

FORMAL MENTORING
for the
FIRE SERVICE

A Model

Third Generation

Available at fireserviceleadership.com

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“Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction”.

John Crosby

“Be the change you want to see in the world”.

Gandhi

“Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.”

Aristotle

“A superior man is modest in his speech, but exceeds in his actions.”

Confucius

“Excellence is in the details. Give attention to the details and excellence will come.”

Perry Paxton

“If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception; it is a prevailing attitude.”

Colin Powell

“Mentoring is the future of fire service leadership and learning.”

J. Scott Thompson

Do we spend more time specking our next rig than we do developing the people that will ride that rig?

Modern fire apparatus are custom built to meet the specific needs of the jurisdiction it will protect. Specs are hundreds of pages long and address every last detail of the apparatus.

Think of this mentoring model as the specifications for our new members and future leaders. The more the specs address, the less that is left up to chance.

It takes an athlete thousands of hours of learning the game, coaching, and practicing to compete at a professional level; these are the elite in their sport. Why do we believe it should take any less of a commitment for a firefighter to compete with fire on a professional level?

If we want to be viewed as professionals, we need to be prepared mentally, physically, mechanically, and procedurally to compete with fire, rescue, and EMS problems on an elite level.

J.S. Thompson

Mentoring or something like it... planned, purposeful professional development process based on a one-on-one relationship.

INTRODUCTION

Immediate feedback on performance and behaviors delivered through coaches and mentors will play a significant role in determining the quality of fire service training and leadership. Fire department organizations that embrace mentoring and that develop a formal mentoring process for new hires and the newly promoted will have a much easier time positioning their departments for future success and survival, than those that do not.

I have sent this program to more than 300 fire departments in North America over the past 20 years. What I have learned over this time is that many more programs fail than succeed. The first year is essential, if you make it five years, chances are the effort is sustainable. The factors that will determine the success of a formal mentoring program are:

- The level of support received from the top of the organization down. Lack of support from the fire chief and from company officers is the number one reason why formal fire-based mentoring initiatives fail.
- Unrealistic expectations for the program, and the lack of a clear vision of mentoring success that can be communicated throughout the organization.
- Failure to provide mentors with the necessary mentoring tools. If one of the expectations for mentors is to model the correct way and reinforce the core values and chosen culture, the necessary tools must be available that explain what each looks like in practice.

OVERVIEW

As in any profession or trade, people must start off equipped with the basic knowledge and skills derived from the experiences of those who have practiced before them. When it comes to fighting fires, success cannot be determined by simply knowing what to do at the task level such as searching, stretching hose lines, throwing ladders, forcing doors, or venting. It is the full understanding of the art and science of firefighting that will ultimately determine the long-term success of a firefighter or fire officer. Developed through one-on-one relationships, mentoring assures the learner (mentee) is positioned for success and survival in the firehouse and on the fireground. Additionally, mentors prevent learners from drifting towards failure during the critical developmental phases of their career.

While the main focus is to develop the person, we must consider the role each person will fill in the organization. This is where the fire service is unique. The typical fire department organization is broken up into divisions, battalions, and fire companies, delivering a highly technical hands-on service out of multiple locations. This environment is ideal for traditional informal mentoring, and benefits greatly from formal mentoring efforts. Deputy or district chiefs, battalion chiefs or shift commanders, company officers, and firefighters spread out across the city, working different shifts, and must all come together and successfully handle the most difficult of problems, in chaotic environments, with extreme time constraints and often incomplete or inaccurate information, and very personal possible consequences if something goes wrong. All the players must come together and do what many consider to be the impossible, and they must do it at the expert level.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Members Mentoring Model is threefold. First is to define the process and phases that make up a formal mentoring process, and to reinforce the key components of a chosen learning culture. Second is to enhance the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful (in my opinion) as a member of a suburban fire department organization. And finally, is to prevent members from drifting towards failure and resulting in actions or decisions that may cost them their life or their career. Recognizing that each mentor will have their own mentoring style, the overall focus of the process should focus on common, standard outcomes, increasing skills and knowledge, and building the confidence of firefighters and fire officers.

INITIATIVE GOALS

- Formally and uniformly invest in the next generation of firefighters and fire officers.
- Create an environment that supports teaching and learning at the company level.
- Utilize the right senior members to position new members and the newly promoted for success and survival.
- Make the training and development process personal.
- Provide immediate and accurate feedback on performance, knowledge, attitude, and behaviors.
- Get people out of their comfort zone for the purpose of teaching, learning, and improving.
- Create teachable moments (create learning opportunities).
- Prevent new hires and the newly promoted from drifting towards failure.
- Position the organization for long-term operational and supervisory success.
- Challenge the status quo.
- Support a chosen learning organizational culture and subcultures.
- Address generational differences and challenges in a productive learning environment.

To achieve the above, several programs have been implemented to support the organization's commitment to mentoring. From the Fire Chief to the newest member, each and every member of TCFD, current and future, can influence the mentoring process positively or negatively. As leaders, supervisors, instructors, senior members, mentors, etc., hopefully we are presenting ourselves as positive role models and also passing on our knowledge and experiences to future generations. The reality is, the legacy that we leave behind by investing in others will tell the real truth about our contribution to the fire service and The Colony Fire Department organization. Always remember, someone taught you. You have an implied obligation to pay it forward.

Mentoring

The process of a more experienced firefighter acting as a trusted advisor to a learner.

WHY MENTORING

I realized the value of mentoring in 1998 after becoming chief of a young, rapidly growing combination fire department. I had been in mentoring relationships prior; I just didn't recognize them as such. I was fortunate to have a team of motivated young firefighters and fire officers. While they were receiving outstanding on the job training and experience, they needed the influence of senior firefighters to help them turn events into experiences, and to position them mentally and physically for future success and survival. After searching extensively for the best way to accelerate learning, I realized the value of mentoring. Unfortunately, then as today, mentoring programs for new hires were rare, and mentoring programs for the newly promoted almost non-existent. I personally believe mentoring is the future of fire service learning and leadership. Those departments that embrace a formal mentoring process for new hires and the newly promoted will have a much easier time dealing with current and future challenges than those that don't.

I have had some over the years challenge my use of the word mentor or mentoring. The following includes what I believe is a commitment to a planned and purposeful professional development process that is based on individual or small group relationships. To me, this is mentoring. If you choose to disagree, please feel free to call it whatever you like. The important thing is that you have a planned and sustainable process for positioning your people for success and survival now, and in the future.

Firefighters are in fact occupational competitors; a profession of service and problem solving. Chief Alan Brunacini said "the work firefighters do in the hot zone is the smartest form of manual labor." To compete at a professional level, to be among the elite in the delivery of fire operations, rescue, and emergency medical care, requires hundreds if not thousands of hours of mental and physical conditioning, practicing, coaching, and competing with those problems. If we hope to be viewed as professionals, and compensated like pros, we must commit to competing with fire, rescue, and emergency medical problems on a professional level.

Mentoring Statistics

- Higher retention rates - (72%) for candidates, (69%) for mentors, (49%) for non-mentoring participants (Sun Microsystems). Losing an employee costs 100-300% of the replaced employee's salary (Society of Human Resource Management).
- People are 77% more likely to stay in a job if they are in a mentoring relationship. 35% of employees who do not receive mentoring are likely to start looking for another job in the first 12 months. (Emerging Workforce study by Spherion, 2012).
- Mentoring increases learning retention. With mentoring, managerial productivity increased by 88% compared to 24% with those who trained alone. (ASTD).
- Mentoring helps fill the leadership pipeline; Employees who receive mentoring were promoted 5 times more often than those who did not. (Forbes). Mentors were 6 times more likely to promote. (Forbes).
- In The Colony Fire Department, the retention rate of mentored members is 100%. (The Colony Project 2018).
- 75% of millennials want a mentoring relationship in the workplace (HireVue).

- 75% of millennials believe mentoring is essential for their success. (Deloitte Millennial Survey, 2016).
- 78% of executives in the private sector credit their mentors with helping them reach their current position.
- 81% of firefighters believe mentoring is necessary for developing future successful officers. (FOOLS survey, 2017).

The career and volunteer fire service provides an ideal environment for mentoring relationships. The rich history of the fire service combined with the firehouse environment, and the knowledge and highly technical skill requirements provide numerous mentoring opportunities. Additionally, the attitudes, temperament, and team spirit that must exist in the firehouse for the fire company to be functional, requires a commitment to each member of the team.

Mentors help their learner transition through the phases of their career. Ideally, mentors build the candidate's skills and decision-making confidence by helping the candidate read and interpret various situations. They lead the candidate towards taking on more personal responsibility and build confidence in their judgement. The best mentors inspire the candidate to take ownership of the roles and responsibilities of the job... they don't just give them the answers, they lead them towards them.

Mentoring combines learning, purpose, and participation... three things motivated firefighters value in their work experience. Mentors lead candidates to become students of their own experiences. As with leadership, coaching and mentoring is about influencing. The goal of coaching and mentoring is to increase a firefighter's decision making and judgement confidence and performance capability... mentors are coaches, but coaches are not always mentors.

Mentoring is a critical component of the organization's intellectual and chosen culture infrastructures. Just as our Emergency Vehicle Technicians prepare and maintain our new apparatus, mentors develop and maintain new members to the organization, and the newly promoted. Surely our members deserve the same level of commitment as our apparatus. Unfortunately, there is far too much evidence that suggests fire departments spend considerably more time specking their next apparatus, than they do developing their next generation of officers.

Informal Mentoring

"Informal mentoring is a natural component of relationships that occurs throughout the society, in the workplace, as well as in social, professional, and family activities," according to the *Journal of Leadership Education*. "Informal mentoring occurs in a relationship between two people where insight, knowledge, and wisdom is gained, a friendship shared, and support provided the mentor. Either person may initiate the informal mentoring relationship, the mentor to help the other, the learner to gain wisdom from a trusted person."

Formal Mentoring

Formal mentoring differs from informal mentoring as it develops within a program and process established for mentoring to take place. It's usually short-term (one year), with the hope it will develop informally for longer. Mentors are usually volunteers, but they're still chosen, and both parties of the mentoring relationship may not choose each other.

There are many benefits in formal mentoring. Employees who are mentored are impacted in terms of professional growth, career advancement and mobility. Mentors take pride in the other person's accomplishments and the mentor is invigorated and renews his or her commitment to the job and the profession.

Ref: Online.grace.edu

After evaluating nearly four hundred suburban fire departments, it is clear that mentoring has not been widely embraced in fire department organizations. In those organizations where mentoring did exist, it was informal in nature, and the learner was new to the organization. Few fire department organizations had a formal mentoring process for new members and the newly promoted.

