

Developing Chief Officers for the Dallas Fire Rescue Department

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Certification Statement

I hereby certify that this paper is my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and the appropriate credit is given where I have uses the language, ideas, expression, or writings of another.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Abstract

The Dallas Fire Rescue Department (DFRD) had lost considerable leadership and management experience through attrition over the past decade. The problem was the DFRD did not have a Chief Officer Development Program for current or future Chief Officers. This had caused difficulty for the members to transition to the required leadership and management skills necessary for the timely and successful performance of a Chief Officer position within the DFRD. The Purpose of the research was to identify the managerial and leadership deficiencies of DFRD Chief Officers and to identify the skills necessary for a successful Chief Officer Development Program. Descriptive research was used to answer the three research questions: (a) what managerial and leadership skills are DFRD Chief Officers lacking? (b) What does the DFRD need in a Chief Officer Development program? (c) What resources can be used to enhance the capabilities of existing Chief Officers and the development of future Chief Officers in the Dallas Fire Rescue Department? Literature was read and reviewed, the internet and library were used, nationwide surveys and internal surveys were done and an interview was conducted in order to answer the research questions. The results of the research project identified answers to the research questions and gathered the necessary information in order to initiate the process of developing a Chief Officer Development Program in the DFRD. Short term recommendations include committee work to better define the DFRD needs and to initiate a mentoring program. Long term recommendations would complement the mentor program with a sustainable Chief Officer Development Program to meet the needs of the DFRD and the community.

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## Introduction

Leaders and managers in the United States are in a constant state of transition. With the ever changing conditions of the Fire Service, budget constraints, and doing more with less, it is more important than ever for organizations to better position themselves to adapt, improvise, and become more competent and capable. It is becoming a requirement that our leaders be able to lead this change. ([www.corneliusassoc.com/article/Todays%20Leadership%20Challenge.pdf](http://www.corneliusassoc.com/article/Todays%20Leadership%20Challenge.pdf))

The future of the fire service will likewise depend upon forward thinking leadership and the ability to adapt to the changing demands our citizens will place upon our services. When the future Chief Officers are promoted they must be prepared to lead and manage at a proficient level similar to or better than their predecessors. Likewise, the leadership should be seeking and preparing the next generation of leaders. It is essential and urgent that these leaders set the example of how the future generation should lead. (Murphy, 2011, p. 1)

The manner in which a fire department recognizes competent leadership and management skills within their employees and how they strive to enhance and pass along those skills will ultimately determine the future success of a department. It has been verified by numerous researchers that the commitment a public sector organization puts forth, will be the primary factor in improvement and refinement of motivation. Through the years, researchers have repeatedly proclaimed that the organizational commitment level is directly affected by the leadership style of the organization. (Alyn, 2011, p. 1)

Many Fire Departments do not even know what the leadership traits and qualities are that will essentially develop their competent leaders. It is important for the fire service to understand

that it is not adequately assuring the leadership development of its future. Dr. Dennis Onieal shared his view on leadership and challenged the American Fire Service with this statement:

What passes for truth and knowledge in the fire service is imperfect. Our doctrine is experience and consensus based, not research based. Professional status demands that we develop and publish a body of knowledge upon rigorous academic research and subject to scrupulous peer review and replication. Until or unless that happens, the fire service shall forever remain a vocation because we will never know the truth. (Onieal, 2007, p. 5)

The Dallas Fire Rescue Department (DFRD) has lost considerable leadership and management experience through attrition over the past decade. To amplify the problem, there will be a considerable amount of attrition at the Chief Officer ranks in the very near future. The problem is the DFRD does not have a Chief Fire Officer Development program for current or future Chief Officers. This has caused difficulty for our members to transition to the required leadership and management skills necessary for the timely and successful performance of a Chief Fire Officer position within the DFRD.

The purpose of this research is to identify the managerial and leadership deficiencies of DFRD Chief Officers and to identify the skills necessary for a successful Chief Officer Development Program. Descriptive research will be used to answer the following three research questions: (a) What managerial and leadership skills are Dallas Fire Rescue Department Chief Officers lacking? (b) What does the Dallas Fire Rescue Department need in a Chief Officer Development program? (c) What resources can be used to enhance the capabilities of existing Chief Officers and the development of future Chief Officers in the Dallas Fire Rescue Department?

### Background and Significance

The City of Dallas was first settled in 1841 and is currently the ninth largest city within the United States with 1,299,000 residents. The City of Dallas covers 343 square miles and sits 463 feet above sea level. Through the 1990's Dallas's population has grown by about 18%. It is estimated that in the first 5 years of the past decade the population of Dallas has grown by about 2%. Since 2005 Dallas's population has grown by about 4%.

([www.idcide.com/citydata/tx/dallas.htm](http://www.idcide.com/citydata/tx/dallas.htm), 2012)

The Dallas Fire Rescue Department is a full time professionally paid government agency with 1,842 members. The department is broken down into five Bureaus, each with an Assistant Chief responsible for their bureau. The five Bureaus are; Emergency Response/Homeland Security, Training & Support Services, Emergency Medical Services, Technology & Personnel Support, and Fire Prevention, Investigation & Arson. Each of these bureaus has numerous Deputy Chief, Battalion Chief, Captain and Lieutenant Positions that supervise numerous members of our department. There are two separate career paths within DFRD-the Firefighter Career series and the Fire Inspector Career series. The Inspector Career series primarily operates within the Fire Prevention, Investigation and Arson Bureau. The remaining divisions are comprised of members from the Firefighter Career series. The rank structure of DFRD is Firefighter, Driver Engineer, Lieutenant, Captain, Battalion Chief, Deputy Chief, Assistant Chief then Chief of Department.

The Dallas Fire Rescue Department Emergency Response/Homeland Security Bureau operates out of 56 Fire Stations with 55 Engine Companies, 22 Ladder Truck Companies and 35 Rescue Units. These stations are divided among 10 Battalion Districts and 2 Deputy Chief

Divisions and in FY 2010-2011, DFRD responded to 292,906 incidents. (*Annual Statistics, 2012*) The members of the Emergency Response/Homeland Security and the EMS Bureaus all work 24 hour shifts, with 48 hours off. The minimum daily staffing is 419 with 4 members assigned to each Engine and Truck Company and 2 members to each Rescue Unit and Chief vehicle. There are additional Emergency Response positions such as EMS Supervisors and the Air Supply program.

DFRD operates its own Fire Training Academy for all of its firefighter and fire inspector recruits and an In-Service Training Program for all of its certified members. DFRD also provides EMS protection from all 35 Rescue Units and all 56 Engine Companies with Paramedics assigned to each of these units. In 1972 the Dallas Fire Department was one of the first major U.S. Fire Departments to begin training paramedics to provide Advance Life Support to its citizens and visitors. The training for the Paramedic program is accomplished through the University of Texas, Southwestern Medical Center.

DFRD has had twenty one Chief Officers retire since 2004. These Chief Officers had an average tenure of 36 years, 3 months of service and more than 764 years of experience between them. At this point in time we have sixteen Chief Officers with more than 30 years of service, with a total of 591 years of service among them. This represents 30% of our current Chief Officer rank. Currently, there is no mentoring program or a Chief Officer Development Program in place within the DFRD.

There have been numerous attempts throughout the years to establish a Fire Officer Training Program, typically aimed at the Lieutenant and Captain ranks. Each of these programs has been successful to some degree but none has been sustainable. They have been established

to indoctrinate newly promoted Lieutenants or Captains to their new responsibilities with minimal input and no continual evaluation. It is interesting to note that in 1947 records do reflect a Chief Officer School that covered the subjects of Municipal Government, Sprinkler Systems, Traffic Safety, Municipal Water Systems and Personnel Safety for a total of 9 hours. (Penn, 1948, p. 5) Three years ago, the only other Chief Officer Class of record, was an attempt to educate newly promoted Battalion Chiefs with a two week orientation that was considered unsuccessful.

The promotional process in Dallas is governed by the City of Dallas Civil Service Department, and involves the studying of numerous books and literature along with the Rules, Regulations and Policies of the DFRD. This culminates with a written examination where it is not uncommon to have a passing point of less than 70. The positions of Lieutenant and above are then followed up with an assessment center where a second grade is factored into the candidate's score. Based on the most recent round of promotions: the Lieutenants assessment center was weighed at 45% of the candidates score, the Captains was weighted at 48% and the Battalion Chief's exam was weighed as 36% of the overall score. The rank of Driver Engineer is promoted solely on the written test examination score. The ranks of Deputy Chief and Assistant Chief are based upon appointment and no examination or requirement of education or training of any type is administered or necessary.

It is worth noting that the requirements of promoting to each rank do not prerequisite any specific education, training or certification. Based upon the current promotional process, the only specific requirements for eligibility to take the examination, was specific time on the department and time in the prior rank. There had been a department-wide effort to enhance the candidate abilities at each rank by revising the promotional process in 2009. This was

accomplished by a committee that reviewed best practices and national standards to improve the quality of candidates within the DFRD promotion processes. More specifically, it was proposed that points be awarded for education, professional development and certifications.

