

Making the Most of Employee Development
“Research Project Proposal”

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that the following statements are true:

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ABSTRACT

This research project was chosen from a desire to research problems associated with employees exhibiting difficulties in professional development. Often times, employees working for the Loveland Symmes Fire Department (LSFD) would get discouraged both as firefighters and fire officers working within the system. The LSFD is part of the Northeast Fire Collaborative (NEFC) which was established in January 2011. The other four organizations included Mason, Sharonville, Blue Ash, and Sycamore Township Fire Departments. This research project offered a snapshot of the entire NEFC group. It provided feedback regarding work experience, hiring, orientation, performance appraisals, work documentation, and organizational mission statements. Approximately 62% of the NEFC firefighters did not participate in the survey instrument while 52.4 % of the NEFC fire officers did.

A review of the LSFD employee development program was initiated early in this research project to find common patterns that may suggest poor processes or lack of attention to overall development strategies. Some of the tools, such as field training documents used to facilitate employee growth were found inadequate, incomplete or in some cases absent. This suggests a lack of attention during influential times when employees are most attentive to learning, and growing organizationally. Recommendations from this research include overhauling the tools used to document development, and improve supervisor attentiveness to every element of the process.

While most NEFC firefighters said that their organizations have a mission statement, 77.3% surveyed could not recite it. Firefighters must be made familiar with it because it describes the role of the organization in the community.

The research data shows that 29.8% of firefighters do not have access to the performance standards in advance of their evaluation. The study suggests that the NEFC make this information known early, keep it simple, and easy to administer.

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INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

The problem this study will address is identifying what weaknesses contribute to slow or difficult employee professional development and what improvements can be implemented to enhance development and contribute to a more productive and cost effective organization.

The Loveland Symmes Fire Department (LSFD) is a community oriented and customer service savvy organization that has identified a weakness in employee professional development. While setting the bar high in productivity and community satisfaction, a shortfall in development can have visible consequences.

Inadequacies with development processes have created difficulties in achieving organizational expectations. Additionally, connecting with people during this influential time is a skill learned and used by mentors when they take the position of field training seriously. Mentors have a responsibility to deliver a quality and effective program however; many of the pieces needed to be successful are missing. The problem is inadequate employee professional development. Contributing causes for this problem include the lack of established mentor qualifications, outdated or missing program content, limited feedback, and rushed or ill prepared improvement plans. The difficulty is that employees developed slowly and failed to meet

expectations. The final result is unhappiness and attrition. This problem started with new employees, and is still present with experienced ones who were lost within in the system.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the best practices that contribute to successful employee development, and to implement proven processes that will facilitate professional growth with the LSFDF early in their career.

This study reviews current practices, identifies shortfalls, and will make recommendations for improvement. It reviews how successful businesses develop their staff, and describes how their progress is measured along the way. Employee development is crucial to any organization regardless of their occupation. This study will assist the LSFDF in understanding its employee needs while enhancing a healthier workplace. This study looks at comparisons where similar weaknesses exist, and identifies conclusions to fixing things where the best approach is identified.

Research Questions

The research questions this study will investigate are:

1. What issues may be attributed to employee professional development problems?
2. What recommendations can be made to improve the individual development including the performance review process?
3. Who is best to fit the role in the Loveland Symmes Fire Department to conduct a one on one approach, facilitate employee growth and what should their priorities be?
4. Is the mission statement important to an organizations success?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The LSF D's membership grows alongside the communities it serves. Long since it was reorganized as a private non-profit fire company in 1939; today it is a predominately career organization, using additional part time members and, supplementing extra services with a group of volunteers. As stated by Chief Otto J. Huber, "The entire LSF D team takes pride in our department and values the public's confidence in our performance." The LSF D serves a population of 28,000 residents and responds to approximately 5400 calls each year.

As a private fire company, LSF D services are delivered through contracts with the City of Loveland and Symmes Township, Ohio. The department is located in southwestern Ohio and extends into Hamilton, Clermont, and Warren counties. It currently maintains a Class 2 ISO rating, and has a CAAS Nationally Accredited Paramedic Service.

With new demands being placed upon its members, through continuous change and the desire to accomplish more, little quality time is spent fostering the team's professional development. It has had many accomplishments in earlier years with lots of attention given to task oriented projects and with one-on-one interaction, which were easier with fewer personnel. As time passes and new employees are introduced into the organization, supervisors do not maintain a clear roadmap regarding employee professional development. Supervisors have managed using past practices and outdated material as shown in Appendix C. Managing today with yesterday's tools contributes to slower development and occasionally, failure.

The future impact of correcting deficiencies through applied research will bring a new experience to its members. Employees will feel more confident about their performance and

have a better understanding where they fit into the organization. They will also have a better understanding of the organization's vision, values and mission. The final impact will also create longer tenure and eliminate or reduce retraining costs.

One comparison of 10 employees, half full time and half part time suggests differences how employees are being developed (Appendix A & B). All probationary employees receive quarterly performance evaluations so that officers may provide feedback and establish improvement plans. Part-time employees are occasionally hired full time. This change in employment status introduces a new probationary period. A review of the quarterly performance evaluations of the ten most recently hired employee group shows that 30% were missing 25% of their performance evaluations while 40% were missing 50% of the their evaluations. Additionally, 20% were missing 75% of their evaluations and 10 % had no probationary evaluation following the change to full time.

The performance evaluations were documented in three different formats. The formats included a memo format on letterhead, plain paper, and a prewritten form listing the evaluation criteria. Employees are unaware of the evaluation criteria listed on the form when they are hired.

All probationary employees are required to complete an "Orientation and Competencies Package" form # FT1-1 (Appendix C) and the "EMS Practical Skills Examination Package" (Appendix D) six months after hiring. This requirement is outlined in the Employee Handbook revised 01/01/2011, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD TRAINING OFFICER (FTO) "CAAS- 106.08.02." A review of the same ten employees shows that 30% did not have an Orientation and Competencies Package on file and 70% were missing the EMS Practical Skills Examination Package. The completion times range from 243 days to 576 days. In some cases, items were not reviewed, approved by the Field Training Officer or signed by the

shift supervisor. The packets contain outdated data (Appendix C, D) regarding equipment that is no longer used or upgraded with newer technologies. Using outdated forms sends the message that the organization has not taken the time to focus on the proper development of its employees.

The job descriptions outlined in the most recent version of the LSFDF employee handbook outline minimum qualifications for each position. Although employees are required to meet the qualifications for which they were hired, there are no specific minimum qualifications required for the position of Field Training Officer (Appendix E).

The potential impacts this study could have on the Loveland Symmes Fire Department are improved development processes, stronger employees who are better suited for the work, a broader group of employees who can perform certain tasks, and cheaper operating costs associated with employee replacement and retraining.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Literature review began with the selection of four questions that once answered, would improve pitfalls commonly encountered by LSFDF supervisors. While changing from what has not worked to learning and using successful strategies found in the literature review, supervisors will now offer employees new opportunities that may have otherwise gone unchanged.

Use of the internet to query searches of similar projects elsewhere provided vast amounts of information from the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy, and the archived files of the Ohio Fire Chief's Association. Additional information was found in managerial texts, trade magazines, and the local library.

What issues may be attributing to employee professional development problems?

