

Running head: LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN THE MOFD

Executive Development

Identifying the need for Leadership Training in the
Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD)

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April 2005

CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that 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.

Signed: Bryan Collins

ABSTRACT

The problem was the MOFD did not have a training plan to provide leadership development skills for future Chief Officers. The purpose of this research was to identify the leadership skills necessary to be a MOFD Chief Officer, and determine what methodologies could best be utilized to prepare its future leaders.

Through descriptive research questions about what others are doing, the necessary skills and competencies needed, what programs were being utilized within the MOFD, and alternative methodologies were answered. The research was carried out through surveys, and literature review. The results showed the importance of leadership succession planning, and the need for such at the MOFD. Recommendations included further development of a formal Succession Plan for the District.

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INTRODUCTION

The California Fire Service has seen a large number of its firefighters opting for retirement during the last decade. With the employees from the baby boomer generation reaching retirement age, coupled with increased retirement benefits at an earlier age, this trend appears likely to continue into the foreseeable future. Many of those leaving, hold leadership positions, and take with them years of experience and knowledge. The impact of these retirements is being felt at all levels within organizations, especially in the leadership positions such as Chief Officers.

The Moraga-Orinda Fire District (MOFD) is faced with this same issue. Within the next five years over sixty percent of the Chief Officers in the MOFD will be eligible to retire. The problem is that the MOFD does not have a formalized training plan that identifies and provides leadership development skills and competencies for its future leaders, which could lead to an inadequate number of qualified personnel to fill future leadership positions.

The purpose of this research is to assist the MOFD in identifying those leadership skills and competencies necessary to be a Chief Officer, and to determine what methodologies could best be utilized to prepare its future leaders for these key leadership positions.

Descriptive research was used to answer the following four questions:

1. What are other public and private sector organizations doing to prepare leaders?
2. What are the leadership skills and competencies necessary for Chief Officers in the MOFD?
3. What is the MOFD currently doing to develop its personnel for future leadership positions?
4. What methodologies could be used by MOFD to prepare future Chief Officers?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Town of Moraga and the City of Orinda lie approximately 20 miles east of San Francisco, California in the suburbs of Contra Costa County. The MOFD was formed on July 1, 1997 when over 80 percent of the voters in the Town of Moraga and the City of Orinda approved a consolidation plan that eliminated two former independent Fire Districts and created a single consolidated Fire District. The District serves the Town of Moraga, City of Orinda, the community of Canyon, and some other unincorporated areas of Contra Costa County.

The Fire District protects an area of 63 square miles and serves a population of approximately 50,000 including a private University. It offers a full range of services to the communities such as Fire protection/suppression, Fire Prevention and Code enforcement, advanced life support transport, technical rescue capabilities and response to hazardous material incidents. Service is provided out of five fire stations operating four engines, one truck company, two transport ambulances, and a shift Battalion Chief. Each of the engines and the truck are staffed with three personnel, one of whom is a licensed Paramedic. The two transport ambulances are staffed with a minimum of two Paramedics each at all times. The District is a fully paid professional department with approximately 70 employees.

The District's organizational structure is noticeably flat. The Fire Chief reports directly to a five member Board of Directors that is elected by the two communities. Five Battalion level Chief Officers report directly to the Fire Chief. Each of these Chief Officers has administrative and functional responsibilities over a major division of the Fire Department. Three Battalion Chiefs are responsible for the areas of Emergency Operations/Information Technology, Personnel, and Support Services. In addition these three Battalion Chiefs are assigned as the Chief Officer in charge of day-to-day operations for each of the District's three shifts. One Battalion Chief oversees Training/Education, and the Fire Marshal is responsible for Fire Prevention, Code Enforcement, Fire Investigation and other related activities.

In the past, these Chief Officer positions have been filled via promotion of existing qualified personnel from within the Fire District. However, shortly after the formation of the

District the positions of Fire Chief, and Fire Marshal, were filled via a recruitment that included both internal personnel, and recruitment outside of the department.

Preparation for these leadership positions had been traditionally left up to each individual, with no formal process of preparing personnel to fill these positions. Historically the interest level of personnel from within the department to fill these Chief Officer positions has been rather low. This lack of interest has impacted the department by producing a minimal number of applicants to participate in the testing process and a low number of successful candidates after completion of the tests.

Prior to their appointment, none of the four Battalion Chief's had received any formal training that specifically prepared them for the new level of responsibility that they would face upon promotion. All four had been Fire Captains, with training specific to that job, and each had sought further training and educational opportunities outside the department. The result of this lack of formal preparation has been a great deal of on the job learning, which has taken a tremendous amount of their time, and likewise significant effort by the District.

If past history is an indication of the future, this void in preparation should be of significant concern to the District. Faced with over 60 percent of its Chief Officers potential retirement over the next five years, and few candidates preparing on their own for these positions, the MOFD is likely to see a limited number of adequately prepared candidates competing in the testing process. The impact to the community, is the MOFD's potential inability to provide a quality services to its customers. The Mission Statement of the Moraga-Orinda Fire District states, "With pride and professionalism the Moraga-Orinda Fire District will provide the highest level of emergency and public service in response to the needs of our community". In order to fulfill this mission the MOFD will need to ensure that the personnel that move into its leadership positions are prepared with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to continue to meet the growing and changing expectations of the community.

This applied research project is being conducted as part of the Executive Development course through the National Fire Academy. Development and Training of future leaders directly

relates to Course unit six, “Organizational Change and Professional Development”. This research paper is intended to support the United States Fire Administration (USFA) operational objective of, “Responding appropriately in a timely manner to emerging issues”.

Descriptive research will analyze the skills and competencies necessary for these leadership positions. The research will also look at what is currently being done within the organization, and what is being done to address similar issues in other public and private sector professions. Finally, this research will recommend a methodology for the MOFD to consider in the future, to assure adequate preparation and training of its personnel that will be filling these leadership positions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of literature for this Applied Research Paper (ARP) started at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at the National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, in January 2005. The LRC staff assisted this researcher in collection of published books and journals dealing with the subjects of Leadership Training, Succession Training, and Leadership Competencies of both public and private sector organizations. Also examined, utilizing the LRC card catalogue, was literature relating to current methodologies used to prepare personnel for leadership positions. Upon this authors return home, additional research was conducted at the Ygnacio Valley branch of the Contra Costa County Library, in Walnut Creek California. Additionally, various sources within the MOFD library were utilized, along with Internet site searches, which availed a great deal of information on this topic.

What are other public and private sector organizations doing to prepare their leaders?

The 2001 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centers served as a stark wakeup call to America’s business sector. The attacks virtually devastated the executive ranks of many companies both large and small. In addition, the talent pool of younger workers for technology companies such as Compaq Computer, eLogic, Sun Microsystems, Oracle, Raytheon, Applied Materials and others, was suddenly severely diminished. “These disastrous events have prompted

some serious management rethinking about business succession and contingency planning” (Morris-Lee, 2001, p.18). Some literature suggests that less than one quarter of industry in the U.S. has a robust, effective leadership or succession-planning program ready for unforeseen future contingencies. In response to this shortcoming many companies, especially large for profit companies such as Hewlett Packard, and McDonalds are busy at work evaluating, developing, and implementing leadership training and development programs within their organizations. The drug giant Glaxo Wellcome’s promotes an integrated development process. Employees and managers collaborate on performance planning and managers help employees work to develop and meet personal performance goals. This approach to leadership and succession training is based on retaining “star” employees as well as ensuring that key positions are filled. Glaxo concentrates heavily on matching star employees talents and interests to available opportunities (Arbogust & Gusman, 2000).

