

Discovering Promotional Testing Options for the Mount Vernon Fire Department

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A research project submitted to the Ohio Fire Executive Program

27 February 2017

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that the following statements are true:

1. This paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

2. I have affirmed the use of proper spelling and grammar in this document by using the spell and grammar check functions of a word processing software program and correcting the errors as suggested by the program.

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ABSTRACT

The problem with the Mount Vernon Fire Department's promotional process is that it has almost exclusively relied on a generic multiple-choice examination to select new fire officers. Given the limited number of possible candidates, and the potential influence of each new officer at this small fire department, further vetting of fire officers could have a significant impact on the future of the organization. The purpose of this research project was to identify additional methods of assessment and present them to the Mount Vernon Safety Service Director for use in future fire department promotions.

This project included historical and descriptive research which utilized historical files, relevant open-source literature, and an internet survey to address the following four questions: (1) What relevant promotional testing options and procedures exist under municipal civil service law within the state of Ohio? (2) What criteria have the City of Mount Vernon and other non-chartered Ohio municipalities used in the past to determine fire officer promotions? (3) What promotional procedures most effectively identify the best officer candidates? (4) What monetary costs and time commitments are needed to complete the various promotional testing options?

The results of the literature research and a 31 question survey distributed to 27 comparable municipalities indicated that the City of Mount Vernon has several promotional testing process options available for use. The resulting recommendations argue that incorporating any number of these options into future promotional examinations would improve the fire officer selection process and have a positive impact on the fire department.

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem that this study addressed was identifying possible promotional selection procedures for the Mount Vernon Fire Department.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to present the Mount Vernon Safety Service Director with viable procedural options for use in future fire department promotions. Through the use of historical and descriptive research, the author attempted to identify relevant, cost effective, and legal promotional procedures that have consistently identified the best fire officer candidates in Civil Service municipalities like Mount Vernon.

Research Questions

The following questions were answered with historical and descriptive research:

1. What relevant promotional testing options and procedures exist under municipal civil service law within the state of Ohio?
2. What criteria have the City of Mount Vernon and other non-chartered Ohio municipalities used in the past to determine fire officer promotions?
3. What promotional procedures most effectively identify the best officer candidates?
4. What monetary costs and time commitments are needed to complete the various promotional testing options?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Mount Vernon Fire Department, located 40 minutes northeast of Columbus, Ohio was originally formed in 1849 to protect a small town of 3,000 from fire conflagration. In 2016 the department had a \$4.2 million operating budget and provided a variety of safety and emergency services for the City of Mount Vernon and three adjacent townships. Its 39-person roster consisted of 30 responding paramedic-firefighters, six shift officers, and three administrative officer positions. This team of professionals was responsible for a population of over 23,000 unevenly dispersed over 55 square miles in rural Ohio.

Leadership is a key element in any modern organization, and this is especially true in a busy fire department. During 2015, the Mount Vernon Fire Department responded to nearly 5,000 requests for emergency services. The majority of these situations were mitigated from two stations utilizing a combination of nine on-duty responders, two fire engines, three EMS vehicles, and a command truck. A captain and lieutenant provided daily operational supervision and resource coordination. The fire chief, fire prevention officer, and EMS lieutenant focused mainly on administrative duties. Because of the department's small size, leadership positions were not limited in scope. The nine sworn officers accepted a wide range of roles which caused them to perform as administrators, technical experts, mentors, and disciplinarians...sometimes, all in the same day. These few individuals possessed a tremendous amount of responsibility and authority. Therefore, the proper selection process for these positions was critical.

The City of Mount Vernon had consistently exercised, but not developed, its fire officer promotional system. Over the previous sixteen years, the Mount Vernon Fire Department replaced its entire officer corps with new personnel and added a new lieutenant position. Since 2000, there were 28 promotional opportunities within the Mount Vernon Fire Department which

included five fire chief examinations, five assistant chief examinations, six captain examinations, and eight lieutenant examinations. 86% of the resulting promotions were determined entirely by seniority credit and a multiple-choice test. The individual with the highest aggregate score was simply promoted without further vetting.

Only 3 of the 24 aforementioned examination processes (12.5%) utilized an assessment center (conducted by the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association) to augment the officer selection process. The city approved the first two assessment centers after the fire chief petitioned their inclusion. The city insisted on the third assessment center even though only one candidate passed the prerequisite written examination. Although written tests satisfied the minimum requirements for fire department promotions in the state of Ohio, there were other methods of examination which could have been employed to acquire a better measurement of the officer candidates. Budget constraints did not prevent additional in-depth selection processes in any of the 24 examinations.

Mount Vernon was a non-chartered city that operates under the statutory form of municipal government and was therefore subject to Civil Service law determined at the state level. The mayor appointed three members to the Civil Service Commission for six year terms. In 2016, the three sitting members were Scott Craig originally appointed in 2012 (term ends 8/16/18), a real estate agent with Re/Max Stars, David Rigg originally appointed in 1995 (term ends 9/12/22), president of an aviation insurance firm, and Katie Peterson originally appointed in 2016 (term ends 11/20/20), a resource development coordinator with the local United Way chapter. The mayor also appointed the current Civil Service Administrator, Tony Deluliis. Mr. Deluliis was a retired public high school principal.

The three members of the Civil Service Commission met on an "as needed" basis and were responsible for administering and enforcing Ohio Civil Service laws. More specifically,

“the Municipal Civil Service Commission shall administer all appointments and promotions in the civil service of the city. They shall be made according to merit and fitness, to be ascertained, as far as practicable, by competitive examinations” (Deluliis, 2016). Historically, the Administrator simply posted job openings and acted as proctor during written examinations. There were no records to support that any of the appointed Civil Service Commission personnel provided any directives or recommendations regarding fire department promotional testing. The only related commission activity discovered involved making minor edits to fire department job descriptions, per the suggestion of the fire chief.

The Mount Vernon Civil Service Commission was responsible for fire department promotions per Section 124.45 of the Ohio Revised Code. This section clearly stated that officer vacancies “in a fire department shall be filled by competitive promotional examination” and those examinations “shall relate to those matters that test the ability of the person examined to discharge the particular duties of the position sought.” The code went on to state that, at a minimum, this process “shall include a written test component” (2007-2016).

Determining the potential success of officer candidates by utilizing fair and objective methods was an extremely difficult task. Those responsible for making these types of determinations should not have relied on a single form of assessment. Ohio law clearly stated a minimum examination requirement (a written test), but did not expressly limit other fire officer selection process possibilities. The Mount Vernon Civil Service Commission was not progressive in the discharge of these examination duties. As stated earlier, the fire department used this minimum requirement to select 86% of its officers over the last sixteen years. Although a written test may have measured an individual’s ability to recall or recognize data, it did not assess the myriad of other functions that were required of a successful fire officer. The purpose

of this research was to identify other methods of examination that could be included in the promotional process. Ideally, the findings will be used to select better potential officers in future promotions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the City of Mount Vernon was a non-chartered municipality that operated under the statutory form of government, the simplest areas to begin this research were within state and federal laws and labor departments. A search of relevant codes and regulations was conducted in order to establish the limits, intent, and constraints of Civil Service promotional law.

At the state level, the most relevant sources of information were the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) and the state constitution. Section 124 of the Ohio Revised Code (2007-2016) simply outlined the minimum promotion standards accepted by municipal civil service law. The legalistic writing style provided the expected applicable definitions, directives, and timelines. It also addressed individual time-in-grade/time-in-service minimums, mandatory written portions, the application of seniority credit, military service absences, and the optional inclusion of previous efficiency ratings. Unfortunately, Section 124 did not expound on the intent, history, or purpose of the basic law. Only a short 1912 addition to Ohio's Constitution (2015) addressed the spirit of promotions within the state's civil service. Specifically, the Constitution stated that promotions "be made according to merit and fitness...by competitive exams" (2015, p. 116). These two examples established that promotional processes must be fair and competitive, but did not specify any limitations to the examinations.

