

H3. A positive relationship exists between perceived communication from management and management recognizing strong job performance.

Research and Audience Rationale

My audience is Senior Management specifically the Trial Court Administrator, Jude Del Preore and the Assignment Judge, Ronald Bookbinder. The findings in this research can be applied to improve leadership effectiveness, further enhance work performance, and ultimately improve morale in the Criminal Division but across all the Burlington County Divisions.

If morale is not addressed, there is potential that the criminal division will be unable to attract skilled professionals to fill vacant positions for the newly implemented pre trial services unit as well as backfill positions for employees who have been seeking employment elsewhere. The division could face lower performance rates, unsuccessful implementation of a new program and could fall in its statewide rankings.

This research falls within the purview of a Master of Science Leadership concentration. Upon delving into researching office morale, leadership and training styles may be identified that
are more effective to increasing morale as well as styles that may be better suited for addressing low morale issues and could potentially find resolutions that will improve the office environment.

**Research Study Scope/Delimitations**

This study is delimited to current State of New Jersey Judiciary Burlington County Criminal Division employees and managers. The focus of this research is inclusive of probations officers, judiciary clerks, administrative specialists and court services supervisors. It does include any employees who have transferred to other divisions or counties. It does not include any employees that maintain employment in other counties, Divisions, or have been promoted outside of the Burlington vicinage. This research does not include any employees who have been terminated or are currently serving suspensions. It is not a representation of the entire state or other county employees.
CHAPTER II: Literature Review

Introduction to Literatures that Addresses Morale

Literature was reviewed with interest in studies surrounding the issue of low morale in the Burlington County Criminal Division. A brief analysis is included in this literature review of books, research studies, journals, articles and website.

There are several variables factors that relate to morale in an organization. Leadership techniques can directly impact employee morale. Significant factors discussed herein are elements of a learning organization, benchmark leadership techniques and qualities, overall emotional intelligence, managing change, environmental factors, feedback and support and human relations, workplace incentives. This review also discussed variables hypothesized to causing decreased morale and increasing in employee turnover and absenteeism.

Presentation of the Literature

Effective Leaders. Research has proven that leaders build culture. Research has also identified that at the root of many religions the leaders set in place are skilled in bringing out goodness in people. “Native American wisdom is a great blessing from the past that provides and opportunity for personal and organizational growth (Boggs 2003).” “Leaders are made not born (Bradberry and Greaves, 2009).” . There are many aspects of leaders that must be developed in order to be effective. To become an effective leader it is important to reflect on characteristics of dynamic leaders.

Kouzes and Posner compiled a list of admired characteristics “Ambitious, broad-minded, caring, competent, cooperative, courageous, dependable, determined, fair-minded, forward-
looking, honest, imaginative, independent, inspiring, intelligent, loyal, mature, self-controlled, straightforward, and supportive.”

The greatest leaders in history usually have backgrounds in military service-good strategizers, political service-great visionaries or humanitarian service-help those in need. In all cases great leaders are passionate and committed to understanding society and making a difference (Boggs 2003).

Tecumseh, leader of the Shawnee, was a dynamic leader. His political opponents as well as his captives praised his leadership qualities. He led with charisma and understood the value of knowledge. To earn the Honored Feather of Wisdom for Leadership once must reflect upon the characteristics of admired leaders, be the type of leader who also coaches, lead in a way people will want to follow without coercion, take responsibility for maintaining peace, and come up with a personal plan to improve leadership abilities. Another important aspect of a great leader is to be visionary and able to communicate with a diverse society. Vision is a platform from which further communication should inspire others to achieve the goals of the leaders vision. Similar to Kouzes and Posner leadership traits the 19 attributes of wisdom practiced by the great Native American leaders are “Appreciation, cheerfulness, compassion, courage, determination, dialogue, experience, honesty, humility, justice, kindness, knowledge leadership, loyalty, patience, respect, sacrifice, sharing and vision.” Wisdom is acquired when one learns to balance intellectual knowledge with emotional knowledge. “These attributes provide a connection between Native American wisdom and our personal development, and the direction organizations must take in order to provide happy, healthy and productive work environments (Boggs 2003).” All effective leaders are motivated by something. Motivation represents “those psychological processes that cause the arousal, direction, and persistence of voluntary actions
that are goal directed (Kiniki and Fugate, 2012). Leadership expert, James Macgregor Burns, introduced the concept of transformational leadership. According to Burns, transformational leadership can be seen when "leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of moral and motivation." Through the strength of their vision and personality, transformational leaders are able to inspire followers to change expectations, perceptions, and motivations to work towards common goals (Cherry, K. (n.d.)).

“Gifted leadership occurs where the heart and head-feeling and thought- meet. These are the two wings that allow a leader to soar (Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee, 2013).” At the root of a happy, healthy and productive work environment is high morale. Morale is a prime motivator and can make a big difference in a firm's performance (Goodale 2001). Goodale discussed ways to increase morale are to develop a clear vision and make certain that senior staff embrace that vision, make overall communication a high priority, establish a clear chain of command, demand accountability and delegate wisely, and give all employees a chance to shine. Of significant note one of the weaknesses of small organizations is having several supervisors and conflicting expectations. It is important to have one supervisor and for that supervisor to provide feedback, help and advice (Goodale 2001).

In crisis employees turn to leaders for emotional guidance. Another powerful component of a strong leader is emotional intelligence (Goleman et al. 2014). One emotional task of managers is to make sense of chaos and be able to put into words what employees are feeling in their heart. Effective leaders prime good feelings in those they lead. Great leaders move people and ignite passions and inspire (Goleman 2014). Recruiting leaders with emotional intelligence skills would promote organizational learning and an environment where people flourish by working together (Goleman et. Al. 2014). The effective leader can drive collective emotions in a
positive direction. If people’s emotions are pushed toward a range of enthusiasm performance increases. Goleman discusses "group IQ," as the sum total of every person's best talents contributed at full Effective leaders that can build collaboration can keep cooperation high and balance the group's focus on the task at hand and naturally create a friendly but effective climate that lifts everyone's spirits.

Research shows that people improve their emotional intelligence most when they have strong motivation, practice, new behaviors consistently, and seek feedback on their own behavior (Talent Smart Inc., 2015). Self-awareness is the foundation of emotional intelligence (Bradberry and Greaves, 2009). If a leader cannot recognize one’s own emotions they cannot improve them, manage them or recognize them in others. It is best to find someone else who is good at what a person is particularly struggling with or working in improving and mirror them. Watch them and get them to talk about how they do it so well. Then put it into practice and ask that person for feedback until you have a strong grasp on the skill set you were trying to improve. Change can be embarrassing and frustrating.

