


What Staffing Problem?

How the Santa Cruz (CA) Consolidated 9-1-1 Center Solved Their Staffing Problem and Created a Less Than 1% Turnover Rate.

- Michael J. McDougall, General Manager
- Lisa Martinez Sullivan, Support Services Manager

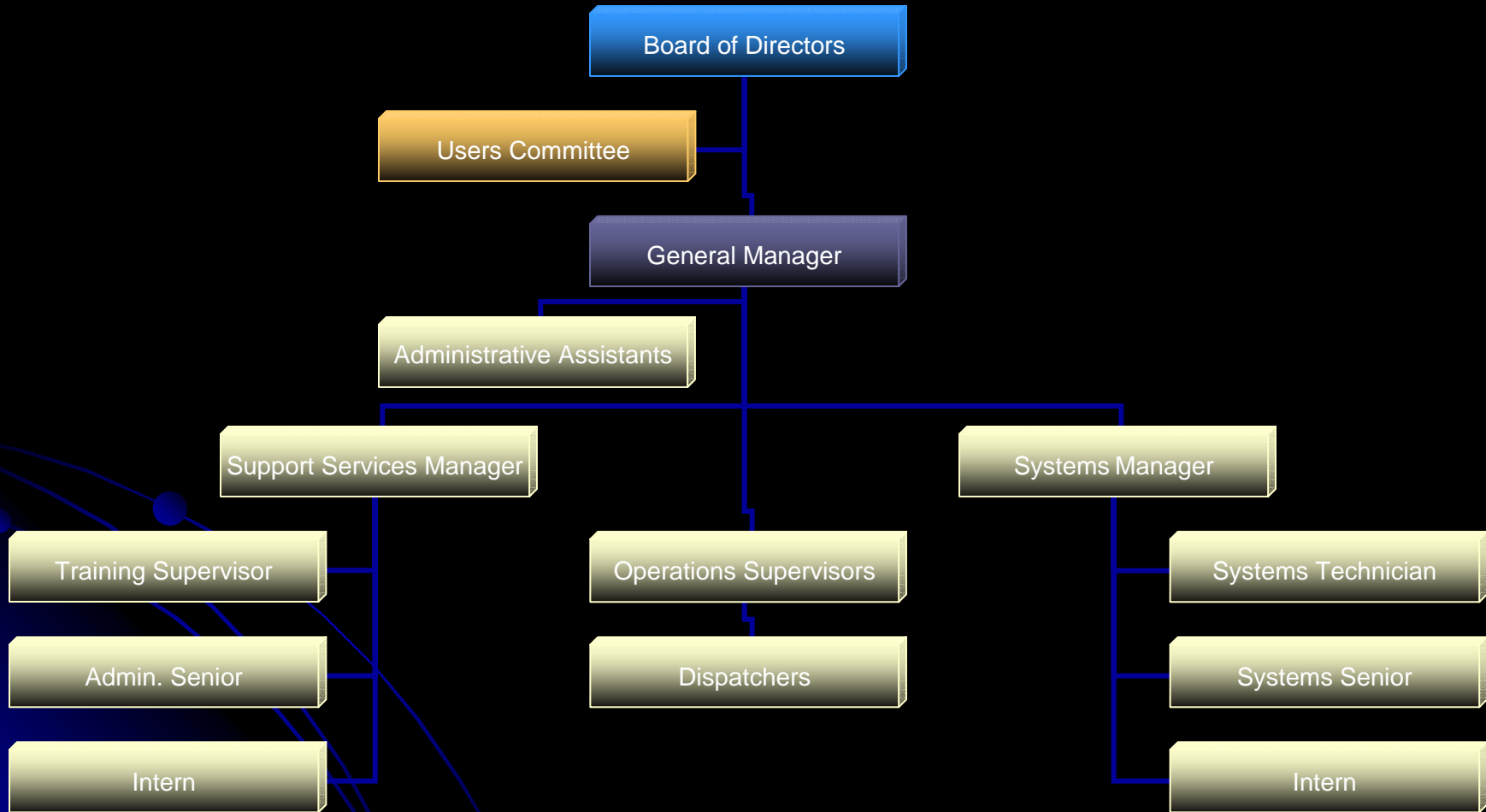
What Staffing Problem?

- SCCECC Organization & Background
 - The Problem: Where We Were
 - What We Did: Traditional Reactions
 - What Was the “Real” Problem?
 - Findings & Solutions
 - Things That Worked & Didn't Work
 - Where Are We Now?
 - Byproducts of Success
 - Project RETAINS
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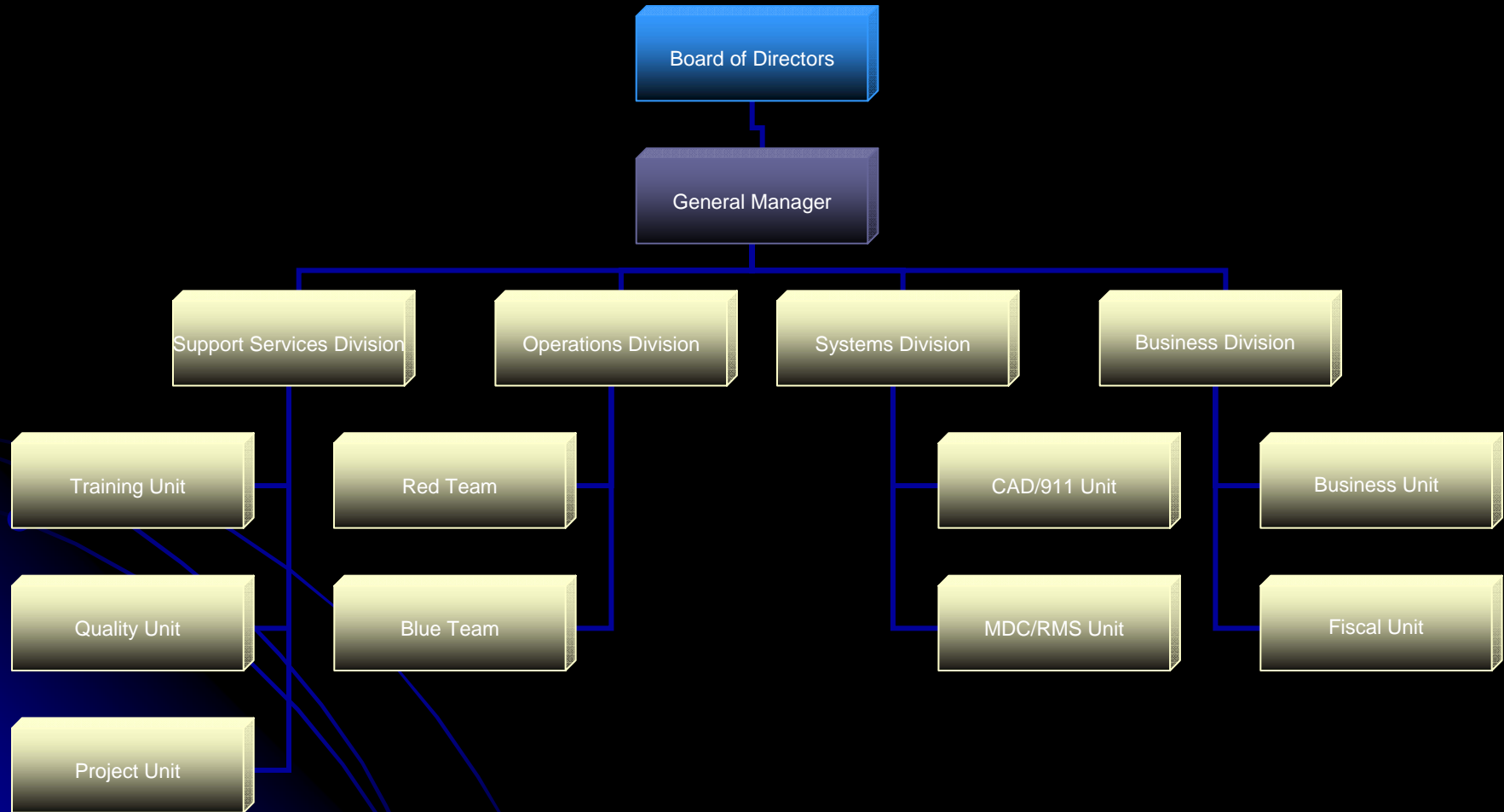
SCCECC Organization

