



# FIRESIDE TRAINING



## COMMAND PHILOSOPHY

### Leadership and Relationships:

Leadership transcends rank and must exist at every level. While the appropriate style employed is situational, being a servant leader is imperative and remains the constant. The order of priority should remain as follows: the mission, your brother and sister firefighters, and then you. A decentralized command will be employed, which requires adherence to the 3 E's: expectations; education; and empowerment. The roles and responsibilities of each member must be clearly defined and understood, as well as outlining the processes, and the desired end states. By providing the training to develop the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities, crews can then excel when positioned and supported properly. Always remember, you own *everything* within your charge, so take responsibility and execute accordingly.

With promotion and seniority comes more work and responsibility – *not the other way around*. When there is a job to be done, you must lead from the front. Do not ask people to do what you are not willing to do yourself. As the old proverb goes, "Shepherds should smell like their sheep." Attitude is infectious, so be sure to maintain a positive disposition. Relationships are the cornerstone of any elite team. The welfare of your members is directly correlated to the level you invest in and care for them. The more you include people and set them up for success, the greater their output and morale will be, as well as the support you will receive in return.

### Conduct and Morality:

While it may seem juvenile, the Golden Rule – "Treat others how you would like to be treated" – remains one of the most fundamental principles of conduct. Along with that precept, must be the moral, ethical, and legal filter in our decision-making process. As firefighters, we are held in high regard by the public and are afforded a great deal of trust. We must act with the utmost integrity and respect in everything we do to preserve that status. Behaving righteously requires fortitude, as it is often not the easy or the popular choice. We must possess the conviction to do the right thing, for the right reasons, even when no one is watching or it comes at a personal sacrifice.

### Risk, Performance, and Service:

The job of a firefighter is inherently dangerous, as the fireground presents a hostile environment. While safety can never truly be attained, we can minimize the potential for harm, as well as the impact of the associated dangers and risks. By proactively accounting for and aggressively managing those factors, we can maximize our security. Doing so requires maintaining optimal situational awareness and constantly assessing the conditions and the threats to gauge the viability of the operation. The single greatest countermeasure we can take is deliberate preparation; that which is focused, systematic, and progressive, in the mental, physical, and tactical domains. By ingraining a growth mindset and engaging in a relentless pursuit of mastery, we can develop competency, which breeds confidence, and manifests as composure on the fireground – the core tenets of peak performance. When coupled with consistency, compassion and cohesion, the highest level of service can be delivered to the community.

### Preparation and Readiness:

Nothing shall interfere with your response or service capabilities. We exist to be in a constant state of readiness to address the public's needs in the most impactful manner. We must be consummate students of our trade, being ever present and acting with intentionality, to not just meet the standard, *but to exceed it*. Remaining humble and keeping our egos in check, allows for free-flow learning and constructive criticism to improve our performance. Through rigorous preparation and honest assessment, we can achieve excellence.

### Commander's Intent:

The intent is for our firefighters and fire officers to possess a bias for action founded on a brilliance in the basics. By valuing each member and tapping into their unique talents and experiences, as well as creating open lines of communication, they will be poised to achieve their full potential, as well as to share their invaluable perspectives and tacit knowledge. Through delegation and dynamic leadership, that which promotes innovation and initiative to proactively seize advantageous opportunities, operations can be executed decisively.

## **Culture:**

We are committed to fostering a culture of esprit de corps, high-performance, and mission-orientation, with a service before self mentality. For this to occur, resilience, discipline, and accountability must be exhibited *throughout the chain of command*. We must be diligent in our preparation in the fire house and on the drill-ground, so we can be squared-away in our response and in our actions on the fireground. As the philosopher, Archilochus, stated, "We do not rise to the level of our expectations, we fall to the level of our training." This requires steadfast commitment, because how we do the little things is how we do everything.

Due to the demands of firefighting and the uncertainty of the fireground, coordination is imperative. To achieve the teamwork and the operational tempo necessary, we must build a fraternal community and develop an intuitive familiarity. Nothing breeds camaraderie and loyalty like shared experience, especially when hard work is involved. Spending quality time together and investing in each other's betterment and well-being is how these bonds are forged.

## **Vision:**

The vision is to preserve and accentuate the nobility of our profession through service to the public. The citizens must know, unequivocally, we have their best interests in mind, and are unwavering in our dedication to ensuring the highest degree of protection and assistance is provided. We must view our existence as more than responding to emergencies. We are imbedded within the community, and therefore, we must be a part of it. By taking a vested interest and weaving ourselves into its fabric, we can personify the "neighborhood fire house."

## **Beliefs and Values:**

- Remain mission-oriented and operationally ready
- Commit to excellence through deliberate preparation
- Possess a beginner's mind and a brilliance in the basics
- Cultivate service before self and a bias for action
- Continuously critique and improve performance
- Care for and support those you serve
- Act with integrity, humility, and compassion
- Develop relationships and build community
- Ensure transparency, inclusivity, and equity
- Convey trust, loyalty, and respect
- Empower initiative, innovation, and leadership
- Foster esprit de corps and a competitive spirit
- Maintain composure, optimism, and resiliency
- Instill discipline and lead by example
- Correct issues immediately and at the lowest level
- Defend what is justified and own what is not
- When in command, command with conviction

## **Supporting the Philosophy:**

These ideals and aspirations are only attainable through collaborative and purposeful actions – *deeds, not words*. By establishing an environment of transparency, inclusivity, and equity, as well as promoting reciprocal mentoring, the foundation will be laid for this framework to be successfully implemented. With a clear picture of what we stand for and what we strive to achieve, our collective efforts will be galvanized and our resolve strengthened, illuminating the path to accomplishing our common mission and upholding the oath we all swore – *to protect life and property*.

Fraternally,

*Nicholas J. Papa*

Nicholas J. Papa, Founder  
Fireside Training, LLC

