

A while ago, I was in the office of one of the Police Department employees when I read a poster on her wall. It was Robert Fulghum's "All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten." This wonderful piece articulates many of the things we learned as children and that as adults many of us have obviously forgotten.

"Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back where you found them. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say sorry when you hurt somebody. When you go out in the world, watch for traffic, hold hands, and stick together." These are some of the things, as a police officer, that I often wish adults would behave as if they remembered – and believed! They represent priceless values about how we should act toward each other.

These little "rules" for proper childhood behavior are not all that dissimilar in importance from the things we, as employers, want our employees to learn and demonstrate in their daily work lives.

It has been written that the strongest, most profitable corporations are those that are "value-driven." Rather than being driven by organizational rules known as "company policy" these companies -- whose employees understand the basic principles and values on which the organization is based, and act accordingly -- will be the most successful in the future.

Today's business environment is too complicated and society is changing so fast that sufficient rules cannot be written to address every circumstance an employee finds himself in. Only steadfast values will ultimately prove sufficient to guide workers consistently.

While the RPD has its own set of "police" policies, we have developed our strategic purpose, organizational values and guiding principles that serve in concert as our "roadmap" to serving the people of Redlands and the desired behavior of our employees. The department's recruitment and hiring practices, promotions, assignments, evaluations, budget requests and crime control strategies are all aligned with our purpose, values and principles. I believe that collectively, these are stronger than any set of rules we could possibly construct.

Why we "really" exist is a metaphysical question man has asked forever. (My wife is sure she knows the answer to this one!). Periodically asking ourselves what we believe to be the purpose of our lives is invaluable to achieving our personal destinies. Similarly, it is critical for the RPD to ask why it exists. Is it to control crime? If so, how should we do that? How will the department fulfill its destiny?

The *Strategic Purpose* of the RPD helps us keep centered on the intended outcome of the department's efforts. It answers our own metaphysical question. It is:

*To control crime before it occurs by supporting
strong families, resilient youth and safe and
sustainable neighborhoods.*

We refer to our values as our *CLEER Values*. *CLEER* is the acronym that stands for **C**ollaboration, **L**eadership, **E**thical Behavior, **E**xcellence and the **R**espect for Human Dignity. Everything we do at the RPD must be squared with these values if they are to be meaningful. Each value promotes ongoing discussions about what it "really" means in terms of our actions. For instance, we know that crime is not the sole province of the police. Without significant

collaboration between the police and community groups, the schools, other city departments and the business community our ability to combat crime would be seriously stunted.

The *Guiding Principles of the RPD* provide tangible meaning to our values and serve as strategic delineators for future department initiatives. They are:

- Live our Purpose and Values
- Support and Honor our People
- Develop the Organization
- Hold our relationship with the Community as Sacred
- Help Victims of Crime Rebuild their Lives
- Control Crime through Excellent Police Work and Innovative Problem Solving

Over the next several months my column will describe in depth what each piece of our own “kindergarten lessons” mean in terms of our service to each of you.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at 909-335-4744 or at chief@redlandspolice.org.