



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 Owen McKeough (McQ!), Brighton Fire Rescue District, for his promotion to Lieutenant/Safety and Medical Officer! Owen's journey to this promotion began long before he joined the fire service. Owen has served in the Army since 2001 with focus being in the Military Police, his most recently as Training Sergeant, continuing to share his knowledge in the Reserves.

After the military, he worked as an ER Tech (2009-2012) where he was responsible for training others. In 2012, he became a Platte Valley Medical Paramedic, where in addition to his Paramedic role, he served as an FTO. In 2015, he joined Brighton Fire serving as a Firefighter/Paramedic where he has filled roles as Firefighter, Out of Class Engineer, Out of Class Officer, peer fitness instructor, CQI team member and most recently as FTO. Do you see the pattern here?

Lt. McKeough has completed an AA in Paramedicine, receiving an "Outstanding Achievement Award" in the process. He also holds a BS in Fire Administration from Columbia Southern where he achieved "National Society of Leadership and Success."

Words of wisdom from Lt. McKeough? Sure, this is what he offered: *"Be the reason things improve by first improving yourself, uplifting those around you, and leaving every place better than you found it."*

Congratulations Lt. McKeough. You accomplished your primary and secondary goal. I can't wait to see what's next!

About the photo, from Owen: Iraq. This deployment was when I learned a lot about myself and pushed myself further than I can imagine. I realized that others do not control my future. I was told I couldn't do things, but I persevered and did it. Which made me who I am today.



"Who Raised You Up!"

When we see a leader ahead of us that is "underwhelming" or maybe just missing the mark, it might not be their fault. Perhaps this person doesn't understand the role or perhaps is because of "who raised them up."

I believe that when a leader is struggling or failing, it is rooted in one of two places; either lack of development during formative years or toxic leadership over that same period. It might not be their fault!!!

Let me first illustrate lack of skills of an individual that was struggling because of a lack of development by his mentors.

Performance: I was sitting in my BC office one day, working with a Captain on his out of class/acting Battalion skills so he could get checked off. We were working on the computer, through some staffing issues as I recall, and he wasn't getting what I was trying to deliver. After several attempts, I became frustrated with his inability to grab the concept and out of frustration, I tossed my paperwork and pens to the back of the desk. Understand, this individual is a high-performing, experienced person for whom I have deep respect.

I then asked him, "Who were your officers across your career?" He gave me a list, all of whom I was familiar with, and there wasn't a great performer in the group. These were officers that were developed or promoted in the late 1970s and early 1980s which was very different from today. I said to my out of class/acting BC candidate that he was "successful in spite of, not because of, who raised him up." His mentors either were not willing or were unable to invest properly in his development. Not his fault. Who Raised Him Up!

What this person needs is coaching and development. This is the time for you, the leader, to step up and invest!

Cont. on pg. 2

“Raised...!” (cont.)

Behavior: Perhaps our leader is just not good with people, is unable to inspire others or maybe even motivate them. Perhaps it's worse and they are negative, belittling or creating a hostile work environment, damaging morale. Let me illustrate an individual with these characteristics.

I worked with an individual, who I was good friends with across the early stages of my career. We shared a lot of laughs, a lot of experiences, and I learned quite a bit about the skills of the job from this individual. At some point, our relationship became fractured as we began competing for positions. I worked hard inside and outside of the organization on my growth and development while he simply relied on his “experience,” meaning time on the job. We were both raised under a leader, who was extremely toxic. Badgering, harassing, belittling and even, making derogatory comments and terms for those in our workplace or personal lives.

It didn't take long for either one of us, or anybody else for that matter, to say “I never wanna be like that person.” As our relationship became more and more contentious, the gap grew greater between us. I went about my business, using my style, as a leader and partner to the people on my team. I worked hard to be empowering, supportive, and ensuring my people felt safe to succeed, or fail in their attempts. My counterpart went on to show favoritism, prioritization of “things” over people, and stepping on others to get to the top. Eventually, this person made it all the way to position of Fire Chief, but was eventually terminated. Along the way, he left a trail of destruction, disappointment, and damaged individuals who fell into his slipstream, thinking it would be an advantageous method to get to their goal. Now, I'm starting to see failure amongst those, the “second generation.” Again, not entirely their fault. I will extend grace because they are a product of “who raised them up.” For those that choose to be hostile or destructive... No grace. That's a choice.

The key is to recognize that you might be influenced by those that “Raised You Up”; the good, the bad and the ugly. Self-awareness and monitoring is critical to recognizing these propensities before they become a problem so you still have time to adjust or interrupt to reduce the damage you may inflict. -K



On Track?

NURTURE: verb: 1) to support and encourage, as during the period of training or development, foster; 2) to bring up, train, educate.

Are you aware of how the way you were NURTURED is affecting your behavior, values and performance today, positively or negatively?

“Raised...Part 2!!”

Next month we will feature a bit written by a guest author that is a good illustration of how the way you are “Raised Up” can sneak up on you, impacting your behavior.