While informal mentoring is better than no mentoring, the content of informal mentoring in fire service organizations is often inconsistent, and its influence sporadic. The best way to ensure that each member of the organization benefits from mentoring is through a formal mentoring process that each member has access to.

DEFINITIONS

Coaching – A firefighter who instructs other firefighters on the fundamentals of firefighting demonstrates the correct way and provides immediate feedback on performance.

Counseling – Providing assistance or guidance in an effort to resolve behavior, attitude, or performance difficulties or problems.

Deliberate practice – Practice where the participant gets out of their comfort zone with the intention of growing and improving.

Learner (Mentee) – A person who is likely to receive or experience something. What they will receive is wisdom and understanding while experiencing the job with their mentor. The person with less knowledge and experience.

Mentor – The person with more knowledge and experience, acting as a trusted advisor to the candidate.

Mentoring – The process of a more experienced firefighter giving advice and guidance to a new firefighter or fire officer.

Mentorship – A training and development relationship between a more knowledgeable and more experienced firefighter, and a firefighter with less knowledgeable and experience.

Naïve practice – Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting to get better.

Purposeful practice – Practice performed in the presence of a coach who is positioned and qualified to provide immediate feedback.

TYPES OF FIRE SERVICE MENTORING

Distant mentoring – Exchange of information and evaluation by correspondence, or over the internet without the learner being at the same location as the mentor. This is a term that I use, no known reference.

Functional mentoring - A mentoring relationship which is project oriented. (Ex. Preparing an engine firefighter to ride the truck or rescue).

Reverse mentoring - Situations where a junior member who may be actively learning or enhancing their skills mentors a more senior or experienced member.

Selective mentoring - Similar to traditional, individuals are chosen based on future potential and succession planning.

Situational mentoring - Creating or taking advantage of mentoring moments. Typically, unplanned and addressing a current event or recognized need.

Supervisory mentoring - Those in supervisory roles have the responsibility to coach and mentor those in their charge, and those who look to officers for career and life guidance.

Virtual mentoring - Virtual mentoring is, in my opinion, the most common style of mentoring occurring in the North American Fire Service. This is where technology is used for distance mentoring.

BENEFITS OF MENTORING**For Candidates (new hire or newly promoted)**

- Improves skills at the technique level, increases knowledge, promotes positive attitudes, supports the chosen culture
- Accelerates learning and professional development
- Increases confidence
- Provides access to role models
- Develops personal decision-making capabilities

For Mentors

- Two-way learning
- Sense of accomplishment
- Recognition
- Provides an opportunity to give back
- Improves communication and people skills

For the Fire Company

- The learner has completed a formal development program
- Strengths and areas in need of improvement have been identified
- The learner has been exposed to experiences, stories, and tricks of the trade, and not just book knowledge
- The learner has been provided insight into the chosen culture and subculture

For the Organization

- Great tool for improving employee engagement, reducing friction, and increasing contribution
- Member retention
- Reinforces vision, the chosen culture, mission, and core values
- Action step for a learning culture
- Increases operational capabilities
- Adds value

INFLUENCE IN THE FIREHOUSE

Each tour of duty, your firefighters are being influenced in one way or another. Firehouse influence can be positive, or as we know, it can be negative. Too often suburban fire department organizations knowingly allow productive members to be negatively influenced. The only reason this happens is because fearful people have been put into supervisory roles, and they have not been held accountable for practicing effective supervision. For some unknown reason, fire chiefs, operations chiefs, shift commanders, company officers, and senior men and women allow negative influences to challenge their personal values, their character, and their leadership.

Leadership is influence. Everyone in the firehouse is presented with opportunities during a tour of duty to influence each member of the company. The following are some of the most common ways that firefighters are influenced in the firehouse environment.

Conversation influence – Philosophy based and often full of emotion and personal opinion.

Symbolic influence – Character based and exposed by the things people do; how they live their personal and professional life.

Instruction influence – Information based and typically focused on a specific subject or topic.

Counseling influence – Correction based with the focus being intentional, structured, one-on-one conversation based on observable behaviors or level of commitment. May determine at some point if someone remains employed or not.

Coaching influence – Performance based with the focus on developing firefighters so they are positioned to do their job to the best of their ability. Maximizing individual capability, which in turn increases the capability of the fire company.

Mentoring influence – Development based with the focus on a learning relationship aimed at personal and professional development.

Philosophical influence – Leadership and operational. The most basic beliefs, concepts, and attitudes of an individual.

COMMITTING TO A FORMAL MODERN MENTORING PROCESS

Step 1

Start with the end in mind and why? If not this... what?

Whenever I address a challenge, anticipate a change, and begin planning to transition The Colony Fire Department organization to the next level, I always start the same way. First is to “start with the end in mind.” This comes from Stephen Covey’s habit number two (7 Habits of Highly Effective People). Once you are able to define success, and articulate a vision of what success looks like, you can begin to identify the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitude, commitment, and cultural components necessary to achieve success.

Next is to ask the question, why? Simon Sinek has dedicated an entire book on the importance of understanding the why (Start With Why). By understanding the why, we are able to understand the value and impact of the effort and target outcomes. Understanding the why also helps with selling the change. While many may feel junior members don’t deserve the why, knowing the why is essential for achieving success.

Finally, ask “if not this...what”? What are the alternatives? If a formal modern mentoring process is not the right fit right now, what are the alternatives for assuring your people are positioned for success and survival beyond directives? Answering this question will assure that you look at options, and additionally

it will help you with your justification as you move forward to gain support for a formal mentoring process, or for whatever you choose for you people's personal professional development; to maximize their potential and therefore, their capabilities.

While I continue to learn new things every day about learning, leading, and maximizing performance, the following are my responses at this point and time to *start with the end in mind and why? If not this...what?*

Start with the end in mind

Implement and support a relationship based personal development process that positions people for long-term success and survival. A process that focuses on individual goals, the members current and future positions within the organization, helping people achieve their full potential, and what is best for the organization.

Why?

If we say our people are our greatest asset, then they deserve our greatest investment towards their short and long-term success and survival.

If we hope to compete with fire, rescue, and emergency medical problems on a professional level, we must make the commitment to our members to prepare them to perform on a professional level. We do this by understanding what each member values, what motivates them, and how they best learn and retain skills and knowledge.

The fire company can't be a high performing fire company unless each member is better than average... otherwise they are just another average fire company, doing the minimum to get by.

If not mentoring, what?

Unverified in-service training that is generic, impersonal, and random; using canned programs, generic information, and hands-on training possibly taught by firefighters who lack experience and the expertise to demonstrate and apply the knowledge or skills correctly at the technique level.

Some canned program or certificate taught by someone who has minimal insight into the person or the organization for which the person belongs.

Why do you believe it is the right time to implement a mentoring process in your fire department? Based on what you know now, what are your short and long-term expectations for developing new members and the newly promoted?

Do a little research on formal, informal, traditional, and modern mentoring. Unfortunately, there are not many fire-based mentoring programs, therefore, you will find more quality information on mentoring outside of the fire service. (See attachment Mentoring Suggested Reading List)

With that said, I have found that mentoring in academia, business, the federal government, and in the medical and legal professions don't really meet the criteria for an ideal fire service mentoring process. It is my opinion that mentoring in the fire service has to be a hybrid derived from traditional and modern mentoring principles and practices... that is what this model consists of.

Action Steps

- Adopt a definition of mentoring that will best represent what you are hoping to accomplish, and that best supports your chosen or desirable culture.

For example – **Mentoring:** The process of a more experienced firefighter giving advice and guidance to a new or newly promoted firefighter.

- Gain an understanding of formal and informal mentoring. A formal mentor program will require a greater commitment at start-up and regular maintenance than that of an informal process. For example:

Formal	Informal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process • Structured • Clear goals and expectations • Uniformity (firefighters fill a position on the team, interchangeable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No structure • Unclear goals and expectations • No uniformity • Chosen by learner • Highly subjective

Ref. management-mentors.com

- Learn about traditional and modern approaches to mentoring and make a decision on what will work best for your organization. For example:

Traditional Mentoring	Modern Formal Mentoring
• Relationships develop organically	• Preparation and planning required
• Individual goals	• Connection to the chosen culture
• Unknown outcomes	• Established goals, objectives, and standards
• Limited access to process	• All have access to the process
• Pairing is initiated by the individuals	• Strategic and purposeful pairing
• Unofficial and random content	• Defined content
• May improve the individual’s level of success because the mentor can choose the content based on needs, and give the learner their undivided attention	• More individuals are able to benefit from the mentoring process, especially when virtual and group mentoring takes place
• Is more personal and has fewer distractions when technology isn’t involved	• Networking opportunities outside of the organization are possible to extend the mentoring process after initial one-on-one mentoring phases have occurred
• May lead to higher levels of accountability, as individuals are more engaged when there are less obstacles between the mentor and learner	• The potential exists to become just another program with no quality controls or revision

What All Forms of Mentoring Have in Common

Traditional and modern mentoring both encourage individuals to develop their capabilities, so either will work. Encourage traditional mentoring if you are not ready to make the commitment to a formal mentoring process. After identifying the needs of the organization and its members, implement a formal modern mentoring process. Here are some benefits of both types of mentoring:

- Can be tailored to the learner's needs
- Provides a low-stress environment for learning and turning events into experiences
- Introduces individuals to the organizational culture and existing subcultures and micro cultures
- Shows that the organization cares about developing its members and for positioning them for success and survival in an activity rich with risks

Mentoring is a game changer, and well worth consideration. The more you seek to understand, the more mentoring will make sense...read on.

Step 2

Develop the Process

I can't over emphasize the value of mentoring. For an eleven-year period in The Colony Fire Department we did not have one member voluntarily leave to go to another fire department. For the first five of the eleven years, TCFD was one of the lowest paying departments in the region. What is more amazing, seasoned experienced firefighters were giving up their seniority and taking a cut in pay to come to TCFD. In the interest of full disclosure, we did have one or two retire and start a second career in another department after taking a period of leave, and we did have a few in the early years leave the fire service and chase the money in the oil industry.

People actually get upset when I talk about this, claiming those who stayed while the pay was low screwed everyone else, those who came were traders, or that this is BS all together...100% certain that at the end of the day money rules. All I can say is that we experienced it. Make what you will of it. I contribute it to a chosen culture that values learning and high performance, and our commitment to mentoring as part of that chosen culture.