- **Governance & User Agencies**
 - Joint Powers Authority (JPA): special, single purpose government agency created by general governments of Capitola, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, and the County.
 - 4 member Board of Directors
 - 19 User Agencies
- **Demographics**
 - 250,000 population
 - UC Campus
 - Summers
 - Politics
- **Calls for Service**
 - Law Enforcement, Fire, & EMS
 - Approximately 600,000 phone calls; 275,000 calls for service annually
- **Size & Scope**
 - Manage City Police Records Management (RMS) and Mobile Data Computer (MDC) systems – Santa Cruz Metro Records System (SCMRS)
- **56 Employees**
- **\$5 million annual budget**

SCCECC Organization Chart

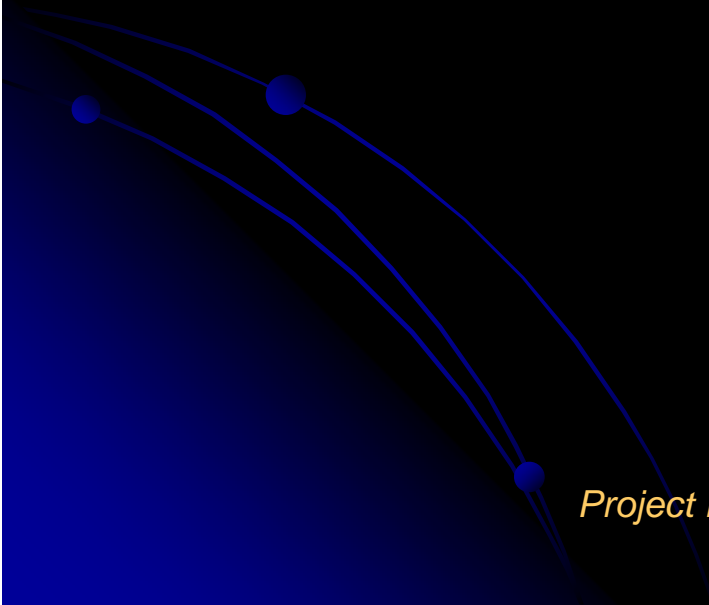


SCCECC Program Structure



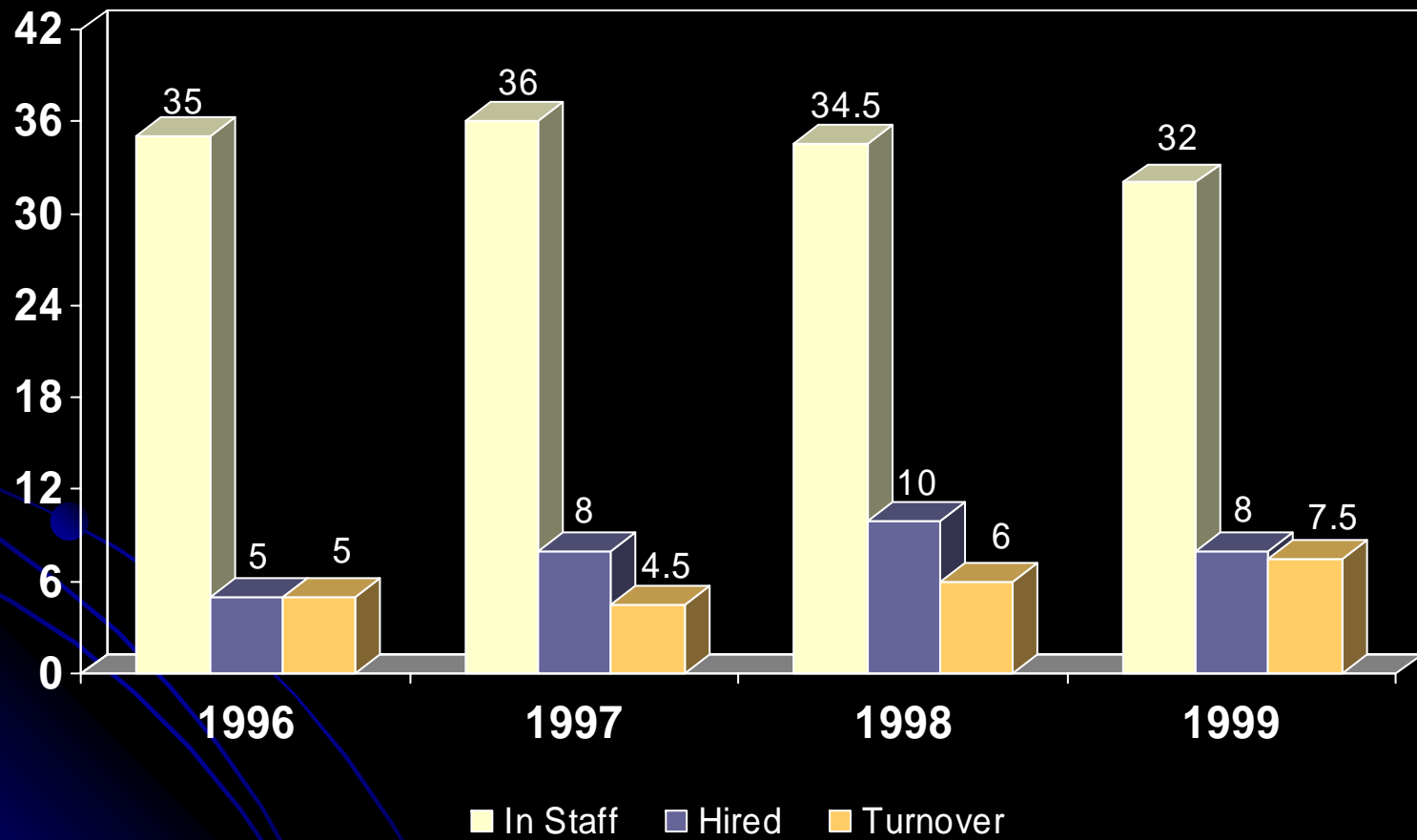
The Problem: Where We Were

- 1991-1996 (pre-consolidation): 18% annual turnover
- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% annual turnover rate

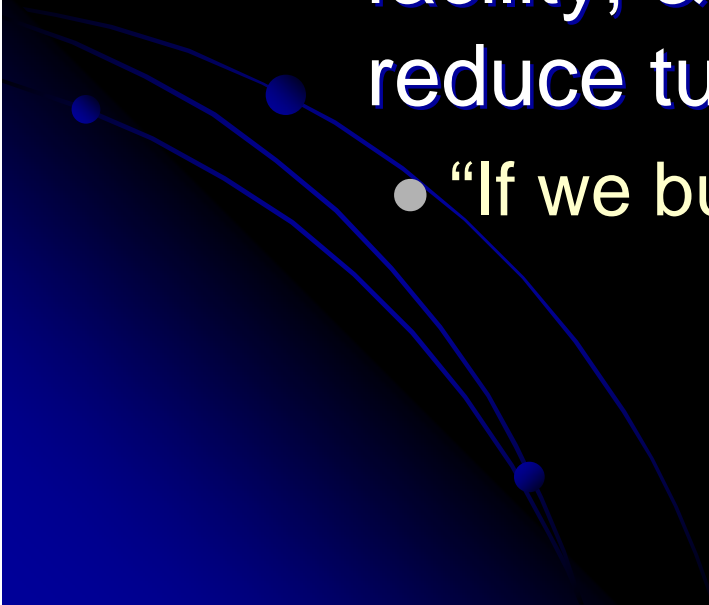


Project RETAINS → National turnover rate = 17%

1996-1999



The Problem: Where We Were

- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% turnover rate
 - Assumed new organization, facility, & equipment would reduce turnover
