



Chief's Corner

Learning to Speak the Language

Hello everyone and welcome to the Valentines' edition of the Chief's Corner. I hope you are well and remaining "flu free" through this cold weather. I know some employees have not been that lucky and the accompanying cough seems to really hang on. Oh well, take heart. Spring is just around the corner and the warmer weather, along with getting outside, should make us all feel better.

This month I want to discuss how someone can learn to speak a different sort of language; it's called "The Language of the Responsible," and it can make a great deal of difference in how you approach your professional and personal life. You don't have to learn any new words or diagram a sentence, so it should be pretty easy, but it does take some work. Let's get started.

There are two different types of languages that people can speak with regard to responsibility. There is the "language of the responsible," where an individual takes ownership of their actions and knows that when they commit to something they need to get it done. Then there is the "language of the victim," where an individual looks for someone or something else to blame. When a person speaks in the language of the victim, failures are always blamed on another. Let's take a paragraph or two to discuss each of these "languages" in greater detail.

When you speak in the language of the responsible, you are saying, I take personal responsibility for my actions and the consequences that may ensue. An example of this could be the age-old excuse, "the dog ate my homework." If you actually did your homework and the dog chewed it up then you should say; I did my homework but I left it in the wrong place and the dog got it. It's my fault, not the dog's. However, I had saved the work on my computer and printed another copy. If you did not actually complete the assignment then you should say; I'm sorry, I did not plan my time accordingly and failed to complete my assignment. I will get it done as soon as I can and will do a better job of planning in the future. (This is much better than trying to lay the blame elsewhere.)

One of the modern versions of "the dog ate my homework" tends to be; I could not finish my assignment because my computer "crashed." If you speak the language of the responsible, you know that computers do in fact crash and plan for this possibility. You backup your work somewhere other than the actual computer you are using and allow sufficient time to complete your work on another device. This is taking personal responsibility for your actions. As a supervisor, it's very refreshing to hear an employee say; it's my fault. I take responsibility for this and I will do better in the future. An individual who does this will be a better employee and will grow from his/her mistakes.

When an employee speaks the language of the victim, they will always find a reason to blame failure on someone or something else. (We can all think of people who are fluent in this language.) People speaking the language of the victim rarely learn from their mistakes because they won't take responsibility and correct the problem. They think to themselves, this problem couldn't be my fault. As a result of this type of thinking, these "victims" are rarely happy because they believe that the "whole world" is out to get them and make their life miserable. When you speak the language of the victim, you believe your fate is in the hands of others and do not take control of your future. This is a poor way to go through life, believing others have control of your destiny. People who speak the language of the victim tend to have others around that also speak that language. These "friends" are enablers and reinforce the idea that someone else is to blame. They generally have a poor outlook on life that can drain the positive energy from you if you allow that to happen. A word of advice...Don't hang around people who constantly speak the language of the victim and you will feel much better.

In summary: learn and practice the language of the responsible. It's empowering and puts you "in charge" of your future. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you. Take personal responsibility for your career and your mistakes. Don't look for another to blame when something goes wrong. Fix it and move on. When you are looking for someone to blame, you are wasting time that could be spent on correcting the problem. Remember this; you don't get what you deserve, you get what you earn!

Well, that's all for this month. Before I close I would like to thank Battalion Chief Heather Childress for the information she provided on this subject. We were discussing this topic one day and she related that her graduate class had a similar conversation about responsibility and her professor had given them some reference information. She was kind enough to provide me with a copy and I used some of the information in this article. I hope you found it helpful and can put some of it to use.

Until next month, keep up the great work and stay safe. But, never forget the most important rule: "Everyone goes home safe at the end of the shift."

Chief

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LFD Years of Service

Congratulations to the following department members who celebrate service anniversaries with the Fire Department in February.

27 Years

Maurice Braxton
Ronnie Coleman

26 Years

Russell Ayscue

24 Years

Tim Staton

17 Years

Tyson Crawley

7 Years

Megan Signor

2 Years

Beau Arnn
Tucker Driskill
Jason Marston
Sam Young
Heather Bowen

Congratulations

Congratulations to Battalion Chief Keith Johnson who retires effective March 1, 2015, with 27 years, 3 months of service.