General Electric (GE) prides itself on the strength of its internal executive pool. When its legendary leader Jack Welch stepped down, that internal executive pool produced Jeff Immelt as the ready successor. Once identified as the successor, Welch brought in Immelt and the two worked together on the succession for ten months before Welch finally stepped down as the CEO. For GE, identifying, training, and nurturing replacements from within the company is embedded within the companies’ culture. It is seen as an integral part of executive leadership, and a sign of a confident company. The company is constantly evaluating progress and development within its corporate training initiatives such as its Management Trainee program, Global Leadership programs, Certification programs, and Masters of Business Administration programs. Annually, every GE business conducts what is known as a “Session C”, which is a CEO led initiative, which produces a snapshot of the leadership bench strength and rising talent. Leaders analyze their organizations strengths and needs, and development plans are crafted to address specific individuals. This type of commitment to leadership training and development is why GE is often called a “Leadership Factory, a place where we are constantly looking at grooming our people and developing the leaders of tomorrow” (Bhasin, 2003 p.2). Byham

(2002) details how the PepsiCo Company prepares its people in “acceleration pools”. This program readies high-potential personnel for organizational levels rather than specific positions. Best Practices LLC (2003) talks about managing your corporate benches to meet company needs with successful career path and succession planning systems. Highlighted are companies such as Apple Computer, Black & Decker, Levi Strauss, Microsoft, Motorola, Clorox, Intel, Merck and others, all of which have implemented successful leadership development programs in their corporations.

Private companies are not the only ones that have been evaluating and implementing leadership development programs. The public sector has begun to get busy as well. There are numerous examples of public agencies that have begun to implement leadership development and succession planning into their organizations. The United States Department of Labor (DOL) has developed competencies for all of its mission critical occupations. Over the last two years the DOL completed a competency-modeling project for 25 of its key positions, and those models are being implemented for the purposes of hiring, training, assessment and other human resource functions. A software program was purchased that evaluates personnel against the identified competencies, and then creates individual development plans. These plans are used to compare with known competency gaps and organizational evaluations, out of which come new training initiatives. The DOL also has implemented a Masters of Business Administration (MBA) program which is considered to be a key element in its succession plan. MBA participants are periodically rotated through position assignments throughout the organization, allowing for exposure and growth opportunities (Lindholm, 2004). According to Lindholm (2004) a number of other federal agencies have new or expanded workforce planning efforts including the Environmental Protection Agency, Internal Revenue Service, General Services Administration, Department of Energy and the Social Security Administration. In existence since 1990, the leadership/succession management process in the Minnesota Department of Transportation is reported as having achieved numerous successes, in large part because of the acceptance and support it has received across the agency. Key positions and those essential to the health of the

organization are identified, and based on a voluntary survey, potential successors are identified. A review follows, including an assessment of these individuals, their work history, and structured meetings with managers. Managers then conduct competency profiling of the potential successors. Based on this information, personnel under consideration are rated on potential and readiness for the strategic positions in which they have expressed interest (Public sector management, 2001). Wilkerson (2002) profiles the Oklahoma Department of Corrections (DOC). The DOC takes a systematic approach to filling leadership positions. The DOC views these transitions as critical to the continued success and growth of their organization, and has a strong commitment from the top to ensure that the transitions are effectively managed. Some of the key components of the DOC program include formal and informal recruitment of potential candidates, a rigorous interview process where initial selections are made, feedback to both successful and unsuccessful candidates, and a learning journey in which employees are educated and developed to assure they are ready for the next position. The director of the department is an active participant in these processes, particularly in the training phases, which demonstrates the commitment to the program to the rest of the organization.

The Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) discovered leadership deficiencies in their organization and implemented the Leadership Institute in August 1998. The Leadership Institute consists of 112 plus hour program focusing on leadership development, decision-making, problem solving, delegation, empowerment, conflict management, communications, personal growth, team building and ethics. Graduates of the training over the years have become involved in numerous committees and programs, have redesigned the OCFA's approach to customer service, and have published their own Leadership Development newsletter. Of the program's first 48 participants, 15 have received promotions to Fire Captain, Battalion Chief, or other senior staff positions (Martin, 2001). The Ohio Fire Chief's Association (OFCA) has developed an award winning executive development program. The program is designed to assess, develop, and enhance the skills of current fire chiefs and high potential Chief Officers. The two and one half year program consists of development training in the areas of executive leadership, leading

change, and self-analysis. Throughout the sixteen learning modules the program's students complete assigned readings as well as four or five comprehensive writing projects, on topics such as evaluation of their own organizations, and a strategic plan. The participants change in leadership behavior is assessed by a 360-degree evaluation which is conducted both at the beginning of the program and at the successful completion (IAFC, 2003).

The literature suggests that both public and private agencies are beginning to realize the importance of developing their personnel. In many cases those that have leadership development programs in place are reaping the rewards with continued success as they transition through changing leaderships. Those that are caught unprepared are often left to look outside the organization for successors. Succession planning appears to be the methodology of choice for the public and private organizations that were reviewed.

What are the leadership skills and competencies necessary for Chief Officers in the MOFD?

Based on information obtained from the private, public, and governmental agencies reviewed, there exists a great many competencies that have been identified, and which could be included as necessary skills or competencies for those in leadership positions.

The United States Coast Guard (2002) identifies three general broad categories to which these competencies belong:

1. **Self:** Understanding one's own abilities, personality, values, personal conduct, and technical abilities.
2. **Working with others:** Working with co-workers, influencing others to achieve, effective communications, understanding diversity, understanding roles such as leader, mentor, follower, peer, subordinate, and establish professional relationships.
3. **Performance:** Ability to meet challenges, application of leadership in daily activities, decision making and problem solving, conflict resolution, work process improvement.

The Maine Management Service (2005) identifies the three following categories:

1. **Inspiring:** Includes vision, a supporting coach, and effective communicator, model of integrity.
2. **A Steward:** Someone who is customer centered, results oriented, and who has sound judgment.
3. **Effective problem solver:** Someone who is an analytical thinker, a systems thinker.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (2003) identifies the following leadership competencies:

1. **Leads People:** Fosters teamwork and a team supportive atmosphere, resolves conflict, reflects and models organizational values, promotes diversity, works well with other officers.
2. **Continuous Learner:** Pursues advanced and continuing education, participates in training and development activities, seeks out projects and assignments, adapt behavior and work methods to new information or changing conditions.
3. **Business Proficiency:** Ensures acquisition procedures are followed, understands budgeting, aligns activities with performance goals, proactive planner, and understands new technologies.
4. **Problem Solver:** Skilled at problem solving, identifies barriers to goals, good planner, develops innovative alternatives to problems, builds coalitions, anticipates change, and understands roles and relationships.
5. **Strategic Thinker:** Demonstrates skills for strategic thinking, develops strategies, advocates change, actively involved in research, identifies and integrates political, social, scientific, technological issues that affect the organization.
6. **Communicator:** Clear and convincing speaker, excellent report writer, develops and enhances alliances with other groups, considers others needs and responds appropriately, gains cooperation from others.