Although the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (29 CFR Part 1607, 2015) was written at the federal level, its review seemed pertinent to this research project. The intent of this document was to establish a simple set of principles that satisfy federal regulations and requirements related to employee testing and selection in any employment decision. The list of topics included a section dedicated to promotional processes. Among other items, the guidelines addressed discrimination avoidance and the use of valid procedures when making

promotional decisions in merit based systems like civil service. Again, no specific examples were used because this document was meant to be used as a guideline rather than a set of defined procedures. It should be noted, however, that the principles outlined were influential enough to be adopted by the Equal Employment Commission, the (Federal) Civil Service Commission, the Department of Labor, and the Department of Justice.

An online search of the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) was a conducted as a final attempt to include more legitimate federal input. The author found that the DOL Employment and Training Administration has produced some extensive assessment guidelines for American employers. Saad, Carter, Rothenberg, and Israelson (2000) categorized thirteen principles of job related assessments and broke down the essential concepts into a format that can be used by managers and human resource professionals. They explained how to legally select, implement, interpret, and apply assessment procedures in the workplace. Maranto and McKenzie (2006) expanded on this previous work by adapting it to the concept of workforce investment. Essentially, Maranto and McKenzie filled the gap between decision assessment centers with a continuous, progressive assessment through counseling, training and career development. Both Department of Labor works focused on assessment tools involving “traditional knowledge and ability tests, personality and interest inventories, and work samples or performance tests” (Marento & McKenzie, 2006, p. 2). Once again, a government agency provided two additional sets of principles to assist an organization in developing relevant examinations, but no specific procedures.

Next the author turned to the standardization body of the United States’ fire service, the National Fire Protection Association, in order to identify potential examination criteria. While NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications (2014) is not an enforced

regulation in Ohio, it is an industry standard that establishes minimum ethical, experience, and performance requirements for fire officers. The publication addressed seven areas of officer development that should be considered when selecting personnel for higher levels of responsibility. They were: human resource management, community and government relations, administration, inspection and investigation, emergency service delivery, health and safety, and emergency management. These seven areas could be used as an outline for creating a more comprehensive promotional testing system.

As the American fire service's national labor union, the International Association of Fire Fighters [IAFF] possessed a vested interest in addressing fire officer promotions. The theme throughout their documentation on fire officer promotions focused on demonstrated competencies and fairness. In the organization's human relations manual, the IAFF stated several times that it "stands strongly in support of the hiring and promotion of fire fighters on the basis of their skill, ability, and merit" (IAFF, 2008, p. 12). The national union preferred the use of multiple assessment centers combined with multiple trained assessors over other promotion selectors (IAFF, 1998).

Although the IAFF acknowledged other common evaluation criteria such as written exams, seniority, interviews, and performance ratings, these measures were considered too subjective and disputable. An exam taker might have a bad day or be a poor test taker. Seniority does not insure competency, and interviewers are inherently biased. Performance ratings predominantly focus on subjective criteria and often reflect the rated "employees' reputations rather than their actual job performance" (IAFF, 1998, p. 37).

Historical research was used to ascertain what procedures have been used in previous Mount Vernon Fire Department promotional examinations. A public information request was

initiated through the Mount Vernon Civil Service Commission resulting in an in-office interview with the current Civil Service Administrator, Tony Deluliis. A thorough document review established that the Commission's fire department promotional files (2000-2015) were incomplete at best. Contradictory and misdated closed competitive examination postings were marked with the handwritten notes of previous civil service administrators and former fire chiefs. Oftentimes several revisions had to be combined with historical Mount Vernon Fire Department annual reports (2006-2015) in order to gather a comprehensive picture of the promotional process for a particular officer vacancy. These primary source documents lacked the depth and detailed information needed for more substantive reporting.

Historical research was applied to the last five labor agreements between Local 3712 and the City of Mount Vernon. This analysis identified that changes to the promotional process have not been formally negotiated within the last fifteen years. The only portion of the labor management agreements that specifically mentioned fire officer promotions fell under the "probationary periods" section (Local 3712, 2000-2015). The wording simply obligated a newly promoted officer to serve in a probationary status for one hundred and eighty days but made no reference to any officer selection requirements. This was a significant finding because it illustrated the lack of attention given to this subject by both the administration and the labor union over the last fifteen years.

Riccucci and Riccardelli conducted an "extensive review of civil service law" (2015, p. 355) across the United States and a number of major cities. Their purpose was to ascertain if the use of written exams was a major contributor to the racially unequal representation of minorities in civil service, specifically police and fire. Riccucci and Riccardelli also touched on the use of alternate promotional testing methods like assessment centers and discuss whether the outcomes

successfully counter the racial bias of typical written examinations (2015). This article began to reveal the negatives that have become associated with written examinations such as racial and socio-economic bias. Although the Mount Vernon Department's recent promotional examinations have not included minority candidates, Riccucci's and Riccardelli's work demonstrated the need for civil service organizations to develop more inclusive testing procedures. Specifically ones that assess the candidates ability to complete or learn job related tasks.

Another researcher, Dr. Roberts, a 35-year political science professor at James Madison University explored the implications of recent U.S. Supreme Court rulings regarding civil service testing and test certification. He reported that fire department promotions across the United States that were based solely on written examinations were being criticized for racial discrimination. Roberts explained how a 2009 Supreme Court case (*Ricci vs. Destefano*) made it harder for municipalities to help correct the promotional bias mentioned above, while at the same time calling into question the fairness of the written testing processes (2010). Roberts went on to explain how civil service municipalities attempted to correct the situation by including additional evaluations including fire simulations, oral presentations, and in-basket exercises. The intent was to get a better measurement of officer candidates because "a fire officer's job involves complex behaviors, good interpersonal skills, the ability to make decisions under tremendous pressure, and a host of other abilities – none of which is easily measured by a written multiple choice test" (Roberts, 2010, p. 588). Both articles made it clear that promotions primarily based on written examinations have been under legal scrutiny for some time and no easy solutions to the problem have been discovered.

Several articles explored the benefits of utilizing non-written examinations such as job related testing, performance based assessments, and simulations. Salem and Ellis conducted a research project on the effects of in-basket testing on a group of twenty male Texas police officers competing on a promotional exam for sergeant (1981). They found that a combination of cognitive testing, in-basket testing, and supervisory observation seemed to produce the best candidates for advancement (Salem & Ellis, 1981). Although utilizing performance measures to determine future leadership potential seemed like a logical process to Julnes and Holzer, their study showed that most state and local governments shied away from the practice. Government agencies preferred to use less effective written examinations. They found that political and cultural influences in government organizations still prevented the transition to more effective promotional processes (2001).

Organizational budgets may impact how promotional selection occurs. Motowidlo, Dunette, and Carter, (1990) studied the responses of 120 entry-level managers in the telecommunications industry and discovered that low budget simulations are very effective indicators of future performance. Rather than reproduce expensive, labor intensive, and time consuming scenarios, the researchers identified eight necessary managerial skills needed to resolve interpersonal issues and perform effective problem solving. Then, using input from over 100 supervisors they created simple situational questions based on actual incidents that resulted in managerial success or failure. The candidates' responses to these multiple choice questions were proven just as indicative of future performance as more expensive assessment centers. This was the only published peer-reviewed article that the author found which contradicted the overwhelming negative opinion of written tests. It was included as a counter to other selections.

Although not fire service related, Hogan and Zenke (1986) performed another study that addressed the cost-benefit of alternate examination methods. They analyzed the selection procedures for seven school principal positions. The 115 candidates were divided into four different selection methods. The first consisted of a series of interviews over several days. The second method was a two-day assessment center involving tests, interviews, and writing assignments while the third was merely a number of performance exercises. “The fourth alternative measure was a short paper and pencil personality measure of managerial potential” (Hogan & Zenke, 1986, p. 938). Their cost benefit analysis included numerous unexpected findings. For example, Hogan and Zenke discovered that the most widely used process, the traditional job interview, was not only the costliest, but also the least effective form of selecting a school administrator.

This final article was not fire service based either, but it addressed the concept of promotions based on previous work history. Hough (1984) introduced the “accomplishment record” method of selection and promotion. She attempted to validate whether a professional’s past achievements could effectively be used to determine future success. Hough subjected 307 attorneys to her analysis of their behavior, records, psychological batteries, and professional development. Although her accomplishment record method did not actually predict potential, it did make the participants more aware of their successes and the reasons behind those accomplishments. Therefore, those who completed the study were far more likely to succeed because they had conducted an extensive self-assessment which encouraged them to correct their shortcomings.

