Improving Institutional Corrections Training Academy:

Guiding Principles

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THE MOSS GROUP, INC.

Experienced Practitioners Committed to Excellence in Correctional Practice

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IMPROVING INSTITUTIONAL CORRECTIONS ACADEMY TRAINING:

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Training is an integral component of every correctional agency, influenced by factors such as agency mission, organizational priorities, and budget considerations. Setting the agency values and communicating the mission of the organization is imperative in preparing the workforce to engage in positive outcomes for both the correctional population and the retention of a healthy staff. Agency leaders must navigate staffing levels, overall funding, and demographic changes in determining training priorities. The critical issues of the last 30 years have created the need for an expanded view of skills, knowledge, and abilities that correctional staff are called upon to perform. In addition, funding for long-standing resources for training practitioners has been impacted by budget cuts while training technologies have rapidly changed. Despite established standards for critical issues like Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) compliance and healthcare, national standards for corrections training have not uniformly evolved to meet the current needs of the workforce. The American Correctional Association Standards for Correctional Training Academies, last updated in May 1993, highlight this gap.

In response to the Bureau of Justice Assistance's (BJA) 2019 Comprehensive Corrections Training and Technical Assistance solicitation, The Moss Group, Inc. (TMG) was selected to conduct a national scan as part of the *Improving Institutional Corrections Academy Training* cooperative agreement. As trusted partners in criminal justice and corrections, TMG has spent over two decades dedicated to helping state, local, federal, and private organizations achieve organizational excellence in corrections. This includes developing strategic solutions to sensitive issues facing correctional administrators, executives, and leaders.

This project was designed to include the training needs of non-security staff as well as the custody staff for all critical to day-to-day operations. Training all correctional staff will augment the effectiveness and integration of an agency's mission and support consistency. The BJA initiative proposed a comprehensive national scan of training academies to document the current state of staff training. The outcomes of this scan produced examples of best practices and observed gaps, providing BJA with potential areas for technical assistance and guidance

to assist agencies in filling gaps in resources and supporting staff. In collaboration with BJA and a national steering committee, TMG collected and reviewed national qualitative and quantitative data elements to help develop the following guiding principles.

Guiding principles are intended to provide a framework for best practices in the field to ensure staff receive the highest caliber training available. Similar to other Department of Justice projects,[1][2] this body of work results in the guiding principles that provide a tool to organize priorities for a contemporary correctional training academy.

PRINCIPLE 1

A correctional agency's culture is greatly influenced by effective training and professional development, including learning environments, tools, and leadership buy-in that empowers the workforce for safer, more effective corrections.

1.1 A demonstrated commitment by executive leadership is critical to the success of the department's training and professional development priorities.

Where training lies in an organizational structure is impactful. In agencies where training directors have direct access to executive leadership, specifically the agency head, training and leadership goals can be more aligned. A noted difference in the motivation of learners was observed in agencies where the training staff had direct access to executive leadership. Training priorities are met when the agency head is engaged and meets with training units at least annually. The training unit can discuss the needed content, personnel, and budget implications. The agency head can communicate vision and ensure agency messages and mission are integrated into the training.

1.2 A staff culture of accountability can be anchored with a focus on personal responsibility and professional development.

Accountability in fostering cultures of safety within the corrections environment is critical for physical, emotional, and sexual safety in confinement. The field of corrections has learned the

importance of creating cultural norms that foster safety through initiatives such as PREA.

Accountability for safety is everyone's priority, and it starts in training. Establishing a training environment where one can learn from mistakes without fear of reprisal allows for active learning. What is found to be valuable for adult learners is to start with a challenge that is just beyond their ability, also known as teaching with desired difficulty. Environments that employ this training method effectively establish cultural norms that allow for mistakes, as learning moments and are not fear-based. Academies that encourage this type of learning had staff that reported feeling prepared when they were placed on a post.

1.3 Leaders prioritize training by articulating its value and including it in the department's strategic plan and budget requests.

Training is an important priority in the department's strategic plan. Training encompasses everything from a new hire academy to ongoing leadership training. Areas such as in-service training for uniform and non-uniform staff members, specialty assignment training, diversity, equity, inclusion training, volunteer training, and leadership training are also included. Understanding the training department's essential role in effective operations, communications, recruitment, retention, innovation, and cooperation is crucial to a successful strategic plan. In addition, training is typically required to communicate and engage employees in organizational change and core value implementation. Therefore, inclusion within the strategic plan process needs to be a priority, including the resources necessary to meet the department's goals.

