

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The problem was that the Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) had not evaluated the impact of its Management Development Program (MDP). The research purpose was to create an instrument that would solicit program feedback to be used in a formal evaluation of the MDP. Through the use of action research, questions about MDP impact criteria, the expectations of the LACoFD leadership and the MDP faculty, and available training evaluation instruments and instrument formats were answered. The research was carried out through interviews and literature research. The results showed the importance of, and the need for, a formal training program evaluation. Changes were recommended to provide MDP refinement and improved training effectiveness.

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INTRODUCTION

Evaluating the effectiveness of a training program in an organization is an essential component of the program's success (Poister, 2003). As public agencies are constantly changing and pressured to utilize their resources more wisely through strategic management, quality improvement programs, and benchmarking practices, the success and value of costly training programs becomes more and more important to the management of these agencies (Poister, 2003).

The Los Angeles County Fire Department (LACoFD) has long focused on the importance of technical training for its employees, whether it is training in the use of computers, fire suppression skills and methodology, or wellness/fitness techniques. For the past five years, however, the LACoFD has provided its managers and executives with its new Management Development Program (MDP). The constant changes which take place in the operations, and the diversity of the LACoFD, has demanded such a program. As a unique LACoFD program, representing change as its training philosophy, the MDP has the potential to create many lasting changes to the organizational culture. The LACoFD developed and implemented the MDP in response to action taken by Department executives because LACoFD managers needed formal training in specific management skills, separate from traditional, job-related technical training.

The research problem is that the LACoFD has not formally assessed the impact of its MDP. Therefore, it does not know if the MDP is meeting the professional development needs of the participating managers in performing their managerial roles. The research purpose is to create an instrument which will solicit input from the MDP participants about the impact of the MDP on their professional development as a LACoFD manager. The use of the instrument will aid in the gathering of input for utilization by the MDP trainers (faculty) to enhance the MDP. Action research was utilized to answer the following research questions through interviews of members of LACoFD leadership and the MDP faculty, through analysis of standard feedback instruments used to evaluate management development programs external to the LACoFD, and through investigation of the criteria addressed in employee development programs external to the LACoFD. The research questions are:

1. What criteria should be considered to determine MDP impact?
2. What outcomes are expected by the LACoFD leadership of the MDP participants following completion of the MDP?
3. What knowledge/skills do the LACoFD trainers intend that the MDP participants will gain following completion of the program?
4. What instruments exist which solicit effective feedback from other training program participants, and in what format should a new instrument be developed?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Los Angeles County Fire Department employs over 4,300 employees, has a jurisdiction of over 2,290 square miles, and provides fire and life safety services to almost 3.9 million residents. In March of 1997, an outside consulting team presented its report to the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The Fire Chief, P. Michael Freeman, had asked the team to conduct an internal review of the Department's work place systems and employee concerns. He wanted them to identify methods for capitalizing on strengths and identify ways to ensure long-term productivity, job satisfaction, and morale (Chamberlin, Harrison, Youtan Kay, & Turner, 1997). One of the recommendations made by the team was the implementation of new training for employees in supervisory and managerial positions. Specifically, the consulting team recommended that increased emphasis should be placed on higher level, non-technical management skill development for these employees. Through its research, the consulting team found that employees reported they lacked many basic supervisory and managerial skills. Whether sworn or civilian, the employees felt they were provided enough technical training to perform their jobs; however, employees reported that they lacked formal training in areas such as managing diversity, listening, and dealing with difficult people (Chamberlin et al., 1997). While the Department continued to change in many ways, it also needed to change the way it had previously handled supervisory, managerial, and executive development.

In response to the recommendation, and for the first time in the Department's 75 years, it offered the MDP. The MDP was implemented in 1999 as an eight-module, mandatory program presented to newly appointed and incumbent LACoFD managers. The group of participants in each module is a mixture of sworn and civilian managers at various levels in the organization. The minimum level of the participants in the program includes sworn managers at the level of battalion chief and civilian managers at the level of section chief. Participants attend each module "on duty" whether that means during their normal business day, or during overtime hours outside of a regular, 24-hour emergency shift. The program was expanded to include 10, four-hour modules in 2003. During the first five years of the MDP, 104 managers have completed all 10 modules, and over 100 managers are still working towards completion. The curriculum now includes these management topics: managing time and multiple demands, interpersonal communication, group dynamics, conflict resolution, employee relations, performance management, creative problem solving, embracing change, technology, and risk management.

As new managers take their places in the LACoFD, they continue to experience the various modules of MDP. But while the LACoFD has supported the continuation of the MDP since 1999, no formal assessment of the program and its effects on the MDP participants has been made. The leadership proponents of the MDP do not know if LACoFD managers have been influenced by the MDP, or not. Whether or not the costs of the program---overtime hours, productivity loss, and training staff time---are sufficiently justified has never been evaluated. As an example, when a battalion chief attended the MDP in Fiscal Year 2003-04, the LACoFD overtime cost for that person exceeded \$3,500. On average, a civilian section chief attending the MDP modules is paid \$2,400 in regular salary for those hours in the same year. There is no overtime or additional monetary cost to the LACoFD for their attendance. While the dollar value of productivity loss incurred because a civilian section chief attends the MDP during the workday cannot be quantified, the loss still exists. The Department needs to know how and if

the MDP improves the performance of the program participants and to what degree. Has the LACoFD effected the organizational change it intended to make through the MDP? Is the program meeting the needs of the participants? Do the benefits outweigh the costs of this relatively new program? Like any training program in the LACoFD, or in any other organization, an evaluation of the impact of the program needs to be made.

The LACoFD may well benefit in the future from the MDP as the participants lead the Department for many years to come. As the LACoFD continues to experience succession of its managers and executives, it is important that the new leadership have both technical and non-technical management skills to ensure the success of the individual manager, as well as the Department overall. As a new member of the Organizational Development (O.D.) Division which developed and presents the MDP, it is important to the author that the program is a successful one, thus, the interest in ensuring the effectiveness of the MDP. The continuation of the MDP may be an inappropriate use of the Department's time and resources if it does not add value to the Department and its management team.

As the Change Management Unit of the National Fire Academy's Executive Development course describes, it is imperative to evaluate the implementation of change and to identify the need to alter the implementation of change (Federal Emergency Management Agency, United States Fire Administration, National Fire Academy [FEMA, USFA, NFA], 2004). The problem with the lack of assessment of the MDP is a clear example of the importance of the APIE Change Model theory, also presented in the course. By not having assessed the impact of the MDP, the LACoFD has not determined the need for program improvement or measured the program's effectiveness. The Ethics and Change Unit of the course describes how it is important for the LACoFD to address the additional cultural change that occurs as sworn and civilian managers train together on common managerial topics (FEMA, USFA, NFA, 2004). As the MDP represents a shift from a past where no formal non-technical training existed to the implementation of a mandatory, non-technical training program, an assessment of the MDP needs to happen to ensure the MDP benefits the Department and accomplishes the goals established for this much needed developmental tool.