Unfortunately, the work, along with the recommendations of the committee, was never addressed by the prior administration of the DFRD. This issue tends to be politically charged and the various firefighter associations of the DFRD have input but rarely agree on the accepted process and often end up in litigation. The odds of DFRD raising the bar and requiring education, certification and training prior to taking a test looks like it will not happen any time in the near future and the issue would be left to a future researcher. The last promotions for the rank of Battalion Chief occurred on January 6, 2010, the last promotions to Captain and Lieutenant occurred on December 22, 2010. As of August 15, 2012 there are currently 9 Battalion Chief vacancies within DFRD, 13 Captain vacancies and 26 Lieutenant vacancies.

The genesis of this Applied Research Project began with the completion of the pre-course material for the National Fire Academy (NFA); Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) course entitled “Executive Development.”

By researching the required skills of a successful Chief Officer Development Program, this applied research project relates to the United States Fire Administrations operations objectives goal #4, Improve the fire and emergency services’ professional status. (*Strategic Plan*, 2010, p. 14) More specifically, the objectives of: Enhance the professionalism of the nation’s fire and emergency services leaders, and advocate a competency-based approach to professional development that includes training, higher education, and professional designations.

The Fire Service also has the responsibility to continually prepare our officers for the leadership positions for which they will one day be responsible for and to instill preparedness in them in order to stay abreast of the cultural changes within the Fire Service. Creating reasons for those who work for you to establish their own culture of preparedness is part of being a good leader. (Giuliani, 2002, p. 65)

This ARP also corresponds to the EFOP Executive Development Course goal of providing Executive Fire Officers with the opportunity to use research to affect positive change in their organization and to enhance professionalism of the fire service through a research format (United States Fire Administration, 2011, p.7).

### Literature Review

There has been considerable literature written about leadership and management, even within the Fire Service and a review of each would be mind boggling. Depending upon the author, the array of leadership and management ideas, qualities, and theories would cover the entire spectrum. A quick search of the internet lists 4,700,000 results for fire service leadership training. Likewise, the values and concepts are dynamic and constantly change over time and certainly vary from department to department. As Adena S. Wright stated, “the challenge is that there are as many ideas about what leadership is as there are thinkers, writers and leaders” (Wright, n.d., p. 1)

[www.wrightwayconsulting.com/articles/ArticThe%20Leadership%20Factor.pdf](http://www.wrightwayconsulting.com/articles/ArticThe%20Leadership%20Factor.pdf)

The literature review consisted of resources available through the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy along with the personal library of the author, the DFRD library, as well as the Dallas and Plano, TX public libraries. Each of these resources was used to

obtain material on leadership and management skills along with deficiencies and what would be important to establish a Chief Officer Development Program. Considerable time was spent searching the internet for literature regarding but not restricted to: resources pertaining to management and leadership qualities and deficiencies, succession planning traits, mentoring for future leaders and executive and chief officer development programs. This research endeavored to solicit the best practices and previous successful programs related to the development of a Chief Officer Development Program and what specific components should be incorporated, specifically to the needs of the DFRD.

The Standard on Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, NFPA 1021, was read and evaluated and it states “The purpose of this standard shall be to specify the minimum job performance requirements for service as a fire officer” (National Fire Protection Association, 2008, p. 1021-6) This standard breaks the process down into 4 levels of progression,-Fire Officer I, Fire Officer II, Fire Officer III, and Fire Officer IV. A review of the requisite skills and subject matter does not clearly identify the specific levels of rank that an officer should have at each of these progressions. This was not a concern for the author because his research addressed the DFRD Chief Officer rank in general with no specific level of Chief Officer.

A review of the job descriptions for the specific ranks of Battalion, Deputy and Assistant Chiefs was performed. In the DFRD these job descriptions are vague and do not lend credence to leadership and management requirements between the progressing levels of Chief Officer. A similar review was undertaken of the Dallas Civil Service requirements for the promotional process. There are no references to developing leadership or management skills, nor are there any requisite requirements to obtain the rank of Battalion Chief as simply the requirement to promote to Battalion Chief is open to those employees who have served in the Fire Department

for seven years and who have served as Fire Captain for eighteen months shall be eligible for promotion to this rank. (*Dallas Civil Service*, 2006, p. 6)

The last competitive examination that was administered to the Battalion Chief candidates did include literature that contained leadership and managerial development. This examination included reference material from *Managing Fire and Rescue Services* by ICMA, *Incident Management for the Street-Smart Fire Officer* by John Coleman, and *Leadership on the Line* by Ronald A. Heifetz and Marty Linsky. While this material was required reading for the preparation of the exam, only a couple of questions were asked out of each of these resources. The ranks of Deputy Chief and Assistant Chief do not have an exam and therefore there is no required reading material. While this may not be an issue in the DFRD, this is certainly a point of contention across the United States fire service. There are numerous methods and processes for identifying, developing and selecting fire service leaders: most are flawed in one way or another. (Warren, 2012, p. 1)

More than two dozen Executive Fire Officer Papers were reviewed on subject matter relating to Chief Officer Development, Mentoring, and Succession programs. While each of these papers had valid points, especially for their own organizations, for the most part there was minimal prior research that helped answer the research questions posed in this ARP. What each of these papers did identify is that the research would center on mentoring and succession training and planning. Most of these authors state the importance of replacing their senior leadership as they attrite, but most do not give specific details of what is actually needed and what is important to the organization. A few examples of these researchers that share similarities are (Newberry, 2011), (Knoff, 2011), and (Dirksen, 2008).

This researcher then performed a thorough review of material consisting of additional departmental documentation, standards, periodicals, published books, and publications as well as various media in order to answer the research questions.

The first research question is: *What managerial and leadership skills are DFRD Chief Officers lacking?* As was mentioned earlier, there are many ideas about what leadership and management actually are defined as being. For the purpose of this research, according to Webster's the following terms can be defined; leadership is "An act or instance of leading; guidance; direction" ("Webster's," 2001, p. 1093) Likewise the term management is defined as the "act or manner of managing; handling, direction, or control" ("Webster's," 2001, p. 1166) and Webster also defines "mentor" as a "wise and trusted counselor or teacher; an influential sponsor or supporter" ("Webster's," 2001, p. 1201) It is also worth noting that "mentor" was a loyal advisor of Odysseus who in turn entrusted with the care and education of his son Telemachus.

Regardless of how these skills are defined, it is important to understand why and how these skills will benefit the Chief Officer as well as the organization in which they operate. It is difficult to review research material and literature that would accurately answer this specific question. The literature review did clearly identify positive and even necessary managerial and leadership skills that should be possessed by anyone in a managerial or leadership role. Kouzes and Posner produced and analyzed historical surveys referring to the characteristics needed of a great leader. These characteristics have been repeatedly assessed by agencies and corporations around the world over a considerable period of time. They have identified that all characteristics are valued by various people at some time or another but identify that consistently there are only

four characteristics that continually rate above 50% (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 24). The four characteristics most frequently noted are: honest, forward looking, competent, and inspiring.

Most literature referred to the importance of the organization having a vested interest in developing the leadership and managerial skills of its future leaders. It seems critical to the survival of the organization to develop programs that would enhance leadership and management on all levels. Regardless of the program used, whether there is a specific Officer Development program or mentorship programs or succession planning, the unanimous sentiment is that the organization will benefit the most. Mentoring is “a three-way beneficial process”, which helps everyone involved: the mentor, the mentee and the organization. (ProMentoring Inc., 2009, p. 2)

If the department wants to identify what its Chief Officers are lacking, then the question must also be asked, “What is it that the department wants?” If we don’t know what we want how would we know it is lacking? Improving an organization means knowing what needs to be improved. (Compton & Granito, 2002, p. 236)

As the literature unfolded and numerous periodicals, books, research papers were read, the idea of mentoring, succession planning, and officer development all can be surmised as simply training. As Battalion Chief John Salka points out, “mentoring is really a fancy word for *teaching*. It’s more focused perhaps, but that’s really about it” (Salka & Neville, 2004, p. 203)

Teaching and training are the solutions to passing along knowledge, skills, and information. This needs to be continual. When departments create programs and procedures that people teach what they learn to others within the department, it significantly increases individual and organizational learning and knowledge transfer. (Covey & Merrill, 2006, p. 99) The importance of why this information must be continually passed along can be echoed by the

following quote, “the fire service is neither a sprint nor a marathon; it’s a long-distance relay race. Each generation of fire chiefs and officers passes the baton on to the next.” (Sager, 2005, p. 1)

As was pointed out earlier, there has been and will continue to be a loss of senior leadership and management knowledge from the DFRD. How the loss of this knowledge base and experience level is addressed will determine the preparation we will have in the future. In order to continually and adequately serve our community in the present and future, DFRD must develop programs that will capitalize on the experience base of those currently in leadership and management positions now and institute a process for passing that knowledge to the next generation. (Gates, 2011) This is also echoed by Mike Wisko who adds, “Unfortunately, as most veteran fire officers retire, they take their experience with them. (Wisko, 2011, p. 83) Therefore it is the responsibility of DFRD leadership to pass along the knowledge and wisdom that has been learned, often the hard way, to the future leaders of tomorrow.