Step 2 is the fun and creative part of implementing a mentoring process. Your mentoring process should fit the personality of your organization. If your organization is very structured and policy driven, a casual, informal process will likely not be the best fit. On the other hand, if the organization is philosophy driven and a little less formal day to day, a structured policy driven mentoring process will likely be awkward and uncomfortable at the station level.

Define Mentoring Success

Once the essential people are on board, and once they have committed their long-term support, the next step is to define what you want your mentoring process to do. This is defining mentoring success based on the mentoring vision of the organization. Once you have a basic understanding of formal and informal mentoring, and modern and traditional mentoring techniques, begin to identify and define what will work the best for your organizations. Smaller organizations may find it is best to start with an informal, traditional mentoring process simply because of a lack of possible mentors.

Action Steps

- Define what the end result should look like. What will the person who has gone through your formal or informal mentoring process look like compared to the one that has not been involved in a mentoring relationship. How will their attitude towards work and the organization differ? What knowledge and skills benefits will one have over the other? Finally, how do we hope those that have been mentored process information and make decisions different from those who are developed by current programs and interactions?
- Identify the problems with the existing personal development process. What must remain the same? What must change?
- Once you have a clear understanding of what you want your mentoring efforts to achieve, work backwards and identify the knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and short and long-term investment necessary to achieve the vision of success. What must the culture value?
- Make sure your vision of mentoring success can be communicated so that others can understand what mentoring success looks like, and so others can share in the vision.

Think in terms of mental imagery, visualization, and creating mental models. (Ref. Mentoring Suggested Reading List)

The Model

One of the most common mistakes departments make when implementing a mentoring program is to introduce the initiative as a policy, procedure or program of the month. A model on the other hand, is something that a copy can be based on because of a detailed example. Models also lend themselves to slight alterations or modifications, in this case based on the coaching style of the mentor. Describing the model is a critical phase in the process to create mental models. A mentoring model has been chosen in TCFD to explain what mentoring success should look like. The model describes the pieces, instructions for assembly, and an idea for what it should look like when done.

At a minimum, the mentoring model should include the things that have been identified to lead to success in the organization. The following provides the framework for The Colony, Texas Fire Department's 3M - Members Mentoring Model.

Mentoring Themes & Sample Mentoring Tools**Fire Service Success – The Final Four**

These four outcomes were identified from The Colony Project, an effort conducted to better understand the organization. The point here is, provide the mentor with insight as to what success looks like at an organizational and personal level. The four bullet points highlight and summarize what organizational success looks like for The Colony Fire Department organization.

- Take care of people, them and us
- Solve problems utilizing all available resources
- Manage risks inside and outside of the firehouse
- Maximize operational capabilities

Keep in mind that each of the following is intended as mental prompt for TCFD mentors to create coaching or teaching opportunities, and in no way intended to be an all-inclusive message. Each point compliments the chosen culture and the leadership and operational philosophy of one suburban fire

department. If you choose to include something similar, you must take the time and put forth the effort to identify the things that you want your model and process to emphasize and reinforce.

Responsibility

Reinforce the responsibility we have for:

- Self
- Family
- Citizens
- The department
- The city
- The state
- The country
- The American fire service

Family Values

- Treat everyone like family
- Emphasize that the people we will be called to assist are someone's son or daughter. They may be someone's mother, father, brother or sister. How would we expect your mother, father, son, daughter, or spouse to be treated by the fire department responding to their needs on a bad day? This is what needs to be reinforced.

Daily Preparedness Priorities

- Mental
- Physical
- Mechanical
- Procedural

Respect Given and Earned (TCFD core value)

- Family
- Citizens
- Other city employees
- Neighboring fire departments
- Brother/Sisterhood
- American Fire Service

Attitude

- Display a proactive approach to work.
- Help the learner realize that we can choose our attitude. Is our chosen attitude helping or hurting the fire company team?
- Reinforce that those we serve, expect and deserve a positive problem-solving attitude. The bad day that people are experiencing should not be made worse by our bad attitude
- Make the connection between accepting a job/position and working to meet or exceed the expectations established for that job/position.

Risk Management

- Make the connection that safety is a decision, while risk management is a process.
- Explain the difference between being safe while doing extremely dangerous work, and managing risks while solving problems...being smart.
- Manage risks inside and outside of the firehouse
 - Why we wear PPE
 - Why we use seatbelts
 - Why we drive defensively
 - Why we attack problems with a sensible level of aggression
 - Etc.
- Help them be here now. Why it is important to have your head in the game at all times.
- Never, ever recklessly compromise the welfare of yourself or your crew.
- Reinforce calling for help at the very first sign of trouble.
- Don't allow short cuts.
- Don't allow anything less than their best effort.
- Don't allow them to drift towards failure.
- Don't allow bad habits to form inside or outside the firehouse.

Commitment to Duty

- Emphasize that our job is to deliver a service.
- Our commitment to duty is what sets us apart from everyone else.
- Make sure there is an understanding that customer service and problem solving is a priority, second only to preparing to deliver the service.
- Reinforce service delivery without prejudice or bias.
- Help the learner realize we respond to all requests for service.
- Make every effort to solve the problem utilizing all available resources.
- Help them understand they are empowered to solve problems to the best of the fire company's abilities, limited only by potential liability and negative financial impact to the city.
- Don't allow them to make assumptions about the value of people's property.

Be Smart

- Always be in the best mental and physical positions to succeed and survive.
- Always ask the "what if" question.
- Understand the why, and the how.
- Use discretionary time when available.
- Always strive to operate within the confines of our operational capabilities and limitations.

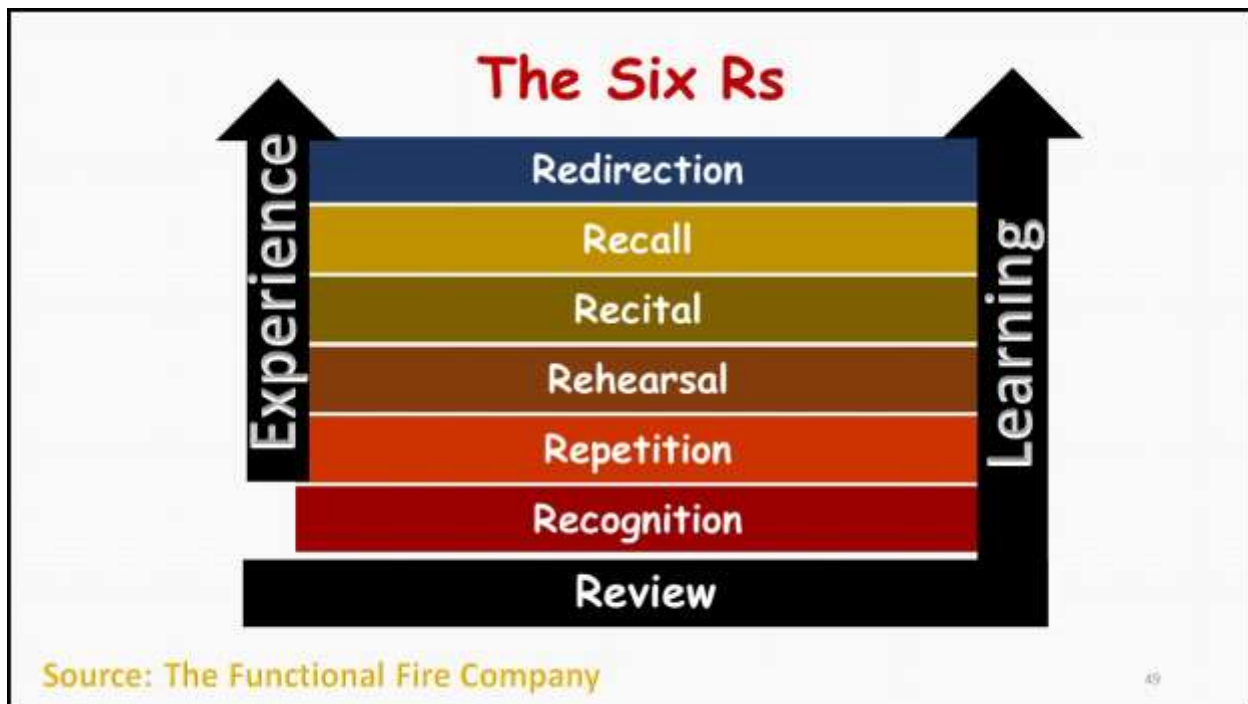
Practice Being a Brother or Sister - don't just wear the t-shirt

- Emphasize that being a brother or sister is a responsibility.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the members of The Colony Fire Department family.
- Cultivate a sense of family for the men and women who serve in the American fire service.
- Demand respect for one another.
- Show respect towards those who have paved the way.

- View new members as the future of TCFD.
- Explain the difference between being a friend and being a brother or sister.
- Understand that as a new member, they may not understand their responsibility in our fire family. Sometimes we may need to show them.
- Recognize that diversity strengthens the team.
- Provide an environment of development, and do not allow an environment of destruction.
- Explain that sometimes we can be our own worst enemies.

The Six Rs of Learning and Experience

The role of a mentor is to coach the learner in the moment, and towards long term success. I am sharing a model I developed many years ago that defines what I believe to be levels of learning and experience applied to the fire service.



Review – Coaching and learning moments should always start with a review of what the learner knows and has been exposed to.

Recognition – The most basic level of coaching influence, but a very important level of learning, none the less. In this phase, the goal is for the mentor to coach the learner on recognizing critical information. Question and answer and “what if” scenarios are effective coaching and mentoring tools at this level.

Repetition – Is the next step increasing performance and developing visualization and mental imagery. This is also the first level that I believe qualifies as a level of experience. This is the sets and reps phase and is critical that the mentor demonstrate the correct way and not allow bad habits to form.

Rehearsal – The next level of learning and experience is the rehearsal phase. This is similar to a dress rehearsal in the theater. It involves performing during practice just as you would during the real deal. If a firefighter is allowed to participate in a structural firefighting drills while wearing rescue gloves, there should be no surprise when a firefighter has to take off their firefighting gloves to operate their radio, thermal imager, or breathing apparatus. The firefighter was allowed to drift towards failure.

Recital – It is my opinion, that this level of learning and performance is the most interesting from a cognitive perspective. The recital phase can be used to evaluate an understanding of the who, what, where, when, how, and to what degree. The picture below is a prop built for the recital phase of learning and experience, and as a coaching tool.



In this picture, firefighters are participating in purposeful practice demonstrating various tasks associated with performing vertical ventilation. The officer is positioned so that he or she can “quiz” the participants as they perform their tasks, and to coach by providing immediate feedback.

