

Running head: HFD SUCCESSION PLANNING

For it's future, the Honolulu Fire Department really needs a validated succession plan.

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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 others.

Signed:  _____
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Abstract

In over a hundred and fifty years of existence, the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) has never had a formal succession plan for its upper level leadership. The problem is that currently in the HFD the only way to prepare oneself for future executive leadership is through self-determination, implied mentorship, and trial and error. The purpose for this research was to identify the necessary knowledge and skills for Executive level chief officers, and to create the necessary preparation process associated in developing oneself to that level of competency or higher.

An action research method was utilized to answer the following questions: What are the applicable knowledge and pre-requisite skills needed for a Fire Assistant Chief Officer? What do the other emergency response agencies in the State of Hawaii do to prepare their chief level officers for succession? What do other fire organizations similar in size and scope to the HFD do to prepare their chief level officers for succession?

The procedure called for literature reviews of industry articles and NFA ARP and personal communication interviews with colleagues throughout the State of Hawaii and from agencies across the U.S. similar in size and scope to HFD. Elements and components that three or more authors and/or interviewees agreed upon were chosen to fill a program manual for professional development under the umbrella of a succession plan. As a result, a new policy insert, a new position specific guideline, and a new mentoring program was created and will be delivered to the Executive Staff of the HFD. The final step calls for the Fire Chief to validate the entire succession/professional development program and have it implemented.

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really needs a validated succession plan.

Introduction

Why do successful corporations in the private sector spend so much time grooming their future leadership? It is called succession planning. Assessing, directing, mentoring, promoting, and retaining local talent are key to organizational longevity. Succession planning is an organized method by which any organization can identify, train, and promote key employees who have shown skill, knowledge, and abilities. Succession planning can be a powerful tool for any organization where exceptional performance is necessary for all of its upper level leaders to possess and for each lower level leader to aspire to if they wish to fill those positions of authority in the future of their organizations. According to the American Heritage Dictionary; succession is the act or process of succeeding to the rights or duties of another; and planning is a detailed scheme, program, or method worked out beforehand for the accomplishment of an objective. (Succession Planning, 1991)

For the really large and successful organizations it is truly a matter of survival. Setting up a program whereby a chosen person or persons will succeed another in a sequenced process for the top position is a must for those organizations looking for continuity of leadership well into the future. For any organization regardless of the reason for its existence, great leadership is optimum for the perpetuation of the business. If the top person is any type of visionary, and if the business or organization is worth anything, he or she will put much thought into the future of the organization and figure out what the necessary steps would be to make the organization continue on well after they are gone. One such thought would be for a seamless transition of authority. When the President, CEO, Owner, or whoever is on top is ready to retire, is there

someone to immediately take his or her place? Has anyone been groomed? Has anyone been prepared? If not, why not? If they have, then how was that accomplished? Will the amount of preparation and the type of preparation be enough?

If that much effort is made in the private sector, can the same efforts be used by a fire organization? Does the fire organization need to grow, expand, and prosper? How long will this fire organization exist? Can a fire organization truly be considered a business much like the Disney Corporation, or AT&T, or even Trump International, and can its future be planned for in the same way? Absolutely!

The fire service has been around for a long time and if you were to survey the public, they might tell you that even as little as they may know about the history of the fire service, they do understand that it has definitely come a long way since its early years. In 1736 Benjamin Franklin organized the Union Fire Company where its members were responsible to provide two buckets a piece and respond to the incident with their buckets in hand for manual fire suppression. Taking a look at what the fire service is today, there is no doubt that it has come a long way and that it has been around for awhile, but it definitely needs to be around for much, much, longer. For the fire service to survive, it must improve, it must stay current with new technology, and it must continue to grow and move forward with direction, purpose, and vision. For all of that to happen for an individual organization, some person or persons with knowledge, confidence, vision, and drive must be at the helm steering that organization and keeping it on the right path. But how is that person or persons identified? Who chooses them and what are the criteria used in making that choice? Is there any form of preparation prior to this person having to assume this awesome responsibility?

The problem is that currently in the Honolulu Fire Department (HFD) the only way to prepare oneself for future executive leadership is through self-determination, implied mentorship, and trial and error. How will the HFD survive into the future without strong leadership? If there is an importance to having strong, experienced, educated, and confident leadership for the continuation of an organization into the future, and if it is necessary for this leadership to have a full understanding of all of their responsibilities before hand, then how will that happen for the HFD without succession planning? Chief Gary Johnson (2004) says that to create a succession plan, those in the decision making position must not only understand the process of succession planning, but they also need to fully understand the dynamics of the organization, the workings of the local government, and most of all, they must know and understand the citizens being served. Finding and developing the skills and abilities of the best candidates for the key leadership positions, says Patrick Ibarra (2005), is the next important step the present leadership must commit to.

Since the HFD has never had a documented succession plan which prepared its executive level officers, but has to date been a successful organization which provides timely and effective emergency response to its citizens, why is it necessary to provide some form of succession plan now? Times continue to change. Budget issues, poor economy, lack of governmental support, and doing more with less are but a few problems which plague current fire service leadership everywhere. Technology, education, equipment, tactics, and just the speed at which everything happens now are impacting organizations around the nation and if one does not keep up with the changes, they will come up short when it comes to providing the proper service delivery to their community. An organization should not live on its past laurels for everything is changing and if you don't keep up with the trends, the upgrades, or the forward movement, then you are opened

up for failure. And as for failure, when it comes to the community and citizens you serve, it can be a costly or even fatal error.

The purpose of this research is to identify the necessary knowledge and skills for Executive level chief officers, and to create the necessary preparation process associated in developing oneself to that level of competency or higher.

The following questions will be reviewed and answered by the conclusion of this action research: (a) what are the applicable knowledge and pre-requisite skills needed for a Fire Assistant Chief Officer (b) what do the other emergency response agencies in the State of Hawaii do to prepare their chief level officers for succession (c) what do other fire organizations similar in size and scope to the HFD do to prepare their chief level officers for succession?

Background and Significance

The HFD has a very storied and historical past. Established in January of 1851, the HFD was the brainchild of then King of the Hawaiian Islands, King Kamehameha III. As such the HFD is the only fire department in the entire U.S. that was established by a ruling monarch. The King even performed fire fighting on many occasions by assisting the local volunteers. Chief Smith (1930) points out that through his research and report, for nearly 100 years prior to the establishment of the HFD, bucket brigades were the only means of fire extinguishment. The first ordinance written by the King in regards to fire fighting ordered every citizen to keep two buckets hanging near by, to be used exclusively for fire extinguishment, and that the buckets are brought to every fire.

From these hand bucket days of volunteers up until present day 2010, the HFD has been through 32 changes of administrations and Fire Chiefs. Each chief has brought their own individuality in leadership style, education, and experience and all have spent varied amounts of

time as the Fire Chief. During the years since its establishment, the HFD has had the Fire Chiefs chosen by political appointment and in recent years by the newly created Fire Commission.

It is the Fire Chiefs responsibility to promote to his executive team or the Assistant Chief's (AC) those he feels are capable and deserving of the higher-ranking leadership position. In the past, those chosen for final promotion have come from all different positions within the department. Some from administrative positions, some from suppression positions but at no time were programs identified where the candidates were exposed to mandatory training, schooling, or mentoring prior to their promotion. Many of those chosen have taken it upon themselves to attend college level courses, NFA courses, or other educational opportunities of their own choosing.

During this authors career it was never identified nor specified by the Fire Chief as to his criteria for choosing the person who would go on to become the AC of the HFD. More often than not, those members seeking to challenge others for the coveted executive leadership positions would find out what the requisites or qualifications would be when the notice of position availability came out. Was there a career development opportunity for these members prior to their application for promotion? What credentials did they possess and what made them stand out above the rest in the eyes of the Fire Chief upon his selection? Was there some form of transitional learning for the incoming chief from the outgoing chief? Where did the incoming person obtain their expertise? What knowledge, training, or experience was each of these promotees subject to prior to submitting their names for application to the new AC position?

The answers to those questions may never be known but the purpose of this research is meant to find what is being used throughout the fire industry now, and how those processes could be used locally here for the HFD. The important question is what is currently being used

by identified organizations and agencies that have already shown success in preparing their AC or executive leadership level prospective candidates. The research report will also be used to point out the necessary parts to a program spelling out what information, training, education, experience, or process can be used by the HFD from this point forward into the future to prepare their identified or chosen personnel. The process for choosing the final candidate needs to be transparent so that all personnel understand it, and are aware of their choices or options and what they must do to prepare themselves for an AC position. The importance of having a continuity of educated, experienced, and confident leadership should be well recognized by any successful organization looking to perpetuate itself well into the future.