Therefore, an organized development process for the future must be warranted by the DFRD. The future leadership is already on the way. The next Chief is already at work and honing their skills. The department needs to have a vested interest in the development. After reading several published books, the following quote identifies this importance, “Managers who have made a real commitment to individualized leadership development give their employees a clear sense of their own potential in the organization, and help them develop plans for reaching farther.” (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009, p. 170) Gates also added that having executive level mentorship programs in place would enhance succession planning and allow for the transfer of knowledge. It would also increase job satisfaction and enhance the management and leadership capabilities (Gates, 2011).

We must continue to develop people as they progress through the ranks if they are to be effective leaders. The skills needed today may change in level of importance as time passes by. However, as the literature has pointed out, the basis and foundation for improving and enhancing as a leader and manager have been consistently identified. Mentoring at the executive fire officer level is different from that used to teach tactical decision-making or technical skills. What we are talking about here is mentorship provided by an organizational leader with specific intent of creating a future leader. (Gates, 2011)

The second research question stated, *What does the Dallas Fire Rescue Department need in a Chief Officer Development Program?* The literature review itself was limited in specifically answering this question. In the DFRD we could easily say we want it all, but what exactly are we talking about. This research question along with the answers is tied to the first research question. What we need is to enhance the managerial and leadership skills we are lacking. The specifics that will harness the success of DFRD, strengthen it, and allow us to move into the future adequately prepared were identified as more than just technical problems with technical answers. This is not a process that can be fixed by flipping on a switch and the problem lies deeper and will be more challenging to resolve than it will be to identify. This challenging solution must originate at the top of the DFRD leadership hierarchy but must be carried through the entire organization on all levels. However, it cannot be solely resolved at the top. “We call these adaptive challenges because they require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization and community.” (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, p. 13)

One of the more common traits that is often pointed out regarding leadership and management or a lack of the same, is accountability. It is not unusual in the DFRD to hear a complaint regarding accountability and the lack of it. “Such complaints make it sound as if

accountability is something that exists separate and apart from the day-to-day leadership, management, and supervision within the department.” (Compton, 2012, p. 1) It certainly is not and therefore should be incorporated into any type of Chief Officer Development Program.

The literature review has basically intertwined the phrases mentoring, succession, development, and training. Each of these phrases can be used in place of the other and conversely each can be used to enhance the other. What the DFRD seems to need in a Chief Officer Development Program should come from each of these sources. We know we have great leaders today, we know we have some leaders who can use to improve their skills and capabilities. We know some will leave soon and new blood is on the way. Providing multiple resources and avenues may be beneficial to all involved. Mentoring is an extremely popular buzz word in both the fire service and the corporate world. Clarification on how it will benefit the department or organization is crucial. This adaptive challenge will be continual as the department continues to evolve and new challenges arise and new leaders are placed into leadership positions. “If people simply cannot adapt, the reality is that they will be left behind.” (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, p. 99)

One thing became clear throughout the entire literature review and that is Chief Officer Development, mentoring, and succession planning, not just at the Chief level ranks but all ranks, needs to be a higher priority.

In order to answer the third research question, *What resources can be used to enhance the capabilities of existing Chief Officers and the development of future Chief Officers in the Dallas Fire Rescue Department?* this author reviewed several programs that were discovered on the internet as well as the responses to the survey request forms that were distributed to the fifty-

eight major urban fire departments. Only a few departments have an actual program and all are informal and all are aimed at Incident Command and Fire ground tactical decision making and none address the actual development of leadership and management especially in the administrative area. The most acknowledged resource was The Officer Development Handbook which is available from the International Fire Chief's Association. While this resource was certainly helpful, especially by identifying specific levels of management such as Supervising Fire Officer, Managing Fire Officer, Administrative Fire Officer, and Executive Fire Officer, the resource is not specific to the needs and problems within the DRFD. Each of these dimensions transcend each of the Chief Officer ranks within the DFRD, in some assignments, Captains may even need to operate at the Administrative and even Executive Fire Officer level within their regular job duties.

What is important to take from this document is that a process is needed to enhance the knowledge at the leadership level. They refer to the importance of motivation, mentorship, mapping, measuring, and maintaining. Within the mapping section they recognize four distinct elements: education, training, experience, and self development. (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003, p. 2-9) More importantly they point out the "ineffective fire service practice of promoting personnel into higher ranks and then trying to train and educate them" this simply does not exist in any other profession.

At the National Fire Academy, the Executive Fire Officer program is designed to further educate and advance the capabilities of a Chief Officer. It is significant to note that the program requires a bachelors degree to apply, but the DFRD does not require this level of formal education at any rank within the department and therefore has many Chief Officers and future Chief Officers that do not possess the required education to participate in the program.

Most of the other literature that was reviewed that is used by other departments follows the basic outline of Fire Officer III and Fire Officer IV offered by several agencies that have used the Officer Development Handbook from the International Association of Fire Chiefs.

Now that we understand that DFRD is lacking in some of their leadership and management skills as has been addressed in the first research question and we have a feel for what should go into a Chief Officer Development Program, what else can be done to improve and help facilitate a successful and sustainable program?

During the literature review it was pointed out that our department does a great job of training and educating on the front end of the careers of our members. In fact, we continually revisit, revise and enhance the training and preparation of our paramedics, hazardous materials technicians, instructors and recruits. Yet the process begins to diminish and wane as the member begins to move up in the organization and becomes more and more responsible for leadership and management skills. Everyone in the organization has some sort of responsibility which is determined by the needs of the organization. Within this area of influence, the employee should be allowed to use their managerial and leadership skills (Compton & Granito, 2002, p. 233)

In order for the DFRD to move forward and enhance each member's capability, there must be an adaptive change from top to bottom within the organization. We must get out of our comfort zone and plan better for the future. Whether you are learning new skills or passing them along to the next generation, you must be on board with the goals of the organization. "On the one hand, firefighters cannot define the business the department is in on the basis of the missions that have the most appeal and provide the most immediate gratification." (Compton & Granito, 2002, p. 236)

According to the literary review, the DFRD has the Officer Development Handbook from the IAFC and NFPA 1021 to refer to and a multitude of additional literature that identifies the importance and benefit of a mentoring program and succession planning and how it will enhance the capabilities of the DFRD Chief Officers. Each of these references can be researched to identify the development needs of our future leaders but can also enhance the existing and more senior leaders. This can apply to the technical skills of a Chief Officer as well as the managerial and leadership skills demanded of a Chief level officer. The literature review identifies numerous benefits of a mentor program. One of the most significant is that the mentor “can afford the mentee a confidante who can honestly guide and direct the younger officer’s demeanor and attitude. Along with that will be accountability, responsibility and innovation.” (Sager, 2005, p. 3)

Concluding the literature review, it was obvious that there is a plethora of expertise and information to review when dealing with the development of leadership and management skills. All of the literature provided invaluable information to research best practices for the preparation of Chief Officers within the DFRD. The development of the program and process will be unique to the specific needs of the DFRD and the goals of the organization. Anthony Kastros, Battalion Chief with the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District recently spoke at the Fire Department Instructors Conference in Indianapolis. According to Kastros, any effective succession-training regimen, at the least, will include cultural documents, strategic guidelines, task books and scenario-based tabletop exercises. Even better would be the creation of an officer academy. Prior to all of our knowledge retiring from our department, we must create opportunities for future Chief Officers to mentor with and ride-along with the more senior officers. Tour the territory, or as we used to say, “Go chiefting.” (Sager, 2005, p. 3) To begin this process it was

important to determine what are the expectations and shortcomings of our current Chief Officers. While the job duties of an Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief and a Battalion Chief are vastly different, the skills necessary to manage and lead are similar.

### Procedures

The purpose of this descriptive research project was to identify the managerial and leadership deficiencies of the Dallas Fire Rescue Chief Officers, identify what managerial and leadership traits should be incorporated into a Chief Officer Development Program, and to research what types of programs are already being used. More specifically, to answer the questions: (a) What managerial and leadership skills are DFRD Chief Officers lacking? (b) What does the Dallas Fire Rescue Department need in a Chief Officer Development Program? (c) What resources can be used to enhance the capabilities of existing Chief Officers and the development of future Chief Officers in the Dallas Fire Rescue Department?

The research started with a search of the National Fire Academy's online card catalog to search and locate other applied research papers and information that would be relevant to Chief Officer Development Programs. A review and search of the author's personal library, the DFRD resource library, and the Dallas Public Library on material that was related to managerial and leadership development programs was performed.

Several surveys were created and distributed to help garner additional information relevant to the research questions. In order to identify the information necessary to answer the first research question, a survey was designed and issued to the Fire Chief and the five Assistant Chief's of DFRD found in Appendix A. Regardless of the answers to the research questions identified above, the author wanted to start at the top and identify what the leadership of DFRD

thought about their Chief Officers and what the Chief and his executive staff wanted to see regarding their Chief Officers.

The Executive Chief Survey was designed with the first two research questions in mind. The design also questioned if the executive leadership was even interested in enhancing the development of their Chief Officers either through mentorship or the development of an official Chief Officer Development Program. Surveys were designed, with closed-ended questions as well as open-ended questions, to help obtain as much information as possible. The surveys were sent to all six members on June 11, 2012 and all replied back by June 15, 2012. This represented a 100% response rate shown in Table 1 and no follow up was needed other than to remind one chief of the survey they had promised.