1.4 An optimal physical and virtual learning environment enhances opportunities for learning, content retention, and engagement.

Training academies, classrooms, and spaces are places where department members can gather, learn new ideas, collaborate, discuss life, and build professional relationships. Executive leadership can ensure the facilities they choose for training are designed and constructed with the care and attention necessary to shape the workforce and organization as the strategic plan is intended.

The physical space of a training location is a consideration when designing curricula. The room must be large enough to accommodate the number of participants and adequate amounts of

tables and chairs during the session. If the program involves physical interaction, such as an unarmed self-defense or defensive tactics class, there must be sufficient space for the students to safely practice the defensive moves and not risk falling or colliding with other students. The need to use safety materials during training is another consideration when developing instruction. A defensive tactics class includes the use of mats and extra instructors to ensure the practice is done safely. The physical environmental training element requires there to be thought concerning the necessary supplies and classroom tools during the curriculum development process. By providing enough training weapons, handcuffs, inert OC spray canisters, or even laptops, students are more likely to learn, retain, and later apply the information shared in a training course.

Training units experience high volume use of much of their equipment, furniture, weapons, restraints, and other accessories. The entire organization uses these resources, so ensuring they are in good working condition and that there are enough quantities for all attendees is essential to successful training outcomes and a positive learning environment.

1.5   Training schedules, sequencing of training, and content customization relevant to participating cohorts impact knowledge retention and effectiveness.

Timing is important in determining when to offer pre-service training, annual training, and every course within the academy. A detailed evaluation of the agency's needs can help determine the timing of basic and annual training. Considerations on the initial day can be influential in the engagement of the staff. For instance, some agencies have seen increased staff engagement by changing the training start day from a Monday to a Tuesday. Additionally, examining what courses to offer and when to offer them is important for the engagement of the learner. A topically dense course may not be best right after lunch or at the end of the day.

The sequence of training courses will also impact the learner. How the agency sequences priorities may assist or hinder the learner's understanding, as courses need to build upon each other. For example, it would confuse the learner if the first course was about a specialized population when basic security and communication skills were not taught.

1.6   Providing an opportunity to test out of mastered topics empowers staff.

Several topics are required to be trained annually, and for staff with longevity, these courses can be frustrating. In addition, our observations indicate these same courses are generally not updated frequently. An empowering option would be to allow staff to test out of the topics to demonstrate their mastery of the content. When content is updated, staff will be required to complete the updated training until they can successfully master the new information. This is aligned with adult learning and demonstrates trust in the ability of staff to master the content delivered.

PRINCIPLE 2

Crafting course content to shape our future workforce is aligned with the realities that the workforce will face on the job.

2.1   Adult learning principles are integrated into all curriculum and teaching opportunities.

- *Adults are self-directed*. Employees reported that they have the desire to learn and do not need to be told to do so. It was also reported that ownership of their success was motivating. Being able to select a training path or have input in their training path made the staff more engaged.
- *Adults use their experience and want to apply the content practically*. What was observed in successful training classes were instructors that allowed for real-world examples and relatable scenarios. Adult learners appreciate the quick application of the content. Employees highly valued scenarios and tabletop exercises in focus groups. These scenarios provided information to help them achieve their goal of being successful in their position.
- *Adults like goal setting and mentorship*. Staff have goals for their career. Sometimes, it is position-specific, but most times, it is as simple as improving a specific skill. We saw motivated staff when the class helped them achieve their goal(s). Staff also reported that when they had a mentor or strong training officer, they felt they could acquire the skills at a preferred level.

- ***Adults want to know how the information is relevant****. Staff reported that the content needed to be related to the job. The class needed to be seen as having a purpose. When the content did not seem relevant, the employee reported being frustrated and bored.*
- ***Adults are flexible in the ways they learn.*** There are different types of learners, including those who learn best through hearing a concept explained to them (auditory learners), those who learn best by seeing representations of something (visual learners), and those who learn best by manipulating tangibles that represent something (kinesthetic learners).[3]

Ensuring class size reflects the content of the course and allows for skills training and directed practice is of utmost importance, and further allows for integration of the above principles. Maintaining an instructor-to-student ratio of one to 15 is the best practice for this type of training approach unless physical skill practice is added, reducing the ratio to one to ten.

