



**THAMES VALLEY
POLICE**

PROBLEM

SOLVING

4Sept 96)

PROBLEM SOLVING IN THAMES VALLEY

reducing crime, the fear of crime and disorder

This is being achieved through:-

- Operational Staff tackling the causes not just the symptoms
- Support Staff making problem solving happen

Scanning
Analysis
Response
Assessment

A common framework for identifying problems and working together enables a better understanding of Thames Valley Policies, whether we are:-

Civilian or Police
Operational or Support
Manager or Practitioner

We need 100% staff participation, not the 5% on patrol on a Saturday night.

EWART WATSON
Crime & Partnership Consultancy
September 96

PROBLEM SOLVING

Social instability, drug dealing, and violent crime hurt more than the immediate victims: they create fear among the rest of us. We wonder who will be next, but are typically unable to take any resolute action.

Until recently there was little the Criminal Justice System felt was appropriate beyond the police continued response to calls for service, arrests, and punishment of known and proven criminals. However research from the 1980's repeatedly implied that these strategies, no matter how efficiently run, were severely limited in their effectiveness. The first awareness of an unexplored dimension was Neighbourhood Watch

Since the mid-1980's some innovative police forces in America began experimenting with techniques industry had adopted from management gurus. Many created turmoil and tension, only to wither and waste. Perhaps only one has displayed durability and achieved the accolade of a 'pivotal process' over the last ten years.

This 'problem-oriented*' approach differs from traditional methods in several ways:-

1. Police actively seek ways to prevent crime rather than simply react to calls.
2. Police recognise that crime and public order problems arise from a variety of conditions: therefore analysis is needed to understand and respond appropriately to these unique conditions.
3. Police understand that crime and public order problems stem from problems beyond the remit of any single agency. If problems are to be solved work with partners is crucial - (they must be willing!).

Recent developments within Thames Valley have given some indication as to the potential which exists through the police involvement in multi-agency working. This potential can be achieved through analysis of a situation and the flexibility of police officers to engage proactively (crime reduction/preventative patrols, schools programmes) or reactively (task forces, specialist units) depending on the circumstances.

Incident-Driven Policing

A decade ago the police were notorious for their success in dealing with major incidents BUT their inability to resolve 'bulk' crime. We have in the past sought to apply the same process, methodology and response but to a bigger scale.

The securing of additional resources has therefore been interpreted as vital. Yet research suggests that preventative patrol strength would need to be increased 30-fold throughout the country before it would have any lasting impact on crime.

Less than 10% of all crime is reported within five minutes of occurring, so the fastest response will not appreciatively result in more arrests of suspects.

Since the recent scrutiny of the Audit Commission and the Home Office, our focus has moved to achieving more effective use of current resources, guided by crime analysis. Now we examine alternative deployment, technological advance and employment strategies in order to 'do things right'.

- new shift patterns
- changes in conditions of service
- civilianisation
- graded response
- crime screening

We now realise:-

- i) Additional police resources applied in response to individual incidents of crime and disorder, will be ineffective at controlling crime.
- ii) Few incidents are isolated but can be symptoms of some recurring, underlying problem. Problem analysis can help us develop effective, proactive and reactive tactics.
- iii) Crime problems are integrally linked to other problems: therefore the mobilisation of whole communities, commercial and private, is necessary.

The question is - 'Can we also 'do right things?'

What's Missing? - A Problem Solving Approach

Crime and criminal analysis is a vital player; but like the partnership philosophy must be applied locally by practitioners committed to an estate, beat, village, or patch. If our aim is to reduce the crime rate in a given area we must examine what is going on there - areas differ so the best plans may include common elements, but will differ from the next area's.

I believe a tool is needed to assist with the initiation of such processes and vital to crime analysis. The heart of the problem oriented activity is systematic thinking. Three principles have proven vital in its application to policing.

- i) Officers of all ranks, and all departments, should be able to use the procedure as part of their daily routine.
- ii) The system must encourage officers to collect information from a broad range of sources and not limit themselves to conventional police statistics.

iii) Solutions should emanate beyond and initiate from outside the Criminal Justice partners.

This problem solving process consists of four parts - S. A.R. A.

- Scanning* - as part of their daily routine, officers are expected to look for possible problems.
- Analysis* - Officers collect information about the problem. This might include examining offenders, victims, the social and physical environments, as well as previous responses to the problem. The goal is to understand the nature of the problem and its causes by drawing in information and experience of partners.
- Response* - Knowledge gained in the analysis stage is used to develop and implement solutions. Officers seek assistance (planning and action) from colleagues in other departments and external agencies.
- Assessment* - Officers evaluate the effectiveness of their response, using this knowledge and experience to revise the plan.

The 'Communicative Approach'¹

Problem oriented policing also requires the police to challenge their attitude to the community they serve. At present we ask little more of citizens than being reporters of crime, good witnesses and 'allow us to do our job'. Like other agencies problem solving requires the police and community to communicate and co-operate on wide ranging issues. It acknowledges that often the community knows the problems intimately and the likely solutions. A 'communicative approach' in all facets of work is therefore vital.

