



Proactive Behavioral Health

The Upstream Work-Life Balance Approach

Results of 22 workshops in Oregon

Likert Scales Used:

Pre-Workshop Survey - Current Satisfaction Questions

N=385

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Satisfied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Satisfied

Post-Workshop Survey - Confidence Questions

N=315

- Fewer post-workshop surveys due to emergency calls

	1	2	3	4	5	
Not Confident	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Very Confident

Executive Summary

The analysis 22 workshops in Oregon of recent "satisfaction" data from Dr. Donnie's pre-workshop survey reveals that participants experienced neutral to slightly satisfied with their current results across key areas, including physical health, mental fitness, work-life balance, and spiritual health. Most importantly, the workshop significantly boosted participants' confidence in their ability to improve these areas, with mental health emerging as a critical area of impact.

Participants reported high confidence in using positive coping skills and seeking support for emotional challenges, underscoring the workshop's effectiveness in addressing mental fitness. Additionally, the strong likelihood (mean score of 4.57) of participants recommending the workshop to others reflects overall high satisfaction and the perceived value of the program. While confidence in spiritual health was slightly lower, this area presents an opportunity for further development in future workshops.

RESULTS:

PHYSICAL HEALTH

- **Pre-Workshop: Satisfaction with Your Results in Making a Healthy Diet and Exercise a Priority**
 - **Mean Score: 3.09**
 - **Interpretation:** Participants were generally neutral with their efforts to make a healthy diet and exercise a priority. This is concerning since firefighters should consider themselves as industrial athletes. Training and support could help increase satisfaction in this area.

- **Post-Workshop: Confidence in Improving Your Results with Making a Healthy Diet and Exercise a Priority**
 - **Mean Score: 4.17**

- **Interpretation:** Participants expressed strong confidence in their ability to make a healthy diet and exercise a priority in their lives. This high level of confidence indicates that the workshop effectively equipped them with the tools and motivation needed to pursue these goals.

- **Pre-Workshop Satisfaction with Maintaining a Healthy Body Weight/BMI**

- **Mean Score: 3.01**
- **Interpretation:** The mean score reflects ambivalent satisfaction with maintaining a healthy body weight/BMI. This area remains challenging for many participants, suggesting the need for further strategies to enhance their results and satisfaction.

- **Post-Workshop Confidence in Maintaining a Healthy Body Weight/BMI**

- **Mean Score: 4.14**
- **Interpretation:** The mean score reflects strong confidence in maintaining a healthy body weight/BMI. Participants felt empowered and prepared to tackle this challenge, likely due to the strategies and support provided during the workshop.

MENTAL FITNESS

- **Pre-Workshop Satisfaction with Using Positive Coping Skills**

- **Mean Score: 3.43**
- **Interpretation:** Participants expressed slight satisfaction with their use of positive coping skills to manage daily stressors. This result demonstrates an opportunity to educate and train the importance of using positive coping strategies and skills.

- **Post-Workshop Confidence in Using Positive Coping Skills**
 - **Mean Score: 4.16**
 - **Interpretation:** Participants demonstrated strong confidence in their ability to use positive coping skills to manage daily stressors. This score suggests the workshop successfully reinforced the importance of these skills and left participants feeling capable of applying them effectively.

 - **Pre-Workshop Satisfaction with Seeking and Talking with Someone About Mental and Emotional Challenges**
 - **Mean Score: 3.49**
 - **Interpretation:** Participants were slightly to moderately satisfied with their efforts to seek and talk with someone regarding their mental and emotional challenges.

 - **Post-Workshop Confidence in Seeking and Talking with Someone About Mental and Emotional Challenges**
 - **Mean Score: 4.05**
 - **Interpretation:** Participants expressed strong confidence in their ability to seek and talk with someone regarding their mental and emotional challenges. The workshop effectively addressed potential barriers to seeking support, encouraging participants to engage more openly in these conversations.
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WORK-LIFE BALANCE & WELL-BEING

- **Pre-Workshop Satisfaction with Making Balance and Well-being a Priority**
 - **Mean Score: 3.30**

- **Interpretation:** Participants were slightly satisfied with their efforts to prioritize balance and well-being. This score suggests positive progress, though there is potential for further improvement in helping participants achieve a more satisfying work-life balance & well-being.
- **Post-Workshop Confidence in Making Balance and Well-being a Priority**
- **Mean Score:** 4.23
 - **Interpretation:** Participants showed strong confidence in their ability to improve their overall balance and well-being. This score indicates that the workshop provided valuable guidance and inspiration, leaving participants feeling empowered to achieve a balanced and resilient life.
- **Pre-Workshop Satisfaction with Making Family/Friends a Priority by Being Fully Present**
- **Mean Score:** 3.57
 - **Interpretation:** Participants generally felt satisfied with their ability to prioritize time with family and friends by being fully present. This positive score indicates successful efforts, though continuous focus could enhance these relationships further.
- **Post-Workshop Confidence in Making Family/Friends a Priority by Being Fully Present**
- **Mean Score:** 4.45
 - **Interpretation:** Participants expressed the highest confidence in their ability to be fully present with family and friends. This strong score reflects the workshop's success in emphasizing the importance of relationships and equipping participants with strategies to enhance them, which also enhances resiliency.
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SPIRITUAL HEALTH

- **Pre-Workshop Satisfaction with Making Spirituality/Prayer a Priority**
 - **Mean Score:** 3.16
 - **Interpretation:** Participants were neutral to slightly satisfied with their spiritual practices. This suggests that while some participants feel fulfilled in this area, others might see room for improvement in integrating spirituality or prayer into their daily lives.

