

Introducing Innovations at Police Roll Calls: Lessons from Four Vera Projects



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Nearly all of the Vera Institute's demonstration projects and spin-offs ask front-line government staff to change something about the way they work, even though they may not benefit directly from Vera's innovations. Persuading front-line staff to accommodate innovation and follow new procedures is always challenging. The challenge is particularly great in the case of police officers, who have countless duties and who receive new instructions about some of them every day. This paper reviews the experiences of four Vera projects that have asked police officers to change their routines in some way. Each has used police roll call meetings to provide background information to police or to train officers in new procedures necessary to the implementation of the demonstration.¹ Based on the experiences of project staff, the paper draws lessons that may be relevant for future efforts to engage police.

In December 1999 and January 2000, I interviewed staff of three current Vera demonstration projects: La Bodega de la Familia, Project Confirm, and the Bureau of Justice Assistance (South Africa); and one Vera spin-off, Victim Services. I asked staff of each project to describe their experiences making presentations at police roll calls: who attended, who presented, the information presented, the goals of the presentations, responses from police officers, and reflections on what has been learned over time.

What have we learned over time? A lot, from every one of these projects, and there is a great deal of consistency in the lessons--even in South Africa. Each of the projects has experimented on its own with who should do the roll calls, how often they should be done, what else staff must do to reinforce the presentations, and more. By far the deepest well of experience comes from Victim Services, a Vera spin-off that has been working with police and making roll call presentations for more than 16 years.

The resounding note among all four projects is that cops are a tough audience, and roll calls are not sufficient for getting them to take part in an innovation. They are one way of communicating information to officers with the police department's blessing, but they do not substitute for a supervisor's orders. To be effective, roll call presentations must be combined with other incentives for the officers to participate. It may also be necessary to do roll calls on an ongoing basis, to account for the various shifts and tours and the high

¹ Roll calls are short (five to 15 minutes), informal briefing sessions held at the beginning and end of each patrol shift. An average of 10 to 20 officers is present. In the New York Police Department, specialized officers, such as domestic violence or youth officers, do not attend roll calls. The sessions are led by a training sergeant and held in a room at the precinct. The training sergeant typically delivers information about crime conditions and issues order to staff.

rate of turnover in precincts. Although roll calls can be an important way for project staff to reach police officers and deliver information, without a serious commitment of time and thorough preparation, the benefits are slim.

La Bodega de la Familia

La Bodega de la Familia is a neighborhood drug crisis center opened in October 1996 to demonstrate that family-focused interventions can help drug users succeed in outpatient treatment, reduce drug-related domestic victimization, and restore neighborhood safety. La Bodega serves a densely populated 56-square block area of Manhattan's Lower East Side.

One of La Bodega's objectives is to diversify the ways police and other criminal justice agencies respond to drug addiction. Early in the project, staff had hoped that police officers would routinely refer family members of substance abusers to La Bodega. La Bodega's director forged strong relationships with the New York City Police Commissioner and the local precinct commander, who both expressed support for the project. Other staff at La Bodega developed relationships with officers from the local precinct and housing police units. Staff also attended roll calls over several months to brief patrol officers about La Bodega's services. Yet, between October 1996 and January 1999, La Bodega received only 41 referrals from police out of 688 total referrals. Most of these were from domestic violence and housing police, with whom La Bodega staff had spent more time and developed personal relationships. These officers do not attend roll calls.²

When La Bodega staff first began attending roll calls to brief officers about La Bodega in 1996, the presentations were led by Fred Weinburg, a retired parole officer who had also worked as an investigator for the District Attorney's office. During La Bodega's first year of operations, Fred and some of his colleagues made presentations to approximately eight roll calls in the Ninth Precinct. They did not cover every shift and tour because they feared "wearing out their welcome" with the police. They provided basic information about La Bodega and passed out beatbook inserts containing referral cards for officers to distribute to arrested persons, their family members, and other members of the public. Fred says the officers were polite and listened to the presentations, but that they offered little feedback. Some officers were disinterested simply because their beats did not intersect with La Bodega's catchment area.