If the MDP affects the managers of the LACoFD in a positive manner, it supports all five of the USFA operations objectives by enhancing the effectiveness of the managers in their vital roles working in fire suppression, fire prevention, and risk reduction programs. The need to evaluate the impact of the MDP on LACoFD managers, however, specifically relates to the fifth USFA objective, which emphasizes the need to appropriately respond in a timely manner to the issues of managerial and executive development, planning for personnel succession, and the need for successful leadership continuity in the LACoFD.

This research examines what outcomes the LACoFD wants from its managers as a result of their completion of the MDP. The results of the research provide a mechanism for the LACoFD to solicit feedback about the MDP from the program graduates. The information gathered will be used to ensure the quality of the program and to better meet the training needs of LACoFD managers. This investigation was achieved using action research, which included interviews of LACoFD personnel, a review of written information on the topic of program evaluation and assessment, and an analysis of feedback instruments and methods.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of relevant literature affirmed the importance of training employees in managerial skills. While a new LACoFD manager may be technically well-trained, there may be little understanding of the managerial role. Rao (1994) explains that while managers may be able to provide technical guidance, it is equally important that they be able to provide clear direction to subordinates as well. A technical skill may apply the same to everyone, but management skills may need to vary from situation to situation. Management skills, including supervision skills, may be the most difficult skills to learn, as well as to maintain. As described by Walker (2002), many managers are promoted without the benefit of managerial skills. Managers may be unaware of the skills they are missing in their job and so training these individuals is of the utmost importance to an organization.

A particular challenge to all managers is guiding their organization through change. To a member of the LACoFD, change is a frequent occurrence and managers must be able to depend on their managerial skills. It is critical, therefore, that training in managerial skills be as effective as possible so that the manager gains as much knowledge as possible to apply to the new job (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). The training must motivate the manager to learn and to be successful. The motivation can occur in many ways, including job enrichment, learning new skills, and the basic need to adapt to a LACoFD managerial role (Lieb, 1991). Unless the MDP has impact on its participants, learning may not occur. "The basic view that managers are born and not made still lingers, but there is recognition that even the 'natural' manager must have a very full appreciation of the facts about the world he lives in" (Talbot & Ellis, 1969, p. 66).

The MDP presents change to the LACoFD as a new type of training in a new training setting. It is important that what is learned by the managers be proven successful through an evaluation of the results and by the display of attitude, behavioral, and cultural changes. Many studies emphasize the importance of improving program success rates through formal evaluation of a program. Researchers also emphasize how it is important for an evaluation of the MDP to include the reactions of the participants, the improvement that results from the program, and the impact of the training on the organization overall (Kirkpatrick, 1975).

Best evidence shows that evaluating training programs can be as important as the training itself. It is necessary to establish that a training program has been successful, that is, it results in the behavioral outcomes as it was intended. Additionally, experts describe that by evaluating training programs not only is the program potentially affected, but the program participants are as well. Evaluation of a training program is often overlooked, and leaves a gap in the program's potential success. An evaluation of a training program will often reinforce the topic with the participant, as well (Burn & Payment, 2000). The evaluation can often reveal barriers to the application of training and create improvements to the program (Phillips & Stone, 2002). Simply through program evaluation involving the participants, their awareness of the training benefits are raised, increasing their support of the program (Bartram & Gibson, 1999). Training program efforts can be negatively affected when they do not have an organization's managerial support. Beyond the training program, the evaluation secures more management support of a program.

The LACoFD must evaluate how the MDP affects participants in order to determine whether or not the training adds value to the Department. Specialists discuss in depth the importance of evaluating training to measure its results on an organization and emphasize how training may fail without input from an evaluation of its impact. Many organizations, including the LACoFD, provide training to their employees, but they neglect to evaluate their efforts. The training may be well-planned and coordinated, but without evaluative feedback, an organization cannot know whether or not the training is worthwhile (Nadler, 1977; Phillips & Stone, 2002). The leadership of the LACoFD needs to see behavioral outcomes in its managers which reflect the impact of the MDP, and one of the ways to ensure the potential for these outcomes is through evaluation of the program. The participants need to be able to show what they have learned through their behavior as a manager. If training is viewed as a catalyst to change in how employees work, then evaluating that training can be referred to as that which activates the change (Bartram & Gibson, 1999).

Measuring the success of the training program, and how it affects the participants, provides for changes in employee performance. As many experts describe, it is important to know the difference between measuring results and measuring impact. Results show how much was learned, while impact gives results on the participants and the overall organization. Are people using the skills they were taught, and is the work environment supporting the use of these skills? These questions need to be answered to establish the effectiveness of the MDP as described by organizational development and training specialists (Robinson & Robinson, 1989).

The results of effective management training are many, but often the results are not quantifiable. However, the effect of learning can still be measured or demonstrated (Talbot & Ellis, 1969). Phillips and Stone (2002) explain that it is more difficult to measure learning, than to just solicit reaction. Reactions to a program may not reflect its true success. Therefore, if training impact is to be measured, proper measurements are very important (Likert, 1967). When considering the importance of a new or existing training program, an organization, such as the LACoFD, must consider not only the cost of the program, but the cost of not training. These costs, while more difficult to quantify, may be higher than the monetary cost of the training program itself (Talbot & Ellis, 1969). It is important, too, to know what is being measured.

The effectiveness of the measures used to evaluate training is critical to ensure the outcomes of the program correspond with the intention of the program. The most effective measures of the success of a training program will always tie back to the purpose of the training (Poister, 2003). Such meaningful measures will be related to the mission, goals, and intended result of the program, and represent the performance dimensions of the program (Poister, 2003).

If behavioral learning objectives are established for a training program, often these can be tied to the measure of the program's success. As such, the measures may be easier to develop. Objectives are critical to effective learning because they communicate expected outcomes from the training program and help define the desired competencies which would show the impact of the program (Poister, 2003). Objectives can provide a focus for the participants to indicate what they must learn and then provide a basis for evaluating what is learned (Poister, 2003). These measurable objectives are often called organizational impact objectives and reflect how a training participant utilizes in the work place what has been learned.

Measures can be important based on how they will be used by the organization. Because they may lead to data gathering, the data will be used in decision making. Without sound data, decision-making processes may be ineffective (Likert, 1967). Managers are expected to make the most appropriate decisions they can, but if the information they depend on isn't dependable, the decisions made may be flawed (Likert, 1961). Training programs, and then success measures, are important to many levels of the organizational process. Quantifiable measures may not reflect the positive impact of every type of training; but, sometimes, they can misrepresent it. Organizations are always looking for ways to measure overall performance, and must emphasize the importance of measuring the success of their management training programs.

There are many techniques to use to evaluate the effectiveness of a training program. Observations, interviews, and questionnaires are the primary methods. Each can be effective, depending on the organization and on the evaluation circumstances. Questionnaires (surveys) seem to be the most popular, perhaps because of the relatively low cost, the number of participants that can be reached in the shortest period of time, and the ease with which the collected data can be analyzed (Nadler, 1977). However, there are many considerations that need to be made when creating a survey.

