Rehabilitative Leadership and how it contributes to Safety

SAFETY TOOLKIT

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Contents

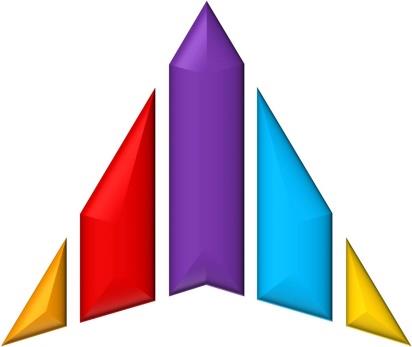
[1 How Rehabilitative Leaders contribute to safety 3](#_Toc526778512)

2 Rehabilitative Leaders and the 5P's5

[3 The importance of Procedural Justice](#_Toc526778514) 7

[4 Leading Cultural Change to improve safety](#_Toc526778515) 8

[Please leave a blank page here as the back of the contents table if you plan to print this document. If you don’t want to print the document, you can delete this blank page by deleting this guidance and the page break on the previous page.]



Rehabilitative Leadership and How It Contributes to Safety

A rehabilitative culture is one where all aspects are safe, decent, hopeful and optimistic about stopping offending.

Rehabilitative Leadership Definition

Rehabilitative leaders use their authority in a procedurally just way and strike a balance between control and flexibility. They set clear rules and boundaries to provide a safe environment and allow flexibility through opportunities for development and trying new things.

Academic research on prison safety indicates that leadership is crucial in so far as creating a safe environment is concerned. It suggests that there some key measures that if taken can improve levels of safety:

1. Maintaining an operational grip, but without screwing everything down.
2. Paying attention to the detail and caring about the individuals concerned (rather than seeing them as numbers, data or performance measures).
3. Compassion and care – being able to respond to individual need.
4. Good Governance.
5. Have a learning culture and environment - learn from incidents where institutional failures or mistakes have directly or indirectly contributed to the incident.

Rehabilitative leaders encourage hope in their staff that people can desist from crime/ harm to self/harm to others. They model to staff how to impart hope and encourage others and the behaviour they expect of them. Research shows that there is a clear connection with legitimate authority, the judicious use of power and strong relationships, rehabilitative culture/leadership and staff assaults. The rehabilitative leader has an imperative role in modelling this. If Governors and Custodial Managers do not use their authority and power legitimately, competently and judiciously, it influences staff wellbeing, perceptions of rehabilitative culture and rehabilitation, and the extent to which they create strong relationships with prisoners. Poor staff – management relationships lead to poor staff – prisoner relationships.

Rehabilitative leaders need to be visible. They need to feel their prison. Leaders who regularly sense check their prison, take an interest in prisoners, and respond to what they see, addressing things that they are unhappy with and those things that fall below the ethically and morally justifiable position.

There has to be a relentless focus on the basics by leaders not just staff. It is easy to become desensitised to poor conditions, litter, vermin and the inability of prisoners to get basic kit or bedding. The rehabilitative leader has to keep a clear focus on the basics, keep ‘turning over rocks’ and keep reminding staff about the need for human decency and dignity. By preventing distress, organised crime, the expansion of the illicit economy to address material needs, you will reduce levels of violence and self-harm due as a result of indebtedness.[[1]](#footnote-2)

Rehabilitative Leaders and the 5 P’s

**People**:

* Ensuring staff have the right level of authority, support and supervision for prisoners.
* Building capability and confidence through learning and development.
* Encouraging engagement and relationships that are supportive, collaborative and respectful.
* Giving staff hope (the will and the way) to achieve change.
* Embedding FMI skills into every day practice.
* Ensuring that people have the basics they are entitled to.

**Physical**:

* Normalising environments. Access to outdoor space, colour, light, noise levels, signage etc. as far as possible reflect our knowledge on what supports safety.
* Providing an environment that supports staff wellbeing and shows they are valued.

**Population**:

* Understanding your populations’ needs and strategies are in place to address these needs.
* Encouraging participation in constructive regimes and peer support schemes such as the Listeners, Insiders, Equality, Induction/First Night Peer Mentors and Rehabilitative Culture Champions.
* Ensuring that people with increased risk of harm to themselves or others have their needs addressed.
* Ensuring that people have access to activities and opportunities that support their desistance from offending, improve levels of hope, wellbeing and sense of purpose.
* Proactively using the OMiC model and Key Worker provision, providing support, encouragement and motivation to help people to address their offending behaviour.

