



# LIFE LINE

Volume 1, Issue 2

NOVEMBER 2012

## LIFE

Leadership Inventory for  
Female Executives

## What's Your Superhero Name? By Leslie A Smith

Greetings to all and welcome to our second issue of LIFE LINE. I have to tell you, everyone has really come through with submitting great articles, exciting news, and some touching personal stories so this issue has nearly written itself. Well, almost. For days I have been staring at this huge blank white spot on the front page. You know that area where the Editor would generally write a great article, report some exciting news, or even share a touching personal story? Well the staring at the blank page ends today and I offer this as my contribution.

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Take a minute and think back to when you were young. Think back to the time when you imagined that you could be anything or anyone that you wanted to be. For some, you may have been Wonder Women, Batman, Bat Girl, Superman or even a new character Super Women. For me, Batman was my hero. Batman was different than the other Superheroes, because he made use of intellect, investigator skills, science and technology to fight his war on crime. Batman was awesome!

I truly believe that this was a time in our lives that we knew we were going to be great and nothing was going to stop us. Then the unthinkable happened. We realized that no matter how hard we tried, we no longer could leap a building in a single bound, we couldn't shoot bullets from our fingers and our jump rope was not a real Lasso of Truth. It's a shame, but as we got older we stopped believing in the impossible and we started second guessing our skills and abilities. The truth is that when you block your ability to find that superpower from within, that second guessing of yourself becomes your kryptonite.

I believe that every person has a Superhero within waiting to be unleashed. It's time to go back to that place where you imagined that you could be anything or anyone that you wanted to be. It's time to don your cap, don your indestructible bracelets, pen your own Superhero name and unleash the superhero within you. After all, the Hall of Justice needs you. Keep moving forward and keep your dreams and visions alive. The power within you is a mighty force to be reckoned with.

- November 5-9, 2012**  
Leadership Inventory for Female Executives (LIFE)
- November 12, 2012**  
LIFE Series: Women Incident Commander: Tales from the Hot Seat
- March 18-22, 2013**  
Leadership Inventory for Female Executives (LIFE)
- July 29-August 2, 2013**  
Leadership Inventory for Female Executives (LIFE)
- July 24-26, 2013**  
1st Annual LIFE Conference

## LIFE'S BRAGS

**Lt. Shelley Knight**  
Dallas County SO  
Received her Master of Science in Leadership and Management Program, SHSU

**Karen Coleman**  
Promoted July 2012 to Sergeant at Alief Police Department

**Beverly Freshour**  
Austin ISD Police Dept.  
Graduate LEMIT—LCC

**Carrie Wyrick**  
Durant Police Department  
Graduated with Masters in Public Safety Leadership

Contact our Editor-in-Chief at [smith@littleelm.org](mailto:smith@littleelm.org)  
With comments and news.

## Loyalty and Advancement By Magdalena Denham

Whereas promotions within department are generally supported nowadays, some executives become threatened or even betrayed when their employees make decisions to look for opportunities elsewhere. Often, we take it personal and after all in law enforcement particularly, loyalty to the organization has long been valued. Therefore, officers trying to find greener pastures and perceiving the lack of support resort to either do it in secrecy (i.e., do not contact for reference until seriously considering) or fear the uncertainty whether the referral provided by the superiors will be positive and perhaps secure referral from someone they trust but who is not as valuable as reference. The secrecy may prevent them from receiving good mentoring and insight about their planned change. As leaders, I believe we have the mandate to make people grow and be successful regardless of organizational boundaries. Most often than not, the decision to change is not personal but results from a desire to have a different experience, opportunity not available under existing conditions, or position not realistic within organizational constraints. Open position of transparent support to anyone pursuing advancement is the best assurance of respect from the subordinates. Besides, we have to be cognizant that the Millennial generation that has been slowly growing in law enforcement ranks has different perspectives on organizational mobility. Ultimately, we should promote the culture under which it is acceptable to keep our eyes and ears open to opportunities around us.