**Communication.** “Leadership is solving problems. The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help or that you do not care either case is a failure of leadership.”-Colin Powell.

An in depth look at communication and the key role it plays in organizations proves that effective leaders must be good communicators. Fisher and Ury discuss Integrative approaches to handle communication conflicts. An effective leader views these conflicts as a mutual problem to be solved together. The leader must act as a mediator and help to create a sense of ease, camaraderie, and openness. Good communication can change attitudes, prevent or overcome deadlock and misunderstandings and help to improve relationships (Fisher & Ury 1981).
Managing Change. “People buy into the leader before they buy into the vision.”-John Maxwell

Change happens and organizations are required to create quick responses to how this can affect employee expectations as well as the organization as whole in turn causing decreased productivity (Bennett, 2001). The change must be addressed or the impact will reduce employee and organizational productivity, contribute to burnout, negatively impact the quality of products and services, damage customer relations and reduce employee morale (Bennett 2001). Bennett’s research revealed that pending on the nature of the workplace and the latitude to address personnel issues, resistance among employees can foster negativity, skepticism and low morale, and, consequently, lower productivity.

Johnson (2007) looks at passive aggressive behavior and how it affects employee’s resistance to change. Johnson found that when passive aggressive behaviors find a safe place to reside, they are not easily removed. The only resolution is for an effective leader to determine the factors that allow them to thrive. Johnson’s studies revealed passive aggressive behaviors have a large emotional component and are resistant to change. The manager or organizational leader must confront this behavior and be persistent, creative, and systemic in his or her resolution plan. Johnson identifies that unfortunately, few managers have the resources of time and money to follow-through. By not rooting out the causes and enacting resolutions, the dynamics of this behavior are prone to multiply and thrive because they foster more of their own (Johnson 2007). Research also revealed coercive and inflexible leaders who do not listen as fostering passive-aggressive behaviors in the workplace. The participants also attributed personal mixed messages, excluding workers from decisions that directly affect their work, and unplanned or unannounced change involving the organization’s structure or culture.
Hypothesis Test of Criminal Division Office Leadership Relationship to Morale

**Human Relations/Environmental Factors** “Do people really matter in business?”

“What makes people tick?” Human relations theory and the movement surrounding it is the analysis of people's issues that arise due to interpersonal and organizational relationships. In the business world, human relations are a critical part of organizational success; an organization may have a wonderful business plan, but without employees to carry out that plan, it is worthless (Kiniki Fugate, 2012).

The human relations movement was a direct result of Elton Mayo and Fritz J. Roethlisberger's Hawthorne studies, which were designed to find ways to increase worker productivity at Western Electric's Hawthorne Works factory by assessing working conditions related to things such as lighting levels, rest periods, and the length of a work day. Those participating in the experiments were watched closely by the researchers. According to Kiniki and Fugate, a study was conducted and during the experiment productivity levels of those participating in the experiment increased but not directly due to the conditions that were being imposed on them. They could not correlate the increase in productivity to the working conditions that they were controlling in the experiment. The researchers ultimately attributed the increase in productivity to the higher morale that was witnessed in the group. This morale and productivity boost was indirectly caused by the changes the researchers made to work conditions. Leaders made their employees feel special because they were selected to participate in the study and because of the attention from the researchers. The employees developed strong interpersonal relationships with one another and their supervisor as they determined how to manage their work together under the new structure. Their contributions were valued. It was found these relationships created a pleasant and enjoyable work environment (Kiniki Fugate 2012).
Incentives. It is often said that a happy employee is a more productive employee. Many researchers have looked at money as a means of increasing morale and according to Changrasekar, this may be true in a minority of cases, but many surveys in fact find the opposite. Salary increases and bonuses for performance have a very limited short-term effect. All too common extra pay soon comes to be regarded not as an incentive but as an “entitlement” (Chandrasekar 2011).

The Human Relations organizational theory is related to McGregor’s Theory X and Theory Y. Theory X states that people do not like to work and need constant incentives to be productive. Theory Y states that people are driven by self-motivation and a desire to work. While McGregor proposed both theories, research led him to believe that Theory Y was the one that best applied to the world of management. Theory Y best suits a learning organization (Kiniki Fugate, 2012). All managers and employees are driven for self-improvement and are motivated to assist with the success of the organization. Managers and their teams work collectively exchanging knowledge.

Feedback. In order to make knowledge management initiatives work in practice, the employees within the organization must be willing to share their knowledge with others. Leaders must understand the culture both on an organizational and community level. While culture often exists on an organizational level, each community may have its own norms, perspectives, and collective understandings. Their willingness to share and to seek knowledge will be influenced by these collective views (Kiniki Fugate, 2012).

In effective learning organizations limitations exist. In application of the Human Relations Movement as well as McGregor’s Y, managers must learn exactly what motivates each employee (Kiniki Fugate, 2012). In today's business world, employee motivation is a bit more
challenging. The employee pool is made up of men and women of different nationalities, cultures, religions, and beliefs. What motivates one doesn't necessarily motivate another, and what offends one is perfectly fine to another. Managers must learn how to interact with employees, how to fulfill employee needs, and how to create a work environment that is pleasant to all concerned. Once this is accomplished, organizational success is likely to follow.

**Leadership Style.** There are several different theories that have evolved that discuss and support the role leadership plays with regard to organizational performance and overall morale. One, in the 1960’s McGregor’s X & Y Theory looked at the difference between leaders that make all decisions at the top of the hierarchy as opposed to a more effective leadership style that gives followers independence, openness to communicate and strives to empower others. A second theory, Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid was also a leadership theory from the 1960’s that stressed the interrelationship between production (task) and people and managers assumptions about concern for people and concern for production, the Team Management style with a strong emphasis for both task oriented and people oriented proved to be the most effective way to lead. Third, in the 1970’s Robert K. Greenleaf proposed the Servant Leadership theory in which servant leaders focus on providing increased service to others, meeting the goals of both the followers and the organization rather than themselves. Characteristics of Servant Leadership are listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to growth of people and building community. Another theory evolves in the 1990’s. John Kotter theorized “What Leaders Really Do” and discussed the difference between management coping with complexity and leadership coping with change. Kotter envisioned that effective leadership plus good management equals a successful organization. One of the most recent theories of leadership is Stephen M.R. Covey: The Four Cores of Credibility. “The answer
to increasing or restoring trust is all about consistent behavior and learning how According to Chandrasekar (2011), today’s manager has to change his style of functioning in order to bring about effective changes in these aspects. He has to spend more time on controlling the factors of the work environment rather than micromanage. Leaders must give adequate authority to employees, delegate responsibilities, increase their accountability, and encourage teamwork. The manager must curb the tendency to micromanage and instead display that he has confidence in the ability of his team members and trusts them to do their work efficiently. If he treats his subordinates as professionals then there is no reason that they should not behave in that way. Such an attitude promotes trust and loyalty among the employees and encourages better teamwork among them. Besides, they develop a sense of ownership towards the company. Creating a work environment in which employees are productive is essential to increased profits for your organization, corporation or small business. Principals of management that dictate how, exactly, to maximize employee productivity center around two major areas of focus: personal motivation and the infrastructure of the work environment (Chandrasekar, 2011).