In January 2000, La Bodega staff made presentations to three shifts of housing police unit PSA Four. This time, the presenters were in their 20's, had no law enforcement experience, and were new hires at La Bodega. They presented basic information about La Bodega and distributed beatbook inserts with tear-out cards that they could give out to citizens. The presentations emphasized La Bodega's family-oriented approach to

² For a full account of La Bodega's relationship with police, see Douglas Young, Catherine Stayton, and Emily Rosenzweig, "Bridging the Gap between Police and Community: Attitudes Toward Drugs, Treatment, and Law Enforcement," Vera Institute of Justice, November 1999.

substance abuse. Again staff hoped that the roll calls would increase the number of referrals to La Bodega from patrol officers, but they also hoped that the roll calls would simply introduce police to La Bodega and help them understand the project's basic concepts.

Soon afterward, La Bodega received three or four referrals from housing police, which they attributed to the roll calls. In July 2000, La Bodega received a referral from a housing police officer who said he remembered the program from the roll call presentations in January.

Staff members intend to schedule more roll call sessions with patrol officers in the Ninth Precinct, and they plan to return to PSA Four to repeat the presentations in the next few months.

What makes an effective roll call presentation?

According to Fred Weinburg, the most effective presentations are quick and to the point. The presenter must gain credibility with the officers by showing that he or she knows what the officers' daily routine is like and what they face on the streets. The presenter should be clear as to how the program relates to the officer and should stay away from general explanations about a program's benefits unless they are immediate.

After the roll call presentations in January 2000, staff said that the most effective technique for eliciting officers' support and cooperation was to help them see that the police and La Bodega are working toward the same goals: crime and harm reduction.

Did roll calls work for La Bodega?

There are many possible explanations for why La Bodega's efforts to work with the police resulted in few referrals. According to some staff, the roll call presentations did not produce the intended results for at least two reasons: 1) There is high turnover of officers in the precinct and housing substations. Staff felt that once officers became familiar with La Bodega and understood its mission, they were transferred. To keep pace with the high turnover, La Bodega staff said they would have to make roll call presentations on an ongoing basis, which would be too time consuming. 2) The police department did not offer any incentives to patrol officers for making referrals to La Bodega. Domestic violence and housing police work more closely with families and are expected to make referrals to social services, which may account for why they were more likely than patrol officers to refer families to La Bodega. Other officers, staff say, simply don't think that making referrals to social services is a proper role for them.

Although referrals from police to La Bodega are low, staff say they will continue to do roll calls because they are one of few ways to communicate information about the project directly to police officers and because it introduces the officers to La Bodega staff members. Afterwards, staff say, police officers are more willing to stop and speak to a staff member whom they see in the street or who visits them at the precinct or substation.

In addition to roll calls...

Staff found that other contact with police officers—particularly one-on-one meetings—have been more effective at gaining support for the program. One staff member, for example, developed a close relationship with a domestic violence officer who was responsible for several referrals. Staff cautioned that these relationships take a lot of time and energy to nurture.

Project Confirm

Project Confirm is a Vera demonstration project started in July 1998 to reduce unnecessary detention and foster home replacements for children in foster care. Each time a juvenile is arrested in New York City, Project Confirm determines whether he or she is in foster care. If so, project staff arrange for a child welfare caseworker to confer with probation, the prosecutor, and the court to exchange information, create a plan for the child, and avoid unnecessary detention or replacement.

Project Confirm learns about juvenile arrests from the Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) or from the police. Most notifications come from DJJ, through a report sent to Project Confirm each morning listing arrests made of juveniles in the last 24 hours. The sooner Project Confirm is notified of an arrest, the more time they have to determine whether the youth is in the child welfare system and arrange for the caseworker to appear with the arrested juvenile in court. For this reason, the project prefers to receive referrals from police immediately following an arrest.

Project Confirm's director, Molly Armstrong, anticipated that it would be difficult to get officers to call for every juvenile arrest. Before the project began operations, Molly started talking with officials in the NYPD's Patrol Division about the possibility of issuing the operations order. Although the police department issued the operations order in May 1999, which required police to call Project Confirm each time they arrest a juvenile suspect, police did not call Project Confirm in more than 90 percent of juvenile arrests during the project's first year and a half of operation.