Review – Review is not only important before moving to the next phase, it is also an action phase in the learning and experience model. The science associated with retaining information and skills clearly

indicates that which is not used, is lost, or greatly diminishes over time. In The Colony, the training season includes a drill called the Quarterly Big 5. This drill assures that the big five - hose, ladders, search, PPE to include portable radio and thermal imager, and firefighter survival and rescue skills are reviewed no less than quarterly to assure knowledge and skills are maintained.

Redirection – I personally view this as the highest level of formal fire service coaching and mentoring in relation to learning, and turning events into experiences. At this level, the learner should be able to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of what structural firefighting operations should look like for example, and the courage and initiative to redirect those operations once they recognize deviation from the standard, guidelines, or accepted best practices.

FORMAL MENTORING PHASES (The Colony Fire Department, Texas)

In order to formalize the mentoring process, five mentoring phases are offered for consideration for fire department organizations. The five phases were created to follow the natural progression of fire service roles and responsibilities, and the science behind learning and skill development. While these phases will not be found in any other mentoring manuals, they have proven effective for moving members through a fire department organization. The five phases involve formal and informal mentoring relationships, and can be tailored in content and time commitment to meet the needs of each learner.

Phase I Mentoring – Orientation

One of the visions I had for The Colony Fire Department mentoring process is to have each new member to the organization greeted by their assigned mentor on day one. We refer to this as The Power of Day One. As such, the mentor calls the learner and introduces him or herself and inquires as to the time the learner will be arriving to their newly assigned firehouse. On their first day, the learner is greeted by their mentor as they approach their duty assignment for the first time. After a formal introduction, the mentor provides the new member with the most important thing that the organization wants all members to remember for the duration of their career. In TCFD, the message goes something like this.

IMPORTANT – ORIENTATION WARNING

The first communications between the mentor and new hire learner will include the following critical information:

“It is not okay to die on a fire. However, you may be asked to perform tasks in the line of duty that may result in death or serious injury.”

“The work that a firefighter or paramedic performs is extremely dangerous. It is likely that if you spend any time on an engine company, truck company, or medic company, you will suffer physical damage and emotional scaring. You will be expected to do things that others could not do, and you will see and hear things that no one should see and hear. You must learn how to manage physical and emotional stress, and have the courage to ask for help when you feel you can no longer cope with mental or physical pain”. Firefighter paramedics are more likely than the average person to suffer from:

- Certain types of cancers
- Mental and behavioral health issues (Post Incident Stress)
- Substance abuse
- Conditions associated with interrupted sleep patterns, and poor sleep quality
- Relationship challenges

“Understand you must take responsibility for your own personal wellbeing. The minute you assume someone is more concerned about your safety than you are, complacency has set in.”

“Doing the work of firefighter/paramedic will never be safe. The best we can do is make it safer, or less dangerous.”

“Now let’s go in and meet your new family.”

While this may sound painfully obvious, we have found that it does two things. Whatever the day one, minute one message is, it will stay with that person for their career. A personal message delivered by a respected senior member, in a one-on-one setting, is the highest form of making training personal. Second, it reaffirms the commitment and consequences associated with being a firefighter, and causes the new member to take ownership of their personal wellbeing.

The first goal of Phase I, is to orient the new member to the organization, or the newly promoted to the position. This is a formal phase of the mentoring process in which a mentor is assigned to a learner, and mentoring tools are used to provide structure, continuity of information, and track progress. Phase I typically lasts until the end of a one-year probationary period, but may be extended to assure the goal has been adequately met. The focus should be on mental, physical, mechanical, and procedural preparedness.

The second goal in this phase is to provide teachable moments and training opportunities that involve judgement, application of common sense, recalling knowledge, demonstrating skills, and providing immediate constructive feedback and reinforcement on performance, attitudes, and behaviors. Task

books that focus on technique and the overall performance of tasks are useful in this phase. It is important to maintain a journal of the Phase I journey.

Phase I Checklist

- Communicate Day One message
- Review job description with the new learner
- Review expectations
- Identify critical skills
- Demonstrate the correct way
- Explain the who, what, where, when, why, and to what degree
- Assess existing skills, knowledge, and confidence
- Coach technique
- Set goals
- Monitor progress
- Position for success
- Provide feedback
- Lead the learner to the solution, don't give it to them
- Encourage.

Tools – The organization's statement of purpose (why the organization exists), mission statement (the most important thing the organization does), the fire chief's leadership and operational philosophy, task books, guidelines and best practices, mentoring and goal setting sheets.

Phase II Mentoring - Develop

The goal of this phase is to develop knowledge, skills, abilities, and to bring awareness to habits, attitudes, and emotions. This phase combines formal and informal mentoring, and often combines traditional mentoring principles and practices with distant mentoring and learning. Learners are encouraged to seek out additional mentors that are content experts, or who compliment their style of learning. The learner may also use available resources during periods of personal self-development to enhance the learner's capabilities and contribution to their fire company team.

Phase II Checklist

- Review strengths and weaknesses from Phase I
- Set goals
- Participate in purposeful and deliberate practice
- Get learner out of their comfort zone
- Provide feedback
- Review progress

Tools – Monthly Mentoring and Goal Setting forms, Six Rs of Learning and Experience

Phase III Mentoring - Prepare

Often fire departments allow or require their members to act, or temporarily work at the next organizational level. Filling these positions on a temporary basis provides many learning and confidence building opportunities. The goal of this phase of the mentoring process is to prepare the learner mentally, physically, mechanically, and procedurally to perform at the next organizational level on a temporary basis. This is a formal process that utilizes a structured step-up process such as task books for learning

objectives, structure, and accurate content. This phase typically includes learners “shadowing” and being mentored by members working at the next organizational level.

Firefighter to Apparatus Operator (sample)

- Meets certification, education, and experience requirements.
- Process mirrors the promotional process.
- Complete 12 Mentoring and Goal Setting sessions. Candidate is mentored by more experienced senior firefighters and apparatus operator.
- Shadow the rank of driver apparatus operator for two shifts.
- Letter of recommendation and sign-off by the candidate’s captain and battalion chief. Endorsement by the operations chief and fire chief.

Driver Engineer to Company Officer (sample)

- Meets certification, education, and experience requirements.
- “Take home” written exam that allows the candidate to seek direction from more experienced officers.
- “Take home” in-basket exercise that allows the candidate to seek direction from more experienced officers.
- Tactical exercise that is evaluated by the candidate’s officer and battalion chief. Immediate feedback is allowed regarding performance and decision making.
- Complete 12 Mentoring and Goal Setting sessions. Candidate is mentored by more experienced driver engineers and captains.
- Shadow the rank of captain for two shifts.
- Letter of recommendation and sign-off by the candidate’s captain and battalion chief. Endorsement by the operations chief and fire chief.

Company Officer to Battalion Chief (sample)

- Meets certification, education, and experience requirements.
- Task book that allows the candidate to seek direction from more experienced officers.
- “Take home” in-basket exercise that allows the candidate to seek direction from experienced officers.
- Tactical exercise that is evaluated by the candidate’s officer and battalion chief. Immediate feedback is allowed regarding performance and decision making.
- Complete 12 Mentoring and Goal Setting sessions. Candidate is mentored by more experienced captains and battalion chiefs.
- Shadow the rank of battalion chief for five shifts.
- Letter of recommendation and sign-off by the candidate’s battalion chief. Endorsement by the operations chief and fire chief.

Phase III Checklist

- Review the job description for the position next in the organization chart
- Review expectations
- Identify critical skills
- Demonstrate the correct way
- Explain the who, what, where, when, why, and to what degree
- Assess existing skills, knowledge, and confidence

-
- Coach technique
 - Set goals
 - Monitor progress
 - Position for success
 - Encourage

Tools – Step-up processes task books, promotional process preparation material

Phase IV Mentoring - Master

Mastering the basics is a core component of both the leadership and operational philosophy in TCFD, and in my opinion, the same should apply to the fire service as a whole. In this phase firefighters and fire officers work independently and alongside senior members with the intentions of mastering the techniques and tasks associated with the job. A learner never graduates from Phase IV mentoring. While the interactions between the mentor and the learner may become less formal, mentors with increased knowledge and a higher level of skill proficiency will continue to work with the learner during formal and informal learning and purposeful and deliberate practice sessions. In Phase IV mentoring the learner has made the commitment to deliberate practice, pushing themselves beyond their comfort zone in order to grow mentally and physically. Because of the commitment, this level of mentoring is not for everyone. Mentors need to communicate to learners the fact that if their knowledge and skill level is not being maintained, both are in a state of decline. A member who has not demonstrated a high level of proficiency at the task level, and who is not a student and committed to continual learning should not be granted the privilege of being a mentor.

Phase IV Checklist

- Demonstrate the correct way
- Coach technique
- Ask them to explain the who, what, where, why, when, and to what degree
- Provide feedback

Tools – Identified best practices, Six Rs of Learning and Experience

Phase V Mentoring - Pass-on

In the final mentoring phase, learners transition to mentors and are encouraged to pass-on their experiences not only to current members, but to the many generations of learners and mentors to come. This can be accomplished by writing directives or guidelines, developing and delivering classes or programs, developing task books or curriculum, or by contributing to the Mentor Book. This would be the equivalent of a mentoring black belt. While the learner has proven to be a high performer in many areas, they continue to be students and also teach others.

Mentor Book

The Mentor Book is in place to capture as much information as possible from senior members (informal mentors), before they leave the organization.

This training and mentoring tool has a minimal cost and consists of a questionnaire given to members with fifteen or more years on the job. The answers to the questions, typically a paragraph or two, are collected and placed in the Mentor Book with the members name and the years they served. Below are examples of questions asked to senior members.

Sample Mentor Book Questions**Apparatus, Tools, Equipment**

What can you tell us about our apparatus? Are there any with special needs or “quirks”? Any with safety concerns that you would like to pass along? This can also apply to equipment on our rigs such as extrication equipment, generators, saws, tools, etc. Is there a rig you like best and why? Is there a rig you like least and why?

Calls, Incidents, Experiences or Problem Buildings

Are there any calls, incidents or experiences that you would like to share? Either for historical purposes or more importantly, a call or incident that provided you with a “lesson learned” type situation that may help a new firefighter. Are there any buildings that you are concerned about? The type of building, that when you think about it, you say “I hope we never have a fire in that place”.

Smart Firefighting

Is there anything specific about operations that you would want to share with a new firefighter? Any risks, or tips for managing risks that would help keep one of our members out of trouble?