## Lessons Learned from a Small Town Girl's Move to the Big City By Kelle Hall

In June, I took a giant leap of faith and left behind family and friends behind to venture WAY beyond my comfort zone. My retirement was bittersweet as I embarked on a new endeavor and began a new job. Though the work is the same, the people, equipment and procedures are vastly different. It's been an adventure, and I love the opportunities offered in the Dallas area for cultural events like the theater and museums. I especially love the variety of restaurants and the sporting events (go Rangers!).

What has surprised me most is what I've learned about myself. I've learned I can be content with very little. Living in a one-bedroom, 674 square foot apartment has made me downsize tremendously and that's okay! I've also learned that I like myself! I am perfectly satisfied to spend a quiet evening home alone with only myself for company. I've even learned that I'm an early riser!

I've learned I'm more knowledgeable in my field than I ever dreamed. I've learned there are successful women in law enforcement who are highly regarded. I've learned now, more than ever, that I need the support of my sisters in law enforcement AND that I MUST support them as well.

Often it's difficult being a female in a male dominated career. But I've learned by encouraging one another and valuing our differences, WE can make it easier for each generation to come. Take a leap of faith, venture outside of your comfort zone and applaud the accomplishments of fellow female officers! You will make a difference!

## Dream Road By Tara Sophia Mohr

Being on the road to our dreams means: We've found the courage to articulate them. We've pulled them out from being buried in our guts and spoken them, even if only to ourselves.

Being on the road to our dreams means: We've said: this dream is worthy. Worthy of my time, my energy, my best effort. I will host it, I will welcome it, I will keep the kindlings going for the fire.

Being on the road to our dreams means: Keeping the vision alive in our minds. Returning, again and again, to the imagined future, and letting its image guide us.

Being on the road to our dreams means: We've said: I'm in. I'm in for this project. I will try. I will work toward it. I will be my own friend in this way.

Freedom comes when we step, with both feet, onto the road toward our dreams not when we reach the destination. That's when the joy and the poignancy and the lightness of heart arrives.

When we step, wholeheartedly with both feet with permission and with surrender onto the road of our dreams.

## Appreciative Leadership By Anita Vestal, MBA PhD

What people want from leadership has changed dramatically over the past decade. People no longer want leaders who are bosses, who act as if they know best. Now people want leadership to include and engage with them. They want leadership to facilitate collaboration. Consider the evolution of leadership style. How have your expectations of leaders evolved over the past ten years? Do you see a shift from authoritative directives to more facilitative approaches? Appreciative leadership resonates with the kinds of networking capacities needed to address today's issues. The principles of appreciative leadership are Inquiry, Illumination, Inclusion, Inspiration and Integrity.

### Strategy 1: Inquiry

The manner that questions are asked makes a big difference in the response we get. For example when a question is asked that assumes and conveys an expectation for successful implementation of policy or program, the response is more likely to deliver the successes to date. On the other hand if the question is asked in terms challenges and barriers, the response will naturally focus on the barriers to successful implementation.

When formulating questions, keep in mind that research shows that questions are most effective when they focus on the positive, rather than focus on a problem. How you ask questions of your team is a reflection of how your leaders ask questions of you and in turn how your team will ask questions of themselves and their partners.

### Strategy 2: Illumination

The heliotropic principle tells us that things grow toward the light. We shine the light or put focus on issues and those issues become bigger. What do you want to become bigger? The positive or the problem?

Do you shine the light on excellent performance? As mentor and coach to your team, how do you...

Encourage new skill development? Strengthen skills? Challenge an attitude or skill that detracts from great performance? Support personal transformation? Spot/recognize strengths?

### Strategy 3: Inclusion

Today's leaders understand that there is wisdom in every member of the team or unit. Leaders may use the term "inclusion" to include voices previously not in the conversation. Inviting multiple voices and opinions can lead to high performance and innovation. Make the dialog inclusive, rather than exclusive.

### Strategy 4: Inspiration

Hope is essential for positive performance. Inspiration can provide stories and tools to create a new story, a new chapter. Consider that success stories can inspire pride, which in turn inspires commitment at all levels. What are your stories that inspire your team? When people learn about, see or hear of a better way, they are inspired toward it. Sharing Best Practices is one way to inspire people toward a stronger program. Every team has its successes and triumphs... how do you as leader use these stories to inspire the team to higher levels of performance?

