



New Trends
in Psychology

Policemen Assertiveness and Communication Style in a Pandemic Context

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Abstract: During the evolution of human skills in various fields of activity, a series of changes that produced results where those directly involved became aware of their power of manifestation took place. Moreover, such aspects can be integrated in all fields of activity, if access to information with and about the benefits of conscious involvement and their constant implementation is facilitated. One of these aspects refers to the personal communication style. There were more than a few contexts in which a handful of people had the courage and power to change the course of implementation of some ideas in their field of activity (including certain legislative frameworks) by improving communication and making the transition from a passive or aggressive communication style to an assertive one. This implementation can be done in compliance with all the rules and procedures imposed by the legislative framework of a certain activity. This way, we can reach results that highlight the effectiveness of improving the communication style and its development towards an assertive one.

Keywords: assertiveness; fields of activity; strategy; communication channels; policeman; legality; order

Introduction

We can all understand that in certain fields of activity, where fairness, discipline and respect prevail, a certain rigor and type of conduct is required in the performance of the activity itself, and especially in the manifestation of certain skills. These skills existed at an empirical level even before the acquisition of a professional rank, and they often need a constant upgrade. In addition to the fact that it requires a very good

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self-knowledge and awareness of the relational framework between the employees of a public institution, it is also highly necessary to develop communication skills and then bonds with those who are the direct beneficiaries of the working process.

These aspects can be easily highlighted in the professional category in which policemen carry out their activity. In order to put into practice both the existing theories and the related information, at a globally appreciated level, with a positive feedback, it is preferable that the stages are analyzed and materialized initially within the institution.

Policemen are people specially trained to carry out activities in different directions of work, in compliance with the legislative framework in effect. They must also ensure the implementation of various norms and work procedures specific to their field of activity. The necessary training for the people who want to work in this domain takes place over the course of 2-3 years and represents an entire process in which those who choose this job develop their skills and competences both physically and emotionally, but especially cognitively. The imposed conditions are quite rigorous and are meant to outline and strengthen certain skills so that one can successfully face all the situations that arise during the course of duty.

Many of these training sessions are difficult and it is often observed that, during the internship, the dynamics regarding the skills is fluctuating, due to the fact that it is influenced by a series of factors starting with the ones from a personal level, and continuing to those belonging to the environment. Knowledge regarding the communication style it is not a compulsory condition for the job itself, but in certain social contexts it is highly necessary, so that the policeman can properly perform his job duties. We used this parallel in order to understand, highlight and use as example assertiveness, as a personality trait and assertive communication style, as a skill that can be acquired.

Assertiveness is one of the most important psychological qualities in the development of human personality, which considerably contributes in maintaining the inner balance, in expressing one's own desires and in cultivating pleasant interpersonal relationships. Generally speaking, assertiveness is a successful combination of firmness and good sense, which is a necessary aspect in acquiring and practicing a qualitative level of the policeman profession. In the same time, during the process, we develop the ability to express what we are, what we want and what we demand in a certain situation, without harming those around us or their interests, within the limits of common sense. Consequently, as a police officer, one

has to behave firmly, without violating the personal psychological space of the other, with self-respect and with respect for the interlocutor. This means being assertive.

Knowing some of the aspects regarding the rights and obligations that stem from becoming a policeman, we may conclude that there is a high possibility that assertiveness is one of the most effective ways of solving problems during the course of activity, especially those that aim at the relational context. Direct, sincere and open communication allows the reception of all the messages, without blockages and distortions. Assertive communication improves relations with others and it represents the middle way between two extreme behaviors: passivity and aggression. In the daily activity of policemen, a correct and balanced institutional image is vital, and this is a reflection of a balanced self-image, based on self-confidence and confidence in those surrounding them and understanding both institutional and personal needs as well as those of others they interact with.

Starting from the assumption that every human being has a natural tendency towards instinctive variants of response to stress (fight or flight), assertiveness is unnatural. In other words, we can understand that self-control is cultivated and in order to become assertive it is necessary to make a conscious effort. This aspect is known by military personnel in all forms because during the training process they were trained to reach certain key skills at their maximum potential. The professional quality of policemen is an asset in the training field. The training includes exercises for the development and training of assertiveness and assertive communication style, appreciating the benefits at institutional level and not only.

The activity of police officers manifests itself with and in support of citizens, thus assertive communication is very important, if we consider the fact that at the moment, in our daily life we no longer have interactions that can be solved effectively only through the two ways, fight (aggression) or flight (passivity). Solving certain challenges can also be done through active, direct involvement, in relation to society's needs, where the situation requires it. Thus, between assertiveness and the necessary conditions for obtaining the quality of policeman, a series of common characteristics stand out: respect for one's own rights and for the rights of others, the expression of needs and wishes in an open manner, taking into account the requests of citizens reported to the legislative framework, a correct communication and reception of messages (without cognitive distortions), asking for additional information and offering respectful help, appreciating the involvement

and effort put into solving different situations, finding the fastest and best solutions, finding self-satisfaction in performing their duties and satisfying the citizen's needs.

One of the contexts in which the policemen's assertiveness was put to the in the performance of their duties, was the current pandemic context. The term pandemic, according to the World Health Organization, refers to a new disease among people, in which very few people are immune to it, which is caused by new pathogens or new types of viruses and which does not spread only at a regional level, but ends up affecting entire countries and continents. The pandemic context led to the need to impose urgent measures at all human existence levels, both for managing the situation and for its return to a normal framework for carrying out all activities. Starting from this idea, it is noted that including, and especially, the activity of policemen, being included in the forces of maintaining and ensuring public order, a component of the country's national security, was subjected to this challenge.

Romanian public order, a component of national security and European public order, is the state of legality, balance and social peace that ensures public order, the safety of people, communities and properties, health and public morals, the maintenance of which, according to the principles and norms established by the Constitution, it is carried out through specific coercion methods.

Public order does not have a regional character; it manifests itself in all social spheres, both in time and space. If public order has been disrupted, for example due to a pandemic context, in order to restore it, the Romanian government used especially the Police force, considering it a particularly important element, and a very well determined one. Any external action, such as the one triggered by the existing pandemic context, can generate crisis situations with major implications when leaving the state of normality imposed by the norms of the current society. Among the duties of policemen, specified in law 360/2002 regarding the status of the police officer, they have the obligation to ensure the correct information of citizens on public affairs and on issues of their personal interest, as well as having a correct conduct, not to abuse of their official capacity and not to compromise, through public or private activity, the prestige or the position of the institution he is a part of.

Summing up this information, we can say that the pandemic context was and continues to be a favorable one for the development of assertiveness in terms of public order, in a constant manner and for the improvement of competences and abilities in compliance with the legal framework for the proper fulfillment of service

duties. A paradoxical beneficial factor was the existence of the disease and the fact that it affected the military personnel and their families also, a fact that determined a better understanding of the moments of crisis that both them and the citizens with whom they interacted with, went through.

Knowing all the vulnerabilities, lacks and needs imposed by the Corona virus pandemic, and at the same time being directly affected, through their human quality, the policemen naturally developed their assertiveness and assertive communication style. Those who realized the importance of developing these skills, had the possibility to receive more information and training, and subsequently benefits were found at all levels. We obviously live in a society which is in a continuous development and new situations with which we have not had to deal before arise, and there is the necessity of finding new solutions or adapting the ones we know, developing new analyzes and managements so that we keep our motivation alive in terms of the awareness of the important role played by each acquired skill, in the development of professional activities related to our social side.

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