

TOP TEN LEADERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

CHIEF CHRIS BARRON

2025 SAFE-D CONFERENCE

Chief
Chris
Barron



- 34 years in the fire service--chief for 24 years, served as both Volunteer and Career
- 15 years as Executive Director for State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas
- International Association of Fire Chiefs- Chief of the Year 2014
- IAFC John Buckman Leadership Award
- IAFC-VCOS Recruitment and Retention Award
- Numerous fire service certifications and AAS, BBA and MBA degrees
- National Fire Protection Association 1720 Committee Member
- CEO, Emergency Services Solutions, LLC

WHY THIS PRESENTATION?

- HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF DUE TO:
 - BAD CHOICES
 - LACK ETHICAL VALUES
 - NO GUIDANCE
 - NOT HAVING THE BASIC TRAINING
 - NOT CARING
 - NO EXPERIENCE
 - DOING STUPID THINGS
 - THE CON-ARTISTS

Former Magnolia fire chief convicted on charges of public corruption



Jose R. Gonzalez, Staff writer

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10. MAXIMIZE RESOURCES

DON'T HAVE THE PERSONNEL/EQUIPMENT?

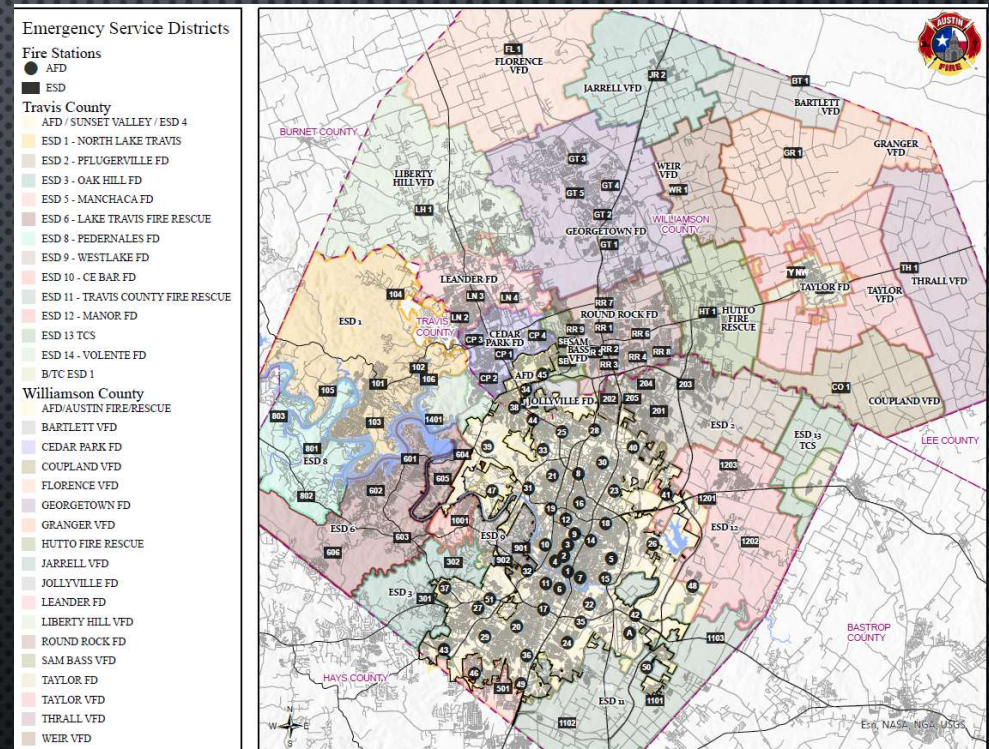
- TASK SPECIFIC PERSONNEL
- OWNERSHIP TO STAFF

AUTOMATIC AID

- DON'T BE AFRAID
- WORK WITH YOUR NEIGHBORING AGENCIES
- COMMUNICATIONS, EQUIPMENT, APPARATUS, TERMINOLOGY

SHARING RESOURCES

- FLEET
- GROUP PURCHASING
- COMBINED DISPATCH CENTER



10. MAXIMIZE RESOURCES

- REGIONAL GRANT OPPORTUNITIES
 - POOL YOUR RESOURCES/DATA
 - ASK FOR WHAT YOU ARE LACKING (SHARING OF SCBA COMPRESSORS, EXTRACTORS, MOBILE HEALTH)
 - BENEFITS FOR EVERYONE
 - RESULTS DRIVEN
- TAKE THE LEAD!
 - BE THE CHANGE AGENT