Department History and Traditions

Can you provide us with any information regarding our department’s history? Any traditions? Anything you would like to share with future generations of firefighters? History regarding our firehouses, apparatus, personnel, culture, etc.?

Your Wisdom and Thoughts

Is there anything that you would say to a new firefighter or officer that would help him or her to succeed and survive?

Phase V Checklist

- Distribute mentor questionnaire to members with 15 years or more on the job
- Enter responses into the Mentor Book
- Update the Mentor Book at each firehouse

Tools – Mentor Book questionnaire, Mentor Book

Step 2 - Implementation Checklist

- Commit to a learning culture throughout the organizational culture and subcultures
- Make the support for mentoring process visible and sustainable, mentoring can’t be the project of the month
- Provide the necessary mentoring tools: at least a one mission, one department approach
 - Definitions of success
 - Purpose and mission of the department
 - Vision of success
 - Core values
 - Leadership and operational philosophy
 - Standards for performance and behavior
 - Desired outcomes

- Define and sell the mentoring process
- Train the organization
- Identify mentors
- Train mentors and provide on-going support
- Hold the organization and fire companies accountable for supporting the mentoring process**
this will take courage and leadership
- Review and revise the process regularly (no less than annually)
- Look for the next opportunity
- Take advantage of the Power of Day One

Organizations may choose to increase or decrease the mentoring phases based on their vision and the goals for a formal mentoring process. The important thing is to remember formal mentoring processes need structure.

Step 3

Make the Commitment

Without all out commitment from the top, a formal mentoring program does not stand a chance. If the chief is not willing to commit 100%, you can stop here. The Chief of Department must hold the organization accountable to the mentoring process.

As fire chief, there are four things that are a part of every day, 24/7/365

1. Managing the chosen culture daily
2. Risk management
3. Cultivating two-way trust
4. Creating an environment that each and every member can be successful and survive in if they choose to do so. My support for mentoring and leading learning is an action step for this commitment

I was lucky, when I went to work for Rick Lasky as a Division Chief of Training, mentoring was a priority. Since 2002, I have kept up with formal traditional and modern mentoring process start-ups in the fire service. Unfortunately, a large number of formal processes fail in the first year because of the lack of commitment and support from the top down. **In order for a formal mentoring effort to succeed long term, it must receive sustained support from the fire chief, and from each rank below the chief of department.**

Note: A portion of what I have included in this document originated in the Lewisville, Texas Fire Department under the leadership and support from Rick Lasky, Chief of Department (ret.).

Mentoring is a win-win. I encourage every fire chief, at a minimum, to take a look at the ways mentoring can help the organization deal with existing performance and behavior issues, and also help the organization with transitioning to the next phase... whatever that is for each organization.

Scenario

Firefighter Smith has twelve years at his current rank. He loves the job and wants to pass on what has been taught to him, and all that he has experienced over the years working with some of the best.

Firefighter Smith sees an email from the fire chief about a new formal mentoring process that will be implemented after the first of the year. Firefighter Smith reads about the process and the requirements to be considered as a mentor. Firefighter Smith gives the idea some thought and makes the decision to apply to become one of the department's first formal mentors.

A few weeks later Firefighter Smith receives notification that he has been chosen as a mentor, along with a packet of information outlining the goals of the process, the phases of the process, mentor preparation requirements, the necessary commitment, and other information aimed at positioning him for success as a formal mentor.

Upon completing all of the preparation work, Firefighter Smith meets the new firefighter that he will be mentoring, and the process begins.

It's at this point that the success and sustainability will be determined.

On their first tour together in the firehouse, firefighter Smith and firefighter Jones take advantage of the power of day one and begin to work on their relationship and how the formal mentoring process will be executed.

Hopefully firefighter Smith has the necessary tools he needs to position firefighter Jones for short and long-term success and survival, it will be up to him and his personal mentoring style to bring the process to life and build the relationship. A big part of this will involve making the process work in the firehouse.

While the rest of the company may not be directly involved with mentoring firefighter Jones, they will be impacted.

On day one Smith goes into the company officer's office and updates the Captain on his plans to work with Jones, the Captain will likely have one of two response upon hearing Smith's plan.

1. *That sounds great! This is a great thing not only for our department, but for our firehouse. Let me know what you need and if we can assist in anyway. We have a few things scheduled, but other than that we will work around your activities with Jones so that you can have some quality time with her. This is a big step for our department that will pay dividends well into the future. Thanks for stepping up and getting involved. We are here to help make it a success.*
2. *Really! Well the rest of us didn't volunteer for that shit. I don't care what you do, just don't tear anything up or do anything to bring attention to the house. There is enough shit going on without volunteering to do things. Don't take anything off the rig, and remember you have two pub-eds and it's your turn to cook.*

Number two will only happen so many times before there will be no one left to fill the role of mentor. For mentoring to work, it must be accepted in the firehouse...or at least not discouraged. Don't be that company officer...there are too many as is.

Action Steps

- Make the decision as an organization to commit to learning how mentoring can best benefit your organization
- Ask if a formal or informal mentoring program can benefit your organization
- Ask which levels of the organization will benefit most from a mentoring process (i.e. new hires and newly promoted)
- Ask the following questions:
 - Is each level of the organization receiving the necessary orientation and development necessary to succeed and survive in the firehouse and on the fire ground?
 - Are we spending more time developing the specifications of our apparatus, than we are our next generation of supervisors and leaders? Do we do a better job of maintaining our tools and equipment, than we do on those that are expected to use that equipment like professionals? If so, we can't say our culture values our people above all else.
- Build your mentoring team or focus group that will help develop and implement the process. Seek out your early adopters and the influential members of your organization...your rock stars. Getting the folks involved early will assure they take ownership of the process and hopefully the final product.

REQUEST TO THE CHIEF (sample)

I have discovered a very inexpensive, yet highly effective way to position our new members and our newly promoted for short- and long-term success. With your support, I believe we can provide each and every one of our members with great learning opportunities, while developing a culture that firefighters want to be a part of, if done correctly, I believe it will help our recruitment and retention. What I am requesting is that as an organization, we look into the benefits of A formal modern mentoring program.

The number one reason why formal mentoring programs fail in fire service organizations is because of the lack of continual support from the top. A formal mentoring process does not stand a chance without your full and visible support. Mentoring programs are a win-win for the organization and each individual, and the cost is minimal. Your ongoing support will assure the sustainability of the program, and that each mentor's preparation and dedication will pay dividends.

The first thing that I respectfully request is as chief of department, you meet with your direct reports to share your vision and gain their support. To be successful, mentoring will need to become a department standard, part of the organizational culture and subcultures, and an expectation that is passed down from one level of the organization to the next, starting with you.

The second most common reason why formal mentoring processes fail is because mentors lack the tools necessary to be successful. In order to be successful, each mentor will need to have a very clear understanding of the environment they are working in. Your input in the early stages of development will assure your vision, your values, and your leadership and operational philosophies are reflected in each phase of the mentoring process. Your chosen culture will become the organization's culture. The organizational and intellectual tools that the organization will need to provide for the mentor include.

- **Purpose and Mission Statement**

Where does the mentor start if he or she does not know why the organization exists, and what the most important thing is that the organization does. New members to the organization need to understand why the organization exists and what it is the organization does, and the newly promoted need to be reminded if they are expected to be effective supervisors.

This needs to be a working statement of purpose and mission, and not a ceremonial look how progressive we think we are statement.

- **Core Values and Core Value Action Steps**

What are the organizations core values, and what are things the organization does or does not do to reflect the core values?

- **Rules, Regulations, Policies, and Standards**

These are the “hard influences” that provide direction to each level of the organization. Each regulates performance and behaviors. Standards are particularly important, yet too often lacking. The mentor must have a very clear understanding of the things that regulate performance and behaviors so that they can mentor to the standard. Where standards are lacking, mentors are forced to improvise and come up with their own personal standards on how they would do it. A formal mentoring is the best and fastest way that I have found for bringing consistency and uniformity to operations.

- **Philosophies, Assumptions, Best Practices**

What else influences the organization? The mentor needs to know why and what it should look like if possible.

Please do not create a policy on mentoring. When I was a young fireman, a nationally respected fire chief that I was working for at the time decided we would become a customer friendly organization. This was about the time that Chief Brunacini came out with his book *Essentials of Fire Service Customer Service*. My chief decided we would value customer service so he came out with a memo on Friday directing the organization to be a customer service friendly organization on Monday. Mentoring needs to be sold to the organization and not told to the organization. I view the formal mentoring process as a model of what mentoring should look like and that can be used by mentors to follow or imitate. Please don't put out a directive on Friday after a staff meeting that mandates the organization will start mentoring on Monday... it will never work.

MESSAGE TO THE TRAINING CHIEF FROM THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

As the person overseeing training and professional development you are the quality control officer for our new mentoring process. As our chief of training, you are one of the most influential members of this organization. Because you determine our training needs, you have the opportunity to exercise your operational and leadership philosophy, and in doing so, influence each member of this organization.

In order for our mentoring process to be a success, your full support is essential. I hope you will work with myself and the leadership team as we turn this vision into a reality. Your input on the process and content is crucial, and in the long run will make your job easier and will positively influence generations to come. That will be your legacy.

As mentioned, your contribution will be in the form of developing the mentoring tools that reflect how we do things in the firehouse and on the fireground. The mentoring process builds on the basics. No one is in a better position to breakdown our tasks and tactics into teachable segments. Many refer to this as task books. The goal is to provide mentors with enough information so that they can demonstrate and model the correct way while coaching and mentoring others.

I am committed to making this work. Please let me know if I can provide further direction on my vision.

MESSAGE TO THE COMPANY OFFICER FROM THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT

As a company officer, you have one of the most difficult jobs in the organization. It's recognized that you often have to deal with varying levels of knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes as you work to build a fire company team. It's also recognized that often performance problems are dumped in your lap with the expectation being "fix it"... all while trying to run your firehouse/fire company in a way that meets your personal expectations.

We are implementing a program that will not only better prepare our new hires and newly promoted to step into their new roles, but will also provide additional tools to assist you with developing and maintaining the knowledge and skills of those in your charge.

To be honest, this program will not succeed without your full support. You have very valuable experience and I am asking you to share that experience and to be a positive leadership influence. As fire chief I am all in, but without support in the firehouse, this effort doesn't stand a chance. All that is being asked of you is to practice leadership and do what you can to create a supportive environment and be a positive influence. We will take care of choosing the people and providing the structure and the information necessary to manage this program. You may be as involved as you like. Your experiences and position in this organization have great value and you are encouraged to share that to whatever degree you choose.