The survey asked where the DFRD leadership thought our Chief Officers were weak and where they were strong. The first question asked of our executive management team was if they felt they had been adequately prepared and trained when they first were promoted to a Chief Officer. The second question asked if they believed a Chief Officer Development Program would have better prepared them to lead and manage as a Chief Officer. The third question asked if they believed they would have benefited from a structured mentoring program when they became a Chief Officer.

The survey also asked how their specific careers were impacted, or could have been impacted, with regard to leadership and management preparation at the Chief Officer level. Most importantly the question was asked, open ended, what did they believe could help to better prepare and enhance the capabilities of our Chief Officers. The next question asked them to identify five areas where they felt our current Chief Officers were the strongest. They were then

asked to identify the five areas where our Chief Officers were the weakest. The last question on the survey asked what their opinion would be for DFRD to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future chief officers.

The same survey was re-titled and then distributed to each of the ten Deputy Chief Officers within DFRD found in Appendix B. The same exact survey was sent with the intent of researching whether the Deputy Chief level officers had the same view and beliefs as the Executive Chiefs. The survey was sent out electronically on June 15, 2012 and all but one of them responded by June 21, 2012. The rationale for the survey sent to the Deputy Chief Officers was the same as executive level and the results were similar to those of the original survey reflected in Table 1. Numerous attempts were made, by e-mail and face-to-face discussions, to obtain the last evaluation and this author still believes it will come.

The initial question asked if they were properly trained and prepared to lead when they became a Chief Officer. The second question asked if they thought a Chief Officer Development Program would have better prepared them to lead and manage as a Chief Officer. The third question asked them if they believed they would have benefited as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program.

Next, they were asked to list the five areas where our current Chief Officers were the strongest, and then to rank the five areas where our Chief Officers were the weakest. The last question to our Deputy Chiefs asked what the DFRD could do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future Chief Officers.

After evaluating and examining the results from our most senior Chief Officers, another survey was designed and distributed to each of the twenty-seven Battalion Chief Officers found

in Appendix C, and sent on June 18, 2012. Twenty-six of the twenty-seven Battalion Chiefs replied to the new survey by June 29, 2012, for a response rate of 96% shown in Table 1. The only survey that was not received was sent to a Battalion Chief who is off on long-term leave and possibly may not return to duty.

This new survey did contain all of the original questions but also added to the survey were two new sections that listed numerous items to be ranked by the evaluator. In addition to the open-ended questions and closed-ended questions on the original survey, two additional forced-choice questions were asked where a table of items and a table of traits were listed and the respondent was required to rank the items based on their opinions on a scale of one to five. This group of Battalion Chiefs represents the majority of DFRD Chief Officers and this author sought to have them identify which items were of most and least importance that would help enhance any future programs. This would also help address the third research question, *What resources can be used to enhance the capabilities of existing Chief Officers and the development of future Chief Officers in the Dallas Fire Rescue Department?* This can be accomplished by identifying specific items that could be addressed and incorporated into any recognized or established programs.

Simultaneously the survey for the Captains, found in Appendix D, was distributed and mirrored the Battalion Chief survey with the same questions but reworded to “if you were promoted to Chief Officer” rather than “when you were promoted to Chief Officer”. This survey was also distributed on June 18, 2012 and the results were received by July 9, 2012. Of the fifty-four surveys distributed forty-nine were received as shown in Table 1. The author made numerous attempts, through email and phone conversations and messages, to obtain the missing surveys and the author once again believes some are still on the way.

All of the surveys were done anonymously and there were test surveys provided to a couple of members at each rank where the actual final survey was adjusted and corrected for clarification, prior to being sent out.

Table 1

*Response Percentage for DFRD Surveys*

	<u>Surveys Sent</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Executive	6	6	100%
Deputy	10	9	90%
Battalion	27	26	96%
Captain	54	49	91%

A completely different survey was created in order to answer the research question, “What type of processes can be used to enhance the capabilities of the development of DFRD Chief Officers?” To obtain this potential information a survey, found in Appendix E and F, was prepared and sent to fifty-eight of the largest urban fire departments that would likely resemble the needs and services of the DFRD. A phone conversation took place with a representative of each department prior to sending the survey. This accounted for the fifty-eight cities that were over 300,000 in population. (Citytoplists, 2012) The surveys were sent between June 19 and June 23, 2012. By August 1, 2012 there had been thirty-eight responses from the fifty-eight surveys sent out, representing a response rate of 66%.

Due to the low response rate to this questionnaire, follow up phone calls and interviews were conducted with twelve of the departments that did not reply to the survey. This additional information was added to the original survey results.

An interview with the Assistant Chief of Emergency Response, Tod Gillam, was conducted on July 25, 2012 at the Emergency Response administrative offices at Dallas City Hall. A list of the questions and responses can be found in Appendix G. This interview was conducted in order to gain input on what types of deficiencies, as well as strengths, existed among our Chief Officers. The Chief was asked the following questions: Do you believe our DFRD Chief Officers are lacking managerial and leadership skills? What are the leadership and managerial skills that our Chief Officers lacking? How can we enhance the leadership and managerial skills of our Chief Officers? Do we need an actual program? What does the DFRD need in a Chief Officer Development Program?

#### Limitations and Assumptions

There were several surveys that were not received from DFRD members during this process. It can be assumed that the missing surveys would have had similar responses in to the ones actually received. A similar assumption was made that the replying members were truthful and honest in preparing their answers and put the required time into thinking about the answers before replying. It is also noted that some of the DFRD members actually do serve in staff positions or have previously been assigned into staff positions and that their responses would be weighed the same and included in the results in the same manner as those members who have never served time in staff.

A survey was prepared and sent to fifty-eight of the largest metropolitan area fire departments around the county seen in Appendix E. These surveys were sent to the attention of the Chief Officer of the training programs or divisions of their respective departments. Of these fifty-eight departments a reply was received from thirty-eight of the departments which represent a response rate of 66%. An assumption was made that the other 34% of the departments that did not send a response would have had coinciding results with the ones that responded to the survey. The request for current Chief Officer Development Programs produced only three actual programs that are being used. All of these programs were based on the Officer Development Handbook and Fire Officer II and IV curriculum. Each of the programs obtained by this author was technical in nature and addressed the tactics and strategies a Chief Officer would use on the fire ground. It is significant to note that there were numerous departments who were still in the developmental stages of such a program and most acknowledged the need and importance of this type of education and training and a hope to initiate a similar program in the future. There were more departments that requested copies of this paper and any proposal for the implementation of a Chief Officer Development Program than departments that were able to provide documented programs.

### Results

The results of this research were analyzed from the literature review, the survey responses, the interview and the survey material gathered from other departments. The National Standards were reviewed from NFPA 1021 in order to assist in setting a baseline of standard; the Officer Development Handbook was reviewed as well and gleaned for additional research analysis.

The first research question was “*What managerial and leadership skills are DFRD Chief Officers lacking?*” The literature review produced an abundance of information regarding the positive and negative traits of what it takes to be an effective manager and leader. Alyn pointed out the importance of an organization putting forth the effort and time to produce improved motivation. (Alyn, 2011) Dr. Dennis Onieal (2007) pointed out that the Fire Service has rarely developed research-based knowledge, that in the past it was through experience that knowledge was obtained. If the knowledge does not become researched based, the knowledge will continue to be imperfect.

While there was plenty of material to reference in the literature review, establishing the exact skills of management and leadership and which ones are the best for the DFRD was difficult to define. None of them identified the specific shortcomings of the DFRD Chief Officers. These answers were contained in the surveys that were distributed to the membership of the DFRD and produced the specific answers to the first research question.

According to the survey shown in Appendix A and answered by the Fire Chief and his Assistant Chiefs, the first question asked of our executive management team was, if they felt they had been adequately prepared and trained when they first were promoted to a Chief Officer as reflected in Table 2. Four of them replied yes, they were properly trained, but two of them said they were not properly trained and prepared to lead as Chief Officers when they were promoted.

It should be noted that in addition to answering the first research question, the survey results also address the second research question: “*What does the DFRD need in a Chief Officer Development program?*” The second question, also in Table 2, asked if they believed a Chief

Officer Development Program would have better prepared them to lead and manage as a Chief Officer and all six responded yes. The third question asked if they believed they would have benefited from a structured mentoring program when they became a Chief Officer as shown in Table 2. Once again all six replied yes. Therefore, it is important to understand that some of our Executive Chief Officers felt they were prepared when they were initially promoted to Chief Officer and some did not, but all unanimously agreed that they would have benefited from a Chief Officer Development Program and a mentorship program.

The survey also asked how their specific careers were impacted, or could have been impacted, with regard to leadership and management preparation at the Chief Officer level. Most importantly the question was asked, open ended, what did they believe could help to better prepare and enhance the capabilities of our Chief Officers. The author was pleasantly informed that the executive staff all believed that a Chief Officer Development Program and structured mentorship would be beneficial to our Chief Officers and DFRD.