Instrument design, including the use of questions without bias or questions that are unclear, is critical to the success of the survey and the validity of the resulting data (Phillips, 1983). Phillips and Stone (2002) explain how data collection using a survey is a common way to evaluate training, and how there are many different types of question formats to utilize: scaled rating, open-ended, multiple choice, and comparative rankings. A well-known and widely used scaled rating is a Likert scale question. Many sources described the Likert scale survey method, and others explained how to ensure valid data from instrument results (Phillips & Stone, 2002; Robinson & Robinson, 1989). The Likert format utilizes five levels of agreement for a respondent to choose from when providing feedback, and provides for a more simple data evaluation. Likert scales are often used when the survey will be used to report attitudes and/or opinions.

In summary, all of the sources agreed to the importance of managerial training and assessing a training program to identify needed improvements and to ensure effectiveness. The results of an evaluation of a training program may help the participants report how they apply to their job what they have been motivated to learn. The objectives of a program affect how it can be evaluated and how its success can be measured. An evaluation of the training will affect managerial decision making by increasing its relevance and effectiveness. The literature review validates that a survey of the MDP participants can provide essential information about the program. Such feedback can be used to enhance the MDP, as well as the LACoFD. "Through systematic collection and use of data in organizations, we may be able to take at least small steps towards improving organizations, towards making them more effective, and towards making them better places for people to work" (Nadler, 1977, p. 174).

PROCEDURES

The first part of this research began with a literature examination in the student library at the California Polytechnic University in Pomona, California starting in March 2004. These efforts were made to answer research questions #1 and #4:

1. What criteria should be considered to determine MDP impact?
4. What instruments exist which solicit effective feedback from other training program participants, and in what format should a new instrument be developed?

The initial search of library sources was focused on topics such as managerial training, evaluations of training, organizational development, and measuring employee performance. The author examined sources that discuss the value and benefits of managerial training, such as the LACoFD MDP, and the importance to organizations of evaluating the impact of such programs.

The second part of this examination involved a search of the LACoFD O.D. Division library in March and April 2004. Such an analysis of selected books on program evaluations and assessments provided a broad view of the criteria necessary to effectively evaluate the MDP. An examination of sample evaluation instruments from both libraries provided a comparison of often-utilized instrument formats, as well as the suggested ways to ensure instrument success by getting significant and valuable feedback from the MDP participants.

Notes taken by the author of research findings were categorized by topic in order to use the information in a systematic way in the production of an instrument that would solicit useful MDP participant feedback. Based on the information found, these note categories included: managerial training, program evaluation, instrument construction, use of a Likert scale, measures of program success, managerial commitment, and decision making. The objective of this literature review was to provide impact criteria options to the author, as well as more formal and tested methods for soliciting feedback from training participants.

The second part of the process included interviews with LACoFD leadership and the MDP faculty to address research questions #2 and #3:

2. What outcomes are expected by the LACoFD leadership of the MDP participants following completion of the MDP?
3. What knowledge/skills do the LACoFD trainers (MDP faculty) intend that the MDP participants will gain following completion of the program?

The first round of interviews involved the LACoFD Fire Chief and the Department's two Chief Deputies. These individuals were chosen because of their leadership role, and because they have continually championed the MDP. It was important to ascertain their professional expectations of the MDP and its participants. The interviews were arranged three weeks in advance through each individual's secretary, and an e-mail request was sent to each individual. The e-mail message explained the reason for the interview request (i.e., the applied research

paper related to the MDP), the 30-minute timeframe for the interview, the confidentiality of the interview, and the planned use of a tape recorder during the interview. The message also thanked each person in advance for his support of the project. Attached to the e-mail message was a list of questions to be discussed during the interview to give each person the opportunity to consider the issues beforehand. The questions for the LACoFD leadership were as follows:

1. What behavioral outcomes are you looking for in Department managers as a result of their participation in the MDP (i.e., what differences would you expect to see in these managers) (Robinson & Robinson, 1989)?
2. How do you know these outcomes/differences have occurred?
3. Why are these outcomes important to you as the Fire Chief (as a Chief Deputy)?
4. Why are these outcomes important to the LACoFD overall?
5. What changes have you seen in organizational culture since MDP began in 1999?
6. What changes have you seen in managerial behavior since MDP began in 1999?
7. What do you think the MDP faculty can do to assess the impact/effectiveness of the MDP program on the Department? On its managers?

These interviews were held in each individual's office on the following dates/times:

Fire Chief	June 4, 2004 at 2:30 p.m.
Chief Deputy, Business Operations	June 7, 2004 at 1:00 p.m.
Chief Deputy, Emergency Operations	June 4, 2004 at 8:00 a.m.

A similar e-mail message was sent to the three members of the MDP faculty, who developed the MDP and now presents the modules to the Department. The interviews with these individuals were arranged by the author directly with the individual and held in each individual's office on the following dates/times:

O.D. Division Chief	June 17, 2004 at 2:30 p.m.
Administrative Services Manager II	June 17, 2004 at 2:30 p.m.
Training and Communications Specialist	June 21, 2004 at 11:00 a.m.

The questions asked of the MDP faculty were as follows:

1. What knowledge/skills are you looking for Department managers to gain as a result of their participation in the MDP (i.e., what differences would you expect to see in these managers)?
2. How do you know these outcomes/differences have occurred?
3. Why are these outcomes important to you as a member of the MDP faculty?
4. Why are these outcomes important to the LACoFD overall?
5. What changes have you seen in organizational culture since MDP began in 1999?
6. What changes have you seen in managerial behavior since MDP began in 1999?

All six interviews were completed following the literature research by the author to assist with asking meaningful questions based on the study of issues relevant to the problem and related research questions. The author listened to each of the six interview audiotapes within 24 hours of each interview to ensure a clear understanding of the context of the discussions and thorough documentation of the information.

The intent of the interviews was to get input from these six MDP stakeholders about an evaluation instrument so that any concerns they had related to the MDP could be addressed in the instrument, thereby enhancing the value and relevance of the intangible data to be collected from the MDP participants (Phillips & Stone, 2002). The assumption made when arranging these interviews was that all interviewees were not only supportive of the continuation of the MDP, but that they were supportive of the use of the new instrument and its potential for improving the MDP overall. As the results will show, this assumption was correct.

As a result of the literature review, an additional aspect of the process was added to ensure the survey was both comprehensive and useful. The author arranged to meet again with the MPD faculty as a group to discuss the instrument components. As recommended in some of the literature, the author coordinated three informal brainstorming sessions with the MDP faculty to plan an instrument which would be as beneficial and worthwhile as possible (Trochim, 2002). Since the author is not formally trained in the field of organizational development, this teamwork process enhanced the content of the instrument, as well as promoted critical buy-in of the survey process from the MDP faculty (Phillips, 1983).