Lundin, Paul, Christensen (2000) describes a department manager Mary Jane who was determined to catch the energy and release the potential of her third floor office staff who worked for First Guarantee and had turned the third floor reputation as described as a toxic energy dump. She further describes that so much time had been spent being negative that the entire atmosphere was always negative and miserable place to be. After careful observation and a few work sessions, she learned that three ingredients were key to turning around the third floor reputation: Choose Your Attitude, Play, Make Their Day, and Be Present. First, choose to have a great attitude and love what you do. Next, engage the internal customer in play so it will forever remember you because you will forever make its day. Finally, be present with everyone you have contact with. Actively listen, make eye contact, and eliminate any distractions. It will have more meaning than you may realize, and have a profound impact with those you touch. Finally, what transformed this organization using the ingredients was written and displayed stating, "As you enter this place of work, please choose to make today a great day." "Your colleagues, customers, team members, and yourself will be thankful." She said we can be serious about our work without being serious about ourselves. We should stay focused in order to be present when your customers and team members most need you. Furthermore, if you feel your energy lapsing, try this surefire remedy: find someone who needs a helping hand, a word of support, or a good ear, and make their day.

(Hill, and Lineback (2011) posed the question: "Do you understand what's really required to become truly effective?" Too often managers underestimate how much time and effort it takes to keep growing and developing. Becoming a great boss is a lengthy, difficult process of learning, and change, driven mostly by personal experience. Indeed, so much time and effort are required that you can think of the process as a journey, a journey of years.

Solie (2003) suggested that the first step in investigating employee turnover is to separate the issue into two categories: avoidable and unavoidable. Unavoidable turnover is due to personal and family reasons, or when employees are unable to perform some aspects of the job. Avoidable turnover occurs when the organization doesn't meet the needs of the employee.

Cochran (2006) discussed leadership that transformed organizations that was composed of knowledge, skills, abilities, and traits. Any one of these attributes can play a major role in a firefighter ascending through the ranks, and ultimately becoming a fire chief. The leader who possesses all four in the proper measure, and balance will not only succeed in most environments, but also sustain an administration that will make a difference even after the leader has moved on or retired.

Simpson (2007 pg. 121) stated that leaders struggle to find an atmosphere that allows employees to harness their "energy and factions" toward the goals of the organization as a whole.

Anderson (2011 pg.17) discussed that as a leader, it's natural to assume that your focus should be on bringing in and retaining customers. While that, of course, is the end goal of any business, 212° leaders must change their focus internally to recruiting, and retaining their best people.

Anderson (2011 pg. 46) stated that over the past 25 years, there has been an upward trend in how great companies view the value of team work. John C. Maxwell described that in the

1980's, the word was management. In the 1990's, the key concept was leadership by an individual. In the 2000's, the idea had become team leadership.

Anderson (2011 pg. 68) discussed four categories of culprits that create obstacles that keep a team from executing its plan. These obstacles are outdated systems, outdated people, outdated procedures, and a combination thereof.

What recommendations can be made to improve the individual development including the performance review process?

Royse (2009) described the components that are key to successful performance reviews. These components are updated job descriptions, communicating the performance expectations and standards, receive feedback from supervisors, and a simple performance review form.

The International City Management Association (1997) identified twelve characteristics of an effective performance appraisal:

1. The appraisal should be simple and easy to administer.
2. The Human Resource Department should be able to keep track of the appraisal easily.
3. The performance appraisal form should be easy to complete by supervisors.
4. The evaluation criteria should be concrete, specific, controllable and measurable.
5. Employees should have access to the standards being measured and the appraisal form well in advance.
6. Employees should be given the opportunity to comment on the performance appraisal.
7. The performance appraisal should be designed to fit the needs of the organization.
8. Job descriptions used in the performance appraisal process should be updated and kept recent.

9. Supervisors should be properly trained on how to evaluate employees.
10. Performance standards or goals should be communicated to the employee before the performance appraisal.
11. Performance appraisals should focus on specific job related behaviors, and not traits, abilities or personal characteristics.
12. The performance instrument or form should be developed from a systematic analysis of individual jobs.

Sachs, (1992 pg. 38) discussed that a common misconception is that performance appraisals are meant to inform an employee of how his or her performance has been rated. Unfortunately, this is the only thing that is done. Producing an effective performance appraisal can accomplish much more. It provides an employee a review of their work, and serves as an opportunity for the supervisor, and the employee to take time, and effort to set future goals, and objectives for the upcoming year. Productive performance appraisals recognize the value of the employees, and why they are the most valuable resource of the organization.

Bishop (1996) discussed one specific Field Training program initiated by the Metropolitan Nashville International Airports Safety and Security Department. They modeled it after the San Jose (Calif.) Police Department's program and it became the country's first written and court tested FTO Program. As part of this program, each FTO attended 40 hours of training on "How to Develop an FTO Program." Bishop also discussed the benefits of adapting the law enforcement FTO concept into training of new recruits. Examples included a cost effective approach (since employees get up to speed sooner with intensive on the job training), and reduced potential for negligent retention and hiring. This FTO concept helped establish and maintain agency wide standardization of policies, procedures, training, and evaluation. The FTO

position represents an additional career path for firefighter's, and the promotional process benefits from having more competent people in the promotional pool.

Alyn (2011) discussed that when you show people that you love what you do and have passion for it, you fire people up to want to be more, reach more, and achieve more. She furthermore described there are countless people all around the globe who have inspired millions of people that share a common thread, passion and a love for the job.

McMillan (2009) discussed that what you believe and focus on becomes your reality. If you go looking for trouble, you'll find it, if you focus on happiness, it will appear. Once you decide what you're looking for, your brain will go to work to find it and make it your reality. Whether your focus is something positive or negative, your brain will subconsciously gather evidence to prove it and make it your reality.

Fields (2001 pg. 84) said that organizations should develop organizational profiles. These included age, sex, race, and where they live, then to look at whether or not you need to change that profile, or think how to better serve the people you have. Retaining current staff is as important as recruiting new staff. Once you have information on employees' demographics, you can make more informed decisions about how to serve your current employee population with regard to benefits, compensation, and incentives. Additional decisions can include marketing, advertising, communications, social enterprise (responsibility) efforts, training, and advancement initiatives. The demographics should be routinely updated and include age, gender, racial composition. Other demographics that can be included are racial and gender composition of board and vendors, turnover rates, post hiring experience survey results of candidates and managers and affirmative action statistics. When it comes to retaining employees, take a hint from salespeople who know that it is 6 to 7 times easier to keep a satisfied customer than to

recruit a new one. Nurturing and growing current staff is far more cost-effective than attracting and training new staff.

Nigro (2003 pg. 112) discussed that your acute supervisory role in the office makes it imperative that you be a model of probity and consistency throughout all of your coaching actions. That is, design your own performance plans based on the coaching standard known as principled coherence. Principled coherence merely asks that you do exactly what you tell your employees you are going to do, when you tell them you are going to do it. If you neglect follow up evaluation on the progression of your employee improvement plans, you will lose your credibility as a coach.

Nigro (2003 pg.166) said that when employees' goals are reached or exceeded, you've got to do more than reward them for their achievements. You need to write performance reviews detailing all the things that went right. Allow your employees to glean positive lessons from their performances.

Nigro (2003 pg. 37) stated mentors must be individuals with impeccable credibility, and that their advice must always ring true. He further described that mentors will be looked upon as a treasury of knowledge with keen insight on the ways of the business world and maybe the world in general.

