COMPANY OFFICER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT – MAINTAINING CONSISTENCY IN A DYNAMIC ENVIRONMENT

EXECUTIVE ANALYSIS OF FIRE SERVICE OPERATIONS IN EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

BY: Gregory M. Anglin
Assistant Fire Chief
Patrick AFB Fire Department
Patrick AFB, Florida

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ABSTRACT

This research project identified criterion and considerations necessary when a fire department engages in the process of creating a company officer training and development plan. The problem was the absence of a Company Officer (CO) training and development plan at Patrick Air Force Base Fire Department (PAFBFD). The lack of a CO training and development plan has resulted in CO’s not being familiar with core competencies (broad knowledge, skills, and abilities that employees must possess to work in an organization) and task requirements narrowly defined knowledge, skills, and abilities that are job specific).

The purpose of this applied research project was to identify elements necessary for inclusion in a CO training and development plan. This research project employed descriptive and evaluative research methodologies to answer the following questions:

1. What national standards exist for company officer training and development?
2. What criterion are other fire departments utilizing for company officer training and development?
3. What criterion will PAFBFD utilize in a company officer training and development plan?

The procedures used to complete this research included a review of fire service literature, a review of PAFBFD documents and records, a statewide survey (State of Florida) of forty-eight chief officers and a survey of PAFBFD present and future CO’s.
The results of this research identified deficiencies that existed in the training and development of CO’s and provided information that identified the basic criterion necessary to include in a training and development plan.

This research paper recommended that PAFBFD utilize the information provided as a guideline to assist in the decision making process for the creation of a CO training and development plan for PAFBFD CO's.
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INTRODUCTION

The problem is Company Officers at Patrick Air Force Base Fire Department (PAFBFD) receive modest training and no career development assistance. The lack of a company officer (CO) training and development plan has resulted in CO’s not being familiar with minimal core competencies (broad knowledge, skills, and abilities that employees must possess to work in an organization) and task requirements narrowly defined knowledge, skills, and abilities that are job specific).

Since the department’s inception, on-the-job training (OJT) has been the dominant method for training new CO’s. In recent years PAFBFD has experienced an increase in emergency response activity, which has required increased CO knowledge, skill, and ability. The current method of training CO’s (OJT) has become antiquated and ineffective for continued use. It has been determined through evaluation that the creation of a training and development plan is necessary. It should also be noted that the United States Air Force (USAF) has chosen to adopt National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards in their entirety, which, include several standards significant to CO’s.

The purpose of this applied research project is to identify elements necessary for inclusion in a CO training and development plan. This research project employs descriptive and evaluative research methodologies to answer the following questions:

1. What national standards exist for Company Officer training and development?
2. What criterion are other fire departments utilizing for Company Officer training and development?

3. What criterion will PAFBFD utilize in a Company Officer training and development plan?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Patrick Air Force Base (PAFB) is located south of Cocoa Beach on the east coast of Central Florida. Originally known as the Banana River Naval Air Station the base housed United States Navy seaplanes that performed submarine patrol during WWII. The United States Air Force (USAF) took possession of the base after WWII and its mission has changed on several occasions from housing bomber aircraft and the renowned U-2 spy plane during the cold war era to it’s present day mission of supporting rescue and United States Department of State aircraft.

PAFB comprises approximately 3.3 square miles and has a daytime population of approximately 6,000 people. The fire department is responsible for providing services to a large industrial/business area, three housing areas (one of which is located outside the confines of the base), and aircraft rescue firefighting (ARFF) protection for the assigned, tenant, and transient aircraft. To accomplish its mission the department has fifty-nine assigned personnel operating out of one station. A second station located two miles south of the base was closed several years ago due to budget constraints.
PAFB Fire Department (PAFBFD) provides fire and rescue response on the base (and mutual aid requests by surrounding communities) excluding Advanced Life Support (ALS). Like a majority of other Air Force Bases within the United States, PAFB has contracted to an outside agency for ALS response.

Typically, the CO is a journeyman military or civilian firefighter who is thrust into an unfamiliar environment armed only with the knowledge derived from their predecessor (who received the same type of training) through OJT. This type of training has resulted in poorly trained CO’s who have little understanding of core competencies and task requirements. Newly assigned CO’s have not had the opportunity to master firefighting skills let alone CO skills.

In previous years, Air Force Base fire departments were narrowly focused and OJT was an acceptable method for training CO’s. Today that focus has broadened to include hazardous material mitigation, confined space rescue, and emergency medical response to name a few. This broadened focus combined with the USAF’s adoption of NFPA standards has made it necessary to formalize CO training and development.

