



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – Sept 24, 2020

This Edition:

The Chief's Desk Page 2
Complacency Killed The Cat: Curiosity didn't.
.....Page 3
So You Want to Be a Company Officer.....Page 3

"You have power over your mind – not outside events. Realize this and you will find strength."

Marcus Aurelius



The Chief's Desk

As you may recall, the Senior Leadership Academy was developed to fill the training gap between Battalion Chief and senior staff level officers. It was also created to explore and bridge the cultural differences between operations and non-operations. We identified that a newly promoted operations person does not necessarily understand their new environment in administration. Conversely, many in non-operations do not fully understand the cultural environment in operations. We are one in the same organizationally, but there are two different and distinctive personality types between the operations and administrative professional environments.

We hoped to run two or three successful offerings and then approach the Arizona Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA) about running the program statewide under their moniker. We also hoped to seek some level of credentialing for those who complete the program.

This year would have been the second year of the academy had it not been for COVID. As big a pain in the you know what COVID has been, it did present an opportunity for me to meet Robert Isbell Fire Chief of Round Rock, Texas and board member for the Texas Fire Chiefs Association. As I have mentioned previously, the Texas Chiefs developed a Fire Chiefs Academy that is credentialed and highly regarded throughout the State of Texas.

We now have a small working group through the AFCA developing our own version of the Fire Chiefs Academy. This new academy will replace the Senior Leadership Academy and will be more focused on Fire Chief level development. We have completed a draft curriculum, and have developed a model structure for the academy. Our next steps are to develop a survey that will be distributed through the League of Towns and Cities, City Managers Association, fire district boards, as well as the Central Life Safety Council. Our intent is to solicit input from these groups to determine what skills and knowledge they feel a fire chief needs in order to be successful for their organization and community. We will use their feedback to hone the curriculum and determine the best path forward for potential credentialing. We may not be ready for 2021, but will definitely have the program ready to roll out in early 2022.

This leaves us with two gaps. First, one of the objectives of the program was to bring developing chief officers together with their non-operations counterparts to gain a better understanding of their respective professional environments. We will address this part of the program by requiring attendance at a one day, or half-day seminar at the summer leadership conference. The seminar will include both operations personnel and non-operations personnel from a cross section of disciplines within the fire service. They will address topics related to the interdependence of all parties within an agency as well as discuss the underlying cultural differences that can create some initial challenges during leadership transitions. Continued on Page 4

Upcoming Events:

Sept 28 – Record Sample Podcast, Board Meeting Day
Sept 29 – Meeting with PFFA and Ashton Tiffany re: presumptive cancer
Sept 30 – Arizona Ambulance Conference
Oct 1 – AFDA meeting Zoom, MCI meeting, Chief Bliss last official work day

Board Meetings:

September 28
CVFD – 1600-1630
CYFD – 1630-1700
CAFMA – 1700-1830

Complacency Killed The Cat: Curiosity didn't.

By: Sabrina Singh

Being comfortable isn't a bad thing, but not wanting to improve isn't a good thing.

People tend to become complacent because they've accepted the things around them as possibly non-changing. Complacency doesn't mean you're pleased with yourself, it means you've chose to believe that there's nothing left to change and compel you forward.

Why do you become complacent?

For starters, your brain is hardwired to keep you safe.

Mammals have evolved to feel the need of safety and social connectedness to others. The amygdala, a small part of the brain, is responsible for processing the basic emotions coming through your sensory inputs. These emotions include anger, avoidance, defensiveness and fear.

The amygdala is responsible for your fight or flight mechanism. It's what causes adrenaline and other hormones to be pumped into your bloodstream. Fast reaction is what you're looking for; the faster you can notice threats and either run away from them or fight back, the more likely you are to live to reproduce.

Some scary things are not really as risky as they seem, and others are better handled by staying in the situation to set up a better future response. This means there's an evolutionary advantage to being able to hold off the reflexive fight-or-flight response while you work out a more sophisticated analysis of the situation and your options for handling it.

medium.com

So You Want to Be a Company Officer...

By: Troy Bonfield

As with most firefighters, it is in our DNA to aspire to have more impact. In the fire service that often translates into promoting within the ranks. Many are fortunate enough to promote and are successful as company officers. Others for whatever reason may choose not to or may never be successful in promoting and remain a firefighter for their entire career. Regardless of which category you may end up in, there are some essential questions and self-reflection that are necessary before you decide to take the next step.

I will preface what is about to be covered with this statement. If you have the pleasure of working with a great company officer, you will already have the right answers for what I'm about to say. If not, then we may have some work to do.

First, you need to ask yourself WHY... Why do you want to promote? There are right answers and wrong ones. When you come up with an answer share it with someone that will give you honest feedback. If

you get the answer you need and it's telling you that you are seeking promotion for the right reasons, then move on to the next step. If not, stop here and be the best firefighter you can be. There is no shame in not promoting. In fact, it is more honorable to recognize that it may not be for you. It is not for everyone and not everyone should be an officer.