In summary, the literature review revealed several important factors that will ultimately contribute to the fire department’s follow-on decision making research on the subject of

promotional examinations. First, state and federal law provided guidance but very little procedure concerning department promotions. Second, government and fire industry labor organizations demonstrated support for well-rounded officer selection processes but failed to provide examples or specifics. Third, there is no document indication that either the City of Mount Vernon or the Mount Vernon Fire Department ever reviewed, assessed, or discussed the topic of developing more effective fire officer promotional processes. Finally, the ten peer-reviewed articles indicated that although written tests satisfied minimum legal requirements, their value as the sole officer selection factor was lacking. Additionally, it was both possible and legal to incorporate additional relevant and cost-effective exercises into a non-chartered civil service system. The literature review supported the premise of this research project to identify other promotional examination options.

PROCEDURES

This research project began with four simple questions regarding promotional testing as it related to the Mount Vernon Fire department. (1) What are we allowed to do? (2) What have we done? (3) What have others done? (4) What are the associated costs? What was ultimately documented in this paper is the result of the Ohio Fire Executive research methodology.

In order to determine what promotional testing options and procedures were available to municipalities governed by civil service law, an internet search of applicable legal sources was conducted. An ascending level of government approach was used beginning with the fire departments labor contract and any local municipal civil service rules. Next a search for information was conducted at the state level. Unfortunately, the Ohio Revised and Administrative Codes only established minimum requirements and did not offer insight into more comprehensive selection processes. Finally, an extensive internet search at the national level involved the National Fire Protection Agency, the International Association of Fire Fighters, and the United States Departments of Labor and Personnel Management.

Discovering what procedures have been used for fire officer promotions in Mount Vernon and other civil service municipalities involved various research methods. Defining the City of Mount Vernon's past promotional practices required paging through the fire department's historical records and making formal requests of the Civil Service Commission. An in-house historical records review was conducted for all promotional tests conducted within the last fifteen years. Missing data led to a formal public information request and a meeting with the City of Mount Vernon Civil Service Commission Administrator. At the conclusion of this information consolidation, all testing instances included some form of written testing and appeared to satisfy the letter of the written law.

A two-part, internet-based survey of similar sized Ohio civil service municipalities was conducted in order to discover what effective promotional processes were used to determine their current officer corps. These communities were chosen by government type and population. Ohio Municipal League open-source documents identified 27 non-chartered Ohio municipalities with 2010 census populations between 10,000 and 25,000.

Part one of the survey consisted of questions involving selection criteria such as professional experience, personal education and certifications, written examinations, assessment centers, interviews, previous performance evaluations, and the weighting of those testing components. Part two focused on the chief officers' assessment of the promotional processes effectiveness and outcome satisfaction. The intent of this two-part survey was to provide real-world application and feedback for an academic research project.

A brief introductory letter and a link to a 31 question internet survey were emailed to fire chiefs in the following 27 Ohio communities:

Table 1

Non-Chartered Ohio Municipalities: Population 10,000-25,000 (2010 Census)

Alliance	Coshocton	Reading
Amherst	Dover	Salem
Athens	East Liverpool	Sharonville
Bellefontaine	Fremont	Struthers
Bucyrus	Greenville	Troy
Cambridge	Marietta	Van Wert
Celina	New Philadelphia	Wadsworth
Chillicothe	Niles	Wilmington
Circleville	Norwood	Zanesville

Only seven chief officers responded within the first two weeks. A reminder was emailed and five additional surveys were completed. One department indicated that it had not experienced any promotional examinations within the last five years and exercised to opt out of the survey. At the four-week mark, those departments who had not responded received a final reminder from Survey Monkey. Additionally, the author emailed these fifteen chiefs directly from his personal account, and he discovered three of the contacts were no longer in service. Ultimately, seventeen of the twenty-seven surveys (63%) were completed in full. The survey is discussed extensively in this paper's results section, and individual survey question results are listed in Appendix 3.

Finding professional peer reviewed journals analyzing the current policies and best practices of civil service organizations proved difficult at best. The author used OhioLINK's Electronic Journal Center to search a database consisting of over 10,000 academic journals for any research conducted on fire officer promotions.

The finally step of this research project was to discover associated costs for the above-mentioned promotional selection processes. Eight testing companies were initially contacted and requests were made for fees schedules. Only one organization refused to provide information for this research project. The actual letter is posted at the end of this document as Appendix 2. It should also be noted that most agencies chose not to publicize their rates online. Therefore, direct communication was required to obtain information relevant to this study. All seven of professional testing institutions that responded did so by telephone in order to clarify the intent of the project and discuss pricing. Requested documentation was emailed and mailed to the author.

All of the original eight testing organizations were given the same parameters:

- A minimum of two and a maximum of ten candidates
- Single testing event, not a reoccurring contract
- Off the shelf written exam
- Custom written exam
- Assessment center
- Oral board
- Psychological evaluation

The following is a list of testing venders that were contacted:

- Industrial/Organizational Solutions, Inc.
- C.O.P.S. and F.I.R.E. Personnel Testing Service
- The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association
- McCann Associates
- Fire Service Testing Company, Inc.
- Ergometrics & Applied Personnel Research, Inc.
- EB Jacobs, LLC
- Fire & Police Selection, Inc.

The examination options and their associated costs acquired in this final step were processed and presented as generic options. The intent was to provide enough information to illicit meaningful discussion while remaining generic enough to prevent testing predispositions. Again, the purpose of this research project was to provide options, not create a decision-making matrix.

Definition of Terms

Assessment centers. Promotional candidates executing situation exercises and/or tests while being evaluated by assessors. These exercises were devised to measure job-related skills and to test these skills in ‘real-life’ situations that may confront the applicants at the higher level position (International Association of Fire Fighters [IAFF], 2008, p. 36).

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations that could have profoundly affected the results of this study. First, there were few available professional peer reviewed studies on the subject of fire department promotions within the civil service system and the author found only vague government parameters. Therefore, there were no clear examples of best practices or legal boundaries to research.

Incomplete documentation and historical records at the Mount Vernon Civil Service office required the author to rely on the fire department membership’s memory to fill data gaps. Organizational archives did not exist. It was possible that fire department incorporated a variety of examination practices in the past, but there were no records to support this, and the majority of the current fire department members possessed less seniority than the author.

In regard to the online survey, only municipal population, department size, and local form of government were used to select the 27 fire departments. Budget, available resources, organizational structure, run type/volume, and contracts for service all could have influenced the outcomes of this survey. Additionally, only 63% of the surveys were completed.

Finally, the competitive nature, fiscal constraints, and legal implications of the professional testing agencies affected the discovery of available examination practices. Several agencies openly adjust the scale of their services in reaction to changes in demand from budget-

conscious fire departments. Some high dollar examination options were only revealed during telephone conversations with senior staff.

RESULTS

Question One

What relevant promotional tasting options and procedures exist under municipal civil service law within the state of Ohio?

The short, simple, legal answer to this question can be found in Section 124.45, paragraph 4, of the Ohio Revised Code.

“Promotional examinations for positions within a fire department shall relate to those matters that test the ability of the person examined to discharge the particular duties of the position sought, shall include a written testing component, and, in examinations for positions requiring the operation of machines or equipment, may include practical demonstration tests of the operation of those machines or equipment as a part of the examination.”

The remainder of section 124.45 requires the addition of seniority credit and the option to include credit from the previous year’s efficiency ratings (ORC, 2016).

No records were found that would indicate the City of Mount Vernon, or its Civil Service Commission, has made any attempts to modify or clarify the administration of promotional examinations as presented by the Ohio Revised Code, Section

Question Two

What have the City of Mount Vernon and other non-chartered Ohio municipalities used in the past to determine fire officer promotions?

The City of Mount Vernon has conducted twenty-four fire officer examinations since 2000. The Ohio Fire Chiefs’ Association was brought in on three (13%) occasions to administer a written test based on local information, documentation, and procedures. Candidates that passed the Ohio Fire Chiefs’ written test then participated in an assessment center consisting of an interview, ethical decision making, a tactical scenario, group dynamics, a writing exercise, and time management/prioritization evaluation. The Civil Service Administrator determined the

candidates' rankings by adding the individuals' seniority credit to an average of their written test and their assessment center scores.