MESSAGE TO THE FUTURE MENTORS

The commitment that we make to our current and future members directly impacts their success and survival. The fire service is rapidly changing in many areas. We have two choices. We can maintain what we are doing, hold on until we can retire, hope for the best, and not worry about the next generation. Or we can choose to be proactive, choose what we want to be, identify how to get there, and get to work.

We are exploring mentoring possibilities and looking at developing a formal mentoring process for new hires and our newly promoted that will pair our more experienced members with members who have not yet had the opportunities that you have had. Many of you already informally mentor those who seek you out. In fact, we have seen the power of mentoring through these informal one-on-one learning relationships. I would like to provide that opportunity to everyone. It has become quite obvious during the promotional process, who has, and who has not had mentors as they prepared for advancement.

We will be reaching out to the organization in the near future to see who would like to serve as a mentor. Because these mentors will have such a huge influence on our organization, those interested will need the endorsement of their peers/company officer/battalion chief/training chief. We are in the process of rolling out our mentoring process and the tools that will be made available to mentors.

Mentoring is an important component in determining not only the future success of our members, but our organization. Please take some time and think about if this is something that you can commit to. Attached is some information for your review. Your fire chief, training chief, and company officers realize the value of mentoring and have committed to supporting those who volunteer to fill this important role in our organization. You will have my full support.

Step 4**Develop/Provide Mentoring Tools**

Another reason formal mentoring programs fail is due to the lack of mentoring tools. It is essential that mentors not only have an above average knowledge of the job, and the ability to not only perform tasks, but also evaluate the performance of others who are performing the tasks. Mentors must also understand the organization and have the ability to mentor the candidate on navigating the organization daily, and to also position themselves to increase their contribution and achieve future goals.

Many organizations already have rules, regulations, general orders, policies, procedures (formal influences), and guidelines. These tools assist the mentor with guiding the candidate towards understanding the formal things that influence the organization as a whole, and each member of the organization. Often the formal influences are black and white, and can be grasped through self-paced studies. The mentor can use the formal influences to develop and coach the candidate's comprehension and judgement when applying the formal influences in the firehouse and on the fire ground. Of course, this has value, and is often the central focus of mentoring programs because it already exists, there is little room for interpretation, and therefore everyone is comfortable. But it's the informal stuff, guidelines, routines, best practices, beliefs, assumptions, values, philosophies (informal influences)... the things that are not so black and white which influence every minute of every day in the organization that mentors must also focus on.

Mentoring Tools Checklist

These tools provide insight, goals, and continuity of information which is especially important in the fire service.

- Purpose statement for the organization – why your organization exists
- Mission statement for the organization – the most important things the organization does
- Core values - personal, professional, organizational
- Describe the leadership and operational philosophies that exist in the organization
- Job descriptions
- Policies, procedures, general orders
- Identify core competencies
- Task books
- Core competencies
- Operating guidelines
- Mentoring process
- Monthly Mentoring and Goal Setting forms
- Etc.

Concerns regarding entitlement and maturity or the ability to deal with emotions are two areas of concern with new members and the newly promoted. The following are offered as tools to assist mentors with recognizing and coaching these two subjects.

Mentoring Maturity

Maturity is the state of being mentally and emotionally well developed, and as a result taking responsibility for meeting or exceeding the stated and implied expectations of an employment agreement.

Marks of Firefighter Maturity

- **A mature person is able to keep long-term commitments.** A key indicator of maturity is the ability to delay gratification.
 - Demonstrates a commitment to doing what is right or what is necessary to be successful even when they don't feel like it.
- **A mature person is unshaken by flattery or constructive criticism.** As people mature, they sooner or later understand that nothing is as good or as bad as it seems.
 - The firefighter, paramedic, or officer demonstrates the ability to receive compliments or criticism without letting it ruin their day or sway them into an emotional change. They are secure in their abilities.
- **A mature person possesses a spirit of humility.** Humility parallels maturity. Humility isn't thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less.
 - The firefighter, paramedic, or officer isn't consumed with drawing attention to themselves or their grievances. They see how others have contributed to their success and can sincerely give honor to their crew who ultimately determines success as a team. Humility is the opposite of arrogance.
- **A mature person's decision are based on character and not feelings.** Mature people live by values.
 - The firefighter, paramedic, or officer demonstrate that principles guide their decisions.

- **A mature person expresses gratitude.** The more people mature, the more grateful they are for both big and little things. Immature people are ungrateful, and feel entitled to good things, even if they have not earned or worked for them.
 - The firefighter, paramedic, or officer realizes they are ultimately responsible for their situation, and they focus on opportunities and the good things in their life. They demonstrate respect for the position.
- **A mature person knows how to prioritize others before themselves.** A wise man once said: A mature person is one whose agenda revolves around others, not self. Certainly this can go to an extreme and be unhealthy. A pathway to courageous leadership is getting past your own desires and beginning to live to meet the needs of others who look to them for survival, success, and leadership.
 - The firefighter, paramedic, or officer positions his people for success and survival.
- **A mature person seeks wisdom before acting.** A mature person demonstrates that they are teachable.
 - The firefighter, paramedic, or officer does not presume they have all the answers. The wiser they get the more they realize they need more wisdom (having experience, knowledge, and good judgement).
- **A mature person acts on what is right, not popular.** Senior members, role models, and those in supervisory roles understand just how much their actions and decisions impact others. They understand that no action is often as damaging as the wrong action.
 - The firefighter, paramedic, or officer does not lie, cheat, steal, or take short cuts, nor do they tolerate those who do.

Reference psychologytoday.com

Entitlement Checklist

Entitlement is the belief that one is inherently deserving of privileges or special treatment.

The firefighter, paramedic, or officer:

- Imposes unrealistic demands on those ranks above them. Those whom they can benefit from the most.
- Tends to feel sorry for themselves if things don't work out the way they wanted, and they openly advertise this in a melodramatic, attention-seeking way. They believe they are always the victim.
- Has been called a "bully", "manipulative", "ruthless", "egotistical", "vain", or a "liar".
- Believe they deserve happiness all the time while at work, and they go to great, sometimes extreme lengths to ensure that happens, often at the expense of others.
- Punish people when things don't meet their expectations, or go their way either passively (e.g. silent treatment, gossiping, spreading rumors) or aggressively (e.g. shouting, verbally/physically abusing).
- Believe that in order to "succeed", they take the path of least resistance when it won't be noticed, but they appear to be an overachiever when it will be noticed.
- Constantly see others as competition or "threats".
- Demonstrate many double-standards in the way they behave/interact with other people (e.g. they can be late and fail to fulfill their duties and commitments, but others can't; they abuse or disrespect others, but others can't them.)
- Take more from the team than they give to the team.
- Tend to look out for themselves, their needs and desires more than anyone else, 100% of the time.

- Have a hard time negotiating or compromising.
- React to their emotions instead of trying to understand the big picture.
- Have a deep-seated conviction that they have priority and should always come first, even at the expense of stepping on others.
- Always seem to be offended or upset by what others do or say.
- Think they are better, or more important, than other people and other people should see this and unquestionably respect them.
- Believe they should be given things they have not earned.
- Believe they should do less, but they expect the same as those that do more.

Reference lonerwolf.com

Mentoring Entitlement

1. Bring to their attention

Sometimes just defining entitlement and identifying entitled tendencies is sufficient to cause someone to self-monitor their behaviors and attitudes.

2. Practice perspective taking

Take a recent example of a time the learner got mildly annoyed with someone and spend 3 minutes talking about the situation from the other person's perspective. Create scenarios where they must practice understanding what their agenda is, and what the other person's agenda is.

3. Sensitize the learner to how good it can feel to contribute to other people's success

There is an area of social psychology research called capitalization research that shows that promoting other people's success has a positive effect on the promoter. To make an action step out of it, ask the learner to promote someone else's success other than their own for the next 30 days. Lead a discussion on the experience.

4. Use cognitive reconstruction

Take any one of the entitlement tendencies that you recognize in the firefighter, paramedic, or officer and consider alternative evidence or perspective. For example, define some rules that apply to everyone else, that should also apply to the learner. Discuss some reasons why in the small group or firehouse environment keeping the peace and avoiding upsetting/offending team mates (unless absolutely necessary based on personal values and dignity) is a leadership quality. Ask the learner to list some examples of how people are generally more generous to them than they typically are to others.

5. Provide feedback on what can happen when the firefighter, paramedic, or officer curb their entitlement tendencies

Explain how team relationships run smoother. Ask them if they feel less annoyed or stressed. Point out that people will support them more if they support others. Explain how it builds two-way trust and respect. Helping them understand and believe that curbing entitlement tendencies actually benefits them, is a great way to reinforce making changes.

6. Hold them accountable when they fall into a moral licensing trap

Moral licensing is a cognitive distortion in which people internally justify the things that they do that are wrong. It's a common tendency. Help them to catch themselves doing it. For example, help them develop a mindful awareness of thoughts like "it's okay to take more than I give in _____ situation because _____"

People with entitlement tendencies come in two types – (1) those who are ashamed of their tendencies and feel motivated to change, and (2) those who see no reason to change. If the firefighter, paramedic, or officer fall into the former category, encourage them to not be too hard on themselves, and don't be too hard on them. Mentor them on putting in a consistent effort to manage their tendencies, but don't load them up on criticism. If the entitlement tendencies are significant, and if the learner has no desire to address the issue, organizational decisions will be necessary to deal with the disruptive behavior.

Reference psychologytoday.com

Step 5

Choose Mentors

There are three basic ways to choose mentors

- Clearly state the qualifications and required commitment, and ask for volunteers
- The organization can choose mentors
- Mentors can be chosen at the battalion or company level

The organization must be very careful when choosing mentors. Focus on quality over quantity. **THE ROLE OF MENTOR SHOULD NOT BE FORCED ON ANY ONE, BE SOMEONE'S "TURN", NOR THE PRIVILEGE GRANTED TO SOMEONE WHO MAY VOLUNTEER, BUT WOULD NOT BE A POSITIVE INFLUENCE.** In other words, leaders need to display a little leadership courage when choosing members, and not choose the path of least resistance.