The HFD protects approximately 604 square miles of land area on the island of Oahu. The HFD has 42 fire stations, where 42 engine companies, 7 ladder companies, 6 quints, 2 towers, 5 water tankers, 2 heavy rescue units, 2 haz mat units, 1 fireboat, 2 helicopters, and 1 helicopter tender reside. In the HFD there are approximately 1,200 uniformed career fire personnel where on any given day there are 300 plus suppression personnel and 80 plus administrative personnel on duty.

The suppression personnel are spread out across the island where the 42 fire stations are divided into five geographical areas or battalions. Each of these geographical battalions is managed by a BC. Everyday there are five BC's on duty who manage the entire suppression force that is spread out across those five battalions. Each BC is responsible for up to nine fire stations with the associated apparatus, equipment, facilities, and personnel. The service delivery to the citizens and communities on the island of Oahu are varied and the emergency response is very dynamic and each day brings unique challenges to these suppression personnel.

Besides the suppression BC's, there are bureaus which handle various responsibilities for the HFD. BC level leaders manage the Training, Fire Prevention, Fire Communications, Safety and Health, Operations, and Administrative Bureaus.

There are a total of 15 suppression BC positions in the HFD but there are also 7 administrative BC positions each in individual bureaus. So out of the total 1200 uniformed member force, only 22 are BC's and that works out to less than two percent of the work force being middle management supervisors. These members are usually the only ones who qualify for application to the next level of leadership in the HFD and if they are not prepared who then can the Fire Chief choose from, and who would make the best candidate for the AC position? If they were not prepared, how would they go about getting prepared without a "professional development" program or plan in place? These middle management personnel are already taxed on their time spent on the daily operations of their battalions or bureau's so during their BC years it would be very tough to then try and develop their education and skills to be ready to move up to the executive level should the opportunity arise. That's why a dedicated path or program could help way in advance if the person aspired to an executive level sometime in their future by allowing them to prepare themselves during their earlier career days.

The Fire Chief has a Deputy and what he calls his "Executive Staff" (ES). The ES is comprised of four AC's; one manages all of suppression/operations; one manages all administrative services; one manages the Prevention and Training sections; and the final AC takes care of all planning and development for the HFD. So the hierarchy for the HFD starts at the top position of Fire Chief, next level is the Deputy Fire Chief, and then comes the four AC positions, and finally the 22 BC positions. The four AC positions represent less than .350 percent of the total HFD membership. With those odds, how does a member prepare him or

herself and even separate themselves from others willing to challenge for the coveted AC position. Wouldn't it be more advantageous to start preparing early, to prove dedication, to prove worth, and to prove knowledge, skills, and experience? Any successful business or organization must take in to account their future and set up the next generation of leaders to be successful otherwise, how does it maintain its own success in perpetuity?

The Fire Chief is nominated by the Honolulu Fire Commission, and then appointed by the Mayor, and then the new Fire Chief chooses the Deputy. The Fire Chief and his Deputy hold interviews for those interested in applying for any vacant AC position. The pre-requisites are spelled out in the position vacancy announcement as far as necessary qualifications but other than that, there is no preparation for any person interested in the AC position. Now, whereas the BC positions still require testing and skill level evaluation before promotion, the AC positions do not require any of that. The Fire Chief sends out departmental memo notification of the upcoming interview opportunity. It is then up to each interested candidate to submit the proper documentation consisting of a request for consideration and a resume.

Since there are no exams, no assessment centers, or no prepared program or process, how then does a member prepare him or herself for the position of AC? How does the Fire Chief choose his new AC? What is required of an applicant who goes into an interview? How does one prepare for this eventuality of entering into an interview process while they are still in the rank and file level if that is their ambition? Other than having to be a BC, there is really no other established pre-requisite for qualification for AC; however the question of preparation for the HFD AC position will be given a means to an answer by the end of this report. According to Bill Sager (2005) the organizational knowledge seems to be leaving the fire service at an incredible rate but nowhere is it as critical as in the emergency operations arena. If that proves to be so in

the upcoming years, and the HFD does not prepare itself for that exodus of experience and knowledge, how successful will the department be in the years to come? Sager states, “The fire service is neither a sprint nor a marathon; it’s a long-distance relay race. Each generation of fire chiefs and officers pass the baton on to the next” (Sager, 2005, pg 76).

This report’s topic relates directly with the Executive Leadership (EL) course just completed, as it is one of the units studied in the student manual. The final report will have an overall effect on the HFD for the reduction in loss of life of all ages due to fires because those in the position of authority, like the AC level officer, will be more knowledgeable, with better skill level and capabilities derived from focused experience and early preparation. The newly promoted AC will have the most current knowledge due to proper courses of learning prior to promotion, which will give them a better grasp on how to appropriately manage and resolve emerging issues by quick and decisive actions.

Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review will be to research for common components of succession plan models used in other jurisdictions by other fire service organizations across the U.S. as well as what local emergency response agencies in the State of Hawaii use for their personnel. The NFPA standard for Fire Officer III will help to provide information on what the pre-requisites, requisites, and required knowledge and skills are necessary for certification to those standards. Those recommended knowledge and skills could then be applied to the new process being created for the HFD. State of Hawaii emergency response agencies will be asked to provide documentation on the process and procedures they provide their personnel for preparation, if any, for promotion to the executive level chief officers of their agency and jurisdictions. Current fire service industry periodicals, books, EFO papers, and other written

material will be researched for information of current plans being used in our industry.

Direction, visions, recommendations, and even parts of actual plans that have may have proven successful and are identified in these periodicals etc., will be reviewed and should they prove to be viable options for consideration, will be used to develop a succession plan that could be validated by the authorities of the HFD.

The literature research identified above will be used in answering the following questions: (a) what are the applicable knowledge and pre-requisite skills needed for a Fire Assistant Chief Officer (b) what do the other emergency response agencies in the State of Hawaii do to prepare their chief level officers for succession (c) what do other fire organizations similar in size and scope to the HFD do to prepare their chief level officers for succession?

According to T. E. Finley (2001) editor of the Public Safety Communications magazine, those members who are serious about their careers will look for the opportunities for advancement and promotional opportunities. They will study written material as well as study those who may already have moved up the ladder they aspire to. They may find a mentor to question and follow. They may do many things but what sets them apart from the rest of the field is their desire to lead other. A leader as defined by Finley is:

“...someone who can influence not threaten or force others to follow him or her.

A leader has a vision, sets directions and motivates and inspires others to pursue those directions. A leader gets “buy-in” by understanding how to communicate with different audiences in a way that creates meaning for them” (Finley, 2001, pg 27).

So if an organization needs to find a leader for their future, how do they go about it?

During the literature review, the Honolulu Emergency Services Division (HESD) which maintains all the ALS and BLS medical transportation on the island of Oahu, and the Honolulu

Police Department (HPD) will be questioned on their process for identifying and preparing their personnel for future promotion to middle and executive management positions. Hopefully each will have its own documentation that provides the proper information and can be analyzed for possible addition to the HFD model. As Dr. Harry Carter points out, if an organization fails, it is usually because those chosen to lead and were put into that position of authority, eventually proved their inability to really lead (2008). So whose fault is it then when the leader fails? If the right person were chosen, then that person should be the best candidate with the strongest attributes for leadership? If that were true, how can this new leader possibly fail? The failure occurs either because the right person was not chosen in the first place, or if the person was the right one, it is possible that they were not prepared in advance or allowed to gain the required knowledge, skills and the necessary confidence prior to assuming the new and difficult responsibility.

The State of Hawaii is broken into four major counties, and all four counties have their own fire departments that service their communities. Each of the other three county fire departments will be questioned on how they prepare their current personnel for future leadership. Like the HESD and HPD, any documentation that can be used and dissected on how these county fire departments prepare their younger personnel for future leadership roles will be used for inclusion in an HFD model if it appears to be something that might work or has already proven to be successful. It all goes back to succession planning says author Ibarra, for an organization to grow and succeed, key personnel must be made ready to immediately take over the important vacated position(s). But to do that, the individual should already have been groomed to take over, and that this employee should have been made ready to increase their proficiency in their present efforts (Ibarra, 2005).