Bennis (2005) defines four competencies important for leaders. They are:

1. Management of attention
2. Management of meaning
3. Management of trust
4. Management of self

The National Legal Aid and Defender Association (2003) has identified the following seven competencies of effective leaders:

1. Builds and sustains relationships, coalitions, and community networks
2. Maximizes impact by honing messages for multiple venues
3. Recognizes and engages issues of power and difference
4. Understands the personal dimensions of leadership through self awareness
5. Develops, facilitates, and inspires a shared vision
6. Fosters and environment of leadership development and growth
7. Thinks strategically and acts tactically

Fleming (2002) talks about Fire service Chief Officers, and those who are management material.

He points out the following as competencies needed for Chief Fire Officers:

1. The ability to work with and through other to accomplish the organizations goals
2. Ability to prepare your Fire Department for the future
3. Must possess technical, human and conceptual skills
4. Ability to articulate the future
5. Develop consensus
6. Obtain buy in from within and external to the organization
7. The ability to influence others to achieve goals

Fleming (2002 p.40) goes on to discuss effective transition to the position and the barriers that sometimes prevent this. He states, "This situation can result from not really wanting the job, not understanding the job, or not having the necessary knowledge and skills. Frequently those

promoted to chief officer positions have extensive technical skills, but lack human or conceptual skills”.

In its last recruitment for the position of Battalion Chief the MOFD listed the following as key competencies for candidates:

1. Strong leadership and interpersonal skills
2. High energy with the ability to manage a number of projects simultaneously
3. Broad technical knowledge and abilities
4. Good computer skills
5. Good verbal and written communication skills
6. Ability to make sound decisions in a manner essential to the job functions
7. Ability to maintain physical condition to allow for performance of assigned duties

(Moraga Orinda Fire District, 2003)

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 1021 in its Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications identifies the performance requirements necessary for fire officers, and groups them into four categories. Levels one and two are lower level officers at the company level such as Captains. Many of the skills and competencies at this level deal with tactical and strategic decision making, and management functions. Level three addresses mid management officers such as Battalion Chiefs, with level four addressing administrative management positions such as Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief and Fire Chief. Because of the relatively flat organizational structure in the MOFD its Battalion Chief's have assumed many of the roles and responsibilities of these administrative management positions. Therefore, when analyzing the necessary competencies required of the MOFD Chief Officers it is appropriate to compare with both levels three and four of the standard. The standard lists the following as some of its competencies:

1. Budget preparation
2. Development of budgeting systems
3. Bid solicitation

4. Resource allocation planning
5. Working with information technology systems
6. Advanced administrative skills
7. Political and legal implications and functions

In addition, the prerequisites for levels one and two are required for Chief Officers, which address many of the same competencies that have been identified by other authors previously in this research, report.

The United States Coast Guard's description of three general competency areas seems to contain most of the identified competencies discovered during this literature review. Within these categories many skills and competencies are identified which would need to be included in a successful and comprehensive leadership development program.

What is the MOFD currently doing to develop its personnel for future leadership positions?

To best answer this question, this author will take a look at both formal and informal procedures that may exist within the MOFD.

Informally, the MOFD encourages its employees to prepare for promotional opportunities that will arise throughout their career. The culture of the department is such, that it supports and encourages members to actively further their education by attending schools and specialty classes, and to become involved and actively participate within the District. Generally, young firefighters are urged by their Captain's to prepare for the promotional opportunities at the levels of Engineer and Captain. Some Captain's also encourage their subordinates to become involved in one or more of the many programs that the department runs. Of course, the amount of effort and encouragement varies greatly between the individual Captain's within the Fire District, and some personnel by the very nature of their station bid assignment, may not receive much if any encouragement from their Captain.

This author has noticed a shift in the department culture regarding this subject over the last five years or so. What was once almost an expectation that personnel would prepare themselves

to promote, has lessened a great deal, and many more firefighters seem to be perfectly content to stay within the lower levels of the organization.

The MOFD Battalion Chief's as a general rule seem to informally support the efforts of their respective Captains, but because of increasing responsibilities in the areas of administrative workload, program development and management, and fulfilling their obligations to run the day to day activities of their respective shifts along with responding to emergencies, don't have the time necessary to spend with the Captains or Firefighters to offer much more than their general support.

The Fire Chief has an informal agreement with the Battalion Chief's to rotate their assignment and responsibilities approximately every two- three years. By rotating through the various assignments of Operations, Apparatus and Facilities, Personnel, and Training, the Chief Officers are exposed to the different aspects of the Fire Department. The theory being, that learning and exposure to the different responsibilities cross trains personnel in those areas, while making them a more "well rounded" Chief Officer. For the most part this informal agreement has been upheld, with Chief Officer's rotating responsibility areas every three years or so. The Fire District also informally supports the educational growth of its Chief Officers. For the most part the various Chief Officers identify classes, seminars, and conferences etc. that are beneficial to the individual and or District and its programs, and those personnel are allowed to attend with expenses covered by the District.

Formally, the MOFD board of directors adopted a Career Development Guide in 2001. The purpose of the Career Development program is to assist and inspire employees in preparing themselves to meet future challenges within the District. It includes guidance and incentive for personal growth and development of District personnel. Its goals are to promote professionalism, knowledge, and produce more effective and productive employees (MOFD, 2001). The main components of the guide are a career path algorithm, responsibilities, job descriptions, educational policy, promotional process overview that includes a ten-year schedule of testing dates, and promotional examination tips. The premise of the guide is that career development is a

joint effort between the MOFD and its employees (MOFD, 2001). This commitment is reflected in the educational policy that is contained within the guide. Personnel are allowed to attend two classes per fiscal year, if the classes qualify as a necessary requirement for their next promotable position. These classes and materials are paid in full by the District. Personnel are also allotted up to one hundred fifty dollars per year to attend any class of their choice. This program addresses one element of leadership training, in that it supports educational growth of the employees.

The MOFD also has a formal policy that addresses employees that act or perform in a higher classification. This policy allows for both short term and long term acting assignments, with the long term acting assignments being filled predicated upon employees ranking on that current promotional list. This policy allows for some on the job training and exposes personnel to the acting positions responsibilities, however no other formal preparation or training is currently being provided.

It is evident that the MOFD has some formal procedures in place to support the need of leadership development. The Districts career development guide appears to address at least one component of a successful leadership development plan. The informally agreed upon rotation of the Battalion Chief's through the various divisions within the department also appears to aid in the development of the current Chief Officers. Other informal practices while helpful, leave some personnel at a distinct disadvantage based upon what officers they are assigned to.

What methodologies could be used by the MOFD to prepare future Chief Officers?

Developing current talent for key leadership positions will help insure the supply of leaders your company needs in order to continue to work and grow. Effective leadership development and planning delivers top performers ready for the challenges of the future (Best Practices, LLC 2005). The Literature review reveals a number of different ways companies and organizations are preparing personnel for future leadership roles. The use of formalized succession planning was the methodology this author found most common.

Wilson (2004) states “Workforce and succession planning have become key components of the hiring strategy for public-sector organizations”. Johnson (2004) writes that in order to plan for constant succession we need to assess the potential vacancies, and the readiness of current staff to assume these positions. Strategies need to be developed to address the needs of employees and the organization, then mentor, train and develop personnel in the area of leadership and management. This in essence is succession planning. He goes on to say that “The fire service is at a crossroads. We complain about a lack of professional recognition, but often we promote individuals to chief officer positions with no formal education”.