2.2 Subject matter experts (SMEs) participate in developing training content to allow for accurate and applicable training.

When developing training content, utilizing SMEs provides more impactful and relevant content. Effective training development teams were noticed to thrive when there was strong collaboration between the curriculum developer and the SME, who was actively involved in the work. This collaboration was crucial for the successful development of training courses. These courses were also better received by the employees than those without SME involvement.

2.3 Effective instructional design includes applying new knowledge to real-life situations and problems with scenario-based training.

Based on what we know about adult learning and consistent with input during this project, trainees overwhelmingly prefer to be involved in scenario-based training. Scenario-based learning is an interactive instructional strategy that uses real-life situations and narratives to engage students.[4] Having the ability to talk through real-world situations in a safe manner is a preferred learning strategy. Adults appreciate the opportunity to practice their skills in as close to a realistic environment as possible. Utilizing a tabletop scenario where students can evaluate an incident and talk through what went well and what did not can serve as an effective tool for working through complex topics. Utilizing role plays to portray the various individuals involved in an incident, in addition to having the training done in a simulated training

environment, helps the student correlate the instruction with their job-related performance. Scenario-based training is often the most engaging, relevant, and transferable choice for engaging adult learners.[5]

2.4 Content is relevant, current, and of sufficient duration to ensure skill acquisition.

The lesson's content is a narrative that helps the student learn how to transition from performance objectives to performance. Content provides the who, what, when, where, and how staff will acquire the knowledge and information upon which they will later be evaluated (and hopefully have an improved skill set, knowledge set, etc.).

Developing quality content for training programs requires a comprehensive literature review and relying upon evidence-based, valid resources. Using their experience in the field of corrections, adult learners will question what is shared with them during a training session if it does not align with their experience. The content is best when it is researched and current and builds into the instruction an opportunity for student and instructor interaction.

The duration of a training program is a question posed by correctional agencies as well as researchers. Burton shares a recommendation for basic training conducted for new correctional personnel to be a minimum of 300 hours, based on the wide range of information and content a student is not only expected to learn but also to demonstrate their proficiency in.[6] This did not consider the time a new employee may have had at the job site prior to attending basic training or during site-specific on-the-job training after basic training. As an agency evaluates the duration of training, skill acquisition for expected behaviors is the most impactful consideration.

2.5 Course content reflects a balance between risk containment and risk reduction for people who are incarcerated.

Studies reveal that pre-service training content needs to be more evenly divided between technical skills (such as investigations, defensive tactics, physical restraint, and technology deployment) and human-centered skills (like active listening, conflict resolution, and effective teamwork).[7] As corrections professionals are ultimately responsible for the rehabilitation and reentry of individuals who are incarcerated, curricula are best when they cover pathways into

the correctional system, with an opportunity for trainees to understand better strategies for practice that result in positive outcomes. Training academies offering coursework in evidence-based strategies for responding to mental/physical health conditions among the incarcerated, as well as techniques for managing stress in a challenging work environment, better prepare their workforce for the expectations of the job.

Many staff involved in focus groups reported a desire for more training, like crisis intervention and de-escalation training, stating it better prepared them on the job and lowered their stress levels. A study conducted on the use of Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training to lower burnout in correctional officers found that after completing CIT, officer burnout was indeed lowered, but reductions in emotional exhaustion and depersonalization were statistically significant.[8]

2.6   Barriers are removed to allow training to adjust and focus on relevant, performance-based topics.

Many agencies have a shared academy with law enforcement that approves or sets what courses are offered for correctional training. This is helpful for agencies to gain varied perspectives and allows for transparency in the training offered. However, if the ability to shift training that supports the agency mission becomes difficult or cumbersome, the staff are the ones who suffer. Courses need to include scenarios and opportunities to practice skills taught, but more importantly, the course content needs to focus on corrections-specific content. When practice shifts in the field, the ability to adjust the curriculum to meet common and best practices must occur without barriers.

PRINCIPLE 3

Correctional onboarding creates an opportunity for a powerful, inspired start through content and participant engagement.

3.1 Training content that aligns with the mission and defines desired behaviors for staff helps inspire staff and sets expectations for a successful career.

A review of training content to ensure the mission is clearly woven throughout will pay dividends. It is important to ensure that the message being delivered in every course supports the agency's mission and beyond a recital of the mission. The curriculum needs to have language that mirrors the agency's mission language. The connection through each course is reflected on the job when there is a consistent message of what the mission means and how it is operationalized. When staff feel connected to the purpose, they are more likely to commit to the agency and be retained.