Nigro (2003 pg. 159) concluded employees always welcome positive performance reviews. When your employees do their jobs, prepare performance reviews for them. Detailed performance reviews pointing out their solid efforts and achievements are confidence boosters. They tell your employees that you both notice, and value their special efforts in overcoming obstacles, solving problems; other accomplishments and that you care about them.

(Schwartz, 2011) described in his article “The Twelve Attributes of a Truly Great Place to Work” that employers must shift the focus from trying to get more out of people, to investing more in them by addressing their four core needs: physical, emotional, mental and spiritual, so they are freed, fueled and inspired to bring the best of themselves to work every day.

Anderson (2011 pg. 92) discussed that as a 212° leader, you have to ask yourself, “what activities can I measure to track our progress?” He explained that you must determine where you are now; set realistic targets for improvement; and track, monitor, and review results.

Anderson (2011 pg. 34) discussed that United Supermarkets’ CEO Dan Sanders stated that “A sustainable culture is built from the inside out. It starts with leadership that places the highest level of importance on human beings and a corresponding premium on recruiting, hiring, and training , both academic and experiential training to equip and empower them.”

Anderson (2011 pg. 71) said that during a conference in Hawaii, Tom Asacker asserted that it really doesn’t matter how customers feel about you and your business, what makes the difference is how your products make them feel about themselves and their decisions. Anderson (2011 pg. 90) also quoted Michael LeBoeuf as saying “The greatest management principle in the world is the things that get rewarded, and appreciated get done.”

Anderson (2011 pg.99) described how to plan on executing changes, and reinforced that change won’t happen on its own. He described that you must answer the following three questions for the first step to success. First, “how do I keep it simple?” Less is always more. Second, “how can I make it memorable?” Third, “how many times can I communicate it, on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis?”

Anderson (2011 pg.100) stated in the words of Peter Druker, “What gets measured gets improved.” It described that most employees want to grow, they want to do better and they want to take pride in their work, but they need targets to shoot for.

Who is best to fit the role in the Loveland Symmes Fire Department to conduct a one on one approach, facilitate employee growth and what should their priorities be?

Kraut, Pedigo, McKenna and Dunnette (2005) completed a study where 1,412 managers were questioned to rate the relative importance of 57 managerial tasks, and statistically identified 7 major tasks. This study revealed that 63% of first line supervisors said managing individual performance was “the utmost” or “considerable importance” while 45% of executives felt the same. The study also showed that 40% of first line supervisors said instructing subordinates was “the utmost” or” considerable importance while 27% of executives felt the same. This data supported the idea that one-on-one with subordinates is more important to first-level managers, and diminishes as manager’s move up.

Nigro (2003 pg.162) described how important coaching techniques are, and discussed the importance of positive reinforcement. He said that you must identify the positive behaviors in your employees, and should provide them with positive feedback. Positively reinforcing the right behaviors encourages employees to exhibit those behaviors as a rule, and not the exception.

Nigro (2003 pg. 220,221) also described how some service oriented organizations do not know how to service customers. He explained that these circumstances “cry out” for coaching and mentoring. “When these types of businesses commit themselves to bettering both their

employees' satisfaction, and customer service, a coaching approach will be welcomed into management.”

Nigro (2003 pg. 165) furthermore described that timing is everything. The coachable moments await you. It is during these times when you can upgrade your employees' skills both hard, and soft, and show your people what professionalism means in their daily efforts.

(Tjan, 2010) discussed the starting point for mentoring; where it is about less mentorship and more about an apprenticeship. During entry-level, early stages of a career, or when “on boarding” to a new job, what really benefits someone is a “buddy” or peer-based mentor who can help one get up the learning curve faster. This type of peer mentor is focused on helping with specific skills and basic organizational practices of “this is how it is done here.” He referred to this type of mentoring as Buddy/Peer Mentoring.

(Kanter, 2011) discussed the lens through which leaders view the world can help or hinder their ability to make good strategic decisions, especially during crises. Zoom in, and get a close look at select details; perhaps too close to make sense of them. Zoom out, and see the big picture, but perhaps miss some subtleties and nuances. He further said that effective leaders zoom in and zoom out.

Anderson (2011 pg. 97) asked, what example did you set today? When you lead by example, you engage your people to follow your vision, not by words, but by action. While you are measuring your employees' performance, they are measuring how well you follow through on both your words and your deeds. He explained that leading by example is not only for top management, but the way you do your job and the attitude with which you do it determines your impact.

Why is the mission statement so important to an organization's success?

FEMA/USFA/NFA-STF-SM (1995) stated in the student manual *Shaping Our Future* that to understand impact objectives, we must see them as part of a larger system. This system starts with the mission statement, which describes the role of the department in the community, and the specific functions or tasks it performs to achieve the mission. The mission statement defines the areas in which the department will formulate goals.

(Blanchard & O' Conner (1997) said that by providing a choice to decide what values best represent each employee collectively, it can have an effect on the everyday decision making process, and when employees know their values are part of the organization, it only reinforces the positive outcome of gathering support for moving the organization forward.

Robin (2010) stated a mission statement is usually meant to define internal motivation, and meant to align and engage the agents or actors in the organization, rather than helping define an orientation to outside customers. Furthermore he explained that a mission or purpose statement defined why it all matters to employees, contractors, partners, and management, the internal "customers."

Hoffman (1991) said that the functions performed as an organization should be included in the mission statement, and that the organization must determine how it will carry out those functions, and make changes accordingly so they are met.

Anderson (2011 pg. 34, 35) discussed two consultants, Joe Calhoun and Bruce Jeffery who helped companies create a simple one-page strategic plan. This plan identified the following six points.

1. Vision - A clear picture of your destination

2. Mission - The driving purpose of your business
3. Values -The guide you use for decision making and how you treat each other.
4. Objectives - The numbers you track.
5. Strategies - The paths you've decided to take
6. Priorities - The work that needs to get done and who needs to do it.

Anderson (2011 pg.31) said Jim Harris, author of *Getting Employees to Fall in Love with Your Company* explained that “to capture the hearts of our employees, it is essential that we tell them what we stand for and where we are going. Our vision must be compelling, understandable, and focused.” Anderson (2011 pg. 33) also stated that capturing your vision in a way that's easily understood is a powerful call to action. It's the foundation of your company, a way to share your mission to serve.

PROCEDURES

The LSFDD has operated using two policy manuals. One is known as the “Employee Handbook” and the second is known as the “Emergency Operations Manual.” When employees exhibit difficulties in certain performance expectations, it may be attributed to a process that was either followed incorrectly, not followed, or a poor process. In some cases, it was noted that policies were updated in the Employee Handbook, and not updated in the Emergency Operations Manual, which contributed to inconsistent resources.

Early in this research, a review of ten personnel files of the most recently hired employees was completed. The goal was to determine if documentation problems existed, then identify the problems and evaluate the extent. This evaluation suggested that the processes

lacked follow-up, substance and consistency that were designed to improve performance and point the employee in the right direction from the beginning. The two areas chosen for initial evaluation included performance appraisals and field training documentation. This review provided a snapshot of the inconsistencies of the appraisal forms and verified the absence or incorrect appraisal timelines. The field training documentation was evaluated to review procedural compliance, which verified that timelines were unacceptable, and accountability for the material was overlooked.