The HFD has chosen the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) codes and standards, as do many organizations across the U.S., to adopt and to train their personnel up to for certain areas within the organization. The NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications (by Committee, 2008) is another piece of literature used in this report to gather procedures and/or policies, which would help in developing the AC qualifications. The HFD has already identified the Fire Officer III as the standard they want to utilize for their Assistant Chiefs as opposed to the Fire Officer IV. To date, there has been no official adoption of that standard but due to this fact, the Fire Officer III will be analyzed for this report. In chapter 6 of the NFPA 1021, the following prerequisites, knowledge, and skills are recommended as necessary to attain Fire Officer III:

1. Meet the requirements of Fire Instructor Level II as defined in NFPA 1041
2. Have background in Human Resource Management
3. Develop programs that improve services to the community and to build relationships within.
4. Have Administrative skills to include:
 - a. Budget knowledge
 - b. Purchasing knowledge
 - c. Records management
 - d. Full understanding of the organizations Policies and Procedures
5. Be able to manage multi-agency planning, deployment, and operations
 - a. Incident mitigation utilizing an Incident Action Plan of his/her creation
 - b. Delegate authority and maintain open communications throughout
 - c. Develop and conduct a post incident analysis of a multi-agency incident

6. Have knowledge and skills to perform Emergency Management of any local disaster.
 - a. Should be able to develop an action plan
 - b. Know the necessary policies, procedures, and programs for disaster preparedness
 - c. Have the ability to communicate with, integrate services with, and manage inter-agency operations for emergency mitigation

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has published a guidebook that has been reviewed for inclusion in the HFD succession plan. In this guide can be found different levels of Fire Officer of which the Administrative Fire Officer has been chosen to imitate where it appears to meet the needs of this report. In this IAFC Officer Development Handbook (by Committee, 2003) the following standards, knowledge, prerequisites, and skills are being recommended in preparation for the position of Administrative Fire Officer:

1. Must meet the requirements of Fire Officer Level III as defined in NFPA 1021
2. Have interjurisdictional incident management knowledge and skills
3. Understand database management
4. Strategic and deployment planning background
5. Recommended Baccalaureate degree courses:
 - a. Principles of Management
 - b. Historical leadership
 - c. Human Resource Management
 - d. Risk Management
 - e. Advanced Fire Management

- f. Managerial Budgeting and Accounting
 - g. Organizational Behavior
 - h. Professional Ethics
6. Personal experience should include:
- a. 3-5 years of agency operations at rank
 - b. Directing resources and influencing through program management and other interaction
 - c. Incident management of significant incident under ICS
 - d. Financial resource management (budgeting)
 - e. Community events involvement
7. Personal “self-development”
- a. Maintaining health and physical fitness requirements of organization
 - b. Public speaking through large group and public presentations
 - c. Understanding, demonstrating, and promoting ethical behavior
 - d. Developing and maintaining technical skills commensurate to position

Succession planning should be part of the present leaderships long-term survival planning, says Thomas Poulin (2009), they should look beyond their tenure and use “fast-tracking” where future leaders are identified early. These department members are then provided enriching experiences through opportunities provided during their training and development. These opportunities give the identified leader the chance to expand their experience and depth for the issues that will come up in their future endeavors (Poulin, 2009).

So identifying potential leaders early might be something the HFD will need to embrace as they look into creating succession plans. Do the local emergency response forces handle succession in the same way, and do they identify their personnel early on?

The Emergency Services Department (HESD) has a director who serves in the City & County of Honolulu Mayor's administrative cabinet. Dr. Elizabeth Char is the current director and was interviewed for her input (personal interview, February 4, 2010). The HESD directs two entities or divisions; Emergency Medical Services Division; and the Ocean Safety Division. According to Dr. Char, both of these divisions have Executive level management positions; as she has a Chief of EMS and an Ocean Safety Administrator, however to date no programs have ever been developed to prepare any personnel for future leadership opportunities at either of these positions. Although this author's request for information was met with much interest, and a request was made by Dr. Char for a follow up, she informed this author that at this time due to various circumstances, the HESD had no immediate plans to prepare any candidates, or develop programs, policies, or processes for any such succession planning. Though the need has been identified, there are many hurdles for this agency to overcome before any form of preparation can be standardized and utilized in the near future.

Honolulu Police Department's (HPD) Assistant Chief of Administrative Services, Chief Mark Nakagawa explained in a phone interview (personal interview, March 25, 2010) that unfortunately the HPD does not have any formal program or process for preparing their Assistant Chief level officers. Like the other local emergency response agencies, this topic of succession planning is a concern for the HPD, however to date no formal planning has taken place.

There are a couple of ways the personnel get to experience what it may take to be a leader at the upper levels. One way is through attending an FBI academy course on law enforcement.

The only problem here is that this FBI course is not held on a regular basis, and only selected individuals are chosen to attend. The opportunity is announced, interested candidates then apply, get chosen to sit before a panel of their peers, who have already attended the course, then go through an interview process before being chosen to attend. Dependent on time in service, experience level, and other criteria identified by the organization, the candidate is then chosen to attend the FBI course.

Another way is when the Major level leaders, those responsible for upper-middle management and usually those in the 40-hour administrative positions, temporarily get assigned to fill the vacancy of an Assistant Chief level officer who may be on some form of leave. This Major will then assume all the duties and responsibilities, including attending meetings of the upper level Chiefs and making the necessary decisions which allows that person to gain in experience, knowledge, and confidence all through their exposure to the office duties of that Assistant Chief.

After a recent promotion to Deputy Chief in the HPD, a step above the Assistant Chief Officer and the number two position in the HPD hierarchy, Chief Randal Macadangdang provided information (personal communication, March 12, 2010) to this author regarding some informal ways that personnel in the HPD can improve themselves for future leadership opportunities.

Chief Randy explains that upper level management personnel, while on their own off-duty time, give informal “promotional classes” to interested individuals. Even the newly promoted Police Chief has been involved in the past as an interested instructor relaying relevant preparation information to interested personnel who have less time in-service in their department. The classes are given off duty, by officers willing to give of their time to help

benefit the younger personnel who are interested in bettering themselves for the future.

Informal, informative, but its effectiveness has no way of being measured due to the nature and structure of the classes.

Another option some of their personnel take advantage of is through getting reimbursements of payments made towards higher education related to law enforcement. Monies from an "Asset Forfeiture Fund" are used to reimburse individuals who attend higher education courses as long as it is based on law enforcement. These are not formal programs, nor are they long term programs, and it was not made clear if there are any criteria to be met by interested personnel.

The next step in this research was to gather information from the local fire organizations across the state. Each county, in having its own government and fire department, was interviewed separately for information on their specific department's methods and programs or processes.

In a phone interview with Deputy Chief John Blalock of the Kauai Fire Department (personal interview, January 7, 2010), Chief Blalock discussed the problems he encounters with this form of preparation of their personnel. This local County fire department is a smaller capacity department than the HFD, with its own set of challenges with budgeting and staffing. Choosing the right candidate and being able to fund some form of training, education, and overall preparation is not something that this department can fiscally provide at the present time. Again, like the HESD director, Chief Blalock thought the idea of succession planning was a sound one and one that he would like to discuss further concerning his departments future, the only problem was that at this time, no program, project, or even consideration is being given to any form of succession planning in the immediate future. This is not to say that succession

planning is not very important to this department; however it is a concern that is lower on the priority list and will be addressed as soon as it is possible. Until that time, alternatives to a true succession plan will be used by this department and plans, procedures, and processes will be gathered, discussed, and held for sometime in the future when time, energies, and monies can then be directed to develop an acceptable model.

A personal interview was conducted with a Battalion Chief of the Maui Fire Department (MFD) (personal interview, January 15, 2010). Chief Frank Tam provided insight into the way the handles this issue of succession planning for its Executive level personnel. He volunteers that the department does not have a structured way, formal or informal; to let their personnel know what is necessary for them to do to prepare themselves if they were interested in a future in the executive level of leadership. Currently, the lower level personnel have not been given any directions for, or been provided with any suggested pre-requisites needed to be a chief officer in their department. From the fire fighter levels on upward, everyone is left to his or her own devices as to seeking educational opportunities for advanced degrees needed to possibly benefit them to that end. But even trying to figure out what type of training or what kind of degree would benefit his or her upward mobility is very difficult all the way down to the lowest ranks.

Currently the Civil Service of the Maui County Government provides the only requirements for the upper level leadership. The following are those requirements:

1. A combination of education and experience substantially equivalent to graduation from an accredited four year college or university
2. Ten years of progressively responsible firefighting experience, one of which shall have been as a Fire Battalion Chief

When speaking to Deputy Fire Chief Glen Honda (personal interview, February 1, 2010) of the Hawaii County Fire Department (HCFD), he felt it was quite a coincidence that this authors question is something that he has been contemplating in recent months. Chief Honda says that he is tasked with designing and facilitating internal recruitment assessments for all ranks within their department. He is amazed that in our industry we promote based on personnel meeting “minimum requirements”. In our industry upper level leaders are promoted while never having had the necessary experience, skills, or knowledge to provide the delicate and often times critical decisions needed in the heat of battle at an emergency incident. At times some have been promoted to a position where they never have performed any duties for in the past. Some to very important positions like the many administrative positions of authority within any organization.

In the HCFD, fire fighters must have EMT and MICT certification, which in itself is a dedication to learning due to the number of hours necessary to reach the certified level, plus their recruits must go through an academy so stringent that they learn, and eventually possess a high level of skills and knowledge that will prepare them for what they may face at some point in the future as fire fighters. How strange then that the upper level leadership is not provided that same level of attention and preparation nor required to go through some higher form of education and training.