Compliance with NFPA standards and insuring the CO is prepared to handle the leadership function as well as any responsibility assigned to him or her without incident should take precedence. The consequences of not formalizing a training and career development plan will result in CO’s not being familiar with minimal core competencies (broad knowledge, skills, and abilities that employees must possess to work in an organization) and task requirements (narrowly
defined knowledge, skills, and abilities that are job specific) and may have far reaching implications.

The Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management course at the National Fire Academy challenges executive fire officers to incorporate the Incident Management System (IMS) into training and development plans for CO’s. The IMS model will be utilized throughout the process of developing a CO training and development plan.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 1561 addresses the need for an IMS. An incident management system that meets the requirements of NFPA 1561, *Standard on Fire Department Incident Management System*, shall be established with written standard operating procedures applying to all members involved in emergency operations. All members involved in emergency operations shall be trained in the system. The incident management system shall be utilized at all emergency incidents. The incident management system shall also be applied to drills, exercises, and other situations that involve hazards similar to those encountered at actual emergency incidents and to simulated incidents that are conducted for training and familiarization purposes. The current method of training CO’s at PAFBFD is undeniably in need of change.

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

A literature review was conducted in order to gain relevant information concerning Company Officer (CO) training and development. The literature
review targeted trade journals, magazines, and textbooks that contained
information on CO training and development.

**Standards Influencing Company Officer Development**

The literature review revealed the following National Fire Prevention
Association (NFPA) Standards: 1021, 1500, 1521, and 1561. These standards
influence CO career training and development in that they provide clear
guidelines for elements that are necessary to be included in training and
development plans.

*NFPA 1021, Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications (1997
edition).* This standard outlines minimal qualifications for fire officers. Chapter 2
includes the following the major components necessary for inclusion in a CO
training and development plan:

*General Prerequisite Knowledge for Fire Officer I.* The organizational structure
of the department; departmental operating procedures for administration,
emergency operations, and safety; departmental budget process; information
management and record keeping; the fire prevention and building safety codes
and ordinances applicable to the jurisdiction; incident management system;
socioeconomic and political factors that impact the fire service; cultural diversity;
methods used by supervisors to obtain cooperation within a group of
subordinates; the rights of management and members; agreements in force
between the organization and members; policies and procedures regarding the
operation of the department as they involve supervisors and members.
The Fire Officer I should be able to deal with administrative procedures that might include the following: transfers, promotions, compensation/member benefits, sick leave, vacation, requests for pay or benefits while acting in temporary position, change in member benefits, commendations, disciplinary actions, and grievances.

**General Prerequisite Skills.**

The ability to communicate verbally and in writing, to write reports, and to operate in the incident management system.

**Human Resource Management.**

This duty involves utilizing human resources to accomplish assignments in a safe and efficient manner and supervising personnel during emergency and non-emergency work periods.

**Inspection and Investigation.**

This duty involves performing a fire investigation to determine preliminary cause, securing the incident scene, and preserving evidence.

**Emergency Service Delivery.**

This duty involves supervising emergency operations, conducting pre-incident planning, and deploying assigned resources, according to the following job performance requirements.

**Safety.**

This duty involves integrating safety plans, policies, and procedures into the daily activities to ensure a safe work environment for all assigned members.
The NFPA 1021, 1997 edition identifies ethics as an essential element of knowledge for the Fire Officer. Fire officers are expected to be ethical in their conduct. Ethics implies honesty, doing what’s right, and performing to the best of one’s ability. For public safety personnel, ethical responsibility extends beyond one’s individual performance. In serving the citizens, public safety personnel are charged with the responsibility of ensuring the provision of the best possible safety and service.

Ethical conduct requires honesty on the part of all public safety personnel. Choices must be made on the basis of maximum benefit to the citizens and the community. The process of making these decisions must also be open to the public. The means of providing service, as well as the quality of the service provided, must be above question and must maximize the principles of fairness and equity as well as those of efficiency and effectiveness.

*NFPA 1500, Standard on Fire Department Occupational Safety and Health Plan (1997 edition).* Chapter 3 addresses training and development. The standard requires that all fire officers shall at least meet the requirements for Fire Officer I as specified in NFPA 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*. The officers in charge of fire prevention, maintenance, communications, and other specialized bureaus shall be responsible for special training needed by the personnel assigned to their particular staff function. They shall coordinate this special training with other plans of the department and with the training officer. When inexperienced members are working at an incident, direct supervision shall be provided by more experienced officers or members.
**NFPA 1521, Standard for Fire Department Safety Officer (1997 edition).**

Chapter 2 addresses organization. A health and safety officer shall be assigned to manage the fire department occupational safety and health plan. The health and safety officer shall be a fire department officer and shall meet the requirements for fire officer level I specified in NFPA 1021.