A limitation on this research was the six-month timeframe during which the research was performed, because there was not time to test methods of data collection to ascertain which method would be the most effective. A second limitation was that, other than the MDP faculty members, former MDP graduates were not interviewed to get input about how to develop the evaluation instrument. A third limitation was that the survey was not tested on former participants of the MDP.

RESULTS

Through action research, which included reviews of many written sources as well as interviews with key stakeholders in the LACoFD MDP, the author found much information and evidence to answer the four research questions.

Question #1 What criteria should be considered to determine MDP impact?

The interviews with members of the LACoFD leadership revealed their concern about the lack of follow-up related to the completion of the MDP, and that results of the MDP could not be measured. These interviewees said they could observe little or no behavioral change related to a manager's completion of the MDP. They stated that the ability to measure the learning in the MDP will help to create evidence of program impact, and that the use of a "before and after" assessment may be necessary. They explained it is important the MDP graduates be able to apply to their jobs what they learned. Also, since the leadership could not be certain where a manager's particular skills had been learned, they still could not necessarily attribute the skills to the MDP. They were concerned the effectiveness of the program could not readily be demonstrated and each felt the instrument, resulting from this research, would be a good place to start towards exploring the program's success. The impact criteria for the MDP, as they described, should be a connection between improved managerial skills and the MDP. They know the concept of the MDP is sound and that the content of the modules is of a high quality,

so they encourage this research, and support future efforts towards investigating the program's success.

During their interviews, the MDP faculty described their perception of how best to determine the impact of the MDP. They said behavioral outcomes, which reflected the established objectives of the program, would show the effectiveness of the MDP. Managers who are able to implement a goal-setting process or demonstrate the use of formal discipline techniques, for example, can demonstrate how the MDP affected their performance. [These managerial skills are included in the formal objectives of the program (see Appendix A).] The faculty explained that the ability of the MDP graduates to show they could model, demonstrate, and discuss basic management competencies would also be a way to reflect the impact of the MDP on the managers. The competencies include the capability to and the manner in which managers monitor progress, processes, and results, solve problems in the face of uncertainty, and take into account diversity in communication styles. The faculty members feel these behaviors may indicate the success of the MDP. The faculty members, like the LACoFD leadership, feel the strength of the program needs to be measured. They recognize the potential to continually improve the MDP through data that can be collected from its graduates. The faculty members realize it is important to evaluate what is learned in the MDP sessions by measuring, and not just to collect data on the participants' reaction to the program

The evaluation of learning pertains to measuring the extent to which desired attitudes, processes, and techniques that are presented have actually been learned. Obviously, it is more difficult to measure learning than to simply solicit reaction (Phillips & Stone, 2002). To determine criteria to use to ascertain MDP impact, one must consider the use of feedback from the training participants. As the LACoFD leadership discussed, following up with the managers to reinforce MDP topics would be a useful way to measure the impression of the MDP.

Such follow-up can provide valuable data about the program, as well as help the participants to continue learning. As Phillips (1983) reports, follow-up evaluations, which follow and often refer to end-of-program assessments, can measure the lasting result of a program, show where participants show specific improvement, and evaluate the use of what is learned in the program over time. Most of the sources reviewed highly recommended the value of following up with managerial trainees to reinforce the content of programs such as the MDP, as well as to gather program improvement data.

As the MDP faculty explained, it is possible and beneficial to use the application of implementation objectives as criteria to measure overall effectiveness. Such objectives provide the MDP expectations to the participants, help them to understand how and when to apply the new knowledge and skills, and show how the organization can be impacted by their improved performance (Phillips & Stone, 2002). Emphasis on the objectives of each MDP module can be effectively implemented into the criteria used to assess the effects of the MDP. An evaluation of the MDP may produce intangible data, so it is important that the LACoFD realize the benefits of this intangible information. Even though such data may not be converted into monetary values, increased organizational commitment, improved teamwork, and conflict reduction may result from the collection and evaluation of the information (Phillips & Stone, 2002). When

considering the development of MDP impact criteria, the LACoFD may be successful by utilizing the program objectives as its base.

Studies have shown it is possible to measure learning and performance even when subjective criteria are used. The quality of a manager's performance, as well as the effects of training on the decision-making process, can be measured and used to measure training program success (Likert, 1961). Measuring the application of what is learned is another way to establish impact criteria and then to measure program success. The use of measurements can be very telling of what is learned in a training session. But as important as the resulting data is the quality of the measurements themselves. Developing and using meaningful measurements is not a simple endeavor. For the MDP, the measurement must be directly related to its intended goals. The measurement, as Poister (2003) describes, must be important to organizational leadership, managers, and other stakeholders. If no stakeholder places importance on a particular measurement, then it may not be useful. The measures need to be presented to explain what they consist of and how they represent some aspect of managerial performance. To summarize, the measurement of behavioral outcomes and demonstration of the application of what was learned can be criteria against which to measure the impact of the MDP.

Question #2 What outcomes are expected by the LACoFD leadership of the MDP participants following completion of the MDP?

The leadership explained that they hoped attendance in the MDP would result in more professionalism. The leadership looked for overall better managers. They wanted the MDP graduates to be able to more effectively manage people, and to think more "outside the box." They described that better use of time, the ability to work better with subordinates and to energize subordinates to do their jobs, and the desire to improve the way things are would be some of the desired results of the completion of the MDP. They agreed that the MDP alone could not produce managerial experts. The leadership said it was important for the MDP participants to clearly understand the behavioral objectives of the MDP. They said this understanding would help the MDP participants see the relevance of the MDP topics to their job and increase their learning.

The leadership discussed how the potential outcomes of the MDP were important for many reasons, not the least of which was that managers need the skills previewed in the MDP to be successful. High performing managers need to achieve the MDP objectives to be well-rounded, effective managers. The future of the LACoFD is dependent upon these individuals and their keen ability to manage. The leadership explained that they had not noticed behavioral outcomes in the LACoFD managers, which they can specifically attribute to the completion of the MDP. While they may have noticed some use of buzzwords or other phrases, which may have been taught in the MDP, they had no way of knowing where the manager may have learned the information. Because there are no measurements of managerial skills prior to participation in the MDP, there is no starting point from which to show change. While the MDP is a valuable program and may be planting seeds of information, it may be that the MDP is only a small piece of a much bigger learning challenge. However, the leadership said that because such changes could evolve over a long period of time, it will be necessary to reinforce the skills through training follow-up. The leadership explained that there may be no apparent change

because the MDP participants may only be exposed to the skills in the program, and they may not really be learning them without reinforcement. The leadership felt uncertain that without training reinforcement or follow-up, cultural or behavioral changes may not occur as a result of the MDP.