 - “If we build it, they will come.”
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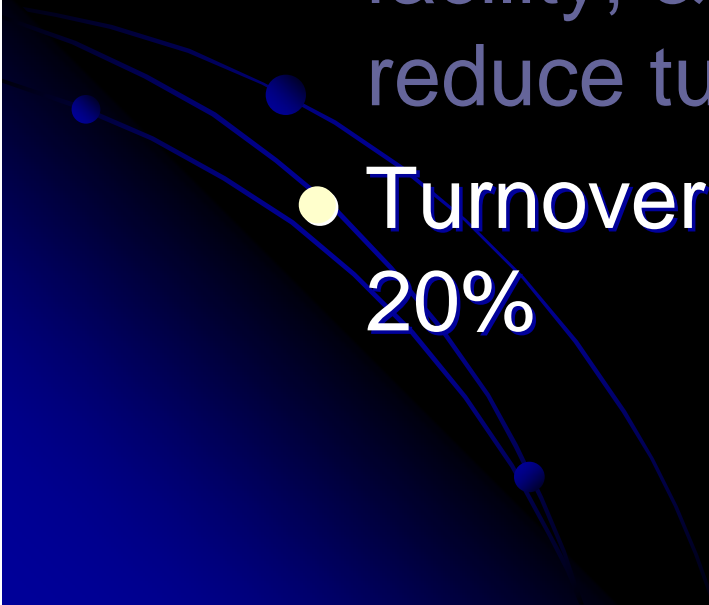
“If We Build It, They Will Come”



The Problem: Where We Were

- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% turnover rate
- Assumed new organization, facility, & equipment would reduce turnover
 - Dispatcher participation
 - Law Task Team, Fire/EMS Task Team, Staff Representative, Standards Team, Safety Committee, ACE Team, TOAC, Operations Division meetings, CTO's, Instructors, etc.
 - 24 dispatchers (out of 42) participating

The Problem: Where We Were

- 1996-1999: inherited dispatchers & 20% turnover rate
 - Assumed new organization, facility, & equipment would reduce turnover
 - Turnover rate remained steady at 20%
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What We Did: Traditional Reactions

- Threw money at it – significant salary raises (1999)
 - Salaries circa 2000
 - \$29,827 - \$42,391 Dispatcher I/II
 - \$39,478 - \$50,472 Dispatcher III
 - 18.1%: 2003, 2004, 2005
 - Salaries circa 2005
 - \$37,981 - \$59,514 Dispatcher I/II
 - \$50,274 - \$70,827 Dispatcher III

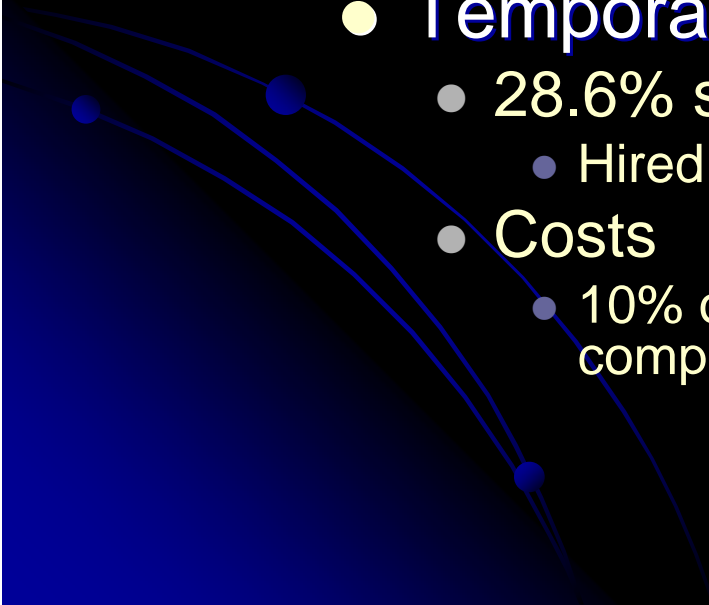
Project RETAINS → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees earned more.

