

The call to leadership in the AFP is vast and complex and requiring leaders to adapt quickly to change whilst still delivering core business. It can range from dealing with situations where your life is at risk, to navigating political complexity, to inspiring teams to action under dangerous circumstances or whilst undertaking the administrative requirements in an office. The AFP Leadership Model is an orientating point for conversations about leadership and the rich complexity that lies within it in the AFP context.

## DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

Scholars all over the world have contemplated the definition of leadership and the qualities that make a good leader. As a concept, leadership is the same worldwide, no matter how or where it is practiced.

Leadership is complex to define, meaning different things to different people and influenced by the situation, environment and culture within which leaders operate.

Leadership is often defined as a quality within an individual and used to describe personal characteristics or specific competencies held by that individual. By far the simplest definition of leadership attributes this quality to the role or rank performed. Simply holding a position of authority does not mean that the holder automatically displays leadership behaviour.

### *In the AFP context, leadership is defined as:*

The process of positively influencing others before, during and after AFP activities in order to mobilise a collective purpose, effectively manage resources and stakeholder relationships and take purposeful action to achieve the best possible outcome for the government, the community we serve and the team members involved.

Policing, by its very nature, operates within a hierarchical command structure. All Sworn Officers have to exercise command and authority by the nature of the work that they do. Command can be defined as:

“Directing with authority the employees, resources of an organisation and members of the public to achieve the desired outcome. Command is recognised as being an essential part of effective police leadership; it is how and when it is utilised that makes the difference between a leader and a dictator.”<sup>1</sup>

## FOLLOWERSHIP

The relationship between leader and follower is extensively researched and has led to the concept of followership. Leadership is exercised at all levels in the AFP from recruits up and is not solely dependent on rank. Followership explains how followers are an active participant in leadership, and can be defined as the capacity or willingness to follow a leader.

The importance of followership in a policing environment is evident, and endeavours to acknowledge the complementary roles of both the leaders and the followers in this process. In a hierarchical structure such as the AFP, responsible followership is a vital part of everyday functioning and requires people to understand and respect the rank structure whilst simultaneously exercising sound judgement and discernment around when to follow without question, when to challenge respectfully and if faced with an unethical or unlawful situation, when to dissent.

Followership exists in ethical partnership with leadership and leaders aspire to form professional and mutually respectful partnerships with followers. In essence, leaders and followers work together to co-produce leadership.<sup>2</sup>

Leaders invite constructive challenges on their decisions without receiving this feedback as an attack on their character or competence, and followers engage in leadership behaviours, developing ideas, strategies and courses of action to push forward. In summary, they work together to move the collective forward.

## WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE A GOOD LEADER IN THE AFP?

By its nature, a policing environment functions on authority and power. To be a good leader within this context, there are a number of critical components that together assist members exercise quality leadership, continually improve these qualities and flourish in the AFP context.

The AFP Leadership Model provides commentary on these components and underpins all leadership development initiatives in the AFP:



The Leaders' **character, motivation to lead and leadership style** are all important qualities for leadership.

Policing as a profession has unique challenges due to the difficult and at times ambiguous situations police are operating within. In the AFP context, a leader's character is constantly under scrutiny in all that they do, and is critical to maintain the trust of the community we serve, the trust of AFP management and the trust of their teams.

Your **character** is a combination of your competence, interpersonal skills, personal integrity, conscientiousness and confidence. As a role model, your character is consistently on display and affects the extent to which you can elicit the support of your followers. Leaders need to be technically and tactically proficient, and willing to help others develop that competence.

Those demonstrating strength of character abide by their conscience, demonstrate moral courage, integrity and authenticity.

The AFP is striving to develop inclusive leaders at all levels; leaders who value individual difference, who understand how to get the best out of others in all situations, who commit to action using fair and transparent decision making processes and achieve results ensuring the welfare of their team.

