



# REDLINE

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## LEADERSHIP L.L.C.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT COACHING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY LEADERS



Issue 16– July 2024

### Tip o' the Hat...

A ***“Tip of the Hat”*** goes out to Jacob West as he just completed the Fire Academy as a Recruit for the City of Bellevue (Washington) Fire Department. Jacob was referred to me by a leader from the Port of Seattle (POS) Fire Department after he was let go during their academy due to a very sad event that occurred in his personal life.

In my first conversation with Jacob, I learned that he worked as a paraeducator with special needs students in the Seattle area. From our conversation, I could easily see that he was the



right person for the fire service. His loss of employment at the POS was beyond his control and I didn't even consider it failure...on his part. He simply had more than he could deal with and very little support at a time when he needed just the opposite.

Jacob's self-confidence was bruised a bit but his values, his ethics, his ambition shone brightly. Jacob re-discovered his objective of serving others through the fire service and worked to regain his confidence. A couple of meetings, a few conversations and the real Jacob prevailed. A few weeks ago, Jacob sent me a photo commemorating his academy graduation and the start of a great career. BFD...you got a great one!!!

Jacob never quit. He will always be successful.

### The “Sticker Story!”

It took until my senior year of high school football to truly realize and appreciate the impact that others had on my success. Luckily, I had realized early enough that I still had time to do something about it. I had a pretty successful high school football career, starting on varsity my sophomore year and was one of the captains on the team my senior year.

I remember my first sack starting on the defensive line. The QB fell to the ground and, as grainy VHS footage of the time will show, I jumped up with my hands above my pads in celebration. My second and third sack were celebrated in similar fashion. As we were watching game footage of that 3rd sack with the team, the defensive line coach stopped the tape. He looked at me and said, “I gave you the first two, this is your 3rd sack on varsity. Act like you have been here before.” That advice stuck with me.

Every sack and any other big play in a game earned a sticker that went on the back of your football helmet. I had a lot of stickers on my helmet my sophomore and junior years. But by the time my senior year rolled around, my helmet was empty. I had started to realize that my success happened because of the effort from guys that never had a minute of playing time. I went up against the same guy every day in practice and he would hit me harder than most offensive linemen from other teams. When I got off the field after a big play there was always a guy getting me water and hitting my pads telling me to get out there and do it again. So my senior year, those were the guys who had helmets full of stickers. I gave away any of the stickers the coaches said I earned because I realized that it was everyone around me making me, and the team, better. Besides, I had two years to show off my big plays with all of those stickers. By my 3rd year, I figured maybe I should act like I had been here before.

When people on my team were seen, recognized and appreciated for their effort, they showed up and gave more the next day. Our team had a lot of good things going for it that year and we won the state championship. By no means am I saying that giving a few stickers away won the championship. But as I have reflected on this story I realize that a lot of small positive actions create large results.

Although the main point of this story is to tell you about my high school glory days, this story applies directly to the fire crew. It is important to remember that any individual success happens because of the entire crew. At the least, a small recognition of someone's effort may be what they need to show up ready for their next shift.

Continued next page....

## Stickers!! (cont. from page 1)

Hopefully that type of recognition will help strengthen the bond a crew has and develop a level of humility and respect for each other that inspires everyone on the crew to show up and push each other to meet their full potential.

-Thanks to Guest Author **Richard O'Rourke**,  
Brighton Fire Rescue District.

## Respect vs Rights!

A few weeks ago, we were deep in the woods of North Central Washington, cutting firewood for my wife's uncle, whom we will call "Larry" for this bit. This annual event is a lot of hard work but a lot of fun. Chainsaws, guns, a few sodas, wildlife and some beautiful country always make for a great times and shenanigans. Seldom do I miss this event.

One of the rules Larry has when we work in the woods is "no liquor if you're going to run a saw." Kind of makes sense, actually. It's in the best interest of all involved when you are an hour drive into the woods from the highway and a 3/4 day drive (or really expensive flight) from a trauma center. Well, one of the "laborers" likes to have a beer at lunch after a hard morning of work. The challenge is that we usually have to cut just a bit more after lunch. Maybe fall a tree or two, buck it into rounds and then load. So, I challenged this young person with the rule. He felt it was "just a beer" and no big deal. I rebutted with, "Yes, but it's disrespectful of the rule maker." I then shared the following analogy.



Many of us work in the emergency services in some fashion. Often, we find ourselves working an incident on the highway where, if we're lucky, we set up a safety zone to protect us while caring for patients. I asked our young laborer how he felt when someone ripped through his safety zone. He stated, "It pisses me off." I pushed him a bit by asking "Why?" and he said, "Because it puts us at risk." I then followed up with "It's not respectful of our safety, our role, and our families."

When I drive through an emergency scene, or a construction zone, I always abide by the speed limit. For me, it's not a matter of following the law, it's a matter of respect for those that work there, those that made the rule, those that asked us to respect their safety.

Just because it's your right, doesn't mean it's right. Respecting others is always the right thing to do.

**HURRY!!**

The NFA application process **CLOSES**

**July 15!!!**

Everyone should take a trip to Emmitsburg to experience the Fire Academy. The perspective gained will be most valuable in your personal growth!!

Apply between **June 15 and July 15** for on-campus courses scheduled from **October-December of 2024**.

Follow this link for a Course Catalog:

[National Fire Academy Courses](#)

[\(fema.gov\)](#)

## Link of the Month!!

Follow this link to something I found useful.

["Be Like AJ!!"](#)



## On Track?

**DILIGENCE:** *noun: constant and earnest effort to accomplish what is undertaken.*

Are your **DILIGENT** in your efforts to achieve your goals?