What We Did: Traditional Reactions

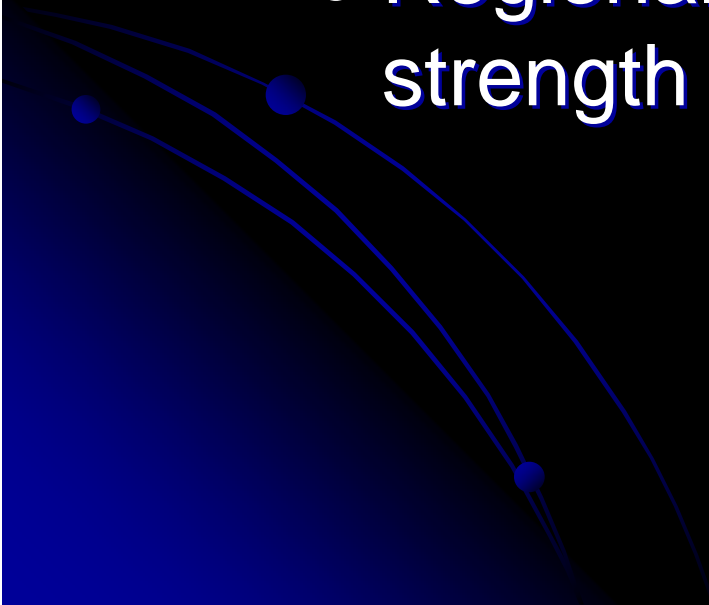
- Threw money at it – significant salary raises (1999)
- Created Dispatcher Assistant positions (1999)
 - Why?
 - No call takers
 - Scope of duties
 - Labor relations
 - Traded unfillable positions

Project RETAINS → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when staffed to handle work comfortably.

What We Did: Traditional Reactions

- Threw money at it – significant salary raises (1999)
 - Created Dispatcher Assistant positions (1999)
 - Temporary over hire (2000)
 - 28.6% success rate
 - Hired 7; retained 2 (after 1 year)
 - Costs
 - 10% over hire costs = 2% of total compensation
- 

Summer, 2000

- End of 2000: no change, at 75% working strength (all positions, dispatchers & DA's)
 - Regionally: 53-93% working strength
- 

July, 2000

Agency	Working Strength	Positions	FY 99/00 Turnover
Santa Rosa	93%	24	n/a
Sunnyvale	90%	22	20%
San Jose	79%	166	n/a
SCCECC	75%	45	22%
San Francisco	66%	137	n/a
Marin	61%	30	48%
Monterey County	56%	62	n/a
Ventura County	53%	28	48%

October, 2000

- End of 2000: no change, at 75% working strength (all positions, dispatchers & DA's)
- Regionally: 53-93% working strength
- **Re-evaluate**
 - DA program: helped
 - Temporary over hire: no help (sort of...)
 - Salary increase: no help

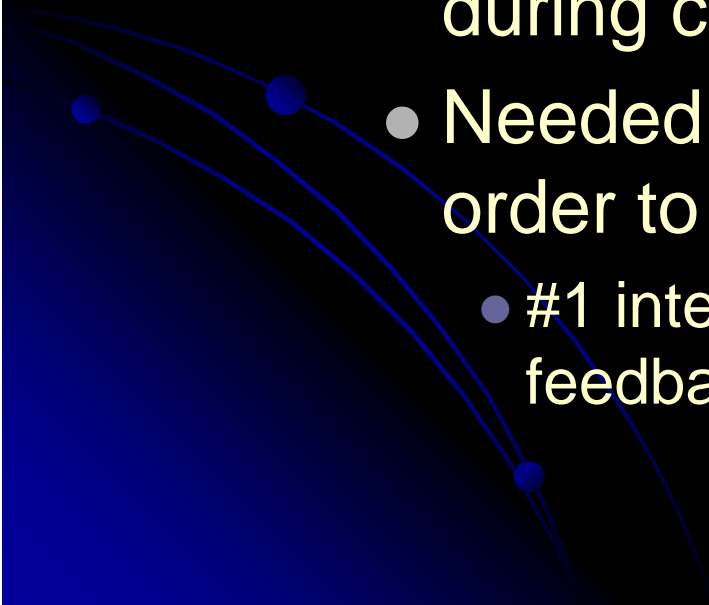
What Was the “Real” Problem?

- Exit Interviews

- Seniority gap between 1 – 2 ½ years
- Why?
 - Too much overtime
 - Lack of shift selection

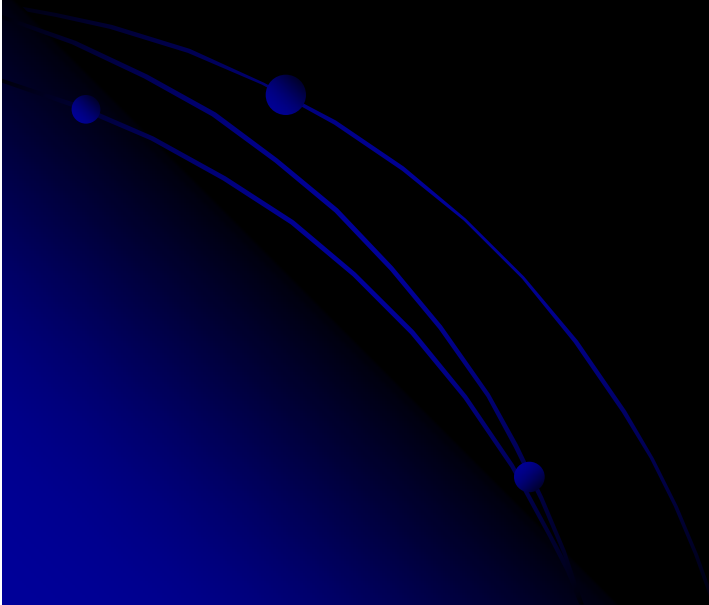
Project RETAINS → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when there is less overtime and OT is voluntary, not mandatory.

What Was the “Real” Problem?

- Vision 2000: Organization Development Project
 - Follow up to previous OD project to improve Users service delivery during consolidation change project
 - Needed to solve internal issues in order to deliver better service
 - #1 internal issue = acceptance of feedback
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Findings

- Shift selection process
- Overtime burden
- QI process changes



Solutions

- Shift Rotation & Selection
 - Negotiated
 - 10's and 12's, Days and Nights
 - Rotation = Days vs. Nights; no more than 8 months on one, then off for 4 months, per year
 - 15 year employees exempt (but shifts may be unavailable)

Project RETAINS → Satisfaction with shift selection process is predictive of employee satisfaction.