- **Post-Workshop Confidence in Making Spirituality/Prayer a Priority**
 - **Mean Score:** 3.76
 - **Interpretation:** Participants expressed moderate confidence in their ability to improve their results in making spirituality or prayer a priority in their lives. While this score indicates a positive level of confidence, it is slightly lower than other areas, suggesting that participants may feel less certain about their ability and/or interest to consistently prioritize spirituality or prayer.

Analysis of the Executive Summary in the Context of Firefighters' Career Stressors

Contextual Background:

Firefighters face unique and significant stressors in their careers that affect their physical health, mental fitness, work-life balance, and spiritual health. The demanding nature of the job, exposure to traumatic events, irregular work hours, and the physical intensity of the work all contribute to these challenges. The analysis of Dr. Donnie's workshop must be viewed through the lens of these occupational stressors to fully appreciate its impact and relevance for this population.

Physical Health

- **Current Challenges:** Firefighters are at high risk for physical health issues due to the physically demanding nature of their work, including the need to maintain high levels of fitness, manage body weight, and cope with the physical toll of frequent, intense exertion. Diet and exercise are critical for sustaining their health, yet the irregular and long work hours often make it difficult to maintain healthy habits.
- **Workshop Impact:** The workshop's emphasis on making a healthy diet and exercise a priority is particularly relevant. While participants were neutral to slightly satisfied with their efforts in these areas' pre-workshop, the high confidence levels suggest that the workshop effectively motivated them to overcome the challenges posed by their demanding schedules. The strong confidence in maintaining a healthy body weight/BMI (4.14) is promising, as this is crucial for the long-term health and operational readiness of firefighters.

Mental Fitness

- **Current Challenges:** The mental health of firefighters is a significant concern due to repeated exposure to traumatic incidents, high levels of stress, and the pressures of making life-and-death decisions. Firefighters are prone to conditions such as PTSD, anxiety, and depression, making the development of effective coping strategies and mental resilience critical.
- **Workshop Impact:** The workshop's positive impact on mental fitness, particularly in using coping skills (4.16) and seeking support (4.05), is crucial for this population. Although participants were only moderately satisfied with their current use of coping skills and support-seeking behaviors, the high confidence scores indicated that the workshop provided them with practical tools to better manage their mental health. This

could lead to better mental health outcomes if these strategies are applied consistently in the field.

Work-Life Balance

- **Current Challenges:** Firefighters often struggle with work-life balance due to irregular hours, shift work, and the emotional toll of the job, which can strain relationships with family and friends. The need to decompress after shifts and the unpredictability of emergency calls can further complicate efforts to maintain a balanced life.
- **Workshop Impact:** The workshop's focus on work-life balance is particularly pertinent. Participants showed strong confidence in their ability to improve their balance and well-being (4.23) and be fully present with their families (4.45). Given the importance of strong social support for mental health, this aspect of the workshop is highly valuable. The moderately high satisfaction with work-life balance efforts indicates that while participants are making progress, ongoing challenges remain. The workshop's success in building confidence in this area suggests it provided strategies that could help firefighters better navigate the demands of their career while maintaining healthy relationships.

Spiritual Health

- **Current Challenges:** For many firefighters, spiritual health can be a source of resilience, helping them find meaning and cope with the traumas they face. However, the demanding nature of their work can make it difficult to prioritize spiritual practices, leading to a disconnect that may exacerbate stress.
- **Workshop Impact:** The slightly lower scores in satisfaction (3.16) and confidence (3.76) related to spirituality indicate that this is an area where firefighters may need more support. While the workshop addressed this dimension of well-being, the results suggest that further emphasis on spiritual health could be beneficial. Providing firefighters with

strategies to integrate spirituality or reflective practices into their routine could enhance their overall resilience.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The executive summary, when analyzed in the context of the unique stressors faced by firefighters, underscores the importance of targeted interventions like Dr. Donnie's workshop. The workshop appears to have successfully addressed several critical areas—particularly physical health, mental fitness, and work-life balance—providing firefighters with the tools and confidence needed to navigate their demanding careers more effectively.

However, the lower scores related to spiritual health suggest a need for additional focus in this area. Given the potential benefits of strong spiritual health in coping with trauma and stress, future workshops could place greater emphasis on this dimension, offering more concrete strategies for integrating spirituality into daily life.

Overall, the workshop's positive impact on confidence across multiple dimensions is a promising sign that, with continued support and application, firefighters can better manage the physical and emotional demands of their profession. The strong likelihood of participants recommending the workshop (mean score of 4.57) further suggests that it is a valuable resource that could be beneficial to a wider audience within the firefighting community, law enforcement, and other public safety employees.

- Dr. Donnie Hutchinson
August 19, 2024