3.2 Structured job shadowing and orientation are integral prerequisites to basic training.

According to a recent Gallup panel study, when employees can strongly agree that their "onboarding process was exceptional," they are nearly two times more likely to feel fully prepared to excel in their new role and 2.3 times more likely to say their job is as good or better than they expected it to be.[9] Exposure to the environment is essential for expectations to be managed and aligned with the realities of the job. A structured job shadowing experience has been shown to increase retention rates significantly in one agency. A structured job shadowing process was implemented prior to the basic training academy, and retention rates increased by over 40 percent over a year's time. This, coupled with an engaging orientation with basic information about the job and the agency, can positively impact the staff and the agency.

3.3   Structured on-the-job training is a continuation of basic training, wherein training is position-specific and work location-specific.

While the concept of on-the-job training is widely supported, having a structured process that ensures consistency across the agency has not been implemented with fidelity in many agencies. The tasks required for each position need to be clearly outlined in a document to be utilized by every trainee for that position. This is done through a job-task analysis. The skills trained need to be consistent across facilities for specific positions yet include site-specific skills for positions that are unique to that facility.

Having structured on-the-job training allows for skills practice as well as an established mentorship, which is highly valued by adult learners. An on-the-job designed program may include:

- *The opportunity to have a skill demonstrated.*
- *Allowing the student time to practice the skill and then take part in proficiency.*
- *Testing using step-by-step checklists developed for the necessary job tasks.*

Training staff spend significant time with each individual going through the initial training and onboarding. They are acutely aware of the content taught and the strengths and challenges of each individual. For these reasons, the training staff that provide the basic training must be aware of the entire on-the-job training process. A smooth handoff to the specific job site can only occur with a continued feedback loop between training and the facility.

3.4   A training program exists for coaches and mentors assigned during on-the- job training, ensuring effective demonstration of skill attainment.

Not only do the staff being trained need direction and support, but those used as mentors or coaches for on-the-job training need direction and support as well. The onboarding process is only as successful as the people doing the onboarding. Providing a consistent structure in which to provide the coaching, as well as consistent expectations of the role of the coach, allows for the best outcomes. Each person paired to assist in on-the-job training needs to understand the process of not only teaching the skill but also observing and evaluating the skill

when the new employee demonstrates it. Having a formal process for onboarding those used as mentors or coaches is as important as the onboarding of new staff.

PRINCIPLE 4

Correctional training and human resources work hand in hand for continuity and to ensure excellence.

4.1 The utilization of core competencies sets a foundation upon which a comprehensive strategic performance management system can be built.

Core competencies are the intangible and tangible qualities an applicant brings to the workplace; they represent an important aspect of the recruitment process. It is believed that by focusing on competencies, an employer can look beyond qualifications and experience alone to have a more holistic evaluation of the candidates' capabilities.[8]

Agencies are encouraged to incorporate these qualities into position descriptions, in addition to further defining the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to perform each job. Given the shifts that agencies are making, which include recidivism-reducing responsibilities, defining the expectations is needed. Representing the agency's values and culture, core competencies serve to guide performance expectations, inform the structure and content of learning and staff development initiatives, and create a succession planning model for the agency.

A blueprint for establishing core competencies is available for others to replicate.[10] It is noted that this is a daunting task that takes time to complete for all positions. The agency would be well positioned by prioritizing the development of core competencies for the positions of training director and curriculum development personnel. Often, these positions are promotions within the agency without specific knowledge or skill in instructional design, which is paramount to being successful in these positions.

4.2   Use a job task analysis to inform recruitment, performance management, and retention.

A job analysis provides an overview of the competencies, skills, and responsibilities for a specific role.[11] In the field of corrections, there is a growing need for job task analysis to inform not only recruitment but also performance management. A job analysis can be used to inform the content of an officer's on-the-job training program, in addition to providing employees with information on what they will need to do to best prepare themselves for promotion. Ensuring that training is relevant to the job provides an agency with a legal defense. The process for conducting a job analysis can be managed by human resource professionals, or some agencies have utilized the services of local college and university industrial and organizational psychology departments. NIC has several general positions where an analysis was completed. These competencies are available through the NIC Information Center.[12] In addition, NIC provides technical assistance for developing a curriculum (DACUM) when agencies need it.

