



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **November 3, 2023**

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Have a Great Weekend!

“Don't judge each day by the harvest you reap but by the seeds that you plant.” - Robert Louis Stevenson

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The Assistant Chief's Desk

Are you ready for the next season? Fall is in the air and the season is changing. Unfortunately, the Diamondbacks baseball season has ended; however, they surpassed everyone's expectations. They didn't let the media narrative doubting their potential impact their performance. While I will miss watching baseball, I enjoy the changing colors and the cooler temperatures in fall. I also enjoy the snowfall in winter, and the opportunity to sit in front of a fire. We have the benefit of living in an area where we get to experience all the seasons nature has to offer. Each season has its blessings; however, there's a downside to each season also. Summers can be harsh and dry, while winter can be long and cold. During spring and fall, the wind can feel like it will never end and seems to cut through all layers of clothing. I start each season looking forward to the change because I have usually grown tired of the previous one. While nature has its seasons, so does life.

There are a lot of changes happening within the organization related to staffing in all divisions. While this can challenge the institutional knowledge within the organization, there is also an opportunity for growth. An opportunity for growth within the leaders of the organization to help adapt to our current challenges and prepare for the future. While it would be nice if we could take a breath and slow down, we cannot always control the circumstances related to change. However, we can provide training and empower the next leaders to make positive change within the organization. We are seeing multiple promotions from Battalion Chief to Firefighter. There is currently a lot of opportunity for personnel advancement. We will continue to encourage coaching and mentoring across the organization to do our best to prepare the next generation to lead the fire service in the future. While change brings opportunity, it can also bring challenges.

I recently had the opportunity to listen to a former MMA fighter discuss the challenges related to organizational change. He compared the structural change within an organization to the transitional movements within an MMA fight. He discussed how a fight evolves quickly and you cannot always control your opponent. He explained that the most dangerous time during a fight is when you are transitioning positions or strategies. This is also true on the fire ground when the strategy changes because it takes time to transition. He explained that in an MMA fight, while transitioning from one position to another, you are off balance and open to getting submitted. You are no longer in control and on the offensive; you are repositioning to try and gain the advantage. As an organization, there are times when we are controlling the change, and times when we are not. While there is a danger during this transition, it also provides an opportunity to gain the upper hand against your opponent. The important part is to identify when you are in that transitional moment.

Upcoming Events:

Nov. 6 Senior Staff Meeting
& HR/Admin Chiefs

Interview

Nov. 7 Labor/Management
Meeting

Nov. 8 BC Academy/Struggle
Well

Nov. 9 BC Academy/Struggle
Well

Board Meeting:

November 27

CAFMA – 1700-1800

As an organization, we need to understand that we are in that moment. We are promoting new leaders across all divisions, and we are working on several projects to improve the organization. So how do we reposition ourselves for the future and effectively respond to the change? My thoughts are simple. Honor the mission, protect the values, embrace the change, and manage the little things. What is our mission? Our mission is "To protect life and property through prevention and response". Each day we respond within the community to requests for service. These requests vary in severity and frequency; however, we are ready, available, and prepared to respond at a moment's notice. There are also many personnel that work to support this mission and ensure that CAFMA personnel have the resources needed to accomplish their task to the best of their ability.

Change is inevitable but our core values should not waver. These are the cornerstones of our organization and are values that we strive to adhere to in spirit and intent. As an organization, we have committed ourselves to serve our internal and external customers with Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, & Excellence. These core values are printed in The Compass and framed on our walls. If we truly believe in these core values, then our behavior should reflect this belief. This should be the culture in our stations and in our hearts.

So, are we embracing our mission, vision, and values as an organization? If we are, how do we maintain our current heading and if we are not, how do we correct this? I would imagine that there are numerous opinions and ideas regarding the current culture of CAFMA; however, what are you doing to impact positive change? Consider Tim Knight's definition of an organization's culture. He describes an organization's culture as: belief, behavior, and experience. This means that our beliefs drive our behavior, and our behavior defines the experience of those around us. With this definition, our true culture is not what we say it is, it is not what we have printed and hanging on the walls, but rather, it is defined by our behavior and the experiences our behavior creates. If we put a value to our behavior, then our culture will be defined by the summation of the behavior of all CAFMA employees. Is your behavior adding value to the organization and the community or is it subtracting from it?

Tim Knight's definition should shift the original question away from, what is our culture, to what experience is my behavior creating. This has more to do with you than anyone else in the organization. There is no one you spend more time with than yourself. If you are swimming in self-pity, then you will drown in the negativity. In fact, identifying all that is wrong in the world, the community, the department, and our lives is easy. The more difficult task is searching for what is positive, what is good, and what is valuable. The shift in Tim Knight's definition should move us away from what we think others should be doing to what we should be doing as individuals. If we have embraced the core values defined in The Compass, then we should be conducting ourselves according to the highest standards of moral behavior while committing ourselves to the highest quality service in all aspects of our profession. We should be treating everyone with dignity and honor. Our core values could also be defined as heart values because out of our heart, our behavior will flow. The Compass does not deliver our culture to the community; our culture is delivered to the community through the effort of every one of you. If we believe in Professionalism, Respect, Integrity, Dedication, & Excellence then this will be represented in our service.

I am truly proud to be a part of this organization and I am grateful for the work you do every day to serve the community. We are better because of the collective work that we accomplish as a team, and we should all be proud of the organization we continue to build. I have the benefit of hearing about the great customer service that each of you provides regularly. This is both internal and external. CAFMA's culture is written in documents; however, these documents do not define our culture. We define our culture through our behavior and our service to the community. May we never lose our way.

Honor the mission, protect the values, embrace the change, and manage the little things.

Have a great week!