Research presented by Bojeun (2011), it was found the transformational leader tends to be more tolerant of innovative risk-taking, demonstrates altruistic behavior patterns which are focused on the success of the organization, the teams they lead, and overall job satisfaction. Negative organizational environment may have a tendency to decrease transformational attributes in leadership, increase job dissatisfaction and to decrease overall performance and morale in the employees who work in these environments. Many organizations have attempted to improve the culture and decrease the toxicity of their organization by hiring individuals who have demonstrated transformational leadership skills. This study gave a better understanding of the impact that a transformational leader may have on the culture of the firm and the impact on
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overall efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. Of the fifty participants who qualified as transformational leaders, there was no indication that toxicity impacted their transformational attributes in a negative direction.

Repercussions of Decreased Morale. It has been researched and found low morale is a direct cause of employee turnover rates and absenteeism rates (Porter Steers, 1973). Research in the 60’s and 70’s found concerning factors related to turnover and absenteeism in work situations. In this study, overall job satisfaction was consistently and inversely related to turnover. Porter and Steers sought to break down the global concept of job satisfaction; various factors in the work situation were analyzed as they related to withdrawal behavior (Porter Steers, 1973). Four types of factors were reviewed, organization-wide factors, immediate work environment factors, job-related factors, and personal factors. Several variables in each of the 4 categories were found to be related fairly consistently to one or both forms of withdrawal (Porter Steers, 1973).

Improving Office Morale. Succession planning is one way to improve office morale.

Prziborowski discusses the importance of succession planning. Succession planning is used to promote interested and qualified personnel from inside the department and not to have to go the outside. Succession planning ensures one can fill key roles and positions which reduces the chances of promoting unprepared or unqualified individuals. It is important to locate the offices future leaders, create individual development plans. These plans are essentially road maps for success and get improve office morale (Prziborowski 2013).

Additionally ways to boost morale are laid out by Viscuso and Viscuso. If an office is looking to increase morale they state it is imperative to praise often and in public, set goals, lead by example, don’t be a micromanager, eliminate problems quickly, encourage promotion, help
your members advance in their career, instill team spirit and be consistent and fair (Viscuso, F., & Viscuso, J. 2011).

**Strategies to Improve Leaders and Organization.** Peter Senge has discussed an effective learning organization being one where its members and leaders are constantly learning from everything that they do. Trial and error is most often used and ideas are expanded upon to improve company’s performance and reach the organizations goals. Knowledge is continuously gathered, shared, and applied among organizational members in a decision-making and work processes. All staff work together in identifying and resolving issues so that the individual and organizational goals can be accomplished. In an effective learning organization, people are able to create the results they truly desire through personal expansion of creativity, collaborative efforts, and shared vision (Senge 1990).

Effective leadership and overall strategies to increase performance and organizational growth have existed since the beginning of time. Research has established leaders are everywhere from church groups, employees, volunteers, students and men and women of every age group. Strategic leadership is about behavior, an observable set of skills and abilities. Kouzes and Posner identified what great leaders actually do when they are at their personal best and discovered there are five core practices common to all: they Model the Way, Inspire a Shared Vision, Challenge the Process, Enable Others to Act, and they Encourage the Heart.

Leaders model the way through example by practicing what they preach to be credible and encouraging mutual accountability. Leaders passionately believe that they can make a difference. They envision the future, creating an ideal and unique image of what the organization can become. Vision is also a great way to turn dreams into action and to get buy-in from those involved in creating the change. Leaders enlist others in their dreams through persuasion and
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Inspiration (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Leaders are pioneers and they search for opportunities to change the status quo. They look for innovative ways to improve the organization. In doing so, they experiment and take risks. Leaders build trust and empower collaborative effort among members of the organization. They view teamwork, trust and empowerment as essential components of their efforts. Effective leaders use the word “we” and understand that their visions require team effort (Kouzes and Posner, 2007). Leaders encourage the heart by setting clear standards, paying attention and expecting the best. Accomplishing extraordinary things in organizations is hard work. To keep hope and determination alive, leaders recognize contributions that individuals make. In every winning team, the members need to share in the rewards of their efforts, so leaders celebrate accomplishments together and have fun. (Kouzes and Posner, 2007)

Summary of the Literature

The literature review indicates that lack of feedback, lack of overall employee development, lack of addressing change, utilization of passive aggressive leadership techniques ultimately lead to low office morale. Negative organizational environment has a tendency to decrease transformational attributes in leadership, increase job dissatisfaction and to decrease overall performance and morale in the employees who work in these environments. According to the literature review, there is a relationship between leadership styles of the managers and supervisors and the impact it has on performance and office morale. The results when low morale exists are absenteeism and high turnover rates. Ways to combat low office morale are to ensure that your work environment is non-toxic, try to hire transformational leaders, provide incentives and appropriate feedback. Variables identified and associated with morale are praise.
often and in public, set goals, lead by example, don’t be a micromanager, eliminate problems quickly, encourage promotion, help your members advance in their career, instill team spirit and be consistent and fair.
CHAPTER III: Research Methodology

Research Approach

The objectives of this research center around Burlington County Criminal Division’s leadership as it relates to morale. Although Burlington County Criminal Division has been ranked number one in the State, this Division has a reputation for having low morale issues. The problem is that low morale may be impacting the Burlington Criminal Division internally and seems to appear transparent to other members of the overall vicinage possibly causing lack of participation in outside events and lack of interest from outside applicants. This research identifies effective leadership techniques that will improve moral in the division.

This study researches hypothesized relationships between leadership styles of the managers and supervisors and the impact it has on office morale. Additionally, this study looks at how employees view communication and feedback from their leaders. It further investigates job satisfaction and use of rewards or incentives to identify if a relationship exists to low office morale.

Data Collection

Based on the objectives of the proposed research, the following questions were established: The primary question to this study, what are some benchmark management techniques or styles that can assist in increasing morale in the Burlington County Criminal Division?

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- What possible relationship exists between effective leadership of supervisors and managers as well as employee satisfaction and the impact it has on office morale?