Chief Honda believes that it is very important to give the young fire fighter level personnel the information they will need to prepare themselves for a chief officer level position if they so chose to pursue one. It is never too early to arm them with the knowledge that will help them when they eventually need to compete for the higher position, as that position will be a highly competitive one. Maybe requiring NFA classes will be a great start to sparking some interest and hopefully making more of their personnel aware of what it will take to prepare them

to assume a higher-level leadership role, says Chief Honda. Other than that, the HCFD does not have any formal or informal plan for preparing their future leadership.

Across the U.S., many fire agencies face the same issues. Although separated by geography, it is the industry itself, which lends to the similarity in problems, and solutions used by these various agencies. The succession problem is one shared by so many of these agencies and yet many come up with unique solutions while others struggle in defeat for not being able to solve the same issue(s) with the same solution(s).

Author Chris Sproule (2008) wrote of the Las Vegas Fire & Rescue (LVFR), that the job description for the Assistant and the Deputy Fire Chief focuses on the considerable amount of knowledge and education needed by these positions to perform their duties to the level demanded by the services provided to their citizens, and by the personnel they are to command. Sproules then recommends that a Career Development Committee be created whose responsibility includes creating a Career Development Program that will provide personnel with the resources and opportunities for professional growth through identified education and training prior to their promotion to the higher level of command. It will be necessary to first have the City of Las Vegas' Human Resources Department reexamine the chief officers' educational requirements and make necessary upgrades or increases to the minimum qualifications.

Steve Dirksen (2008) of the Sioux Falls Fire Rescue (SFFR) points out that organizations need to identify employees early on who possess the ability to lead. Like what is being required of their organization, the present leadership should establish a "leadership transition committee" that will be charged with developing the structure of a leadership transition plan. The objectives of this plan will be to develop competencies, mentoring programs, and educational programs and

opportunities. This transition plan would then become the roadmap for their younger generation leaders who are looking for direction.

Patrick Ibarra (2007) states that one myth; in governmental service you cannot pre-select candidates nor can you guarantee promotion, can easily be explained out with a comprehensive and systematic succession management plan. If done properly, this program can be a very effective tool for merit-based selection of identified candidates. A management plan, or in the above cases, planning committees, when used properly is only intended to give each identified and chosen individual the opportunity to be the most competitive that they can be and no more. “Comprehensive and systematic succession planning is not a gimmick. It provides organizations with a clear and actionable strategy to target their investments of time and money where they are most needed” (Ibarra, 2007, p. 26).

Author Ham (2006) of the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department (AFRD) points out that any successful succession plan must follow some form of professional development. He goes on to say that higher education and greater emphasis on officer development is very important to the AFRD to the point where, “If a comprehensive training program is not developed to help foster new leaders, the current administration will have failed in providing an adequate pool of candidates to succeed them” (Ham, 2006, pg 21). An officer development and/or training program will go a long way in developing a succession plan and those coming out of the program will find themselves in a smoother transition through the rank and file of the AFRD. The bottom line then is to assure that an officer development program is created because it is a must to enable the younger personnel to better themselves and prepare themselves way in advance of attrition, or abrupt change of leadership or command. This helps in succession as the members to be chosen will have had the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and

experience before they may need to step up to a new leadership role and all the trials and issues that comes along with it.

Division Chief Knight of the St. Petersburg Fire & Rescue (SPFR) of Florida shared with this author during a personal phone conversation (personal interview, March 7, 2010) that the SPFR has adopted the IAFC Officer Development Manual as their guide for education and competencies. Their personnel are encouraged to attain these competencies as they come along in their career. The NFPA Fire Officer IV is required for their executive level leaders; Division and Assistant Chiefs. A Bachelor's or higher degree is also required for these executive leaders as well. All of their leader positions are required to possess a Florida Fire Officer I certification and although at this time it is not mandatory, it is highly recommended that their Division Chiefs and higher acquire their CFO and EFO. So as pointed out, there are requirements needed by these SPFR personnel, but all of the requirements are only identified and each individual must attain these same on their own during their early on years of their career. Individuals are encouraged to attain the education and experience however; programs provided by the organization for preparation are non-existent at this point in time.

Chief Gary Johnson of the Marysville FD of Ohio explains that succession planning takes a lot of thorough planning, communication, and commitment on the part of everyone in the organization (2004). Part of the process would be for the current leadership to assess the readiness of the current staff to assume those positions; develop strategies for what each individual employee needs as well as what the organization needs; mentor, train, and develop leadership skills for those identified and ready personnel. All of this can be broken down into four components:

1. Identify all competencies relating to your leadership needs, the needs of your organization, and the needs of the community served.
2. Evaluate those personnel identified for future leadership to see how they fit with the department's mission, vision, and core values both now and possibly in the future.
3. Start them in coaching, mentoring, and training programs.
4. Develop a plan of how you can use all of the information gathered to successfully create a succession or leadership development program.

Chief Johnson acknowledges that there really is no substitute for education and experience as a good leader needs both, but at the same time there is no substitute for character and competence either if a leader is to be successful for any organization (2004).

Renee Domingo (2007) provides a six component model of a succession plan that best fits the needs of the Oakland Fire Department (OFD). Listed are the six components, which are being considered for insertion into a succession plan for the HFD:

1. Top management's total support for a "Succession Planning Program".
2. Projection of organizational leadership core competencies.
3. Identifying and retaining high potential talent, and top performers.
4. Establishing individual career and personal development programs.
5. Regular review, evaluation, and measurement of this succession planning program.
6. Evaluating these chosen members to assure that they fit with the organizations mission, vision, and core values.

But how would an organization outside of the United States handle this issue? In an organization where uniformed personnel number 9,000 plus, the Hong Kong Fire Services (HKFS) definitely needs strong, experienced, educated, and confident executive leadership. Shane Siu-hang Lo says that there is a Director and Deputy Director at the top of the Org Chart and just below them is the Chief and Deputy Chief Fire Officer positions (Siu-hang Lo, 2008). The HKFS, like many U.S. fire organizations find attrition issues and succession planning looming large in their near future. And like their Western neighbors, the HKFS acknowledges the fact that there will be difficulties in identifying suitable candidates to fill the up coming vacant post of directorate graded officers in the next 10 years. Siu-hang Lo recommends four measures the HKFS could adopt that he felt would help in mitigating low leadership continuity and organizational instability (Siu-hang Lo, 2008):

1. Recruitment:

- a. Age and length of service has direct correlation of career advancement. Regardless of their age, consideration should be given to candidates for their potential plus their actual work experience, their merit of work, and finally the outcome of mentorship.
- b. This should include some form of aptitude testing.

2. Staff management:

- a. Top management should convene regular posting conferences to help in developing the talent of the potential and identified candidates.
- b. Here potential candidates should be placed on “fast track job rotations” resulting in better exposure of all possible events and incidents.

3. Training:

- a. Candidates can be introduced to a development program where they would receive training covering human, technical, and conceptual skills of the line officer monitored by their mentor's watchful eye.

4. Promotion Mechanism:

- a. Performance appraisals shall be created and conducted on a regular basis to provide information on the qualities of talent, knowledge, and experience of the candidate.

Although in North America, the London Fire Department (LFD) of Ontario, Canada is still far enough removed to have separate but highly similar issues when dealing with leadership succession. David Kitterman (2007) of the LFD shows that his department does not have a list of criteria for use in the development of their senior officers, however some of the recommendations he provided to the LFD appear to fit very well for and will help in the creation of a program for the HFD. Kitterman has broken his recommendations down as such:

1. Short term help
 - a. Help the current personnel's understanding and awareness of their roles, duties, and responsibilities to their department and to their communities.
 - b. To do this he recommends reviewing, evaluating, and upgrading the present job description to assist in making them more understandable to the leaders.
 - c. Once created, these new job descriptions will need to be communicated to all of the pertinent positions throughout the department.
2. Working on the skills and abilities of the present leadership to develop their coaching, counseling, mentoring, and positive reinforcement techniques.

3. Building potential candidates:
 - a. Oral and written communication skills.
 - b. Administrative skills
 - i. Computer understanding and use
 - ii. Budget creation, and management
 - iii. Report writing
 - iv. Record keeping
 - v. Development of SOG's
4. Long term help
 - a. After program development, its progress must be continually monitored for successes and failures.
 - i. Annual program and candidate assessment.
 1. Provide candidate feedback pertaining to developmental progress.
 2. Identify weaknesses and provide methods for improvement.
 - b. Upper level management can use this monitoring to evaluate progress and make the necessary changes to ensure the proper success of the program and its candidates.