Ten employees with various years of service were randomly selected to evaluate their familiarity with the LSFD's mission statement and furthermore, they were asked to explain if they encountered any difficulty. Participants remained anonymous to facilitate honest feedback. The results concluded 30% were not familiar with the mission statement while 70% were somewhat familiar with all or most parts. Multiple causes were cited which included "Because I have never been told or have taken the time to sit down and find/study it," "I feel like most fire departments have a similar mission and that is why I have not taken the time to learn specifically LSFD's mission statement," "I remember seeing or hearing it early in my career but cannot recall it" and finally "I have seen it however only a few times, never had to learn it. I know the mission statement is important but I guess in the big picture of working at LSFD, it has never been a major priority to learn the statement".

In previous years, the LSFD displayed the mission statement on fire station doors, reports and other conduits to deliver the message. As times have changed, new fire stations built, and existing stations remodeled, the mission statement has become less visible.

Using a scientific approach, through the creation of a research instrument assisted in determining various organizational development processes within the NEFC, and similarities

with difficulties encountered with LSF. This research will survey both firefighters and fire officers specific for their position. The firefighter survey aligned with how firefighters believe they were being developed while the fire officer survey is specific to fire officer responsibilities regarding employee development. These surveys were used within the Northeast Fire Collaborative which consisted of five fire departments serving six communities. The NEFC's internal customers included approximately 255 firefighters and 61 fire officers. All the communities within the NEFC are similar in kind, size, and all are suburbs of Cincinnati, Ohio. Populations range from 27,000 to 60,000 which are influenced by weekdays, and nights due to heavy industry and large employers. The surveys were delivered to each organization serving in the NEFC and included a representative responsible for maintain custody of them. The survey asked each participant to not disclose their name and once completed, sealed in the envelope provided. The surveys were collected, information recorded, and the results presented in this research paper.

Limitations of the Study

The results of this research project are based on answers received from Northeast Fire Collaborative (NEFC) participants. It offers a snapshot of the total responses within the NEFC regarding how employees have been or are being professionally developed. Specific answer may be factual however may be incorrect if the firefighter or fire officer was unsure and answered the question the best he/she could. Further limitations included the lack of surveys returned. The survey data was studied using a 38% response from firefighters and 52.4% response from the fire officers for the entire NEFC. The instrument used 28 questions that were prepared for both firefighters and fire officers with emphasis to their position. Many surveys were returned with no response and for unknown reasons. Additionally, a larger number of responses from

firefighters can favor a response towards the direction of the larger number simply because there are more firefighters than fire officers. Strength in numbers can be a limitation when comparing responses of two surveys with unequal respondents.

RESULTS

During the initial evaluation of the Loveland Symmes Fire Department employee development processes, procedural difficulties were evident and proved a lack of attention during a new employee's most impressionable time. As illustrated in the employee evaluation audit of the ten most recently hired employees (Appendix A), 25 % to 100% of the required developmental tools were found insufficient for all five full time employees, while 25% to 75% were found insufficient for all five part time employees. During the evaluation of the Orientation & Competencies Packages (Appendix C) that include the EMS Practical Skills Examination (Appendix D), additional procedural insufficiencies were verified. New employees were required to have both the Orientation and Competencies Package, and the EMS Practical Skills Examination completed in approximately 183 days as outlined in the Loveland Symmes Fire Department Employee Handbook, rev. 01/01/2011; DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD TRAINING OFFICER (FTO) "CAAS – 106.08.02" (Appendix E). The audit of the same ten employees showed seven employees ranged from 235 to 576 days and three employees were undetermined because the information was missing.

The results of this research document, using a scientific approach, how firefighters perceive how they were or are being professionally developed within the NEFC. It also documents how fire officers perceive the way they developed or are developing their employees.

A survey instrument was used to gather feedback from the NEFC firefighters (Appendix F) and fire officers (Appendix G). The results of the surveys were reviewed and documented for each NEFC firefighter's and fire officer's response by organization (Table 1 & 2). The total review included all five organizations and offers a snapshot of the entire NEFC using the surveys received (Appendix H).

Table 1

<i>NEFC Department</i>	<i>Firefighter Surveys Sent</i>	<i>Firefighter Surveys Received</i>
<i>Mason Fire Department</i>	48	32
<i>Loveland Symmes Fire Department</i>	47	21
<i>Sharonville Fire Department</i>	60	6
<i>Blue Ash Fire Department</i>	40	21
<i>Sycamore Township Fire Department</i>	60	17

Table 2

<i>NEFC Department</i>	<i>Fire Officer Surveys Sent</i>	<i>Fire Officer Surveys Received</i>
<i>Mason Fire Department</i>	9	4
<i>Loveland Symmes Fire Department</i>	15	10
<i>Sharonville Fire Department</i>	12	8
<i>Blue Ash Fire Department</i>	10	9
<i>Sycamore Township Fire Department</i>	15	1

Table 3

NEFC Responses for Firefighter (255 surveys offered, 97 returned)

Q1. Please indicate your employment status with the fire department listed in the footer of this survey.

A.-0 (Volunteer)

B.-40 (Part Time)

C.-57 (Full Time)

Q2. As of this survey, please identify how many years you have been certified as a firefighter.

A.-24 (0-5 years)

B.-35 (6-10 years)

C.-16 (11-15 years)

D.-22 (>16 years)

Q3. Were you required to take orientation training when you were hired?

A.-79 (yes)

B.-18 (no)

Q4. If you answered yes to question 3, were you required to complete the orientation training before you were released to work an assignment?

A.-53 (yes)

B.-32 (no)

10- (N/A)

2- (blank)

Q5. If you answered yes to question 3, do you feel the orientation training provided useful content and was delivered in a manner that prepared you for assignment?

A.-56 (yes)

B.-19 (no)

C.-21 (N/A)

1- (blank)

Q6. If you answered yes to question 3, was the expectation that all new employees attending the orientation training would progress together at the same rate?

A.-35 (yes)

B.-28 (no)

C.-31 (N/A)

3- (blank)

Q7. Were you required to complete a competency checklist as a way to determine your progress?

A.-65 (yes)

B.-32 (no)

Q8. If you answered yes to question 7, did the checklist contain any outdated content?

A.-31 (yes)

B.-34 (no)

C.-32 (N/A)

Q9. Were you ever assigned a personal mentor?

A.-30 (yes)

B.-67 (no)

Q10. If you answered yes to question 9, why was this mentor chosen for you?

A.-13 (partner)

B.-8 (training officer)

C.-10 (other)

11- (blank)

Q11. Do you receive performance appraisals?

A.-76 (yes)

B.-21 (no)

Q12. If you answered yes to question 11, do you always receive them according to the performance review schedule set by your organization?

A.-41 (yes)

B.-37 (no)

C.-19 (N/A)

Q13. If you answered yes to question 11, what time period best describes your organizations review schedule?

A.-1 (monthly)

B.-4 (bi annually)

C.-67 (annually)

D.-23 (N/A)

2- (blank)

Q14. If you answered yes to question 11, do you have access to the standards being measured and the appraisal form content well in advance?

A.-41 (yes)

B.-29 (no)

C.-24 (N/A)

3- (blank)

Q15. If you answered yes to question 11, is your performance appraisal form easy to read, understand, and does it accurately address the standards being measured?

A.-51 (yes)

B.-19 (no)

C.-24 (N/A)

3- (blank)

Q16. If you answered yes to question 11, does your performance appraisal clearly address your improvement plan to keep you working towards personal and organizational goals?

A.-45 (yes)

B.-29 (no)

C.-27 (N/A)

2- (blank)

Q17. If you answered yes to question 11, does your evaluator measure your success with the improvement plan set for you previously?