H1. A positive relationship exists between having a good working relationship with your supervisor and being inspired to meet your goals.

H2. A positive relationship exists between how effective training provided by supervisors are with how challenging employees perceive their job.

H3. A positive relationship exists between perceived communication from management and management recognizing strong job performance.

These hypotheses will attempt to address the main issues discussed in the statement of the problem in Chapter 1. The research design and methodology that follow is used in order to meet that goal.

**Data Analysis and Synthesis**

A twenty (20) question survey was distributed to forty-seven (47) employees from the Burlington County Criminal Division that were provided the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the research study by completing same. These employees were inclusive of the division ranging titles from Judiciary Clerk 2-4, Administrative Specialists, Probation Officers, Master Probation Officer, Team Leaders, Coordinators, Assistant Division Managers, and the Division Manager. Thirty-four (34) participated; this is a seventy-two (72) percent response rate and is considered to be a sufficient representation of the employee workforce.
Data collection took place during November 2016. The Burlington County Criminal Division Employees were extended the offer to participate via email to the main Burlington Criminal Email Group and were provided 5 days to complete the survey via survey monkey link. Each survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete.

The survey, the sole instrument used for this research, identified employee satisfaction with management and supervisor questions. Questions geared toward the independent variable of leadership consistent with the literature review. Training and Feedback Questions: 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, 16 were utilized to help identify H1. Is there a relationship that exists between training and feedback with office morale? A positive relationship exists when employees believe their supervisors to be reasonable and flexible. Rewards, Incentives, Discipline Questions: 1, 2, 6, 7, 14, 17 19, 20 were used to help identify H2. Is there a relationship between rewards, incentives or punishment that exists to office morale? A positive relationship exists between being inspired by supervisors and office morale. Communication Questions: 3, 4, 5, 8, 18 were used to identify H3. Is there a relationship that exists between good communication and morale? A positive relationship exists when good communication and working relationships exist between employees and supervisors.

The survey’s focus is on extrapolating the employee perspectives on office morale in the division. The survey questionnaire was intended to analyze and identify benchmark management techniques present or lacking that impact morale. The majority of the survey used Likert Scale responses/questions that ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree so that the responses could be analyzed quantitatively.
The data was put into an excel spreadsheet and charts were formulated with specific attention to the independent variable of leadership and the dependent variables or communication, incentives and training and feedback to gear improvement recommendations toward.

**Reliability and Validity**

The researcher’s estimation of reliability and validity is met with measurement issues as related to the quantification of abstract, intangible and unobservable constructs such as Leadership and Morale. The researcher has assigned quantities based on the questionnaire that are only inferred. The measurement of concepts in the testing of the hypotheses from the survey instrument was not used before and the validity and reliability have not been tested.

**Methodological Limitations**

The limitations of the proposed research include multiple factors. Those factors include the sample, the methodology, and the possible presence of bias. First, it must be acknowledged that inquiry was limited by the sample of individuals who were chosen for participation. This sample was selective as it specifically eliminated managers and staff from other divisions and counties in New Jersey. Data was collected using a survey questionnaire. Since the responses were limited due to the multiple choice format, participants may have felt that their proper answers to some questions were not adequately represented by the choices or they may have trouble deciding between two choices.

**Summary**

This chapter reviewed the research approach and data collection, reliability and validity and methodological limitations. The possibility of a relationship between leadership and the impact it has on office morale, training procedures, types of rewards or incentives that are used
in each division, was researched and assessed. The results of the research can add to the literature in a positive manner regardless of the results or answers to the research questions.
CHAPTER IV: Data Analysis

Thirty-four respondents answered question 1 which stated I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional growth. The answer choices were respectively: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree. The researcher finds that 7 or 20.59% Strongly Disagree, 7 or 20.59% Disagree, 8 or 23.53% are Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree, 9 or 26.47% Agree, and 3 8.82% Strongly Agree. These results are found in Table 1. The mean value is 2.82. The standard deviation is 1.29. Since the response coding was set by the researcher and has no particular meaning as far as corresponding to a weight for each answer, the best analysis is that referring to the above results it is seen that the results are spread out across all responses. Employees agree, disagree and are neutral on whether they are satisfied with regard to opportunities for professional growth. The standard deviation of 1.29 is higher than the criterion value of .90 further indicates that the mean is not a valid representation of a single average answer.

All thirty-four respondents answered question 2. It stated I am inspired to meet my goals at work. The possible answers were: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree. Four or 11.76% Strongly Disagree, Three or 8.82% Disagree, 6 or 17.65% are Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree, 14 or 41.18% Agree, 7 or 20.59% Strongly Agree. The mean value is 3.5 and the standard deviation is 1.24. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean is not a valid representation of a single average answer. Since the response coding was set by the researcher and has no particular meaning as far as corresponding to a weight for each answer, the
best analysis is that referring to the above results it is seen that the over half of the employees are inspired to meet their goals at work.

Question 3 was answered by thirty-three respondents and was skipped by one employee and reads, my supervisor and I have a good working relationship. The answer choices were respectively: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree. 1 person or 3.03% Strongly Disagree, 2 people or 6.06% Disagree, 9 or 27.27% were Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree, 7 or 21.21% Agree, 14 or 42.42% Strongly Agree. The mean value is 3.94 and the standard deviation is 1.10. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The response coding was set by the researcher and has no particular meaning as far as corresponding to a weight for each answer; the best analysis is that referring to the above results it is seen that the over half of the employees are agree they have a good working relationship with their supervisor.

Question 4 stated I am able to make decisions affecting my work. All thirty-four respondents answered this question. The answer choices were respectively: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree. There were twenty-six respondents. The researcher finds 3 or 8.82% Strongly Disagree, 2 or 5.88% Disagree, 7 or 20.59% are Neutral/Neither Agree, 16 or 47.06% Agree and 6 or 17.65% Strongly Agree. The mean value is 3.59 and the standard deviation is 1.11. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean is not a valid representation of a single average answer. Since the response coding was set by the researcher and has no particular meaning as far as corresponding to a weight for each answer, the best
analysis is that referring to the above results it is seen that the over half of the employees agree they are able to make decisions affecting their work.

Question 5 reads Communication between senior leaders and employees is good in my organization. There were thirty-four respondents. The answer choices were respectively: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree. There were twenty-six respondents. The researcher finds 8 or 30.23% Strongly Disagree, 12 or 35.29% Disagree, 5 or 14.71% are Neutral/Neither Agree, 9 or 26.47% Agree and 0 or 0% Strongly Agree. The mean value is 2.44 and the standard deviation is 1.12. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean is not a valid representation of a single average answer. Since the response coding was set by the researcher and has no particular meaning as far as corresponding to a weight for each answer, the best analysis is that referring to the above results it is seen that the over half of the employees disagree that there is good communication between employees and senior leaders.