Solutions

- Shift Rotation & Selection
 - Negotiated
 - Shift Differentials
 - Up to \$5.00 per hour
 - \$3.00 per hour, 6 pm – 6 am
 - Additional \$2.00 per hour for weekend graveyard shifts, 1 am – 6 am, Saturday & Sunday
 - Total cost of weekend graveyard differential = \$5,200
 - Annual budget = \$5 million

Solutions

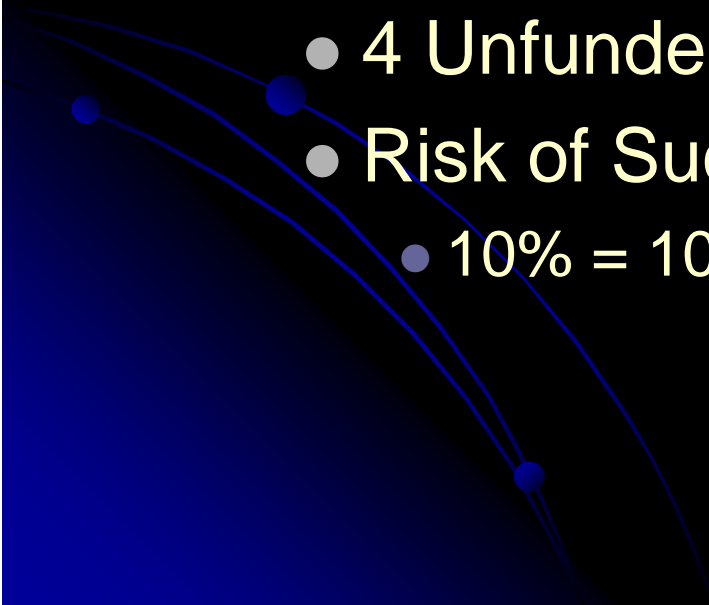
- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
 - Incentives
 - 2-step raises
 - Call Back = 3 hours, straight pay
 - On-Call = \$2 per hour
 - Bilingual = \$1.50 per hour
 - CTO = \$1.25 per hour
 - Instructor = \$1.00 per hour
 - CTO & Instructor = \$1.50 per hour
 - Law Enforcement Cross Training* = \$1 per hour
 - Fire/EMS Cross Training* = \$1 per hour
 - Retention Pay = 5% at beginning of 8th year

Project RETAINS → Job complexity and hourly base pay are predictive factors for employee retention.

Solutions

- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
- Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
 - Placement in Range
 - “...a new employee may be appointed at any step in the range...”
 - Sick Leave
 - “...be advanced up to 160 hours of sick leave upon their first day of employment.”
 - Vacation Accrual
 - “...accrue vacation time at an accelerated rate up to 160 hours annually in recognition of their service credit with a lateral agency.”

Solutions

- Shift Rotation
 - Compensation Plan Changes
 - Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
 - **Permanent Over Hire**
 - 4 Unfunded Positions
 - Risk of Success
 - 10% = 10%
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Solutions

- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
- Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
- Permanent Over Hire
- **QI Process Changes**
 - Delivery of feedback
 - Meaningful rewards

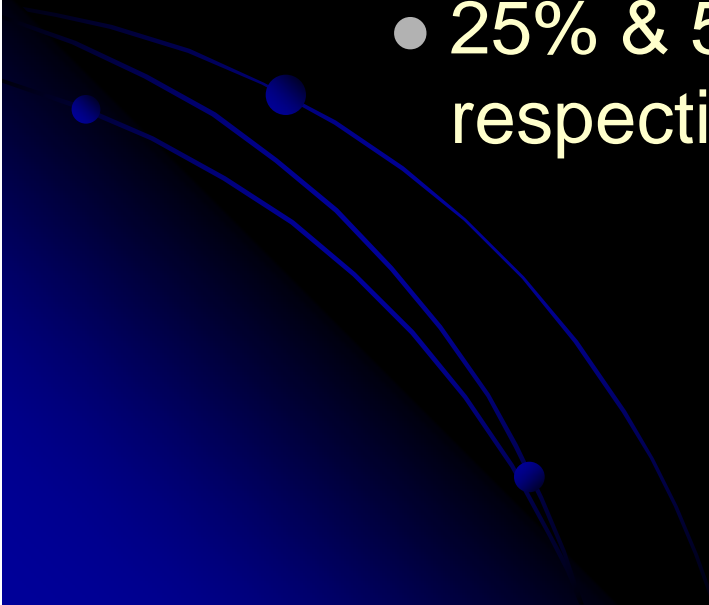
Project RETAINS → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees feel work is appreciated.

Solutions

- Shift Rotation
- Compensation Plan Changes
- Lateral Transfer Policy Changes
- Permanent Over Hire
- QI Process Changes
- Phased Training
 - 5 week entry-level Academy focused on systems & phones
 - Release to CTO program (6 weeks to 4 months)
 - 2 week Radio Academy focused on dispatching
 - Completion of CTO program
 - Release to Operations

Project RETAINS → Managers can increase retention and satisfaction by managing job training for success.

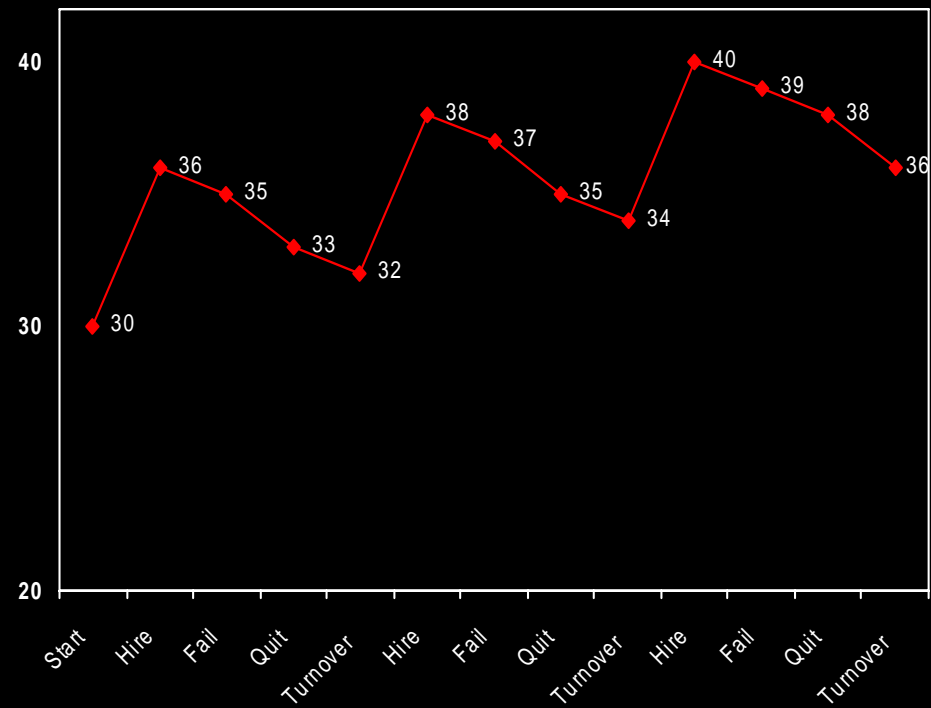
July, 2001

- Implemented 3-year Recruitment & Retention Plan
 - 10 Dispatcher vacancies & 2.5 Dispatcher Assistant vacancies
 - 25% & 50% of authorized positions, respectively
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July, 2001