Below are some qualities of successful mentors:

- Experience with the organization
- The ability to turn events into experiences
- The ability to sustain a positive attitude
- Demonstrates a commitment to the vision and success standards of the organization
- Be an advocate for the process
- Someone who cares about the success of others
- Is able to explain tasks at the technique level
- Takes pride in being part of the solution; demonstrates the ability to solve problems
- Is not determined by seniority, popularity, or by whose turn it is
- Is emotionally mature
- Has their ego in check
- Has no sense of entitlement
- Can offer something more than book smarts

Mentor Checklist

- Character
 - Personal values align with the organization's core values
 - Strong work ethic
 - Positive and optimistic
 - Committed to duty
 - Demonstrates respect
 - Has integrity
 - Does not take shortcuts
 -

- Desire
 - To teach others
 - To invest in the future of the organization
 - To make a difference
- Ability
 - Knowledge base is current
 - To demonstrate above average performance, especially while performing critical tasks
 - To communicate effectively
 - Correctly demonstrate skills at the technique level
 - To recognize wrong
 - To demonstrate the courage to act and do the right thing, and not the popular thing
 - Is above average
- Attitude
 - Demonstrates a proactive approach towards meeting expectations
 - Supports the chosen culture of the organization
 - Supports the operational and leadership philosophy
 - Sends concerns up the chain of command, and not down
 - Views change as growth
 - Can resist getting caught up in negative or destructive communications
- Passion
 - Demonstrated for the fire service and the work that firefighters and paramedics do
 - For The Colony Way
 - For helping others succeed
 - For learning

At a minimum, mentors must have a working knowledge of:

- The mentoring process and targeted outcomes of the process
- The purpose and mission of the organization
- Visions of success – fire service success, training success, operational success, and so on
- Key elements and meanings of the organization’s leadership and operational philosophy
- Behavior and performance standards
- Core competencies (Organization, fire company, assignment, tasks, techniques)
- Guidelines
- Best practices
- Something similar to the Six Rs of Learning and Experience for the purpose of PSRST (Progressive, Sequential, Repetitive, Skills, Training)
- Applicable unwritten rules and daily rituals

Step 6

Implement the Process

Once the process has been developed, support secured, mentoring tools developed and reviewed, and mentors chosen and trained, it’s time to pair mentors with learners.

Mentoring should be seen as an honor for both mentor and mentee. It should be a partnership, stretching the mentor in his or her role and area of expertise while developing the professional skills of the trainee.

When pairing up a mentor with the learner, consider maturity, personalities and learning styles. At the beginning of the mentorship relationship, the mentor and learner should openly discuss personal goals, past experiences, and how they learn best. If there appears to be relationship or learning barriers, there may need to be a compromise or reassignment. Don't allow the mentor/learner relationship to become uncomfortable or damaging.

Both must set common goals and realistic expectations of the other. Mentor and learner should feel comfortable to speak up during their time together to avoid misunderstandings, hurt feelings, and resentment. Both should take notes throughout the process.

Initially, most mentor relationships start out strong. With time however, it may begin to weaken. The mentoring relationship should remain consistent, with the mentor and learner making time and following through, until the performance goal is met.

Finally, it's important to find out how much leave time the mentor and learner will be taking off during the early stages of the formal mentoring process.

Step 7**Measure Effectiveness and Quality Control**

- Effectiveness of the process based on measurable observable outcomes
- Ongoing support for the formal process at each level of the organization
- The quality of information being presented/reinforced
- Mentoring and coaching skills
- Mentoring and learner pairing
- Retention
- The level of commitment and investment of mentor and learner
- Process updates

Sample Firefighter Mentoring and Goal Setting form

Monthly Mentoring & Goal Setting

*** FIREFIGHTER ***

Candidate's Name:						Rank:					
Date of Appointment:				Date of Meeting:				Session #:			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

Goals for next session

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Comments

Candidate's Comments	Mentor's Comments
Concerns:	Strengths:
	Area of Focus:

Review Sign-off

Candidate		Date	
Mentor		Date	
Company Officer		Date	
Shift Commander		Date	
Operations Chief		Date	
Fire Chief		Date	

The mentoring process should be viewed as an investment in our future and a critical element on our road to excellence. We owe it to our new members and newly promoted to “pass on” experiences and knowledge. These standards are a minimum. You are encouraged to expand on any or all areas that you feel passionate about in an effort to assure those assigned to you achieve their personal and professional goals, and meet your expectations.

The sole purpose of this process is to start our newly hired/newly promoted off on the right foot and to have a process that prevents the candidate from drifting towards failure. The contents of this form define the “basics” necessary for success as a productive member of The Colony Fire Department, and should serve as a tool for mentoring our candidates.

DIRECTIONS

- Review the form prior to meeting with the candidate to familiarize yourself with the form and to help communicate your expectations. Add any additional expectations on the back page.
- Provide candidate with a blank Monthly Mentoring Evaluation at the time you discuss expectations and set a date for your first 30-day meeting.
- Choose training and methodology for evaluating skills and knowledge.
- Meet with candidate and discuss personal goals, interests, job performance, skills, knowledge, attitude and interpersonal skills.
- Review each item on the evaluation form. For each item determine if the candidate first meets your expectation, then the listed standard, or if more time and/or additional training is needed.
- Complete the entire form.
- At the conclusion of the evaluation period, give the candidate the opportunity to list comments.
- As the Mentor/Officer list five goals for the next evaluation period. This section is a critical part of the process and really needs to be completed. The candidate should assist with developing goals.
- List at least one strength and one area that the candidate should focus on for each evaluation period. • Sign the evaluation and forward to the Shift Commander.

Knowledge/Skills/Work Habits

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
Demonstrates an understanding of established department rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and accepted operational practices. (Ref. task books, engine/truck company competencies)			
Demonstrates an understanding of established city rules, regulations, policies and procedures.			
Correctly applies rules, regulations, policies, procedures and accepted practices.			
Consistently demonstrates familiarization with the use and maintenance of apparatus, tools and equipment. (Ref. task books, engine/truck company competencies)			
Consistently demonstrates familiarization with maps, streets, buildings, fire protection systems and hydrants located within the city.			
Demonstrates an understanding of pump operations, hydraulics and water supply.			
Demonstrates the ability to effectively work within The Colony Fire Department’s incident management system.			
Uses time effectively to complete tasks, projects and for personal development.			

Is thorough and pays attention to detail. (Ref. reports)			
Demonstrates a commitment to the Excellence Vision and Professional Standards of The Colony Fire Department.			
Completes reports thoroughly, accurately and on time. (Ref. reports)			
Demonstrates the ability to apply protocols and deliver effective patient care.			
Possess the necessary skills and knowledge to independently function at current organizational level.			

Attitude

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
Accepts suggestions, comments and constructive criticism. Adjust actions and behaviors accordingly.			
Volunteers/Accepts special assignments.			
Does not participate in, and discourages discussions and actions that are disrespectful of others.			
Respects the chain of command.			
Displays pride and takes ownership.			
Is operationally smart, manages risks inside and outside of the firehouse.			
Helps others to succeed.			
Uses scheduled and unscheduled leave in accordance with policy. Sick days used in the last 12 months_____. Total days off this evaluation period_____.			

Personal & Leadership Traits

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
Dependability Can be relied upon to perform duties properly. Can be trusted to complete a job. The willing and voluntary support of the policies and orders of the chain of command. Consistently putting forth best effort in an attempt to achieve the highest standards of performance.			
Suggestions for Improvement: You can increase your dependability by forming the habit of being where you're supposed to be on time, by not making excuses and by carrying out every task to the best of your ability regardless of whether you like it or agree with it.			
Professionalism Creates a favorable impression in appearance and personal conduct at all times. Demonstrates the attributes of a Level III Professional (Ref. <i>Going Pro</i>)			
Suggestions for Improvement: To develop professionalism, you should hold yourself to the highest standards of personal conduct. Look sharp, act sharp, and never be content with doing the minimum.			
Courage Remains calm while recognizing fear. Moral courage means having the inner strength to stand up for what is right and to accept blame when something is your fault. Physical courage means that you can continue to function effectively when there is physical danger present.			
Suggestions for Improvement: You can begin to control fear by practicing self-discipline and calmness. If you fear doing certain things required in your daily life, force yourself to do them until you can control your reaction.			
Decisiveness			

<p>Able to make good decisions without unnecessary delay. Getting all the facts and weighing them against each other. Acting calmly and quickly, arrives at a sound decision. Announces decisions in a clear, firm, professional manner.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: Practice being positive in your actions instead of acting half-heartedly or changing your mind on an issue before thinking about the pros and cons.</p>			
<p>Endurance Possess the mental and physical condition measured by the ability to manage fatigue, stress and hardship.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: Develop your endurance by engaging in mental and physical training that will strengthen your mind and body.</p>			
<p>Enthusiasm Displays a sincere interest and passion in the performance of duty.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: Understanding and belief in the role and responsibilities of the Member/Officer/Leader will add to your enthusiasm for your job. Try to understand the importance of every job and every task, and its relevance to the team.</p>			
<p>Initiative Takes action in the absence of orders or directives.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: To improve initiative, work on staying mentally and physically alert. Be aware of things that need to be done and then do them without having to be told.</p>			
<p>Integrity Honesty and trustworthiness. Dependable in all situations and settings. Does not tolerate the acts of others that lack integrity.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: Be absolutely honest and truthful at all times. Stand up for what you believe to be right.</p>			
<p>Judgment Ability to weigh facts and possible solutions on which to base sound decisions. (Common sense)</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: You can improve your judgment if you avoid making rash decisions. Approach problems with a common sense attitude. Separate the facts from the emotion.</p>			
<p>Justice Offers feedback according to the merits of the situation at hand. Administers praise and discipline impartially and consistently. (Fairness)</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: Increase your knowledge by remaining alert. Listen, observe, and find out about things you don't understand. Study trade journals and other fire service related literature.</p>			
<p>Tact Interacts with others without creating offense</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: Begin to develop your tact by trying to be courteous and respectful at all times. Treat others as you would like to be treated. Don't bring friction into the firehouse.</p>			
<p>Unselfishness Avoids providing for one's own comfort and personal advancement at the expense of others.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: Avoid using your position or rank for personal gain, safety, or pleasure at the expense of others. Be considerate of others.</p>			
<p>Loyalty Faithfulness to duty, the mission, the fire service, The Colony fire department, the brother/sisterhood, the city, officers, and co-workers.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: To improve your loyalty you should show your loyalty by never discussing the problems of the fire department or your firehouse with outsiders. Never talk about others unfavorably in front of your subordinates. Once a decision is made and the order is given to execute it, carry out that order willingly as if it were your own.</p>			
<p>Compassion Expresses sympathy, concern and kindness.</p>			
<p>Suggestions for Improvement: To improve your compassion put yourself in the other person's position. Always remember that the person you are dealing with is someone's mother, father, son, or daughter.</p>			

Preparedness Commits to being mentally, physically, mechanically, and procedurally prepared while on-duty.			
Suggestions for Improvement: To improve preparedness try and visualize success. Communicate what success looks like to others. Don't take preparedness shortcuts. Ask questions.			
Respect For country, fire service, city, the mission, department, officers, co-workers and probationary members.			
Suggestions for Improvement: To improve your respect think about what you represent. Always remember that if you want to be respected you must be respectful.			

