

**The Effective & Efficient Volunteer Fire Dept.
Battalion Chief Richard Ray**

The Challenges of Vol Fire Depts

- Staffing
- Funding
- Equipment
- Training
- Culture

Culture starts with a Vision!

- Clarifies purpose & direction
- Sets standards of Excellence
- Inspires
- Ambitious
- It is UNIFYING!

Must Be Committed

- To the vision
- To the citizens!
- To self!
- To your people!
- The organization!

Leadership

- The critical element
- #1 Reason why people leave
- Can be messy
- Can be great!
- Builds trust!

Circle of Influence

- Your attitude affects the people you encounter
- Used properly can influence others to do the right things
- Is your influence positive or negative?

Build your TEAM!

- Together Everyone Achieves More
- Communicate
- Win & Lose Together
- Have each other's back
- Understand you are a part of something much bigger!

Meet them where they are.....

- Everyone brings something different to the table
- Capitalize on their strengths
- Understand their ability
- Not everyone will be an interior firefighter

Empathy

- Creates a culture of respect
- Creates inclusion
- Creates harmony
- Brings value to the organization

Collaboration

- Focuses on maximizing firefighters' skills & competencies through teamwork!

- Works towards common goals!
- Creates productive & effective firefighters on and off the fireground

Transparency

- Communicating openly and honestly allows firefighters to understand the bigger picture.
- Strengthens the relationship between leadership and the firefighters
- Creates openness
- Works to avoid misunderstandings

Lack of Transparency

- Lack of transparency kills trust
- Kills participation
- Lack of participation = kills the organization
- Creates Drama!
- Citizens suffer!

Drama

- Creates a less than professional organization
- Divides the organization.
- Creates bad feelings
- Lowers morale
- Keeps the membership from working together
- Tears the team apart!

Bridging Generations

- Both are critical for dept success
- Both add value
- Communicate
- Fireground is the equalizer

Care for your People

- Stay connected
- What does that look like?
- Accept people for who they are not who you want them to be!

Value their Opinion

- Actively seek it!
- Demonstrate that their input is considered when making important decisions.
- Everyone brings something to the table.

It's an Investment – Everyone's Responsibility

- Staying connected with your firefighters shows that you care!
- Know your people!
- Know your job!
- Take care of your people!
- What you permit, you promote!
- What you allow, you encourage!
- What you condone, you own!

Your Investment!!

- Be humble. You could be wrong.
- Be forgiving. You will make mistakes!
- Be honest. Character is a door opener!
- Be generous! Givers sleep better at night!
- Be grateful! Luck seeks the thankful!

Relationships!

- Great fire departments get the most out of their people because they invest in relationships!

- *If a firefighter knows that you really care and believes you can make them better, they will buy in and do anything for you and the department!!*

Training

- *Relevant*
- *Realistic*
- *Frequent*
- *Muscle memory building*
- *Fundamentally sound*
- *Should inspire*
- *Build confidence*
- *Strengthens the team*
- *Brings the team together!*
- *Keep it interesting*
- *Shuts down drama*
- *Drowns out ego*
- *Breeds confidence and ability throughout the department*

Don't over inflate your ability!

- *You will not perform the way you think you will.*
- *You will perform to the level of your training.*
- *Training bridges the gap for experience.*

Training is for Chiefs & Officers too!

- *Gives value to the training*
- *Inspires*
- *Builds trust & confidence*
- *Set the example!*
- *Maintains & improves their skill set!*
- *Ensure training at their level!*

Training

- *Critical element for success*
- *Your skill set is dependent upon it*
- *Knowing what to do is a matter of training*
- *Knowing why is a matter of education*

Training Scars

- *What are they?*
- *How do we overcome them?*
- *Think through every aspect of your training program!*

Challenges of the Fireground

- *Staffing*
- *Bldg const & design*
- *Water Supply*
- *Poor decisions*
- *Lack of effort*

The Mission

"The primary mission of a fire department is to save human life and extinguish fire! Everything else is, and must be, secondary."