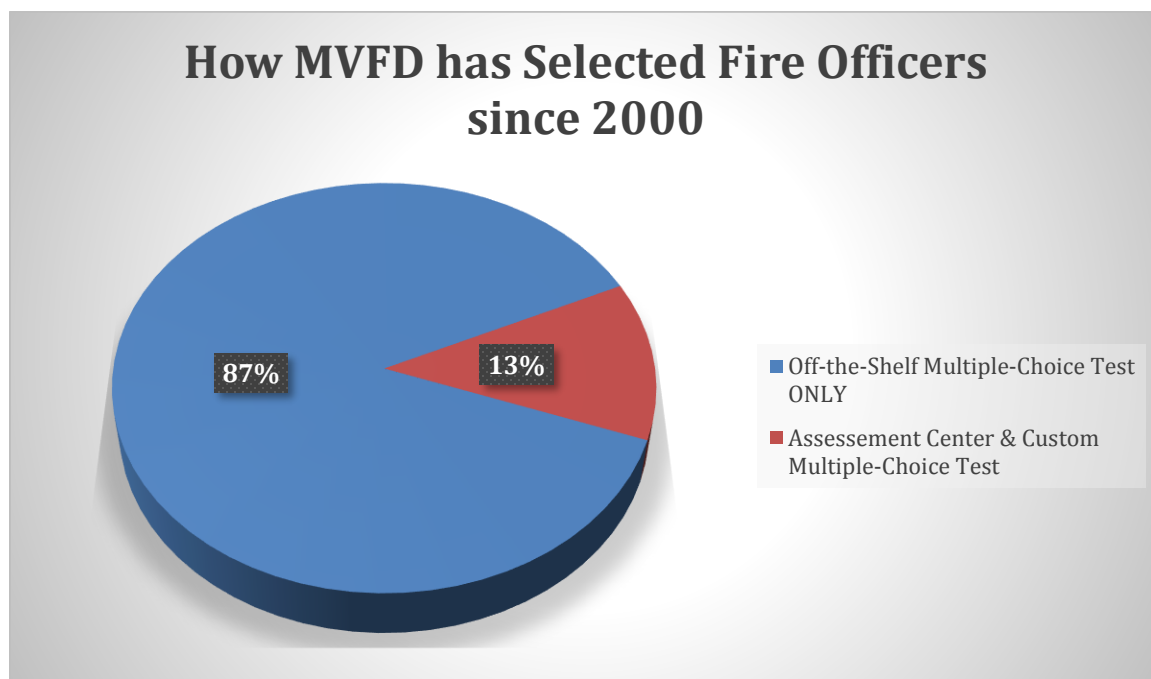


Figure 1.
Comparison of MVFD promotional examinations from 2000 to 2015.

For the remaining twenty-one (87%) Mount Vernon fire officer evaluations, the Civil Service administered multiple-choice tests based on fire industry-related books. The fire chief selected three and seven books with topics ranging from customer care, to building construction, to finance, to fire ground tactics. IO Solutions, Inc. or the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association then created generic written examinations from these selections. Fire officer candidates achieving a passing score then received additional credit based on the seniority calculations described in ORC 124.45. Candidates were numerically ranked without any additional input.

Although permitted by Ohio law, none of the Mount Vernon Fire Department's last twenty-four promotional examinations included the candidates' previous efficiency ratings.

Part one of the aforementioned online survey was completed by seventeen comparable Ohio fire departments. It revealed that the fire chiefs usually (65%) exerted the most influence on the fire officer promotional processes. The results also showed that a majority (59%) of the respondents have relied on a written test to determine fire officer selections. Although sixteen of the seventeen departments (94%) used a multiple choice format for their written tests, ten (59%) chose to develop a custom examination rather than depend on an “off the shelf” test. These custom examinations included labor management agreements (18%), EMS protocols (12%), local policies/work rules (18%), and departmental standard operating guidelines and procedures (35%).

Two respondents (12%) used their written tests as a selection process gate. Candidates either passed or failed. Those who passed were permitted to continue to the assessment center, but their written scores were not mathematically calculated into their final ranking.

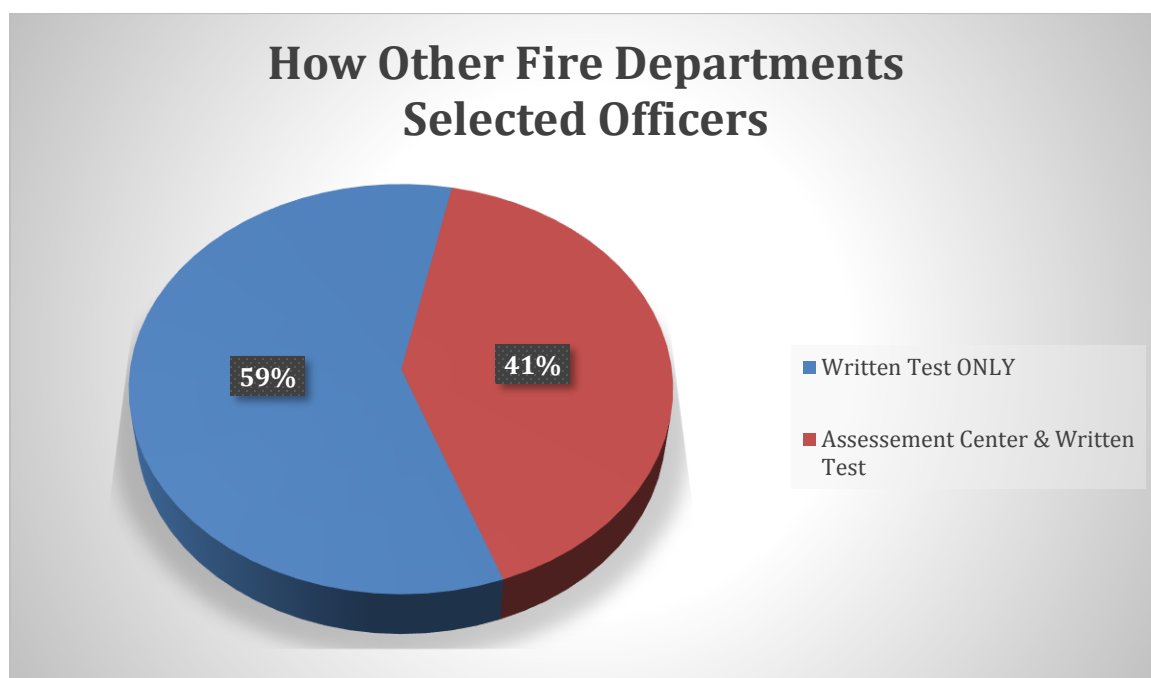


Figure 2.
Comparison of survey respondents' promotional examination elements over the last five years

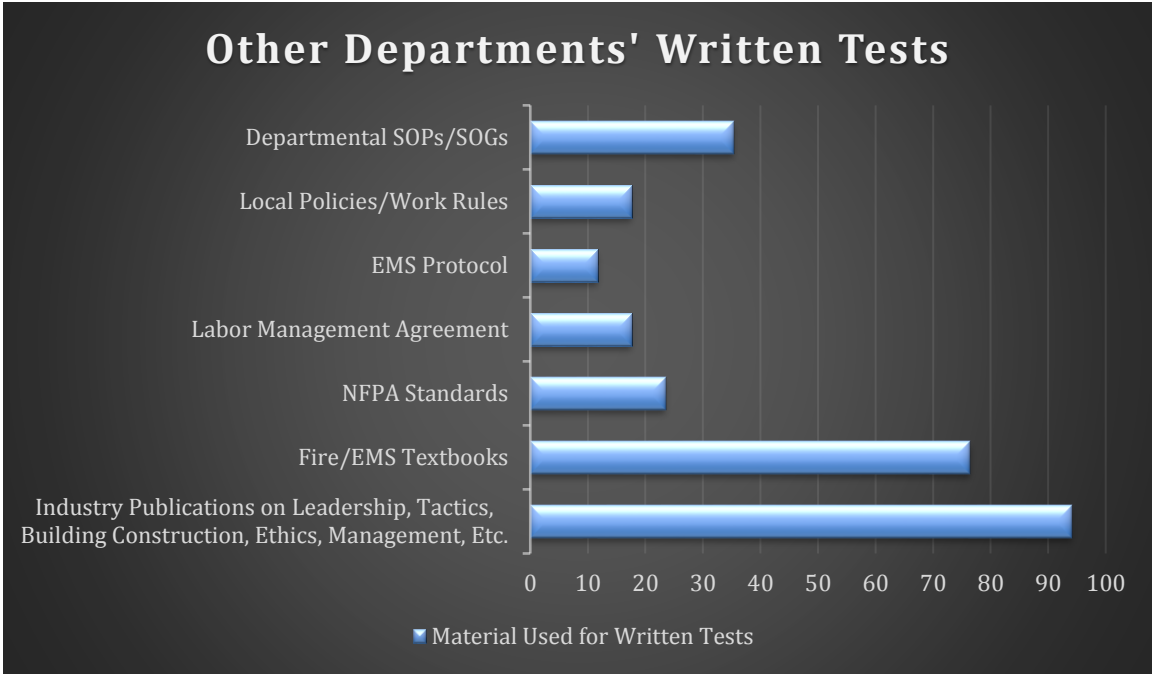


Figure 3.
What other departments have included in their written tests within the last five years.