Staff looked for ways to encourage police to call Project Confirm. They accompanied officers on ride-alongs in all Brooklyn precincts as a way of familiarizing the officers with the project and the individuals who work at the project. When youth officers from throughout the city were assembled for a comprehensive training, Project Confirm staff made half-hour to one-hour presentations to the group. They also began making roll call presentations.

Between June 1999 and January 2000, Project Confirm staff made presentations to an average of three tours in each of Brooklyn's 23 precincts, or 66 roll call sessions in all. The presentations were made by staff members in their 20s with no law enforcement background. At each roll call, staff took five minutes to present general information about Project Confirm.

Following the roll calls, Project Confirm still received few referrals from police. At this time, Project Confirm is not planning to continue doing roll call presentations.

What makes an effective roll call presentation?

Early on, staff realized that they were not making it clear to the officers what Project Confirm required them to do—to make a phone call for every juvenile arrest—and they learned to state this up front. At each roll call they distributed a copy of the operations order from headquarters, which gave clear instructions about what the officers should do. They also placed posters with Project Confirm’s telephone number near telephones in the precincts as a reminder.

Project Confirm staff say their presentation skills improved over the six-month period, but they had thoughts on how they could have been more effective. Aware that the language used to discuss the child welfare system sounds to police like “government jargon,” they began using “police jargon” as a way of gaining credibility with the officers. Eventually they discovered that officers responded well when they talked about the consequences for failing to call Project Confirm (and thereby violate an operations order). The presenters also learned to stress how Project Confirm could reduce police workload by discouraging foster care agencies from calling police every time there is a problem with a child in their care. Staff thought the program’s credibility with police could be enhanced by having a police officer present the information—especially if the officer could talk personally about how Project Confirm had helped him or her with a particular case.

Did roll calls work for Project Confirm?

Staff said the roll call sessions did not give them enough time to persuade officers of the project’s merit. They said that five minutes was too little time to explain the project’s goals, its importance, and its relationship to the officers. They also found it to be a chaotic time of the day, when officers are not focused or attentive.

Ultimately, Project Confirm’s roll call presentations did not result in a noticeable increase in calls from police. Staff say a significant problem is that the department did not enforce the consequences for failing to call Project Confirm.

In addition to roll calls...

Since Project Confirm began operations, staff have monitored police compliance with the operations order to refer juvenile arrestees. Every week, they flag the arrests for which they did not receive calls from police and report these “fail to calls” to the patrol division. For many months, their reports generated no response. Then in January 2000, a newly appointed police liaison in the NYPD’s patrol division started taking Project Confirm’s reports seriously. Appalled at such low police compliance rates, the liaison issued a reprimand from the Chief of Patrol to all precincts, reiterating the operations order and establishing a monthly reporting system that would hold each precinct accountable for its referral rate. Shortly before the reprimand was issued, Project Confirm was receiving an average of 35 referrals per month from the police department. Following the reprimand, referrals increased to 66 in January, 191 in February, 226 in March, and 148 in April. Project director Molly Armstrong concludes that, without an accountability mechanism within the police department, front-line offices lack the incentive to change their work routines.

Pretrial Services of the Bureau of Justice Assistance (South Africa)

The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) is a partnership between the Vera Institute of Justice and the Ministry of Justice of South Africa. BJA designs, implements, and evaluates projects that aim to make the South African justice system more effective and humane. BJA's first demonstration project screened the pretrial detention population in three pilot sites and issued bail recommendations, supervised released persons, and offered secure courthouse facilities for fearful witnesses. A second project teams special prosecutors with police investigators to mount more effective prosecutions of car-hijacking in Johannesburg. In June 2000, BJA launched a third project to improve the investigation and prosecution of rape cases at police stations in the Cape Flats.

The first project, Pretrial Services, required police to both play a new role—interviewing pretrial detainees in the holding cells before they appeared in court—and to perform an old role in a different way—supervising pretrial detainees released on bail or warning. Some members of the South African Police Service (SAPS) were detailed to BJA as full-time supervision officers to assist with interviews and supervision. However, other members of the Police Service simply added new duties to their regular routines. For example, police orderlies in the court holding cells took on the responsibility of escorting pretrial detainees to a special cell for interviews, and supervision was often the responsibility of regular officers at the seven police stations participating in the project.

