



REDLINE

LEADERSHIP L.L.C.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT COACHING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY LEADERS



Issue 17— August 2024

Tip o' the Hat...

A “Tip O’ the Hat” goes out to Nathaniel “Nate” Scott for completing the Seattle Paramedic Training program as a King County Medic 1 (KCMO) Paramedic Student. Nate’s graduation from the program is the culmination of 12 months of hard work and intense focus.

The Seattle Paramedic Training program, one of the premier programs anywhere, is credentialed by the U.W. and is hosted by Harborview Medical Center. After his initial 12 months of training, he will then receive additional training to get him up to speed on the way KCMO does business. Completing this process is no small feat.

Nate began his path in the emergency services field at Bates Vocational Technical Institute, graduating in 2014 with an AA degree. He quickly hopped into a volunteer program with Mountainview (WA) Fire and Rescue where he worked with good people, developing good skills. He was hired at South King Fire & Rescue (SKFR) in 2017, promoting to engineer in 2021. In addition to his regular role, he took on additional responsibility as a HazMat Team Technician. He seized the opportunity to become an Acting Officer for the Aid Car (BLS) and found his love of EMS. In June of 2023, he left SKFR and was hired by KCMO.

You might be wondering what inspired Nate to leave the fire service to become a paramedic.



Full Grown Infant?

Think about it; they sit in a chair, sometimes napping, expect someone else to prepare the food and bring them drink, someone else to do the dishes and all the cleaning, in addition to performing their regular work functions. Does this sound like an infant or a “senior man” on the crew that believes Probies need to “earn” their respect? I’m just saying it’s a “fine line.”

Over the years, I have watched a lot of people bring new people into the fire service. Likewise, I have brought a fair share in myself. Some have seen new people as an opportunity, and some have seen them as a responsibility. I say “not a fine line.” Let us take a moment to explore the differences in approach.

Opportunity. I have watched some members that indoctrinate new members by having them do all the shopping, cleaning, cooking, pouring coffee and racing to the phone or front door. The thought is that the new person needs to earn their spot, put in the time and work, “because I had to....” mentality. This provided the senior members with an opportunity themselves, an opportunity to coast. I even had an officer call me, explaining that their probie was failing and should probably be “let go” as they weren’t developing. I went to the station to visit with the officer about the shortcomings of the new kid, talking about how they didn’t even know apparatus inventories.

Continued on page 2.

Before Nate was hired at KCMO, he told me; “As firefighters, we put the fire out and it ends there. I feel like I want to close the loop providing care to completion.” That’s when I knew he was making the right decision.

When I asked Nate for his “Words of Wisdom,” he had to think a bit. What he didn’t know was that I had already written down something he said earlier in our conversation; “**Be Kind.**” He then shared with me his thought “Be kind, it will allow you to provide better patient care, which leads to job satisfaction.”

Congratulations Nate on a job well done! I know you won’t sit still very long. I can’t wait to see what’s next!!

Full Grown Infant? (continued)

The entire time I was at the station discussing the seriousness of the problem, the probationary firefighter was in the kitchen, cooking and cleaning. Needless to say, it didn't go well for the officer. And the new guy; well, he finished and fit in just fine.

Responsibility. I have watched some members that welcomed their new people using the approach that the new person needs development, needs support as they learned a "foreign language." These leaders focused on the right things, prioritizing what we are supposed to be doing; providing high quality service to our communities. These officers recognized that it was their responsibility to get the new hire successful, providing them with an environment that encouraged success rather than challenging it. When these members called, they said "What can I do to help my new one succeed? I've tried this, and this and this...." They never once suggested the new person needs to be dismissed, but rather displayed empathy and fear that the new person might not succeed.

I know what you're trying to do here, I just don't think it's the right approach. Give them all the tools to succeed and if they can't, you at least gave them their best shot. They failed in spite of you, not because of you.

The Other Side of the Coin!!

Congratulations Newb!! You got a job as a career firefighter! Woohoo! Now settle down and get to work; the easy part is over. Let's see you turn this into 25 or 30 years of dedicated, committed work, serving your community and those sitting next to you in the fire station. Once you've done that, you can celebrate your success. Until then, you need to put in the time.

A couple tips for your success:

Display Humility. No need to walk in like the "cock of the walk." All you did was compete and get a job. Now it's upon you to demonstrate that you deserve to keep the spot. You're just starting!

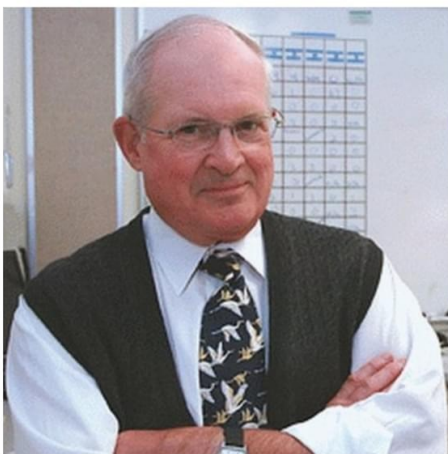
Earn/Maintain Respect. I believe they should give you respect when you walk in the door and then leave it to you to develop that respect more, or lose it, through your words, actions and behaviors.

Show Respect. Particularly to those that came before you for they faced different challenges and are part of the "story" that makes up your organization. Give them respect on day 1 and give them the opportunity to maintain, or lose it.

Get Curious. Watch. Listen. HEAR! Learn. Ask questions, wonder, ask "why," try, fail and try again.

Invest. In yourself in terms of skills development and fitness, in your teammates in the way of support and respect, in your organization in the way of acting so as to not damage the organization's reputation.

IN LOVING *memory of*



DR. MICHAEL K. COPASS

March 30, 1938 - July 26, 2024

Photo credit: Seattle Fire History

We are absolutely heartbroken to hear news of the passing of Dr. Michael K. Copass, a pillar of emergency medicine in our region and beyond.

Dr. Copass' legacy will live on through the countless lives he saved, the paramedics he trained, and the community he served. His dedication to improving emergency medical care has left an enduring impact that will continue to benefit generations to come.

"Dr. Copass was one of EMS's great giants. He will always be remembered for his leadership and exceptionally high standards," said Dr. Mickey Eisenberg, Director of Medical Quality Improvement, King County Emergency Medical Services.

This man exemplifies legacy. Please read of Dr. Copass' accomplishments here:

<https://www.mediconefoundation.org/emergency-medicine-legend-dr-michael-copass-passes-away/>