A well thought out, and designed succession plan has the following benefits:

- Helps ensure that a smooth transition occurs when key leaders leave the organization
- Ensures a well trained, involved and deep pool of capable people who are well versed in the organization
- Provides a continuous stream of people who are constantly reviewing, questioning and refining policy and procedures, which helps improve quality
- A reputation as a challenging, stimulating place to work, which could result in attracting additional quality candidates

Another option available to the MOFD is to adopt a traditional leadership development approach. This approach utilizes traditional leadership courses to instruct personnel on the theories and principles behind effective leaders. This approach to leadership is a sub component of most succession planning models, but is sometimes used in place of a full succession-planning program. The shortfall of this type of approach is that it only addresses the components of theory and principle, and does not include many of the aspects of a full succession plan, for example the identification of high potential employee's.

Another potential method could be a mentoring program. Robbins (1999) describes mentoring as a process where seasoned professionals have a chance to leave their mark on their profession by passing along knowledge and experiences to the newcomers. Mentoring programs have proven to be very effective in some organizations, and again are a component mentioned in

many succession-planning models. They can however be used as a stand-alone approach to leadership development. The Literature review being conducted by this author suggests that mentoring be used as an integral part of an overall succession planning and leadership development strategy.

The MOFD could continue to utilize those procedures currently in place both formal and informal. However, the sum of those procedures does not appear to be adequately addressing the leadership void that is looming on the horizon. If the MOFD were to continue with this approach it is evident that the number and quality of candidates for future leadership positions will continue to decline. The current processes do not address the global issues of preparedness, and leave personnel to guess as how best to prepare themselves for leadership roles. However, some of the current formal and informal processes could be incorporated into a more comprehensive succession planning strategy for future use.

PROCEDURES

The research procedures utilized in this paper started in January 2005, with an analysis and collection of literature contained in the Learning Resource Center (LRC) at the National Fire Academy in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Included in this analysis were applied research projects completed by other Executive Fire Officer candidates, the review of journals and periodicals contained within the LRC, along with published books contained within the LRC. The literature review continued upon this authors return home and included resources at the Ygnacio Valley branch of the Contra Costa Library, as well as online searches for information.

Search criteria on the World Wide Web included leadership development, training, succession planning, leadership competencies, mentoring, fire department journals, and human resource journals. These searches revealed links to web resources which had abundant information on the above items. These searches also led to the discovery of an Internet based survey instrument at <http://www.zoomerang.com> that allowed this author to create the survey

instruments used in this research. Materials were also utilized from the MOFD library pertaining to career development, and formal procedures in place to address leadership development.

Descriptive research was utilized to answer the following questions:

1. What are other public and private sector organizations doing to prepare leaders?
2. What are the leadership skills and competencies necessary for Chief Officers in the MOFD?
3. What is the MOFD currently doing to develop its personnel for future leadership positions?
4. What methodologies could be used by the MOFD to prepare future Chief Officers?

Utilizing information obtained from the literature review a survey instrument was developed, and two survey groups were solicited for their participation. One survey was distributed to the current MOFD Chief Officers (Appendix B), with the second survey was distributed to personnel at the rank of Fire Captain or Fire Captain/Paramedic within the MOFD (Appendix C). The existing Chief Officers were selected as a survey group due to the fact that they are currently doing the job and hold the positions. Captains were surveyed because their next promotable rank is that of Chief Officer. The survey was distributed to the two groups on March 15th 2005, with a completion date set for March 28th, 2005. Participants email addresses were inserted into the address book at www.zoomerang.com. When the survey was launched each of the participants received an email request with a cover letter (appendix A) and a link to access the survey instrument. The respondents then accessed the survey instrument via the Internet link and completed the instrument while online. This author then collected the results from the online surveys and compiled and analyzed the responses. Four Chief Officers (67%) completed the survey instrument. Eleven Captains (70%) completed their survey instrument. The survey gathered information to help answer several of the questions above. The results of these survey's and the literature review were then utilized in the results section of this research paper. This information was also utilized to help this author formulate the recommendations that are

contained within this research paper. The survey questions are included as appendix B and appendix C in this report.

Limitations and Assumptions

This researcher assumes that the various authors' of materials utilized within this document are knowledgeable in the subject matter, and provided valid information in their written documents. It is also assumed that the MOFD respondents to the survey instrument were knowledgeable, and truthful in their answers, and presented their honest opinions or facts when answering the questions. The questions contained within the survey instrument were developed by this author, and were not validated through any other means, and therefore could be a limitation to the information contained in the research. The survey size is also a limiting factor in the analysis of the results. Surveys were distributed to six Chief Officers and fifteen Captains within the MOFD. With this relatively small group of participants, survey results could easily be skewed, and should therefore be looked at within their limiting context.

The literature review is also considered a limiting factor. While an extensive effort was made to gather and review literature, the search was not all-inclusive and should be viewed as such. While this author attempted to conduct unbiased research for this report, the above limitations should be considered when evaluating this research.

Definition of terms

Fire Chief: Typically the Chief executive officer of the Fire Department. Responsible for the overall operation of the department, reports directly to an elected Board of Directors.

Battalion Chief: The second level Chief Officer within the MOFD. Battalion Chiefs oversee a division within the department and manage the day to day operations of the department. Reports directly to the Fire Chief.

Fire Marshal: Chief Officer in charge of the Fire Prevention division. Same rank as a battalion Chief and manages all day-to-day operations in Fire Prevention. Reports directly to the Fire Chief.

- Fire Captain:** Engine Company level officer. Manages his or her personnel as assigned, and manages all station activities, and training activities for assigned personnel. Reports directly to his or her Battalion Chief.
- Engineer:** Functions as the company officer in the absence of a Captain. Primary responsibility is driving and pumping with department equipment. Reports directly to his or her Fire Captain.
- Firefighter:** Entry level position in the department. Primary responsibilities include carrying out of assignments and orders by his or her Captain or Engineer. Reports directly to his or her Engineer and Captain.

RESULTS

What are other public and private sector organizations doing to prepare leaders?

The literature review reveals a number of different approaches being utilized in the public and private sectors. Some companies embrace “leadership training” while others utilize a more comprehensive approach known as “Succession Planning”. Regardless of the terminology used, many of these programs have very similar components. In the private sector, and in an increasing number of public sector organizations, formal succession planning is taking hold. Companies such as Clorox, PepsiCo, and GE have had successful leadership development programs in place for quite some time. PepsiCo utilizes “acceleration pools” which ready high potential personnel for organization levels instead of specific positions. GE with its extensive history of producing executives from within, has seen success of its business models for a sustainable period, in part because of its ability to replace corporate knowledge from within by quality trained leaders.

Many of these programs are formally established and appear to be most successful when they have become part of the organizational culture and are supported by top management. The Hagberg Consulting Group (2005) points out the importance of shared responsibility, driven by top management, in order to assure long term viability and success for leadership development.

The Orange County Fire Authority instituted a “leadership institute” in 1998. Again, the components contained within their program were similar to what was found in many of the companies studied. While the individual specifics of the programs vary, a common theme throughout the literature review was that corporations, and public sector organizations alike, realize the importance of planning for the replacement of leaders in the organization. Those that fail to plan for these inevitable occurrences are often faced with hiring someone from outside the organization to lead it. Without a well-designed succession management system, and organization can find itself thrown into chaos and confusion (Greengard, 2002).