- Implemented 3-year Recruitment & Retention Plan

- Continuous Hiring
- 3 Academies per year

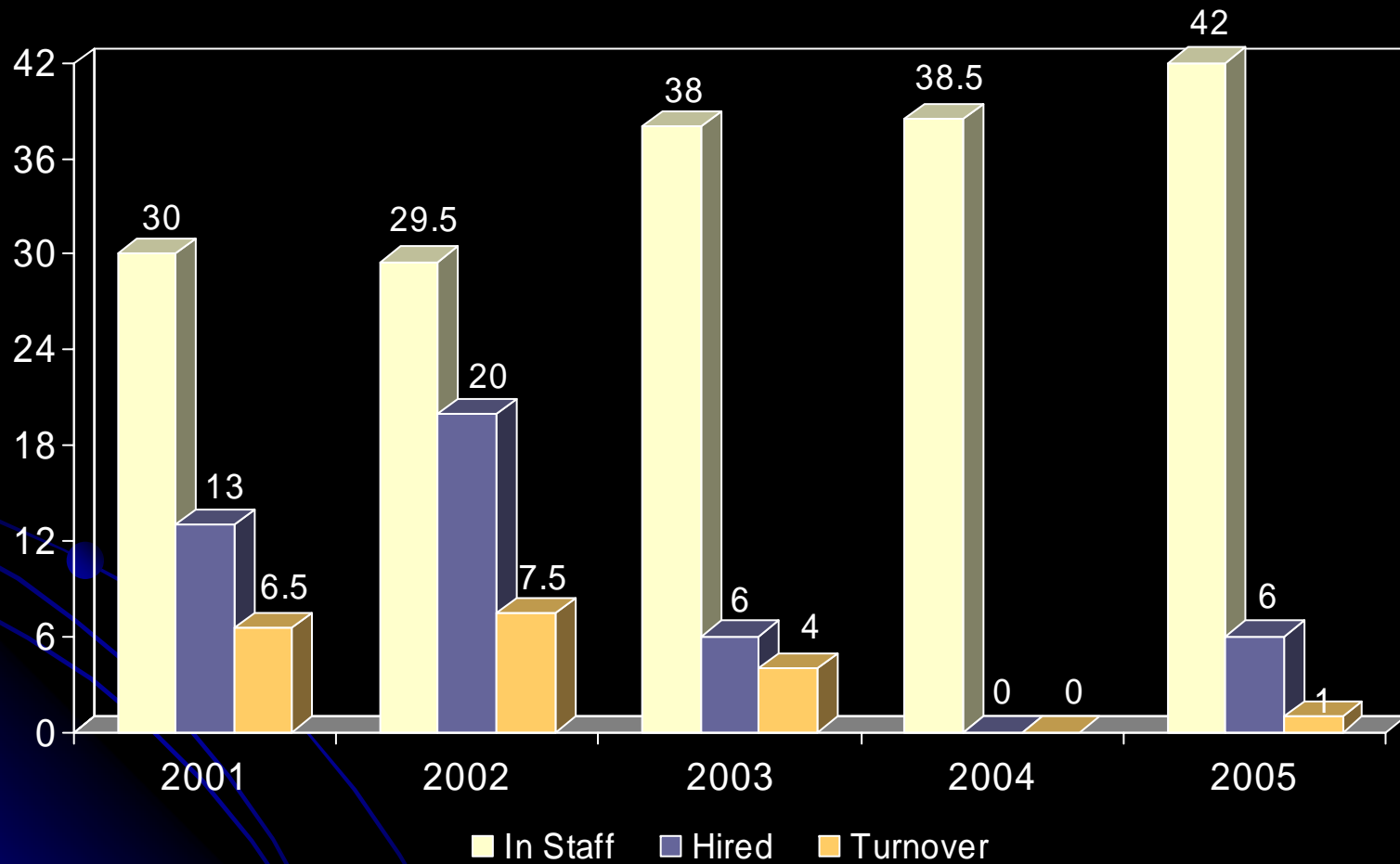


July, 2001

- Implemented 3-year Recruitment & Retention Plan
 - Continuous Hiring
 - Improved Selection Process
 - Recruitment Team
 - Citizens' Academy
 - Revisited test score cut-offs
 - Background screening to front of process
 - Peer Review

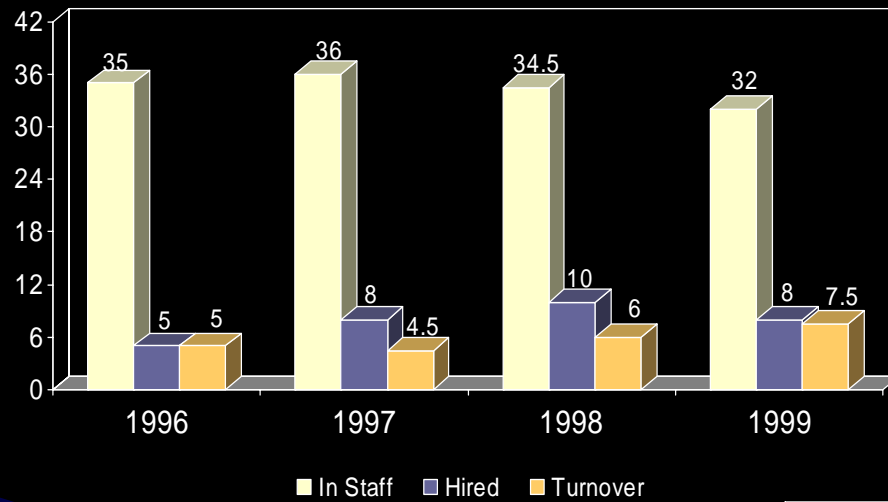
Project RETAINS → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees are satisfied with the screening process