According to Susan Heathfield (n.d.), succession planning is done by any organization that wants to ensure that employees are recruited, and developed to fill key roles within. An organization will need to develop the knowledge, skills, and abilities of superior employees, and prepare them in advance for advancement or promotion into those key roles. Those identified employees must be made to understand the paths they have been chosen for and the roles that

they are being developed and prepared to fill. In doing all of this and doing so in advance, the organization has a chance to retain key employees by showing them that attention, time, and development is an investment into not only their personal future, but the future of the organization as well (Heathfield, n.d.).

Procedures

The procedures for this research started with accepting a dedicated problem facing the HFD for an ARP topic. Succession plan development is a component of the Master Strategic Plan (MSP) for the HFD needing resolution and someone to champion its cause. Through an Assistant Chief responsible for issues needing resolution within the MSP, an agreement on preparing HFD personnel for future leadership led to the choosing of this topic. With an identified topic the next step would be to develop the problem statement, relevant research questions, the purpose statement, and finally to build the outline structure on how the paper was to be structured, formatted, and completed then deciding on how the final product could be used in developing a structured program for the HFD to follow. It was then decided upon to utilize an action research method to develop a succession program, which eventually could be validated by the current executive level chief officers of the HFD and accepted to become department policy and accepted program/plan. Dedicated members of the HFD could then use the proposed program from the outcome of this action research to prepare themselves if they were ambitious and were willing to start early in developing the necessary knowledge, skills, training, and experience for the possibility of becoming a future executive level leader for the HFD.

The structure of the paper included doing a literature review to find other organizations and agencies facing the same problem, getting information on industry standards and practices, outlining policies, procedures, processes, programs, and the like from various authors with

varying degrees of experience with the topic. It would also be necessary to be getting the inside view, from authors of like size and like scope organizations to the HFD, through their NFA ARP's and personal interviews.

It was decided that personal interviews were to held with local State of Hawaii emergency response agencies to discuss components that were currently in use by the organization and possibly found to be successful in nature in preparing their members early for future leadership roles. This author then developed a list of questions (Appendix A) that would be posed in questionnaire form to the local emergency response agencies to elicit answers and/or feedback regarding internal processes and/or procedures.

The next step was to submit a formal proposal to the assigned evaluator. Upon receipt of his comments and recommendations, the original proposal was revised and restructured to the formatting, outline, structure, and content found in this final report.

In trying to maintain the intended outline of the report, it was then necessary to come up with an "action plan" that included creating a list; of agencies, literature, questions, reports, a timeline for personal interviews, names of individuals, and to identify organizations with like size and scope of the HFD. It was also important to ascertain upfront whether or not information from these outside agencies would be available either by direct/open communication or through literature review. For those agencies outside of the State of Hawaii that the author made contact with, the personal interview questionnaire (Appendix A) was again used.

During the two-week period spent at the Fire Academy, the Learning Resource Center was utilized to research and gather publications from industry magazines and ARP's from fire personnel from around the U.S. and internationally. The majority of those articles and reports

researched were downloaded, scanned, or re-printed and portions of each were eventually cited and used in the literature review section as well as other sections of this report.

The next step was to organize the actual timing for information and data gathering, to figure out which sections of the ARP to write and at which point to begin, and then to proceed with the actual report itself. It was decided that the entire data gathering portion would be completed first, and then the personal interviews of local responders would be next. Logically, the data and information would be separated and associated with the various sections of the ARP when and where it was most useful. The start of the actual writing would commence when all research was completed but it was always maintained that should subsequent interviews or article research be necessary, that it would take place during the actual writing of this report.

Data gathering began with industry magazine articles where the focus was to get background information on how succession planning worked, why it was important, how was it accomplished, what methods were available for creation, and which author or authority currently used any such planning method and how effective they felt it was. Data gathering also included reviewing NFA ARP's of personnel from organizations around the U.S. Here data regarding succession plans were reviewed for content to allow comparison of the ARP author's organization to the HFD to assure that some match whether in organizational structure, staffing, hierarchy, area coverage, service delivery, problem statement, or personnel attrition could be found.

Once begun, identified fire organizations and the local state wide emergency response agencies were the easiest and most rewarding for data and information gathering as all of the personnel interviewed have close ties with the author. Anytime one can share openly with brothers and sisters in the industry there must be an element of trust whereby information of a

conversational nature can also be offered knowing that the message stays with the interview alone. The confidence allowed open conversation into internal information, shortcomings, positive and negative outcomes, and personal feelings and opinions which may not have otherwise been offered. The feelings and opinions were good for overall feedback and many times gave a view to why things were the way they were with the organization, however because they only belonged to the individual and not the organization none of those opinions were used for this report. The only data and information used was of factual and current organizational practices.

It was decided that no survey would be used for this ARP due to the fact that the local emergency response agencies interviewed had no succession plans so most of the questions in the survey would go unanswered. Also the number of HFD middle and upper management leaders [28 out of 1200] would prove to be insufficient to provide a good foundation for solid qualitative data.

The only limitation found during the research phase of this report was the lack of current policies, procedures, processes, or programs being in place for the local emergency response agencies in the State of Hawaii. That being the case, there was no way of making any form of comparison between U.S. mainland agencies and those of Hawaii. Without the comparison, no validated recommendations could be gathered from any of the other local agencies. The limitation though will actually become a benefit after the completion of this report as copies of the same will be shared with all interested agencies and discussions will be created to assist in the creation and development of plans and programs for those agencies. The bottom line will be that information shared could become a starting point for all local agencies to open discussions with their upper level management and possibly giving the next generation of fire fighters, or

later, the opportunities necessary to develop strong, confident, and fully capable department leaders of the future.

The writing began in December 2009 and continued into April 2010 with brief pauses to re-interview some of the local agencies and to research on-line Internet sources for additional data and information. Components of this report were written in sections and each section was written in the order outlined in the ARP procedural manual. As was recommended in the Executive Development class, the abstract was held off to the very end enabling this author to maintain the established order and required formatting of the abstract and to allow for a systematic closure to the entire report. The final completed document was mailed to the NFA on June 28, 2010.

Results

“Succession planning is an organized and systematic way to ensure that employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to replace and/or succeed to strategic roles within the organization” (Executive Leadership student manual, 2005, pg. SM7-3). There must be a way by which employees may analyze what they need for their future development and that may be the critical element for organizational strategy (2005).

The results of this original research were used to form a program for the HFD, which if accepted by the Fire Chief, will be used by all interested HFD personnel for their personal future leadership development. Being an ARP research paper, only a recommendation for a succession plan may be made from it; the final program itself will need to be validated by the current Fire Chief and his executive staff before it may become a formal policy and/or procedure if it ever will.

The following research questions were answered by utilizing the results gathered above:

1. What are the applicable knowledge and pre-requisite skills needed for a Fire Assistant Chief Officer?

NFPA is a widely accepted organization by which standards for the fire service are used to guide, to elevate, and to match or exceed. Since this is the case, components from the NFPA 1021 that appeared to fit with an HFD specific program were examined and accepted for use.

Components were taken from the NFPA Standards for Fire Officer III:

1. Have a Human Resource background
2. Acquiring and/or holding Administrative skills such as:
 - a. Budgeting, purchasing, records management, and fully understanding the Organizations Policy and Procedures
3. Multi-agency planning, deployment, and operations for incident mitigation
4. Emergency Management and Disaster preparedness knowledge and skills

The IAFC Officer Development Handbook was used to gather the following components for a development program:

1. Strategic and deployment planning knowledge
2. Higher education or Baccalaureate degree courses
 - a. Principles of Management
 - b. Risk Management
 - c. Budgeting and/or Accounting
3. 3-5 years of agency specific operations knowledge at BC level rank
4. Development of technical skills commensurate to the AC level rank
 - a. Computer skills
 - b. Report writing

c. Public speaking or Legislative testifying

In answering research question number 2:

2. What do the other emergency response agencies in the State of Hawaii do to prepare their chief level officers for succession?

It was found that none of the local emergency response agencies had any type of formal or informal program for their personnel to prepare themselves for future leadership. This is fairly unique as all of the emergency response agencies believe that it is a necessity, and they all agree that their respective agencies should have some form of it, however to date none have begun the development of any such succession plan.

This limitation put a bump in the path chosen for this ARP. In essence, it was now necessary to put more emphasis on finding out what other national agencies similar to HFD were doing to help in preparing their younger members for future leadership roles. No longer was valuable information going to be available from a local as well as cultural viewpoint, and since no local agency had developed any form of plan in the past and no agency had currently been working on any type of plan for the near future, there would definitely be no tangible help coming from the local connections.