A.-36 (yes)

B.-32 (no)

C.-27 (N/A)

2- (blank)

Q18. Does your organization use a performance based incentive program?

A.-17 (yes)

B.-78 (no)

2- (blank)

Q19. If you answered yes to question 18, do you feel the incentives provide challenging opportunities to perform even better?

A.-13 (yes)

B.-29 (no)

C.-54 (N/A)

I- (blank)

Q20. How much do you know about the history of your organization?

A.-10 (none)

B.-22 (little)

C.-46 (moderate)

D.-18 (lots)

I- (blank)

Q21. Are you required to document the work you accomplish excluding fire and EMS report writing?

A.-41 (yes)

B.-55 (no)

I- (blank)

Q22. Do you receive feedback from your supervisor for doing good work?

A.-72 (yes)

B.-23 (no)

2- (blank)

Q23. If you answered yes to question 22, how often monthly are you praised for good work?

A.-49 (1-5 times)

B.-13 (5-10 times)

C.-10 (>10 times)

D.-22 (N/A)

3- (blank)

Q24. Does your organization have a mission statement?

A.-89 (yes)

B.-5 (no)

3- (blank)

Q25. Without using a reference, can you recite your organizations mission statement?

A.-17 (yes)

B.-75 (no)

C.-4 (N/A)

1- (blank)

Q26. Does your organization have a vision statement?

A.-46 (yes)

B.-44 (no)

7- (blank)

Q27. Without using a reference, can you recite your organizations vision statement?

A.-6 (yes)

B.-52 (no)

C.-36 (N/A)

3- (blank)

Q28. Who do you feel contributed mostly to helping you understand your job and the expectations of the organization listed in the footer of this survey?

A.-45 (partner)

B.-9 (orientation)

C.-16 (lieutenant)

D.-26 (other)

1- (blank)

Table 4

NEFC Responses for Fire Officer (61 surveys offered, 32 returned)

Q1. Please indicate your employment status with the fire department listed in the footer of this survey?

A.-0 (volunteer)

B.-1 (part time)

C.-31 (full time)

Q2. As of this survey, please identify how many years you have been certified as a firefighter?

A.-2 (0-5 years)

B.-2 (6-10 years)

C.-7 (11-15 years)

D.-21 (>16 years)

Q3. Please indicate your current rank with the organization listed in the footer of this survey?

A.-11 (chief officer)

B.3 (captain)

C.-15 (lieutenant)

3- (blank)

Q4. Is your hiring process the same process regardless of when employees are hired?

A.-18 (yes)

B.-14 (no)

Q5. If required, how long is your probationary period? N/A if no probation required.

A.-0 (0-6 mo.)

B.-27 (6-12 mo.)

C.-5 (12-18 mo.)

D.-0 (other)

Q6. Are new employees required to attend orientation training for their new job?

A.-31 (yes)

B.-1 (no)

Q7. If you answered yes to question 6, are these new employees required to complete this orientation training before they are permitted to work their assignment?

A.-29 (yes)

B.-2 (no)

1- (blank)

Q8. If you answered yes to question 6, how long is the orientation training? _____ weeks

Fill in the blank – (time variation 1-10 weeks)

Q9. Are new employees required to complete a competency checklist?

A.-32 (yes)

B.-0 (no)

Q10. If you answered yes to question 9, when is the competency checklist due?

A.-20 (end of orientation)

B.-7 (end of probation)

C.-5 (other)

Q11. Does your current competency checklist contain any outdated material?

A.-17 (yes)

B.-15 (no)

Q12. Which best describes the content you offer in your orientation training/competency checklist?

A.-5 (fire/EMS skill only)

B.-0 (administrative/benefits etc.)

C.-27 (both A & B)

Q13. Do you discuss the history of your organization during the orientation training?

A.-16 (yes)

B.-16 (no)

Q14. Have you ever known new employees to fail meeting requirements set forth training such as not ready for assignment, incomplete competency checklists etc.?

A.-20 (yes)

B.-12 (no)

Q15. If you answered yes to question 14, what do you believe is a contributing factor?

A.-1 (lack of orientation training content)

B.-3 (lack of delivery)

C.-16 (other)

11- (N/A)

1- (blank)

Q16. If you answered yes to question 14, what measures do you follow in response to the failure of expectations? N/A- if not applicable.

A.-6 (extend orientation training time)

B.-7 (termination)

C.-7 (other)

11- (N/A)

1- (blank)

Q17. Do you require your field training officers or those responsible for employee development to attend specialized training specifically designed to educate them in employee development techniques?

A.-6 (yes)

B.-26 (no)

Q18. If you answered yes to question 17, what specialized training is required?

A.-2 (instructor)

B.-3 (leadership)

C.-1 (other)

17- (N/A)

9- (blank)

Q19. Do you conduct employee performance appraisals?

A.-32 (yes)

B.-0 (no)

Q20. If you answered yes to question 19, is your current system simple and easy to administer as suggested by the International City Management Association (1997)?

A.-20 (yes)

B.-10 (no)

2- (blank)

Q21. If you answered yes to question 19, do your employees have access to the standards being measured and the appraisal form well in advance as suggested by the International City Management Association (1997)?

A.-14 (yes)

B.-10 (no)

1- (N/A)

7- (blank)

Q22. If you answered yes to question 19, do you use the previous performance appraisal to review improvement plans and measure progress even if the employee was previously evaluated by someone else?

A.-20 (yes)

B.-3 (no)

2- (N/A)

7- (blank)

Q23. How often do you conduct performance appraisals for new employees during probation or during orientation training?

A.-1 (never)

B.-6 (monthly)

C.-8 (bi-annually)

D.-10 (annually)

E.-7 (other)

Q24. Have you ever randomly surveyed your employees regarding knowledge of the mission statement?

A.-7 (yes)

B.-25 (no)

C.-0 (we don't have a mission statement)

Q25. If you answered yes to question 24, did you notice any employee unable to recite the mission?

A.-7 (yes)

B.-0 (no)

C.-25 (N/A)

Q26. Have you ever randomly surveyed your employees regarding knowledge of the vision statement?

A.-3 (yes)

B.-27 (no)

C.-2 (we don't have a vision statement)

Q27. If you answered yes to question 26, did you notice any employee unable to recite the vision?

A.-4 (yes)

B.-2 (no)

C.-26 (N/A)

Q28. Who do you believe best suits the position to mentor new employees and assist them to be successful with the organization?

A.-19 (lieutenant)

B.-2 (captain)

C.-0 (chief officer)

D.-11 (other)

The NEFC firefighters who participated in the survey have many years in the fire service. The highest category is 36% having 6-10 years, followed by 24.7% with 0-5 years. Firefighters with greater than 16 years of service amount to 22.6% of the group, and 16.4% have 11-15 years of experience.

The survey data shows that 69% of firefighters stated they were not assigned a personal mentor however 81.4% were required to take an orientation program, additionally 54.6% were required to complete the orientation training before being authorized to work their regular assignment. Most firefighters (57.7%) surveyed in the NEFC said the orientation training provided useful content and was delivered in a manner that prepared them for their regular assignment. They (67%) also said that a competency checklist was used to determine their progress. Nearly one third (31.9%) of the firefighters also said the orientation checklist contained outdated content. Most firefighters (78.3%) reported they received performance appraisals however 38.1% said they were not on time. Furthermore 29.8% of the firefighters said they did not have access to the standards being measured or to the appraisal form content in advance. The same percentage said that their performance appraisals did not clearly address their improvement plans to keep them working towards their personal and professional goals.