### Strategy 5: Integrity

Integrity is a relational process requiring awareness of self and other, self-care and other care, self-satisfaction and other satisfaction. This process begins with knowing yourself and understanding what is important to you. This allows you to be open and able to respond to what is important to other people. Integrity means more than honesty and following the rules, Integrity is the harmonious alignment of mission, strategies, principles and strengths. Do you work in a "highly principled organization?" While we may monitor for compliance, what does your team do to ensure integrity? Servant leaders put integrity at the top of their list of leadership attributes

### Key Ideas

To incorporate appreciative leadership techniques into your repertoire, consider these five simple I-deas:

**Inquiry:** Questions leaders ask are very influential

**Illumination:** Discovering strengths, identifying root causes of success, elevating performance

**Inclusion:** Engage all, particularly those whose voices have not been in the conversation

**Inspiration:** Creativity, hope and inspiration are essential for high performance and positive change

**Integrity:** Be true to yourself, those you serve, your organization and your planet

Based on: *Appreciative Leadership: Focus on What Works to Drive Winning Performance and Build a Thriving Organization* by Diana Whitney, Amanda Trosten-Bloom, & Kae Rader. McGraw Hill. 2010

## The Olympic Legacy By Diane Lowe

The 2012 London Olympics will be remembered for lots of different things, tears, world records, medals, Union Jacks and the realization that Paul McCartney's best years are behind him! Legacy What about its legacy? There are new sports venues where once there was wasteland and there are now millions of budding sport stars as clubs everywhere report new recruits taking up everything from archery to boxing. Female legacy But what about the specific legacy for females?

London 2012 is the first Olympic Games where every competing nation has at least one female representative. Also it was the first games where women took part in every sport including boxing. There were more female athletes, from more countries, contesting more medals than ever before. Three of the five biggest delegations, the United States, China and Russia, brought more female athletes than men, and the women came through in a big way. Women won 29 of the 46 golds won by the US, which topped the medals-tally, while female competitors accounted for 20 of China's 38 golds.

For the host nation, London 2012 proved one of the most successful Games ever, especially for its female athletes who won gold, among others, in cycling, equestrian and rowing events, several for the first time, helping Britain to its 3<sup>rd</sup> placing in the gold medals and its best tally since 1908. Two 16-year-olds made history: China's swimmer, Ye Shiwen, produced the first world record of the London Olympics swimming the 400m individual medley on the opening night, and won a second gold in the 200m individual medley setting an Olympic record; equally stunning was US swimming sensation, Melissa Franklin, called "Missy the Missile", who won five medals including four gold, setting world records in the 200m backstroke and the 4x100m medley relay - the most successful female athlete of London 2012.

You may be asking "but what has that got to do with me?" Well the biggest legacy, in my view relates to the message that sits behind these terrific achievements. Samantha Murray won a silver medal in the modern pentathlon and when interviewed afterwards stated "Honestly, if you have a goal, anything you want to achieve in life, don't let anybody get in your way, you can do it. There are so many people and so many things that will feel like they're trying to set you back but honestly, find the path you want to take in life and follow it, stick to it because if I can do it - I'm a normal girl - anybody can do anything they want to do." Helen wasn't alone with this message; other medal winners including the rowers were talking about how they hadn't even taken up the sport until 4 years ago.

The real message here is that it isn't always the best that succeed, only a very few individuals have an outstanding talent; most people get to achieve their dreams through self-belief and hard work. For most women the second part is really easy, it is the first part, the self belief which causes the problem. Often you are far better than you actually think you are. What can you do about it?

1. Understand where this lack of confidence comes from and start believing the opposite then "I can't" becomes "I can".
2. Most things stopping us move forward are in our heads and not often based on reality.
3. Henry Ford stated "If you think you can do a thing you are probably right and if you think you can't you are also probably right".
4. Remember, failure is not a bad thing. It is better to try and fail than never try at all....So what is it you are putting off?

What will be your legacy?

