



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **March 22, 2024**

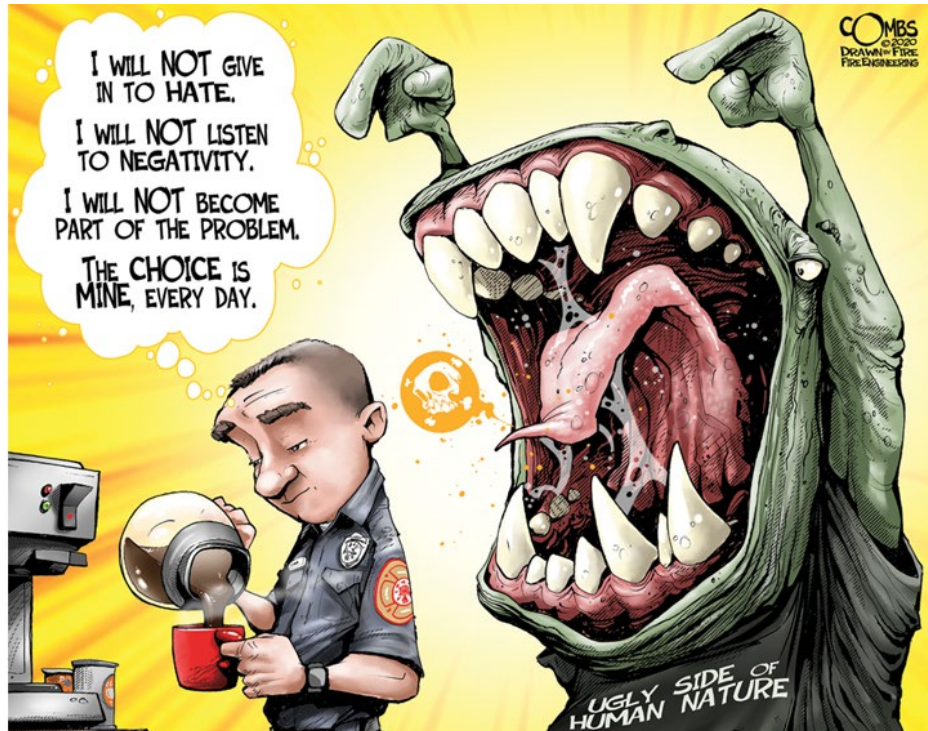
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Have a Great Weekend!

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.” – Viktor Frankl

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The Assistant Chief's Desk

As I'm new to the organization, I've been asked my perspective on a great many things, but by far the most asked question is, "What is your philosophy on leadership?" Early in my career in the Fire Service I was indoctrinated in the traditional Leader-Follower leadership model. The basis for this leadership model is that there are two types of people: Leaders who make decisions and followers who implement them.

This model is practiced by many fire departments, the military, and in fact, most companies, and organizations in existence today. This has been the foundation of our leadership thinking for hundreds of years because it works. It's responsible for many successes spanning from the construction of ancient structures to the first factories in the industrial revolution.

While this philosophy has yielded success, it's not without drawbacks. This leadership structure was designed to coordinate physical labor for a variety of purposes such as construction or mining. In the Fire Service today, we expect our members to work semi-independently and to develop and apply information to assist the team. While firefighting itself is hugely physical work, there is a large cognitive component to the work. As such we want our members to think, and the Leader-Follower model doesn't manage cognitive work effectively.

I prefer to define leadership as: "Embedding the capacity for greatness in the people and practices of the organization and decoupling it from the personality of the leader." (Marquet, 2019). I wish I could claim that I came up with that but, I didn't. The leadership philosophy I subscribe to is something referred to as the Leader-Leader model. This structure is based on different assumptions about the workforce. Everyone can be a leader, and the organization is most effective when everyone thinks and acts like a leader. This model treats our members as valued assets and increases individual motivation which contributes to greater organizational success. In addition, the organizational improvements that come with the Leader-Leader philosophy tend to be long lasting because they are not dependent on a single leader's skill or charisma. Leaders develop throughout the organization.

The usual response when I begin to explain my philosophy is something along the lines of, "That will create anarchy!" or "Well, who's in charge then?" It is important to understand that the leadership structure doesn't change, company officers, chief officers, and managers are still charged with the oversight of and accountability for their respective areas of responsibility. What changes is how we lead.

Upcoming Events:

All Hands Wage and Benefit meetings via Teams:
March 27 9:00
March 28 10:00
March 29 9:00

Board Meetings:

March 25th

CVFD 16:00
CYFD 16:30
CAFMA 17:00

Motivation: The Driving Force Behind Our Actions

By: Kendra Cherry, MSEd

The term motivation describes *why* a person does something. It is the driving force behind human actions. Motivation is the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviors.

