



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **February 2, 2024**

This Edition:

The Chief's DeskPage 2
Discharging discipline: An officer's guide to
employee counselingPage 3
How Leaders Can Empower The 'How'Page 3

**"The fall hurt like hell, but I found grace
in the wounds and a version of me I
never knew."**

Stephanie Bennett-Henry

[The CAFMA Connect YouTube Channel](#) – Like, Subscribe, Watch, and Learn



**Chief Jeff "Pie" Piechura Memorial
Pictured is Donna Piechura**

The Chief's Desk

I've been trying to keep *The Review* focused more on organizational updates for the last few months. I know, some are disappointed that you haven't been exposed to more of my philosophical ramblings. However, I felt there was a lot of information that needed to be provided so y'all would be more informed. And, maybe if I increased readership, the book deal would come through 😊 HA!

Alas, I got noth'n this week... I've racked my brain and have come up empty. It's not that things aren't happening, it's just progress is slow, so I don't have any news of interest to share.

Sooo, I'm reading a new book! I've only made it nine pages in, but already found some good stuff. While I haven't made it to the deeply insightful parts, I'm going to do my best to make something out of what I've read so far.

The book is called *Think Like a Rocket Scientist* by Ozan Varol. I need to thank Robert Borker with Yavapai College as he gave me the book as a gift. I guess, if you don't like what I write about this week, you can blame him...

I read the following passage in the introduction, and it immediately had an impact on me – like an epiphany of sorts:

To think like a rocket scientist is to look at the world through a different lens. Rocket scientists imagine the unimaginable and solve the unsolvable. They transform failures into triumphs and constraints into advantages. They view mishaps as solvable puzzles rather than insurmountable roadblocks. They're moved not by blind conviction but by self-doubt; their goal is not short-term results but long-term breakthroughs. They know that the rules aren't set in stone, the default can be altered, and a new path can be forged. (Page 2 last paragraph)

The question I have, is do rocket scientists apply those same thought processes and can-do attitudes to their personal lives? Do we apply these same principles in our personal lives? Sometimes the challenges we face in life can seem unsolvable. Do we curl up in the fetal position, or do we rise to face the challenge and chart a path to overcome? Life isn't always easy and the paths we have to take sometimes can be rough. How do we respond, or react, to the proverbial spilled milk? Do we kick the ground and wallow in self-pity? Do we have a sudden emotional outburst – a reaction as opposed to a response? Or, do we allow ourselves some grace as we process whatever it is, address the challenge head on, and continue our forward progress?

Cont. Page 4

Upcoming Events:

Feb 5: Record Podcast, Senior Staff Meeting, Surgical Follow-up, Special Board Meetings

Feb 6: Labor/Management, Wildland Commission Report Briefing

Feb 7: Meet with PRCC, CEOP final meeting before the program starts on Feb 12, Saddlevue HOA meeting

Feb 8: AFSI Meeting, Chief Interview for Finance Specialist, CAFMA/PFD Joint Accreditation Update

Feb 9: AFCA Eboard Meeting, Haz Mat Graduation, Lunch Meeting with PV Town Manager

Board Meeting:

Board Meeting: Feb 26
CAFMA – 1700-1830

Discharging discipline: An officer's guide to employee counseling

By: Trevor Frodge

Every fire officer wants to lead that perfect crew – the crew that always does the right thing, never causes issues, and never had any disciplinary problems. The problem with the perfect crew is that it doesn't exist. Even for the best crews, there will likely be a disciplinary issue. Perhaps a firefighter will say something stupid on a run, or maybe they run a red light in the apparatus. It could be that a member shows up late to work, or maybe they get a little bit heated at the kitchen table about that other unit or the underperforming firefighter at the other station.

These types of issues occur in every firehouse across the country, but little time is actually devoted to training the fire officers who have to manage various administrative issues and discharge discipline. I've found that it is easy to follow the three Ds – Document, Discover and Discharge.

Before we dive into the general principles of discipline, followed by a review of the three Ds, it should be noted that each situation is different because we are all different. We are human beings, and as such, we are going to bring very human emotions and ideas to various situations. As officers, it would be amazing if we could just simply ride the right front seat of the rig, give size-ups and lead crews on the fireground all day long. And while we have those days, we also have the responsibility to lead our team and uphold our department's standards, policies, rules and regulations – and to keep order in the firehouse. The company officer must be the constant leader, and it is what we tolerate that will ultimately shape the crew.

Understand the overall purpose of the discipline process. The process is not to simply yell or berate a subordinate for a decision that they made but rather to correct a behavior. For whatever reason, our firefighter has strayed from the normal course of action and violated some type of rule or standard. Yelling does little to solve the problem. Therefore, discipline is always aimed at correcting the issue, not to exude power over our firefighters.