All ten (100%) of the departments that had conducted assessment centers as part of their promotional examination out-sourced this process to a third party. Although this research identified nine potential assessment center categories, only the tactical scenario exercise was utilized by every department.

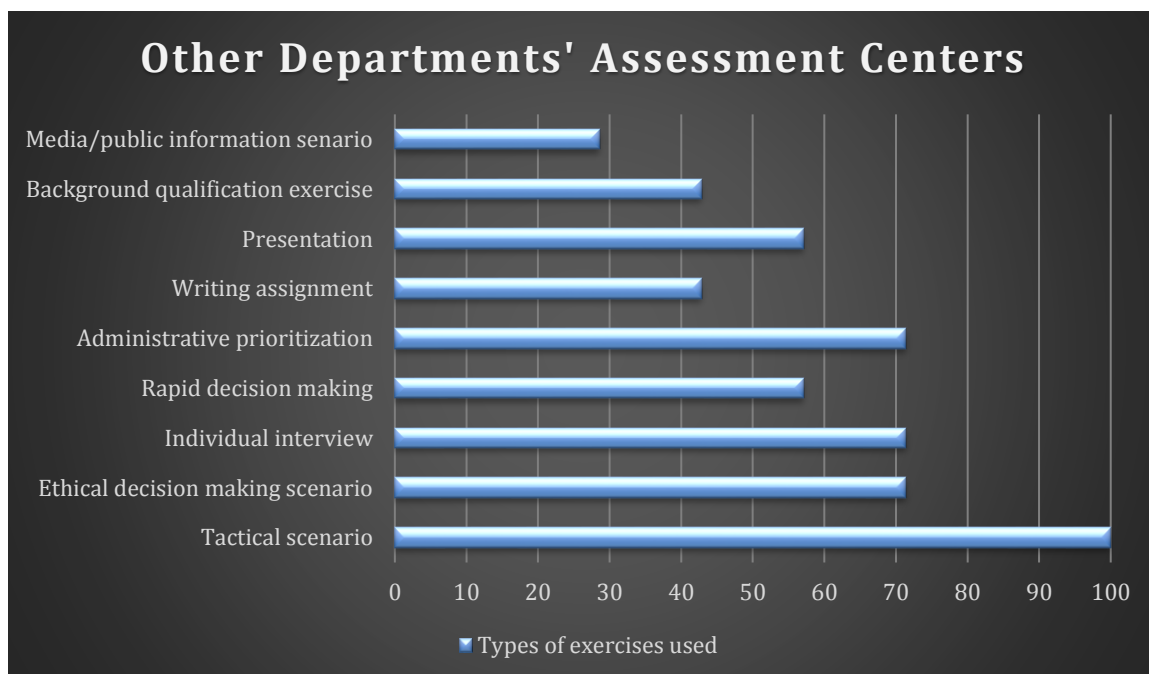


Figure 4.
What other departments have included in their assessment centers within the last five years.

Finally, part one of the survey also included questions regarding the seven examination elements listed in Table 2. Although mentioned in research literary search as acceptable examination options, none of the seventeen respondents used any of these tools to vet their officer candidates.

Table 2

Promotional examination elements discovered during research but NOT used by survey respondents in recent promotions

-
- Additional credit for professional certifications
 - Additional credit for professional or civilian education
 - Psychological evaluations
 - Polygraph evaluations
 - Background investigations
 - Physical fitness, agility, or hands-on assessments
-

Question Three

What promotional procedures most effectively identify the best officer candidates?

Two methods were used to answer this question. The first was a search of industry publications and professional peer-reviewed articles. The most relevant to this research project involved studies on in-basket assessments and situational interviews. These writings supported the trend in the above mentioned guidelines at the national level to make promotional selections based on role-playing assessment centers. There were also few research articles that took legalistic approaches while addressing the use of written civil service examinations. However, these publications seemed more socio-politically motivated rather than performance based.

The second method used to identify the most effect methods of selecting officer candidates involved part two of the online survey. In this portion of the survey, chief officers were asked to critique the methods used in their most recent officer promotions.

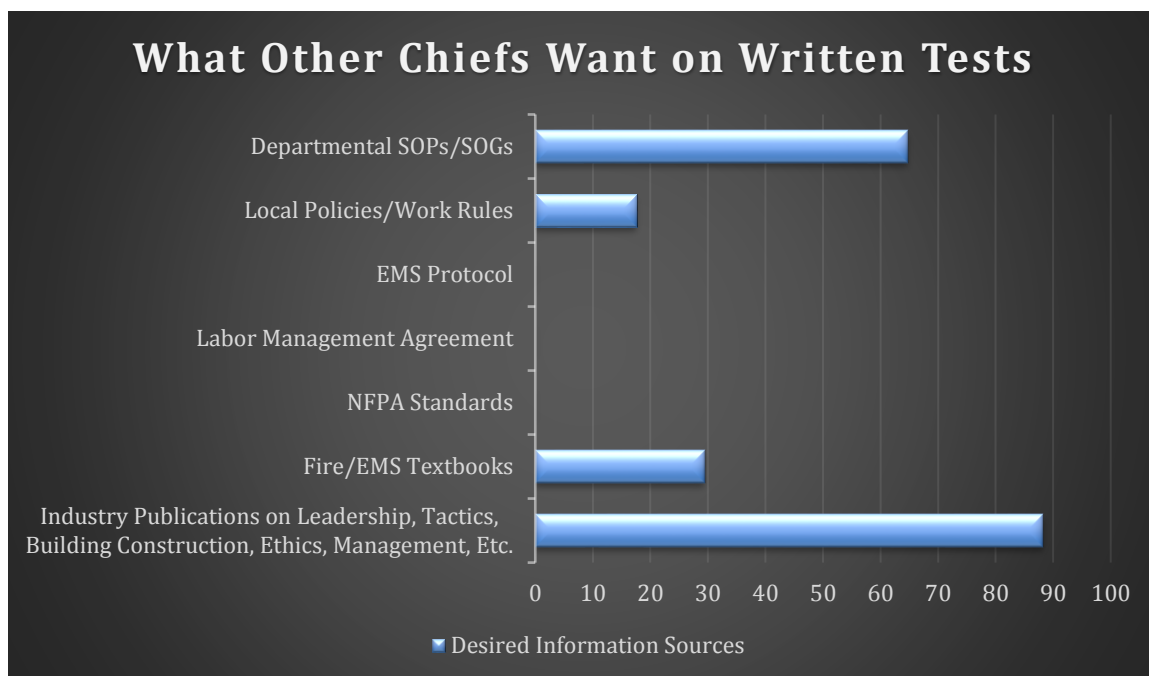


Figure 5.
Survey respondent chiefs identified the TWO (2) most important sources of information for written tests.

The first question asked whether or not their written examinations “adequately assessed” the information a new fire officer required. Nine (53%) responded that their written exams did, while eight (47%) did not believe their tests achieved this.

Less than half (41%) of the respondents used assessment centers to determine officer promotions, however all seventeen surveyed responded to the question which identified the two most effective assessment exercises. The importance of using tactical scenarios to assess fire officer candidates was shared by eleven (65%) chiefs.