The opportunity for data gathering between the various local agencies was still a successful endeavor because it allowed each local agency to query for an internal inspection of their future needs. It opened more lines of communication for future discussions and it opened the opportunity for each agency rep to begin intra-inspection of their policies, processes, and procedures to find the areas lacking for support of this issue. Upon completion of this action research, the final report and its accompanying recommendations will be shared with the other local agencies interested in starting their own data gathering and process for succession planning

or leadership development of their younger fire fighter level personnel. So although no data could be garnered for inclusion in an HFD specific program, a local connection was created whereby information, data, and a final report would be used in future discussions. The ensuing discussion may be helpful to all of the local emergency response agencies in building their own programs for the development of their younger personnel to help in building future leaders for their respective organizations. That by itself helps in making this action research paper a valuable undertaking for all as it will create dialogue as well as inter-agency cooperation which in the long run may help our entire state in its future leadership preparation.

This author was much more successful in gathering information and data from agencies outside of the state but similar in size, scope, geography, service delivery, etc., to the HFD. Not only were agencies from within the U.S. reviewed through literature and personal interviews, but a couple of international agencies were also used. The data gathered from those organizations was used to answer question number three:

3. What do other fire organizations similar in size and scope to the HFD do to prepare their chief level officers for succession?

Different parts of each agency's plans or programs were considered for inclusion in a succession plan for the HFD. Each agency used will be noted below and each individual recommendation being considered will be listed accordingly.

The LVFR contributions used were; one, the recommendation for some form of committee to be created and convened to develop a Career Development Program; two, consideration should be given to the examination of the current educational requirements for AC level officers and the upgrading of the minimum qualifications where needed.

The recommendations to be considered from the SFFR was similar in nature with the LVFR where a committee would be created but in this case the committee would be tasked to develop competencies, mentoring programs, and educational programs and opportunities. The more important recommendation would be the early identification of employees who exhibit leadership ability early on in their career and are looking for direction.

The AFRD provided that an “Officer Development” program needs to be identified and available to anyone interested in preparing themselves for future leadership. This way, young fire fighters may begin to acquire the necessary education, knowledge, skills, and experience long before they are asked to apply for key positions within their department.

Chief Steve Knight of the SPFR confirmed the use of the IAFC Officer Development Manual as a reference source. This validated the fact that other organizations also valued the information contained within that manual so the use of the points included there in was confirmed. Also being reviewed for inclusion in an HFD specific program, is the requirement for the executive level leader to hold a Bachelor’s degree or higher.

Out of the four components being recommended by the Marysville FD, three were found to be useful in an HFD program:

1. Identify all competencies relating to your leadership needs, the needs of your organization, and the needs of the community served.
2. Evaluate those personnel identified for future leadership to see how they fit with the department’s mission, vision, and core values both now and possibly in the future.
3. Start them in coaching, mentoring, and training programs.

The most important point this author gleaned from the Marysville FD was the need for early identification of those personnel who exhibit good and moral character, confidence, and competence.

The OFD recommended a six-point program:

1. Top management's total support.
2. Projection of organizational leadership core competencies.
3. Identifying and retaining high potential talent, and top performers.
4. Establishing individual career and personal development programs.
5. Regular review, evaluation, and measurement of this succession-planning program.
6. Evaluating these chosen members to assure that they fit with the organizations mission, vision, and core values.

In trying to gain different perspectives of this very important issue on succession planning and early professional development, this author decided to use organizations outside of the United States to see how they viewed these form of program issues.

A Chief Officer volunteered that what was used for early development of personnel in the Hong Kong Fire Service was the following:

1. Early identification of candidates with potential.
2. Consideration would be given for their work experience, work merits, and the outcome of any mentoring.
3. Conferences with top management personnel should be held regularly.
4. "Fast Track" rotations for exposure to various forms and types of incidents.

5. Performance appraisals/evaluations to be conducted on a regular basis to assure the talent, knowledge, and experiential growth of the candidate.

The short-term vision for the LFD of Canada recommends the development or updating of current job descriptions to help the present and future leaders in fully understanding their roles and responsibilities to their organization and to the communities they serve. Once this description has been upgraded and updated, that information along with the final document must assuredly be communicated to each department individual. The final recommendation would be the building up of potential candidates through skill development. Administrative skills being the focal point for this form of development:

1. Oral and written communication skills
2. Administrative skills
 - a. Computer, budget management, report writing, record keeping, SOG development.

If editor Finley (2001) is correct, leadership does not necessarily have to come from the upper echelon of an organization. A leader can be anyone, providing this person has vision, understanding, communication skills, commitment, and the confidence to use all of these attributes. The bottom line is that most if not all fire service organizations have personnel who possess those attributes. These members are already leaders and can be found at all levels, all job descriptions, with varied years of service (Finley, 2001). All these people really need to become leaders is preparation through training and/or programs for professional development.

Discussion

The HFD since becoming an accredited agency in the year 2000 has had to maintain a strategic plan. This plan has undergone many updates since 2000 and in fact has morphed into

what is now entitled the “Master Strategic Plan” (MSP). Annually the HFD ES is tasked with reviewing and making corrections, additions, deletions, and general updates to this MSP. The topic of professional development and continuing education for middle management personnel was discussed and added to the existing MSP a few years ago, however no project manager was ever assigned to follow up to conclusion. It was during discussions with the NFA/EFO program manager, the Assistant Chief of Support Services, where the topic of professional development was recommended for follow up and research during this authors’ final EFO class. The research and final report were to be used to answer the intent of the MSP whereby a process or program could be formalized and validated for a formal succession plan for the future leadership of the HFD.

The needs of the various organizations and personnel researched were very similar. It didn’t matter where they were located nor did it matter what type of emergency response it provided. They seemed to agree that succession planning was necessary for continuity and perpetuity. Another similarity found in this research is the fact that although many organizations are in agreement that succession planning is necessary and in some cases highly important, many to date still do not have any formal succession plan or preparation program for their personnel. They may have parts to a plan or even portions to programs already built and in place to assist personnel, but not every organization has a full and validated succession plan to prepare their personnel within that organization.

The data gathered during the literature review will be used in discussion where three or more authors agreed in the application of the identified practice or recommended procedure/process.

According to the NFPA 1021 Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications (by Committee, 2003); the IAFC Officer Development Handbook (by Committee, 2008); the MFD (personal interview with Battalion Chief Frank Tam); the LVFR (Sproule, 2008); the SFFR (Dirksen, 2008); the AFRD (Ham, 2006); Big Island Fire Department (personal interview with Deputy Chief Glen Honda) and the SPFR (personal interview with Division Chief Steve Knight) all agree that higher education is vital for any form of leadership preparation. There wasn't a complete agreement on what type of degree was necessary, nor was there agreement on the path of study however, out of all of the research, the direction for study was determined.

A minimum of a Bachelor's degree will be recommended with focus on administrative and technical knowledge. Human resources, personnel management, program management, communications, intermediate level computer skills, and report writing will all be valuable components for an education background.

When exceptional people are identified early on for their knowledge, drive, desires, dedication, efforts and abilities then more time can be given to groom and prepare them if the organization chooses this method of succession planning. SFFR (Dirksen, 2008); authors Patrick Ibarra (2005), Susan Heath (n.d.), and Thomas Poulin (2009); Marysville FD (Johnson, 2004); OFD (Domingo, 2007); Big Island Fire Department (personal interview with Deputy Chief Glen Honda) have all point out that early identification works very well if done correctly and early enough in a persons career. Nothing was noted as far as a particular methodology for choosing the candidate regarding the time in-service or experience level minimums of the candidate. This last issue prompted this author to recommend that the HFD ES, upon validation or adoption of this reports final recommendations, come up with the final MQ's for early identification. The bottom line is that a candidate should be identified as soon as possible in their career as potential

candidates for executive level positions and then groomed all along the way. It must be noted here that not all candidates will pan out and somewhere in the process more than one may have been identified so continual evaluation must be done. Now, where those not meeting the intended position requirements or their efforts fall short of the required levels of learning, it may be necessary to release them from their candidate status.

As stated earlier, many organizations have portions of plans or programs but for any succession plan to be successful a full or all encompassing and validated and accepted “Leadership or Development Plan” is a necessity. G. Johnson (2004) of the Marysville FD; R. Domingo (2007) of the OFD; L. Siu-hang (2008) of the HKFS; C. Sproule (2008) of the LVFR; D. Ham (2006) of the AFRD; and author P. Ibarra (2007) all in some means or another provide recommendation towards an identified and accepted plan or program by which the necessary steps or means of completion are fully understood and laid out for anyone wanting to learn more about it. The final product will be a Professional Development Plan for the HFD.

Usually those in the executive level management, in any organization, are those responsible to provide direction, vision, and guidance. Part of those responsibilities is towards administration of the organization. The actual administrative skills and the full understanding of those skills are highly important for any person wishing to be an executive level leader. Understanding budgeting, human resources, staffing, record keeping, purchasing, report writing, and at a minimum, having intermediate computer skills are all skills that D. Kitterman (2007) and L. Siu-hang (2008) agree are needed to be a acceptable executive leader. Within the NFPA 1021 (2008) and the IAFC’s Officer Development Handbook, administrative skills such as those pointed out above can be found as necessary components and recommended for attainment of those seeking upper management level leadership.