2001-2005

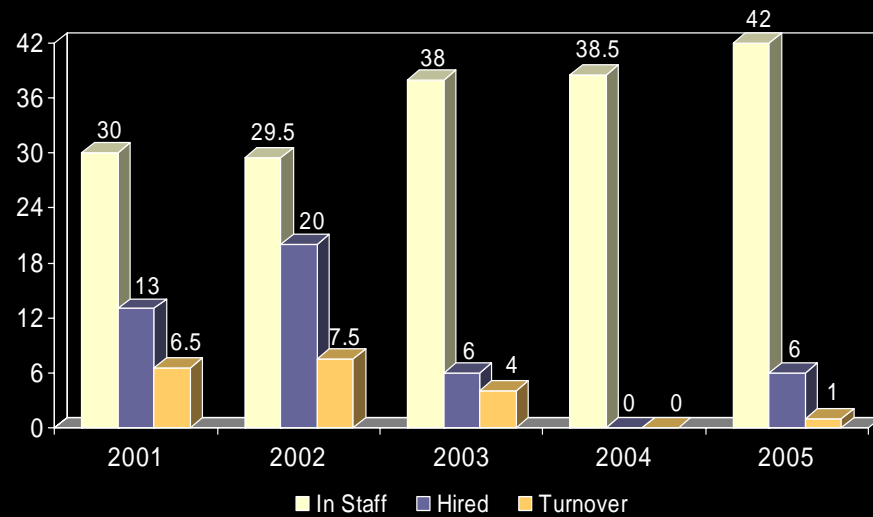


Before & After

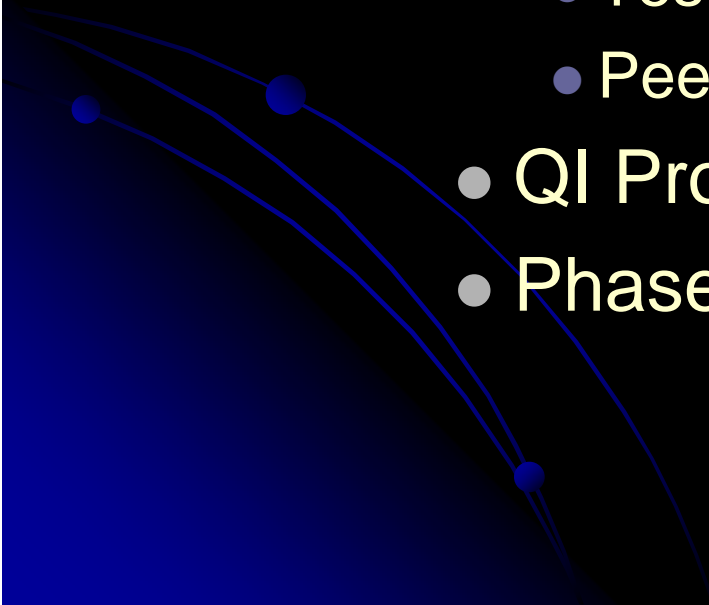
1996-1999



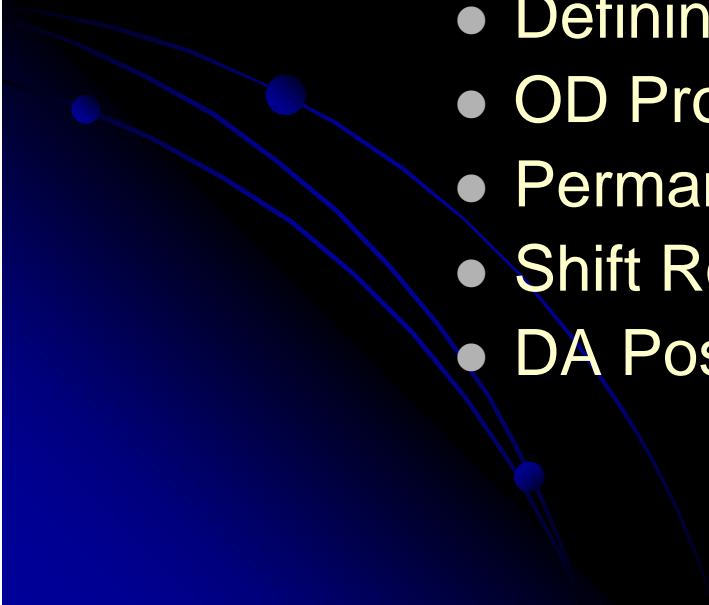
2001-2005



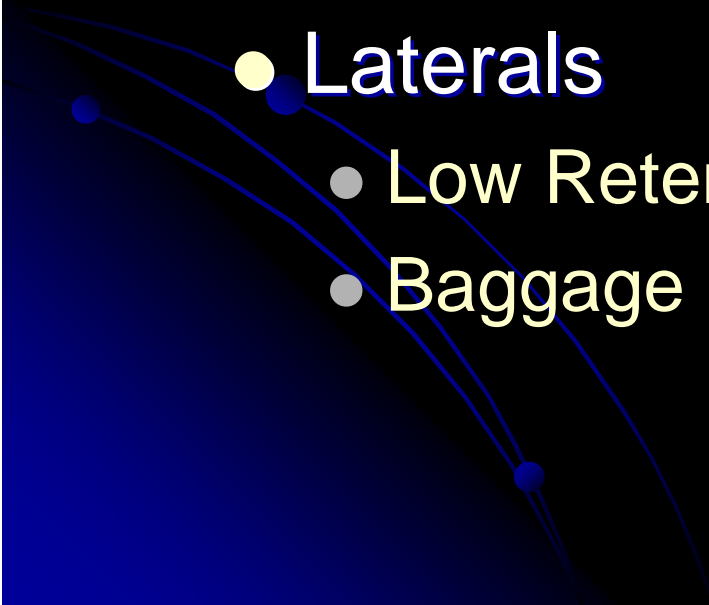
Things That Worked

- Programmatic
 - Selection Process Changes
 - Recruitment Team
 - Citizens' Academy
 - Test scoring
 - Peer Review
 - QI Process Changes
 - Phased Training
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Things That Worked

- Programmatic
 - Selection process changes
 - QI process changes
 - Phased training
 - Organizational
 - Defining the Problem
 - OD Process
 - Permanent Over Hire
 - Shift Rotation
 - DA Positions (temporary solution)
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Things That Didn't Work


- “New Stuff” fixes problems
 - Temporary over hire
 - Working faster & harder, not smarter
 - Just recruiting & hiring more
 - Laterals
 - Low Retention
 - Baggage
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Where Are We Now?

- Overstaffed
- 1% turnover
- Entry level recruitment & Academy every other year

Project RETAINS → A center that is fully staffed (all authorized positions filled) is predictive of high employee retention.