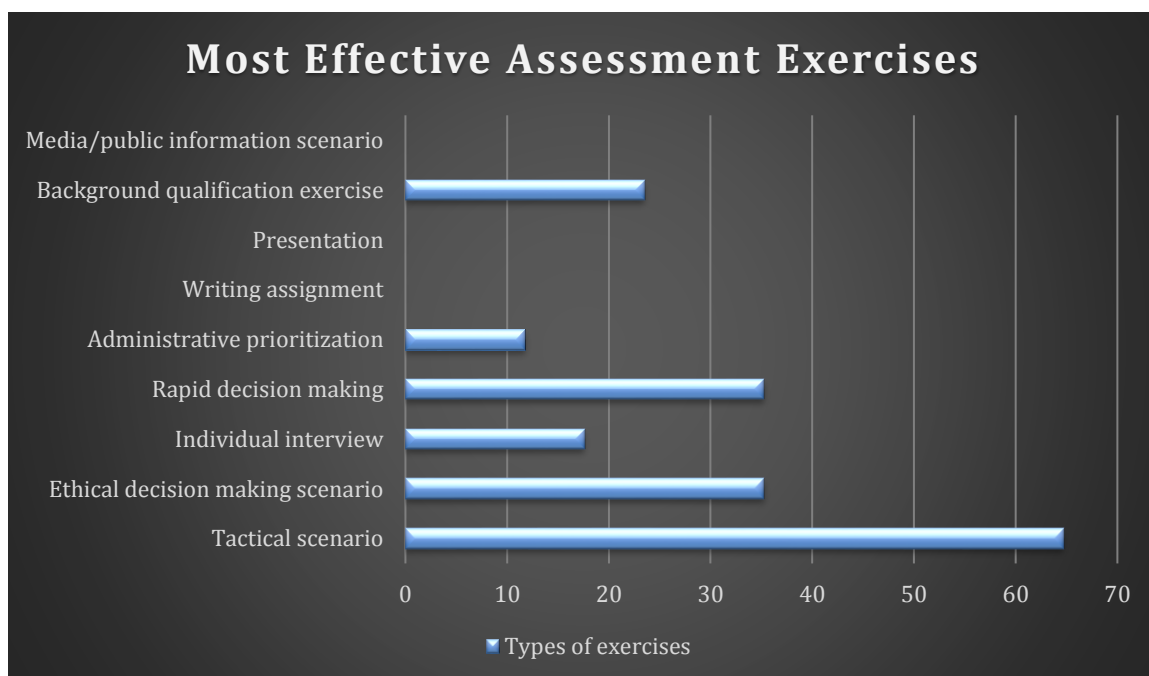


Figure 6.
Survey respondent chiefs selected the **TWO (2)** most effective assessment center exercises for fire officer selection.

Question Four

What monetary costs and time commitments are needed to complete the various promotional testing options?

The seven testing vendors that responded to the author's requests for information offered an assortment of professional promotional examination options specifically developed for the fire service. The data collected was based on the parameters established by the author's letter titled "Request for Pricing Information", which can be found in Appendix 3.

Note that the seven testing organizations submitted rough cost and time estimates based on the verbal and written agreements that their proposals would not be considered contractually binding. Most of the examination and pricing information included confidentially statements that permitted dissemination of to decision makers in the author's organization but prohibited reproduction in public documents such as this research paper. In support of this project's purpose, all relative proposals were made available to the Mount Vernon Safety Service Director.

Officer evaluation packages for two to ten candidates ranged in cost from \$150 to \$17,500 and could take from one to 180 days to complete. Numerous factors influenced time and price determination. These included number of candidates, promotional rank, test development, administration of examination, travel, number of processes included, and overall examination complexity. Most testing agencies charged a base fee and costs rose with increases in candidates and rank. Examination customization had an exponential effect on both required time and final pricing estimates. Some companies offered to administer their products for an additional flat rate, while others included travel costs. All seven responders offered a variety of examination options

that could be selected exclusively or combined with others to form a promotional testing package.

The low end of the time/pricing spectrum consisted of off-the-shelf, multiple-choice tests administered by local officials. All could be administered in one day and costs ranged from \$600 to \$900. These pre-written and legally validated examinations included 50 to 200 questions and were based on generic fire industry standards and widely accepted professional publications. Candidates had the option to purchase study materials through the testing agencies or through third party vendors. Local officials could purchase, administer, and score these standardized tests; saving both time and money while satisfying the minimum Civil Service requirements for fire department promotional examinations.

Developing and administering customized written examinations cost between \$1250 and \$14,000 and could take up to several months. The number of questions, level of customization, and time required to develop a locally relevant written test determined final pricing. The cheapest method involved utilizing an off the shelf test as a base document and including questions from local ordinances, policies, procedures, and contractual agreements. Costs then increased with number of questions and required grading method. For example, scan-able answer sheets cost more to score than fill in the blank and essay answers. Optional candidate test preparation and the creation of applicable study materials also increase final pricing. The most expensive written test involved creating department-specific questions developed from a comprehensive departmental analysis. The comprehensive departmental will be described below.

Assessment center examinations typically consisted of one to five exercises. Most of these could be completed within two days, and overall costs totaled between \$4,500 and \$14,000. Number of scenarios, required resources, test administrator quantity and travel determined

pricing discrepancies between the received proposals. It should also be noted that some professional testing agencies did not offer assessment centers. All that did, however, included a tactical scenario.

Two of the responding testing agencies offered oral board options. One organization charged \$3,500 while the other ranged from \$13,000 to \$16,000. Both oral board descriptions included multiple interview questions created by subject matter experts to assess desired candidate traits and capabilities for the tested position. Oral boards included local officials and third party assessors selected by the testing agency.

Psychological evaluations proposed to identify and categorize certain characteristics that could positively or negatively influence or effect future job performance. These services were only offered by two of the responding organizations. Costs ranged from \$450 to \$850 per fire officer candidate. The less expensive proposal included the option for candidates to be evaluated via video teleconference at no additional cost.

Several of the most expensive and time consuming processes mentioned above involved an initial departmental analysis. This option was reserved for departments committed to developing a comprehensive fire officer promotion program. Testing agencies required multiple site visits in order to perform an objective job analysis, conduct interviews, distribute and collect surveys, and review applicable policies, procedures, and legal issues. This information gathering phase was used to produce accurate job descriptions based on actual functions performed in the local environment. The testing agencies then determined the individual tasks required to successfully complete the functions and what personal characteristics were critical to those processes. Written examinations, assessment centers, and oral boards were then customized to

assess candidates in the realities of their local environment. These one-time services were proposed to cost between \$4,000 and \$17,500.

DISCUSSION

The historical and descriptive research used for this study, in addition to the two-part online survey, supported the findings and views expressed in the literature review. Specifically, the literature review and research identified that the City of Mount Vernon possesses numerous relevant, cost effective, and legal promotional options that should be utilized to identify better fire officer candidates. Ohio law does not prohibit the use of any processes mentioned in the results section of this paper, and over the last five years almost half (41%) of the surveyed fire departments included assessment centers to vet candidates.

The author's original data was collected through a thirty-one question online survey. Responses from seventeen chief officers confirmed that most (59%) of Ohio's small non-chartered municipalities only conducted the minimum state requirement for fire officer promotions: a written examination. Ohio law only limits testing options to those which evaluate capabilities necessary to perform the duties of a fire officer (ORC, 2016). As stated earlier in this paper, fire officers at small departments have a wide range of responsibilities which cause them to perform as administrators, technical experts, mentors, and disciplinarians. Although the procedures must be fair, competitive (Ohio Constitution, 2015), and free of discrimination (29 CFR Part 1607), the promotional process also needs to address more than industry knowledge. It must adequately assess a candidate's skill, ability, and merit (IAFF, 1998) to perform assigned duties.

The ineffectiveness of multiple-choice examinations has been an issue for multiple fire service generations, but they are still the predominate method for promotions. Most (65%) of the surveyed fire chiefs identified the need to improve fire officer promotional process, and most (65%) claimed to possess the influence to do so. Unfortunately, 59% still choose to rely on the

written exam. This corroborates the findings in a thirty-five-year-old study by Salem and Ellis that demonstrated local governments' aversion to using multiple testing methods for promotional examinations (1981). This implies that four decades of fire officer promotions have occurred that could have been improved.