Leadership potential is not realised until someone is **motivated to lead and prepared to do so**. Accepting a leadership position comes with additional responsibilities, increased accountability, a willingness to be respectfully challenged, to continually learn, grow and develop as a leader. Furthermore, leaders need to nurture the development of their followers, encouraging a willingness to take measured risks, to foster innovation and to create a "safe to fail" environment to learn from mistakes.

Leaders who get the best results master multiple **leadership styles**, and adapt quickly to move seamlessly between the different styles as the situation requires. Daniel Goldman identifies six core leadership styles in "Leadership that gets results" and suggests that moving between authoritative, democratic, affiliative and coaching styles of leadership achieves the best results.

Creating good will within the team, forging consensus through participation and coaching to build capacity for the future assist the leader to build strong rapport with their team and provide a solid foundation for all requirements, particularly when authoritative styles are required.

## AFP Values

Less effective over time is a coercive style where the leader demands immediate compliance and pacesetting styles, where the leader sets high standards of performance and/or provides limited timelines to complete. More information about leadership styles can be found [here](#).<sup>3</sup>

Values are beliefs about what is considered to be important in life; they guide thoughts, decisions, behaviours and interactions and are evident in everything you do as a leader.

All leaders are not only judged by followers on their adherence to AFP values, but also to the alignment of their personal values to the corporate values. Leaders never compromise on values; followers are looking for congruence between a leader's values and their actions and the willingness to hold others to account against the corporate values.

Integrity	Displayed through soundness of moral principle, honesty and sincerity.
Commitment	Characterised by dedication, application, perseverance, a belief in our ability to achieve and add value.
Excellence	Never-ending search for improvement leads to excellence. We aim for excellence in everything we do.
Accountability	Ownership of work or results and being answerable for outcomes.
Fairness	Being impartial and equitable.
Trust	Having faith and confidence and being able to rely and depend on others.
Respect	Treat others how you want to be treated and value their contributions.

## BE: CASE STUDY

## “Generation Y Not”

*This case study demonstrates how age or position has no bearing on how a person can show exceptional leadership skills.*

In 2018, Jordyn Francis joined the AFP graduate program. After experiencing a number of different areas within AFP, Jordyn followed her passion and joined the Prevention and Engagement Team of the Australian Centre to Counter Child Exploitation. Jordyn plays an important role developing strategies, campaigns and training programs which aim to help prevent children in Australia and South East Asia falling victim to online child exploitation.



Since a very young age, Jordyn demonstrated great leadership qualities and a passion for helping others, in particular children in South East Asia who are victims of child exploitation.

At the age of 16, she became aware of the issue of child exploitation, about children being sexually abused and trafficked throughout Thailand and Cambodia. While she had limited resources at 16, Jordyn was determined to make a difference.

She organised a community concert showcasing local talent where she was able to raise more than \$4,000. Following this success, other concerts were organised in 2010 raising \$12,000, and \$16,000 in 2012. All the money raised from these events were donated to Destiny Rescue, a charity which frees children from sex-trafficking in South East Asia.

While her drive and passion as a young person inspired others to get involved, Jordyn faced challenges with perceptions of her being too young and inexperienced. This only pushed her to work harder and lead from the ground up, working with people rather than delegating tasks.

When she was finishing year 12 in 2009, Jordyn self-funded a volunteering trip to Zambia to assist other volunteers in building a school for a remote community. At the end of 2013, Jordyn moved to Cambodia to volunteer for Destiny Rescue, where she was able to work with the children being rescued, teaching work and life skills to girls aged 12-17.

*“As a young leader it was important that I was willing to learn, have the tough conversations when they were needed, but I also needed to be open and honest and remain constant in their environment to gain the girls trust.”*

Jordyn reflects that leading girls in this environment was the most challenging yet rewarding time of her life. The girls had been subjected to trauma and Jordyn was stepping into a unfamiliar culture. She was leading while still learning.