What makes an effective roll call presentation?

SAPS roll calls are very similar to NYPD roll calls, except that they last 30 instead of 15 minutes and more officers are present. When BJA first mounted its pretrial services demonstration in the Mitchells Plein magistrate's court, BJA staff made roll call presentations to police officers assigned to the court to tell them about the project and to gain their support. The staff spent 30 minutes at each roll call going over basic information about the pretrial services project for an audience of approximately 20 to 30 police officers. Staff distributed literature about the project and contact information for police who wanted to follow up.

Overall, BJA staff found that it did not work to appeal to officers' higher values or their concern for people affected by the criminal justice process. The police did not feel a part of the local community; they were there only to do a job. Staff also discovered that they could not rely on officers to tell their peers about the changes in protocol or procedures covered during roll calls. Personal contact with the individual officers responsible for a particular task was often the most effective way to gain their cooperation.

Despite efforts to engage some of the police in one-on-one conversations after the first roll call at the court, few were willing to talk casually with BJA staff. In fact, the supervising officer made the other officers stand at attention during the presentation, an uncommon procedure. The second time BJA presented at roll call, however, trainees were more relaxed and comfortable with the staff (and were allowed to sit down)—however, this time they were loud, disruptive, and made insulting jokes.

Although project staff left plenty of time for questions at the end of all their roll call presentations, police rarely asked questions. Even the supervising officer said nothing. Staff interpreted their silence as passive resistance to the new project. According to one former staff member, the police probably thought that the project was one of many new changes that would eventually fade away, and they probably thought that the project would require them to do additional work.

With ongoing contact between BJA staff and these police officials, the relationship strengthened over several months. As the police began to see project staff in the courthouse day in and day out, they began to open up and cooperate.

Although staff agreed that it is important to have support from higher ranks of the police organization, they avoided seeking formal orders from provincial- or national-level commanders to cooperate with the pretrial services project. They first wanted to try persuading the local police division to cooperate on their own. According to the former staff member, directives from above can sometimes be counterproductive: front-line officers may be even more resistant to formal commands than to a local initiative.

Nevertheless, one former BJA staff member said that the effectiveness of roll calls depended on the explicit support of the local police command (not necessarily the provincial or national command). BJA staff developed a strong relationship with the station commissioner in Mitchell's Plein, who appointed a special officer to act as liaison with the pretrial services project. This person often accompanied BJA staff to roll calls and other meetings with police. He was a visible sign of the commissioner's support, and this opened doors for BJA and enhanced the staff's credibility with police.

Did roll calls work for BJA?

According to former BJA director Michelle India Baird, there were at least two ways of detecting police compliance with the Pretrial Services project. One was that the project depended on police officers to voluntarily bring detainees to the Pretrial Services screening facility before going to court. A second was that both the police officer and the accused person were required to sign special list each time the accused reported to the police station as a condition of their release.

Compliance on both counts was mixed, but Michelle India Baird does not attribute this to the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of roll calls. In her view, one cannot expect police to change their routines as a result of roll call presentations. She finds that they are valuable, however, for passing on basic information about a project, alerting front-line staff of the changes that they will be experiencing, and introducing project staff and police officers—who may end up working together—to one another for the first time. BJA found that, even when there is support for an innovations at the highest levels of police command, project staff should not rely on the police chain of command to disseminate information about the project. Roll calls were one way of making sure that front-line officers, whose jobs were likely to change most, were fully aware of the innovation.

In addition to roll calls...

BJA staff found that police were more receptive when there was a give-and-take, not when they were made the audience of a roll call presentation. Staff consulted police officials about aspects of the project and asked for feedback. When police felt they were involved in its development, they were more likely to support its operation.