This attitude must transcend all departments. It leads to intelligence, better relationships with agencies, and a genuine interest in quality first time 'callers'.

An Opportunity in the Mist

Both the New York Police Department and Newport News (Washington DC) identified that 'in the long run it is likely that the problem oriented approach will have its most dramatic impact on the relationship between the police, other city agencies, and the public* This offered an incredibly difficult issue for them to overcome. However for once we have an advantage over them with the advent of the community safety agenda which is shared between agencies of local government.

The Future - Patchworking

The future may lie in decentralised, multiagency practitioner groups working with an estate, village, beat or patch. Using a common problem solving technique their status is raised as 'patchworkers' referring to their parent agency only on policy and resourcing issues.

Ewart WATSON
Chief Inspector
Community Affairs

	PROBLEM	PROBLEM	PROBLEM
PROCESS	STREET FIGHT	TROUBLESOME PUB	RECURRING PUBLIC DISORDER IN TOWN CENTRE
S	How many people involved Degree of violence Recourses Available	Number of calls to attend incidents at pub Drugs seizures Arrests for drunkenness Other agencies information	Incidents of damage and public order Host retail business Information and offender profiling: place of residence, age sex. Unemployment national and regional trends
A	Offences Committed Threat of crowd violence Use of arrest/cautions	Comparison to other pubs Comparison since current licence installed Changes in license Customer profiling	Review of critical assumptions Impact of current police tactics Implications of other agencies changes in policy and performance Identify special features - new drugs, copy cat, death in police cells - weather
R	Intervention Arrest Medical Support Await backup	Meeting with licensee and brewers representative Representation to licensing justices Liaison with local Authority re entertainment High profile policing insits Joint agency insits in inspections	Police - Sensitive but firm invisible patrol targeting of known agitators Local Authority - Review of housing policy and closure of community centre Youth and Community - Outreach works to bring forward programme. Commerce - ? of alcohol to introduce ? training schemes
A	Effectiveness Court result Consider search for witnesses in future	Impact of enforcement on base line figures <u>Considerations for future</u> Health education into schools 'Prove it' identity cards Use of Drug Squad	Impact of actions on base line information identified though scanning <u>Considerations for future</u> Meeting local groups
APPLICATION	Mental	Written	Written
OUTCOME	Action	Short Term Action Plan	Detailed action plan with task allocations supported by nominated co-ordinator
USERS	Uniform Patrol	Beat Officers/Sector Officers	Beat Officers/Sector Officers Director of Operations

1. TWO ASPECTS : PHILOSOPHY AND FUNCTION

To successfully introduce problem solving into the Police Service it is necessary to establish a commitment to the philosophy; however due to the pragmatic nature of most police staff, it is unlikely to be accepted if its relevance and functional effectiveness is not demonstrated from the outset.

The philosophy is to motivate staff, all staff to become creative and resourceful by dealing with causes and not just symptoms. This gives meaning to words such as 'ownership', 'empowerment¹' and 'caring', as well as challenging blame cultures and risk avoidance.

To demonstrate this philosophy through a simple functional approach will enable individuals, teams and departments to build increasingly complex and innovative solutions. To accommodate problem solving within investigative work, operational policing and management a simple methodology is required as the starting point. Herman GOLDSTEIN, who developed problem oriented policing in the United States stated -

"although some cringe at the cookbook character of such instructions, a realistic assessment of the task of introducing a new way of thinking into a Police agency supports the effort".

2. S.A.R.A - HOW PROBLEM SOLVING CAN WORK

The methodology described is S.A.R.A -

- SEARCHING* - identifying problems as part of a daily routine, and expanding information sources.
- ANALYSIS* - learning about the causes, the effects of the problem, understanding what is the problem and its causes, through information and experiences of partners.
- RESPONSES* - action taken to alleviate the problem based on knowledge gained through 'searching' and 'analysis'. Assistance is sought from colleagues and outside agencies.
- ASSESSMENT* - did the response work; staff measure their own effectiveness.

This framework retains clarity and allows it to be used on the street or by those less familiar with the process. As confidence builds (or as time and resources allow) so the framework can be applied with increasing complexity

and innovation. The examples below demonstrate how this can deliver appropriate action : see Appendix 'A'.

DELIVERING S.A.R.A TO THE ORGANISATION

It is recommended that all staff undertake a one-day awareness programme through Teams in Action. The format will be similar to the proposal in Appendix 'B'.

ACTIONS IN SUPPORT

Increased awareness will not guarantee the change in behaviour and performance throughout the entire organisation. A host of additional activities must now be planned to ensure the durability of the problem solving style and the desired changes in culture.