Her time in Cambodia showed Jordyn that to be an effective leader in such complex and uncertain times she needed to remain open to learning and adapting to the situations that she was facing.

In 2014, Jordyn was named Queensland’s Young Australian of the year. In this role, she was invited to speak at over 200 Australian schools to raise awareness about child exploitation and human trafficking. Jordyn used this opportunity to inspire kids to think big and reflect on the passions they would like to pursue.

Jordyn shared some of her experiences and thoughts with AFP colleagues via the [New Horizons Leadership](#) series in 2019. During this presentation she stated “If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more or become more then you are a leader” (John Quincy Adams) but we must recognise that we should never go alone but instead find others that will help us turn our vision into a reality.”

Her presentation was inspiring to many and really brought home the notion that leadership is not about the position you hold, but an attitude and how you influence those around you.

## KNOW

### Professional Knowledge

By its nature, policing is a complex and ever-evolving profession. It requires members to embrace a continual learning mindset to seek out new knowledge to stay one step ahead and outsmart serious crime.

As an organisation that continually learns, the expectation is that each member will continually strive to expand the professional knowledge applicable to their area of expertise (stream) and to strengthen their corporate knowledge of management tools, processes and systems. This includes keeping abreast of relevant corporate documents, strategic plans, legislation and governance documents.

The AFP is striving for best practice, preferably world’s best practice, in all that we do. Leaders aspire to be a highly skilled specialist.

The technical leadership frameworks aim to improve the professional knowledge, specialist skillset and technical mastery in a range of streams. A number of frameworks are currently under development and will come online over time. Some examples include the Forensic & Armourer Professional Development Continuum, the Health Education Framework and the Investigator’s Development Continuum.

### Self-awareness

Developing self-awareness is strongly linked to emotional intelligence and includes managing emotions during challenging times, displaying resilience, learning from mistakes and understanding the impact of their emotional state on decision making and on those around them. It also involves recognising the emotional state of others in the team and managing this to reduce the overall impact on the team.

All leaders benefit from knowing themselves and understanding others. This involves identifying their own preferences, intuitions and strengths and ensuring they leverage these for maximum impact.

Concurrently, leaders need to understand their leadership shadow. It is inevitable leaders will have unconscious biases and be unaware of the full impact of what they do/don’t say. Actively looking at your leadership shadow involves assessing the sum of what you do, what you say, what you decide and how you reward or acknowledge members within. The importance of this knowledge comes with understanding the impact of these actions on others and addressing them where needed.

**KNOW: CASE STUDY**

The complexity of leadership requires a continual learning mindset. One that supports increasing your leadership repertoire regularly, reflecting on your leadership strengths, challenging the status quo and seeking to address your leadership shadow.

Quality leaders devote time to self-development, to regular reflective practice and to learning from mistakes. They develop a growth mindset and accept that learning is a continual process undertaken over a lifetime.

The core leadership framework is designed to assist employees improve their self-awareness and leadership knowledge. It is offered as a series of short modules, delivered in a variety of formats and offers just in time learning.

Application of all of this knowledge is crucial to improve your leadership capability and reach your full potential as a leader.

**Coaching in action**

*Leadership demands self-awareness – intelligent alertness to individual thinking and behaviour, and responsiveness to the impact of these on others.*

MK has been a Team Leader (TL) in the AFP for some years and had always received great feedback about her leadership ability. However, she had recently moved into a new TL role and suddenly found that what had worked for her previously wasn't working anymore. Her new team seemed disengaged and weren't responding positively to her leadership style and she knew she had to take action.

During a regular one-on-one session, her supervisor suggested that she undertake a 360 degree feedback process to gain some "point in time" feedback about her leadership style, and identify some areas of focus.

MK requested feedback from all the members of her current team, her current supervisor and manager, as well as her peers, her previous supervisor and other stakeholders, including several from external agencies.