What good is a program or process, no matter what they may be, if it does not have the full acknowledgment and acceptance by the top management? Everything always starts at the very top. The boss needs to create or develop the plans then make sure that those plans are delivered to all the personnel of that organization. If not that way, then no matter how or who creates the plan, it will eventually still need to have the blessings of that boss and his or her executive staff no matter who develops it. After this acceptance it then still needs to be published down to the lowest level in the organization for all personnel to understand and buy into. Deputy Chief Honda (personal interview) of the Big Island Fire Dept; R. Domingo (2007) of the OFD; and L. Siu-hang (2008) of HKFS agree that top management needs to be in full support of any program like succession planning especially where younger personnel may be involved otherwise derision or dissent may creep into the process. Upper management must show his, her, or their acceptance and full support of this type of program to allow everyone in the organization to see that the intention of the program is to benefit the future of the organization.

R. Domingo (2007) of the OFD, L. Siu-hang (2008) of the HKFS, and D. Kitterman (2007) of the LFD all agree that continual assessment is a must. Continual assessment of the components of the program, continual assessment of the candidates chosen for the program, and continual assessment of the successes or failures must occur. Without continual assessment how can any measurement take place, and without measurements how can successes or improvement or growth be shown. What proof can be had without measurement and what measurement can be had without continual assessment? With assessment those responsible to monitor the program can see where the program was, how it is managing as it moves forward, and how far it has come from its inception.

The final issue having at least three authors agreeing upon is the issue of mentoring. S. Dirksen (2008) of the SFFR, G. Johnson (2004) of the Marysville FD, and D. Kitterman (2007) of the LFD say that mentoring should be included in a succession plan. Mentoring is defined as a trusted counselor or guide such as in “tutor”, or “coach” (mentor, 2010). The HFD has no formal mentor program nor has it ever had. Many battalion commanders informally mentor those that they feel will be stepping in to fill in at their position when they are temporarily away from the office. Informal mentoring programs go on all over our industry in an effort to prepare those filling in on a temporary basis. Mentoring has been practiced throughout many organizations across the U.S. as evidenced by informal talk sessions held between attendees of the EFO program. If there are really no formal mentoring programs to imitate, how then will a mentoring program be assured of success for the HFD? Parameters and guidelines will need to be set. Policy and procedure will need to be laid out. Baselines and benchmarks will need to be developed and monitored. Time lines would need to be defined to limit the term of the mentoring program. And finally, the right people will need to be found, developed, and trained in the proper methods of mentoring before being set up as an accepted mentor within this HFD program.

Recommendations

In a recent article in the Fire Chief magazine, the new U.S. Fire Administrator Kelvin Cochran (2010) said that present fire chiefs would all be challenged in that without providing professional development for their personnel, they may end up either leaving important positions open until successors can be trained, or they may find themselves promoting inexperienced and untrained personnel. This speaks to the necessity of the HFD leadership to pledge their support behind some form of professional development program for the benefit of all personnel as well

as for the future of this fine and historical organization. The importance of an immediate start to some form of program cannot be overstated at this point. The HFD has never had any such program and without one in the near future, executive level leadership will be losing some of its numbers in the next five years without having a means of replacement with quality and highly prepared and effective leaders.

It will be recommended that the HFD adopt a new policy & procedure, and institute a new program and/or process entitled, HFD Professional Development Program. The first effort for this recommendation will be to come up with a new insertion into the HFD manual of Policy and Procedures (Appendix B). This policy will affirm for the department personnel the fact that the Executive Staff (ES) are in full support of the new professional development program as each one of them will need to review, recommend changes, then sign off before the Fire Chief will allow it to become policy. The policy will only need to spell out the acceptance of the new program as written in the formal stand-alone document.

Next is the need to come up with the insert tabs for the all-inclusive stand-alone manual entitled, "HFD Professional Development Program". This manual could be sectioned off where inserts explaining the various ranking positions within the department and the parameters, descriptions, policies, and the development path could be included to provide all the necessary protocols for working towards future promotional opportunities. This manual would benefit the Assistant Chief, Battalion Chief, and Captain positions developmental process. For the purpose of this ARP, only the Assistant Chief level developmental process will be included and provided in the form of an insert (Appendix C) for inclusion in the program manual spoken of above, however the formatting will be easily adaptable to include the other rank positions if they were to be created sometime in the future. Upon completion this new professional development

program, with all of the other component inserts, will only be a small part of a larger succession plan for the HFD. The entire program and plan will allow anyone in the HFD, no matter how much time in-service they may have, to know exactly what is necessary for them to do in preparation for any of the identified ranking positions. This way anyone can begin preparation for future leadership even as early as during his or her first few years of service. According to Chief Robert Rielage, “Earned leadership occurs when individuals have prepared over the course of their careers... These individuals have sought opportunities to learn through training, formal education, and experience on how to lead” (Rielage, 2010, pg 14).

Building a program such as this will need to take place in phases. Phase I in this case will begin with; the new policy & procedure insert (Appendix B); an Assistant Chief position specific component (Appendix C); and a mentoring program component (Appendix D). All of these will be tabs within the all-encompassing Professional Development Program Manual under the umbrella of Succession Planning for the HFD.

Following Phase I, personnel will need to be identified to research and develop the components for the specific positions of Battalion Chief (BC) and Captain (Capt). The chosen individual(s) will have the benefit of the current research already performed to help in creating the position specific inserts for the BC and Capt’s. Whether that can be accomplished in one attempt (Phase II), or two separate attempts (Phase II & III) will have to be decided upon by those chosen to follow up on this Professional Development Program. Upon final draft of all of the position specific components and completion of all phases of this program, the HFD will have a viable and somewhat dynamic Succession Plan.

The final component to be recommended for this report will be the Mentoring Program (Appendix D). As provided earlier, a mentor is someone who can provide counseling as in a

tutor or coach. Since the HFD has never had a formal mentoring program, this mentality of tutoring or coaching has been attempted in many different versions with varying degrees of success. Implied mentoring, and informal mentoring has been tried throughout the past 25 plus years that this author has been involved in the HFD. Since no formal program has ever been developed, getting everyone on-board and accepting of it will be a challenge. The purpose for this new program will need to be stated up-front and the intended outcome(s) will also need to be calculated and stated to help all personnel understand and “buy-in” so that it will have a chance to succeed.

The bottom line is that if the HFD is to continue to be an outstanding organization far into the future, solid, confident, and forward thinking leadership will be a necessity. How those future leaders will be chosen will be the key to success. As always, to get anything ready for the future you must start now. Preparation is the key and in preparation, support, direction, and coordination especially from the top management, will go a long way in creating a strong and long lasting program.

As Dr. Denis Onieal was recently quoted as saying, “Our future over the next 10 to 20 years will be solely dependent upon whether leaders and their organizations are prepared” (Onieal, 2010, pg 68). He further goes on to say, “If you are a leader today, your primary mission is to ensure that the people who will be leading your organization tomorrow have the tools to deal with the issues. If you plan to be a leader in the future, you need to prepare yourself now” (Onieal, 2010, pg 70).

So as it should be, this new program for the HFD needs to be a collaborative effort on the part of its executive leadership, those currently in ranked positions, and those aspiring to become future leaders of the HFD. The HFD is a fine organization with a very rich and historical past.

To continue this very storied department and to progress and stay current, not only with what goes on in the industry now but what will be happening well into the future, the HFD needs to start preparing their future leaders right away. For that to happen, and for its future, the HFD must have a professional development program as part of a validated succession plan.

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Appendix A

Questionnaire for personal interviews

1. Does your organization have a “succession plan”?
2. Do you have any program or process whereby your lower level FF’s can prepare themselves for any future upper level management positions?
3. Are your personnel given any:
 - a. Direction(s)
 - b. Recommendation(s)
 - c. Guidance
 - d. Evaluation(s)
 - e. Standards or MQ’s for the upper level positions
4. What are the minimum qualifications for your executive level management positions (ELMP)?
5. If education is a requisite, what level degree is required for the ELMP?
6. Does your organization provide any assistance in the way of education?
7. Do you provide any mentoring?
8. Do your lower level FF’s know or understand what effort and commitment it will take to prepare themselves for future leadership positions?
9. Is there any other information you can pass on to help in building a HFD succession planning process/program?

Appendix B

Chapter 1 Administration

Policy: It is the policy of the HFD...

Article 1: **Administrative Services Bureau (ASB)**

Section 3: **Finance**

Par. 1-01.03.800 **Professional Development**

Par. 1-01.03.801 HFD Scholarships. The scholarships...