9. CHANGE, FOR THE BETTER

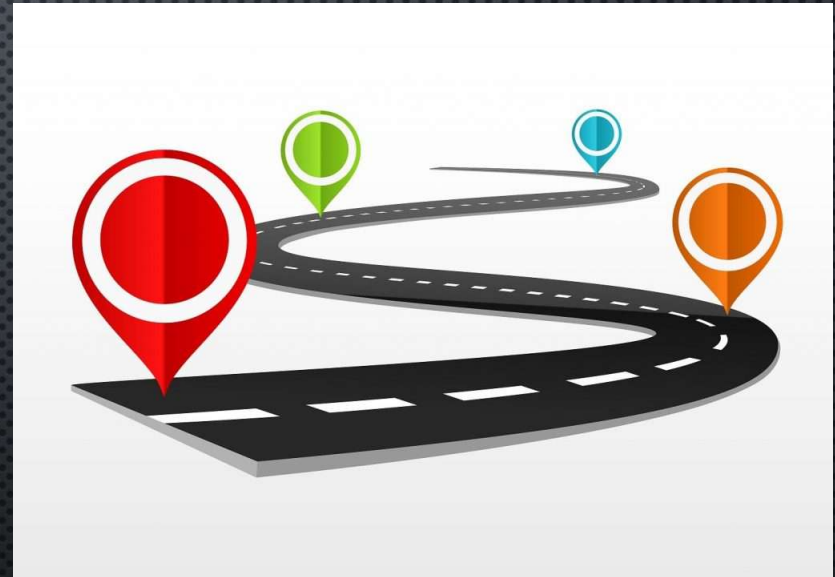
- NEW TECHNOLOGY/NEW WAYS
 - WIRELESS SERVICES, RMS/EHR REPORTING
 - REDUNDANT SYSTEMS
 - GROSS DECON, FACE WIPES, SAUNA IN STATION
 - CHANGE IN STAFFING SCHEDULE
- NEW/UPDATED SOGS
 - SOCIAL MEDIA
 - HEALTH/SAFETY/WELLNESS
 - AUXILIARY/SUPPORT SERVICES
 - SOGS FOLLOWING YOUR PRACTICES OR VICE-VERSA

9. CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

- UPDATED WAYS OF DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY
 - BE RECEPTIVE TO CHANGE
 - TRIAL BASIS
 - ADOPTION/FULL IMPLEMENTATION
- SACRIFICES
 - GIVING UP SOMETHING TO GAIN SOMETHING
 - SWALLOWING YOUR PRIDE

8. LEARN/TRAIN

- DON'T STOP LEARNING!
>TRAINING <RISK <INJURIES
- DO YOU HAVE YOUR OWN ROAD MAP?
- WHAT SKILLS/EDUCATION NEEDS DO YOU HAVE?
- TRAIN YOUR OFFICERS
- TRAIN YOUR REPLACEMENT



7. COMMUNICATE

- PROFESSIONAL - CLEAR, CONCISE, CONSISTENT
 - MEETINGS
 - EMAILS
 - TEXTS
 - MORE COMMUNICATION THE BETTER – DON'T EVER LET SOMEONE SAY "I DIDN'T KNOW"
 - SOCIAL MEDIA - - BE CAREFUL!
 - BE CAREFUL WITH "OPEN DOOR POLICY" RATHER... "I HAVE A CHAIN OF COMMAND POLICY"



6. MOTIVATE!

- ENCOURAGEMENT/COUNSEL
- INCENTIVES TO:
 - STAY INVOLVED
 - CONTINUE EDUCATION – STIPENDS/BREAKS/INCENTIVE PAY
 - STAYING HEALTHY – WEIGHT LOSS CONTESTS, PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS
 - ADVANCED CERTIFICATIONS
 - BRING ON NEW MEMBERS

6. MOTIVATE!

- BENEFITS OF BEING A MEMBER
 - EDUCATION
 - CERTIFICATION
 - FIREFIGHTER DISCOUNT PROGRAMS
 - ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS – STATE/NATIONAL ASSN. MEMBERSHIPS, AD&D, LODD
- CAREER LADDER

#5 GET RID OF THE BAD APPLES!