Questions 6 states Management within my organization recognizes strong job performance. There were thirty-four respondents. The answer choices were respectively: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree. The researcher finds 7 or 20.59% Strongly Disagree, 8 or 23.53% Disagree, 6 or 17.65% are Neutral/Neither Agree, 9 or 26.47% Agree and 4 or 11.76% Strongly Agree. The mean value is 2.85 and the standard deviation is 1.33. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean is not a valid representation of a single average answer. Since the response coding was set by the researcher and has no particular meaning as far as corresponding to a weight for each answer, the best analysis is that
referring to the above results it is seen that the employees are split between whether management
recognizes strong job performance and a small portion of employees are neutral.

Question 7 reads I feel completely involved in my work. There were thirty-four
respondents. The answer choices were respectively: Strongly Disagree; Disagree;
Neutral/Neither Agree Nor Disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree. The researcher finds 2 or 5.88%
Strongly Disagree, 1 or 2.94% Disagree, 9 or 26.47% are Neutral/Neither Agree, 12 or 35.29%
Agree and 10 or 29.41% Strongly Agree. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is
1.09 higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 3.79 is not a valid
representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one
standard deviation. Table 2 provides a good visualization of same. These results indicate that
most respondents agree they are completely involved in their work.

In question 8, respondents were asked how available to employees is your supervisor. All
thirty- four respondents answered this question. The possible answers were Extremely available,
Very available, Somewhat available, Not so available, Not at all available. 7 respondents or
20.59% answered extremely available, 15 or 44.12 % answered very available, 10 or 29.41%
answered somewhat available, 1 or 2.94% answered not so available and 1 or 2.94% answered
not available at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is .91 is slightly higher
than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.24 is not a valid representation
of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation.
Table 2 provides a good visualization. These results indicate that most respondents agree their
supervisors are available to them.

In question 9 employees were asked how reliable is your supervisor. Thirty-one
employees responded. Three employees skipped this question. The possible answers were
Extremely reliable, Very reliable, Somewhat a reliable, Not so available, Not at all reliable. 7 respondents or 22.58% answered extremely reliable, 16 or 51.61% answered very reliable, 7 or 22.58% answered somewhat reliable, 0 or 0% answered not so reliable and 1 or 3.23% answered not reliable at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is .86 is lower than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.10 is a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. Table 2 provides a good visualization. These results indicate that most respondents believe their supervisors are reliable.

In question 10 employees were asked how reasonable is your supervisor. Thirty-three respondents answered this question. The possible answers were Extremely reasonable, Very reasonable, Somewhat reasonable, Not so reasonable, Not at all reasonable. 7 respondents or 21.21% answered extremely reasonable, 18 or 54.55% answered very reasonable, 5 or 15.15% answered somewhat reasonable, 1 or 3.03% answered not so reasonable and 2 or 6.06% answered not reasonable at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.00 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.18 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. These results indicate that most respondents agree their supervisors are reasonable.

In question 11, employees were asked how flexible is your supervisor. Thirty-three respondents answered this question. One respondent skipped the question. The possible answers were Extremely 18.18% answered extremely flexible, 19 or 57.58% answered very flexible, 4 or 12.12% answered moderately flexible, 2 or 6.06% answered slightly flexible and 2 or 6.06% answered not flexible at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.02 is higher
than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.24 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. These results indicate that most respondents agree their supervisors are flexible.

In question 12 employees were asked how realistic are the expectations of your supervisor. Thirty-two respondents answered this question. Two employees skipped this question. The possible answers were Extremely realistic, Very realistic, Somewhat realistic, Not so realistic, Not at all realistic. 2 respondents or 6.25% answered extremely realistic, 20 or 62.50% answered very realistic, 8 or 25% answered somewhat realistic, 1 or 3.13% answered not so realistic and 1 or 3.13% answered not realistic at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is .77 is lower than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.34 is a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. These results indicate that most respondents agree their supervisors are realistic.

In question 13 employees were asked how effective is the training you receive from your supervisor. All thirty-four respondents answered this question. The possible answers were Extremely effective, Very effective, Somewhat effective, Not so effective, Not at all effective. 2 respondents or 5.88% answered extremely effective, 12 or 35.29% answered very effective, 15 or 44.12% answered somewhat effective, 3 or 8.82% answered not so effective and 2 or 5.88% answered not effective at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is .92 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.74 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. These results indicate that most respondents agree their supervisors are somewhat effective in the training they provide.
In question 14 employees were asked how much does your supervisor inspire you. All thirty-four respondents answered this question. The possible answers were A great deal, A lot, A moderate amount, A little, and None at all. 7 or 20.59% responded a great deal, 7 or 20.59% responded A lot, 7 or 20.59% responded A moderate amount, 7 or 20.59% responded A little, and 6 or 17.65% responded None at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.39 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.94 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. All response groups were dispersed evenly. These results indicate there is not one group of respondents this question can make any inferences about whether or not supervisors inspire employees.

Question 15 asked how helpful is the feedback your supervisor gives to employees. All thirty-four respondents answered this question. The possible answers were Extremely helpful, Very helpful, Moderately helpful, Slightly helpful, Not at all helpful. 3 respondents or 8.82% answered extremely helpful, 15 or 44.12% answered very helpful, 11 or 32.35% answered moderately helpful, 4 or 11.76% answered slightly helpful and 1 or 2.94% answered not helpful at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is .91 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.96 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. These results indicate that most respondents agree their supervisors provide helpful feedback to their employees.

Question 16 asked employees, when you make a mistake, how often does your supervisor respond constructively. All thirty-four participants answered this question. The possible responses were Always, Most of the time, About half of the time, Once in a while, and Never. 11
or 32.35% answered Always, 13 or 38.24% answered Most of the time, 5 or 14.71% responded About half of the time, 4 or 11.76% responded Once in a while and 1 or 2.94% responded Never. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.09 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.15 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. These results indicate that supervisors provide constructive criticism when employees make a mistake.

Question 17 asked employees how well does your supervisor motivate you to do your best work. All thirty-four respondents answered this question. The possible answers were Extremely well, Very well, Moderately well, Slightly well, Not at all well. 5 respondents or 14.71% answered extremely well, 16 or 47.06% answered very well, 6 or 17.65% answered moderately well, 3 or 8.82% answered slightly well and 4 or 11.76% answered not well at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.19 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.56 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The two major response groups are within one standard deviation. These results indicate that most respondents agree their supervisors motivate them to do their best work.