The survey then asked them to identify five areas where they felt our current Chief Officers were the strongest and the results are reflected in Table 3. The five most common answers were: incident command, personnel management, customer service, understanding of the technical aspects of fire suppression, and a willingness to carry out the orders of DFRD Executives. It is worth noting that most of these strengths are technical in nature.

When asked to identify the five areas where our Chief Officers were the weakest, shown in Table 2, the answers were not technical. They were: succession planning and mentoring of our younger officers and subordinates, willingness to accept change, knowledge of how the

budget process works, knowledge of how other City of Dallas departments operate and how interaction can assist our service delivery, and innovative thinking.

The last question on the survey asked what their opinion would be for DFRD to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future chief officers. Only the three most frequent responses are shown in table 3, but all of the responses were: provide more professional development opportunities utilizing city resources as well as outside sources, develop a good mentoring program along with mandatory staff time and project development, create and maintain a management mentoring and development course to include best practices within the fire service and other areas of leadership/management, receive mentoring from tenured Chief Officers as assigned by the Chief or Assistant Chief, require all chief officers to attend Executive Fire Officer Training with the National Fire Academy, and support a formal Chief Officer program or adopt Fire Officer I, II, III, IV and/or V certification programs for prospective Chief Officers. Based on these responses, it is obvious that our administration believes the answer to improving the capabilities of our department lies within our own department itself, to recognize and develop formal training and education that will enhance the member's abilities to serve as a Chief Officer. With regard to the suggestion of sending members to the National Fire Academy for the Executive Fire Officer Development program, it is worth noting that all of our top executives have yet to participate in the program and many do not have the educational requirements to be admitted into the program. Therefore, they are likely to be unaware that many of our current and future chief officers would be ineligible to participate without additional professional development, such as a college degree.

Table 2

*Responses to First Three Questions for All DFRD Surveys*

		Executive Staff		Deputy Chief		Battalion Chief		TOTAL CHIEFS	Captain	
When you were promoted to Chief Officer, do you believe you were properly trained and prepared to manage and lead as a Chief Officer?	YES	4	67%	2	22%	9	35%	37%	35	71%
	NO	2	33%	7	78%	17	65%	63%	14	29%
Do you believe that a Chief Officer Development program would have better prepared you to lead and manage as a Chief Officer?	YES	6	100%	8	89%	26	100%	98%	48	98%
	NO	0	0%	1	11%	0	0%	2%	1	2%
Do you believe you would have benefited as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program?	YES	6	100%	8	89%	25	96%	95%	45	92%
	NO	0	0%	1	11%	1	4%	5%	4	8%

The same survey was re-titled, Deputy Chief Survey, and shown in Appendix B. It was then distributed to each of the ten Deputy Chief Officers within DFRD. The same exact survey was sent with the intent of researching whether the Deputy Chief level officers had the same view and beliefs of the Executive level Chiefs. The survey was sent out electronically on June 15, 2012 and all but one of them responded by June 21, 2012. The rationale for the survey sent to the Deputy Chief Officers was the same as Executive level and the results were similar to those of the original survey reflected in table 1.

The initial question asked if they were properly trained and prepared to lead when they became a Chief Officer is shown in Table 2. Seven of them said no, they were not and two said they were properly prepared. The second question asked if they thought a Chief Officer Development program would have better prepared them to lead and manage as a Chief Officer also in Table 2. Eight of them replied yes and one replied no. The third question asked them if they believed they would have benefited as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program. Once again, the majority (8) replied yes and one replied no as shown in Table 2.

They were then asked to list the five areas where our current Chief Officers were the strongest, and then to rank the five areas where our Chief Officers were the weakest; these are shown in Table 3. The five most common responses for strengths were job knowledge, fire ground strategy and tactics, experience, loyalty and commitment to their personnel and pride/dedication to our department. Once again, it is worth noting that these are primarily technical in nature, similar to the responses of the executive staff. The areas identified as weak were communication, development of officers/mentoring, management of training, succession planning, and administrative skills.

The last question of our Deputy Chiefs asked what the DFRD could do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future Chief Officers. The most common answers were development of a Chief Officer Program, mentoring and investing in our younger members, and training on all dimensions as shown in Table 3.

After the results of this survey were evaluated, a new survey form was developed and sent to all twenty-seven of our field and staff Battalion Chiefs shown in Appendix C. Twenty-six of them replied to the new survey for a response rate of 96% shown in Table 1. This new

survey did contain all of the original questions but also added to the survey were two sections that listed numerous items to be ranked by the evaluator; these new sections were Question 4 and Question 8 on the Battalion Chief Survey Form.

The first question asked if they thought they were properly trained and prepared to manage and lead as a Chief Officer, 9 of them (35%) replied yes and 17 (65%) of them replied no as shown in Table 2. The second question asked them if they believed that a Chief Officer Development Program would have prepared them to lead and manage as a Chief Officer shown in Table 2; all 26 replied yes for 100%. The third question asked if they would have benefited as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program; 25 replied yes for 96% and 1 replied no representing 4%, also in Table 2.

When the Battalion Chiefs were asked to identify the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the strongest shown in Table 3, they replied: incident command/command presence, fire ground knowledge, level of experience, attitude/pride/enthusiasm, and communication. This was reflected as question five.

When listing the five areas they felt our Battalion Chiefs were weakest in question six also shown in Table 3, they replied: education and training, mentoring, innovation and adaptation to change, communication, and people skills/interpersonal relations.

The seventh question asked what they thought the DFRD could do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our chief officers. They replied: formal mentoring, structured/mandatory training, a Chief Officer Development program/course, specific Incident Command scenarios/exercises, and succession planning as shown in Table 3.

The fourth question was a new question on the survey form for the Battalion Chiefs and is shown on Table 4. This question listed 22 items and asked, “Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following items regarding their importance to DFR and required knowledge of a Battalion Chief.” Table 4 reflects the five items that received the highest value of scoring: incident command, communication, customer service, motivation, and mentoring. The five items that were ranked the lowest were: knowledge of the budget process, employment law, understanding other city agencies, labor relations, and community involvement shown in Table 4.

The eighth question, shown in table 4, asked the Battalion Chiefs, “Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following leadership traits regarding their importance to a DFR Battalion Chief.” Their answers for most important were: integrity, trustworthy, honest, professional, and responsible/dedication. The traits that were considered the least important as shown in Table 4 are: sense of humor, education, innovation, open to change, and enthusiasm.

The survey for the Captains mirrored the Battalion Chief survey with the same exact questions but reworded to “if you were promoted to Chief Officer” rather than “when you were promoted to Chief Officer”, found in Appendix D. This survey was also distributed on June 18, 2012 and the results were received by July 9, 2012. Of the fifty-four surveys distributed forty-nine were returned as shown in Table 1.

The first question asked of the Captains was also found on each of the other surveys and is shown in Table 2. Thirty-five of the forty-nine Captains believed they have been properly

trained to become a Chief Officer. This represents 71% of the respondents. Fourteen (29%) believe they have not been trained properly.

The second question, also found on the other surveys, is shown in Table 2. Forty-eight of the Captains believe that a Chief Officer Development program would benefit them; this represents 98%. Only one Captain felt differently.

The third question asked if the Captains thought they could benefit from a structured mentoring program shown in Table 2. Forty-five Captains (92%) feel as though a structured mentoring program would benefit them as opposed to the four Captains who feel as though this would not be a benefit to them (8%).

The fourth question listed 22 items regarding their importance to DFRD and required knowledge of a Battalion Chief. The evaluator was asked to rank them by their importance on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being the least important and 5 the most important. Evaluation of the survey identified the most important items as shown in Table 4, were: incident command, communication, customer service, motivation and employee discipline and mentoring tied for the fifth most important items on the list. Table 4 shows the least important items as: understanding the budget process, employment law, understanding other city agencies, labor relations, and community involvement.

Question five and question six were both the same questions asked on all of the prior surveys and the results are shown in Table 3. For question five the Battalions Chiefs replied to the question asking for the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the strongest. The five most common answers were: experience, incident command, pro DFRD/caring for their members, people skills/personnel management, and communication.

The sixth question asked for the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the weakest. The five most common answers were: mentoring/personnel development, communication, training/education, fire ground experience, and incident command.

The seventh question asked the Battalion Chiefs the same question that was posed to the Chief, Assistants and Deputies, “In your opinion, what can the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future Chief Officers?” The most common answers were: enhanced/structured/mandatory training, structured mentoring, and management succession programs as shown in Table 3.

The eighth question was a new question for this survey and it also listed 22 leadership traits that the respondent was asked to rate regarding their importance to a DFR Battalion Chief, as shown in Table 4. They were asked to rate them on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least important and 5 the most important. The reality is that the respondents primarily rated all of the traits as rather important with almost every answer being a 3 to 5 rating. After totaling the numbers, the five highest totals went to integrity, responsible/dedication, professional attitude, and trustworthy. The five with the lowest total went to: education, sense of humor, innovation, resourcefulness, and intelligence.

In the literature review it was discussed what are considered the most common skills or traits that are desired in a good manager or leader (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 24). The four characteristics most frequently noted are: honest, forward looking, competent, and inspiring. It is worth noting that of these most commonly referred to traits of a good leader, none appear on the survey. However, it is also worth noting that the list of strengths supplied from the surveys did not specifically show any of these traits to be a strong point of our Chief Officers other than

the possibility of competent which was similar to the replies from our members suggesting the Chief Officers had good fire ground command and experience.