FireChief.com

How Leaders Can Empower The 'How'

By: Bill Edwards

This exemplifies the importance of empowering the "how." Leaders who are capable of this technique have learned over time through experience, trial and error and expertise gained through repetition. A mature leader guides the team, listens to learn rather than to reply and acts to support growth in the people they lead. This is the foundation of empowering the "how."

There's a lot of discussion and exposure to the leadership concept of "understanding the why," and author Simon Sinek is known for articulating this concept in his well-known concept of "Start with Why." In this concept, he explains how business leaders and strategic communicators need to reverse the

approach and message of "what, how and why" to "why, how and what." As Sinek states: "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it."

This concept is thoughtful and makes total sense, as examples are evident in everyday life. However, leaders need to take this one step further in order to empower the "how." Empowering the "how" in organizations is "leader business," but it's often left for people to simply figure out. Empowering the "how" equates to leader involvement. It becomes a journey for the team and is the foundation and core task for a leader because it requires vision, experience and maturity to create forward momentum.

Here are five steps to empower the "how."

- Focus leadership. One of the first steps a leader must take is to control the number of direct reports. This is a function of position and seniority, and it is necessary for leading teams, directorates, practices and companies. It also displays the company's organizational structure and limits "stray voltage" to the senior leader. All too often in organizations with a lack of clear delineations in structure, "the boss" finds themselves being asked to make decisions that are clearly in someone else's sphere of influence. If you find yourself in an organization that exhibits issues with structure, make it a priority to clear up those lanes in order to provide predictability to the workforce.

[Forbes.com](https://www.forbes.com)

Chief's Desk Cont.

When we set a course for CAFMA and the inevitable bumps in the road or roadblocks pop-up, do we go, "well, it was a good idea, but shucks, it's just not gonna work." Or, do we put our heads together and figure out a way around, over, or through whatever stands in the way of us doing good works? I think we all know the answer to that one 😊 What about in your personal lives – do you give up on a plan for personal growth because the results aren't immediate, or because you find out it's hard? I hope not. Puzzles can be fun...

Politically speaking, there certainly seem to be a lot of people across the country today on both sides of the aisle moved by blind conviction and empty, but loud narratives. What happened to humility, conscious/rational thought, the ability to disagree without being disagreeable, or willingness to work together for the common good? It seems personal short-term gains outweigh the long-term and conscious planning it takes to have a sustainable country, state, and community.

When we make decisions at CAFMA, we do our best to weigh the short v. long game i.e., will the decision we make lend itself to long-term sustainability, or is it something that will feel good today, but jeopardize our future. I cannot overstate the importance of making the best long-term decisions based on the information we have today rather than simply making decisions that feel good, or so people will like us. I pray every morning for guidance to make the best decisions I can even when I know they will be unpopular. Quite honestly, life is not a popularity contest.

Can we change our stars? If you have not seen the movie *A Knight's Tale*, you're really missing out. Nothing is set in stone. We can become what we want, if we're willing to do the hard work to get there. As we've discussed many times over the years, and as our Compass spells out, make the best decisions

you can while doing your work. If that decision takes you out of the bounds set by policy and SOG, then you have to ask yourself if it can be tied back to our Compass. If it can, then maybe we need to change the rule. If it can't, then we need to understand why the best course of action was out of bounds per the established rules, but still fit within our organizations overarching philosophies.

Listen, if we were meant to be what we were as we were growing up, I wouldn't have even graduated clown school. I'm not overly smart, but not completely dumb either. I was not the most mature person and had a tendency to look for the fun easy way out rather than putting in the work. I ran into my share of roadblocks – some created by me for me, and others outside of my control. While I had to pivot quiet often, I usually came out the other side in a better place and sometimes on a different path.

I'm not in my position because I'm super smart and charismatic. Come on, you know me, I'm neither of those things. However, I was willing to do the work others didn't want to do, I was willing to work hard, focus on a goal, and spend the time necessary to learn and grow. The bottom line is I never quit. I never quit believing I could be and do more. I never quit believing that I could learn – unless it was math... Me and math are no bueno. Have I matured? A little... The bottom line is, if you knew me as a kid, and now met me today you might say that I changed my stars.

While I'm not far into the book, the paragraph I shared with you hit home with me. It summarizes so many of the issues we see in our community, business, and family and puts them into one nice, neat paragraph that provides the basic problem and the simplest solution. In the end, it comes down to outlook and attitude. No matter what you face in life, work, or family, it's how you choose to respond, or worst case, react, that determines the outcome. And, you have to do the work.

Struggle in life is real, but you can survive and thrive, if you choose.