It is important to recognize the variances in what each position is expected to do. With an understanding of the job tasks, it is then possible to develop the appropriate training content the position will need. In the case of a new employee, this could encompass not only the content of the basic training program but also the on-the-job training that completes the onboarding process. As the needs of the agency change and as positions evolve, it is important to update the analysis.

4.3   The performance management process and related expectations are introduced and established as a priority at basic training.

A performance management system can assist with retention efforts. A correctional agency that employs a performance management system sees the interconnectivity of the onboarding processes and puts into place appropriate measures to support the ongoing nature of that relationship. A performance management system encompasses all that is done from the point of hiring an individual, up to and including having processes in place to prepare the individual for a career in corrections. Both human resources and training professionals play an integral, connected role in the success of each employee. The competencies and job tasks mentioned in prior principles remain connected. They will continue to follow the employee into annual in-

service training designed specifically to meet the needs of the correction officer position. The officer's performance reviews are directly linked to the competencies and knowledge, skills, and abilities, which are continuously supported by ongoing training.

Having a learning management system (LMS) within an organization provides those responsible for managing the training function with a standardized tool wherein staff can register and participate in training, as well as having a consistent record of the work they have completed. In many state departments of corrections, LMS features are made available through a collaborative partnership with the state's larger administrative services agency. In smaller correctional agencies, it may become necessary to purchase an LMS system. Some agencies have been able to meet their need for an LMS by partnering with local colleges and universities. This has resulted in a wider variety of professional development opportunities for corrections staff, particularly when the college or university offers discounted tuition to staff or advanced standing in a program based on training completed with the department. The LMS used by an agency is the control center for training. An LMS is not only a registration and documentation tool but can also serve to host e-learning courses developed for agency personnel. For a training center, the LMS may also be able to provide rosters of certified adjunct staff instructors, including when they initially became certified and when recertification is required.

4.4   The promotion of staff health and wellness starts with basic training.

The correctional environment is difficult, at best. Many staff are concerned for their physical safety and do not always understand the long-term impacts of the trauma they witness daily. Attending to the culture is as important as attending to the job's physical demands. Training needs to introduce stress management and self-care. There is a recent focus on the corrections profession and the reduced life expectancy of these professionals. While there are courses such as critical incident debriefing, how staff can process daily events and the culmination of lower-level stressors and demands of the corrections job are not always addressed. Courses that address special populations can include debriefing or processing daily activities and interactions. Training employees in self-care, suicide prevention, exercise, mental health support, proper rest, sleep cycles, and overall well-being.

Another focus for training that would assist staff wellness would be introducing families to

corrections. Including a family orientation session during the basic academy for the new staff's families will assist them in understanding the work environment, stresses associated with the profession, and how to access resources to support the wellness of the employees and their families.

4.5   Prepare the next level of supervisors to engage staff and increase job satisfaction by developing a multi-level leadership training series.

It is not just the executive level that sets a tone for teams; every supervisor and tenured staff member is pivotal in carrying out the mission of the agency by motivating and inspiring others. A strong culture encourages effective role modeling that demonstrates the values of the agency from all levels of supervisors. The importance of the supervisory relationship is well documented, and it is known that the supervisory relationship is a determining factor in staff retention.

PRINCIPLE 5

Training is continuously reviewed and improved through rigorous training evaluation to ensure objectives are met.

5.1   Robust evaluation has multiple levels and helps guide future decisions with training.

As correctional agencies face unprecedented challenges with budget shortfalls, a pandemic, and continued staffing shortages, correctional leaders may decide to eliminate training evaluation and training. Unfortunately, this may have unintended consequences. Efficiencies are realized through evaluation, which, in turn, reduces training costs. In addition, training evaluation protects against potential litigation. Ultimately, an agency desires a workforce that is competent and retained. Effective training addresses this, and robust evaluation ensures the training delivered is job-relevant.

A common evaluation model was designed by James Kirkpatrick. He identifies four levels of sequential training evaluation. When done strategically, reaching these levels does not have to

be any more expensive or time-consuming but will still help to ensure the on-the-job performance of learned behaviors and skills.[13] [14] The four levels are as follows:

- *Reaction:* This simply measures if the training was enjoyable and is the most common form of evaluation. Most correctional trainings have implemented this level of evaluation. Often referred to as a smiley-face sheet or a reaction evaluation, participants are asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the course, including how knowledgeable the instructor was, how the topic kept their attention, and if they enjoyed the experience.