Thank you for your service to the department and the community. Best wishes!

Certifications

Criminal Justice Academy Sovereign Citizen Update

Thomas Goode
Matt O'Daniel
Jack Williams

Thomas Mack
Jimmy Seay
Greg Wormser



Upcoming Professional Development Opportunities

Instructor 1

Location: Lynchburg
Dates: Fridays (beginning May 1)

Driver/Operator – Pumper

Location: Lynchburg
Dates: May 11-14 and
May 18-21

Albemarle Regional School

Location: Albemarle County
Dates: March 21-22

Caroline County Regional School

Location: Caroline County
Dates: April 11-12

Tri-City Regional School

Location: Dinwiddie
Dates: March 14-16

Fire Alarm Leadership

Location: Winchester
Date: March 14

West Virginia Public Safety Expo (Company Officers Only)

Location: Charleston, WV
Dates: May 6-9

Virginia Fire Officers Academy (Company Officers Only)

Location: Richmond
Dates: June 7-12 or
June 14-19

For more details regarding any of these opportunities, see the Training Bulletins that were emailed. The bulletins are also posted in the Training Division.

Training Library

By: Captain Abbey Johnston
The Training Division has created a resource library that includes books and DVD presentations on a variety of topics pertaining to the fire service.

Members are encouraged to utilize these materials for personal review as well as for company training. For instance, you could choose one of the books on leadership and cover one chapter per shift (or whatever time allows) as a group. Below are examples of some of the resources that are currently available:

- *Pride & Ownership* Full-day seminar 2-DVD set by Rick Lasky
- *The Art of Reading Buildings* by John Mittendorf & Dave Dodson
- *Five Alarm Leadership* by Rick Lasky & John Salka
- *First, Break All the Rules* by Marcus Buckingham & Curt Coffman
- *Now, Discover Your Strengths* by Marcus Buckingham & Donald Clifton
- *The 360 Degree Leader* by John Maxwell
- *The 17 Indisputable Laws of Teamwork* by John Maxwell
- *Today Matters: 12 Daily Practices to Guarantee Tomorrow's Success* by John Maxwell
- *Talent is Never Enough* by John Maxwell
- *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* by John Maxwell
- *Leadership 101 & Attitude 101* by John Maxwell
- *The Leadership Experience* by Daft
- *Thinking Critically* by John Chaffee
- *Strong of Heart: Life & Death in the FDNY* by Thomas Von Essen
- *Leadership on the Line* by Ronald Heifetz & Marty Linsky
- *Accountability* by Rob Lebow & Randy Spitzer
- *Character Makes a Difference* by Mike Huckabee
- *Perfect Phrases for Motivating & Rewarding Employees* by Harriet & Linda Eve Diamond
- *The Fred Factor* by Mark Sanborn

To check out one of the resources listed above, contact Megan Signor in the Training Division at 455-6343.

If you have books and/or DVD's that you are willing to donate, contact Captain Abbey Johnston at 455-6361.

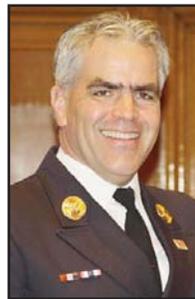
Officer Development Seminar

The department is hosting a three-day Officer Development Seminar on March 30, March 31 and April 1 for all Captains and Chief Officers.

The program will be held at Wiley|Wilson on Nationwide Drive. The program will feature professional speaker and executive coach Art Jackson of Eagles Nest Performance Management and Deputy Chief John Sullivan of the Worcester (MA) Fire Department. A full day will also be dedicated to facilitated mini-sessions led by Fire Department leaders intended to promote personal and organizational success.



Art Jackson



Deputy Chief
John Sullivan

Fire Marshal's Office Staff Takes Technology to the Field!

By Captain Thomas Mack, Deputy Fire Marshal

Electronic Inspections

In 2014, the Fire Marshal's Office (FMO) received three Panasonic CF-H2 Toughbook computers and three mobile printers. It has been a goal of mine for the FMO to perform fire inspections electronically and now we are doing just that!