As expressed by the leadership, it is important to try to measure and evaluate the results of a training program. Since the display of some behaviors by LACoFD managers could not be directly linked to skills or knowledge learned in the MDP, measuring the learning is critical in rating program success. Poister (2003) describes in length the prospects for measuring work performance and how such can reveal the value of managerial training efforts. Managers can improve their performance following an effective training program through better managerial accountability and decision making. Managers affected by the MDP may be more motivated and be better able to understand and achieve organizational goals. It is possible for the intangible measurements of the MDP-related success to result in tangible results such as service improvements and more efficient operations (Poister, 2003). Likert (1967) explains the value to an organization of effective measurements used to evaluate training programs. The program and its results must be reviewed from this point of view to ensure its effectiveness.

As the LACoFD leadership pointed out, the need to reinforce learning is essential to managerial behavioral improvement, especially in an organization with the technical training history of the LACoFD. Reinforcement of what is taught [in the MDP] can ensure the success of a program by showing program participants how to better apply what they learned to their jobs (Talbot & Ellis, 1969). A formal evaluation of the MDP should require a component that leads to reinforcement of the many managerial skills from its curriculum.

Talbot and Ellis (1969) explain that the value obtained from having training is related to the value placed on the training and support given the training by organizational management. Fortunately for the MDP, the LACoFD leadership is very supportive of the program and is supportive, too, of moving towards the improvement of the MDP through a formal evaluation process. It is important for the training program to be effective and for the work environment to support the skills taught in the training program. As the LACoFD attempts to measure the change that takes place as a result of the MDP, consideration needs to be given to the combination of the MDP and the program advocates to really see its impact (Robinson & Robinson, 1989).

Question #3 What knowledge/skills do the LACoFD trainers intend that the MDP participants will gain following completion of the program?

During the interviews with the LACoFD trainers (MDP faculty), they emphasized the intention of the MDP was to teach managers the objectives established for each module (see Appendix A). In some cases, however, this only means bringing about an awareness of the various skills. One faculty member explained how important it is for these managers to leave the program seeing the LACoFD differently, and to be able to think more strategically. The faculty members hope to stimulate the managers' thinking about each MDP topic, and that the LACoFD will benefit from the managers' broadened knowledge.

The opportunity to see managers modeling or discussing basic management competencies, such as encouraging innovative approaches to problem solving or developing effective actions plans, may indicate the influence of the MDP to the faculty. The MDP should increase awareness of management foundation principles and eventually lead to LACoFD cultural change. Cultural change will be a key sign down the road of the impact of the MDP. While the faculty realizes that not all managers would really learn all of the knowledge and skills presented in the 10 modules, the exposure to such had the potential to leave the managers more permeable to organizational change.

To recap, the faculty members look for the LACoFD managers to be able to demonstrate the course objectives after their completion of the MDP. The faculty members intend that the managers' exposure to basic managerial skills will move the LACoFD in the direction of successful organizational change.

Like the MDP faculty, Robinson and Robinson (1989) emphasized the characteristics and importance of behavioral, affective, and cognitive outcomes. Specifically, the benefits to an organization when employees improve their set of managerial skills are many and varied, and will almost always benefit the organization overall. These types of outcomes, which affect attitudes, values, and beliefs, are specifically unique to the MDP, as compared to previous types of training provided by the LACoFD. Such a successful program could indeed lead to widespread organizational change.

Providing objectives in the MDP in a clear and appreciable manner will improve these managers' commitment to a new skill set and to the application of those skills to their job. Encouraging these employees to think towards measurable objectives will help them to overcome their potential fear of change related to the new knowledge (Kirkpatrick, 1975). There is no question that setting objectives, and following through with managers as to their performance, is important. The MDP must have clearly defined "intended results" through some mix of goals, objectives, and standards, which should be related to performance that is closely aligned with the end result (Poister, 2003). MDP participants incorporating those objectives into their job performance is an indication of the success of the MDP and a way to measure the impact of the MDP.

Question #4 What instruments exist which solicit effective feedback from other training program participants, and in what format should a new instrument be developed?

In relation to the question of instruments and instrument format, the LACoFD leadership explained that such an instrument should seek to ensure that the needs of the program participants are being met. They said a survey, such as that which would result from this research, may not give exact measurements of the success of the MDP. However, they feel the survey will focus on opinions about the program and result in the direction to take to make changes to the MDP to strengthen its impact in the future. The leadership also feels it is important to follow-up with the program participants and to provide reinforcement of the MDP skills.

The MDP faculty members described the use of a survey to evaluate the MDP, which includes questions that are easy to answer and to understand, as well as one which provides standard answers the participants would use to rate the MDP experience. They realize the importance of allowing the participants to answer open-ended questions where they can provide personal responses. The faculty expressed their concern that without "measurements," the survey resulting from this research may not result in quantifiable measures of the impact of the MDP. Without measures, they explained, perhaps only attitudes or opinions would be collected as data related to the program effectiveness. They realize that such information would be difficult to collect and even more difficult to analyze.

The library sources of information reviewed by the author explained the differences and benefits of soliciting participant feedback in many ways. This information was used to weed out costly and ineffective methods of collecting data and improve the results of this applied research effort overall (Nadler, 1977). Phillips (1983) explained that to design the instrument, the following questions should be considered: how will the data be used, what facts are needed, should the instrument be tested, and is there a standard instrument that can be used? Additionally, the timing of the LACoFD managers' feedback needs to be considered in evaluating the feedback data. A survey used to collect feedback should be carefully prepared to ensure the appropriate type of feedback can be obtained. Appropriate feedback, in this context, does not mean right or wrong answers. It means asking questions that will indicate how the MDP may or may not have impacted the manager. A valid instrument will measure what the organization using the instrument intended to measure (Phillips, 1983). When measuring the value of the MDP, an effective instrument will help the LACoFD find out about the quality of the program, what managers are learning, the way learning affects job performance, and the effects the learning can have on the LACoFD overall.

Many sources described how important training follow-up is, and how that follow-up, in the form of a survey, can even help the trainee to continue learning. By asking the participants about the MDP, the LACoFD can reinforce, to a small degree, the learning that occurs during the formal program. Such reinforcement may be seen only as an ancillary benefit to the input received about the program, but it is a potential benefit nonetheless. It is important to ensure the results of the survey would help the MDP faculty to identify areas in the program which need specific modification and/or improvements (Kirkpatrick, 1975). Collecting data about the MDP can help better focus training objectives, pinpoint areas where the faculty needs specific assistance, strengthen executive support of the MDP, and secure continuing and effective follow-up.

Of course, there are other ways to evaluate the MDP impact on the LACoFD managers, rather than to use a written survey. Tests, interviews, and observations are among the other methods the LACoFD can utilize to determine the impact of the MDP. However, many studies show that these other methods may prove to be costly, time-consuming, and logistically difficult. While observations and interviews may provide data which a written survey cannot provide, both methods require resources that the LACoFD does not readily have available. Such resources may include trained interviewers and observers. In an organization such as the LACoFD, these types of evaluation techniques may not be practical. Especially, since no measure of MDP success has been established, even certain types of surveys may not suffice.