During the debrief session, MK's report identified her areas of strength and revealed that some members of her team thought her leadership style was ineffectual. Her previous supervisor gave her very positive feedback and her current supervisor acknowledged some issues with her assimilation.

Her new team were comparing her to their previous TL and gave insights into what wasn't working for them under MK's leadership. MK realised she wasn't aware of the impact her behaviours had on them. She wanted to address some elements of her communication style but needed help to understand what she could do.

The debrief facilitator suggested she could partner with a coach who could assist her to do some further reflection and identify some strategies to expand her leadership repertoire. She discussed the 360 results with her supervisor and together they developed an individual development plan to capture the identified areas of development opportunities.

MK was connected with a suitable coach who assisted her to identify three main areas she would like to improve. These were engaging with the team more often to build rapport; increasing her knowledge of business processes; and being more organised with her time management at work and at home.

Through the coaching process, MK realised that she solely focused on task-related issues and had not spent any time getting to know the teams personal strengths, aspirations or challenges.

MK spent time focusing on each team member's communication style and how she could use situational leadership to get the best from each of them. She experienced a "light-bulb moment" and realised the importance of adjusting how she communicated to team members as well as considering the impact of decisions on them. During the coaching sessions, MK explored what her top three values were and compared them with the values of her team to identify any points of conflict.

MK realised that she needed to quickly increase her understanding of the team activities and the business processes. She organised meetings within her team to ascertain what was working well, where they needed assistance and any pain

points. She held regular team meetings at which each member was required to share knowledge with the broader team and collectively problem solve.

By engaging in a different way, MK discovered the diversity and the different levels of knowledge which existed in the team. She found herself using coaching skills by asking more questions and spending time listening. She designed a plan to assign new roles and tasks within the team and, over a period of time, she gained trust and was able to delegate more tasks to assist them develop their skills.

The efficiencies gained by the reorganisation of the team made MK feel more organised with her time management. She was able to leave the office at a regular hours, gaining more time with her family and for herself. MK felt more positive in her relationships at work and was able to regularly acknowledge her team for their efforts.

Coaching assisted MK become more self-aware and come up with new ways of leading. The coaching process provided her with the space to process her thoughts, to hold them up so she could clearly see and understand them to find a way forward.

## DO

### Functional approach to leadership

The functional approach to leadership is based on the research of John Adair.<sup>4</sup> Laboratory and field studies led to what is referred to as the “theory of group needs”. This focuses on what leaders choose to do in a variety of situations and includes the balancing of three areas of need. The resulting model is a simple tool that is easy to remember and easy to apply.

Effective leadership facilitates from where the team is (current state) to where the team needs to go (future state).

To achieve this, relationship management is required to help individuals grow beyond their current capability, to mobilise the team to value and embrace difference and work collaboratively together with the intention of progressing the task to finalisation.

The functional leadership model below identifies these three important leadership considerations, and the constant relationship between them; they are mutually dependent, as well as separately essential to the overall leadership role. The leaders’ role is to achieve the right balance between these three areas of need in order to complete the task, build and maintain team and develop the individual. All three need to be kept in balance for the best results.

## FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO LEADERSHIP



### Task

The actions in this circle could include:

- Setting a vision, defining aims, creating purpose – clarity around the task
- Ensuring adequate resources, systems and processes are in place
- Devising a plan with milestones, outcomes and measures of success
- Clearly articulating standards of behaviour and output
- Establishing responsibilities for the task
- Ensuring control processes are in place
- Ensuring reporting, information management, and feedback are fed into the continuous improvement cycle
- Plans are reviewed, fine-tuned and adjusted as needed.