A Headquarters Department, possibly the Executive, will host a briefing to Departmental Heads advising them of the Chief Constable's Management Team commitment to this programme and requiring them to consider their contribution and resource availability to the programme. This will be followed by a consultation process involving the Crime & Partnership Consultancy, designed to establish a project format. The Executive will create and manage a bridging strategy to co-ordinate activity prior to the arrival of C/Superintendent Caroline NICHOLL

This process has been used to negotiate the Training Services role in creating a one-day awareness event based on SARA Training Services Strategy Group have agreed to have the preliminary work prepared by the end of May 1996 and nominated a project officer, A/Inspector Peter DAVIES.

What Other Departments Will be Involved (This is not exhaustive).

Department

Contribution

Personnel Department

*Recruitment
Appraisals
Selection procedures*

Recruitment

Potential police officers should be challenged to demonstrate an ability to, and an attraction toward, problem solving. This must be explicitly represented in recruiting literature as our preferred way of policing.

Appraisals

Further work must be invested into the appraisal system to establishing the

norm of presenting verbal or written evidence in support of applied problem solving in the workplace.

Selection Procedures

Specialist and promotion procedures must demand evidence of the candidates personal use of problem solving. Practicals and assessments should focus on problem solving as the mechanism by which quality activity can occur. All briefing documents and selection literature should emphasise this as the preferred specialist and supervising style.

Communication Services *internal marketing*
External marketing

internal Marketing

This will be a preliminary action, but one which will require constant maintenance and attention. The preliminary actions will be designed to impact at all levels from the Police Authority, to core shifts.

Literature and quality articles for Teams In Action, Thames View will be required.

External Marketing

A strategy must be determined to synchronise publicity to a changing style of service delivery. Consideration must be given to the proposal to develop capacity prior to a formal launch (if necessary).

Headquarters Executive *Research*
Risk management
Commendations and rewards

Research

The need to disseminate good practise and innovative solutions to problems is a crucial mechanism in proving the methodology's relevance to the police service. Such information would be significant to internal and external marketing.

Risk Management

Problem solving provides a logical and disciplined approach to decision making. With finite resources the organisation must provide the Chief Constable's Management Team with tools to participate in the problem solving approach. Risk management use problem solving to prioritise

resourcing and action according to organisational imperatives and communities needs.

Co-ordination

Advising departmental heads and Area Commanders of the need to utilise and demonstrate a problem solving approach in support of the Chief Constable's Management Team commitment will be crucial.

The Executive should establish a project matrix of the discreet actions within each department, creating and managing a bridging strategy to co-ordinate activity prior to the arrival of C/Superintendent Caroline NICHOLL.

Commendations and Rewards

An alternative system must be introduced to challenge the current one which is in force; a perception that confrontation, reaction and aggression are the most valued qualities in policing. Whilst this aspect must remain to acknowledge bravery, greater emphasis will be placed on eliminating problems before they necessitate dramatic and sometimes costly action.

<i>Performance Management</i>	<i>Area visits</i>
	<i>Management of 'saved' opportunity costs</i>

Area Visits - Performance indicators

The ACC (TP) currently conducts visits to Police Areas during the year. Performance Management must establish performance indicators to assist Areas demonstrate their utilisation of the problem solving style as well as its application to core policing tasks.

Management of 'Saved' Opportunity Costs

The decision to adopt a problem solving approach is based on sound business principles as well as an earnest desire to relieve communities. Using models already developed in the United States, Performance Management can anticipate benefits to the organisation by 2002, including a decline in demand for reactive policing responses through Control Rooms and reduced crime.

Such benefits can have the same effect as additional staff resources, if freed up time is creatively used.

<i>Crime & Partnership Consultancy</i>	<i>Crime reduction Community safety project management Mediation</i>
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Crime Reduction

Crime reduction techniques are an excellent exponent of applied problem solving.

This approach has a major role to perform as a means of demonstrating the relevance of the methodology to core policing. The Consultancy must be used by the marketing strategy to provide 'good news' and success stories to the community and the organisation itself.

Community Safety Project Management

Providing a structure which encourages a cost versus benefit analysis for projects in community safety will underpin the problem solving approach. This needs to be promulgated on Areas and departments.

Mediation

A practical consequence of examining problems is to identify the cause. Community mediation offers the potential solution to the causes of domestic and neighbourhood disputes. Does a case exist for the police to formally contract with mediation groups capable of undertaking service level agreements to manage and counsel protagonists in non-violent circumstances? Will this represent a valid investment and saving in police patrol time and Control Room work?

Specialists Departments

*Crime Support
Operations Support
Mobile Operation Support*

These all use problem solving informally. However there is a need for it to be introduced into their common language and recognised as the 'smart' way of achieving departmental plans.

II) Police Areas

*Area plans and measurement
Territorial responsibility
Named Personnel and local
partnerships
Awareness training*

Area Plans and Measurement

The success criteria of Areas must be re-examined to ensure that activity toward resolving problems and crime trends is not jeopardised by, for example, calculations of staffing requirements.

Performance may need to be considered on two levels - the ability to cope with, and the ability to resolve problems affecting policing with the community.