For instance, motivation is what helps you lose extra weight, or pushes you to get that promotion at work. In short, motivation causes you to act in a way that gets you closer to your goals. Motivation includes the biological, emotional, social, and cognitive forces that activate human behavior.

Motivation also involves factors that direct and maintain goal-directed actions. Although, such motives are rarely directly observable. As a result, we must often infer the reasons why people do the things that they do based on observable behaviors.¹

Learn the types of motivation that exist and how we use them in our everyday lives. And if it feels like you've lost your motivation, do not worry. There are many ways to develop or improve your self-motivation levels.

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The Assistant Chief's Desk Continued

The Leader-Leader philosophy teaches personnel to be successful by building a foundation in three specific areas, the first being technical competency. Technical competency is having the knowledge and ability to apply specific principles to accomplish the job. It's often referred to as the "what" and "how" of performing a task. Most of us have a good understanding of this. Technical competency is espoused from day one at the Academy and continuously emphasized for the duration of our career. However, technical competency is no less critical in the administrative arena. Training, coaching, and mentoring are crucial to personnel development whether we are in the field or in the office. Every day we should be improving our understanding of all aspects of our craft.

The second tenet of the Leader-Leader model is organizational clarity. It's imperative that our members understand the mission, vision, and values of the organization. We are fortunate here at CAFMA to have these clearly articulated in the Compass. This becomes the "Why we do things the way we do and when we do". It's also vitally important that the member not only understands their role in the organization, but also the roles above and below them. This allows the firefighter, engineer, or staff member to anticipate the needs of the company officer or manager in a given situation and move to fulfill them without having to be told. If a member is technically competent and has good organizational clarity, they'll make good decisions for the right reasons.

The third piece of the Leader-Leader puzzle is control. It's not what you're thinking, though. In this arena we decentralize control and push the authority to where the information is. It's well known that the person who often has the best information about the work is the one doing the work. In this situation the information comes up and the authority goes down and we accomplish this by replacing orders with intent. Rather than simply telling our members what to do, we have them tell us what they intend to do. As time goes on and competence and clarity continue to evolve the "why" is added. This seems very simple in concept but in fact, it's a very powerful nuance of communication. This process of replacing orders with intent creates enormous psychological ownership.

When I was a company officer you would have been hard pressed to be able to tell who was in charge of the crew by watching our deployment on a scene. Very rarely did I give direction or specific objectives and orders to my crew. I most often offered strategic guidance and let them do the work that they were trained to do; I simply didn't have to direct staging or deployment. They thoroughly understood not only their responsibilities and tasks but also those of the position above and below. Deployment and operation were routinely quick, efficient, and seamless. When the situation required that we pivot, I gave new guidance, the crew adapted, and there was no issue.

As a Battalion Chief, I applied this thought process to a larger arena. I trained with my company officers on the three tenets described earlier and I had them work with their crews in the same way. This paid huge dividends. As an incident commander I used markedly less radio traffic to manage the scene because the crews were already leaning the right way before I gave direction. They were technically competent and had good clarity. Another unexpected benefit was promotional success. For many years, the vast majority of promotions within our organization came from the ranks of personnel who subscribed to the Leader-Leader philosophy with their crews.

Moving from field operations into administration, I found that this approach again worked well. I was now supervising chief officers who were exceptionally competent and had great organizational clarity. They readily took to this approach and enjoyed the freedom and ownership that it offered. They became more engaged and seemed more interested in the "work" again. In working with my professional administrative staff, I also enjoyed great success with this style of leadership, as administrative work is largely cognitive work. I was fortunate to have several very skilled and highly intelligent professionals who absolutely thrived in this leadership environment. The hardest part was getting them to stop asking for permission. Once they figured out that I meant what I said about leadership they were off to the races.

While the philosophy is easy to describe it's much harder to implement. For most of my career I was trained to tell people what to do and how to do it. It was a significant paradigm shift to not give orders; I stumbled more than once, and the process was initially quite uncomfortable for me. However, progress is made by stepping outside your comfort zone, and I was fortunate that my engine company was intelligent and experienced and genuinely enjoyed the new approach. They were beginning to see the benefits as well and they stuck with me through our social experiment. It took about a year for us all to become comfortable with it, but in the end, it was completely worth it. Once I saw the first success in

the field, I was always excited to apply this leadership style to new areas as my positions or assignments changed.

If you're interested in learning more about intent based leadership, check out the book, *Turn the Ship Around!: A True story of turning Followers into Leaders* by US Navy Captain(ret) L. David Marquet. This was one of the most useful books I have ever read in my career.