Question 18 asked employees how often does your supervisor consider other peoples’ opinion when making decisions. Thirty-three respondents answered the question. One employee skipped the question. Acceptable responses for this question were Always, Most of the time, About half of the time, Once in a while, and Never. 5 or 15.15% responded Always, 15 or 45.45% responded most of the time, 5 or 15.15% responded about half of the time, 5 or 15.15% responded Once in a while, and 3 or 9.09% responded Never. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.18 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.58 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. Responses were spread out and
the results were inconclusive of whether or not supervisors consider other peoples’ opinion when making decisions.

Question 19 stated Employees treat each other with respect. All thirty-four respondents answered the question. The response options were Strongly disagree, Disagree, Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree, Agree and Strongly agree. 3 or 8.82% strongly disagree, 7 or 20.59% Disagree, 10 or 29.41% responded Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree, 12 or 35.29% responded Agree and 2 or 5.88% responded Strongly agree. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.07 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 3.09 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. Responses were spread out and the results were inconclusive of whether or not employees think they treat each other with respect.

Question 20 asked participants how challenging is your job. All thirty-four respondents answered this question. The possible answers were Extremely challenging, Very challenging, Moderately challenging, Slightly challenging, Not at all challenging. 1 respondents or 2.94% answered Extremely challenging, 14 or 41.18% answered very challenging, 11 or 32.35% answered Moderately challenging, 5 or 14.71% answered Slightly challenging and 3 or 8.82% answered Not challenging at all. These results are in Table 1. The standard deviation is 1.00 is higher than the criterion value of .90, which indicates that the mean of 2.85 is not a valid representation of a single average answer. The collected data indicates that people think their job is challenging.

**Correlations between questions.** The results of the survey were examined using a correlation table. The analysis was to measure the degree of positive or negative correlation between the individual questions’ responses. The range for correlation is between -1.00 and
Hypothesis Test of Criminal Division Office Leadership Relationship to Morale

+1.00 inclusive. These boundary values indicate perfect negative and positive correlations respectively. Please refer to Correlation Table 3.

H1. A positive relationship exists between having a good working relationship with your supervisor and being inspired to meet your goals.

The variables in this hypothesis are found in Question 2 and Question 3. These questions directly related to high morale asked about good working relationship with supervisor and inspiration. Using the Summary Output 1 below in the regression analysis, the results show the P-value is lower than the decision criteria value of p <.05 which indicates a significant relationship. The t-statistic is above the decision criterion of t-stat >2.0 and therefore is significant. The correlation coefficient is .35, which indicates a weak relationship between having a good working relationship with your supervisor and being inspired in the workplace.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Regression Statistics</strong></td>
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<td>Adjusted R Square</td>
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H2. A positive relationship exists between how effective training provided by supervisors are with how challenging a job is perceived to be.

The variables in this hypothesis are found in Question 13 and Question 20. These questions directly related to high morale asked how effective training provided by supervisors is and how challenging the employee perceives their job. Using the Summary Output 2 below in the regression analysis, the results show the P-value is lower than the decision criteria value of $p < .05$ which indicates an insignificant relationship. The t-statistic is below the decision criterion of $t > 2.0$ and therefore is insignificant. The correlation coefficient is .06, which indicates according to the Pearson Strength Relationship Chart Table 4 there is extremely weak to non-existent relationship how effective training provided by supervisors is and how challenging the employee perceives their job.

**SUMMARY OUTPUT 2**

```
Regression Statistics
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Multiple R   0.245144
R Square     0.060096
Adjusted R Square  0.030724
Standard Error  0.916819
Observations    34

ANOVA
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          df    SS       MS    F    Significance
----------------------------------
Regression     1 1.719793 1.719793 2.046014  0.162298
Residual     32 26.89785 0.840558
Total        33 28.61765

Coefficients
----------------------------------
Intercept  2.096137  0.473697  4.425055  0.000105
How challenging is your job?  0.224034  0.156625  1.430389  0.162298
```
H3. A positive relationship exists between perceived communication from management and management recognizing strong job performance.

The variables in this hypothesis are found in Question 5 and Question 6. These questions directly related to high morale variables of communication and job recognition. Using the Summary Output 3 below in the regression analysis, the results show the P-value is lower than the decision criteria value of $p < .05$ which indicates an insignificant relationship. The t-statistic is below the decision criterion of $t \text{-stat} > 2.0$ and therefore is insignificant. The correlation coefficient is .15, which indicates according to the Pearson Strength Relationship Chart Table 4 there is an extremely weak relationship between perceived communications with management and recognition of strong job performance.

**SUMMARY OUTPUT 3**

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<td>Management within my organization recognizes strong job performance.</td>
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CHAPTER V: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Summary

The purpose of this research project was to determine whether a relationship exists between management’s perceived behaviors and employee morale or overall employee job satisfaction. The survey questions looked at behaviors such as reliability, flexibility, inspirational leadership, effective communications skills and trainings. The employees were asked if their supervisors were reliable, responsive and motivational. Other aspects were examined such as satisfaction of opportunities for professional growth as well as the perception of whether or not employees treated each other with respect.

The literature review looked at effective leadership techniques, change management techniques, communication, and repercussions of low employee morale, feedback. The review found that lack of feedback, lack of overall employee development, lack of addressing change, utilization of passive aggressive leadership techniques ultimately lead to low office morale. Negative organizational environment has a tendency to decrease transformational attributes in leadership, increase job dissatisfaction and to decrease overall performance and morale in the employees who work in these environments. There is a relationship between leadership styles of the managers and supervisors and the impact it has on performance and office morale. The results when low morale exists are absenteeism and high turnover rates. Ways to combat low office morale are to ensure that your work environment is non-toxic, try and hire transformational leaders, provide incentives and appropriate feedback.

This researcher obtained permission to distribute survey questionnaires to all criminal division employees of the Burlington County Superior Court in Mount Holly, New Jersey. The questionnaires were distributed via email to all criminal division employees so that every
employee could participate if they desired. Instructions for completing the survey were provided
via the email. Survey Monkey was utilized and all the voluntary participants were required to do
was click on the link to complete. Of the (47) employees, thirty-four participated in the study.
This resulted in a 72% response rate and was deemed by the researcher to be a sufficient
representation sample for examining the aforementioned relationships. Decision criteria were
established for accepting or rejecting the hypothesis. Other decision criteria were established for
examining individual questions’ responses as well as correlations between questions.

