



REDLINE

LEADERSHIP L.L.C.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT COACHING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY LEADERS



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Tip o' the Hat

This month's "Tip o' the Hat" goes out to Brighton Fire Rescue Department (BFRD) for their efforts and success in being awarded their Accredited Status from the Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI).

As an internationally accredited agency, BFRD now stands amongst a group of departments leading the fire and emergency services toward higher standards and greater service to their communities. This recognition isn't just about a plaque on the wall—it's a validation of their commitment to self-assessment, continuous improvement, and doing the hard work necessary to grow.

As a young firefighter, Garrison had a mantra something to the effect "Let's suck less today than yesterday" which he now sees differently as a Fire Chief. His retooled mantra asks, **"How do we be better today and awesome tomorrow?"** Well Chief, I think you have a pretty good start right where you are!!

**Congratulations to your entire team
on a job well done!!**



"Rose Colored Glasses? Toss 'Em Out!!"

At a couple recent classes, I asked *"What will the fire service look like in 5, 10 or 15 years?"* Each time, I had responses from the group indicating they thought it would be *"pretty similar"* to what it is now. I positioned some thoughts about having robots do some of our work, the impacts of AI, telecommunication, drones and more. Each time, many were dismissive. Some even stated, *"We will always need firefighters"* or *"We will always have humans doing the work of firefighters."*

After my most recent class, I was traveling back to the great state of Montana, waiting somewhat patiently at the airport, enjoying a frosty soda, catching up on some email and creative writing when I witnessed an autonomous wheelchair delivering travelers to their gates. It didn't take very long before it returned empty, allowing me an opportunity to snap the associated photo.



A couple days go by and I am scrolling through social media, still thinking about that robotic wheelchair, when low and behold....drones dragging firehoses up the outside of a high rise for fire attack appears before me. A few days later I come across an article showing a tracked machine rolling in for fire attack at a recycling plant. Fully self-contained, carrying its own water; just like I offered for consideration in class. Guess I am not so innovative! How about a driverless car with a small 'bot in it that deliver's an iPad to a low acuity call where the caller goes through a series of questions with an online practitioner, the practitioner suggesting a transfer to the hospital wherein the caller gets in the driverless car and gets a ride to the front door where our autonomous wheelchair picks them up and delivers them to the specific spot in the hospital/clinic that is most appropriate. No drivers, no care providers, no instructions, no getting lost, no wages, no benefits, no calling in sick, no "I've been here to see you 4 times this week and I'm cranky...."!!!!



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Glasses! (cont.)

I know what you're thinking; "Wow, that last one would be nice so we can stay in quarters and just respond to fires like we signed up to do." Sounds awesome, right?! That last one, "autonomous low acuity health care" could even be privatized so we wouldn't even have to deal with it in the fire service. But, as my good friend and great Fire Chief Gordie Olson always said, "We must remain relevant or we will be replaced."



If you're going to lead, look forward with open eyes and an open mind. Be ready to adjust and adapt. Failure to do so may result in extinction.



On Track?

RELEVANT: *noun: bearing upon or connected with the matter in hand; pertinent.*

What are you doing to ensure that you or your department remain **RELEVANT** in your community?

Fire Family!?

If you have heard me speak recently, you have heard me downplay the mantra, "Fire Family." I would say I have portrayed my perspective as not being a believer in the



idea that those next to me in the fire service are family. I recognize that while I am extremely close to some of the people I work/worked with, it was still just a job. In retirement, the phone is

pretty quiet, except the few that reach out via calls or texts occasionally. And that is ok. I reach out to others occasionally and we pick up where we left off, no hard feelings about absence. Then, I had a revelation a couple weeks ago.

I spent about 90 minutes on the phone with my first Fire Chief, Robert Arnold, the one that hired me in 1985. If not for him, I might not be sitting here today. We were reliving some memories, talking about those that we had the opportunity to work with; the good, the bad and the ugly. We talked about the wins and losses, some of those losses very close to the heart and devastating.

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Family!? (cont.)

As we reminisced, he said to me, "You guys were awesome, you really made it feel like family." It hit me like a ton of bricks...We "did that." It was true; the people I worked with truly felt like family. We never once said it, we just lived it, and I realize now that it was the words, not the actions, that I wasn't fond of. I believe in actions, not just words.

In everything, if you say it, do it. Don't let it be empty words. If you call them family, treat them like family. All of them, not just the ones you like or when it's convenient. Actions speak louder than words!!

Shared with Me the Other Day!

"I never want to lose someone from my crew unless to a better opportunity."

-BC Bradley Brooks, Pooler (GA) Fire Rescue

Seems lately I have had conversations with several people about losing teammates, employees, leaders or what have you. Some people have taken a "I don't care if they want to leave" attitude indicating a "this is their problem mentality." Maybe so, maybe not. Maybe it's you.

A good leader will ask themselves "What role did I play in their decision to leave?" and others may even offer "How can I help you achieve your goal?" harboring no bitterness.

Thanks Chief Brooks for the Words of Wisdom!!