Overwhelmingly, the NEFC firefighters surveyed (80.4%) said they do not use a performance based incentive program. Nearly 75% of the firefighters surveyed stated they receive feedback from their supervisor for doing good work, and nearly half (50.5%) report they receive that feedback 1-5 times per month. Another interesting fact is that 91.7% of firefighters surveyed said their organization has a mission statement however 77.3% admit they cannot recite it. Finally, when firefighters were asked who contributed the most to helping them understand their job and the expectations of the organization, 46.3% said it was their partner.

The NEFC fire officers have many years of experience with 65.6% having greater than sixteen years in the fire service. When questioned about consistency in the hiring processes, 43.7% said that their processes were not the same for each employee regardless when hired. Probationary periods served within the NEFC range between 6-12 months (84.3%) and 12-18 months (15.6%). The officers (96.8%) said new employees are required to attend orientation, and 90.6% stated that new employees must complete the orientation before being released to their assignments. The orientation periods ranged from one to ten weeks. All 32 fire officers said that a competency checklist was provided to each new employee. The fire officers (53.1%) also said that outdated content existed on their competency checklist and 84.3% said that their content included fire, EMS, and administrative materials such as benefits. Many of the NEFC officers (62.5%) have experienced new employees failing to meet requirements such as not being ready for assignments; and many said that when employees fail to meet requirements set forth in their orientation, it is linked to the member's lack of effort, motivation etc. Most of the fire officers (81.2%) say specialized training is not a requirement to act as a field training officer with their organization. All fire officers surveyed conduct performance appraisals, and 31.2% of them say that their appraisals are not simple and easily administered. Additionally, 31.2% said

that their employees being evaluated do not have access to the evaluation standards in advance. Most of the evaluations conducted within the NEFC occur annually. Most firefighters said their organizations have a mission statement however most (77.3%) are unable to recite it. Of the fire officers surveyed, 84.3% do not survey their members to see if they are able to recite their mission statements. Most officers also agree that mentoring new employees is best suited for the rank of lieutenant.

DISCUSSION

(Hill, and Lineback (2011) described that becoming a great boss is a lengthy, difficult process of learning, and change, driven mostly by personal experience. Indeed, so much time and effort are required that you can think of the process as a journey, a journey of years. Of the 129 NEFC respondents to the survey, 33.3% have greater than 16 years of service which illustrates the experience to build our professional development and to work on becoming great leaders.

Anderson (2011) discussed that “212” leaders must change their focus internally to recruiting, and retaining their best people. This research has identified weakness throughout the NEFC and the results identified can bring the firefighters and fire officers closer to understanding the weaknesses and correcting the deficiencies for a happier, healthier workplace for our internal customers. One goal is to close the gap on the differences in percentages so everyone can become unified to a common working system and reduce factual information from misunderstandings.

The International City Management Association (1997) identified twelve characteristics of an effective performance appraisal which included that it should be simple, easy to complete and administer by supervisors. The NEFC had 31.2% of fire officers that said their performance appraisal did not meet all the characteristics suggested by the International City Management Association.

Sachs, (1992) said performance appraisals should provide the opportunity for the supervisor, and the employee to take time, and effort to set future goals, and objectives for the upcoming year. Productive performance appraisals recognize the value of the employees, and why they are the most valuable resource of the organization. Some NEFC firefighters (29.8%) said supervisors did not address improvement plans with them.

Nigro (2003) said to design your own performance plans based on the coaching standard known as principled coherence. If you neglect follow up evaluation on the progression of your employee improvement plans, you will lose your credibility as a coach. The NEFC firefighters (38.1%) report that their performance evaluations were not conducted on time.

Bishop (1996) discussed one specific Field Training program initiated by the Metropolitan Nashville International Airports Safety and Security Department where each FTO attended 40 hours of training on “How to Develop an FTO Program.” Examples included a cost effective approach (since employees get up to speed sooner with intensive on the job training), and reduced potential for negligent retention and hiring. This FTO concept helped establish and maintain agency wide standardization of policies, procedures, training, and evaluation. The FTO position represents an additional career path for firefighter’s, and the promotional process benefits from having more competent people in the promotional pool. The NEFC fire officers (81.2%) said that there is not a requirement to hold the position of field training officer.

Anderson (2011) explained that you must determine where you are now; set realistic targets for improvement; and track, monitor, and review results. He also stated in the words of Peter Druker, “What gets measured gets improved.” It described that most employees want to grow, they want to do better and they want to take pride in their work, but they need targets to shoot for. In terms of measurements, the NEFC firefighters (56.7%) report that they are not required to document the work they accomplish excluding fire and EMS report writing. This proves difficulties may exist if the NEFC organization desires to set benchmarks and measure work accomplishments.

Kraut, Pedigo, McKenna and Dunnette (2005) completed a study where 1,412 managers were questioned to rate the relative importance of 57 managerial tasks, and statistically identified 7 major tasks. This data supported the idea that one-on-one with subordinates is more important to first-level managers, and diminishes as manager’s move up. The NEFC fire officers (59.3%) believe that the rank of lieutenant is best suited to mentor new employees. This is in agreement with Kraut, Pedigo, McKenna and Dunnette (2005) as lieutenants are first and front line supervisors.

Nigro (2003) described how important coaching techniques are, and discussed the importance of positive reinforcement. He said that you must identify the positive behaviors in your employees, and should provide them with positive feedback. The NEFC firefighters (74.2%) said that they receive feedback for doing good work. This is in agreement with Nigro (2003)

(Tjan, 2010) discussed that during entry-level, early stages of a career, or when “on boarding” to a new job, what really benefits someone is a “buddy” or peer-based mentor who can help one get up the learning curve faster. The NEFC firefighters (46.3%) reported that peer-

based mentoring contributed mostly to helping them understand their job and the expectations of the organization.

Robin (2010) stated a mission statement is usually meant to define internal motivation, and meant to align and engage the agents or actors in the organization, rather than helping define an orientation to outside customers. The NEFC survey shows a significant number of firefighters (91.7%) know their mission statements however; an alarming percentage (77.3%) cannot recite it. Additionally, the NEFC fire officers (84.3%) report they have never randomly surveyed their employees regarding knowledge of the organizations mission statement.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The NEFC should evaluate the results of this study and implement improvement plans as described in the following bullet points.

- Establish consistent hiring practices and professional development programs that will strengthen employees using the same processes for everyone. Inconsistencies were found to exist in hiring as fire officers (43.7%) report that the processes are not the same for all employees.
- Review all the content within the orientation material and update as needed to keep current with the organizations expectations. With the high percentage of firefighters (81.4%) within the NEFC attending or have attended a structured orientation training program, the NEFC firefighters (31.9%) reported outdated material existed.
- Simplify the current performance appraisal format and create a user friendly form. The research showed 31.2% of the fire officers said their current system was not simple and

easy to administer. The NEFC should also share the standards being measured with all its members before receiving their first evaluation so they have knowledge of the criteria in advance. In this research, only 68% of the fire officers said these standards are known.