**NFPA 1561, Standard for Fire Department Incident Management System (2000 edition).** Chapter 3 addresses system components. Standard operating procedures shall define the roles and responsibilities of personnel assigned to command staff functions. Three specific staff positions shall be identified: information officer, incident safety officer, and liaison officer. Additional staff functions shall be assigned, depending upon the nature and location of the incident or upon requirements established by the incident commander.

**Company Officer Training and Development Considerations**

Clearly, today’s fire chiefs and officers are more than fire-scene leaders. They must also be knowledgeable in all the newer functions that apply to their departments and skilled in managing human, physical, and economic resources. Possibly most important, they must be flexible to adapt to rapidly emerging technological developments and the equally rapid changes of the political and social environment.

To be effective in this multifaceted environment, fire officers need to understand the organizational characteristics of their own department and how they differ from those of other departments. They also should be aware of productivity issues, research and planning, the administrative responsibilities of
higher-level officers, and public and community relations activities. Such awareness can help them perform their duties more effectively and participate in decisions as informed members of the department. Every fire company or firefighting unit should be supervised by a qualified company officer when in quarters, when responding to alarms, and when making in-service inspections (Carter & Rausch, 1999).

Company officers translate the goals of the department into goals and objectives for their units. This job requires considerable coordination among shifts. Officers work not only with operational objectives for the activities of the company (such as maintenance of facilities and equipment) but also training and development objectives.

The company officers are responsible for the organizational climate. Climate issues include helping fire fighters gain the greatest possible satisfaction both from their work on maintenance, housekeeping, and so on, and in the use and purchase of equipment and supplies. This may seem to be a difficult task, but many opportunities exist for providing social satisfaction and higher esteem through allocating work assignments that are seen as desirable, through encouraging appropriate participation in decisions, and through providing opportunities for recognition. To acquire the thorough competence outlined in NFPA 1021, officers need much more in-depth knowledge, which they can gain only through a systematic professional development program. Some of the many resources and opportunities available for learning are listed here:

- Departmental officer training programs.
• County or state fire training academies.
• Two-year community college fire science programs.
• Four-year college and university programs.
• National Fire Academy residence programs in Emmitsburg, MD, or Open University programs that are administered by a number of colleges on behalf of the National Fire Academy.
• A wide range of “University Without Walls” programs.
• Self-study in books or with correspondence courses aimed at meeting the standards of NFPA 1021 (Carter & Rausch, 1999).

The fire service has, in the past, promoted personnel and then sometimes provided additional training in the necessary skills. The recently revised NFPA 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications*, offers a menu approach that outlines performance objectives for fire officers. This approach allows jurisdictions to decide to which level of the Standard they want their personnel trained. These performance objectives may be used as a career ladder by both paid and volunteer officers. The areas outlined in the standard address performance objectives from first-line supervisor to administrator. While the officer in a smaller department may frequently function as a first-line supervisor, he also must have an appropriate level of knowledge of the administration and management of the department. A department or individual may use the standard to establish each level, one through four, for promotion or to equate each level of 1021 to a specific rank or responsibility.
Today we stress the need for training before promotion. Supervisory positions require many skills, none of which is more important than dealing with human resource management. The “First-Line Supervisor Training Program”, developed by the City of New York Fire Department, is an excellent example of this type of training. The National Fire Academy offers a number of supervisory-level courses that have a direct impact on the training of present and future officers. The one program that has gained the most attention is the “Executive Fire Officer Program.” This four-part program is an in-depth curriculum that includes case studies, research papers, group dynamics training, and projects. The program has received graduate-level credit recommendations from the American Council on Education.

Training Programs need to be updated and kept current. The continuing education requirements within a jurisdiction may vary; what doesn’t vary is the need for the most advanced training to keep up with the rigors of the profession. A competently trained and competently supervised firefighter is a safer firefighter. State and local training academies should have implemented a continuing education program that is directed not only toward basic skills training, but also ongoing training programs to increase professionalism (Bachtler & Brennan, 1995).