**Partnerships**:

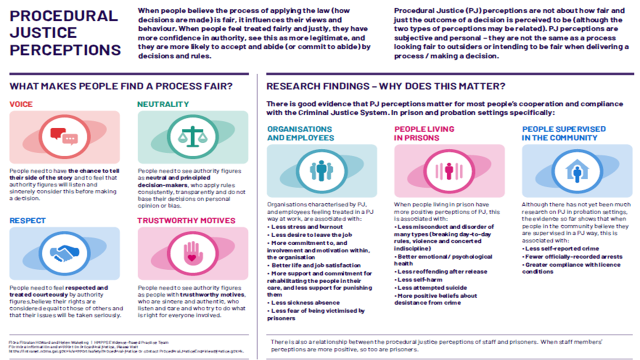
* Having effective, meaningful and impactful relationships and partnerships inside and outside of the organisation that support Prison Safety.
* Encouraging engagement by all.
* Encouraging supportive relationships with peers, families and significant others.

**Procedural:**

* Embedding procedural justice principles into policies and processes.
* Ensuring communications are written with procedural justice principles in mind.
* Informing and communicating in a way that supports inclusivity and rehabilitation.
* Using reward strategies to manage and change behaviours. “You can’t punish your way out of a problem!” If the reasons why people are violent, non-compliant or engaging in the illicit economy relate to aspects of their treatment, punitive approaches contribute to a sense of injustice and illegitimacy.
* Embracing a full Multi-Disciplinary Team approach to the use of ACCT and CSIP. Using the principle of “No decision about me, without me”.[[2]](#footnote-3)

An emphasis on procedural justice is vital, but in so far as safety is concerned outcomes matter too. How incidents are investigated and resolved (police referral, adjudication, IEP, key worker conversations, informal conversation with those involved) sends an important message about what is tolerated, where the boundaries are and the rule of law within an establishment. There can be conflict between the outcomes staff expect and what might be fair to prisoners, and a tendency for staff to want to distance themselves from prisoners and/or desire more security/control measures. In this context rehabilitative leaders have to set standards and expectations in a way that holds up fundamental values of justice, integrity and human dignity. Rehabilitative Leadership and moral leadership are intertwined.[[3]](#footnote-4)

The Importance of Procedural Justice



**Robust research shows that procedural justice matters for all of us because it can help to:**

* improve safety for staff and prisoners, by significantly reducing violence and misconduct
* make the prison regime and relationships more purposeful and respectful
* improve wellbeing, reduce stress levels, levels of self-harm and death in custody
* improve how satisfied those who work, live in and visit the establishment feel
* contribute to the rehabilitative culture of our work and living environment
* improve compliance with supervision/conditions in the community
* improve reoffending outcomes after release

Treating people fairly makes a significant difference to how they react and respond.

Rehabilitative Leaders understand and use the principles of Procedural Justice in everything they do, every decision they make and in all verbal and written communication.

**Voice**

* They allow people to tell their story and take them seriously. Ask people what would help to make them feel safe, encourage feedback and do something about it.

**Respect**

* They treat people with respect, dignity and courtesy, respecting and protecting their rights.

**Neutrality**

* They role model the authority figure as someone who is open, transparent, unbiased and consistent.
* Their processes and decisions are clear and without bias.

**Trustworthy motives**

* As an authority figure they are sincere and caring, genuinely trying to do the right thing.[[4]](#footnote-5)

Leading Cultural Change to improve Safety

**Have A Compelling Argument** – Explain how the evidence supports the need for cultural change. Use best practice examples and make sure people are aware of the risks if nothing changes. We have a duty of care and moral obligation to keep people safe.

**Influencers** - All leaders should be influential but authority/rank does not equate to influence. Identify your ‘influencers’ and get them onside.

**Evidence Based Practice** – Everything you do should be informed by the latest evidence and research relating to keeping people safe.

**Address Concerns -** Make the non-negotiable things clear. If someone has a concern, discuss it and act upon it.

**Plan for some short term easy wins –** To motivate and develop a ‘change’ feel good. Keep things simple and tangible.

**Keep Momentum** - Start with simple steps. Celebrate and share progress. Ensure there is a purpose and transparency in everything you say and do.

**Evolve** -. Test and evaluate, engage with a wide range of stakeholders, continue to develop and advance.



1. Kate Gooch 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Rehabilitative Culture and the 5Ps 27 2 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Kate Gooch 2020 [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Flora Fitzalan – Howard 6 August 2019 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)