REDLINE LEADERSHIP L.L.C.

PROFESSIONAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT COACHING FOR PUBLIC SAFETY LEADERS

Issue 43-November 2026



Tip o' the Hat!!

This month's "Tip o' the Hat'" goes out to Abdiel Duarte, South King Fire (WA), for his promotion to the position of Lieutenant!! Abdiel got his start on his fire service journey while serving in the Marine Corp in Kuwait. Encouraged by military firefighters he met at the gym, he started developing a plan. His plan took him to Bates Voc Tech in 2017 for the fire service program where he took advantage of the training and education, quickly putting the interview prep to work. He was soon hired by South King, his very first test and interview. Abdiel was promoted to the position of engineer on his first try and then to Lieutenant in July, again his first test. These successes point at someone who has done well to prepare!



L to R: Abdiel, Bill Wixey (TV Personality), friends Dan Stokes and Jordan Barrett

Lt. Duarte worked on the HazMat Team and as a member of the academy cadre. After hiring on at South King, he quickly found himself as an Acting Officer due to organizational need. In short, Abdiel has been taking on additional responsibilities across all his time in the fire service.

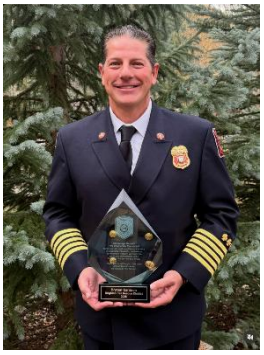
Lt. Duarte obtained an AAS in Fire Science while attending Bates.

Abdiel is married to his high school sweetheart, Rachel and together, they have a son 6 and daughter 4. Abdiel is a self-taught guitarist and loves sports. He favors baseball, football and hockey but his favorite is watching his own son play baseball and hockey.

Abdiel's Words of Wisdom? He quickly said, "If not me, then who?" He went on to tell me, "If I'm not willing to go the extra mile, to be selfless, then who is going to do it."

Congratulations, Lt. Duarte! Job well done!

Fire Chief of the Year!



Brighton Fire Chief Brycen Garrison was recognized as the Colorado Fire Chief of the Year for 2026. He received the George Mazzoti Fire Chief of the Year Award, which is presented annually at the Colorado Fire Leadership Challenge in Keystone, Colorado. It honors a Fire Chief's positive contributions to leadership, innovation, professional development, integrity, public service, and overall contributions to the Colorado fire service. Congratulations Chief Garrison! Well Deserved!

"Dinnertime Indigestion!"

For a period, I had both the most senior (Gramps) and most junior (Sonny) members of the department assigned to my crew. In our meeting room, we had a photo of a kindergarten fire safety presentation that was being led by Gramps with Sonny, a kindergartener attentively watching as an audience member. There were a good number of years between them as well as a few generations.

Not only was there a difference in age but also values and habits based on their different experiences growing up in the fire service. Gramps grew under an old school regime where we were expected to have a lot of productive time, had strict break time limits, couldn't watch TV during lunch and more. Lunch or dinner was 30 minutes and that included dishes…minute 31 was back on the floor! Sonny came into the fire service after we had broken down some of those barriers, but the habits of the past were deeply embedded, with some as solid as concrete. Change is hard.

"Indigestion!" (cont.)

One evening after dinner, Gramps caught me in my office and shared with me his frustration that Sonny "never picks up dishes" after dinner. I felt like everyone should contribute, so I told Gramps I would watch the situation and work on improvement. Knowing the individuals, their propensities, difference in age, and "how they were raised" in the fire service, I had some ideas but took a couple days to observe.

What I saw was Gramps sitting down at the table, shoveling his food in quickly and getting up immediately to take his dishes to the dishwasher. Generously, he even hauled other's dishes along. He did this because of the "30-minute rule" that we were raised on, finishing quickly to get back to production. Sonny on the other hand finished his dinner more casually, engaging in conversation with the rest of the team before putting dishes away. He was taking full advantage of the hour we now got for dinner under our contract.



ALLOW: *verb: to make a possibility; to give an opportunity.*

Do your leadership habits ALLOW others the opportunity to succeed?

A couple of nights later, we were at the table doing our normal thing and I saw Gramps finishing his meal, getting ready to get up. I looked at him and shook my head "no" and told him to just wait. We sat visiting, enjoying our beanery table community until near the end of our allotted hour, wherein Sonny stood up and took his dishes into the kitchen! I realized right then that neither Gramps nor Sonny were wrong, they were just different, misaligned maybe. Gramps was intervening in the process and in turn creating a perceived problem that just simply didn't exist.

As leaders, we need to be patient, **allow** processes to work and recognize that it isn't a failure until it really is. Others might do it differently than you or I, but it doesn't mean they're wrong, just different. **Allow** them the opportunity to succeed!!

"Friction Makes the World Go 'Round!!" (Excerpt from post on The Lighthouse, EQ network)

We all need friction to grow. As much as technology strives to create "frictionless" transactions as we consent to make payments via Plaid connecting to our bank account. Frictionless is not possible with humans.

Nor should it be. Nor should friction be painful or traumatic.

That is where EQ arrives. The moment when we know we need to engage in friction yet strive to approach in a beneficial way. Intention is the force multiplier behind every EQ practice, tool, and skill. The intention animating how we host one-on-one conversations with direct reports. The intention grounding how we conduct all hands meetings across multiple time zones and languages. The intention articulating a vision for the future and a plan for how to get there.

This means I am willing to step into uncomfortable situations to work toward change. At my best in the ambiguity of "*this is broken, nobody owns it, I will go fix it. It needs to be done well.*"

…Thanks to Rachel O'Neil, Juris Doctorate for her contribution this month.

(Excerpt from post on The Lighthouse, EQ network)

I had the pleasure of traveling to Colorado, Oregon and Washington to celebrate the commitment and success of the individuals from Brighton (CO) Fire Rescue Protection District, Redmond (OR) Fire Rescue and South King Fire (WA) with graduation ceremonies. It wasn't fancy, but it represents the efforts of all and their willingness to reflect and question themselves in an interest of greater self-awareness and development. Our conversations often reveal vulnerabilities these leaders have as well as areas of opportunity for growth. Congratulations to all and thank you for sharing your journey with me. I am forever grateful for our time together. -K-



Brighton Fire Rescue, Left to Right: Elizabeth Bednarcik, Kaleb Ledford, Ian Scott, Brent Palizzi



Redmond Fire Rescue, Left to Right: Brandon Hargous, Jessie Pilcher.
Not Pictured: Garrett Robertson, Andrew White

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South King Fire, L to R; James Hampson, Dean Bastin, Shannon Oltman, Blair Cottrell, Jake Wassall, Mike R. Lawson.
Not Pictured: Jordan Barrett, Brad Chaney, Kelly Salvage, Dan Stokes, Chase Woolley

Congratulations to all who completed High-Performance Leadership and Professional Development in 2026! I have enjoyed all of our conversations and love seeing the growth, not only in yourself, but in myself also! I appreciate your commitment to yourself, your peers, your department and your community.

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