The most important means of accomplishing professionalism is education and training. Fire departments can obtain information on training programs and materials from various sources. Many of the national fire service organizations conduct regular conferences as well as professional development programs. The
IFSTA publishes a series of fire service training manuals, which are internationally validated on a regular basis. The training officer should also look at other departments in the area and review their training programs. It is not necessary or useful for each department to “reinvent the wheel” (Coleman & Granito, 1988).

Potential company officers should show an interest in professional development. What a firefighter learns in recruit school only serves as the first installment in a lifetime of learning. Would-be company officers should embrace training and education as a means of developing their careers (Smoke, 2001).

Along with the rest of the fire service, the role of the CO has changed and continues to change. This is natural and inevitable in the ever-changing world we inhabit. Today’s CO’s must know about and be able to deal with concepts such as gender equality and cultural diversity. They must know about planning, budgeting, and time management. In short, today’s CO must be a much more versatile and better-informed supervisor than in the past.

Today – more than ever – CO’s are in the “people business.” In many departments, a small percentage of CO’s time is spent dealing with emergencies. The majority of their time is spent dealing with people. (IFSTA, 1999).

A career development program includes the physical resources employees need, such as a career center, counselors, workshops, and a battery of interest assessments. One example of a successful career development program is found in a federal agency, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) / Western States. The IRS career development program works with employees in three steps:
It begins with the employee’s current position. Employees learn that the identification and filling of skill gaps along with the demonstration of high performance in the current job is the best foundation for career advancement.

Employees receive assistance in identifying career opportunities within the IRS and beyond.

Together, the employer and employee look at the competencies needed for desired positions and develop a career plan to achieve identified goals.

Three elements of a good career development program include:

1. Strong link with organizational needs. A good career development program begins with an assessment of organizational needs.
2. A clear definition of roles. Responsibilities must be clarified.
3. Appropriate resources. A good career development program gives employees access to various resources (Vavra, 1997).

In developing a career in the fire service, a person is likely to have established goals. These goals are either developed by the individual, the department they are affiliated with, or a combination of the two entities. To move forward in any profession we need specific growth and development – a direction. The best way to develop professionally is to have individual goals that mirror or parallel the goals and direction of the organization. There are four basic ways to pursue career development:
**Individually.** We can each personally, as individuals, look to classes, training, references and standards to work on improving our background and working towards our goals.

**Mentoring.** Mentoring is when a member or members of an organization handpick *successors to the throne*.

**Networking.** Working together with your peers within the organization is the third approach to personal and professional development.

**Systematic.** An organizational systematic approach is the fourth way to direct personal development and enlighten career goals and specific ways to achieve these goals (Laford, 1998).

**Literature Review Summary**

The literature review identified many types and methods of career training and development available to assist CO’s.

There are a multitude of resources and material available for learning such as department officer training programs, local or state colleges and universities, and the National Fire Academy.

NFPA standards influence CO’s training and development by providing clear guidelines for elements that are necessary to be included in training and development plans.

CO training and development has evolved from the OJT concept to formalized training and development plans incorporating instruction materials provided by entities such as IFSTA.
Finally, networking can prove to be a valuable tool to learn how others adopt, implement, and evaluate training and development plans.

**PROCEDURES**

This research project employed descriptive and evaluative research methodologies for the purpose of identifying criteria necessary for inclusion in a CO training and development plan and identified deficiencies that existed in training and development practices for PAFBFD CO’s.

The procedures used to complete this research included a review of fire service literature and a statewide survey (State of Florida) of forty-eight chief officers. A sample of fire departments throughout Florida was chosen to reflect organizations that are similar to PAFBFD (Appendix D) (i.e. demographics, call types, call volume, geography, weather, etc.). A survey instrument (Appendix A) containing twelve variables was developed to assess the types of training and career development that fire departments throughout the State of Florida are utilizing for CO’s. The survey asked personnel to rate various aspects of training and career development. Three sections were constructed. Section 1 asked open-ended questions based on general information in an attempt to gauge the size and education level of the respondent’s agency. Section 2 required yes or no, responses regarding the type of training and career development offered for CO’s. Section 3 employed a scale with responses ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 6 (don’t know). Those questions required an opinionated response and attempted to gain an understanding of the culture of
the respondent’s organization. Each variable was broke down and a frequency
distribution was listed for each possible answer (Appendix B).

The survey was drafted and pilot tested on several chief officers at the
Melbourne, Florida Fire Department. Forty-eight chief officers throughout the
State of Florida were surveyed using a stratified, systematic sampling procedure.
Of the forty-eight fire officers that were surveyed forty-six chose to participate,
giving a ninety-six percent return rate.