Advantages of surveys are many, including the relatively low cost and the ease with which responses can be obtained. Utilizing a survey allows for many individuals to respond simultaneously. Additionally, the survey results can be evaluated in a relatively short period of time. Surveys have disadvantages, such as that the data is subjective and that the questions are not adaptive to each respondent. Lastly, surveys, as well as interviews, can only collect behavioral data as the respondents report it, not necessarily about the behaviors themselves. One has to assume when developing a survey that the answers will be reported honestly. This self-report bias in the answers to survey questions may be the most significant weakness in a survey process. Therefore, to reduce the bias, the use of different types of questions should be considered.

When designing a survey, instrument decay should also be considered (Poister, 2003). It is important to ensure that the survey remains relevant and that the measures and data resulting from the survey can be consistently assessed. If measures change or survey questions become outdated, then it can become difficult to evaluate trends and the data can lose integrity. These issues go back to the importance of survey design. Thus, preparing a survey, and the related data measurements, must be tailored to a specific purpose and developed very deliberately to support the intended use (Poister, 2003).

For the first-ever evaluation of the MDP, the use of a survey will provide initial evaluation data. The information collected can start to provide feedback to be used to develop and implement program changes and measures. The evaluation of the MDP learning is concerned with measuring the extent to which attitudes, principles, and techniques presented in the training have been learned (Phillips, 2002). The data to be collected from a survey can be used to confirm that learning has occurred as a result of the training efforts.

With the four research questions answered, the development and implementation of the MDP survey follows. When the decision was made to utilize a survey, consideration of the survey design was very important. The author reviewed the works of many experts to ascertain the strength of each design. Additionally, the MDP faculty members were consulted during the aforementioned brainstorming sessions to collect their feedback on the survey design, as well as to maintain their buy-in of the survey process. The use of both Likert scale survey questions and open-ended questions was agreed upon. Based on the author's review of many sample surveys, this format will produce valuable data to be utilized in the further refinement of the MDP.

The Likert scale, developed by Rensis Likert in the 1920's, has become a frequently used and effective method of measuring attitudes and opinions through the use of standardized response categories (Porter, 1985). The typical Likert scale questions include these response categories: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree. The importance of this scale method is that the answers reflect the strength of the respondent's attitude or belief in each question, and the five ratings can be easily evaluated to obtain an overall rating from the respondent. By relating the questions to the MDP objectives, the author felt this method would be successful, and reinforce those objectives with the participants at the same time.

Using the Likert scale questions will ensure the survey can be completed quickly, give the respondents a wide range of responses, and be relatively easy to conduct (Hitchcock &

Porter, 2002). The proper use of Likert scale questions was equally important in the development of the survey. It is important to ensure each question is brief and contains only one idea (Arnold, McCroskey, & Prichard, 2002).

The survey itself will be brief and the results will be returned anonymously to help encourage honest, open, and complete responses. The survey will also be used to collect logistical information to get input about training locations and timeframes. While this logistical data will not reflect opinions about the MDP, the survey will be an opportunity to collect preference data for use in planning future MDP sessions. Some demographic information about the respondents will be collected to indicate any pattern of responses related to managerial rank, work assignment, or longevity.

The 30 questions in the Likert scale portion of the survey are primarily written to reflect the MDP module objectives. The remaining nine questions require more individualized responses about the respondent's opinion and attitude of what was learned in the MDP and how such knowledge is applied in the work environment. Lastly, it is important to notify the respondents that results of the survey will be provided to them. In this case, this feedback will appear on the O.D. Division website, as stated on the survey. Many of the experts, whose work was reviewed, strongly recommended this step to encourage participation and give respondents incentive to complete the survey. The MDP faculty will implement the survey as follows:

1. The survey will be printed, doubled-sided, on one sheet of 11" x 17" paper to de-emphasize the four-page length of the survey. (Flipping through multiple pieces of paper would discourage survey response.)
2. The survey will be mailed to the MDP graduate's home. The survey package will contain: a memo of support from the Fire Chief, the survey document, an MDP curriculum flyer, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which to return the completed survey.
3. The respondent will be given three weeks to reply to the survey, and the "due date" will be indicated on the last page of the survey.
4. An electronic mail reminder will be sent to all recipients one week before the due date. The reminder will thank those who may have already responded, and encourage those who had not replied to do so.
5. The responses will be directed back to a member of the O.D. Division staff, who was not involved in the program development and who is not a member of the MDP faculty, to encourage open and honest responses from the MDP graduates.
6. The analysis of the survey data will include the eventual use of MDP-graduate focus groups to enhance change to the program for the future.
7. Once the survey data has been analyzed, a synopsis of the data will be placed on the O.D. Division website so that LACoFD employees, including survey-participating managers, can see the results of the survey and the way the feedback may be used to improve the MDP.

DISCUSSION

Through the interviews with LACoFD leadership and the MDP faculty, and through the review of related literature, the author validated what others in the past have found. That is, the true impact of the MDP cannot necessarily be measured unless there is a measurement system in place before a participant begins the MDP. Studies have almost always found that the evaluation of a training program is a vital aspect of the program (Bartram & Gibson, 1999; Nadler, 1977). Such evaluations developed to address trainees before and after the program can result in data that can demonstrate a program's success. The organization provides training at the expense of other organizational needs, and so the results of the training must be ascertained to support the continuation of such programs (Phillips & Stone, 2002).

Presenting a survey from this research to the current graduates of the MDP may only provide data about opinions and attitudes, and not measure the program's success (Phillips & Stone, 2002). As Phillips (1983) reported, it is important for the LACoFD to be aware of the weak link between attitude and behavior. Since attitude does not always predict behavior, ensuring the confidentiality of the respondent's feedback will help prevent this conflict with survey data. The author initially felt the research would develop an instrument to determine the impact of the MDP by measuring that impact. However, the research showed that the LACoFD is not yet ready to actually measure the success of the program. All facets of the research uncovered that the LACoFD needs to go back a few steps before the desired impact measurement can actually be accomplished.

The survey from this research will solicit opinions and attitudes from the MDP participants about the program. Input from managers who completed the MDP months or years ago can set a starting point from which MDP redevelopment can begin. The data derived from the survey will start the LACoFD down the road towards performance measures for MDP participants. In essence, this feedback will include the program participants in the process of enhancing and/or expanding the MDP, and eventually increase the value of the program by motivating participants to learn (Lieb, 1991; Kirkpatrick, 1975). The survey will increase the commitment of the LACoFD leadership to the MDP simply through the survey process itself (Bartram & Gibson, 1999). By supporting the collection and the evaluation of the survey data, the leadership extends its commitment to program change and continuation. As the literature often showed, this type of commitment contributes a great deal to the future success of training functions such as the MDP (Phillips, 1983).

The literature remained consistent about the value of training evaluations, performance measures, and program reinforcement, whether the studies were two years old or 20 years old. The various experts supported what the research interviews revealed, and what other research studies have shown. It is important to include measures in the development of a training program to ensure an organization can evaluate the benefits the training brings, and that public sector resources are being utilized appropriately (Poister, 2003). Considering how many ways its many stakeholders can affect public funding, organizations must evaluate its decisions to utilize its resources to fund training programs, and as a result of the evaluations, programs can be changed and organizational decision making can be refined (Poister, 2003).