Assistant Chief Dave McGrail

NIOSH 5

1. ***Improper Risk Assessment***
2. ***Lack of Incident Command***

3. **Lack of Accountability**
4. **Inadequate Communications**
5. **Failure to follow SOGs**

The Benchmarks

- *Command*
- *Fire Attack*
- *Search*
- *Ventilation*
- *Water Supply*
- *RIT*
- *Salvage & Overhaul*

Supporting the Fireground

- *Forcible Entry*
- *Laddering*
- *Tools*
- *Personnel*
- *Accountability*
- *Rehab*
- *Ability to make decisions*

Coordination - Key

Standard Operational Guidelines

- *Systematic approach*
- *Playbook*
- *Addresses the what not the how*
- *Helps manage risk*
- *Reduces freelancing*
- *Reduces stress for the IC*
- *Relevant*
- *Up to date*
- *Must work*
- *Reasonable*

Guidelines that work

- *Realistic*
- *Should address most situations*
- *Flexible*
- *Safe, Efficient, Predictable*

Mutual aid

- *Must be up to date like SOGs*
- *Identifies appropriate resources*
- *Dispatched correctly*
- *Limit to 50% of resources*

Failing to call for help

- *Exposes citizens to greater danger.*
- *Exposes our personnel to greater danger too.*
- *Exposes your organization to cuts in resources and staffing by saying we can do more with less!*

Command & Control

- *Is a big deal*
- *Focus*
- *Understand risk vs reward*

- *Coordinate the fireground*
- *Avoid a script - meet the needs of the incident*

Command

- *Give orders*
- *Provide direction and intent*
- *Allow personnel to determine best methods*
- *Allow personnel to think & work*

Command's Thoughts

- *Interior crews – Do I have the resources to get them out?*
- *Did they go in the front? Is the rear open?*
- *If they are up & in, do I have ladders for their egress?*
- *Can I win this fight with what and who I have coming?*
- *Division bosses*
- *What is your gut feeling?*

ICs that Win

- *Are poised*
- *Decisive*
- *Calm*
- *Are leaders not managers!*
- *Credible*

Accountability

- *Who is on scene?*
- *Who is operating & where?*
- *How are they?*
- *Contact them!*

Size up

- *Fire location*
- *Life Hazards & Locations*
- *Identify any abnormalities*
- *Be descriptive*
- *Communicate using common language*
- *Don't forget the interior!*
- *It is ongoing*

Nailing the size up

- *Slow down*
- *Evaluate the situation*
- *Devise a plan*
- *Complete the 360*
- *Size up + Incident Priorities = Goals & Objectives*

Size up components

- *Your response model*
- *The structure*
- *The fire*
- *The environment*
- *Interior & Exterior*

Engine Company Ops

- *Rescue*
- *Initial Attack Line*
- *Water Supply*

- Backup Lines
- Exposure Protection
- Master Streams
- Tactical Use of Protective Systems
- Overhaul

Simple Engine Setups

- Complexity breeds issues
- Have one deployment method
- Allows for consistent decision making.
- Unconscious Competency
- Controls the variables which provides consistency

Attack Line Hose & Nozzle Package

- Flow test it!
- Include the pump
- Min 150gpm
- PDP 100-140psi
- NR < 71lbs
- What is your target flow?

Hoseloads

- Loads?
- Lengths?
- Why?

Stretching

- Preparation
- Training
- Staffing

These are the fundamentals! If one of these fails, the stretch fails!

Basics of stretching

- Right amount of hose
- Stretch dry as far as you can
- Nozzle and 1st coupling to door or where the fire attack begins
- Shortest route

Hose Stretch Rules

- Know the location of the fire
- Distance from rig to door
- Distance from door to fire

Estimating the Stretch

- Most homes covered with 1-3 section of hose
- Commercial will require more
- One working length per floor plus the fire floor
- Length + width + one additional section of hose

Water on the Fire

- 1.75", 2", 2.5"
- Horizontal
- Vertical
- Standpipe
- Deluge Gun or Monitor

Choose the Right Weapon

The Powell Doctrine

“When the Decision is made to use force, that force should be OVERWHELMING and DISPROPORTIONATE to that of the enemy.”

Thoughts from UL FSRI

- *Water in the compartment matters, and so does timing.*
- *If you can get the water where it needs to go, you do not need much.*
- *Water flow can impact flow path.*
- *Water converted to steam expands, hot gases cooled rapidly contract.*
- *Cool as you advance - flow and advance.*

How does water impact the environment?