An additional survey was drafted and distributed to present and future CO’s at
PAFBFD asking them to identify and rank core competencies and task
requirements (from a provided list) in order of importance. The results of this
survey were translated into a job task analysis summary and blueprint (Appendix
C) that should be incorporated into a training and development plan.

Assumptions and Limitations

There were three basic assumptions associated with this research. First, it
was assumed that the authors cited in the literature review performed objective
and unbiased research. Second, it was assumed that each survey respondent
answered all questions fairly and objectively. Third, it was assumed that survey
respondents did not discuss variables listed in the survey instruments with one
another prior to completion of the surveys.

The limitations that affected this research project included time, ambiguous
training and development goals, research design, and statistical analysis.

The 6-month time limit imposed by the National Fire Academy for the
competition of this research project did not allow a more thorough review of
available literature nor did it allow sufficient time to directly research CO training and development outside that of PAFBFD. Amazingly, there was not an abundance of trade texts and journals (less than five years old) relating to CO training and development.

The initial goal of formalizing a training and development plan for CO's was ambiguous and lacked quantifiable objectives, however as the research neared closure some unmet needs were identified and methods to meet those needs were suggested to administrators who are responsible for plan implementation.

**Definition of Terms**

**Advanced Life Support** – Techniques and treatments designed for use with victims of advanced emergencies (i.e. cardiac related).

**National Fire Protection Association** – An international, non-profit, membership organization founded to protect people, their property and the environment from destructive fire.

**Standard Operating Guidelines/Procedures** – An organizational directive that establishes a standard course of action.

**International Fire Service Training Association** – An educational alliance organized to develop training for the fire service.

**Job Task Analysis** – The process of breaking down the various things necessary to accomplish an objective into specific, defined parts or steps.

**Blueprint** – Any detailed plan or outline.
RESULTS

Answers to Research Questions

Research Question 1.


The NFPA 1021 Standard is a professionally recognized standard that has been specifically designed to identify concise job performance requirements that can be used to determine that an individual, when measured against the standard, possess the skills and knowledge to perform as a fire officer (NFPA 1021, 1997).

Research Question 2.

It was determined through the survey (Appendix A) and literature review that the criterion other fire departments (organizations) utilize to train and develop their CO’s (employees) vary as widely as the departments (organizations) themselves. Most departments develop their own criterion.
The survey analysis and findings (Appendix B) indicated that less than 10% of departments have a career development program, 68% of respondents have formal training requirements for CO’s, 80% have informal training requirements, and less than 10% require college degrees prior to promotion. The survey analysis and findings indicated that 86% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that there is a need for a fire officer career development program; 68% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that having fire officers certified as State of Florida Fire Officer I and II would benefit their agency; 61% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that certifying fire officers to NFPA 1021 would benefit their agency, 98% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that requiring fire officers to possess a related college degree would benefit their agency, and 66% of respondents either agree or strongly agree that it is their agency’s responsibility to assist with fire officer career development.

There were few or no constructive comments listed on the survey from the respondents.

**Research Question 3.**

A sound starting point for the training and development of PAFBFD CO’s shall be with the NFPA standards identified in this research paper since the USAF has chosen to adopt them. These standards identify the minimum job performance requirements for fire officers. The job task analysis and blueprint (Appendix C) shall be incorporated into the training and development plan. Unique job performance requirements shall also be incorporated into a training and development plan in addition to those outlined in NFPA standards. Training
materials such as those offered by IFSTA shall be utilized for the initial and continued development of CO’s.

**Conclusions Derived from Results**

The surveys returned indicated that the majority of fire departments surveyed have formal and informal training plans however very few have career development plans. This is relevant information because according to the surveys, most departments have plans for training their fire officers but there are no plans to assist them with their career development. Translated this means that executive fire officers should concentrate their efforts on ensuring that their fire officers are prepared to lead their respective departments into the future.

It should be noted that the State of Florida has its’ own standards and training requirements which are similar to NFPA Standards but do not mirror them. Also the Florida State Fire College accredits fire training and education in the State.

**DISCUSSION**

There is a pervasive attitude throughout the literature review. Three topics recurred that are salient to training and development for CO’s.

The first recurring topic was OJT. OJT was identified as the least desirable method to train CO’s. The review of PAFBFD documents and records revealed that OJT is the dominant method utilized to train CO’s. Explanation – OJT is an easy training method.

In the past, fire chiefs may have felt that the best training was done strictly within the fire service. That attitude is changing as specialists and specialty
organizations, including community colleges, government training agencies, private sector technical specialists, and others offer their services to modern fire departments (Bachtler & Brennan, 1995).

