

**“Good Enough Is the Path to Excellence”**

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# **Bottom Line Up Front**

**Focus on the Vital Few.....not the Trivial Many**

**Readiness & Emergency Response Must Drive the FD**

**Continuous Quality Improvement**

**Do Less Better**

***“Because I Knew You Would Come”***

**When you don't know who else to call, call the fire department. We will come and stand between you and danger...no matter what the threat**









FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE DEPT.

# **Are We Trying to Do Too Much?**

**Yes**

**Benchmarks for success?**

**What is working and what is not?**

**What needs to be changed?**

**Who decides?**









**EASILY DISTRACTED**  
**BY SHINY OBJECTS**





# **Leadership Principles**

***“People are our organization’s most valuable asset.”***

**Time is our most important, and finite, resource**

**But, often the time of our firefighters/employees  
appears to have minimal value**



# **Leadership Principles**

**If everything is important, then nothing is  
important**

**We can do anything we want, we just cannot  
do everything we want**

*“The hurrier I go, the behinder I get”*



# **Increasingly Busy Fire Departments**

**FDs seem to not be able to say “no” to new “missions”**

**Call volume is increasing**

**Required annual training hours increasing**

**FD budgets**



# New Missions or Mission Creep?

## **Protection of National Critical Infrastructure**

All Natural & Man-made disasters

Structural Fire Protection

Emergency Medical Services

## **Community Paramedicine**

Wildland Fire Fighting

## **Wildland Urban Interface**

Hazardous Materials WMD

Vehicle Extrication

## **Traffic Incident Management**

Water Rescue

Ice Rescue

Swift Water Rescue

Below Grade Rescue

High Angle Rescue

**All Hazards**

Confined Space Rescue

Trench Rescue

Urban Search & Rescue

Animal Rescue

Animal CPR

## **Active Shooter**

Building Plan Review

Fire Prevention

Public Education

Building Inspections

Code Enforcement

Arson Investigation

Industrial Emergencies

Farm Rescue

Incident Command

**Technological Changes**

Blue Card Certification

**Homeless / Unhoused**

**Elder Abuse**

Lift Assists

Pre-Fire Planning

## **Counterterrorism**

Emergency Management

Mass Casualty

SWAT Medic

Training

Physical Fitness

Apparatus Maintenance

Station Maintenance

**Recruiting**

**#metoo / Diversity**

**More and more....not less**

# **Busy Organizations**

**Backing into new activities with questionable benefit**

**No criteria for stopping activities**

**Mission creep is very dangerous**

**Diluting our ability to do what we do best**

***“Doing things without a purpose did not  
yield the results you desired, because  
nothing was desired other than to do those  
things.”***



# **Busy Personal & Family Lives**

**“Today’s employees.....”**

**Work- Life balance is important**

**Average American adult = 35,000 decisions a day**

**Work + Family + Decision fatigue + Change fatigue =  
Burnt out employees**

# **Change**

**Only about 50% of change initiatives are sustained**

## **“Change Fatigue”**

- Too many changes**
- Too many projects**
- Lack of prioritization**
- Lack of effective committed leadership**
- Not asking the people who are impacted**



# **Achieving the Vital Few**

**Readiness & Emergency Response Must Drive the FD**

**Continuous Quality Improvement**

**Continue to Look for New Programs & Initiatives**

**Engage the Employees**



# **What Do Employees Want?**

**A leader who cares about me as a person in addition about me as a firefighter or employee**

**Respect, Fairness, Integrity**

**Input into the organization's decision making process**

**Leaders who understands and cares about the employees**

# **What Do Employers Want?**

**No problems**

**Good morale & dedicated employees**

**Active, informed and engaged employees**

**Operating within the budget**

# **Characteristics of Conflict**

**Tension caused by top down, paternalistic management**

**Leaders perceived as out of touch / lack of trust**

**The challenges of change**

**Personalities & power**

**Economic issues**

# **The Vital Few**

**Focuses our energy**

**Simplifies our processes**

**Maximizes our results**

**Protects our firefighters & citizens**

**The Vital Few are our reasons for being**

# Achieving the Vital Few

**Roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the effort**

**Do less but better = Achieving the vital few**

**Appropriate funding**

**Establish “go/no go” benchmarks**



# **Questions for the Fire Service**

**Are our firefighters or paramedics making basic mistakes?**

**Did the fire go out?**

**Cardiac arrest?**

**Auto extrication?**

**Inspections?**

**Public Education?**

**What would happen in your organization if  
you didn't change anything for a year?**

**No new programs or initiatives....take a break**

**Stop floundering programs**

**Focus on completion**

# **How Do We Move Forward?**

**Engage the firefighters/employees**

**Set benchmarks for go/no go**

**Stop non-productive programs**

**Focus on completion**

**The Vital Few**





















***“Success is not actually built by moving from hit to hit. It’s the batting average that counts.”***

**Satya Nadelle, CEO, Microsoft**

**Focusing on the vital few and finding your  
“good enough” can be the foundation of  
excellence**

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