- The NEFC should consider familiarizing its employees with the organizational mission through visibility and review. All the organizations in the NEFC have organizational mission statements. FEMA/USFA/NFA-STF-SM (1995) stated in the student manual “Shaping Our Future” that to understand impact objectives, we must see them as part of a larger system. This system starts with the mission statement, which describes the role of the department in the community, and the specific functions or tasks it performs to achieve its mission. The mission statement defines the areas in which the department will formulate goals. The lack of knowledge as reported in the survey instrument (77.3%) by firefighters is a reminder that although a mission statement exists, firefighters must be made familiar with it because it describes the role of the organization in the community.
- The NEFC should consider documenting all aspects of work accomplishments and establish what benchmarks will be used. Through a review process, comparing and tracking time spent working towards the organizations mission will facilitate useful data when justifying staffing levels. Anderson (2011) stated in the words of Peter Drucker, “What gets measured gets improved.” The NEFC has a high percentage of firefighters (56.7%) who responded to the survey that said they are not required to document their work excluding fire and EMS report writing. Using this “What gets measured gets improved” idea, the NEFC should begin improving operations by establishing organizational benchmarks.

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APPENDIX A

10 Employee Evaluation Audit

	HIRE	Eval 1	Eval 2	Eval 3	Eval 4	Percentage missed
FT #1	3/13/2009	8/3/2008	10/28/2009	12/15/2009	3/14/2011	50%
FT #2	4/10/2009	10/27/2009	X	X	4/6/2010	50%
FT #3	8/1/2009	1/2/2009	7/7/2009	12/15/2009	1/16/2011	75%
FT #4	8/1/2009	10/28/2009	12/15/2009	1/22/2010	X	25%
FT #5	11/6/2009	5/4/2008	10/2/2008	1/2/2009	X	100%
PT #1	6/27/2008	1/2/2009	X	X	X	75%
PT #2	6/15/2010	9/14/2010	1/13/2011	X	X	50%
PT #3	6/15/2010	9/14/2010	1/13/2011	X	X	50%
PT #4	6/15/2010	9/14/2010	1/13/2011	4/14/2011	X	25%
PT #5	6/15/2010	9/14/2010	1/13/2011	4/14/2011	X	25%

APPENDIX B

Orientation & Competencies Package Comparison including EMS Practical Skills Examination

No.	Hire Date	Start Date	End Date	Length	EMS Skills Field Training	FTO Competencies on file
FT # 1	3/13/2009	X	X	X	X	X
FT # 2	4/10/2009	X	X	X	X	X
FT # 3	8/1/2009	7/1/2008	1/27/2010	576 days	7/8/08 - 9/11/09	Yes
FT # 4	8/1/2009	3/25/2009	1/27/2010	308 days	X	Yes
FT # 5	11/6/2009	2/1/2008	1/8/2009	342 days	2/1/08 - ?	Yes
PT # 1	6/27/2008	6/27/2008	3/1/2009	267 days	No dates	Yes
PT # 2	6/15/2010	7/8/2010	2/1/2011	235 days	X	Yes
PT # 3	6/15/2010	X	X	X	X	X
PT # 4	6/15/2010	6/1/2010	3/1/2011	273 days	X	Yes
PT # 5	6/15/2010	7/3/2010	3/3/2011	243 days	X	Yes

APPENDIX C

Loveland Symmes Fire Department Orientation & Competencies Package, page 7

ADMINISTRATIVE CHECKLIST

Mastery Date FTO

GENERAL OPERATING INFORMATION

1. Probationary Period			
2. Mission Statement			
3. Location of EOM			
4. Station and Vehicle Locations			
5. Employee Handbook			
6. Fire Prevention Overview			
7. Computers			
8. Specialty Vehicles			
A. Communications Trailer			
B. Utility/Brush Truck			
C. Confined Space Trailer			
D. Wood/Trench Trailer			
E. Hovercraft			
F. Inflatables			
G. Dive 60/Dive 61			
H. Staff Vehicles			
I. Supervisor's Vehicle			

9. Officer Assignments			
A. Explain Chain of Command			
B. Chief / Assistant Chief			
C. Battalion Chief			
D. Captains			
E. Lieutenants			
F. Chief Engineers			
G. Paramedics			
H. Firefighters			
10. Vehicles			
A. Emergency Vehicles			
B. Official Use Only			
C. Black File Box			
D. Driver's Training			
E. Accidents Involving LSFV Vehicles			
F. Daily Check Sheets			
11. Injuries On-Duty			
A. Notifying Supervisor			
B. Worker's Comp. Paperwork			
C. Relieved of Duty			
D. Return to Duty			

APPENDIX D
LOVELAND SYMMES FIRE DEPARTMENT
PROBATIONARY FIREFIGHTER/PARAMEDIC
PRACTICAL SKILLS EXAMINATION

A score of at least **85%** must be achieved on each section of the practical skills test. If a passing score is not achieved on any section(s) of the test the probationary firefighter will be referred back to the training division for further training in the area(s) needing improvement. The probationary firefighter will then be re-evaluated on these areas at a later date. An overall score of **85%** must be achieved in order to pass the practical skills portion of the probationary firefighter examination. A passing score is required in order for the probationary firefighter to be released from the orientation program. If a passing score is not achieved the probationary firefighter will be counseled on the area(s) needing improvement. The probationary firefighter will then be referred back to his / her F.T.O. for review of the areas of deficiency. After a period of at least two weeks and 48 working hours the probationary firefighter can re-schedule the practical skills examination. If a passing score is not achieved on the second attempt at the practical skills examination the probationary firefighter will be scheduled to meet with the appropriate Chief Officers to determine what type of action should be taken for failing to learn minimum skill levels needed to perform as a firefighter / paramedic with Loveland Symmes Fire Department.

NAME _____

DATE _____

F.T.O. _____

PRACTICAL SKILL

PASS

FAIL

SECTION 1: EMS EQUIPMENT LOCATION (outside)

Identify the equipment located in the outside compartments of M63 starting with compartment #1 on the drivers side and working around to the passenger side.

COMPARTMENT #1

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|
| 1. On board O2 supply bottle | _____ | _____ |
| 2. Road Flares | _____ | _____ |
| 3. Fire Extinguisher | _____ | _____ |
| 4. Spare Oxygen Bottles (2) | _____ | _____ |
| 5. O2 Bottle Wrench | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Oxygen Regulator & Gauge | _____ | _____ |

Deduct _____ points for items incorrectly stated as being in this section. List each item # _____.

This appendix includes a small section of the orientation and is a much larger document that is an itemized breakdown of the equipment carried on LSFd ambulances.

APPENDIX E

Loveland Symmes Fire Department Employee Handbook, rev. 01/01/2011

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD TRAINING OFFICER (FTO)

“CAAS – 106.08.02”

The following is an illustrative list of tasks that each ranking position holds.

Rank: Field Training Officer

Title: Field Training Officer

Reports to: District Chief, Captain

As a Field Training Officer (F.T.O.), you will be responsible for the probationary employee's progress through his/her orientation to the operations of the Loveland Symmes Fire Department.

The program is comprised of a series of check-off objectives.

The probationary employee has six months complete the package.

Each task needs to be dated and signed by the assigned F.T.O.; in doing so, the F.T.O. is assuring the department that the probationary employee is proficient in each area.

Once the orientation and competency package is completed, it must be signed by the probationary employee and given to the candidate's shift supervisor.

In order for the probationary employee to be released from probation status, this package must be signed by the F.T.O. and the shift supervisor.

Shall act as a mentor to hourly employees as assigned.

Participate in all fund raising activities as assigned.