Second, take time to reflect on your career to this point. This is a great time to discuss with a trusted mentor, whoever that may be. Some things to think about are:

- How have you prepared yourself to become a company officer? Notice I didn't say, how has your department prepared you to become a company officer. Self-preparation is on you. I'm not just talking about tactics classes, being a company officer requires much more than that. If you truly want to promote, you will do what it takes to get the training and experience to be prepared.
- How do your peers view you and do they support your decision to promote? Remember, every decision or indecision you make during your career will be used to judge your ability as an officer. Years of poor performance cannot be undone by a few months of good performance, especially when that good performance is occurring just before an upcoming promotional process.

Third, you do not have to be an officer to add value and positive influence on your department and your peers. Some of the most impactful people I have known in the fire service were not officers, they were seasoned firefighters. Promotion is not a prerequisite to making an impact.

isfsi.org

Chief's Desk Continued

Second, and specific to CAFMA, we still need a program that will help our personnel develop the leadership skills we want to see within our agency. Chief's Feddema, Parra, Captain Merrill, and I met Thursday to discuss our needs and begin mapping a path forward. We determined there were a number of topics in the Senior Leadership Academy that were not necessarily relevant to non-operations managers. Those topics are now contained within the Fire Chiefs Academy. Our internal program will focus on topics related to leadership, ethics, and culture specific to CAFMA. The idea is to create a one-week leadership academy for our personnel covering these topics.

The Compass will serve as the foundation of the program. It is important for our future leaders to not only understand and internalize our culture, but to help shape who we will be in the future. The program will include a teaching cadre of both CAFMA leadership and outside instructors from the fire service as well as academia.

The target audience for this program will be company officers seeking promotion to Battalion Chief as well as current Battalion Chiefs. We are also targeting current managers and those who wish to promote to managerial positions in the future. So, if you've been through the Senior Leadership program already – that's fantastic! Now we have another one for you.

We are also working to create a one-day immersion program for new employees. I know, sounds a little cult like. That said, we need a more focused approach to introducing our new folks to the culture and expectations of our organization beyond the technical portion of their respective position. Once developed, all new employees will participate at some point within their first year of employment. This is a newer concept, so we still have a lot of work to do to clearly define what the final product will entail.

A draft of the Leadership Academy has been created and is currently being reviewed by staff and training. We will regroup on October 13 to discuss the finite details. Our hope is to have both programs live by the first part of 2021. That is assuming 2020 goes away forever! Really, we are CAFMA so either way we will move forward – we're not scared☺

If we stop to consider the programs available for talent development, it seems we have a good foundation. Our recruit academy continues to evolve and seems to be producing good results. The Engineers Academy has been extremely successful in preparing firefighters to successfully navigate both the acting engineers' position as well as prepare for promotion to engineer. Prescott Area Training Group's Captains Academy fills up each year at CARTA. It has proven a great training program for future officers. The Arizona Fire Chiefs Association (AFCA) Battalion Chiefs Academy is available to those company officers seeking that next level fire service leadership role. We are suggesting attendance at a Battalion Chief Academy be a pre-requisite for those wishing to test for a CAFMA Battalion Chief position – for those not clear, that is a hint. With the addition of our internal leadership academy as well as the AFCA Fire Chiefs Academy, developmental opportunities are readily available.

There are other programs that will be important for your on-going development that can be attained through a college or university, the Arizona Fire District annual conference, the Fire Chiefs annual leadership conference, the National Fire Academy, etc. It is important for us to promote a more global view of our profession, as well as facilitate opportunities both internally and externally for all CAFMA employees.

We will provide other learning opportunities, as well as provide more agency information through our new Podcast and YouTube Channel. Our studio is complete!! We will run a couple of pilot Podcasts Monday morning as a test. Once we have everything together, you will be able to access the Podcasts through your favorite platform e.g. iTunes, Spotify, Google Play, etc. They will be video recorded as well so you will be able to watch on our YouTube Channel.

The Podcast is called **CAFMA Connect** and will include two parallel tracks for lack of a better term. Track one will be a review of *The Review* for those who do not like to read. Those who do not like to read have not read this far, so for those still reading please share this information as you see fit – thank you. These episodes will be short, under 10 minutes, hitting the highlights of what was in *The Review* on Friday.

The Second track focuses more on educational topics e.g. leadership, emerging issues, organizational project outlines, etc. These will likely be between 30-60 minutes depending on the guest and the topic. Our first scheduled Podcast in this format will include Eric Rosoff of the Career Survival Group. Tech Manager Jonah Van Tuyl has designed our system so we can record a Podcast with a remote guest while maintaining the quality of the audio recording. This means we have access to people from all over the

country who can provide insight and expertise on a variety of topics. Remember, we are just starting out so hang with us while we work on our production skills.

There are many things we have been talking about for a while coming to fruition, and a number of new and exciting programs in the works. The importance of personal and professional development cannot be overstated. We are continually trying to develop material that will benefit you on your career journey. That said, your journey is personal so it is imperative that you remember it is *you* that has to put in the time, energy, and dedication not only to seek training within CAFMA, but to seek training opportunities in other venues as well. Your success is up to you – we will be here to help you along the way.