Territorial Responsibility and Named Personnel

Much has been written about the advantages of passing territorial ownership to named police personnel. It makes sense considering the likely increase in local knowledge and the forging of relationships amongst fellow professionals and the community. This would present an ideal opportunity to village and estate partnerships to flourish.

Awareness Training

Areas would have the opportunity to use a one-day awareness programme as an introduction of problem solving to core shifts. Although it represents a considerable abstraction the event could be accommodated in .Team Training and show its inherent value.

General

Each member of staff must endeavour to make problem solving part of their everyday routine, thereby redefining our role in the community beyond enforcement.

The Thames Valley Style

OHP002/ 1



Problem-solving

The Thames Valley Style

OHP002/2

A cyclical process



**Problem-solving
inter-agency
responsibility**

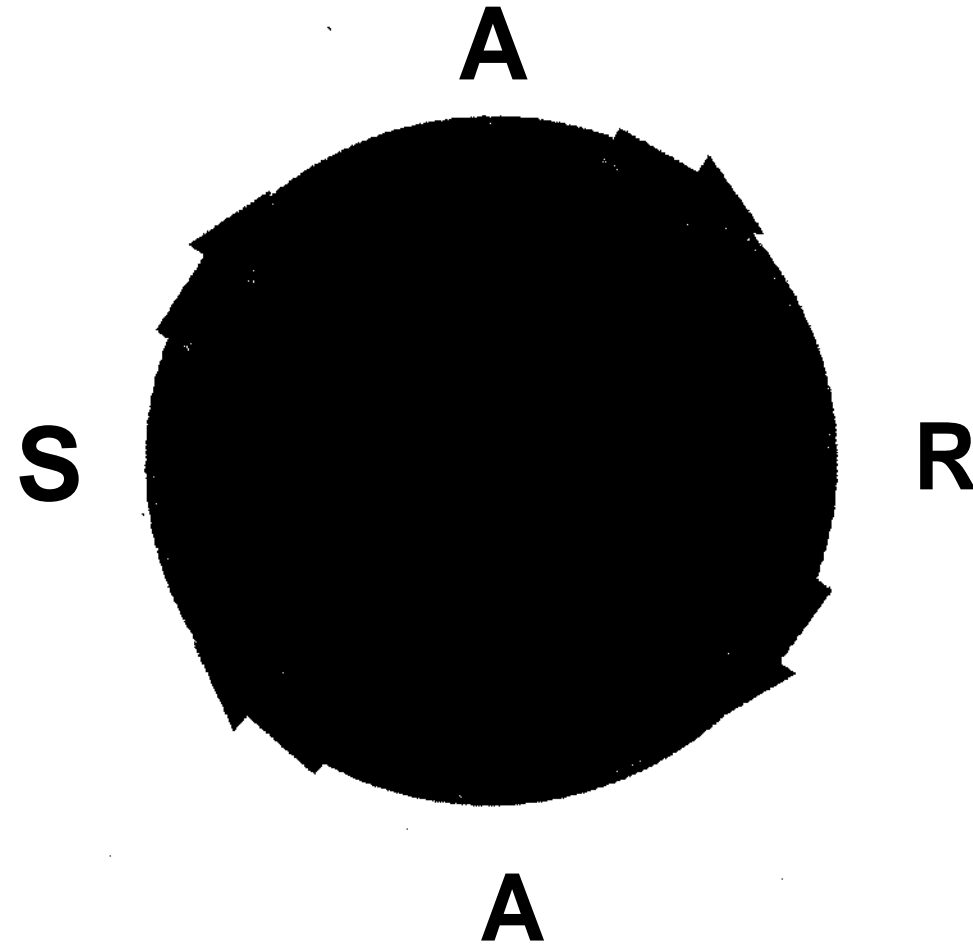
**Community
ownership**

Problem Solving

The Thames Valley Style

OHP002/3

A common process

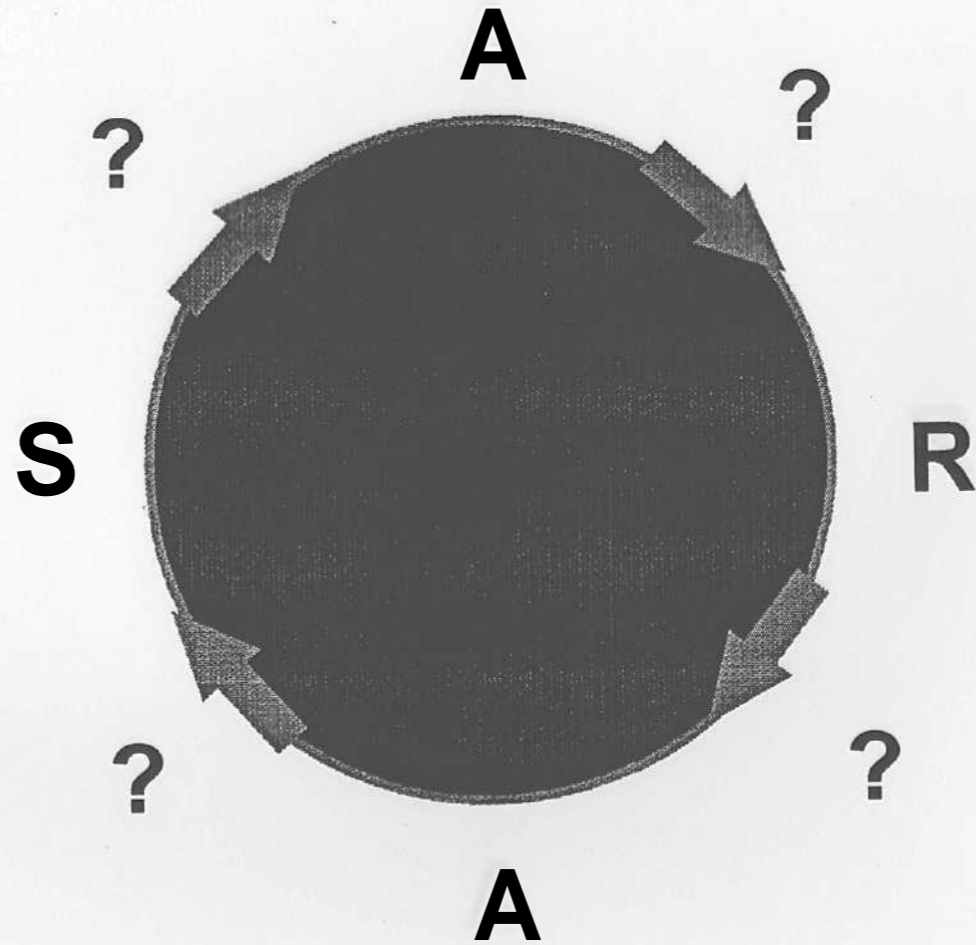




Problem-solving The Thames Valley Style

OHP002/4

An integral **All processes** *for all staff*



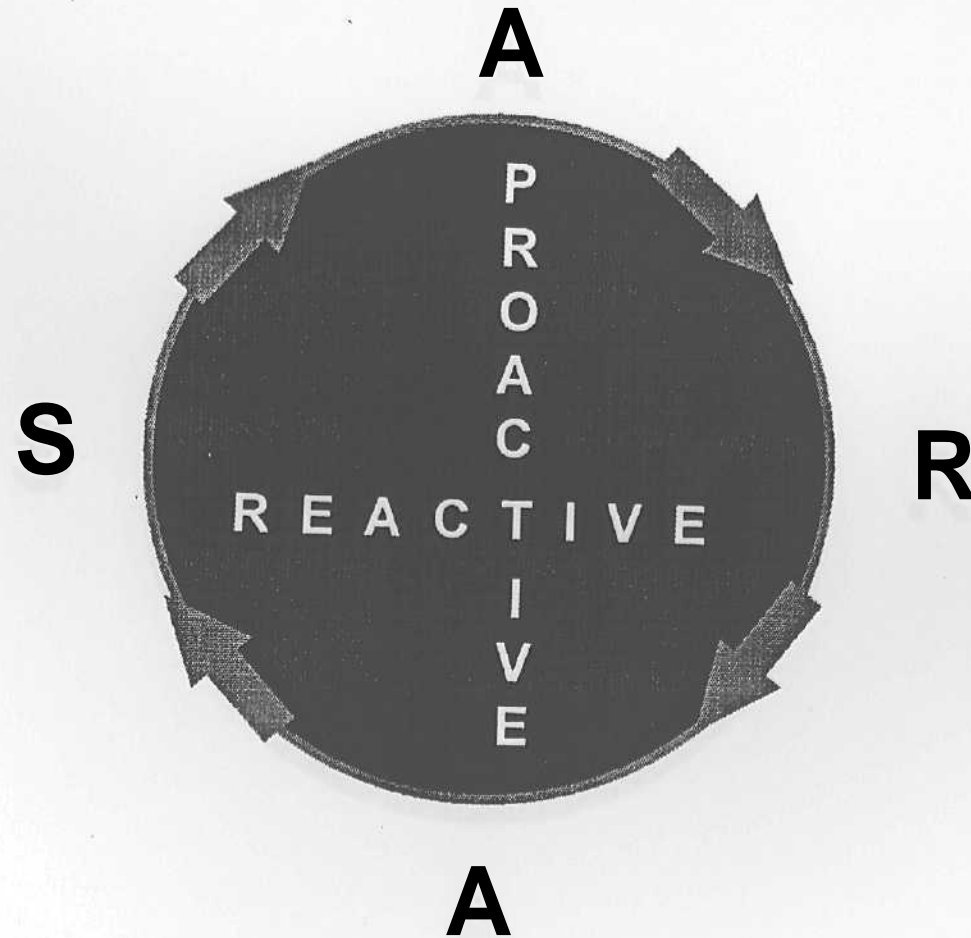


Problem-solving The Thames Valley Style

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OHP002/5