The second recurring topic was training and education budgets. Training and education budgets do not receive adequate appropriations and are usually the first to get cut during recessions. PAFBFD has a training and education budget but it does not specifically include CO training or education because OJT has no associated cost and there is no actual incentive (for CO’s) to increase education levels. When a formalized training and development plan is instituted there will be a need for a budget to train and educate CO’s.

The modern fire department, regardless of size or configuration, is essentially incomplete and virtually nonfunctional without adequate education and training. If the leaders of the organization have attained an educational level that allows them to supervise and manage the organization effectively, its ability to achieve its complex mission is enhanced. While the fire service leaders of today are faced with many complex problems, current needs also must be balanced against future needs and a sense of direction. The difference between good fire departments and great fire departments, and the difference between capable leaders and great leaders, is a matter of knowledge – knowledge gained through training and education (Bachtler & Brennan, 1995).

The third recurring topic was the overall state of training and development for CO’s nationwide. There is a lack of adequate training and development for CO’s, especially those operating in smaller departments. PAFBFD has not had
adequate training and development; however there are resources available to assist with training and development efforts (i.e. NFPA standards). Fire service managers need to do a better job of utilizing resources and evaluating plans to ensure they meet the needs of the organization.

Career development is a personal function that often does not receive the attention it deserves. Yet, for effective operation, hiring, promotion, and, of course, training, it must consider all aspects of career development, from ensuring that competence standards of all positions are met to career counseling (Carter & Rausch, 1999).

More than any other position, CO’s can turn the fire department’s mission statement into a reality. Through leadership and example, CO’s train their crews to reflect the department’s goals and standards.

For years, Retired Fire Chief Morton Shurtleff, Milton, Mass., taught an excellent officer development course for the National Fire Academy and Society of Fire Service Instructors. He asked students what they feared most about their new jobs. The majority of students said their greatest fear was promotion without the benefit of some sort of officer training – and not just basic fire ground command or scene size up training. These students wanted training in such areas as discipline, counseling, grievances, and other personnel issues – and with good reason. An effective CO acts as a coach, counselor, mentor and more to their crew.

Having officers certified at the NFPA 1021 level assures several things. First, it provides an orderly progression in the career development of individuals, and
provides consistent, realistic standards for assessing their skills, knowledge, and abilities. For organizations, use of these standards provides tangible evidence of the competency of their officers (Smoke, 2001).

The following is a list of suggestions when an organization is considering implementing a career development program:

- Gain support early.
- Ensure that it’s well integrated into overall human resources strategy and other human resources initiatives.
- Tie programs to organizational needs; the best programs today are seen as a part of an employee development program.
- Pay attention to the importance of mid- or line management buy-in. The program can be undercut by line management, and becomes another human resources “program of the day.”
- Pilot to measure and build support: don’t just roll out without piloting; those programs tend to experience more difficulty.
- Pay attention to the importance of ongoing marketing to all stakeholders. There are different stakeholders who have different needs that should be marketed to continuously (Vavra, 1997).

The intent of this research was to determine what criterion exists to train and develop CO’s. The literature review produced a limited amount of data from several areas, mainly trade texts and journals. The standards identified the minimal requirements and the foundation was set for which to build the remainder of the research.
It was concluded that there are an abundance of training and development plans available specifically tailored to CO's. While the minimal requirements are identified in NFPA standards, the remaining elements to include in a training and development plan are based on the requirements of the jurisdiction and on local needs.

The results of this research project ensure those having responsibility for plan decisions have comprehensive criterion based information on training requirements for CO's available for reference and input and that this information may be incorporated into a training and development plan. This information will prove invaluable when uncertainties or confusion arise during the decision making process.

The areas of compliance with the appropriate standard and local requirements should receive primary attention when formalizing a training and development plan.

Personal observation revealed several changes that could be implemented seamlessly and several that require major change. This study produced results that were similar to previous opinions, studies, articles, and surveys. Based on the findings of this study, we should look at some very necessary changes in the way we are training and developing CO’s. We need to realize that we have been dragging our feet in the recognition and implementation of a sound CO training and development plan.