- STOP THE CANCER BEFORE IT SPREADS
- DON'T LET ONE RUIN THE BUNCH
- DON'T BE AFRAID TO FIRE THE VOLUNTEER



#5 GET RID OF THE BAD APPLES!

- DO YOU HAVE THE MECHANISMS IN PLACE?
 - PERSONNEL HANDBOOK — IS IT CURRENT?
 - CODE OF CONDUCT
 - DEFINE/ENFORCE “ACTIVE MEMBER” STATUS
 - DISCIPLINARY FORMS/NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Travis County Emergency Services
District
No. 5



Manchaca Fire/Rescue

Personnel Handbook

December 2024

#4 BUDGET – PEOPLE/THINGS

- BENEFITS
 - BENEFITS/INCENTIVES FOR YOUR PERSONNEL! IT PAYS OFF!
 - ANNUAL PHYSICALS, NUTRITIONIST, CANCER SCREENING, RETURN TO WORK PLANS
- APPARATUS
 - APPARATUS DON'T COME CHEAP, NEITHER DOES THE EQUIPMENT ON IT
 - ARE YOU ALSO REPLACING THE EQUIPMENT ON IT OR JUST THE APPARATUS?
- PAY
 - INCENTIVES/STIPENDS FOR VOLUNTEERS
 - PAY COMPARABLE TO SURROUNDING DEPARTMENTS

#4 BUDGET – PEOPLE/THINGS

- STATIONS

- PHYSICAL STATION BUDGET (LAND, BUILDING)
- EQUIPMENT, FURNISHINGS
- GYM – WORKOUT EQUIPMENT, SAUNA, POSITION SPECIFIC EXERCISE EQUIPMENT
- WASHER/DRYER, EXTRACTOR – – ANNUAL SERVICE
- ROOM FOR GROWTH
- CONSOLIDATION OF SERVICES/JOINT USE FACILITIES?

#3 THINK/PLAN AHEAD

- WHERE IS YOUR DEPARTMENT/COMMUNITY GOING?
 - NEW DEVELOPMENTS
 - MAJOR (IMPACTING FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES IE, NEED FOR A LADDER TRUCK?)
 - COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION
 - NEW TECHNOLOGY
 - MULTI-YEAR BUDGET PLANNING FOR REPLACEMENTS
- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE
- BUDGETING AHEAD! – REPLACEMENT PLANS

#2 DOCUMENT



- OK, LET'S FACE IT, COMING UP THROUGH THE RANKS, WE DIDN'T LIKE PAPERWORK
- DOES OUR PERSONNEL HAVE THE SKILL SET TO PROPERLY COMMUNICATE, WRITE REPORTS AND PROPERLY DOCUMENT ITEMS WHICH MAY SOME DAY BE REQUESTED TO APPEAR IN COURT

Adult siblings were in an argument over the last cup of coffee. One assault by contacted the other. Parties separated. Report taken.



#2 DOCUMENT!

- GETTING ALL SIDES OF THE STORY?
TAKE AMPLE AMOUNT OF NOTES,
TRANSFER TO ELECTRONIC FORMAT
AND PUT IN PERSONNEL FILE
- DO YOU HAVE A RULE FOR HOW
MANY “STRIKES” A PERSON IS GIVEN
BEFORE A FINAL WARNING OR A
PERSON IS TERMINATED?

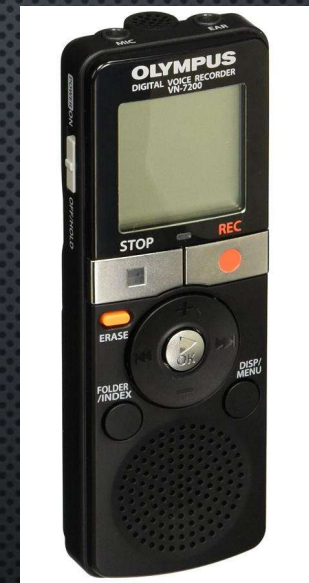
	TRAVIS COUNTY ESD #5 MANCHACA FIRE RESCUE Department Policy / Best Practices	X102
	Authorized by:  Fire Chief Chris Barron	Effective: 03/10/2023
	Discipline	Rescinds:
		Reference:
		Application: All Personnel

I. Purpose

To provide guidance to supervisors for the consistent and fair administration of discipline, as well as the proper documentation of disciplinary action. It is also to provide members with an understanding of Manchaca Fire/Rescue's philosophy and practice of discipline in its goal of maintaining the high professional standards of the organization.