BJA staff also took some measures to help police comply with the innovation. They created new forms for police officers at the stations to use when a pretrial detainee had supervision orders to report there. These forms were explained to officers at the station house during roll calls, as well as in individual meetings with the station commanders. Initially, the officers used the new forms. Over time, BJA staff discovered that the forms were misplaced or that they were not completed correctly, if at all. BJA staff and detailed police officers made additional efforts to speak with the charge officers responsible for the forms, and this seemed to increase cooperation. However, BJA found that because of frequent turnover in personnel at the stations, they had to conduct regular follow-up meetings to ensure that the forms were completed properly.

Staff also found that police embraced the project once they identified some clear benefits that made their jobs easier. For example, the background information gathered by BJA staff was often more detailed and more reliable than the information police obtained in their own interviews with accused persons. Police then looked to project staff to help answer questions and give advice on certain cases. A former staff member says that the time spent listening to these officers and responding to their questions was well worth it. BJA was also able to provide police with photographs of accused persons, which the police would not have had otherwise, and these were useful in identifying detainees who needed to be brought to court or released persons who absconded.

The Bureau of Justice Assistance plans to make roll call presentations to police about its third project, a rape center that will require charge officers at three police stations to do their jobs differently. Based on the lessons learned in the pretrial services project, BJA staff have invited an officer from each station to sit on a subcommittee with the prosecutors, doctors, and ambulance drivers who will staff the center. The committee will help draft protocols for the investigation of rape cases. The police officers will then accompany BJA staff to roll calls at each of the three stations to explain how the new project will work. The protocols drafted by the subcommittee will be distributed by the provincial commissioner's office to each police station, along with posters that explain the new procedure and list the center's contact numbers. A project coordinator will be based permanently in the charge office of each station house.

Victim Services, Inc.

Victim Services, Inc. began as a Vera demonstration project in the mid-1970s and spun off as an independent non-profit organization in 1978. Victim Services' 650 staff provide counseling, referrals, courtroom assistance, and other services to crime victims through more than 60 programs in community centers, courts, hospitals, schools, and precincts in New York's five boroughs. Victim Services serves approximately 200,000 people each year, including 60,000 domestic violence victims.

Since 1984, Victim Services has collaborated with the NYPD to operate the Domestic Violence Prevention Program. Victim Services' counselors and domestic violence officers work as teams inside twelve precincts and nine police service areas. The police-counselor teams offer social services to families reporting domestic violence and intervene to enforce domestic violence laws. The teams contact victims identified through police reports to offer assistance, and they visit homes to investigate some cases. Since 1984, they have made presentations to residents and police to educate them about domestic violence. The program has introduced several new police procedures to improve police response to domestic violence, including a "case enhancement sheet," which gives prosecutors and judges information about defendants' and victims' previous involvement with police.

The Domestic Violence Prevention Program aims to help officers respond appropriately and with sensitivity to the complex issues of domestic violence. Victim Services' trainers try to help police understand why the victim might drop the charges or not want the batterer to be arrested. They also try to educate officers about aspects of prosecution that are relevant to domestic violence cases, such as why a prosecutor would reduce charges or why a batterer would be released on bail. The training is also meant to help officers follow procedures, such as correctly filling out new forms or making appropriate referrals.

What makes an effective roll call presentation?

Staff of the Domestic Violence Prevention Program have been making roll call presentations for 16 years. While Victim Services counselors and supervisors usually pair up with domestic violence officers to do the roll call presentations, they say there is no difference in how police respond to the officer versus the civilian. However, they do believe that police trainees are more attentive to an outsider than to someone who works in their own precinct, regardless of whether it is a Victim Services counselor or a domestic violence officer.

According to program staff, more important than the trainer's affiliation is whether the person is a good trainer and has strong public speaking skills. They say that officers pay attention to someone with authority who can monitor officers' behavior and who can expose those who fail to follow instructions. They also find that survivors of domestic violence are highly effective presenters, but they are careful to draw only on those who feel it would be cathartic for them to tell their stories.

Staff say that roll call presenters who communicate well are those who try to see things through the officers' eyes. It is helpful to speak as someone who has worked on the front-line toward similar objectives or to talk knowledgeably about officers' frustrations. Although police may respond to the presenter's appeal to higher values—such as helping victims—they are likely to resist any program presented as a diversion from arrest, as less punitive, or as an alternative to regular police work. The presenter should answer the question on every officer's mind: How does this make my work easier? Innovations that save officers time or paperwork, even in the long run, will be more appealing.