What are the leadership skills and competencies necessary for Chief Officers in the MOFD?

While a large number of skills or competencies were cited within the literature, this author finds that most fit within the three general categories of self, working with others, and performance. Commonly mentioned skills and competencies found in the literature were those such as effective problem solver, strategic thinker, good communicator, consensus builder, ability to influence others, self-driven, and strong technical abilities.

Again, in the private sector companies studied by this author, skills and competencies mentioned were somewhat dependent upon the particular type of service provided, but generally the above-mentioned skills and competencies were cited multiple times in the literature. The public sector organizations researched, showed very similar results with skills and competencies closely mirroring those of the private sector.

Specific to the fire organizations studied, a number of skills and competencies are cited in programs and standards. The California State Fire Marshals office has a Chief Officer certification program, which has specific classes and other course requirements that must be completed before certification. NFPA 1021 is a standard for fire officer professional qualifications, and identifies performance requirements necessary for fire officers, and groups them into four categories that address the different levels within most fire organizations.

The MOFD has identified in the job descriptions section of its career development guide, the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities required for its chief officer positions. Regardless of the type of organization looked at, one can conclude based on the research, that the above mentioned skills and competencies are important attributes of successful leaders, though not all inclusive.

What is the MOFD currently doing to develop its personnel for future leadership positions?

The research reveals both informal and formal approach's being utilized to differing degrees within the MOFD. While the informal approach has been somewhat helpful for those that have been with the right personnel over the years, it does not serve as a long term or comprehensive solution to leadership development. This author found that too many discrepancies existed between personnel's station assignments and the types of training or mentoring that was occurring.

The informal rotation of the current Chief Officers between assignment responsibilities was viewed as positive in general. Exposure to differing job responsibilities appears to help with the growth of the officers, and allows them to become familiar and proficient in differing areas within the organization. This author also found that this rotation allows for the officers to see the bigger picture organization wise, which helps in group decision making and when involved in budgeting meetings.

Research also indicates that the creation of a Career Development Guide was a positive initial step to creating a leadership development program. The survey instrument responses confirmed this assumption, as ten of the eleven Captain's that responded indicated that they believed the Career Development guide had some value in terms of helping personnel prepare for future leadership positions. The MOFD policy that allows personnel to move up and "act" in a higher classification appears to be perceived as beneficial to personnel and the department. One hundred percent of the respondents indicated that it was of value to the organization in terms of helping personnel understand the position and the responsibilities that accompany it. Based on

the results and comments on this feedback instrument, the MOFD may want to consider some further refinements or modifications to further enhance these policies in the future. The respondents also indicated that they would like to see further attempts or programs by the District that would aid in the preparation of the District's future leaders.

What methodologies could be used by the MOFD to prepare future Chief Officers?

Research illustrates several ways to accomplish leadership and development training. Baldwin (2000) suggests that each individual organization should look at itself and identify those critical positions for which succession planning is needed.

For the most part, the methodologies being utilized by both public and private organizations are very similar. Succession planning appears to be the most successful and comprehensive approach being used. Literature suggests that more and more organizations are embracing this approach and many are currently working hard to implement succession planning within their organizations. Leadership development training is another approach discovered in the literature. However, upon close examination leadership training appears to contain many of the same elements as succession planning, while being somewhat more narrowly focused. Respondents to the survey instrument indicated that they would desire a more comprehensive approach that was preparatory in nature, and occurred prior to the testing and appointing process.

Another option for the MOFD would be to continue those formal processes that they have currently in place. The processes appear to have some benefits, and are generally well received by the MOFD personnel that responded to the survey. Feedback to the survey instrument indicated that District personnel desire, and would be receptive to further enhancements to leadership training and development.

Mentoring programs are popular in both the public and private sectors. This author found several examples in the literature review of successful mentoring programs. In his work Robbins (1999) points out the benefits and importance of mentoring programs. The passage of institutional knowledge via mentoring could be a method utilized by the MOFD, but this author would caution the use of such as a stand-alone approach. Research indicates that mentoring is

best utilized when used in conjunction with, or a component of, a larger succession planning strategy.

Finally, the MOFD could choose to utilize the informal development process that has been used in the past. If this were the choice, it should be noted that a significant risk exists, in that the MOFD may not have enough properly prepared and trained personnel to fill its vacancies. The lack of prepared personnel could force the MOFD to promote, and then utilize the “learn as you go” approach, or look to outside the District to fill these leadership positions. In his work Johnson (2004) cautions against this approach citing a number of potentially negative impacts on the organization.

DISCUSSION

This section will discuss the relationship between specific findings of others obtained during the literature review, and the feedback obtained from MOFD personnel. This author’s interpretation and analysis of these findings will also be discussed. In addition, this author will discuss the organizational implications of his findings.

The MOFD will soon be faced with a large number of retiring fire personnel. Within the next five years, over sixty percent of the current Chief Officers will be eligible to retire. As was evidenced after the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, many corporations and companies were not prepared for the sudden leadership voids they were confronted with (Morris-Lee, 2001). Planning and preparation for these upcoming retirements is essential for the continued health of the organization (Best Practices LLC, 2003). Research shows that this is not unique to the MOFD, or to the fire service in general. DDI, a leadership firm, states “A significant number of companies will see 40% to 50% of their executives leave in the next five years” (Byham, 2005). An abundance of information regarding succession planning, leadership training, mentoring, and planning for the retiring workforce exists in the literature reviewed. It is clear that a good many organizations in both the public and private sectors recognize this as a serious issue, and are taking actions to prepare their personnel for future leadership roles. According to Best Practices,

LLC, (2005) efforts must be made to ensure that personnel are ready and able to assume these leadership vacancies when they occur, not attempt to train and prepare after the fact.

For many in the private sector, the idea of leadership training and succession planning is not a new one. Examples of corporations such as PepsiCo, and GE, that have long standing programs in place, prove that succession planning can be a very effective (Byham, 2002). As outlined by Bhasin (2003) GE has an extensive program in place, with a number of different components such as expanded education, specific targeted training, personnel development, and managerial review, which have yielded outstanding results throughout the years. Drug giant Glaxo Wellcome's has instituted a development program that relies heavily on collaboration between the employees and managers. Glaxo understands that in order to stay competitive and grow it must retain its "star" employees (Arbogust & Gusman, 2000). Lindholm (2004) reports on public agencies in the federal government that having success with leadership development such as the United States Department of Labor. Wilkerson (2002) in a profile of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections explains how the DOC takes a systematic approach to filling its leadership positions. Part of this system is a "learning journey" in which leadership candidates are educated and developed. The United States Coast Guard (2002) has done extensive work on this subject. The Coast Guard has identified competencies, and grouped those competencies into three general categories. Personnel are identified and evaluated based on these skills and competencies, and receive further training and development to refine those. Identification of key competencies appears to be a key component and starting point for many of the program reviewed by this author. In his work Fleming (2002) discusses fire department Chief Officers, and those that are management material. He outlines seven key competencies that are necessary for successful Chief Officers. This approach appears to make sense for fire organizations and mirrors what is being done in many other public and private organizations.