Performing electronic inspections eliminates paper shuffling and allows us to better retrieve building information for the places that we inspect. Many customers have been impressed with the new technology when we walk in the door. Special thanks to Tommy Doss from Information Technology for his assistance in creating inspection forms and also for being the liaison with Image Trend to get the newly adopted 2012 Virginia Statewide Fire Prevention Code loaded into the Inspections Module of the reporting software.

Fire Extinguisher Simulator

ARFF (Airport Rescue and Firefighting) Chief Jimmy Bowen of the Lynchburg Regional Airport contacted me recently with questions about our fire extinguisher simulator. He needed to provide training for several airport employees. As a result, 40 employees of the Lynchburg Regional Airport were given hands-on training on how to use a fire extinguisher properly.

FMO staff members utilized the BullEx Digital fire extinguisher training aide which simulates a variety of fires for students to attempt to extinguish. The training sessions are informative and since the simulator has a built in timer for each session, some of the students even challenged others as to how quickly they could apply the P.A.S.S. (Pull pin, aim, squeeze, & sweep) technique to extinguish different types of fires. The competition makes this type of training fun and challenging for the students.



The BullEx simulator allows us to train large groups without using water or going outside to discharge real extinguishing agents. The training aid has a screen that projects images of fires in different intensities and the fires on the screen will grow, diminish, or go completely out according to how the student applies the techniques of using an extinguisher. Approximately 300 employees at Westminster Canterbury retirement community were also trained using the new technology in the past few weeks. The Fire Marshal's Office teaches fire safety at each of the Jailer's schools for the Central Virginia Criminal Justice Academy. All students get a chance to use the new technology to simulate putting out fires. They enjoy that portion of the class and many say that they had never used an extinguisher before the class. Participants leave the class confident that they would know what to do in an actual situation thanks to us taking this new technology to the field! Thanks again to Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation for donating this valuable training aid to Lynchburg's own hometown heroes. Our goal is to prevent fires and reduce property damage through education and fire prevention inspections.

Promotions

Congratulations to the following department members who were promoted to the rank of Master Firefighter on January 28, 2015.



Master Firefighter
Candace Brown



Master Firefighter
Joey Kilgore

Canstruction 2015



Once again the City will participate in "Canstruction!" Canstruction is a competition designed to creatively raise food, funds and awareness to help people struggling with hunger in our community. The project will bring together the city's architects, engineers, designers, contractors, students and others in the community to build artistic structures with canned food. All food and funds raised through the event will be donated to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank. Last year, Canstruction Lynchburg raised over 15,000 pounds of canned food to benefit those in need in our community!

To make this event successful, your help is needed again this year! We will be collecting cans after we have our design finalized, but right now we are looking for volunteers for the build team who will assemble our canned food structure. This year's theme is "Planes, Trains and Automobiles: Hunger Relief in Motion." The responsibilities include contributing ideas for the build design according to the theme, helping with can collection, and building the structure on April 18th. No prior experience is necessary but a sense of adventure, creativity, and a desire to help the community are all encouraged. Take part in this fun event for a great cause!

If you are interested in participating, please contact Rachel Frischeisen (GIS) via email or ext. 3956 by February 9th.

60 Second Safety

By: Battalion Chief Ricky Bomar
Vehicle Fire Approach

Once it is determined that it is safe to approach a vehicle fire, the firefighter should cautiously approach from an angle. Remember that heat can cause possible failure to tires, struts, and bumpers which may result in serious firefighter injury.

(FireRescue1.com)

Appointments Available with ICMA Representative

Trey Sizemore, the City's ICMA Representative for the 457 Deferred Compensation Plan, will be available on Tuesday, February 10, 2015, in Human Resources from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.



Call Tamika Stamps at 455-4206 to make an appointment to enroll, discuss your investment selections, learn how to navigate the ICMA website, Roth IRA conversion or ask questions.

