

Course Project Paper: Part II

Organizational Culture Analysis: Team Dynamics, Conflict Management, and Global
Relevance in the LAPD

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Introduction

As a law enforcement officer with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), I have experienced firsthand how organizational culture shapes every aspect of policing—from daily operations to long-term strategy. When I took the Leadership IQ organizational culture quiz (Week 7), I was intrigued to learn that the LAPD embodies a Social Culture, emphasizing collaboration, spontaneity, and strong interpersonal relationships.

Nonetheless, the LAPD is also organized into a paramilitary structure, which has led to a special hybrid culture balancing military discipline and group teamwork. This paper will continue with my previous discussions by looking at three key areas:

1. Team Dynamics and Authority Structures – The impact of the LAPD's ranking order on decisions, inventions and officer morale.
2. Conflict Management in the Workplace – The problems of settling disputes in a tense environment and ways to do it better.
3. Enterprise-Wide Functions in a Global Economy – The LAPD's place in international policing and what we can do to make our global footprint felt.

By combining the insights from my Week #7 exam and these findings of Week 8, it is my intention to offer a broad overview of LAPD's culture, its strong points and where we might go now.

Team Dynamics and the Impact of Structure and Authority

The Paramilitary Hierarchy: Strengths and Limitations:

The LAPD has a long tradition of organization based on a paramilitary model, with well-defined ranks, rigid chains of command, and a process of decision making that is strictly top down.

This structure has several benefits.

- Discipline S Order - High-risk scenarios, such as active shooter incidents or riots, demand a clear-cut chain of command to carry out swift, decisive movements.
- Accountability – All officers know their place, limiting confusion in high stakes situations.
- Standardization – Processes and standards are applied in a consistent fashion throughout the department.

But it is a double-edged sword. I would say one of the biggest problems I've seen is a lack of innovation. Junior officers frequently are reluctant to express new ideas because they worry that such would be perceived as circumventing the chain of command or encountering resistance from seniors. Another cop, for example, was once floating a data-driven plan for patrol that would minimize response times in high-crime areas. Although the idea had merit, it was rejected until a lieutenant embraced it months later. This delay demonstrates that our hierarchy-prone culture can slow technological improvement.