#2 DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT

- RECORD
 - KNOW THE LAW FOR YOUR STATE - RECORD YOUR CONVERSATIONS WHEN DEALING WITH A DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE!
 - TEXAS IS A "ONE-PARTY CONSENT" STATE, MEANING THAT ONLY ONE PERSON IN A CONVERSATION NEEDS TO CONSENT TO THE RECORDING FOR IT TO BE LEGAL. THIS APPLIES TO BOTH IN-PERSON AND PHONE CONVERSATIONS.
 - LET THE INDIVIDUAL KNOW THE CONVERSATION IS BEING RECORDED SO THAT YOU MAKE SURE YOU GET EVERYTHING DOCUMENTED CORRECTLY
 - TRANSCRIBE YOUR NOTES ON THE INTERVIEW ASAP!



#2 DOCUMENT

- INTERVIEW PANELS

- DO YOU HAVE A PANEL OF INTERVIEWERS WHEN BRINGING ON A NEW APPLICANT?
- DO THEY HAVE A SCORING SHEET?
- DO THEY ASK THE SAME QUESTIONS OF EACH CANDIDATE? WHAT THEY CAN NOT ASK?

- PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT TESTS?

- STANDARDIZED/REGIONAL
- ONGOING



Emergency Services District 5 - Manchaca Fire/Rescue Hiring Process Interview – Firefighter

Candidate Name: _____

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

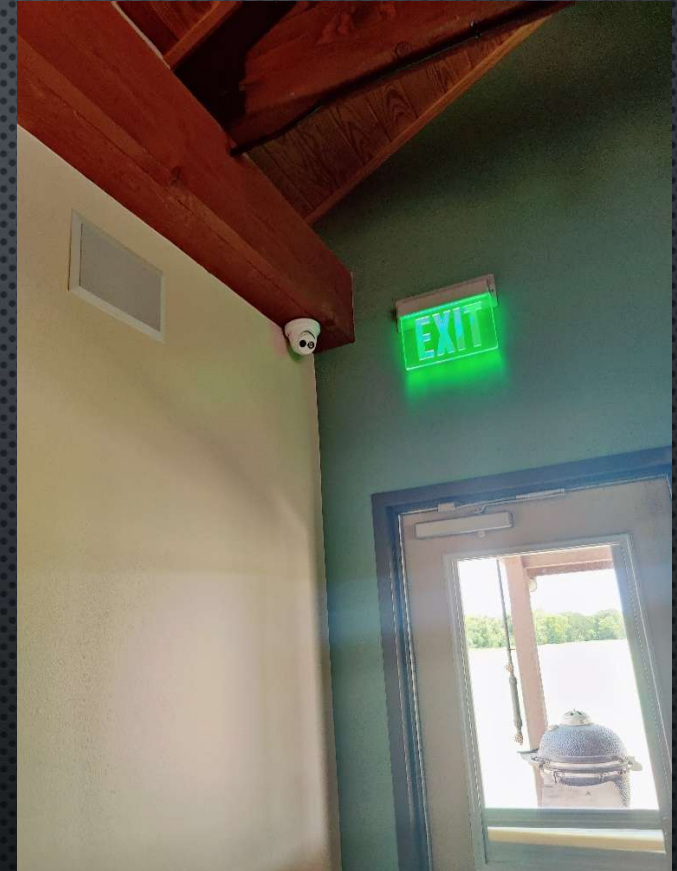
1. Tell us about yourself.

2. Tell us what you know about ESD5 and Manchaca Fire/Rescue.

#2 DOCUMENT

CAMERAS

- HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE THESE FOR YOUR STATION? WAS IT OUT OF NECESSITY?
- FOLLOW PRIVACY RULES
- YOUR STAFF KNOWING THEY ARE IN PLACE!



#2 DOCUMENT – THE UNEXPECTED....