Conclusions

The results of the survey reveal that benchmark techniques for managers and supervisors
to possess such as reliability, reasonableness, flexibility, realistic expectations, effective training,
helpful feedback and constructive feedback identified in questions 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15 and 16
have been identified by the majority of criminal division employee as positively existing within
the division. If the first hypothesis identifies morale to be high if these factors exist then a
negative relationship would exist. Overall, it is found employees agree the training and feedback
of the division is strong.

Additionally, the results of the survey reveal that the majority of the division employees
are not satisfied with their opportunities for professional growth. They do however agree that
they are inspired to meet their goals but there are no strong results that it is their supervisor that
inspires them. The majority of employees believe that management does not recognize strong job
performance. The majority of division members believe their supervisor motives them to do their
best work. If the second hypothesis identifies morale to be high if these factors exist then a
positive relationship would exist. Overall, it is found employees do not agree that the leaders of
the division are properly implementing rewards, incentives and punishment. There is a
relationship between rewards, incentives or punishment that exists to office morale. These results considered responses to questions: 1, 2, 6, 7, 17 and found 14, 19 and 20 to be inconclusive.

The researcher found in analyzing the third hypothesis there is a relationship that exists between good communication and morale. The employees of the division indicate that communication between direct supervisors is strong, however the employees disagree that senior leaders communicate well. A positive relationship exists to good morale when good communication and working relationships exist between employees and supervisor Communication Questions reviewed were 3, 4, 5, 8, 18.

Recommendations

The intent of this research was to assess if a relationship exists to management’s perceived behaviors and employee morale. The findings suggest that employees of the criminal division do believe that their direct supervisors possess many benchmark leadership qualities such as flexibility, reliability and setting forth realistic expectations. The issues identified in the survey that can potentially be a cause of the perceived low morale in the division are poor communication between senior managers and employees as well as low recognition when employees provide strong job performance.

Leadership case studies conducted by Alvesson and Spicer suggest the importance of pursuing the difficult task of establishing local, horizontal governance mechanisms that allow managers and others to talk about leadership. Alvesson and Spicer identifies questions at stake might be what is reasonable, what is possible, what the role of a manager is, for what purposes, when and how is leadership needed? The researcher recommends that leaders of the Burlington County criminal division should meet to reflect on themselves and each other. The researcher agrees the idea is not necessarily that subordinates should approve of everything leaders do. The
point is to stimulate on-going reflection and communication about how to establish, maintain, change and sometimes reduce or even do without forms of leadership. Aslam studies reveal, “This is the task of managers, subordinates, consultants, educators and others involved in the co-construction of leadership. Crucial here are efforts to accomplish a broadly shared, critically informed responsibility for putting leadership in its place in an overall repertoire of ways of organizing”. The discussions surrounding this notion and possible role of leadership is a key aspect in getting critical leadership to work (Alvesson & Spicer 2012).

Identified in the literature review repercussions of low morale are a lack of cooperation, increased turnover rates, overall poor performance and attitudes. The researcher recommends to improve or reduce these conditions supervisors and managers must provide recognition for individual and group achievements; senior leaders must make time for “fun” in the office as a few minutes a day away from your desk can improve morale, change up the routine, lead by walking around and making themselves available. Employees are the force responsible for executing directions and making visions reality. The researcher recommends after careful analysis of the data and literature that supervisors take the time to open up the floor, listen to their employees and to recognize and encourage positive productivity.

Additionally, in response to survey questions met with negative responses senior leaders must try hiring within and creating more opportunities for growth to help increase the overall morale. In the same token, senior leaders should recognize and share the positive attributes employees acknowledged in their leaders. Specifically, positive results were identified that indicated employees overall agreed that they had good working relationships with their supervisors, they had the ability to make decisions affecting their work, overall their supervisors
were available to them, reliable, reasonable, flexible, set realistic expectations, respond constructively when errors are made, and most importantly motivate staff to do their best work.
References


http://www.judiciary.state.nj.us/burlington/vic3b.html


Covey, S., & Merrill, R. (n.d.). The speed of trust: The one thing that changes everything.


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### TABLE 1

**Morale Questionnaire**

1. I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional growth.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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answered question 34
skipped question 0

2. I am inspired to meet my goals at work.

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<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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answered question 34
skipped question 0

3. My supervisor and I have a good working relationship.

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<td>Disagree</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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answered question 33
skipped question 1
4. I am able to make decisions affecting my work.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
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answered question 34  
skipped question 0

5. Communication between senior leaders and employees is good in my organization.

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<td>Agree</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
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answered question 34  
skipped question 0


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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Agree</td>
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answered question 34  
skipped question 0

7. I feel completely involved in my work.

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<td>Disagree</td>
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<tr>
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### 8. How available to employees is your supervisor?

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<tr>
<td>Very available</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
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<td>Somewhat available</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not so available</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all available</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>1</td>
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- **answered question**: 34
- **skipped question**: 0

### 9. How reliable is your supervisor?

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<td>51.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhat reliable</td>
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<td>Not so reliable</td>
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- **answered question**: 31
- **skipped question**: 3

### 10. How reasonable is your supervisor?

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- **answered question**: 33
- **skipped question**: 1

### 11. How flexible is your supervisor?
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<td>Very flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderately flexible</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slightly flexible</td>
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<tr>
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</table>

answered question 33
skipped question 1

12. How realistic are the expectations of your supervisor?

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<td>Somewhat realistic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not so realistic</td>
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answered question 32
skipped question 2

13. How effective is the training you receive from your supervisor?

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<td>Very effective</td>
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<td>Somewhat effective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not so effective</td>
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answered question 34
skipped question 0

14. How much does your supervisor inspire you?

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<tr>
<td>A lot</td>
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<tr>
<td>A moderate amount</td>
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<tr>
<td>A little</td>
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<tr>
<td>None at all</td>
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</table>

answered question 34
skipped question 0
15. **How helpful is the feedback your supervisor gives to employees?**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
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<td>Extremely helpful</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very helpful</td>
<td>44.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderately helpful</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slightly helpful</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all helpful</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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</table>

answered question 34  
skipped question 0

16. **When you make a mistake, how often does your supervisor respond constructively?**

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<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
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<td>Always</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>About half the time</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Once in a while</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

answered question 34  
skipped question 0

17. **How well does your supervisor motivate you to do your best work?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Extremely well</td>
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<tr>
<td>Very well</td>
<td>47.1%</td>
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<td>Moderately well</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slightly well</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all well</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

answered question 34  
skipped question 0

18. **How often does your supervisor consider other peoples’ opinions when making decisions?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Response Percent</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Most of the time</td>
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<tr>
<td>About half the time</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Once in a while</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
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</table>
### 19. Employees treat each other with respect.