The survey resulting from this research has been designed to solicit feedback from MDP graduates about their MDP experience. By implementing this initial survey (see Appendix B), the LACoFD not only reinforces the knowledge and skills taught in the MDP, but it collects opinion and attitude data of the graduates of the last five years. The data will help to develop measures that can be used in future evaluations of the MDP. The experts make a clear distinction between data comprised of opinions and attitudes, and data that is collected from surveys or assessment tools which measure participant skills before and after a training session (Poister, 2003). This survey will report on attitudes and opinions and collect valuable, intangible feedback to use in the MDP development. The survey data will help the LACoFD go to the next steps of the program evaluating process and program change.

The research was started with the intention of developing an instrument which would measure the impact and success of the MDP. However, during the research process, the author found that such an instrument could not be developed with the information the LACoFD had about the MDP, as no measures exist which can result in a measurement of impact and success. Therefore, the survey which resulted from the research will be the first step towards developing MDP impact measurements and the overall MDP evaluation process. The data collected from this survey will begin the MDP refinement process by collecting attitude and opinion data from the MDP graduates. As Phillips (1983) and others explain, it is important to ensure a survey is as objective as possible. There should be an adequate number of questions and the administration of the survey should be objective. To reduce response bias, for example, the survey will be submitted anonymously by the respondents.

The literature review and research showed much of the same information disclosed in the six MDP stakeholder interviews. It is fortunate the survey was developed with the benefit of this research. If it had not been, it is uncertain that it would have succeeded in collecting valuable data about the MDP. It is also probable that creating a proper MDP measurement tool will take longer than six months. Clear objectives have been established for each MDP module. These objectives can be used to start the measure development process, since the success measures and objectives can often be successfully linked. Utilizing these objectives should make the creation of MDP impact measures less difficult.

The implications of the research are many. This initial survey will collect data that will indicate whether or not the participants' training needs are being met. It will provide a necessary reinforcement tool to the graduates to remind them of what was taught in the MDP and encourage their use of the skills in their jobs (Kirkpatrick, 1975). The research showed the LACoFD, too, the need to formally evaluate this important program to ensure its future success. The importance of the evaluation process has been brought to the attention of the LACoFD, better late than never. From the initial survey, the LACoFD will go forward with a close look at the information taught in the MDP, the way the information is delivered to the managers, and the refinement of the program overall. The results of the survey will benefit the LACoFD, its managers, and its future decision making.

The author saw the importance of program evaluation, performance measures, and program follow-up, and how these things can be used to improve the impact of the MDP. The development of training should always include an evaluation and follow-up component from

the onset of the program. The funding spent on the MDP will be a more effective use of public funds and the human resources spent on the program will be more valuable than before as a result of the evaluation process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data collected and an analysis of that data, the results of this research have the potential for making significant change to the MDP and for benefiting the participants of the MDP. Utilizing the results of the initial survey, more research may be needed in the areas of performance measures, managerial needs, and skill assessment instrument development.

The following changes to the MDP process are recommended to ensure the MDP is providing the best management development training possible within LACoFD constraints.

- Based on the survey results, and the experiences of the MDP faculty, the MDP curriculum should be reviewed to ensure relevance and that the program meets the needs of future participants.
- An effort should be made by the LACoFD to develop performance measures related to the MDP content so that learning results can be shown and more accurately reflect the success of the program.
- Further MDP development efforts should include input from focus groups and/or interviews with MDP graduates.
- Based on the performance measures developed, a pre- and post-assessment instrument should be developed to measure the program's effectiveness as well as to reinforce learning with the future MDP participants.
- A skills reinforcement component of the MDP should be provided in a post-MDP forum to enable continued learning by the MDP graduates.
- This initial survey should be sent to future MDP graduates because it may show how the MDP refinement process has improved the program overall. A change in the response trends from future graduates will reinforce the learning and collect more valuable, intangible data.
- The O.D. Division staff should consider sending a similar follow-up survey to graduates of other LACoFD training programs to evaluate those programs as well.

There are many benefits which the LACoFD will realize by implementing the changes described above. Those benefits include improved decision making by MDP graduates, MDP faculty, and LACoFD leadership, enhanced support of the MDP by LACoFD managers and executives, and a more effective management development program. Additionally, the MDP participants will experience better learning, and, of course, be more effectual and productive in their managerial role.

The preparation of a worthwhile survey of attitudes and opinions, or even of skills and knowledge, is not a task to be taken lightly. The survey resulting from this research, for example, was specifically designed to collect data about opinions and attitudes from MDP graduates related to their MDP experience. It is very important to understand the purpose of an

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assessment instrument or survey before designing it, and to consider what can be done with the data to be collected. Lastly, it is important to know the environment of the survey so that the survey questions will lead to productive results.

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Appendix A

MDP OBJECTIVES

Module 1 “Managing Time and Multiple Demands”

After completing this module participants will be able to:

- ❖ Describe the Fire Department manager’s role.
- ❖ Implement a goal setting process.
- ❖ Understand the importance of planning.
- ❖ Implement a problem solving process.
- ❖ Utilize appropriate time management tools and techniques.
- ❖ Practice effective delegation.

Module 2 “Interpersonal Communication”

After completing this module participants will be able to:

- ❖ Describe the communication process.
- ❖ Describe the barriers to communication.
- ❖ Demonstrate the active listening process.
- ❖ Demonstrate the use of communication techniques.
- ❖ Apply the basic principles for managing interactions with others.
- ❖ Demonstrate the use of assertive communication techniques.
- ❖ Describe the process for giving feedback.
- ❖ Describe the four types of questions.

Module 3 “Group Dynamics”

Upon successful completion of this module the participant will be able to:

- ❖ Describe the four stages of group dynamics.
- ❖ Discuss the difference between task and process in group interaction.
- ❖ Explain the importance of performance goals in motivating subordinates.
- ❖ Establish group norms and performance expectations.
- ❖ Utilize basic motivation strategies.
- ❖ Incorporate situational leadership theory as a management tool.

Module 4 “Conflict Resolution”

Upon successful completion of the module the participant will be able to:

- ❖ Discuss the manager’s legal and practical responsibilities for handling conflict within the organization.
- ❖ Identify the most common sources of conflict in the Department.
- ❖ Describe the 5 stages of conflict.
- ❖ Identify their personal conflict resolution style and its impact on the work group.
- ❖ Utilize effective methods for handling and preventing conflict.