- *Flow & Move*
- *Hit & Move*
- *Gas Cooling*
- *Create Space*

Search

- *Goes hand in hand with fire attack*
- *Separate tactic*
- *Requires mental & physical strength*
- *Planned event*
- *Every building is searched*

Enemies

- *Time*
- *Toxicity*
- *Thermal Exposure*
- *Proximity*

The Critical Elements

- *Closed doors & fire alarms fail!*
- *It is on us to pull victims out!*
- *Size-up for search*
- *Get down where the victims are*
- *Success comes from knowing the basics*

Search

- *How is more important than speed.*
- *Sweep with your hands*
- *Feel for weight*
- *Where there is 1 there is 2*
- *Entry Points*

Questions to ask people in the yard

- *Where is the fire?*
- *Best way to get there?*
- *Anyone inside?*
- *How many?*
- *Where?*
- *Best way to get there?*

Window Initiated Search

- *Most effective form of search*
- *Quicker type of search*
- *Consider making entry into an isolated space*

- *Search beyond the room when conditions allow*
- *Isolate when necessary*

Tips

- *Understand fire conditions*
- *Ventilate when & where appropriate*
- *Expect to move people – have a plan*
- *Conventional crawling is not efficient or effective*
- *Tools are dumb, use your hands*
- *Who continues patient care once the victim is outside?*

At the Victim

- *Never lose contact with the victim*
- *Search all around the victim*
- *On top & underneath*
- *Parents shield children*
- *Assess the victim*

Victim Removal

- *Keep their airway open*
- *Support their head*
- *Keep their face close to the floor*
- *Victim removal at or below 1 foot off the ground is optimal*

Removal Tactics

- *Must be coordinated*
- *Building drives everything*
- *The way we came*
- *Isolate & find another egress*
- *Isolate & shelter in place*
- *Keep them low*

Ladder Ops

- *Balance Points*
- *One person throws*
- *Understand bed & raise lengths*
- *Tip to the seal*
- *Communicate locations*

Ground Ladders

- *Fast*
- *Easy to reposition*
- *Can't be blocked out*
- *Can be thrown around overhead obstructions*
- *Faster and easier to remove unresponsive victims*

Parallel Ladders

- *Two-way street*
- *Adds stability*
- *Aids to get above the civilian to assist*
- *Allows to pass the civilian and get inside*
- *Allows multiple FFs to operate in limited areas*

Rapid Intervention Teams

- *Do it early*
- *Equipment*
- *Soften the building*

Rapid Intervention Teams

- *Communication*
- *Large homes – multiple teams*
- *Plan*
- *Keep skills simple*

RIT/MayDay

- *How do we prevent it?*
- *What is your policy?*
- *Who does what? Mutual aid?*
- *What does your communication center do?*
- *Have you trained for this type of event?*

Fireground Sins that get us in Trouble!

- *Lack of building construction knowledge*
- *Failure to understand fire dynamics*
- *Failing to assess the fire & building*
- *Freelancing*
- *Lack of crew accountability*
- *Poor risk assessment*
- *Poor command presence*
- *Ignoring stupid actions!*

Ventilation

- *Vertical is an effective tactic*
- *But so is horizontal*
- *Understand the specifics of both*
- *Fans – AFTER the fire is extinguished*
- *Size-up!*
- *Coordinate with attack & search*
- *Correct method*
- *Venting does not always equate to cooling*
- *Timing*

Water supply

- *Water is king*
- *Booster Tanks*
- *Two engines*
- *Hydrants*
- *Rural Water*

It's the little things....

- *Experience and knowledge must co-exist*
- *Experience & Knowledge = understanding*
- *You can't gain experience if you don't know what's happening*
- *Must understand the how to go with the why*
- *Be brilliant in the basics*
- *Good luck reinforces bad habits*

Knowledge

- *You can't go to enough fires to put all the pieces together*
- *Fireground experience differs based on your vantage point*
- *Learn something from every run!*
- *Training is the critical link in the absence of experience*
- *What type of training are you doing daily to improve your skill set?*

Your attitude?

- *Positive or negative?*
- *Do you start or stop rumors?*
- *Are you part of the problem or part of the solution?*
- *It is not about you!*

What is your mindset?

- *Engaged*
- *Positive*
- *Prepared*
- *Believe that a serious event will happen today?*
- *Are expecting fire? Expecting victims?*

Has laziness or complacency set in?

- *Are you disengaged?*
- *Lost passion*
- *Less thinking before acting*
- *Take shortcuts*
- *Make mistakes*
- *Zero initiative*

Overcoming complacency?

- *It starts with **YOU!***
- *Preparedness*
 - *Mentally*
 - *Physically*
- *Training and development*
- *Culture of excellence*

Everyone is responsible!

- *Hold each other accountable*
- *Work each day to get better*
- *Help each other*
- *TEAM Effort*

Together

Everyone

Accomplishes

More

Treat every call like it is the call of your career!

Achieving Success

- *Hard work is a choice*
- *Attitude is a choice*
- *Discipline is a choice*
- *Doing Extra is a choice*
- *Excellence is a choice*

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