Preparing for roll call presentations is crucial, according to Domestic Violence Prevention Program staff. Good presenters decide on a single, clear objective and stay focused on it. It might be changing a specific behavior, such as completing a new form, or helping officers understand one element of the prosecution process. The Victim Services trainers typically draw up a lesson plan, even for short roll call sessions, based on the objective. Victim Services staff recommend keeping the presentations as short as possible and using handouts, so that officers come away with something even after only a few minutes of training.

It is a good idea to leave plenty of time for questions after the formal presentation. Because officers are sometimes reluctant to ask questions in front of their peers, Victim Services program staff usually linger after the roll call is over to answer questions one-on-one. When possible, they try to “plant” someone in the audience to ask the first question, which often breaks the ice and starts a stream of questions.

Do roll calls work for Victim Services?

Sometimes, but only in combination with many other forms of contact between staff and police, with careful monitoring, and with assurance from senior officers that compliance is taken seriously.

Victim Services measures the effectiveness of its roll call sessions by tracking officers’ compliance with the training objective. For example, if the objective is to get them to fill out reports accurately, program staff review the reports and document problems. In some cases, staff approach the officers’ supervisors about problems. Officers are more likely to comply if they think that someone is following up like this, especially if there is the chance that something in writing could go to their supervisors and embarrass them. Victim Services has also monitored compliance with programs across several precincts or even citywide, which allows individual precincts to see how they measure up against others. When the police department uses this information to observe compliance levels, a competitive spirit can motivate officers to take the program more seriously.

Even with all their experience, Victim Services staff find it difficult to overcome some problems inherent to roll calls. One problem is that a civilian presenter is always on police officers’ “turf” in the precincts, where trainees are surrounded by peers, and where there is a strong culture that is not warm to outsiders. Another is that roll calls only reach patrol officers, while a new program may affect specialized officers or other levels of command.

Victim Services staff conclude that roll calls are a large investment with relatively little payoff and question whether they are worth doing at all. Training all the front-line officers in one precinct can involve 10-15 training sessions, to account for the various tours and squads. Because of high turnover in the precincts, Victim Services does roll call training continuously. “Training is not a one-shot deal,” they say. Officers need more information and a more sophisticated understanding of systemic problems and how the program addresses them before they will sign on.

In addition to roll calls...

Although Victim Services continues to use roll calls to connect with patrol officers, staff recommend “staying as far away from roll calls as possible,” in favor of more direct, personal, and extended contact with a range of different police officers. In addition to roll calls, the Domestic Violence Prevention Program engages officers through the following activities:

1. Day-to-day contact. Counselors from the Domestic Violence Prevention Program staff actually work in the precinct alongside police officers and form personal relationships with police officers. They are able to have ongoing discussions about domestic violence and can give on-the-spot advice about how to handle particular cases.
2. Case follow-up. Staff say it is helpful to follow up with officers to explain the outcome of individual cases. A better understanding of the rules of evidence, for example, may help officers see how their work—even filling out a form correctly—can affect a case.
3. Special meetings with training sergeants, who are responsible for leading roll calls. The sergeants’ attitudes towards the presenter affect how subordinates respond. Victim Services and La Bodega staff both reported that their most inattentive roll call sessions occurred when training sergeants were absent.
4. Special meetings with commanding officers. Before starting any new program, Victim Services staff recommend meeting with the commanding officer and getting her or him on board. The commanding officer should be willing to enforce consequences if trainees fail to comply.
5. Supervisor training. Twice a month, each precinct commander meets with all of the supervisors in the precinct for one or two hours. Victim Services staff often make half-hour presentations at these meetings. The longer format gives staff the chance to explain why their program or a new procedure is important. When the supervisors’ are behind it, there is a greater chance that they will hold subordinates accountable for their compliance.
6. Borough meetings. Once a month, police supervisors from precincts throughout each of the five boroughs meet. Again, Victim Services uses this opportunity to orient supervisors and to get their commitment to seeing a new program or procedure take hold. Staff say that everyone tends to be on good behavior at these meetings because there are higher-ups present.
7. Once every quarter, domestic violence officers attend a Victim Services staff meeting. Away from their peers and the environment of the precinct, officers seem more open to helping the domestic violence programs succeed.
8. Victim Services staff make presentations to newly promoted sergeants and lieutenants at the training academy. The longer training sessions are a chance for Victim Services to provide more detailed information and to make stronger connections between the program’s and police officers’ objectives. The longer sessions also give Victim Services enough time to use a range of more effective training techniques, including role plays.