However, for the MOFD the idea is a fairly new one. While the District has made progress with its formalized attempts such as its Career Development Guide, and its acting policy, feedback suggests that personnel would like these programs to be enhanced and expanded. When

asked if leadership training would have been beneficial prior to their promoting to a specific rank, both the Captains and the Chief Officers answered a resounding yes. It should also be noted that when asked if they had received any leadership development training prior to their promoting, the answers varied significantly. Many of the respondents indicated that they had received some training and development from others with which they had worked, but not much specifically from the District. This would be consistent with this author's earlier remarks about informal training that was occurring in the field, but was dependent upon whom the personnel were assigned to work with. Based on the desire from the personnel surveyed and the information that exists in publication, one could conclude that further formalized training in the areas of leadership development, and succession planning would be beneficial to the organization, and its personnel. Bennis (2005) affirms the need for identifying and developing talent, and suggests that the concept should be an integral part of an organizations culture. While still in their infancy, the formal steps that have been taken by the MOFD have proven to be well accepted, and are recognized as a valuable part of an evolving leadership and development program. This "buy in" is critical if the idea of leadership development, and succession planning is to become part of the MOFD culture in the future.

The feedback instrument points to a desire among personnel to fill these leadership roles, yet some apprehensiveness because of their lack of preparation. This also is consistent with many of the other private and public organizations reviewed. It is incumbent upon the District to further research and develop the necessary tools and programs such as succession planning, to identify and develop these personnel, and tap into their desires to assume these leadership positions. It should further be noted that leadership development and succession planning are not a one size fits all. Literature suggests that many different approaches are being utilized, and each individual company or organization needs to address its current and future needs, as best fits their situation. Baldwin (2000) suggests that in some cases, a company may have to move some people along quickly, in order to expose them to a broad range of experiences. In other situations a more deliberate approach may be most beneficial. Looking at the needs of the

MOFD, one could argue that a combination of these two approaches is necessary. In the relatively short period of time before the Chief Officers leave, it may be necessary to accelerate the exposures, and learning of its current Captain's pool. It is also clear that the retirement issue currently being faced, is not a one time occurrence, and that in order to have a solid core of personnel in which to feed into leadership positions, the District will need to invest time, money, and energy into long term growth and development of its younger personnel. Baldwin (2000) also addresses the positions in an organization to be considered. She suggests that not every position in the department needs a succession planning strategy. The organization should look at its key positions and areas of responsibility, then start with those. This first step of identifying "key positions" is a common practice when creating a succession plan among many of the organizations reviewed during the literature review.

The Hagberg Consulting Group (2005) looks at the different components of succession planning and identifies a key component of succession management as focused on development with shared responsibility, driven by top management. This is a critical component of successful leadership programs studied. In order for leadership development to be successful in the MOFD, it will require support and assistance from top management. The District's Board of Directors needs to support management staff in the development and implementation of a comprehensive program. This support will need to be financial, as well as conceptual, with the understanding that the long term benefits will prove essential in maintaining and growing the levels of service those in the communities have become accustomed to. Without sustained support from the leaders of the organization, the program will not succeed. It will be looked at as a project or program, that is nice to have, but sits unused by the organization due to a lack of commitment. In order for a cultural shift to occur, personnel must see the value of the program, and witness the support and efforts of those around them to make it successful.

Organizational implications include some financial expenditures, and a considerable amount of effort on the part of some personnel, to design and implement a comprehensive process. Based on this author's knowledge of the District's training and development budget, it

appears that some of the financial impact could be absorbed within the current training budget. With the current workload of management staff, a considerable effort would be necessary in the development phase, and then ongoing efforts sustained during implementation. One could certainly argue that the development of a succession planning strategy should be of the highest importance faced with what we know about pending and future retirements. Whatever resources as reasonably necessary, should be devoted to the development of a comprehensive, long-term plan. Conversely, the implications to the organization if nothing is done appear to be damaging at the least. The continued knowledge drain, coupled with few adequately prepared internal personnel could lead to the recruitment and hiring of leadership personnel from sources outside of the organization. Not promoting from within can create turmoil within an organization. Often the outsider comes into the organization and begins to correct for past problems or injustices, changing policy and procedure before fully evaluating the people and systems in place (Johnson, 2004). Based on the feedback from the survey instrument, District personnel generally support hiring from outside to fill Chief Officer positions only when there is a lack of qualified, interested, and prepared personnel within the District to choose from.

As stated earlier, the benefits of ongoing internal planning to address future leadership voids is well documented. Also, well documented are examples of organizations that are caught off guard, or ill prepared for these leadership vacancies. It is this author's opinion that ample evidence exists suggesting that the MOFD move forward with a comprehensive succession planning approach that addresses these recognized needs before they negatively impact the organization and communities that they serve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis of the literature review and survey instruments, it is recommended that the MOFD further analyze the specifics regarding succession-planning efforts done by other public and private agencies. Recognizing that time is of the essence, a decision should be made after

this analysis, as to which approach or combination of approaches best suits the needs of the MOFD currently and in the future.

The succession-planning model appears to be the most comprehensive and through approach found in the literature that was reviewed. Any leadership development or succession-planning program should include the common elements as outlined in this research. Further, any leadership or succession plan will require the support and “buy in” of the current Board of Directors, Fire Chief, and other Chief Officers.

It is recommended that further work be done on identifying the key positions within the organization, and developing a “cadre” of personnel that are trained and developed to assume these key positions. It is clear from the survey instrument that a willingness exists within the department from its personnel to further prepare themselves to fill future positions. This willingness should be supported by the District in the form of a formal plan that allows for participation by all interested personnel within the District, and that contains focused, and measurable goals for personnel to attain, and for the District to measure against.

Based on the research, this author concludes that a formalized succession plan could be designed and begun to be implemented, within the next eighteen months with the support of those in current leadership positions.

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APPENDIX A

Company and Chief Officer Survey Cover Letter

**Moraga-Orinda Fire District*****MEMORANDUM***

TO: Company and Chief Officers**FROM:** Bryan Collins, Battalion Chief**DATE:** March 13, 2005**SUBJECT:** Survey instrument

As part of the requirements of the EFO program at the National Fire Academy, I am preparing several research papers. The project that I am currently working on analyzes whether the MOFD should develop a leadership-training program (succession plan) to prepare personnel for future Chief Officer Vacancies. As part of this research, I developed a survey to get input from both Captains, and current Chief Officers. Your participation in filling out this survey would be of great assistance. In the very near future you will receive a web link to the online survey. I would appreciate it if you take the time to complete the survey and submit it. This survey is completely anonymous, and I will only need to get the overall results and comments from the surveys. The survey instrument is time sensitive, so please fill it out within 7 days after you receive it.

Thanks in advance for your participation. My hope is that this information will be utilized to help formulate a formal plan to use in the future for preparing our personnel to fill these leadership positions.

APPENDIX B

Chief Officer Survey Results

1. How long have you been a Chief Officer?
 - 5 years
 - 5 years
 - Since August of 2003
 - 3 years

2. Have you been provided any formal training by the MOFD that has prepared you to assume the responsibilities of a Chief Officer? If so please describe.
 - No
 - No
 - One Command 2E class
 - No

3. Do you believe that a formal Chief Officers training program would have been beneficial to you prior to taking a Chief Officers exam?
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Absolutely
 - Yes

4. To the best of your knowledge does the District have a succession plan for Chief Officer positions that identifies and prepares personnel for those positions?
 - There are now minimum qualifications
 - No. Career development guide list minimum qualifications, certifications etc.
 - No
 - No

5. Currently the Chief Officers (with the exception of the Fire Chief and Fire Marshal) rotate assignment responsibilities every three years or so. Do you believe that this practice helps develop the Chief Officers? Please list the positive and negative aspects of this practice.