Any and all other duties as assigned by the Office of the Fire Chief.

APPENDIX F

Survey for Ohio Fire Executive Program

NEFC Firefighter Survey

2011

I would like to thank you for taking time to complete this 28 question survey. The following questions are specifically designed to assist me in determining various processes and time allocated to employee development within the NEFC. If you would like to receive the results of this review, please feel free to email me at bdowers@safety-center.org and I would be honored to provide it to you.

Directions for completing the survey – Please circle the answer that you feel is most appropriate.

Please return this survey sealed in the envelope provided to (Representative) by (Date). I will pick them up and begin analyzing the data you provided.

1. Please indicate your employment status with the fire department listed in the footer of this survey?
 - a. Volunteer
 - b. Part Time
 - c. Full Time

2. As of this survey, please identify how many years you have been certified as a firefighter?
 - a. 0-5 years
 - b. 6-10 years
 - c. 11-15 years
 - d. > 16 years

3. Were you required to take orientation training when you were hired?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

4. If you answered yes to question 3, were you required to complete the orientation training before you were released to work an assignment?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. If you answered yes to question 3, do you feel the orientation training provided useful content and was delivered in a manner that prepared you for assignment?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. N/A
6. If you answered yes to question 3, was the expectation that all new employees attending the orientation training would progress together at the same rate?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. N/A
7. Were you required to complete a competency checklist as a way to determine your progress?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. If you answered yes to question 7, did the checklist contain any outdated content?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. N/A
9. Were you ever assigned a personal mentor?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
10. If you answered yes to question 9, why was this mentor chosen for you?
 - a. Partner
 - b. Training officer
 - c. Other _____
11. Do you receive performance appraisals?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
12. If you answered yes to question 11, do you always receive them according to the performance review schedule set by your organization?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. N/A

13. If you answered yes to question 11, what time period best describes your organizations review schedule?

- a. Monthly b. Bi-Annually c. Annually d. N/A

14. If you answered yes to question 11, do you have access to the standards being measured and the appraisal form content well in advance?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

15. If you answered yes to question 11, is your performance appraisal form easy to read, understand and does it accurately address the standards being measured?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

16. If you answered yes to question 11, does your performance appraisal clearly address your improvement plan to keep you working towards personal and organizational goals?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

17. If you answered yes to question 11, does your evaluator measure your success with the improvement plan set for you previously?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

18. Does your organization use a performance based incentive program?

- a. Yes b. No

19. If you answered yes to question 18, do you feel the incentives provide challenging opportunities to perform even better?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

20. How much do you know about the history of your organization?

- a. None b. Little c. Moderate d. Lots

21. Are you required to document the work you accomplish excluding fire and EMS report writing?

- a. Yes b. No

22. Do you receive feedback from your supervisor for doing good work?

- a. Yes b. No

23. If you answered yes to question 22, how often monthly are you praised for good work?

- a. 1-5 times b. 5-10 times c. >10 times d. N/A

24. Does your organization have a mission statement?

- a. Yes b. No

25. Without using a reference, can you recite your organizations mission statement?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

26. Does your organization have a vision statement?

- a. Yes b. No

27. Without using a reference, can you recite your organizations vision statement?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

28. Who do you feel contributed mostly to helping you understand your job and the expectations of the organization listed in the footer of this survey?

- a. Partner b. Orientation c. Lieutenant d. Other_____

Note: Please do not put your name on this survey.

Thank you for your time.

APPENDIX G

Survey for Ohio Fire Executive Program

NEFC Fire Officer Survey

2011

I would like to thank you for taking time to complete this 28 question survey. The following questions are specifically designed to assist me in determining various processes and time allocated to employee development within the NEFC. If you would like to receive the results of this review, please feel free to email me at bdowers@safety-center.org and I would be honored to provide it to you. Please do not write your name on this survey.

Directions for completing the survey – Please circle the answer that you feel is most appropriate.

Please return this survey sealed in the envelope provided to (Representative) by (Date).

I will pick them up and begin analyzing the data you provided.

1. Please indicate your employment status with the fire department listed in the footer of this survey?
 - b. Volunteer
 - b. Part Time
 - c. Full Time
2. As of this survey, please identify how many years you have been certified as a firefighter?
 - a. 0-5 years
 - b. 6-10 years
 - c. 11-15 years
 - d. > 16 years
3. Please indicate your current rank with the organization listed in the footer of this survey?
 - a. Chief Officer
 - b. Captain
 - c. Lieutenant

4. Is your hiring process the same process regardless of when employees are hired?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. If required, how long is your probationary period? N/A if no probation required
 - a. 0-6 mo.
 - b. 6-12 mo.
 - c. 12-18 mo.
 - d. Other_____
6. Are new employees required to attend orientation training for their new job?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
7. If you answered yes to question 6, are these new employees required to complete this orientation training before they are permitted to work their assignment?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. If you answered yes to question 6, how long is the orientation training? _____wks.
9. Are new employees required to complete a competency checklist?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
10. If you answered yes to question 9, when is the competency checklist due?
 - a. End of orientation training
 - b. End of probation
 - c. Other_____
11. Does your current competency checklist contain any outdated material?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
12. Which best describes the content you offer in your orientation training / competency checklist.
 - a. Fire/EMS skill only
 - b. Administrative/benefits etc.
 - c. Both a and b
13. Do you discuss the history of your organization during your orientation training?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
14. Have you ever known new employees to fail meeting requirements set forth in orientation training such as not ready for assignment, incomplete competency checklists etc.?

- a. Yes
- b. No

15. If you answered yes to question 14, what do you believe is a contributing factor?

- a. Lack of orientation training content.
- b. Lack of orientation training delivery.
- c. Other _____

16. If you answered yes to question 14, what measures do you follow in response to the failure of expectations? N/A- if not applicable

- a. Extend orientation training time
- b. Termination
- c. Other _____

17. Do you require your Field Training Officers or those responsible for employee development to attend specialized training specifically designed to educate them in employee development techniques?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. If you answered yes to question 17, what specialized training is required?

- a. Instructor
- b. Leadership
- c. Other _____

19. Do you conduct employee performance appraisals?

- a. Yes
- b. No

20. If you answered yes to question 19, is your current system simple and easy to administer as suggested by International City Management Association (1997)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

21. If you answered yes to question 19, do your employees have access to the standards being measured and the appraisal form well in advance as suggested by the International City Management Association (1997)?

- a. Yes
- b. No

22. If you answered yes to question 19, do you use the previous performance appraisal to review improvement plans and measure progress even if the employee was previously evaluated by someone else?

- a. Yes b. No

23. How often do you conduct performance appraisals for new employees during probation or during orientation training?

- a. Never b. Monthly c. Biannually d. Annually e. Other _____

24. Have you ever randomly surveyed your employees regarding knowledge of the mission statement?

- a. Yes b. No c. We don't have a mission statement

25. If you answered yes to question 24, did you notice any employee unable to recite the mission?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

26. Have you ever randomly surveyed your employees regarding knowledge of the vision statement?

- a. Yes b. No c. We don't have a vision statement

27. If you answered yes to question 26, did you notice any employee unable to recite the vision?

- a. Yes b. No c. N/A

28. Who do you believe best suits the position to mentor new employees and assist them to be successful with the organization?

- a. Lieutenant b. Captain c. Chief Officer d. Other _____

Note: Please do not put your name on this survey.

APPENDIX H

NEFC Survey Data