The second research question asked “*What does the Dallas Fire Rescue Department need in a Chief Officer Development Program?*” According to the surveys as shown in Table 2 the answers were: mentoring programs, Chief Officer Development Program, training, succession planning and career/professional development, and scenarios involving an incident command facility. These suggestions parallel the sentiments discover during the literature review. This process is an adaptive problem. Developing mentorship programs that allow both the mentor and mentee to develop will require oversight, leadership, desire and the desire for all to succeed. “We call these adaptive challenges because they require experiments, new discoveries, and adjustments from numerous places in the organization and community.” (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, p. 13)

In summary, the surveys gathered a tremendous amount of information in order to address the specific needs of the DFRD with regard to the skills necessary to improve our managerial and leadership deficiencies and to begin a process where these skills and knowledge can be formally passed along to our current and future leaders. More importantly, the surveys provided answers to the first two research questions: “*What managerial and leadership skills are DFRD Chief Officers lacking?*” and “*What does the DFRD need in a Chief Officer Development program?*”

During the interview with Assistant Chief Tod Gillam on July 25, 2012, several questions were asked that helped identify what should be included in a Chief Officer Development Program (Gillam, 2012, p. 1-2). He verified that each of the levels of our Chief Officers were

lacking in leadership and managerial skills (Appendix G). Chief Gillam went on to identify that what was lacking were not the skills needed on the fire ground or the day to day operations at the fire stations, but with the administrative skills needed in the staff positions. He identified that administrative knowledge should be included in any type of training that would enhance the knowledge of a Chief Officer. Understanding the budget process, the importance of knowing how other city agencies operate and impact the DFRD, legal issues, labor management and working with the associations are all required skills that are not taught in Incident Command classes or acquired while promoting up through the ranks in the DFRD. Chief Gillam also agreed that the DFRD needed an actual structured program that can be measured and adjusted as needed. He also went on to opine that such a program should involve the entire department at all ranks. Gillam felt that there should be a program in place to retain the knowledge of senior members that could be passed along to the more junior and future leaders. The information gathered during this interview added to the answers provided during the survey in answering research question one and two.

Research question three asked, “*What resources can be used to enhance the capabilities of existing Chief Officers and the development of future Chief Officers in the Dallas Fire Rescue Department?*” The literature research identified specific programs that can be used as a baseline for development of Chief Officers. It is important to understand that “the career of the fire executive must be systematic and deliberate” (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003, p. 2) NFPA 1021 does identify some of the administrative understanding and skills that are needed by Chief Officers and is often used as a reference or outline for existing training programs.

The results of the surveys that were sent to various fire departments identified the mutual agreement that this type of training program is in fact needed; however, none have an actual

defined formal program in place. Only Phoenix, AZ, New York City, NY and Portland, OR identified programs that were defined formal processes but each of these centered on Incident Command and tactical fire ground operations and command. None of the programs address administrative duties or responsibility, even though their departments have Chief Officers assigned these responsibilities. In each of these departments the process is informal and not part of structured training, mentoring, or succession planning.

Table 3

*DFRD Responses to Surveys*

		Fire Chief and Assistant Chiefs		Deputy Chiefs		Battalion Chiefs		Captains
In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the strongest:	1	Incident Command	1	Job knowledge	1	Incident Command/Presence	1	Fire ground knowledge/command presence
	2	Personnel Management	2	Fire ground tactics & strategy	2	Fire ground knowledge	2	Communication
	3	Customer Service	3	Level of Experience	3	Level of Experience	3	Incident command procedures
	4	Understanding technical firefighting	4	Loyalty to personnel	4	Attitude/pride/enthusiasm	4	Relations with subordinates/troops
	5	Willingness to carry out orders	5	Pride/dedication to department	5	Communication	5	Tactics and strategy
In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the weakest:	1	Succession planning/mentoring or young members	1	Communication	1	Education/training	1	Mentoring
	2	Willingness to accept change	2	Development of officers/mentoring	2	Mentoring	2	Communication
	3	Knowledge of how the budget works	3	Management of Training	3	Adapt to change/innovate	3	Training
	4	Knowledge of how other City Departments operate	4	Succession planning	4	Communication	4	Discipline
	5	Innovative thinking	5	Administrative skills	5	people skills/relations	5	Motivation
In your opinion, what can the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department do?	1	Professional development opportunities	1	Mentoring programs	1	Mentoring	1	Ongoing training/continuous
	2	Mentoring programs	2	Training programs	2	Training	2	Mentoring program
	3	Chief Officer Development Program	3	Chief Officer Development Program	3	Chief Officer Development Program	3	Chief Officer Development program
			4	Career development	4	Scenarios/IC facility	4	Succession planning and preparation
			5	Investing in younger members				

Table 4

*Battalion Chief and Captain Responses, Questions 4 & 8*

		Battalion Chief		Captain	
Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following items regarding their importance to DFR and required knowledge of a Battalion Chief.	Most Important	1	Incident Command	1	Incident Command
		2	Communication	2	Communication
		3	Customer Service	3	Customer Service
		4	Motivation	4	Motivation
		5	Mentoring/employee discipline	5	Mentoring/employee discipline
	Least Important	1	Knowledge of budget process	1	Knowledge of budget process
		2	Employment Law	2	Employment Law
		3	Understanding other City Agencies	3	Understanding other City Agencies
		4	Labor Relations	4	Labor Relations
		5		5	Diversity/cultural issues
Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following leadership traits regarding their importance to a DFR Battalion Chief.	Most Important	1	Integrity	1	Integrity
		2	Trustworthy	2	Responsible/Dedication
		3	Honest	3	Professional
		4	Professional	4	Attitude222
		5	Responsible/Dedication	5	Trustworthy
	Least Important	1	Sense of Humor	1	Education
		2	Education	2	Sense of Humor
		3	Innovation	3	Innovative
		4	Open to change	4	Resourceful
		5	Enthusiasm	5	Intelligence

## Discussion

The literature review noted significant material on the subject matter related to management and leadership as well as mentoring, succession planning, training, and specific Chief Officer Development. There are recognized standards, specifically NFPA 1021 which identifies Fire Officer I, II, III, and IV programs, as well as the International Association of Fire Chiefs, *Officer Development Handbook*, which identifies a “career map” as an important tool (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003, p. 14) that can be used to initiate an effective training program. A program that will enhance the DFRD Chief Officers will, no doubt, be a program that should build upon prior successful programs but also addresses the specific needs of the DFRD.

Determining the specific skills and traits that are needed by managers and leaders will produce a rather long list. Some of these are certainly more important than others and will vary between organizations. Likewise their importance can change day to day depending upon the specific situation in which the leader or manager is placed. Some of these skills are used infrequently, when compared to others, yet when they are, they may be of the utmost of importance.

Kouzes and Posner identified the four most consistent traits following years of research. They are honest, competent, forward-looking, and inspiring (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 24). These traits are certainly important to any effective leader; however when the surveys were analyzed from the leadership of the DFRD, these traits were not agreed upon.

Most of the weaknesses that were identified during the survey process of the DFRD indicated that most of them were potentially motivational in nature and may possibly reflect upon the work ethic of the individuals.

What DFRD did consider important is, in fact, reflected in the literature review and agreed upon by several resources, even Kouzes & Posner. However, the value applied to each differs between authors, researchers and literature. It is worth noting that the original inclusive list that Kouzes & Posner produced paralleled the responses of the DFRD, whereas, all traits were recognized by at least one respondent as being important.

With regard to improving areas of weakness, this author notes that some of the responses from the DFRD surveys indicated varying degrees of importance based on views and experience. The Executive Chiefs placed much more importance on knowledge of how to work with other City of Dallas Departments, budgeting processes, and labor relations than Battalion Chiefs and Captains. All of the Executive Chiefs have had experience with these individual subject areas whereas most of the Battalions and Captains have never had to deal with those types of concerns. Therefore the Battalions and Captains do not place as much importance on understanding these subject areas, even though some day they may eventually consider them to be very important. The Executive Chiefs think these are important and the Captains not so much; which one should be given more credit? If the Executive Chief Officers feel as though these were a weakness, then these skills must be enhanced. The suggestions of the Captains do not necessary have to contrast those of the Executive Chiefs, but could be further explored and added to the concerns expressed from a higher rank. Each has a very different view from within the organization.

If the DFRD wants to identify what its Chief Officers are lacking, then the question must also be answered: what is it that the DFRD wants from its Chief Officers? If the DFRD does not know what they want, how would they know it is lacking? The organization cannot be improved, unless the organization knows what needs to be improved. (Compton & Granito, 2002, p. 236)

The author's own interpretation and evaluation of the results of the surveys and comparison to the literature review identified many similarities but the literature review was simply a great starting point for the process. The specific solution for DFRD will not be found in someone else's literature or another department's procedure. These will always be excellent references and resources that can be used to enhance and fine tune the programs that will work in DFRD. However, when this literature is combined with the information obtained from the DFRD surveys a more feasible program begins to develop that can be used to identify and improve the skills of our Chief Officers. Considerable literature can be used to assist with the initiation of a program and likewise be used to continually evaluate and measure the program as it is implemented and fine tuned.