An integrating process for all staff

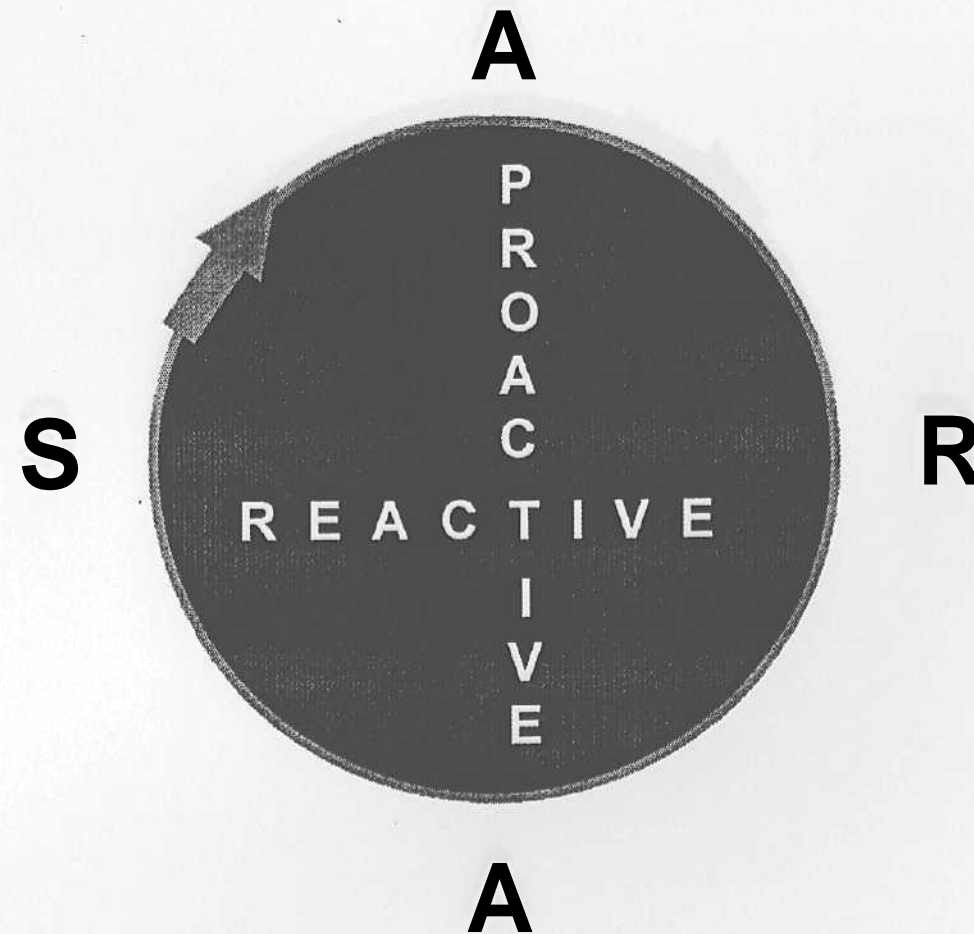




Problem-solving The Thames Valley Style

OHP002/6

Initiating action - scanning

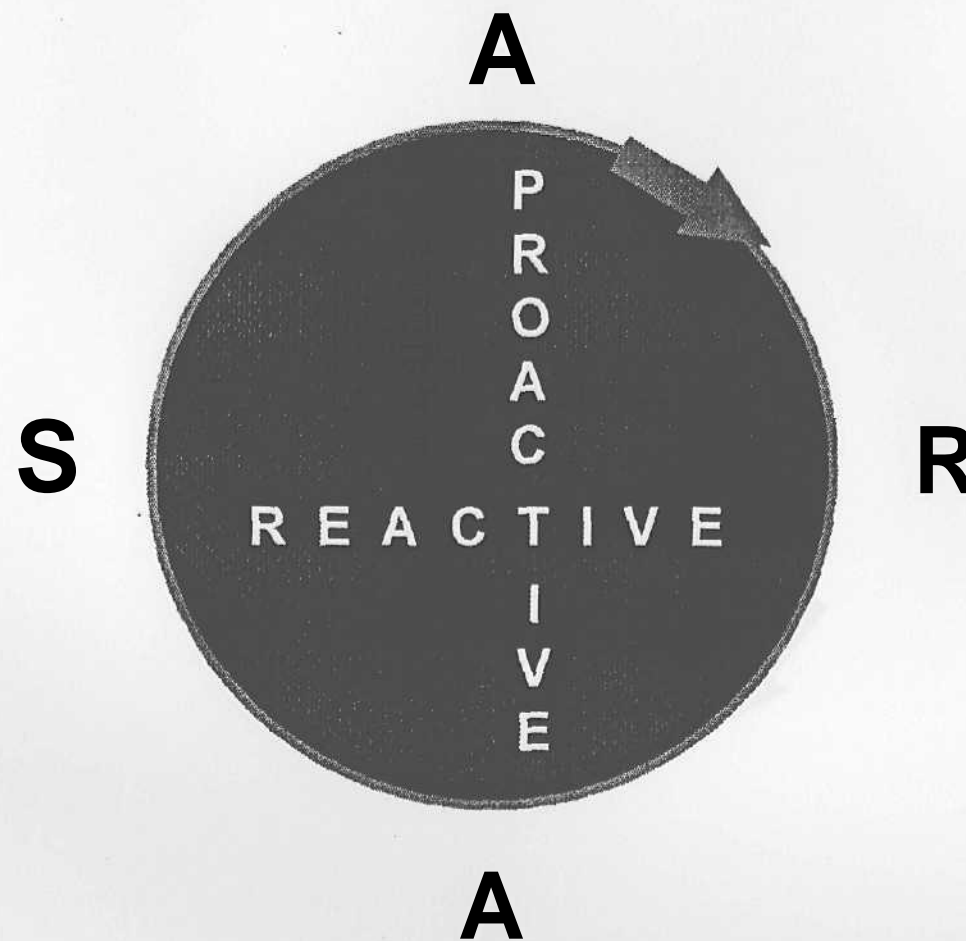




Problem-solving The Thames Valley Style

OHP002/7

Initiating action - analysis

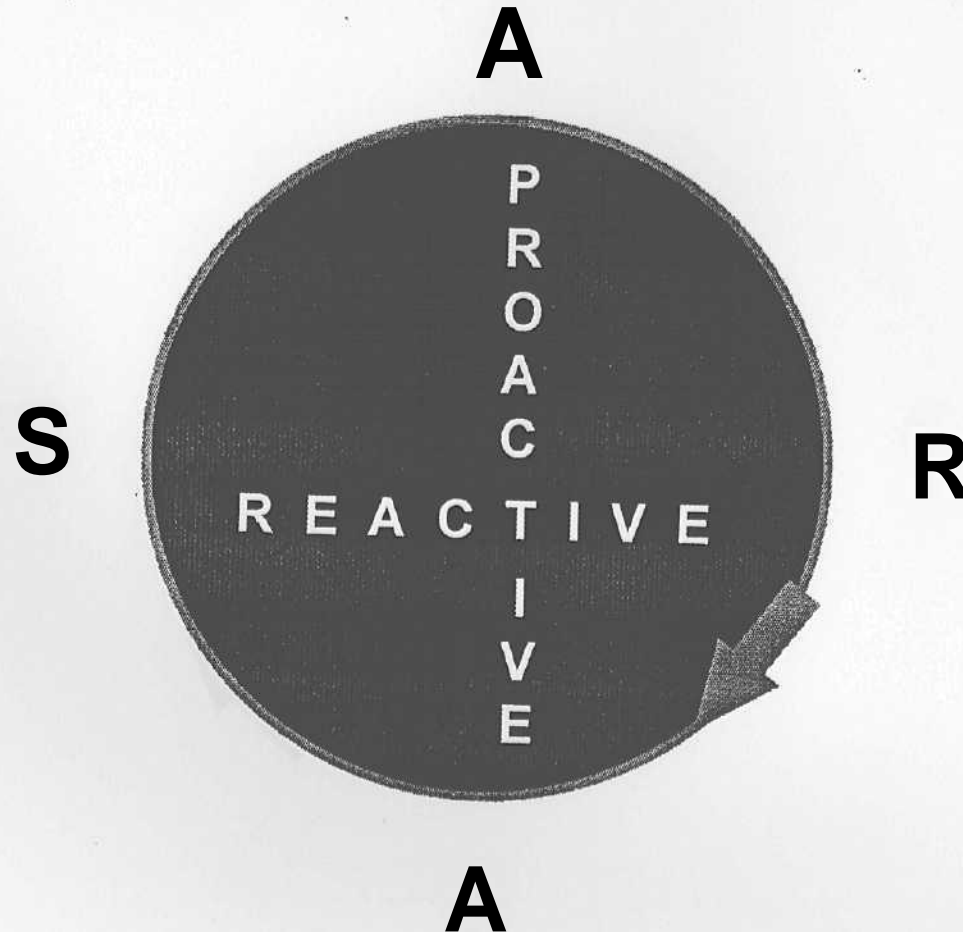




Problem-solving The Thames Valley Style

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Initiating action - response