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<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Percent</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### 20. How challenging is your job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Very challenging</td>
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<td>Moderately challenging</td>
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<td>Slightly challenging</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not at all challenging</td>
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(answered question | 34  
skipped question | 0)
Table 2
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### TABLE 4

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<td>Very Strong</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>.2-.4</td>
<td>Weak</td>
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<tr>
<td>.00-.2</td>
<td>None to Extremely Weak</td>
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Appendix A

Survey Consent Form and Cover letter

Dear Participant:

My name is Raschelle Demshock and I am a graduate student at Central Michigan University. For my final project, I am examining the relationship between leadership and employee morale in the Criminal Division. I am inviting you to participate in this research study by completing the attached survey because you are an employee who experienced the schedule change.

The following survey will require approximately 10 minutes to complete. There is no compensation for responding nor is there any known risk. In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, please do not include your name. Copies of the project will be provided to my Central Michigan University instructor and the Trial Court Administrator of Burlington County. If you choose to participate in this project, please answer all questions as honestly as possible and return the completed surveys promptly to the secure drop box located in your department. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

Thank you for taking the time to assist me in my educational endeavors. The data collected will provide useful information regarding factors that affect employee job satisfaction and helps the Criminal Division improve leadership and overall morale. If you would like a summary copy of this study, please complete and detach the Request for Information Form and return it to me in a separate envelope. Completion and return of the survey will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. If you require additional information or have questions, please contact me at the number listed below.

Please note that if you are not satisfied with the manner in which this study is being conducted, you may report (anonymously if you so choose) any complaints to the MSA Program by calling 989-774-6525 or addressing a letter to the MSA Program, Rowe 222, Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant, MI 48859.

Sincerely,

Raschelle Demshock
Demsh1rl@cmich.edu
Appendix B

Confidential Survey – Questions
This is a confidential survey questionnaire to capture your views and feelings about the leadership and office morale of the criminal division. This information will serve as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of management techniques currently being utilized. There are no right or wrong answers. All data will be held in strict confidence. Supervisors will not have access to the data and the data cannot be used against you in any aspect of your work performance.

Morale Questionnaire
1. I am satisfied with my opportunities for professional growth.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

2. I am inspired to meet my goals at work.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

3. My supervisor and I have a good working relationship.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

4. I am able to make decisions affecting my work.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

5. Communication between senior leaders and employees is good in my organization.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
6. **Management within my organization recognizes strong job performance.**
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

7. **I feel completely involved in my work.**
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

8. **How available to employees is your supervisor?**
   - Extremely available
   - Very available
   - Somewhat available
   - Not so available
   - Not at all available

9. **How reliable is your supervisor?**
   - Extremely reliable
   - Very reliable
   - Somewhat reliable
   - Not so reliable
   - Not at all reliable

10. **How reasonable is your supervisor?**
    - Extremely reasonable
    - Very reasonable
    - Moderately reasonable
    - Slightly reasonable
    - Not at all reasonable

11. **How flexible is your supervisor?**
    - Extremely flexible
    - Very flexible
    - Moderately flexible
○ Slightly flexible
○ Not at all flexible

12. How realistic are the expectations of your supervisor?
○ Extremely realistic
○ Very realistic
○ Somewhat realistic
○ Not so realistic
○ Not at all realistic

13. How effective is the training you receive from your supervisor?
○ Extremely effective
○ Very effective
○ Somewhat effective
○ Not so effective
○ Not at all effective

14. How much does your supervisor inspire you?
○ A great deal
○ A lot
○ A moderate amount
○ A little
○ None at all

15. How helpful is the feedback your supervisor gives to employees?
○ Extremely helpful
○ Very helpful
○ Moderately helpful
○ Slightly helpful
○ Not at all helpful

16. When you make a mistake, how often does your supervisor respond constructively?
○ Always
○ Most of the time
○ About half of the time
○ Once in a while
○ Never

17. How well does your supervisor motivate you to do your best work?
○ Extremely well
○ Very well
○ Moderately well
○ Slightly well
18. How often does your supervisor consider other peoples' opinions when making decisions?
   - Always
   - Most of the time
   - About half the time
   - Once in a while
   - Never

19. Employees treat each other with respect.
   - Strongly Disagree
   - Disagree
   - Neutral/Neither agree nor disagree
   - Agree
   - Strongly Agree

20. How challenging is your job?
   - Extremely challenging
   - Very challenging
   - Moderately challenging
   - Slightly challenging
   - Not at all challenging
November 10, 2016

Raschelle Demshock
34 Azalea Lane
Levittown, PA 19055

Dear Ms. Demshock,

We have reviewed your request to conduct a research project involving the Burlington County Criminal Division Employees and the survey questionnaire (copy attached). Therefore, you have permission to distribute the survey for this project subject to the following conditions:

1. Results will only be made available to Central Michigan University and the Burlington Vicinage Management Team as follows: Assignment Judge Ronald E. Bookbinder, Criminal Presiding Judge Jeanne T. Covert, Trial Court Administrator Jude Del Preore, and Criminal Division Manager Shannon DeNise-Budenas.

2. Any changes in the scope of the project must be submitted in advance to Trial Court Administrator Jude Del Preore for consultation with the New Jersey Courts Research Council.

3. There can be no publication of the results or distribution to vicinage staff without the prior written permission of the Vicinage Executive Team.

We believe that the results of this survey have potential benefit to our organization.
If you have any questions regarding this letter of approval, please feel free to contact me. Good luck with your capstone experience.

Very truly yours,

[Signature]

Jude Del Preore
Trial Court Administrator

Cc: Ronald E. Bookbinder, A.J.S.C.
    Jeanne T Covert, P.J.Cr.
    Shannon DeNise-Budenas, C.D.M
Appendix D

Dear Raschelle,

Your Research Review Application has been reviewed and approved. You may start your data collection. This approval will not expire as long as your topic and methodology remain unchanged. If your topic or methodology changes, please submit a new Research Review Application and supporting documents to your instructor by e-mail.

Please contact your instructor if you have any questions. Also, be sure to check with your instructor concerning the due dates for your project.

Good luck with your project. This is the only notification you will receive. Please keep a copy for your records.

Kim Gribben
Assistant Director, MSA Program

Christina Prout
Administrative Secretary Master of Science in Administration Program
Rowe 222 | Central Michigan University | Mount Pleasant, MI 48859
☎: 989-774-6525 ☎: Fax 989-774-2575
1-800-950-1144, ext. 6525
✉: prout1cl@cmich.edu
🔗: Visit us online!

WARNING: This message (including any attachment) may contain confidential information and is intended only for the individual(s) named. Please do not distribute, copy, or forward this e-mail without the permission of the sender. Please notify sender if you have received this e-mail by mistake and delete it from your system. Thank you.