Discussion of the DFRD surveys themselves is warranted. For example, when the results for the survey question regarding the weaknesses of the DFRD Chief Officers were evaluated, the following information unfolded. Initially the Chief and the Executive Chief Officers identified five areas where they believed our Chief Officers were weak and can be referenced in table 3: succession planning/mentoring of young members, willingness to accept change, knowledge of how the budget works, knowledge of how other city agencies operate, and innovative thinking. When the same question was asked of the Deputy Chief rank shown in Table 3, three new answers emerged. Communication, management of training and

administrative skills were added to the list. When the Battalion Chiefs replied to the survey they added people skills and relations as weaknesses or areas the Chief Officers were lacking. This totaled nine different responses in total by all of our existing Chief Officers.

The Captains survey asked the same question and the five most common answers only shed two new items on the list: discipline and motivation. This totaled eleven different responses to what is lacking of our Chief Officers in the DFRD. These eleven areas are: succession planning/mentoring, training, communication, innovation, willingness to accept change, knowledge of how the budget works, knowledge of how other city departments operate, administrative skills, people skills, motivation, and discipline. One should note that when comparing what the Executive staff and the Captains believed to be our Chief Officers greatest weaknesses, it only produced mentoring as a similarity; the rest of the answers were significantly different. By reviewing table 1 it is apparent that the expectations of our Chief Officers change through the ranks for both strengths and weaknesses.

Still another area that is worth discussing is that communication skills appeared on both the strongest and weakest lists for both the Battalion Chiefs and Captains surveys and it shows to be the weakest area according to our Deputy Chiefs survey. This should point out the need for further research for better clarification. Perhaps the opinion is that communication is so important that even when it is good, it may still be improved upon in some opinions. Further research could also possibly show that perhaps there is minimal middle ground, either our Chief Officers are great or terrible at communication. This would simply be speculation by this author and the point being made is that this should warrant better clarity in order to be addressed properly and included in any formal programs.

The surveys did in fact point out some discrepancies that were anticipated by comparing survey results from individuals who are already doing the job duties compared to those who might someday be performing the same duties, but as of today are not performing those duties. There were two sets of unique questions asked of the Battalion Chiefs and Captains that were not asked of the Executive Chiefs and Deputy Chiefs. The questions requested a ranking or rating be applied to simple items or traits. The design of these questions was to compare what the executive staff desired from its Chief Level Officers and what the Chief Officers themselves believed coupled with the beliefs of the Captain and their futures. Beyond this comparison, the survey sought to identify specifically what traits were needed and could be incorporated into a Chief Officer Development Program.

It is obvious that this depended upon the individuals' opinions and own ranking system. For example, two members may have considered an item to be of highest value and one may have assigned a rating of 5 and the other a rating of 3. Conversely, many members tended to grade near the middle with hardly any fluctuation at all and a couple even gave the same score to all items. Unfortunately, there were even a few evaluations that did not follow the instructions or the instructions were not clear enough, and in these cases they were omitted from the research portion of the summary. It also assumed that each of the respondents were truthful with their answers. Other limitations that were identified considered the background of the individual. Members with a tremendous amount of time on the department were often hired during a time when education was not required nor supported. Conversely, many of the younger and newest members have a tremendous amount of education and place a noticeably different value on education when compared to experience. Other limitations were identified by members who have or currently work within staff assignments. Subjects such as budget, labor law, employee

relations, and interactions with other city agencies all have a different meaning to employees who have worked in staff compared to those that have never worked in staff.

Additional literature research indicated that some of the best ways to enhance leadership development was through promotional requirements and preparation prior to an actual promotion. It is apparent that the fire service industry is headed in the direction of a more rigorous and structured promotional process nationwide (Warren, 2012, p. 2). At this point in time, due to the political sensitivity of the promotional process within the City of Dallas, along with the current Civil Service Rules, that is not a viable option for the DFRD, and therefore not addressed in this applied research project.

The literature that was reviewed is filled with suggestions and recommendations on the importance of a mentoring program. This is a significant implication for the DFRD. It is crucial that the DFRD stop allowing the experience to simply walk out the door through attrition. The DFRD needs to be able to retain and pass along that knowledge to the future leaders, managers, and Chief Officers (Wisko, 2011, p. 83). It is also paramount to understand developing these leadership and managerial skills is vastly different than teaching tactical decision-making skills needed on the emergency scene and technical skills on the fire ground. (Gates, 2011, p. 2)

The surveys sent out to the fifty-eight largest U.S. fire departments indicated most departments have acknowledged a tremendous need for a Chief Officer Development Program, but very few have actually mapped out a plan. All of the departments contacted during this research, that claim to actually have a program in place, use the process to further enhance the technical skills needed by a Chief Officer on the fire ground. The specific skills needed to enhance the ability of the individual to lead and manage especially in the areas of human

relations and administration is not being addressed at this time. Most of these programs are informal and no definitive, measurable, or sustainable program is actually being used. It was significant to note that each of the departments contacted during this research expressed a need for and a desire for such a program but as of this time, the importance of such a program has yet to manifest into reality.

Based on the researched developed, there are numerous avenues to explore and combine into one complete process. The literature review pointed out the importance of a multidimensional approach to Chief Officer Development. Many resources point out the necessary improvement of education and training, the development of a mentoring program and simply experience. Some resources focus on revising and enhancing the education process but others point out just the opposite, that experience plays a bigger role. (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2010, p. 5)

It appears that it is unanimous on what needs to be done within the DFRD, especially with regard to the original purpose statement, “The purpose of this research is to identify the managerial and leadership deficiencies of DFRD Chief Officers and to identify the skills necessary for a successful Chief Officer Development Program.” Literature is full of identifying traits and skills that are needed in order to successfully lead and manage. The survey results clearly identify the weaknesses and strengths of the DFRD Chief Officers. The literature identifies the importance of mentoring programs, succession plans, and Chief Officer Development Programs. The surveys also corroborate these finding and each of the ranks individually feel the same programs are the solutions for the DFRD. Communications with other U.S. Fire Departments echo the need for such a program and the equal desire to enhance their own organizations with a similar process or program.

### Recommendations

Based upon the information obtained during this research project, this researcher recommends that we begin a program where DFRD can enhance the leadership and management skills of our existing Chief Officers. Likewise the DFRD should begin developing our future leaders with the necessary skills that will be needed by our department to handle future challenges.

Based upon the surveys, it is clear that the department itself recognizes the lack of knowledge regarding leadership and management of its Chief Officers. “Improving an organization means knowing what needs to be improved.” (Compton & Granito, 2002, p. 236) Based upon the research obtained from the survey results, this is true from the Fire Chief down through the Captains. This is the single most important piece of information this research produced. It could be assumed the same could possibly be said for the other leaders and managers within the department. The research identified weaknesses that give opportunity for improvement for our Chief Officers. The research also showed where we are strong and expanding upon this information will allow our department to build upon past success.

This research was not intended to only identify what is lacking or weak among our leaders and managers, but also to identify what is working well and to harness that information and build upon it. We do have people in positions where they are performing well while dealing with the budget process, labor agreements and law, interacting with other city agencies, human resources, and administration. The next generation is probably honing their skills on the fire ground. How will they obtain, train, and prepare for their future positions within the department? The answer is by educating and preparing the next generation but we must also be

retaining the knowledge of those who are already finding success in those positions; we must have succession planning and mentoring in place.

For the short term recommendations, the author will propose that the DFRD begin the process of identifying the specific needs within the department. This certainly should be done at each rank but this author believes that the solution to such a complex adaptive problem like this one should begin at the top. Therefore, this researcher specifically addressed the Chief Officer rank.

A committee of all ranks should begin the process of clarifying the specific needs of our Chief Officers. For example, the research indicated that communication was one of the biggest concerns and potentially one of our biggest weaknesses. Future research could clarify if this communication problem is written reports, verbal, email, on the fire ground or in administration. Each of these is a possible problem and each would require that a different training program be developed. This committee could also identify what does work well with communication and who specifically is the best at communicating. This individual could be an instructor of the program or even a mentor.

Still, within the short term, another survey could be devised to see who would be willing to volunteer as a mentor and who is actually interested in seeking a mentor. We have very senior and successful Chief Officers; many got there the hard way and without today's education, but they have the knowledge right now. The DFRD should be verifying that valuable knowledge and skills are passed along. It is in the DFRD's best interest. Mentoring and succession planning have been clearly identified throughout this research. Some departments are even having success with non-structured programs. If action is not taken immediately, this knowledge will be lost forever.

The long term recommendation should be to develop sustainable programs. In the IAFC Handbook, there are four distinct elements listed for professional development: education, learning, experience, and self-development. (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2010, p. 13) DFRD should invest in a process where our department continually informs and guides our younger members to adhere to the life-long learning process. If they aspire to be a Chief Officer some day, they need to be aware of the knowledge required and skills necessary to perform these jobs in administration. These jobs will require knowledge and skills and an understanding in human resources, employment law, working with other city agencies, and other administrative duties. Those skills are just a few examples but they are different than those obtained at the Command Post. By being an Incident Commander, the skills must be learned in a different arena. Formal education programs, Fire Officer Certifications, National Fire Academy classes and programs will all help to develop the required skills. Initiative on the part of the member will be crucial on their career resume, but will also allow them to be innovative and forward thinkers. By the time these members are the leaders of our department, there will be a different set of challenges than exists today. However with life-long learning and continual development of education and skills, these members will be prepared when they arrive in the future.

