



DODGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Dale J Schmidt Sheriff Scott Mittelstadt Chief Deputy

Developing and Growing Leaders in the Sheriff's Office

During my first 6 years as Sheriff, the sheriff's office has focused on building leaders, succession planning for the future and ensuring our staff is prepared for the many challenges presented to them in service of our community.

In law enforcement, the word "change" can often be viewed as a dirty word. However, for a law enforcement agency to be effective, we must constantly be adapting and changing. Just because something has been done one way for 20 years, does not mean it is the best and most effective way to accomplish our mission. Some of the changes we have made include how we lead and manage our staff.

Six years ago, I made leadership a priority for my administrative team, meaning we not only needed to develop ourselves as leaders, but we also needed to grow new leaders for the future. In 2016, I attended a nationally recognized leadership program called Leadership in Police Organizations, recognized as the flagship law enforcement leadership training of the International Association of Chiefs of Police. I attended this course because I needed to grow in my abilities and that need for growth as a leader must continue for the rest of my career. That philosophy of always continuing to grow and learn is a must for any leader because everyone can improve.

After graduating, I made this leadership training the standard for formal and informal leaders at the sheriff's office. My command staff and most of our first-line leaders have attended this training since and we have had excellent reviews from attendees. Recently, one attendee said it was one of the two best trainings he has ever attended.

Why is all of this important? As a result of our changes, our organization continues to improve and every day is better than the day before. There are always challenges and hurdles to overcome, but I am extremely proud of our staff for what they have been able to accomplish. The public can be proud of them as well. For example, I feel that our administrative team has grown to be extremely cohesive and productive. Their successes have made my task of steering the ship much easier as we are all working in the same direction. Our front line supervisors lead and manage our staff with a uniform and consistent message providing expectations to them that are clear and obtainable. Our front-line staff is motivated, understands our mission, and does so with the core values of our organization in mind (Integrity, Accountability, Teamwork, Leadership and Service).

Our administrative team has taken the direction given to them six years ago and they have gotten the job done. We have grown leaders and the succession planning of our agency, while still in development, is starting to take shape nicely. As people choose to retire and others are promoted, vacancies will be filled

by those who exemplify the core values of our organization. All employees have an excellent opportunity to set themselves up for success.

A long time ago, I was taught that you don't have to know everything to be successful, you just need to surround yourself with the right people and they will help make you successful. I have adopted that philosophy and we will continue to develop our staff for years to come as we work hard every day to make Dodge County a safe and enjoyable place to live, work and visit.

Sheriff Dale J. Schmidt