Considerations for Future Vera Innovations

Despite the variations in the operations of these four projects, how each works with police, and the methods they use for obtaining police support, there is some consistency in the lessons they draw from their roll call experiences. For future efforts at Vera to introduce innovations to police, project staff may find it useful to consider the following points before deciding whether to make roll call presentations.

1. *What does the project require police to do?* If the project is asking police to change some aspect of their work, the change should be reasonable, clear, and concrete. Above all, it should be consistent with the goals of police work. It is not reasonable to expect to change police attitudes or values in the short time allotted during roll calls. Project staff should be able to answer the question: “Why would a police officer comply with this change?” If the objective is not reasonable, clear, and concrete, project staff may want to think of alternative ways of getting the information, service, or referrals they are seeking from police.

2. *What does the project offer police?* As noted above, the first question on every officer’s mind is: “How does this make my job easier?” Roll call presenters should be able to state concrete, immediate benefits of complying with the program. If these benefits don’t exist, project staff may want to adapt the program to include them. For example, Project Confirm staff could offer to answer questions about the foster care system—something they are already doing—as a service to police officers who notify them of a juvenile arrest.

Typically, it is difficult to persuade police to comply with a change in procedure because of long-term benefits. However, some officers—particularly officers who specialize in certain populations of victims or offenders—may be more interested in long-term goals than others.

3. *Whom does the project affect within the police department?* Different units and levels of command work in different ways, in different places, and with different populations. Roll calls are one way to reach housing police and patrol officers assigned to precincts. If the project intends to work with other members of the police department, the project will need other strategies for reaching them.

4. *What can the project do besides or in addition to roll calls that would encourage police to support it?* Many of these strategies have already been discussed, but they include: one-on-one meetings with supervisors, presentations at the training academy, attending borough meetings, and following up with individual officers to let them know the results of a particular case or situation they were involved in.

5. *What mechanism within the police department will ensure that officers apply what they learn from the training?* If there is no consequence from within the police department for failing to comply with the project, do not expect cooperation from front-line staff. Even if the innovation promises to make the police officer’s job easier, he or she will be reluctant to change an old, comfortable routine. Police

supervisors must be willing to monitor their subordinates' behavior and take action when they do not comply with the project.

6. *Who will conduct roll calls or other training sessions, and how will police officers perceive the presenters?* The presenters should have excellent presentation skills and be capable of getting people interested and motivated. The presenters should have a positive attitude toward police and an understanding of police work. In some instances, it may be a good idea to ask a police officer to make the presentation (or some part of it), particularly if the officer can describe a positive experience that he or she has had with the project. Another strategy is to get clients or participants to talk about their positive experiences with the project.
7. *What information should be presented?* Presenters should not try to deliver too much information, and they should be clear and concise. Presenters should prepare for roll calls and any other presentations to police, using outlines or lesson plans, even for short, informal presentations. It is a good idea to distribute handouts that describe the project and contain contact information.
8. *How will you know if roll calls are having an impact?* Roll call presentations can consume a lot of staff time, and project directors will want to know if it is time well spent. Project staff may want to follow up by having one-on-one conversations with a sample of trainees to learn about their reactions to the presentations and, when possible, whether the training had any effect.

One-on-one conversations are one way to gauge officers' reactions, but it is also important to record, when possible, whether officers are doing what the project requires them to do. This is easier to do when the project requires a specific change in procedure that can be observed. Feeding the performance information back to the officers and to their supervisors is a powerful way for the project and the police department to reward those who comply, to sanction those who don't, and to identify problems that may be causing non-compliance. When project staff track this information, it can give police supervisors evidence they need to enforce rules and procedures.