Positive:

 - Enhance the understanding of other areas
 - Helps develop Chief Officers
 - Exposes Officers to different responsibility areas
 - Makes for a more well rounded Fire Service knowledge base

Negatives:

 - Leads to a loss of momentum which takes time to build
 - Disruptive
 - Lose the expertise and relationships that are developed

- Takes a great deal of time to come up to speed on responsibilities
 - Each Officer has strong and weak points and areas of interest. It may be best to assign program responsibilities according to ability and interest
6. Do you believe that the current policies in place that allow for “acting” time in a higher rank are beneficial for those who wish to promote in the organization?
- Yes
 - Yes, especially the long-term acting assignments
 - Yes
 - Yes
7. If not, what changes would you suggest to these acting policies?
- It would be beneficial for the shift BC and the training BC sit down with the acting officer and go over expectations
8. Do you believe that the current minimum qualifications for the rank of Battalion Chief and Fire Marshal are adequate and match the jobs responsibilities?
- Never done the FM job, so I can't speak to that position's qualifications
 - For B/C the Captain should have some minimum time as acting B/C prior to taking the test.
 - The minimum requirement of two years as a Captain, and Chief Officers certification are not adequate for the position
 - No
 - No
 - They need to better reflect the responsibilities. Currently they do not match up well.
9. Please list the skills and competencies that you feel are necessary for your position as a Chief Officer?
- Command and control experience
 - Command presence
 - Computer skills
 - Communication skills
 - Knowledge of labor laws
 - Knowledge of budgets
 - Leadership skills
 - Ability to multi-task
 - Willingness to make tough decisions
 - Self starter
 - High energy
 - Strong moral values
 - Ability to accept criticism
 - Big picture thinker
 - Ability to interpret and enforce policy and procedure
 - Ability to complete assignments

- Aptitude to learn new skills and tasks
 - Physically able to do the job
 - Good time management skills
 - Organizational skills
 - Supervisorial and management skills
 - People skills
 - Ability to relate with others
 - Incident command abilities
10. Do you believe that for the rank of Battalion Chief and Fire Marshal, that the candidates promoted should come exclusively from within the MOFD if there are qualified candidates?
- Yes
 - Not in all circumstances
 - Yes
 - Yes
11. Please give examples of when the District may want to consider candidates from outside the organization for the position of Battalion Chief or Fire Marshal.
- When there is a lack of qualified or interested candidates internally
 - When no candidates from within meet the qualifications
 - No candidates possess the desirable attributes necessary to be a leader
 - When there are special skills necessary for the job requirement
 - When District personnel don't show the initiative to meet MQ's
 - The requirements for the position of Fire Marshal are almost impossible to attain while in suppression
12. Do you plan to participate as a candidate in a MOFD Fire Chief selection process? If not, why?
- Probably not. Skeptical about working for an elected board such as ours.
 - Don't know. It will be time dependent.
 - No. No desire
 - No
13. Do you believe that for the position of Fire chief those candidates should come exclusively from within the District if there are qualified candidates?
- Yes if possible. If no one is qualified or the board does not feel like the internal candidates suit their needs, then they should look outside.
 - No. Always go for the best candidate possible for the leadership role
 - No
 - In most circumstances yes

14. Please give examples of when the District should consider candidates from outside to fill the Fire Chief's position.
 - Obviously when no internal candidates are up to the task. Further, whenever there are leadership qualities that are necessary for the future success of the District (i.e. Political, financial, etc.)
 - Whenever the position needs to be filled
 - When there are no qualified candidates to choose from within
 - When the board is looking for qualities that none of the internal candidates have

15. What do you consider the advantages of promoting from within the District?
 - Good for moral, knowledge of the District and its personnel, knowledge of history
 - Moral, having a candidate who is familiar with the history, current trends, needs, direction of the District
 - Knowledge of the District and its personnel, knowing the strengths and weaknesses of its employees, Competition between the BC's and the FM
 - History, good for moral, smooth transition, healthy for younger personnel to see that you can achieve at all levels of the District

16. What do you consider the disadvantages of promoting from within the District?
 - Knowledge of District personnel, baggage could lead to problems
 - Status quo, interfering friendships, possibly not getting the best candidate
 - Lack of fresh ideas and innovation, Maintaining the status quo, biases and preconceived perceptions of the District's personnel. Unable to adjust to people changing and continuing to look at them with a preconceived notion.
 - Status quo, relationships that have been formed, biases, baggage

17. What do you consider the advantages of promoting from outside the organization?
 - Fresh ideas and perspective, no baggage, brings outside experiences into the new organization.
 - New ideas and concepts, no favoritism or past history with the membership
 - Having someone come in with fresh ideas, and a new way of conducting business
 - New perspective, no preconceived ideas about personnel, hopefully no baggage or past negative history with bargaining units.

18. What do you consider the disadvantages of promoting from outside the department?
 - Too much change for the sake of doing things different, or the way they were done in another department,
 - Candidate not familiar with the District, lower moral of the membership
 - Could damage the moral of existing personnel, baggage from last department
 - Lower moral from District members, baggage from past, no history

19. Do you believe that identifying personnel early in their careers, and providing targeted training in the areas of leadership skills, and management competencies would be helpful in preparing those with the organization for future leadership roles? If not, give example why.
- Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes, but all members must be given the same encouragement and latitude.
 - Yes, although those individual would be viewed as sycophants, and suck-ups

APPENDIX C

Company Officer Survey Results

1. How long have you been a Captain?
 - 8 years
 - 1 year and 10 months
 - 19 months
 - 2.5 years
 - 2 years
 - 10 years
 - 2 years
 - 10 years
 - 19 years
 - 9 years
 - 3 years

2. Have you ever participated as a candidate in a MOFD Battalion Chief or Fire Marshal exam?
 - Yes, BC exam
 - No
 - Yes
 - No

3. Do you plan to participate as a candidate in a MOFD Battalion Chief or Fire Marshal's exam in the future? If not, why?
 - Yes
 - No. Too much paperwork and not enough company contact
 - Yes, if I can meet the minimum qualifications
 - No. I don't feel qualified for the position. Not interested in that type of work. Enjoy my current position
 - No, I plan to retire soon
 - Maybe
 - No
 - Yes

- No, I am not interested in that position
 - No. They work too many weird hours, and don't get overtime
 - No
4. Have you been provided any formal training by the MOFD that has prepared you to assume the responsibilities of Chief Officer? If so, please describe.
- No formal training, however the District is supportive of outside training
 - I have started the process of becoming a carded STEN. I have been sent to Safety Officer, S-234, Command 2E. I understand that I need this training to assume command positions at an incident, and am receptive to any training. I think the training goal needs to be formally defined.
 - No
 - Yes, I have received some training in TeleStaff
 - No
 - Yes, District sponsored Chief Officer class
 - No
 - No, acting BC
 - No
 - No
 - None yet
5. Do you believe that a formal Chief Officers training program would be beneficial to you prior to taking a Chief Officers exam?
- Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Absolutely
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Probably
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
6. Prior to becoming a Captain, had you been provided any formal training by the MOFD that prepared you for the position of Captain? If so, please describe
- No formal training by MOFD, however informal training was provided by my Captain
 - Most of the training I have had has not been specific to the position of Captain. I have been selected in the past to attend some outside classes; S-290 was one, prior to becoming a Captain. I do not feel our organization has a formal process for advancement training in any position. Too much is left to the candidate to learn in a haphazard fashion.