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## Effective Leadership Strategies for Women in Public Safety

By Yvette Shorten, Professional Development Programs, Asst. Program Director

I had the opportunity to attend the 119<sup>th</sup> Annual International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference (IACP) held September 29 - October 3, 2012. Offered were several new sessions with emphasis on hot topics in today's Law Enforcement community.

One topic that I found to be very interesting was "Effective Leadership Strategies for Women in Public Safety". This session focused on the need for women in public safety both at the entry level as well as beyond first-line supervision to progress professionally and develop personally through training that is more specialized. I thought to myself "LIFE" is right on target".

Informative though alarming was the fact there is only 9-12% female officers per state nationally.

What I found interesting were the comments and questions from the audience consisting of both men and women, chiefs and officers alike. Some comments were on the lack of advancement of female patrol officers with 10-15 plus years of experience and the fact that men and women learn differently.

The questions ranged from best practice, to tactical, to personal career mapping - How can females be more comfortable on the range with male counterparts? How do you get female officers engaged? Do you go along to get along? Do you go out with the guys? Do you wear make-up to work?

Clearly, the question what "Effective Leadership Strategies" do women need to succeed in the community of public safety at the same level as their male colleagues becomes asked not only in LIFE.

I commend IACP for addressing persistent concerns about the place of females in public safety.

Houston's first female Police Chief, Elizabeth Watson reports that today's police procedures require a greater aptitude for "intelligence, communication, compassion, and diplomacy," making women strong candidates for the many police departments that prize intellectual aptitude over physical prowess. Those are the qualities we want to promote through LIFE and the Lifeline.

Bridging the gap through LIFE!

### My L.I.F.E. Experience By Karen Coleman

**The phrase that resonated with me from my L.I.F.E. experience was, "If you think you can or you think you can't, you are probably right."**

Karen Ann Coleman, number seven of nine children, the first in the family to graduate from college, now the 1<sup>st</sup> woman on the command staff at Alief ISD Police department. Life is about choices and I am proud of the choices that I have made. I have always tried to make good choices, strive for excellence, and never let good enough be enough. Throughout history cultures and beliefs have molded society's concept of what roles should be played and what jobs should be performed by women. Not everyone believes that women are capable of doing every job; therefore we must work hard to prove that we are. My belief is that I can do all things that I am willing to sacrifice for.

Women in law enforcement must constantly watch what they say and do at all times because society is watching. We sometimes face discrimination based on preconceived notions that we are not "cut out" to be police officers or hold a position in command. I have learned through my journey, that honesty, hard work, and dedication is appreciated and acknowledged by true leaders. Over the years I have worked hard to empower myself so I will be able to compete in any arena. I have come to know that anything worth achieving will meet resistance. Resistance is welcomed because it builds character needed to push me into my destiny. The journey was not easy but for every obstacle placed in my path, there were mentors on the sideline encouraging me to continue on. I am grateful for the opportunity and I will continue to be a reflection of those who have paved the road for me, and an example for those who will come after me.



## CONGRATULATIONS

LIFE LINE wishes to congratulate Diane and Dawn on their civil partnership. We wish them a lifetime of beautiful tomorrows.



## **The Magic of NAWLEE** By Lt. Rachel Garza, Houston PD

Approximately 200 female officers from across the nation gathered in the great city of Austin, Texas for the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual NAWLEE Conference this past August 2012. NAWLEE is short for the National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives. This organization was established to connect women in law enforcement that hold senior management positions across the nation, and even internationally. The mission statement of NAWLEE is: "to serve and further the interests of women executives and those who aspire to be executives in law enforcement."

The conference was a great success and one of our own LIFE members, Lieutenant Gena Curtis of the Austin Police Department, was a huge reason why. The conference included an array of seminars including "The Heart of Leadership - How Your Personality Type Impacts Your Work and Relationships," "The Executive Response to Critical Incidents," "Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement," and several other relevant topics to law enforcement. The evenings were filled with great food and entertainment.

The next conference will be held in Denver, Colorado, July 31 through August 4, 2013. NAWLEE is a great networking organization for females in law enforcement who have either already reached a senior management position, or for those who wish to rise through the ranks. The organization is inspiring and also has a Mentoring program available to members. Please consider joining this organization and realize the magic of NAWLEE.