**Team**

The actions in this circle could include:

- Establishing and agreeing on standards of performance and behaviour
- Establishing style, culture and approach of the group
- Identifying and assigning project leads,
- Developing team-work, cooperation, morale and team-spirit
- Developing the collective capability of the group
- Anticipating and resolving group conflict, struggles or disagreements
- Changing the balance and composition of the group as necessary
- Encouraging and motivating the group towards the end goal
- Identify and meet group training needs
- Giving and receiving feedback


**Individual**

The actions in this circle could include:

- Understanding each team members personality, skills, strengths, needs, aims and fears
- Utilising individual strengths and developing capability
- Assisting and supporting individuals with plans, problems, challenges, highs and lows
- Identifying appropriate individual responsibilities and objectives
- Giving recognition and praise to individuals
- Training and developing individual team members
- Empowering individuals to take calculated risks

## DO: CASE STUDY

### “The Wild Boars”

*This case study clearly demonstrates the effects of supporting individuals to be their best, providing strong team backing and setting clear goals to achieve a task, no matter how difficult.*

In June 2018, a group of 12 young soccer players, “The Wild Boars” and their coach, were trapped in the Tham Luang cave system in the province of Chiang Rai, Thailand.

This event attracted intense worldwide interest, and provided the opportunity for the AFP to be front and centre in one of the most watched international search & rescue operations the world has ever seen.

On Saturday 23 June, 2018 a Thai soccer team, consisting of 12 boys aged between 11 and 16 and their 25 year old coach entered a cave system that is complex and extends several kilometres into the mountain side. Ongoing heavy rainfall caused flooding within the cave system, trapping them deep within the cave. The team were not seen for nine days. This was a high risk rescue operation for experienced divers with navigation and access being extremely difficult, let alone children with no diving experience.

The specialist dive team within the AFP Specialist Response Group (SRG) were one of many International teams deployed to help the Thai government.

There were many challenges faced by the team in this time-sensitive operation; the environmental and accessibility factors, the international and inter-agency collaboration, and the immense media and political interest from the various nations involved.

To make a successful contribution to this operation the AFP not only needed to tap in to the exceptional technical skills from individuals in the SRG dive team, but coordinate a whole range of expertise and support from other parts of the business. A support crew was mobilised to ensure the SRG Dive team was supported throughout

the ordeal and could focus on what they did best: conducting searches in zero visibility areas, land search and rescue, and diving in flooded caves.

An operations commander was tasked with coordinating the AFP's efforts. Utilising skills and expertise from the local AFP post in Thailand and from Australia, a team of people were coordinated to assist in areas that ranged from logistical support on the ground, language skills, to media and communications management.

Communication was key in this mission. The communication flow within the AFP team, with other Australian agencies involved, with International agencies and the Thai authorities via an interpreter was abundant but necessary to ensure a shared understanding and mission success.

*In any critical incident response, you need to trust your operators to deliver the skills they bring to the job. Your trust and mutual respect allows them to get on with the job and ensures the best possible result. During this operation the team felt they had the full support of the AFP from the Commissioner down and that was empowering.*

Each individual was supported to bring their best to the situation, given a voice during the ordeal and the team supported each other throughout. All these elements brought forth a successful outcome.

Although the AFP weren't by any means the lead agency during the rescue effort, they succeeded in being a crucial player in the successful operation. The actions of the AFP dive team awarded them the Order of Australia and Bravery medals.



All members of the AFP are called to lead by the nature of the profession. Leadership in a Policing context is challenging and complex as members navigate the ever-evolving fabric of the community we aim to protect. The AFP Leadership model provides foundational guidance on the identity of the organisation and informs discussions on leadership, helping to orientate leaders and followers within teams. It articulates the qualities required to be a good leader within the AFP, to achieve the best possible outcome for the community and the team members involved. The learnings that flow from this model help AFP members stay one step ahead and outsmart serious crime.

#### References:

<sup>1</sup> AFP Better Practice Guide Command, Control and Coordination (C3)

<sup>2</sup> Riggio, Donald E, 2014, Followership Research – Looking back and looking forward, Journal of Educational Leadership

<sup>3</sup> Goldman, Daniel (2010) Leadership that Gets Results, Harvard Business Review, March- April

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