Search for those that will want to make a difference. Dallas is a very large metropolitan fire department. Even though the culture may not embrace or even struggle with such a program today, through diligence, the adaptive solution may be found.

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Appendix A

**Chief and Assistant Chief Survey**

- 1. When you were promoted to Chief Officer, do you believe you were properly trained and prepared to manage and lead as a Chief Officer?

Yes                       No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- 2. Do you believe that a Chief Officer Development program would have better prepared you to lead and manage as a Chief Officer?

Yes                       No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Do you believe you would have benefited as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program?

Yes                       No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions regarding our Deputy and Battalion Chief Officers:**

- 4. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Chief Officers (Deputy and Battalion) are the strongest:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

- 5. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Chief Officers (Deputy and Battalion) are the weakest:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

- 6. In your opinion, what can the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future Chief Officers?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your assistance!

Daniel

Appendix B

**DEPUTY CHIEF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

- 1. When you were promoted to Chief Officer, do you believe you were properly trained and prepared to manage and lead as a Chief Officer?

Yes

No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- 2. Do you believe that a Chief Officer Development program would have better prepared you to lead and manage as a Chief Officer?

Yes

No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

- 3. Do you believe you would have benefited as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program?

Yes

No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the following questions regarding our Deputy and Battalion Chief Officers:**

- 4. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Chief Officers (Deputy and Battalion) are the strongest:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

- 5. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Chief Officers (Deputy and Battalion) are the weakest:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_

- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. In your opinion, what can the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future Chief Officers?

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Thank you for your assistance!

Daniel

Appendix C

**BATTALION CHIEF SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. When you were promoted to Chief Officer, do you believe you were properly trained and prepared to manage and lead as a Chief Officer?

Yes  No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you believe that a Chief Officer Development program would have better prepared you to lead and manage as a Chief Officer?

Yes  No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you believe you would have benefited as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program?

Yes  No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4. Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following items regarding their importance to DFR and required knowledge of a Battalion Chief.

**Please assign a 1 to the least important and a 5 to the most important on a 1-5 scale for each.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding City agencies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Report Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of Budget Process	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Involvement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diversity/Cultural Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor Relations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspections/TIS surveys	<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding of Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring	<input type="checkbox"/>	Incident Command
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	EAP/CISM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complaints/Grievances	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adaptive Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee Discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wellness program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Record Keeping	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment Law	<input type="checkbox"/>	Motivation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

**Please answer the following questions regarding our Battalion Chief Officers:**

5. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the strongest:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the weakest:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. \_\_\_\_\_

7. In your opinion, what can the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future Chief Officers?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following leadership traits regarding their importance to a DFR Battalion Chief.

**Please assign a 1 to the least important and a 5 to the most important on a 1-5 scale for each.**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Intelligence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attitude
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education	<input type="checkbox"/>	Trustworthy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supportive	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good Communicator
<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsible	<input type="checkbox"/>	Confidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enthusiasm	<input type="checkbox"/>	Resourceful
<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrity	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dedication	<input type="checkbox"/>	Honest
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sense of Humor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Competent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional	<input type="checkbox"/>	Open to Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovative	<input type="checkbox"/>	Motivated
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

Thank you for your assistance!

Daniel

Appendix D

**CAPTAIN SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. If you were promoted to Chief Officer, do you believe you are properly trained and prepared to manage and lead as a Chief Officer?

Yes

No

Please explain why/why not?

2. Do you believe that a Chief Officer Development program would better prepare you to lead and manage as a Chief Officer?

Yes

No

Please explain why/why not?

3. Do you believe you would benefit as a Chief Officer from a structured mentoring program?

Yes

No

Please explain why/why not?

4. Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following items regarding what **you** believe is importance to DFR and the required knowledge of a Battalion Chief.

**Please assign a 1 to the least important and a 5 to the most important on a 1-5 scale for each**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	Report Writing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Knowledge of Budget Process
<input type="checkbox"/>	Diversity/Cultural Issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	Inspections/TIS surveys
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentoring
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strategic Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complaints/Grievances
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employee Discipline
<input type="checkbox"/>	Record Keeping
<input type="checkbox"/>	Employment Law
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding other City agencies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Customer Service
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Involvement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor Relations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Understanding of Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	Incident Command
<input type="checkbox"/>	EAP/CISM
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adaptive Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wellness program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Motivation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

**Please answer the following questions regarding our Battalion Chief Officers:**

5. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the strongest:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. In the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department, please list the five areas that our current Battalion Chiefs are the weakest:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

7. In your opinion, what can the Dallas Fire-Rescue Department do to improve the capabilities and better prepare our current and future Chief Officers?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. Examining the position of Battalion Chief, please rate the following leadership traits regarding their importance to a DFR Battalion Chief.

**Please assign a 1 to the least important and a 5 to the most important on a 1-5 scale for each**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Intelligence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Education
<input type="checkbox"/>	Supportive
<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsible
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mentor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Enthusiasm
<input type="checkbox"/>	Integrity
<input type="checkbox"/>	Dedication
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sense of Humor
<input type="checkbox"/>	Professional
<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovative
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

<input type="checkbox"/>	Attitude
<input type="checkbox"/>	Trustworthy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Good Communicator
<input type="checkbox"/>	Confidence
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resourceful
<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Honest
<input type="checkbox"/>	Competent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Open to Change
<input type="checkbox"/>	Motivated
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other: _____

Thank you for your assistance!

## Appendix E

*Example of E-mail sent that prefaced the Chief Officer Development Questionnaire*

Chief [REDACTED],

Thank you for visiting with me on the phone today. Just to follow up after our conversation: I am attending the National Fire Academy and am working on my applied research paper which is part of the Executive Fire Officer Program. My paper focuses on Chief Officer Development. Attached is a survey that will assist me in developing the necessary research for the paper. I am interested in how the [REDACTED] Fire Department addresses this issue.

For your convenience you can just fill it out and e-mail it back to me. If there is anything we can assist you with here in Dallas please don't hesitate to ask.

Thank you,

Daniel E. DeYear  
Battalion Chief  
Dallas Fire Rescue  
469-[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]@dallascityhall.com

Appendix F

### Chief Officer Development

1 What is your Department name?   
 City:  State:

2 How many uniformed members are in your department?

3 How many Chief Officers are in your Department:

Assistant Chief	<input type="text"/>
Deputy Chief	<input type="text"/>
Battalion Chief	<input type="text"/>
Other Chief Ranks	<input type="text"/>

Please identify these other Chief positions? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

4 Does your department have a Chief Officer Development Program?  
 Yes  No

Please explain why/why not? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5 If your department **HAS** a Chief Officer Development Program, please answer the following questions:

How long has your department had a Chief Officer Development Program? \_\_\_\_\_

How did your department determine what needed to be included in the program? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

What national standards or curriculums were used to develop the plan? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Has the program been successful? How has it helped your department?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Would it be possible to obtain a copy of the program? \_\_\_\_\_

- 6 If your department **DOES NOT** have a Chief Officer Development program, has it considered developing one?

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- 7 If your department does not have an official Officer Development Program, how does your department adequately identify and develop the skills necessary for the performance of newly promoted chief officers?

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Thank you for your assistance!

Daniel E. DeYear  
Dallas Fire Rescue  
[daniel.deyear@dallascityhall.com](mailto:daniel.deyear@dallascityhall.com)

## Appendix G

*Interview with Tod Gillam-Dallas Fire Rescue Department Assistant Chief of Emergency*

*Response, July 25, 2012*

1. Do you believe our DFRD Chief Officers are lacking managerial and leadership skills?
  - Yes, absolutely
2. What are the leadership and managerial skills that our Chief Officers are lacking?
  - Mostly administrative leadership. They only understand operations and do not have the preparation to work with other city departments, understand the budget process or grasp the importance of working with the associations. Also, some of the problems can be attributed to work ethic and motivation. They don't do their job or improve their capabilities because they choose not to.
3. How can we enhance the leadership and managerial skills of our Chief Officers?
  - Training. Actual Chief Development Programs that address what is really needed by our Chief Officers, most do not even know they don't have the knowledge because they don't think it is important. To assist with this type of program there should be a partnership or mentoring program to compliment the specific training
4. Do we need an actual program?
  - Yes, we need to have a structured program in place that can be measured and adjusted as needed
5. What does the DFRD need in a Chief Officer Development Program?

- The entire process should be redesigned. At each rank there should be a program in place that takes the strengths of existing members and allows the new member to learn the ropes to make their transition easier and quicker. Then that individual would be responsible to pass that information along. Individuals would not only be a mentee but a mentor as well. When the individual becomes a Chief Officer the process continues, there would be more emphasis on leadership than the other ranks. Our weakest area is the administrative information. Most members do not possess this knowledge and then when they get it there is no process to pass it along.