Formal training requirements established by the USAF for fire department personnel have increased by hundreds of hours and there are informal training
requirements as well it is essential that FD administrators ensure appropriate and ample training and development is being provided.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

PAFBFD managers should work to improve the level of service quality through training and development of CO’s. Administrators should also perform a comprehensive evaluation to determine what course of action is necessary to ensure adequate training and development is being provided. The results of this evaluation should be used to develop a CO training and development plan. A well-defined plan in conjunction with measurable design and performance objectives will help clarify current requirements of CO’s and future goals. Based on this research, the following recommendations are presented:

- Training should be structured and formal, using concepts identified in this research paper. This is critical for improved service quality.
- Formal and informal training requirements, a professional development plan, rules and regulations requiring standards, training, and certification should be adopted for CO’s.
- FD personnel involvement should be an essential element in developing CO training and development.

This research paper recommends that PAFBFD (and any other organization) utilize the information provided as a guideline to assist in the decision making process for the formalization of a training and development plan for CO’s. Key personnel shall be given specific direction for implementing strategies within
specified time frames. Following the plan requirements, recommendations for
evaluation must be reviewed and re-evaluated at monthly staff meetings, in
monthly reports, and in quarterly newsletters. The author recognizes the need for
further evaluation and study.
REFERENCES


Boston: Author.


APPENDIX A

OFFICER DEVELOPMENT
ALL INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS SURVEY IS TO MEASURE THE LEVEL OF OFFICER DEVELOPMENT FOR FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL IN THE STATE OF FLORIDA. THIS SURVEY IS BEING CONDUCTED AS AN APPLIED RESEARCH PROJECT, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EXECUTIVE FIRE OFFICER PROGRAM AT THE NATIONAL FIRE ACADEMY.

Section 1 Please answer all questions.

1. The name of your agency ________________________________
2. Your current job title ________________________________
3. Number of Officers (Company Officers through Chief) _______
4. Number of college degree possessed by all personnel _______

Section 2 Please check yes or no to the following questions:

1. My agency has a career development program for fire officers.
   Yes __  No __

2. My agency has formal training requirements for fire officers based on recognized criteria such as IFSTA, National Fire Academy, or Florida State Fire College.
   Yes __  No __

3. My agency has formal training requirements for fire officers based on department specific criteria.
   Yes __  No __

4. My agency has informal training requirements for fire officers
   Yes __  No __

5. My agency requires personnel to possess a college degree prior to promotion to the officer level.
   Yes __  No __
6. Fire officers in my agency are trained and/or certified to the NFPA 1021 Standard.
   Yes ___ No ___

7. Fire officers in my agency are required to possess State of Florida Fire Officer I or Fire Officer II certification.
   Yes ___ No ___

Section 3 Please circle the answer that best represents your opinion.

SA = Strongly Agree   A = Agree   N = Neutral   D = Disagree   SD = Strongly Disagree   DK = Don’t Know

1. My agency has a need for a fire officer career development plan.
   SA   A   N   D   SD   DK

2. Having fire officers certified as State of Florida Fire Officer I & II would benefit my agency.
   SA   A   N   D   SD   DK

3. Certifying fire officers to NFPA 1021 would benefit my agency.
   SA   A   N   D   SD   DK

4. Requiring fire officers to possess a college degree would benefit my agency.
   SA   A   N   D   SD   DK

5. It is my agency’s responsibility to assist with fire officer career development.
   SA   A   N   D   SD   DK

Additional Comments
APPENDIX B
ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Of the forty-eight fire officers that were sent surveys regarding training and development, forty-six chose to participate, giving a ninety-six percent return rate. The following is a breakdown of each variable, with a frequency distribution listed for each possible answer.

Variable 2.1
Of the forty-four fire officers that responded to this question,
• 9% yes
• 91% no

Variable 2.2
Of the forty-four fire officers that responded to this question,
• 68% yes
• 22% no

Variable 2.3
Of the forty-seven fire officers that responded to this question,
• 68% yes
• 22% no

Variable 2.4
Of the forty-seven fire officers that responded to this question,
• 80% yes
• 20% no

Variable 2.5
Of the forty-three fire officers that responded to this question,
• 9% yes
• 91% no

Variable 2.6
Of the forty-eight fire officer that responded to this question,
• 9% yes
• 91% no

Variable 2.7
Of the forty-six fire officers that responded to this question,
• 49% yes
• 51% no
Variable 3.1
Of the forty-eight fire officers that responded to this question,
• **76% Strongly Agree**
• 10% Agree
• 4% Neutral

Variable 3.2
Of the forty-eight fire officers that responded to this question,
• **38% Strongly Agree**
• 30% Agree
• 2% Neutral

Variable 3.3
Of the forty-seven fire officers that responded to this question,
• 4% Strongly Agree
• **57% Agree**
• 13% Neutral
• 22% Disagree