Par. 1-01.03.802
(Rev. 7/01/10) Succession Planning for ranked positions within the HFD including; Assistant Chief, Battalion Chief, and Captain positions offered through the “Professional Development Program” guidelines are printed under separate cover.

Established process and procedures will assist those personnel interested in preparing for future opportunities in department leadership. Complete information provided in the manual for those interested in preparing for promotional opportunities as well as those interested in knowing and understanding the requirements of ranked positions.

Pre-requisites, education requirements, experience level requirements, timelines for path and completion, and guidance are offered throughout the program manual. ASB is available to answer questions and offer information.

Par. 1-01.03.803
(Rev. 7/01/10) Responsibility for the maintenance and revision of the Professional Development Program manual shall be assigned to the ASB. The ASB shall review the manual on an annual basis and amend it as necessary.

Appendix C

HONOLULU FIRE DEPARTMENT*ASSISTANT FIRE CHIEF
EM 08, BU 11E*Duties Summary:

Administers; extensive and complex firefighting, and search and rescue operations; the administrative services and allied functions; the support services functions (i.e., fire communication, fire prevention, and training and research activities) of the department; or serves as the "Inspector General" with responsibility for providing executive assistance to the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire chief in the planning, development and execution of various departmental programs, special studies, and confidential projects; and performs other related duties as required.

Distinguishing
Characteristics:

Positions in this class report directly to the Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief and reflect overall responsibility for administering the activities of a major division of the fire department, or serving as the "Inspector General."

Illustrative
Examples of Work:Fire Suppression
Operations:

Plans, directs, coordinates, and has day-to-day responsibility for firefighting, search and rescue, and allied operations for a major geographic division; reviews and evaluates personnel and equipment assignments as they may be affected by varying and changing conditions and reassigns them based on the most efficient utilization of available resources; reviews performance of the firefighting force to assure optimum utilization of personnel, equipment and facilities; makes periodic inspections of stations and equipment to assure proper maintenance and operating readiness; reviews battalion activity reports to determine compliance with department policies, procedures and other practices; holds meetings with battalion chiefs to review activities, discuss problems and ways of improving operations; attends staff meetings and participates in reviewing changes in department policies, procedures and programs; recommends changes in designated areas of responsibility for companies and battalions;

recommends changes in firefighting, search and rescue methods, equipment and staffing; prepares operating budget for personnel, equipment and other expenses; responds to major fires and emergencies and takes command when the situation dictates; establishes liaison with the public and other government agencies on matters of fire prevention and mutual aid in fighting fires and responding to other emergencies; may relieve or represent superior officers.

Administrative and Allied Services:

Plans, directs and coordinates the administrative services functions of the department; reviews, coordinates and adjusts work programs and budgets to conform to departmental policies, established goals and objectives, and availability of funds; assists the Fire Chief in the formulation, preparation, justification and presentation of the department's capital improvement and operating programs and budgets; develops administrative directives and procedures on behalf of the Chief and assures compliance by operating units and personnel; maintains and updates departmental rules and regulations, special orders, work schedules, and manuals of operation; directs a departmental personnel management and labor relations program, including grievance resolution and the development of proposals for collective bargaining; develops and oversees fire station and equipment maintenance programs, including automotive and radio maintenance and repair; directs all property and supply activities; appears with or on behalf of the Fire Chief at meetings before administration officials, the City Council, Planning Commission and other agencies as required.

Support Services:

Plans, directs and coordinates, through subordinate supervisory positions, the activities of the fire communication center, fire prevention bureau, and the training and research bureau; reviews bureau reports to determine program efficiencies or deficiencies and develops policies and procedures for the various programs; advises the Chief on matters relating to modern/current fire fighter training curriculum and techniques, fire prevention and safety programs, and emergency dispatch communication systems; researches and proposes alternative actions/plans in providing supportive services for fire operations; prepares operating budget for personnel, equipment and other expenses; prepares reports related to the programs/projects assigned to subordinate bureaus; establishes liaison with other public and private sector agencies, business and community associations, and public safety groups/associations to enhance improvements to fire and safety prevention, internal training, and communication.

Inspector General/
Program Planning
and Development:

Develops studies to determine the effectiveness of departmental programs and recommends/implements changes to programs based on the results of studies; reviews and updates the department's accreditation manual; reviews and evaluates the department's risk management plan and ensures compliance through staff inspections, personal observations, and collection and analysis of departmental statistics; develops and implements plans to effectively minimize departmental risk factors; conducts special investigations of a complex or sensitive nature or special studies related to departmental operations, budgeting, maintenance and safety; prepares departmental statistics and reports.

Minimum Qualification
Requirements:

Education:

Graduation from an accredited college or university with a minimum Bachelors Degree in a business related field, however a Master's Degree would be preferable.

- Study recommendations:
 - Human Resources
 - Personnel management
 - Staffing
 - Payroll
 - Administration
 - Budget & Financing
 - Report writing
 - Program/Project management
 - Intermediate computer technology proficiency
 - Speech and/or communications

Experience:

Minimum of 25 years of progressively responsible fire fighting experience in the Honolulu Fire Department, five of which shall have been as a Battalion Chief.

Participant as a "Mentor" for lower level fire personnel.
Participant as a "Mentee" for position specific Assistant Chief preparation. The mentoring program(s) will require a minimum 1-year full-time commitment at both levels.

License
Requirement:

Possession of a valid Hawaii State driver's license (Type 3).

Knowledgebase:

Fire organization and administration including; supervision; training; budget preparation and control; personnel management; local and State rules, regulations, ordinances and laws relating to fire department operations; department policies & procedures, rules & regulations, practices & procedures; intermediate computer skill level (proficiency with Word, Excel, Power Point, Outlook); Incident Management (ICS) & NIMS compliant; problem solving regarding identification, investigation, mitigation, and resolution.

Ability to:

Proceed with incident management: plan, organize, direct and administer extensive firefighting, search and rescue, hazardous materials, and medical response operations; assist in varied administrative services or support services functions; conduct performance evaluations and to do follow up with personnel; apply good judgment in making management decisions; establish and maintain effective working relationships with subordinates and the general public; keep records and prepare reports. Have good public speaking capabilities. Have a friendly and open management style, which will lend itself to positive relationships throughout the department as well as the external stakeholders; City, State, and Federal agencies.

Appendix D

Honolulu Fire Department Mentoring Program

- I) Purpose: The HFD Mentoring Program is part of a Professional Development Program whereby identified department members will be chosen by the Executive Staff and will partner with position incumbents in an effort to prepare themselves for future leadership roles. Incumbents will support, guide, counsel, and encourage the mentee throughout a year-long commitment at the end of which a complete analysis of the collaboration will reveal whether a continuation or completion of study will be recommended
- II) Goal and Objective: The goal of this Mentoring Program is to provide a means of preparation to all personnel interested in positions of leadership in the HFD. The primary objective is to give each mentee the opportunity to learn about a specific leadership position in the HFD from an incumbent at that position. The learning will be accomplished within a year's time after which more time may be scheduled or the mentoring can be terminated
- III) Roles and Responsibilities:
- a) The role of the Fire Chief
 - i.) The Fire Chief will lend his or her full support to this program
 - ii.) The Fire Chief will together with his or her Executive Staff create then provide the parameters and/or stipulations for choosing the participants and then will distribute this information to all department personnel
 - iii.) The Fire Chief along with his or her Executive Staff shall early on identify, evaluate, and choose candidates to participate in this program
 - iv.) The Fire Chief will do periodic evaluations of the progress and success of this program and make changes where necessary
 - b) Mentor:
 - i.) Then Mentor will make a commitment for "no less than" one full year

- ii.) The Mentor will attend any and all initial familiarization training forums to prepare him or herself for the position of mentor
 - iii.) The Mentor will be:
 - 1) A positive influence
 - 2) Fully supportive
 - 3) Non judgmental
 - 4) Be seriously interested in the Mentee's growth
 - 5) A counselor, a listener, a confidant
 - 6) A teacher, an organizer, a friend
 - iv.) The Mentor will share the responsibility for learning
 - v.) The Mentor will set benchmarks
 - vi.) The Mentor will continually evaluate growth and successes
 - vii.) The Mentor will share personal experiences both good and bad
 - viii.) The Mentor will attend regularly scheduled refresher training classes
- c) Mentee:
- i.) The mentee will be responsible to make a commitment for a minimum of one year
 - ii.) The mentee will:
 - 1) Question
 - 2) Study
 - 3) Accept guidance
 - 4) Accept criticism
 - 5) Train as hard and as long as it will take to become confident
 - 6) Be open and honest with his or her mentor
 - 7) Accept regularly scheduled evaluation analysis
 - iii.) The Mentee will work on all the other requisites for the position he or she is working towards
 - 1) Education – position minimum
 - 2) Experience – minimum qualifications
 - 3) Years of Service – position specific