There are several valid reasons to include multiple examination procedures. First, there may be negative legal implications for not providing a multifaceted selection process. Riccucci and Riccardelli recently demonstrated racial and socio-biases associated with written examinations (2016). Officer selection needs to be more inclusive. Second, it is impossible to assess the necessary behavior, interpersonal communication, and decision making skills of a successful fire officer with a written test (Roberts, 2010). The most important facets of command and leadership are not being addressed. Finally, there are inherent incentives related to improving officer selection and adopting the concept of workforce investment. Selecting the right individuals for leadership positions improves the work environment, cultivates job satisfaction, and increases productivity (Maranto & McKenzie, 2006). Developing the promotion process is a win-win for all stakeholders.

Improvements in fire officer examinations do not have to be cost prohibitive. In fact, one study mentioned above utilized lessons learned from previous incidents to create a relatively inexpensive, organizationally-specific, very accurate assessment center (Motowidlo, Dunette, & Carter, 1990). Another study found that simple performance exercises and personality tests were often more effective leadership predictors than more costly interview processes (Hogan & Zenke, 1986). However, even a combination of the costliest testing options mentioned in this research, say \$35,000, is only 0.8% of the Mount Vernon Fire Department's annual \$4.2 million

budget. That could be considered a small one-time expense relative to the potential future impact of a ten-year fire officer.

The Mount Vernon Fire Department could greatly improve the quality and potential of its future officer corps by simply including several of the selection processes already being used by other small, non-chartered municipalities. Both the research and survey indicate that a custom, well-rounded, position-specific examination is an industry best practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated at the beginning of this paper, the problem with the Mount Vernon Fire Department's promotional process is that it has almost exclusively relied on a generic multiple-choice examination to select new fire officers. Given the number of promotional examinations (24) in the last decade and a half, it is reasonable to assume there could be an equal amount of turnover in the officer corps over the next fifteen years. In order for the Mount Vernon Fire Department to select future leaders capable of addressing tomorrow's challenges, the department must develop a more effective officer promotion process. The literature review, online survey, and testing agency proposals clearly demonstrated the need and feasibility of including additional examination procedures. The following recommendations are based on the assumption that the City of Mount Vernon will continue to function under its current form of government in the foreseeable future. They should be performed in the order listed:

1. **Develop current and specific job descriptions for fire officers.** Although this topic was not specifically addressed in the research project, it is the author's opinion that the Mount Vernon Fire Department's officer job descriptions must be updated before making any changes to the promotional process. Logically thinking, in order to select the best person for a job, the organization must first define the job.

A thorough job assessment must be conducted in order to (1) identify the specific tasks that Mount Vernon fire officers perform and (2) determine what personal characteristics, knowledge, and skills are necessary to successfully complete those tasks. The findings from the job analysis should then be used to update officer job descriptions and to define officer functions within the organization.

During the information collection phase of this project, the author discovered several testing agencies that provide these services. Although a third party, on-site job analysis could take several months and cost up to \$17,500, the lasting benefits to the department would be profound. Additional information on this option can be found under “Question Four” in the “Results” section above. Once the fire officers’ jobs are clearly defined, then the department should move to the recommendation number two.

2. Administer written examinations that are tailored to the Mount Vernon Fire

Department. As stated earlier in this paper, previous promotions were determined by multiple-choice exams. These written tests were based on popular fire industry books written by fire officials from major cities like New York, Chicago, and Phoenix. Because of this, much of the testable material was only indirectly applicable to the Mount Vernon Fire Department. In the future, the department must select fire officers based on the realities, values, and resources of Knox County, Ohio.

Section 124 of the Ohio revised code mandates promotional examinations “shall include a written testing component” (ORC, 2016). The same section also requires that they “shall relate to those matters that test the ability of the person examined to discharge the particular duties of the position sought” (ORC, 2016). So, in order to best satisfy the law, it would be logical to create a written test that assesses the officer candidate’s knowledge of standard operating procedures/guidelines, administrative policies, emergency medical protocols, labor management agreements, and municipal ordinances that specifically apply to the Mount Vernon Fire Department.

3. Mathematically incorporate written examination scores into final candidate ranking.

Fire officers who have studied and committed to memory the various procedures, policies,

protocols, agreements, and laws mentioned above are better prepared to deal with daily challenges. The nature of emergency services often requires those involved at fire and medical scenes to make immediate decisions based on acquired knowledge. Oftentimes, critical situations and personnel issues do not allow for lengthy deliberation or in-depth research. Therefore, written tests should not be used as a pass/fail gate which allows candidates to move on to the next examination step. Instead, individual scores should be used to separate the ranking of potential officers. This was the most common practice of those who participated in this study. 88.24% of surveyed departments mathematically incorporated the candidates' written test scores into their final rankings.

- 4. Do not give credit for efficiency.** Too many potential pitfalls exist with this practice. First, the Mount Vernon Civil Service Commission has not established a record of efficiency, nor is efficiency graded by three ranking officers (ORC, 2016). Additionally, state, federal, and industry literature reviewed for this project made it clear that promotional processes must be fair and non-discriminatory. Finally, current employee evaluations lack objective performance measurements, do not incorporate standardized improvement steps, are mostly subjective in nature, and are only conducted annually. Therefore, incorporating efficiency evaluations into the candidates' promotional scores would unnecessarily expose the entire process to undesirable legal scrutiny.
- 5. Conduct assessment centers tailored to each promotable rank.** Only half (52.94%) of the surveyed fire chiefs believed that written tests adequately assessed their fire officer candidates. Assessment centers must be used to provide a better understanding of the candidate's character, abilities, and potential. The exercises included in the assessment center must evaluate the characteristics, knowledge, and skills necessary to successfully complete

assigned tasks at the promoted rank. Again, this is why recommendation #1 is important.

Although, tactical scenarios were popular among survey respondents and should be included in company officer promotions, all other assessment center activities should be directly related to the new officer job descriptions.

6. **Invest the appropriate time and money now. Actively planning for a fire department's** future leadership should be an immediate and high priority. Unfortunately, this is not the norm for most of the fire chiefs surveyed. Only 41% believed that their cities committed the appropriate amount of money, time, and personnel to selecting future fire officers. As a result, only 35% thought that their examination process identified the best candidates for promotion.

The Mount Vernon Fire Department must develop its promotional system now. The past fifteen years is proof that rapid turnover in the Mount Vernon Fire Department's officer corps is both possible and probable. As stated at in the "background and significance" section of this paper, the few fire officers at the Mount Vernon Fire Department possess an incredible amount of responsibility and authority. Each individual officer directly impacts the success, morale, and future of the organization. Turnover in these positions is inevitable and largely predictable, and can therefore be addressed today. The law of compounding interest applies to leadership and management. A relatively small amount of stakeholder effort today will certainly have an exponentially high impact on the Mount Vernon Fire Department in the future.

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APPENDIX 1 – SURVEY INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Chief _____-

I am currently enrolled in the Ohio Fire Chief's Association, Ohio Fire Executive Program. Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association. As part of a class requirement, I am collecting data for a research project concerning officer promotions, and your contribution would be greatly appreciated. The purpose my research is to present the Mount Vernon Safety Service Director with selection options for use in future fire department promotions. I am attempting to identify legal, relevant, and cost effective promotional procedures that have consistently identified the best fire officer candidates for civil service municipalities like Mount Vernon.

This survey is intended for non-charted cities that promote fire officers under Ohio municipal civil service law (ORC 124). Part 1 asks about the methods, while Part 2 requests a critique of those methods. Please consider any promotional examinations that have occurred in your organization over the last five years when answering the following questions.

The survey should take no more than 10 minutes to complete and your input would be greatly appreciated. Simply click the button below to start the survey.

Thank you for your participation and contribution to my research project!