- Not really. I attended fire officer classes outside the District, and was allowed some acting time by my Captain
 - Yes. Some of my previous Captains have assisted me, and allowed me to act under their supervision
 - State Fire Marshal classes. District specific training for all personnel in leadership would be very helpful
 - Mostly outside classes
 - No
 - No, I took classes on my own
 - No
 - No
 - No
7. Do you believe that a formalized Company Officers training program would be beneficial to department personnel prior to taking a Captain's exam?
- Most definitely
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes it would
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
8. Do you believe that the current policies in place that allow for "acting" time in a higher rank are beneficial for those that wish to promote in the organization?
- Yes
 - Yes I do. The individual needs to use that time to his/her advantage. "Actors" need to be the best qualified and be given the chance to hone their skills
 - Yes, definitely! It helps to become more comfortable with the job prior to actually being promoted
 - Yes
 - Yes. It gives them a chance to test that position and see if they are suited for it. Also gives the District a chance to look at the candidate to identify high potential Officers
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Very beneficial
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes

12. Do you believe that for the rank of Fire Marshal that the candidates promoted should come exclusively from within the MOFD if they meet the minimum qualifications?
- Yes
 - No, see # 11 answer
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - No
 - Yes
 - No
 - Yes
 - No
 - No
13. Please give examples of when the District may want to consider candidates from outside to fill the position of Battalion Chief or Fire Marshal.
- Only if there is no interest from MOFD candidates. Our current MQ's may limit the candidate pool and exclude some persons who may be able to perform well in the position of B/C. Priority should always be given to MOFD personnel even if they don't meet the current MQ's, but can complete them in a reasonable time frame. Previous candidates promoted to the position of BC did not meet our current MQ's and they appear to be doing a good job in that position. It should be noted that the District's policy in this area does not allow for the hiring of outside candidates due to the Minimum Qualifications.
 - When a candidate is already successfully working in the position for another agency. When it is clear that inside personnel do not have the necessary job skills or qualifications.
 - If nobody from within signs up for the position
 - When no qualified candidates with the District are interested in the position
 - Small amount or borderline candidates within the District
 - Only if no one from in-house is interested
 - Only if no one is interested
 - Should not do this unless dire circumstances
 - I believe all promotions should be from within the ranks
 - Only when the training has been offered to MOFD candidates for the position of Battalion Chief and Fire Marshal and no one accepts the training
 - When there are no qualified candidates either on a list or able to test
14. What do you consider the advantages of promoting from within the organization?
- Knowledge of the District and its policies. Procedures and personnel. Higher morale, and a shorter learning curve for the position within our District.
 - Movement within the organization. Continuity of personnel who have worked well together in the past

- Answered in question #11. It is beneficial to know the history and inner workings of this department to be able to work well within the system
 - Area familiarization, Promotional opportunities for MOFD personnel
 - It does help morale if good qualified people can promote up
 - Knowledge of District, motivation and morale of personnel
 - Employees are more familiar with the District and organization. Keeps morale high within the ranks
 - Knowing the person, prior to promoting, in aspects of leadership, work ethic, abilities, weaknesses, communication skills and strengths
 - Familiarity with the District/Department
 - Excellent for morale. You get a known quantity
 - Helps younger employees see that there is an attainable career path in the organization
15. What do you consider the disadvantages of promoting from within the organization?
- None
 - Stagnation. Limited abilities of personnel within the District may cause the organization to lower job expectations. Fresh ideas do not come from the candidate within
 - We limit ourselves to the workforce within
 - Limited candidates
 - Miss out on possible new ideas and ways of doing things
 - Unknown
 - None
 - None
 - None
 - None
16. What do you consider the advantages of promoting from outside the organization?
- None
 - Possible access to better-qualified personnel. New ideas
 - Again, new ideas and methods of doing the job
 - Larger candidate pool
 - None
 - None
 - Wide range of candidates with possible better skills and new ideas
 - Fresh ideas and experiences
 - None
 - New ideas of leadership, no connection between personnel
 - None
17. What do you consider the disadvantages of promoting from outside the organization?
- Unknown candidates, detrimental to morale, and longer learning curve for the position within our District

- Distrust of outsiders. The candidate would have to be very prepared to work hard to overcome this. The candidate would have to be prepared to combat “tradition”
 - We could get someone incapable of working in our system. Morale may suffer
 - Some resentment from the crews, a time curve to learn the new District
 - Poor for morale of personnel, lack of knowledge of District
 - None
 - None
 - Lack of knowledge in the District/dept., area, special concerns, interaction with agencies related to doing business as usual (BC’s only)
 - Bad for morale
 - We have good people. We need to spend our efforts preparing them so we don’t have to go to the outside
 - Use the people within. Train them to the level you would like them to be at
18. To the best of your knowledge does the MOFD have a succession plan for Chief Officer positions that identifies and prepares personnel for those positions?
- No
 - No
 - No
 - Yes
 - No
 - No
 - Not really
 - No
 - No
 - Yes. But I’m not sure it is an actual succession plan
 - No
19. Historically, the MOFD has promoted personnel to Chief Officer positions from within the organization. Do you believe that the current method of preparing personnel for Chief Officer positions is adequate?
- Yes, however more formal training in the positions could be utilized for interested personnel. These may include acting time, work shadow program under a current Chief Officer, or a field-training program. This would allow persons to come up to speed prior to promotion into the position rather than after, thus increasing productivity
 - No. From B/C on up, the jobs are complex and ever changing. Id do not see a formal training path being used
 - No
 - No
 - No
 - Yes, but could be enhanced with training to be MOFD specific. People have to go outside the District to get additional specific training

- The preparation I know about is giving Acting B/C opportunities and requiring Chief Officer certification. There should be some additional specific training
 - No. More classes are needed. Also proficiency tests on all aspects of the job
 - No
 - No
 - No
20. Do you believe that identifying “high potential” personnel early in their careers, and providing targeted training in the areas of leadership skills, and management competencies, would be helpful in preparing those within the organization for future leadership positions? If not, please give examples of why.
- All interested personnel should be given the same opportunities, not just a selected few
 - Yes I do. It can be very plain to see some employees’ potential with regards to their ability to work higher classification. One past problem is some will see this targeted training as favoritism. The organization would need to defend this. The personnel would need to see this as a necessary process.
 - Absolutely. There are a number of quality individuals that would make excellent leaders, and we should be grooming them to do so.
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes, I think that early in a person’s career it seems obvious who would make good Officers. They should be developed, great Officers make a great department
 - Identifying “high potential” personnel is problematic. Making such training available to all would be helpful, generally only those with potential will sign up for these classes anyway.
 - I think that would be great
 - Yes
 - Helpful? Yes maybe. To single someone out is not correct, “high or low potential” This could result in favoritism.
21. Do you believe that the MOFD Career Development Guide has been beneficial to personnel within the District for purposes of preparing for future leadership positions?
- Yes, it is a good guideline in needed knowledge, skills and abilities
 - Yes, to those who read it
 - Not enough. It needs some refining
 - Somewhat
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - Yes
 - A little
 - To some degree
 - Yes
 - No