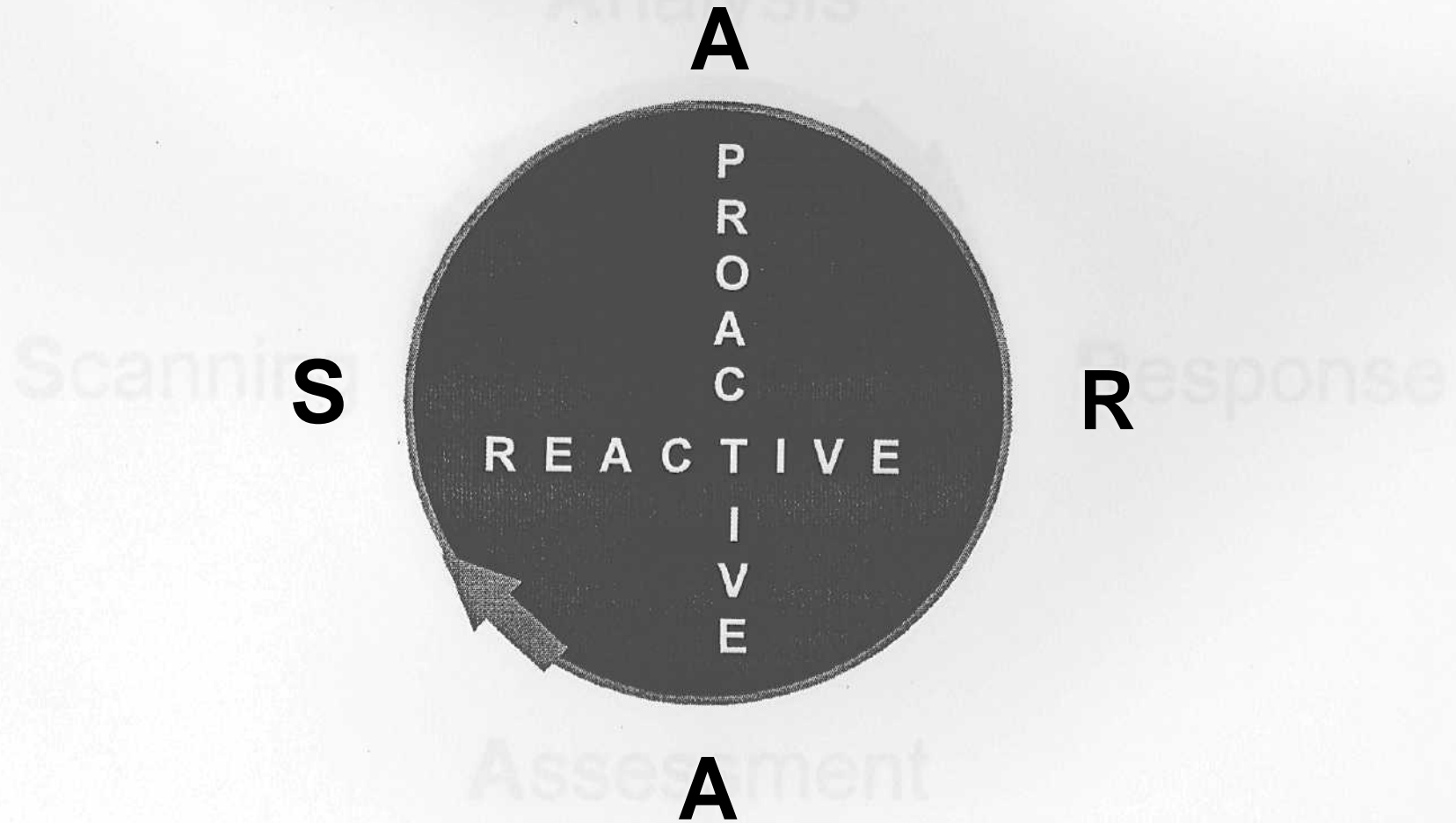




Problem-solving Policing The Thames Valley Style

OHP002/9

Initiating action - assessment



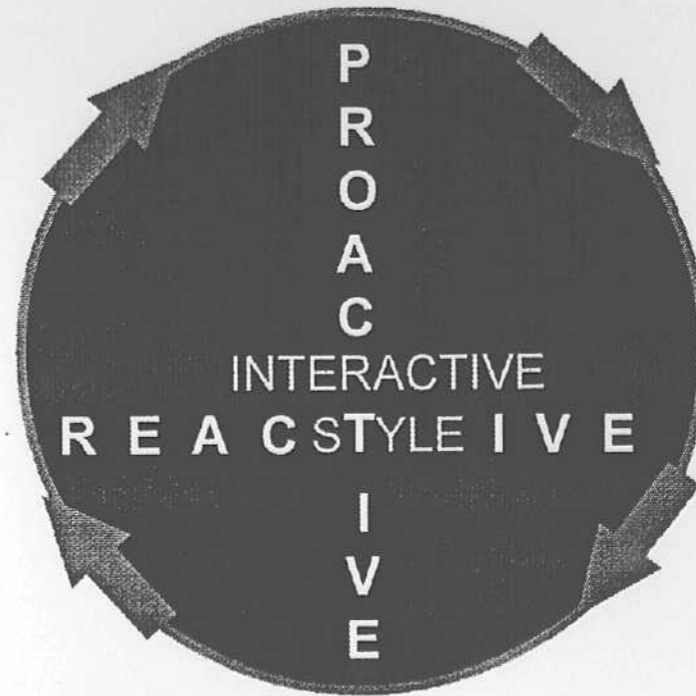


Problem-solving Policing in Thames Valley

OHP002/10

Analysis

Scanning



Response

Assessment