



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **September 2, 2022**

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— Unk

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The Chief's Desk

Well, this week certainly has not gone as planned. My hope was to return from FRI in San Antonio and hit the ground running Monday. Ultimately, I hit the ground running Monday morning and took vacation Monday afternoon to work on a project. Unfortunately, I woke up Tuesday morning with a low-grade fever, no voice, and what seems to be a raging sinus infection. Per our policy, I need to be fever free for 24hrs before returning to work. To that end, I did not end up in the office at all this week. I was able to take a few meetings on Wednesday via Zoom. One of which was our second quarterly joint command staff meeting with Prescott. It was another opportunity for us to spend some time coordinating our efforts.

As a result of the work required to migrate our IT systems, we will not be recording a podcast this week. We'll figure something out for next week, assuming the migration goes well and Dave or Cody can host. As part of the migration to Office 365, we are also changing our emails and web domain (I think that's what it is) from .org to .gov.

Fire Rescue International (FRI) served as a great opportunity to attend some really good presentations, and spend a lot of time networking. Fire Chief Chuck Ryan, Tucson FD, gave an overview of the shooting that took the life of an AMR EMT, two other civilians, and injured one of their Captains while pinning down an engine company. I believe his presentation is something that our company officers and BCs need to hear. To that end, I'll be working with Chief Feddema and Chief Parra to put together a mandatory officers meeting sometime later this year. Part of the meeting will be to catch up with everyone in person and discuss future needs and staffing for the organization; the other portion will be the presentation by Chief Ryan.

One piece of feedback I received as a Program Planning Committee member was that this year's conference was a bit heavy on the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs. In fact, there was a bit of a dust-up in one of the sessions on privilege. It was a class that wasn't originally scheduled, but someone on the Committee had been asked to fill in for a presenter whose flights were canceled. Maybe it's just me, but I'm not sure that the topic of "privilege" belongs in that setting. Honestly, it's not a good way to even start a dialogue about DEI.

I certainly support the idea of DEI from the perspective of learning tools and language that can help us avoid or traverse difficult conversations regarding diversity; however, I believe programs of this type should be presented by those whose body of work focuses on DEI. It is my opinion that we as Fire Chiefs, or Chief Officers, do not possess the expertise necessary to present on these topics. That's why when the AFCA wanted to have a class at the leadership conference in 2021 regarding unconscious bias, I pushed to ensure that we had someone who was an expert in the field – from academia, not the Fire Service.

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Upcoming Events:

Sept 6-11: Chief attending Fire Summer Fire School in Mesa
Sept 11: MC Healing Field Ceremony

Board Meeting:

Sept 26: Administration
CAFMA – 1700-1830

The Word of the Year is Uncertainty. Now What?

By: Kevin Eikenberry

Time Magazine famously names a Person of the Year in December. I'm naming uncertainty as the Word of Year now. We don't even have to wait. I know, the future is always uncertain – the only time we have 20/20 vision is looking backwards. Yet, due to a list of factors as long as your arm (at least), the amount of uncertainty – especially the uncertainty at work and about work – has never been higher.

I'm guessing you agree with that statement. The question is, what do we do about it?

Acknowledge The Uncertainty

In your situation there might be several unknowns. While that number might be higher than usual, it isn't like the future used to be clear and obvious. There has always been uncertainty. Take a breath, and realize you have dealt with uncertainties before, and you can do it again. And just because uncertainty is to be expected, don't deny how the unknowns might be impacting you. Ignoring or denying the uncertainty isn't a good strategy.

Recognize Feelings

Once we choose to face the recognize the uncertainties, we will feel something. It might be anxiety, anger, concern, or worry. It might affect our levels of confidence, trust, and optimism. And since we are talking about uncertainty at work, this isn't just our feelings, but the feelings of those around us. Our customers and colleagues, teammates, and leaders will all have feelings that matter. We will be more successful in moving through uncertainty when we acknowledge the emotions and mental states that the uncertainty evokes in each other. Recognize that how you are impacted might be different than others. One of the best things you can do is give space and opportunity for people to talk about how the uncertainty is impacting them and their work.

[kevineikenberry](http://kevineikenberry.com)

Stepping Into A Leadership Role: Steps To Take

By: Melinda Fouts Ph.D.

The other day, a client of mine said, "I can step into a leadership role. How do I do that?" We took a deep dive into the details of this prospect, and not only was it an opportunity, but it was also a clear path to becoming a powerful and influential leader in her organization.

One of the key factors here is that she was aware of this opportunity. So many individuals miss seeing opportunities because they are too focused on what they are doing, or too attached to the path they decided upon, resulting in a lack of awareness of their own inner potential to become a leader.