#1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1



- MAKING CUSTOMER SERVICE YOUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY
- BE AN ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVED SERVICES
- BE AN ADVOCATE FOR HEALTH & SAFETY
- WE WANT TO MAKE OUR CUSTOMERS DAY BETTER
- TREAT OTHERS "BETTER" THAN THEY EXPECT

#1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

- INTERNAL
 - BOARD MEMBERS
 - OFFICERS
 - FIREFIGHTERS/EMTs
 - ADMIN STAFF
- EXTERNAL
 - MR. & MRS. SMITH
 - COUNCIL
 - COUNTY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
 - OTHER OFFICIALS

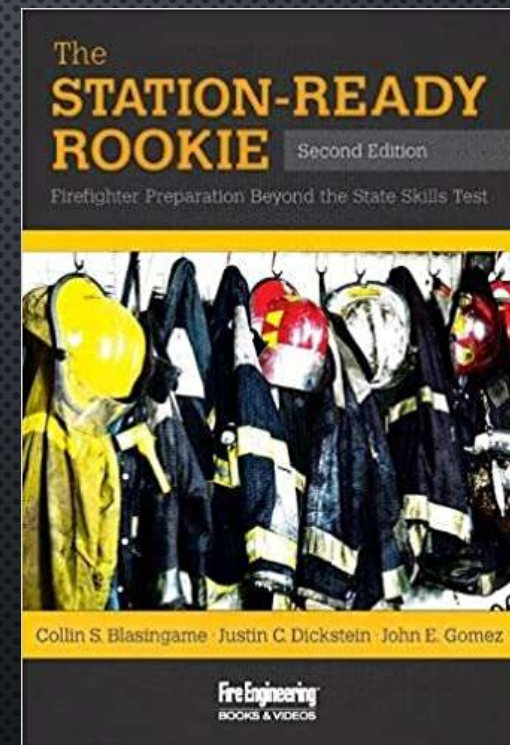


#1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

- ARE WE MAKING/KEEPING OUR CUSTOMERS HAPPY?
 - HUMANS ARE OUR #1 ASSET – DOES YOUR BUDGET SHOW IT?
 - DOES YOUR FD INCENTIVES/BENEFITS FOR BEING A MEMBER (PAID OR VOLUNTEER)
 - ANNUAL NFPA 1582 PHYSICAL/CANCER SCREENING
 - RESPONSIVE INCENTIVES
 - YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

#1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

- ARE YOUR NEW FIREFIGHTERS BEING “TRAINED” ON THE FIRE SERVICE “LIFE” & EXPECTATIONS?
- IS YOUR FIRE STATION “ATMOSPHERE” SAFE?



#1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

- “CLIMATE SURVEYS”
- EXPECTATIONS
- RETAINMENT:
 - EAP
 - TEAM BUILDING
 - BENEFITS



#1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

- EXTERNAL CUSTOMERS...
 - GENERALLY... NO NEWS IS GOOD NEWS...
 - ARE OUR MEMBERS/STAFF TRAINED IN CUSTOMER SERVICE?
 - IS IT A PRIORITY?
 - ARE YOU ASKING CUSTOMER SERVICE OR COMMUNICATION SKILLS QUESTIONS ON INTERVIEWS?
 - DON'T JUST ASSUME!
 - CUSTOMER SATISFACTION SURVEYS
 - RATINGS/REVIEWS/SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS

10 KEY STRATEGIES TO SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

- 10. MAXIMIZE RESOURCES
- 9. CHANGE, FOR THE BETTER
- 8. LEARN/TRAIN
- 7. COMMUNICATE
- 6. MOTIVATE

- 5. GET RID OF BAD APPLES
- 4. BUDGET – PEOPLE/THINGS
- 3. THINK/PLAN AHEAD
- 2. DOCUMENT
- 1. CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

SUMMING IT UP!

- BEING A LEADER IS A TOUGH JOB
- A US ARMY GENERAL ONCE SAID THAT IT IS LIKE BEING THE FLAG AT THE TOP OF A FLAG POLE!
- PEOPLE LOOK UP TO YOU AND SEE YOU
- TARGET
- OFTEN, IT'S LONELY AT THE TOP



ONE LAST, BUT PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT, TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF!

- BEING A LEADER CAN TAKE A TOLL ON YOURSELF
- TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF (PERSONAL DAYS OFF, VACATIONS, LEARNING)
- DON'T BECOME A VICTIM OF THE STRESS
- DON'T LET THE JOB WEAR YOU DOWN OR OUT
- TALK WITH OTHERS IN THE INDUSTRY
 - FIND A MENTOR OR SOMEONE RETIRED FROM THE SERVICE





QUESTIONS??

THANK YOU!

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