Professional Development: It's Not Just Training

By Battalion Chief Jason Campbell

I'm very excited to have the opportunity to serve as the interim Battalion Chief of Training. The first month has been very busy for the division staff and I am excited for the planning that is taking place for the future of the organization. While we are certainly going to continue to juggle conducting mandatory training topics, coordinating training by special requests from company officers, and planning travel arrangements to get members to out-of-town training, the Training Division will also be spending a few months developing several strategic initiatives for our professional development.

I am certainly of the mindset that professional development is of the utmost importance for our entire organization. And it's certainly not just "training" any more. As our profession has evolved, so too should our efforts to develop our members beyond basic skills and abilities to get certain tasks completed. Professional development is a continuous process of improving and increasing the capabilities of our members through access to education and training opportunities here at home, through outside organizations, and through watching others perform the job. Professional development helps to build and maintain morale of department members, and can also be used as a tool to attract higher quality candidates for employment to the organization.

So, why? Why is professional development so important? Professional development simply improves our knowledge and skill sets. In turn, this helps make us more effective at what we do every day. And there is not one of us who can't be better at what we do. The world and our profession changes rapidly. Political changes, changes in local policy, advanced equipment (and sometimes old equipment that becomes "new" again), changing community demographics and dynamics – all are changes that we are facing today. And it will continue tomorrow, next week, next month and next year.

Have you looked around recently who see how the face of our organization has changed? Month by month it seems that the "old" faces are gone. In fact, in the past five years alone, over 60 of our members have left the organization – most of them for the enjoyment of retirement. That means that the rest of us are quickly rising on the seniority list and are becoming the "old" faces. I believe that this alone makes our professional development even more important, as we improve the leadership qualities in all of us, both as formal leaders and informal leaders.

Professional development also provides us with an opportunity to re-energize. I can't think of a professional development opportunity that I've participated in where I haven't come away with a "to do list" or ideas that I picked up that we can implement to make our organization stronger or to make our work more efficient. I challenge each of you to always try to walk away from a professional development opportunity with at least one "to do" item.

For the past four weeks your email inbox has been flooded with opportunities for training in the coming months, both here at home and across the state. It is my commitment to the members of this organization to assist you any way possible to provide you with opportunities to grow personally and professionally, because I believe it will directly relate to the improvement of our organization and in our roles as public servants. As opportunities continue to be made available, I will share those with you.

My greatest goal (other than staying within the training/travel budget) is to develop a professional development handbook/guide/matrix, whatever you want to call it, for our organization that will provide all members with a roadmap of sorts for professional development opportunities at all ranks within our organization. The intent is to answer the questions, "What should I do now, in year [insert year here] of my tenure as a [insert rank here]? What can I do to better prepare myself to meet the challenges and demands of the citizens and my peers at this point in my career?" The roadmap will offer training opportunities, recommended college courses, and necessary interpersonal skills for success, among other recommendations. The product will be the result of a compilation from sources such as the International Association of Fire Chiefs, International Association of Fire Fighters, the National Fire Academy, The Center for Public Safety Excellence, department members and other professional peers. My goal is to have the document ready for preview and feedback by March 1.

If you have any questions about upcoming professional development opportunities, please contact me at 455-6363.

Enhancing Operations

By: Acting Deputy Chief Greg Wormser

As many of you may be aware, Station 5 now reports to Battalion 2 and Station 6 reports to Battalion 1. This is just one of many operational ideas that are part of a larger movement to increase operational efficiency and enhance the quality service delivery already enjoyed by the community.

Some of the other changes that have taken place include: CAD changes for Charlie Level Transports, changes in the use of the Rescue for other special situations as indicated in EMD like Haz-Mat and Rescue responses, along with implementation of the Limited Response Protocol. Future goals include: response order updates for a more efficient service delivery that reflects the community needs and actual calls for service, additional CAD changes reflecting updates in EMD which include call types such as hemorrhage/lacerations, and better utilization of the ladder trucks when they are closer than the rescue. In addition, we will likely be adding EFD (Emergency Fire Dispatching) as a standard service in much the same way we use EMD.

There are many more exciting days ahead for all of us, please be informed and ask questions as we all continue to improve our service delivery.

Reminder

City offices will be closed on
February 16, 2015 in
observance of Presidents' Day.