Byproducts of Success

- Organizational
 - Model for Other Organizations: SCMRS, ASA, Narrow Banding JPA
 - Employee Satisfaction
 - Stability of Workforce
 - Rotating Assignments (Admin. Seniors)
 - Labor/Management Relations
 - Cost Savings/Lower Overtime
 - Time off/ETO
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Byproducts of Success

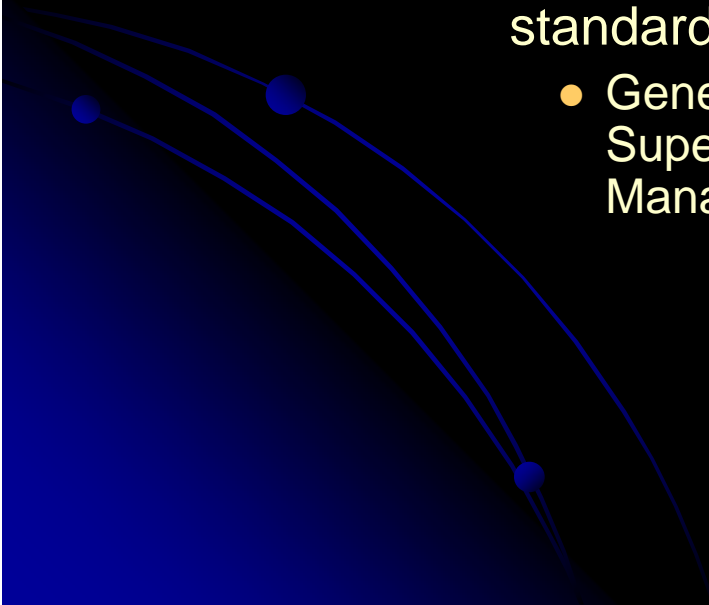
- Programmatic
 - Lower training success = keeping the best

CTO Program Performance

	Trainees	Success Rate	Retention Rate
FY 99/00	14	79%	60%
FY 00/01	21	81%	50%
FY 01/02	12	75%	77%
FY 02/03	23	52%	100%
FY 03/04	10	60%	100%

Project RETAINS → Managers can increase retention and satisfaction by recruiting constantly and screening carefully to minimize turnover of new employees.

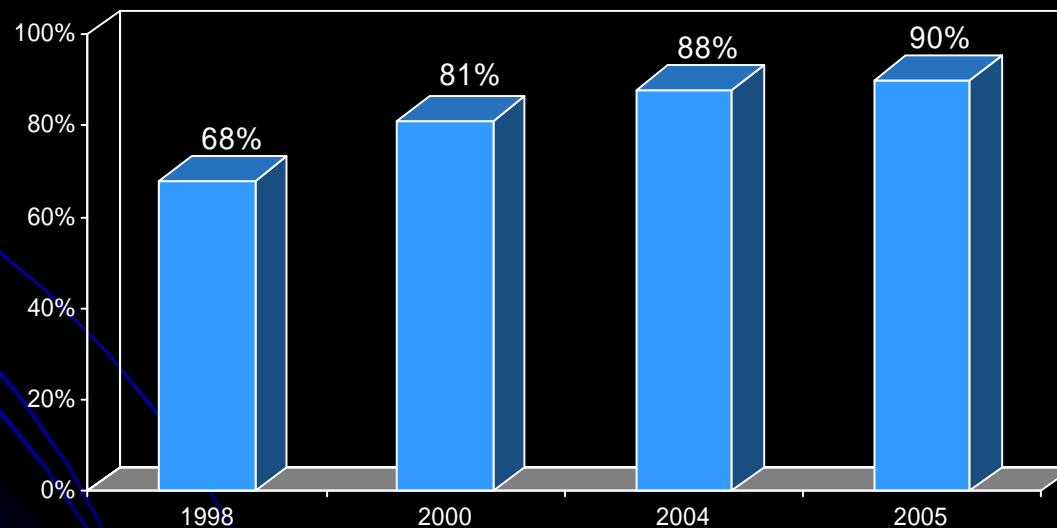
Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
 - Lower training success = keeping the best
 - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
 - 13 employees directly participated in accreditation project
 - 11 employees participated in Panel Review (68 standards presented)
 - General Manager, Dispatcher II's & III's, Supervisors, Administrative Assistants, Managers
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Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
 - Lower training success = keeping the best
 - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
 - Higher operational performance levels

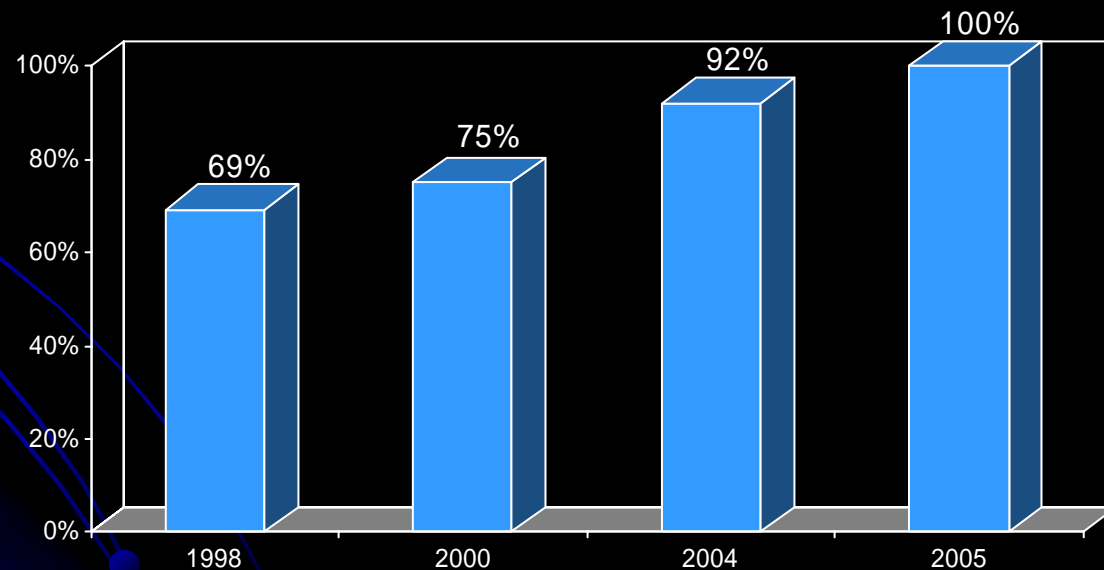
Law Enforcement Call Taking



Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
 - Lower training success = keeping the best
 - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
 - Higher operational performance levels

Fire/EMS Pre-Alerts



Byproducts of Success

- Programmatic
 - Lower training success = keeping the best
 - CALEA accreditation (30% involvement)
 - Higher operational performance levels
 - Benchmarking performance



Project RETAINS → Employee satisfaction & retention higher when employees rate overall performance of agency high.

Questions

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