Here is how I began our exploration of stepping into a leadership role and outlining the steps to move into this position. She saw the opportunity and needed guidance on how to step into being a leader for

the new executive team coming on board. This is a common issue I encounter, and I have become aware of an inner roadblock some of my clients face. We all can get in our own way of success through our limiting mindsets about ourselves and our capabilities. Making changes to our self-perception often requires a thought partner and someone who can push you to grow.

I first gave her my definition of leadership: Leadership is a process of social influence to maximize the effort and input of others with the mindset toward reaching and going past the vision and goal. Leadership is a mindset in action, whether you have the title or not. Leadership isn't something anyone can give you—you earn it through specific competencies and then claim it for yourself.

One thing to keep in mind is that many of my clients are not aware of their strengths because they innately do what they are doing. When I point out they have a strength in a certain area, I often hear, "Really? This is what I do!" Let's look at key competencies needed to be an effective leader and the steps to implement to step into a leadership role.

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Chief's Desk Continued

While I think it's important that we at CAFMA have some level of training in these types of areas, I'm not a fan of the unconscious bias approach. The bottom line is that we all know we have biases, e.g. I have a serious bias against electric cars. In my mind, that's not the issue. What we need are tools, language tools specifically, that can help us properly address situations we may face in the station, in our community, and sometimes even at family gatherings. If you look at issues of harassment and hostile environments in the Fire Service, they're generally the result of the words that we use.

I still hear people say things like "fireman" instead of "firefighter," or "manning" instead of "staffing." Words mean something and we need to be cognizant of that fact. This is especially true in our current environment when it seems anyone can be offended by anything. At the same time, we cannot cower and live in fear. So, how is it then that we can communicate effectively, i.e. express feelings of frustration, anger, concern, or hope, without fear of a negative reaction from others?

Chief Mary Cameli, Mesa FD, shared an example from the Metro Chiefs conference. After a 90-minute presentation by Dr. Kawme Cooper regarding DEI, the Board of the Metro Chiefs moved to their board meeting. Part of the conversation in the meeting was a brief discussion of Dr. Cooper's work and presentation. A Chief in the room made a comment that he had just taken the Chiefs position in an agency that had been under a federal mandate for years dictating hiring ratios. He expressed his frustration with the system and how it had failed the agency.

The Board was together again the next morning for a meeting. Another chief in the room acknowledged that he should have said something the day prior, but felt he needed to express how offended he was by the other chiefs' comments. The chief from the day before listened to the concerns and then apologized. He didn't apologize for his feelings; he apologized because the language he used did not relay the message as intended. Once he explained his actual intent, everything was fine and additional healthy conversations followed.

I've certainly found myself in that situation more than once. Sometimes people are willing to engage and have a healthy dialogue until we understand one another, or conclude that we simply agree to disagree. Other times, people will walk away frustrated with what they believe was said. Some will come back and seek clarity later, others may never seek clarity and simply remain frustrated.

Understanding that dynamic, I try very hard to communicate clearly; however, there are times when I find myself not engaging, especially in larger groups, because my beliefs are contrary to what is being said and I'm not certain I have the tools to engage properly. Yes, there are times when the environment is absolutely not right for engaging in any type of healthy dialogue; however, I know that I've also missed opportunity to engage in what could ultimately be a good healthy conversation.

I was attending a program a couple years ago with a diverse group of professionals from around the country. One of the people in my group was a higher-ranking member of Border Patrol. I certainly have had my feelings over the years about the border, but it's generally a conversation that I avoid. In this instance, however, I was very curious about how the other person felt, as someone on the front line, regarding the border and immigration challenges we face. I have to say that she caused me to pause and rethink the way I approach my concerns with the border. In fact, she opened my mind to a more global perspective regarding the much larger systemic immigration issue in the United States.

Had I not spent more time listening and actually asking questions, I would have never learned about the monumental challenges our country faces, many of which are - shocker - created by inept political types. Nor would I have heard her thoughts regarding steps we can take to mitigate the problems. When you use the right words, ask questions, listen intently, and set aside some of your own personal beliefs, it's amazing how much more clear things can become.

I'm still learning and was really hoping to hear Dr. Cooper speak in Mesa this week on Tuesday, but as I said, I've had to be home all week. Patty, Chief Feddema, and Chief Parra attended his presentation and I look forward to catching up with them to hear how they felt, and if it would be a good program for CAFMA to host at some point.

I'm headed down for summer fire school Tuesday to co-facilitate the New Chiefs Seminar. Hopefully, I'll see some of you in Mesa – maybe over a cold frosty beverage one evening.