Variable 3.4
Of the forty-eight fire officers that responded to this question,
• **88% Strongly Agree**
• 10% Agree
• 2% Neutral

Variable 3.5
Of the forty-seven fire officers that responded to this question,
• 4% Strongly Agree
• **62% Agree**
• 16% Neutral
• 14% Disagree
APPENDIX C

Patrick Air Force Base Fire Department
JTA Summary and Blue Print for Company Officer

TASK BY DUTY AREA AND RANKED BY ORDER OF IMPORTANCE:

DUTY AREA I  EMERGENCY INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

TASK 10  Communicate by face-to-face or radio to fire officers and firefighters.
TASK 41  Ensures company safety while operating at emergency incidents.
TASK 3  Conduct incident size-up to determine course of action.
TASK 2  Initiate the Incident Command System at major incidents.
TASK 6  Select and apply strategies and tactics for motor vehicle accidents.
TASK 13  Supervise and inspect the return of apparatus after an incident.
TASK 5  Select and apply strategies and tactics for fire suppression.
TASK 7  Select and apply strategies and tactics for specialized rescues.
TASK 4  Supervise a company in incident activities in a safe and efficient manner.
TASK 9  Determine tactics required for identifying, securing and handling hazardous materials incidents.
TASK 8  Supervise emergency medical care at mass casualty incidents.

DUTY AREA II  DEMONSTRATE SUPERVISORY AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

TASK 20  Transmit orders and communications to subordinates.
TASK 12  Supervises/gathers data and complete a fire incident report.
TASK 26  Implement department rules, policies, and procedures.
TASK 18  Assign functions to be carried out by subordinates.
TASK 19  Motivate and lead subordinates to improve teamwork, productivity, and efficiency.
TASK 24  Respond to public inquiries and requests for information.
TASK 39  Supervises competition of the station logs and required reports.
TASK 40  Supervises company inspections in the district.
TASK 15  Counsel subordinates in order to correct behavior and improve performance.
TASK 43  Completes special tasks assigned by administration.
TASK 1  Supervise pre-fire planning within the district.
TASK 16  Participate in the resolution of employee complaints and grievances.
TASK 14  Evaluate the performance of subordinate personnel.
TASK 42  Coordinates and supervises multiple fire stations.
TASK 29  Conduct training classes and drills.
TASK 17  Discipline subordinates.
TASK 23  Conduct preliminary investigations of accidents and injuries involving the Department.
TASK 22  Conduct station meetings.
TASK 28  Orient newly assigned mid level managers and station personnel.
TASK 21  Recommend transfer, promotion, and assignment of personnel.

DUTY AREA III  DEMONSTRATE SUPERVISORY AND LEADERSHIP SKILLS

TASK 29  Conduct training classes and drills.
TASK 31  Recommend topics to the Training Officer and plan future training needs.
TASK 30  Critique emergency incidents to improve performance.

DUTY AREA IV  SUPERVISE CARE AND MAINTENANCE OF STATION, APPARATUS, AND EQUIPMENT.

TASK 32  Supervise daily, weekly, and annual inspections of equipment to ensure company readiness.
TASK 33  Supervise inventory of equipment to ensure company readiness.
TASK 38  Orders repairs of station facilities, apparatus, and equipment.
TASK 37  Inspect bunker gear and equipment for readiness.
TASK 34  Supervise the cleaning of the station.
TASK 35  Supervise hydrant and hose testing.
TASK 27  Manage station inventory.
TASK 36  Order supplies to maintain a stock for the station.
APPENDIX D

1. Altamonte Springs
2. Boca Raton
3. Boynton Beach
4. Bradenton
5. Brevard County
6. Broward County
7. Cape Canaveral
8. Cape Coral
9. Casselberry
10. Clearwater
11. Cocoa
12. Cocoa Beach
13. Coral Gables
14. Coral Springs
15. Daytona Beach
16. Ft. Lauderdale
17. Ft. Myers
18. Ft. Pierce
19. Ft. Walton Beach
20. Gainesville
21. Hialeah
22. Indialantic
23. Jacksonville
24. Key Biscayne
25. Key West
26. Kissimmee
27. Lakeland
28. Lake Worth
29. Melbourne
30. Miami
31. Miami-Dade
32. Naples
33. New Port Richey
34. Ocala
35. Orlando
36. Ormond Beach
37. Palm Bay
38. Panama City
39. Pensacola
40. Pinellas County
41. Pompano Beach
42. Rockledge
43. Sarasota
44. Satellite Beach
45. St. Augustine
46. Tallahassee
47. Titusville
48. West Palm Beach