- *Learning:* This level adds the transfer of knowledge to the evaluation. Most commonly, this level is implemented by a post-test or quiz that requires learners to demonstrate their understanding of the material. Agencies also implement coaching and skills practice into the training to provide immediate feedback to the learner, and it can demonstrate mastery of the content.

- *Impact:* This level is less common in corrections as it takes some follow-up with others outside of training to gather the information. This level evaluates if the learner's behavior changes as a result of the training. It is common for the training division or unit to be separate from the day-to-day operations, and the bridge between training and facilities is not observed to be strong in most agencies. One step would be for training staff to establish a process to solicit the input of the learner's supervisor, who can determine the extent to which the individual's job performance has improved because of the training. This is important information to incorporate into evaluating the effectiveness of a course.

- *Results*: This level of evaluation is the least utilized and was not observed in most correctional agencies. Evaluating if the training had a measurable impact on performance is more difficult to measure, as it involves multiple measurements. An example of this level of evaluation was demonstrated in an agency that wanted to determine the extent to which use of force training positively impacted the frequency of both planned and reactive use of force. Consistent measures were established, and all facilities were required to report on the same criteria for an incident. The agency assessed that there was a 25 percent reduction in both reactive and planned uses of force over the first year when the new policy and procedures were in place.

Understanding which level of evaluation to use and when then becomes a challenge for many correctional agencies. Not all correctional training needs to be evaluated by each level described above.[15] Training directors and executive staff can determine to what level training can be evaluated and leveraged to retain skilled staff and ensure knowledge transfer.

5.2   Develop a cost-benefit analysis for the training through robust evaluation.

Several authors have suggested the addition of a fifth level of evaluation. JJ Phillips has argued for the addition of a return on investment (ROI) level. At this fifth level of evaluation, the program's monetary benefits are compared with the program's costs.[16] With limited financial resources and the expectation of corrections agencies to be good stewards of taxpayers' money, agencies can establish a process to calculate a rate of return on investment for training. Several agencies have already established such a process for programs, and adding training into the evaluation could position an agency to advocate for more resources or refine the course taught, ensuring the learner leaves training prepared for the job.

5.3   Evaluate trainers for consistency and fidelity to the curriculum.

Training staff is a valuable commodity and is limited. Therefore, it is incumbent upon an agency to maintain consistency among the trainers, ensuring they adhere to the prescribed curriculum, which is best completed by evaluation. This evaluation can be completed through written feedback from those who attend training, but it is equally important to establish an in-person review to provide feedback and ensure the training is delivered as intended.

PRINCIPLE 6

Innovation in correctional training is critical to safety, meeting the mission, and attracting new talent.

6.1   Ensure correctional training academy models align with the agency's mission and challenge the status quo.

A historical model of correctional training academies is to have a highly structured, paramilitary

style of training. When this is present in training, yet practice on the job does not align, the staff becomes confused and, at times, conflicted. The objective of training and onboarding new employees is to ensure they are prepared for the job. When the training does not align with day-to-day practice, the probability of retaining staff is reduced. The model is often simply what has always been done, but agencies would be well-served to evaluate the model and ensure there are well-established reasons for the environment that they choose to incorporate into the training academy.

6.2 Innovation in instructional technology, content development, and delivery demonstrates the agency's investment in the workforce.

A continuously evolving training and communication platform makes technology availability essential to the successful operations of every corrections department. Not only is it important to have the equipment and hardware necessary to meet these high standards, but the software and Wi-Fi must match the improving ability to create virtual training. The level of bandwidth must meet the standards necessary for the training to be effectively viewed and completed by the employees. Therefore, the technology at the facilities and the academies must handle the virtual training pushed out to the employees.

6.3 Correctional leaders and training staff embrace current research for transformative correctional practice.

To be a learning culture, it is necessary to have an ear to research and an eye on the trends in corrections. It is critical that this is not just something the training director does, but all staff involved in training, be it curriculum development or relaying a message within a classroom, need to stay current on research and trends. Staying current on research and trends also helps ensure the curricula are up to date. Updating statistics is important, particularly those that represent the agency's population, recidivism, etc. In addition, the expectation of today's correctional field is no longer simply on safety and security. Many systems, realizing a role larger than simply incapacitation, have placed more emphasis on rehabilitation and reentry for incarcerated individuals. However, correctional officers need appropriate training and knowledge to perform in such a way.

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