Joe Jurkowitz
OFE Class 15
Captain
Mount Vernon Fire Department

APPENDIX 2 – PROMOTION PROCESS SURVEY RESULTS

PART 1: Promotional Process Elements

1. Has your department conducted a promotional process within the last five years?
 - a. 94.44% Yes
 - b. 5.56% No (you may skip to Part 2 or end you survey)
2. Did your department require more than the state minimum time-in-service/time-in-grade requirements to sit for a promotional examine? (48 months time-in-service to compete for lieutenant, 12 months time-in-grade as a lieutenant to compete for captain, etc.)
 - a. 23.53% Yes (please explain)
 - b. 76.47% No
3. Were your written tests developed locally?
 - a. 0.00% Yes (continue with #4)
 - b. 100.00% No (skip to #5)
4. Would you classify the written test:
 - a. 41.18% Generic or “off the shelf”
 - b. 58.82% Custom
5. What type of written test did you administer? Select all that apply.
 - a. 94.12% Multiple choice
 - b. 5.88% Fill in the blank
 - c. 5.88% Matching
 - d. 5.88% Short answer essay
 - e. 5.88% Long essay
6. What material were the written test questions derived from? Select all that apply.
 - a. 26.53% NFPA standards
 - b. 17.65% Labor management agreement
 - c. 11.76% EMS protocol
 - d. 17.65% Local policies/work rules
 - e. 35.29% Departmental standard operating guidelines/procedures
 - f. 76.47% Fire/EMS textbooks
 - g. 94.12% Industry books on leadership, tactics, building construction, ethics, management, etc.
 - h. 0.00% Other (Please specify)
7. How were the results of the written test used?
 - a. 11.76% Pass/fail. Passes are permitted to continue selection process
 - b. 88.24% Graded. Grades are mathematically incorporated into final ranking
 - c. 0.00% Other (Please specify)
8. Did you include an assessment center?
 - a. 41.18% Yes (continue with #8)
 - b. 58.82% No (skip to #10)
9. Was your assessment center conducted by:
 - a. 0.00% Local officials or staff
 - b. 100.00% Out-sourced third party

10. What did your assessment center include? Select all that apply.
- a. 100.00% Tactical scenario
 - b. 71.43% Ethical decision making scenario
 - c. 71.43% Individual interview
 - d. 57.14% Rapid decision making
 - e. 71.43% Administrative prioritization (ie. In-basket exercise)
 - f. 42.86% Writing assignment
 - g. 57.14% Presentation
 - h. 42.86% Background qualification exercise
 - i. 28.57% Media/Public Information Officer scenario
 - j. 0.00% Other (please specify)
11. Did you include credit for last year's efficiency ratings or evaluations?
- a. 23.53% Yes
 - b. 76.47% No
12. Did you include an oral board with senior officers and/or elected officials?
- a. 11.76% Yes
 - b. 88.24% No
13. Did you give additional credit for certifications? Select all that apply.
- a. 100.00% No
 - b. 0.00% Emergency Medical Responder (old First Responder)
 - c. 0.00% Emergency Medical Technician (old EMT-Basic)
 - d. 0.00% Advanced EMT (old EMT-Intermediate)
 - e. 0.00% Paramedic
 - f. 0.00% Fire/EMS/Inspector Instructor
 - g. 0.00% Certified Fire Safety Inspector
 - h. 0.00% Other (please specify)
14. Did you award extra credit for professional or civilian education? Select all that apply.
- a. 100.00% No
 - b. 0.00% Fire Officer I, II, III, or IV
 - c. 0.00% Ohio Fire Executive or Executive Fire Officer
 - d. 0.00% Civilian Undergraduate Education (Associate, Bachelors)
 - e. 0.00% Civilian Graduate Education (Masters, Doctorate)
 - f. 0.00% Other (please specify)
15. Did you conduct psychological evaluations?
- a. 0.00% Yes
 - b. 100.00% No
16. Did you conduct polygraph evaluations?
- a. 0.00% Yes
 - b. 100.00% No
17. Did you conduct background investigations?
- a. 0.00% Yes
 - b. 100.00% No
18. Did you include any type of physical fitness, agility, or hands on assessments?
- a. 0.00% Yes
 - b. 100.00% No

19. Who exercises the MOST influence when determining the materials, processes, and resources used in the testing process?
- a. 64.71% Fire chief
 - b. 5.88% Current officers
 - c. 0.00% Elected officials
 - d. 29.41% Appointed officials
20. If your organization has utilized any selection criteria not mentioned above, please describe in the space provided.
- a. Our testing is through the Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association by CBLA.
 - b. All lieutenants must complete Fire Officer 1, and all captains must complete Fire Officer 2 if not already completed prior to promotion.
 - c. An OFCA book list is used to select texts for the written examination. Current officers select 7 books, and then the chief narrows the list to 3 books. Each rank has certification requirements. For example, a LT would have FO1, inspector card, and blue card to be eligible for the exam.
 - d. 60% assessment 40% written score

PART 2: Assessment of Promotional Process

1. Do written tests adequately assess the minimum knowledge required of newly promoted position?
 - a. 52.94% Yes
 - b. 47.06% No
2. What TWO (2) sources of information are most important on a written test? Select TWO (2).
 - a. 0.00% NFPA standards
 - b. 0.00% Labor management agreement
 - c. 0.00% EMS protocol
 - d. 17.65% Local policies/work rules
 - e. 64.71% Departmental standard operating guidelines/procedures
 - f. 29.41% Fire/EMS textbooks
 - g. 88.24% Industry books on leadership, tactics, building construction, ethics, management, etc.
 - h. 0.00% Other (please specify)
3. What TWO (2) assessment center methods are most effective in the fire officer selection process? Select TWO (2).
 - a. 64.71% Tactical scenario
 - b. 35.29% Ethical decision making scenario
 - c. 17.65% Individual interview
 - d. 35.29% Rapid decision making
 - e. 11.76% Administrative prioritization (ie. In-basket exercise)
 - f. 0.00% Writing assignment
 - g. 0.00% Presentation
 - h. 23.53% Background qualification exercise
 - i. 0.00% Media/Public Information Officer scenario
 - j. 5.88% Other (please specify)
4. How important is it to include credit for last year's efficiency ratings or evaluations?
 - a. 17.65% Very important
 - b. 76.47% Somewhat important
 - c. 5.88% Not important
5. How important is an oral board with senior officers and/or elected officials?
 - a. 31.25% Very important
 - b. 43.75% Somewhat important
 - c. 25.00% Not important
6. As rank increases in your department, are officers required to maintain _____ professional certifications.
 - a. 0.00% fewer
 - b. 52.94% the same number of
 - c. 47.06% more
7. Which is more important for officer development and success?
 - a. 94.12% Professional education
 - b. 5.88% Civilian education

8. Does your department maintain active promotion lists regardless of officer vacancies?
 - a. 11.76% Yes
 - b. 88.24% No
9. Does your department use active promotion lists to select personnel to “ride out of class?”
 - a. 17.65% Yes
 - b. 82.35% No
10. Does your city commit enough resources (money, time, personnel) to selecting future fire officers?
 - a. 41.18% Yes
 - b. 17.65% Depends on position
 - c. 41.18% No
11. Overall, does the promotional process in your city effectively identify the best candidate for the job?
 - a. 35.29% Yes
 - b. 47.06% Sometimes
 - c. 17.65% No

APPENDIX 3 – REQUEST FOR PRICING INFORMATION

Good afternoon,

My name is Captain Joe Jurkowitz with the Mount Vernon Fire Department in Mount Vernon, Ohio. I am conducting a small research project to identify additional promotional assessment procedures for my organization. The information collected will be processed and forwarded to my fire chief and used to complete a project for the Ohio Fire Executive program.

Over the last 16 years the Mount Vernon Fire Department has conducted 24 promotional examinations. Most of the officer selections were determined by a multiple-choice exam produced by IO Solutions, Inc. Our department is looking into the possibly incorporating additional testing procedures for future promotions. Cost is an obvious factor.

Could you please forward approximate costs for any of the promotional testing services that your company provides? Please apply the following parameters:

- A minimum of two and a maximum of ten candidates
- Single testing event, not a reoccurring contract
- Off the shelf written exam
- Custom written exam
- Assessment center
- Oral board
- Psychological evaluation

This request is being submitted to the following organizations:

- Industrial/Organizational Solutions, Inc.
- C.O.P.S. and F.I.R.E. Personnel Testing Service
- The Ohio Fire Chiefs' Association
- McCann Associates
- Fire Service Testing Company, Inc.
- Ergometrics & Applied Personnel Research, Inc.
- EB Jacobs, LLC
- Fire & Police Selection, Inc.

If you have any questions, or would prefer to respond to this request via telephone, please contact me at (740) 507-0572.

Joe Jurkowitz
Captain
Mount Vernon Fire Department