Module 5 “Employee Relations”

Upon successful completion of this module participants will be able to:

- ❖ Describe the manager’s role in assessing and developing employee performance
- ❖ Describe the organizational role of Employee Relations
- ❖ Describe the civil service due process hearing
- ❖ Describe the steps of progressive discipline
- ❖ Demonstrate the use of formal discipline techniques
- ❖ Discuss when to use informal vs. formal discipline techniques
- ❖ Utilize the Department’s Standards of Behavior and Penalty Guide

Module 6 “Performance Management”

Upon successful completion of this module participants will be able to:

- ❖ Explain the main purposes and benefits of an employee performance evaluation
- ❖ List the main steps in the performance evaluation process.
- ❖ Discuss ways of handling sensitive problems arising during, or as a result of, the evaluation interview.
- ❖ Explain the manager’s legal responsibilities and implications during a job candidate interview and during a performance evaluation interview.
- ❖ Understand equal employment opportunity legislation and whom it addresses.
- ❖ Discuss the importance of women and persons of color in the workplace and their difficulties in advancing in non-traditional roles, including job evaluation, comparable work, and sexual harassment.
- ❖ Understand the harassment (Title VII) complaint process.
- ❖ Initiate a discrimination or harassment complaint process when appropriate.

Module 7 “Creative Problem Solving”

Upon successful completion of this module participants will be able to:

- ❖ Discuss ways to recognize trends and identify patterns before they become problems.
- ❖ List the eight steps in problem solving and decision making that lead to the removal of a problem’s cause.
- ❖ Discuss several approaches to creative thinking and problem solving.
- ❖ Discuss computerized information handling systems and ways to overcome employee resistance to systemization.
- ❖ Describe how managers can utilize the various Department management information systems and differentiate between data and information.

Module 8 “Embracing Change”

Upon successful completion of this module participants will be able to:

- ❖ Discuss the drivers of organizational change.
- ❖ Describe Lewin’s model of change.
- ❖ List three reasons why change is resisted.
- ❖ Describe strategies for building commitment to change.

Module 9 “Technology for Managers”

Upon successful completion of this module participants will be able to:

- ❖ Identify the Department and County “operating systems.”
- ❖ Understand managers role – maintaining legitimate Dept. systems, preventing system corruption, consequences of grassroots software programs, supporting standardization, GroupWise tips, tools and limits for your staff.

Module 10 “Risk Management”

After completing this module, participants will be able to:

- ❖ Discuss major concepts of Risk Management.
- ❖ Determine how Risk Management applies in the LA County Fire Department.
- ❖ Understand and utilize the Risk Management Model.
- ❖ Determine Risk Management methods in their own scope of responsibilities.

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Appendix B



Management Development Program Participant Survey

Please complete this participant survey based on your experience in the Department's Management Development Program. In order to ensure the quality of this program, we are making efforts to continuously improve the presentation of each MDP module. When responding, please consider the specific curriculum in which you participated.

If you have questions about your MDP attendance dates, please contact the Organizational Development Division office at (323) 881-2407.

Your responses to all areas of the survey should relate to your job performance with the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Your CONFIDENTIAL input will greatly assist in this program refinement process.

LOGISTICS:

1. When did you start MDP? _____ (Give month and year)
2. When did you complete MDP? _____ (Give month and year)
3. Which MDP schedule do you prefer? _____ 4-hour sessions/one module per day
_____ 8-hour sessions/two modules per day
4. What training site(s) do you prefer? _____ Fire Camp 2 _____ LA Trng Center
_____ Lifeguard Trng Center _____ FS 126 Trng Room

DEMOGRAPHICS:

5. How long have you worked for LACoFD? _____ Years _____ Mos.
6. What was your position/rank when you attended MDP? _____ Deputy Chief
_____ Division Chief/Asst Fire Chief
_____ Section Chief/Battalion Chief
_____ Other
7. Has your position/rank changed since you completed MDP? _____ Yes _____ No
8. How long have you been in your current position/rank? _____ Years _____ Mos.
9. To which LACoFD bureau are you currently assigned? _____ Reg Ops (North/East/Central)
_____ Administrative Services
_____ Prevention Services
_____ Executive
_____ Support Services
_____ Special Operations

Comments:

Please indicate your level of agreement with each statement regarding your work performance since your participation in MDP. Check the appropriate response beside each item.

OVERVIEW:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10. The program objectives were clear.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
11. What I learned in MDP is useful in my work.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
12. Considering the time spent away from my regular duties, this program is a good investment for LACoFD.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
13. I would recommend MDP to other LACoFD managers.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
14. The class materials and activities helped me to better understand the program content (e.g., role playing, exercises, videos).	<input type="checkbox"/>				
15. Compared to similar courses I have taken elsewhere, the MDP modules were more beneficial to my professional development.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
16. I have developed a personal leadership philosophy and plan, which I use.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
17. I am able to think more strategically.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
18. I demonstrate improved oral communication skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
19. I demonstrate improved written communication skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
20. I plan, prioritize, and delegate my workload more effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
21. I am better able to communicate strategic direction to my subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
22. I spend more time seeking input from and listening to my subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
23. I manage my subordinates according to their individual developmental levels.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
24. I delegate assignments to my subordinates according to their level of expertise and experience.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
25. I consistently communicate my expectations when delegating assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
26. I hold more useful, regular meetings with my subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
27. I am able to initiate and utilize the Department's employee disciplinary process.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
28. During the annual employee performance appraisal, goals are discussed and agreed upon with each subordinate.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
29. I apply different coaching techniques based on the situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
30. I use opportunities (such as participation on a committee) to motivate my subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
31. I demonstrate the values of diversity and inclusion.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
32. I deliver important communication using a combination of at least two different methods (e.g., a written memo + verbal assignment; e-mail + a follow-up conversation).	<input type="checkbox"/>				
33. I let others completely express themselves without interrupting them.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
34. I utilize a variety of tools to handle interpersonal conflict.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
35. I do less technical and more managerial work.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
36. I use the e-mail scheduling and calendar tools on my computer more often.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
37. I have improved my teambuilding skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
38. I reinforce the Department's internet and e-mail guidelines with my subordinates.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
39. I take a more active role in controlling and mitigating workplace safety risks.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

Comments: _____

REMARKS:

Please provide a brief written response to each of the following statements/questions.

40. Because of my participation in MDP, LACoFD has benefited in the following ways:

41. I have made the following additions/changes to my management skills:

42. The following changes in my work were caused in some substantial part by my participation in MDP:

43. The barriers I have encountered which have prevented me from using the new skills/behaviors I've learned in MDP are (check all that apply):

- I have had no opportunity to use the skills/behaviors.
- I have not had enough time to apply the new skills/behaviors.
- my work environment does not support these new skills/behaviors.
- my supervisor does not support the concepts taught in MDP.
- the material does not apply to my job situation.
- other: _____

44. The things in my work place that promote utilization of the skills/behaviors I learned during MDP are:

45. Additional benefits I have derived from MDP include:

46. The following management topics could be added to MDP:

47. My specific suggestions for improving MDP are:

48. Other comments:

Your participation in this MDP evaluation survey is appreciated.
Thank you for sending your completed response to Denise Duke, Organizational Development Division,
in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by _____.
The results of the survey will be found soon on the Department's Intranet Website (Portal 2000)
on the Organizational Development Division webpage.