Note: Many of the traits and descriptions were borrowed from the United States Marine Corps.

Sample Only – Take the time to make yours specific to your department

FIRE APPARATUS COMPETENCIES

*** TRUCK COMPANY ***

Candidate's Name:							Rank:					
Date of Appointment:					Date of Meeting:				Session #:			
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	

Goals for next session

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Comments

Candidate's Comments	Mentor's Comments
Concerns:	Strengths: Area of Focus:

Review Sign-off

Candidate		Date	
Mentor		Date	
Company Officer		Date	
Shift Commander		Date	
Operations Chief		Date	
Fire Chief		Date	

Search

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
Discuss and display the ability to perform: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oriented Search Techniques • Tool Selection & Usage • TIC Assisted Search • Searching Ahead of Hose line • VES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Radio Communications o Tool Selection • Hostile Searches • Large Area Searches • Proper Door/Window Control 			
Search Initiation Decisions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time of Day • Seat of Fire vs. High Percentage Victim Locations • Conditions 			
Occupancy Types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction • Single Family Residential <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Class 1 o Class 2 • Multi-Family/Hotel • Commercial <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Big Box o Mega Box o Strip Centers • Mid and high rise 			
Victim Removal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimal Removal Tactics • Difficult Patient Removal Tactics • Ground & Aerial Ladder Removal • Victim Location/Removal Communications 			

Rapid Intervention

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
T.C.F.D. Operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RIT/Recon Operations • Officer Responsibilities • Tool Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Occupancy/Construction Types o Cache Sites • Ladder Selection & Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Throw Types o Vent for Rescue vs Egress • Locations of Working Companies 			
Downed Firefighter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RIT Bag Contents • RIT Bag Connections • Mask Replacements • Firefighter Removal Techniques <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Standard Drags 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Tool-Assisted Drags o Denver Drill o Nance/Columbus Drill 			
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Ventilation

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
Ventilation Size-Ups & Decisions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vertical • Horizontal • Natural • Pressurized 			
Tool Maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start/Stop Chainsaw & K-Saw Operations • Cold Starts • Flooded Saw Starts • Blade & Chain Replacements • Refueling & Bar Oil Additions • After-use Maintenance & Cleaning 			
Roof Size-Up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roof Pitches & Roof Ladder Considerations • Reading Smoke • Wind Condition • Roof Feature Size-Up – Interior Layout • Ladder Selection & Placement • Travelling the Roof • Sounding Roof/Ventilation Location Determination 			
Ventilation Cut Types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspection Cuts • 4X4 • Louver • Drop • Dice • Diamond • Pepper • Aerial Cuts • Gable Cuts • 7-9-8 (Coffin) Cuts • 8x8 • Trench • Heat Holes 			

Forcible Entry

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
Residential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool Selection • Outward Swinging Doors • Inward Swinging Doors • 1 Firefighter Force • 2 Firefighter Force • Power Saw Cuts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Garage Doors o Burglar Bars 			
Commercial:			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool Selection • Outward Swinging Doors • Inward Swinging Doors • 1 Firefighter Force • 2 Firefighter Force • Through-the-Lock • Rabbit Tool • Forcing Hinges • Padlocks • Power Saw Cuts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Overhead Doors o Security Gates & Fences o High-Security Doors 			
<p>Elevator Doors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tool Selection • Car Location Size-Up & Considerations • Elevator Types • Key Identification • Power Cut-Off Considerations • Forcing the Door 			

Extrication

Standard	Meets Standard	Additional Time Needed	Additional Training Needed
<p>Tool Operation & Maintenance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Power Plant • Hoses • Pig Tail Adapters • Spreaders • Cutters • Rams, Extensions, & Block • Airbags • Glas-Master • Reciprocating Saws • Hand Tools 			
<p>Vehicle Stabilization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Struts & Jacks o Cribbing, Chalks, & Wedges o Airbags • Stabilize Automobile - Upright • Stabilize Automobile Overturned - Side • Stabilize Automobile Overturned – Roof 			
<p>Vehicle Extrication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Company Type Responsibilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Engine/Quint o Ambulance o Truck • Glass Removal • Vehicle De-Energization • Airbag Identification/Panel Exposing • Purchase Points • Door Removal • Roof Removal • Third Door Conversion 			

most invasive corrective action short of time-off or separation. (Ref. *What You Accept is What You Teach* listed on the Mentoring Suggested Reading List, when dealing with firehouse behavior challenges)

Ask yourself, what are other members of the crew modeling, and what type of leadership influence does the officer and senior men/women have on the company?

Resistance – This form of friction typically comes from more senior members. The fire company or organization typically has run off and left these members, and as a result, they resist any type of change, or effort to improve. Often these are good, well respected members who have just lost the passion, motivation, and confidence to “keep up”.

We have a saying in TCFD, we will respect the longevity of our senior members with the same level of compassion as we do the passion of our younger members. This is an example of a success is imminent message, and it lets the senior, slower, beat-up members, know their situation matters.

The primary action for dealing with resistance is to involve the members in the change process. Members causing this type of friction often have valuable experience and institutional knowledge. Often, they just want to be heard, and their opinions taken seriously. This is a great opportunity to practice leadership. Involve the members a little at a time, coach them with respect, and be patient.

The Employee – This is the true definition of a Level I Professional. These are often pretty smart people, often running successful part-time businesses. They are most commonly found in firehouses that lack strong leadership, with minimal expectations and accountability.

If you think about it, when we bring a new member into the organization, or promote a member, we sit down with them and go over expectations. Many have the job description and these expectations to develop their personal vision of success. In reality, we can't expect all members to exceed what is listed in the job description or expectations. The culture will really play a role in determining if people exceed, or just meet the basics in any event, we can't penalize a person for doing exactly what they were told to do. This is why job descriptions and expectations need to really reflect what it takes to succeed.

Another problem exists when an average member is placed in a high-performance firehouse. Again, one of two things will happen. The crew will work with the member to bring the member up to company standard, or they will write them off and label them as something less than worthy.

The action step for dealing with minimum contribution friction is strong leadership. Leadership is influence, and positive influence is motivating. Take time to learn these members on a more personal level, personal values, personal goals, etc. As each level of friction listed in groups 1-4, don't be afraid to ask what it will take to get them to minimize the friction they bring into the firehouse, and increase their contribution to the company by say 50%. Make the connection between the friction they cause, the contribution they make, and the overall success the team. Don't allow finger pointing or excuses.

Undecided – Those in this group are our highest priority. These members will adapt to the environment that they are put in. If they are assigned to a weak house, they will be underperformers, and eventually become friction when they are assigned to other firehouses. If they are placed with a strong officer and senior man or woman, the sky is the limit. If a good hire is placed in a toxic or weak firehouse, and at the end of their probation they are placed in the friction, resistance, or employee category, everyone above that member shares in the outcome. What you condone, you own. There is no denying that a senior

man/woman, company officer, and shift commander allowed the member to self-destruct. Personally, I don't care what the reason is, we hired a good hand and allowed them to drift towards failure. Now we have to deal with it. All these members need is someone to explain what is expected, show them how, and hold them accountable until good habits form.

Groups 5-9 just need to be involved, challenged, and supported.

Those that "get it" as we like to say, need to be trained up using a combination of purposeful and deliberate practice techniques.

Effective Supervisors need to be inspired to become positive influence leaders. Not all officers are strong leaders at first, and that's ok. However, ALL officers MUST be effective supervisors and strong tactical leaders, that's their job.

It is my opinion based on training hundreds, if not thousands of fire officers or future officers, that being a committed follower has to be a part of the professional development process. This is most important when they are the learner in the mentoring relationship in the early stages of the mentoring process. You can't be a positive influence leader without being a committed follower at some point in your preparation to become a formal or informal leader.

Leadership company contribution is broken into two groups. The first, courageous leaders, have the courage to move the company to be better. They have demonstrated that making the company better is more important than being liked. Courageous leaders also have demonstrated that they have the courage to have the tough, uncomfortable conversation when there is friction in their firehouse, or when someone is not pulling their weight. This also applies to the senior man or woman in the company. These leaders need to be coached and provided with immediate feedback on their journey to becoming a functional leader.

A loose definition of functional means it operates as it is supposed to. Leadership is about making people better, while providing an environment that supports success, and that do not discourage it. I view leadership as influence. If an officer is being a positive influence, however you define that, all they require is the opportunity to build on their knowledge and experience, direction and feedback...basically. Functional leaders have figured it out. They have developed themselves while investing in others. The difference between a courageous leader and a functional leader, is that functional leaders invest in others in an effort to get them to become courageous leaders. All that functional leaders need is support, and the opportunity to learn and to be a positive influence.

The goal is for all officers and acting officers to become competent, experienced, well-trained tactical leaders...this should be a given.

Using the above exercise, I have personally witnessed members who were not highly respected transform into highly respected leaders. All they had to do it make the choice and commit, the organization provided the map to follow.

If not this... what?

Mentoring Suggested Reading List

- Tipping Point – Gladwell
- MCDP 7 Learning – USMC
- PEAK – Ericsson and Pool
- Going Pro – Kerns
- Mindset – Dweck
- The Science of Accelerated Learning – Hollins
- The Functional Fire Company – Thompson
- Developing Firefighter Resiliency – Carpenter, Gillespie, Jorge
- The Power of Habit – Duhigg
- Leadership and Motivation – Tracy
- Emotional Intelligence Authentic Leadership – HBR
- The Art of Advice – Salacuse
- The Leader’s Guide to Storytelling – Denning
- Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture – Cameron and Quinn
- The Laws of Human Nature – Greene
- The Manager’s Role as Coach – National Press Publications
- What You Accept is What You Teach – Cohen
- Performance Management – HBR
- The Three Laws of Performance – Zaffron and Logan
- Coaching for Performance – Whitmore
- Range – Epstein
- Mental Models – Hollins
- Tribal Leadership – Logan, King, Fischer-Wright
- Small Acts of Leadership – Hunter
- The Science of Rapid Skill Development – Hollins
- Tribe- Junger
- The Talent Code - Coyle
- Mentoring 101 – Maxwell
- Man’s Search for Meaning – Frankl
- Smarter, Faster, Better - Duhigg