

**Delhi Township Fire Department**  
**Professional Development**  
**for Company Officers**

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A proposed research project submitted to the Ohio Fire Executive Program

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## **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

I hereby certify that the following statements are true:

1. This paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.
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## **ABSTRACT**

The Delhi Township Fire Department (DTFD) offers its personnel numerous fire and emergency medical training programs targeted to continue providing the best customer service possible to the community. These training programs are designed for the firefighters to give them the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to be the best of the best. The focus of these programs is to continuously educate the firefighters on the basics and expand their knowledge on current best practices.

The problem that this study addressed was DTFD has no formal process for professional development for the company officers to correct operational deficiencies that are occurring. The purpose of this study was to identify strategies, incentives and/or programs that will educate and improve the development of company officers. The descriptive research method was used to investigate what the minimum professional standards are, along with the programs that are being used by others to prepare their company officers. The research also examines what DTFD personnel are doing to develop themselves and what the department's Chief Officers think should be included in a development program for company officers.

The procedures for this study included extensive literature reviews, internal and external survey instruments and interviews. The results revealed that a program should model the professional standards of NFPA 1021 and IAFC, consisting of education, training, experience and self-development. DTFD should consider developing a program to better prepare the company officers for their critical role in the organization.

The research recommendation was for DTFD to focus attention on a professional development program for company officers to ensure these individuals understand the roles and

responsibilities of their position, as well as increase the overall efficiency and effectiveness of DTFD's delivery of emergency services to the community.

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## INTRODUCTION

### **Statement of the Problem**

Clint Smoke writes in his book, *The Company Officer*, that the company officer's job is vast and varied and it covers many diverse topics. Company officers are expected to walk into a new job, know all the answers, and be ready to go to work. In reality, life is not quite like that. We learn something new every day and yet we really never know all the answers. However, we can prepare to make the transition from firefighter to fire officer with study and effort (Smoke, 1999).

The problem that this study addressed was Delhi Township Fire Department (DTFD) has no formal process for professional development for company officers to correct operational deficiencies that are occurring. Talking with Assistant Chief Moore (personal conversation, September 10, 2009) the chief officers of the department do not feel that they have enough individuals qualified to step up and adequately perform as a lieutenant and/or captain. A few of the issues that face us are that the current company officers have inconsistencies with what they accomplish, time management and making the transition from buddy to boss. Fire Chief Bill Zoz (personal conversation, October 6, 2009) feels that the main issues for individuals are the lack of stepping up in a leadership role and decision making.

"Career development is a formal approach utilized by the department to ensure that firefighters and officers with the proper qualifications and experience are available when needed and that their careers are productive until their retirement date" (Edwards, 2000, p.133).

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to identify strategies, incentives and programs that will educate and improve the development of the company officers. The recommendation of this research study will be presented to the department's chief officers for review and adoption.

## **Research Questions**

The descriptive research method was used for this applied research project. Two surveys were used to get feedback from career personnel at Delhi Township Fire Department and similar fire departments with this problem.

The answers to the following questions were pursued:

1. What are the minimum professional standards for a company officer?
2. What classes and/or programs do others use to prepare their company officers?
3. What are DTFD personnel doing to develop themselves to be company officers?
4. What do the Chief Officer's of the department think should be included in a company officer professional development plan?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

Delhi Township is located on the west side of Cincinnati, in southwest Ohio, and is bordered on two sides by the City of Cincinnati. The township is approximately ten square miles and has a population of more than 30,000 residents. It is predominately a bedroom community with single family dwellings, apartments and condominium complexes. There is quite a bit of mercantile and commercial occupancies, but only a few light industrial facilities.

The DTFD's primary purpose is to provide fire protection, emergency medical services, both basic life support (BLS) and advanced life support (ALS), and technical rescue services to the community. The department also provides secondary services such as, but not limited to, fire safety inspections, fire prevention activities, CPR and first aid classes. According to Assistant Chief Campbell (personal communication, September 5, 2009), DTFD responded to 3,363 incidents in 2008, with an operating budget of \$3.6 million

According to Pete Pritchard (personal communication, February 10, 2010), the department was formed in 1935 as a volunteer organization running out of one station in the center of the township. The east side of the township was growing rapidly, increasing the number of incidents with delayed response time, which caused the department to build its second station in 1956. A third station was built on the west side of the township in 2001 to serve that portion of the community and improve the average response times in that area.

Fire Chief Bill Zoz (personal communication, Octoberber 9, 2009), stated that DTFD is currently a paid career/part-time combination department operating on a three-platoon system consisting of three shifts. The first career fire chief was hired in 1940. Staffing has increased through the years and today we have three chief officers on a forty hour work week, one fire chief; two assistant fire chiefs; one career office manager; nine career company officers; and nine

career firefighter/paramedics, who are required to step into the company officer's role in the absence of a captain or lieutenant. The normal shift consists of six career and seven part-time personnel. The career personnel work a shift rotation, twenty-four hours on-duty with forty-eight hours off-duty. The fifty plus part-time personnel work either a twelve hour shift rotation every third day, or a twenty-four hour shift rotation every sixth day. The maximum staffing each day is thirteen firefighters, with the minimum being nine. There are basically two primary apparatus out of each station; one fire apparatus and one advanced life support transport ambulance (DTFD, 2008).

The lieutenants are responsible for their station and their company that consists of the station, apparatus and the personnel assigned to them for the shift. The company is the workhorse of the fire department. The lieutenant directs the firefighters assigned to him/her for the day while responding to emergency fire and emergency medical service (EMS) calls. One company will routinely respond to EMS calls or fire details that can be handled with one company (ex. car fires, trash or dumpster fires and wires down, etc.). Multiple companies will respond to incidents involving structures or large scale incidents (ex. structure fires, appliance fires and fire alarms, etc.). The company officers also direct their companies to non-emergency tasks such as public education, fire safety inspections, installing smoke detectors and servicing fire hydrants. The company officers also have numerous administrative responsibilities assigned to each of them such as maintenance, training, inspections, uniforms, SCBA maintenance and so on. It is also the responsibility of the lieutenants to train their firefighters to maintain the knowledge, skills and abilities to handle emergency situations as they arise and to always be in a constant state of readiness. The company officers need to have a broad knowledge in many areas in order to effectively lead his/her company.

Forty-seven percent of our career personnel that are put into the company officer role have less than five years of experience. This lack of experience or training has lead to poor communications and inappropriate actions on fire scenes, such as screaming on the radio and freelancing; assignments not being competed, such as lack of scene size-up and inappropriate attack strategies; lack of direction for the remaining personnel; inconsistent enforcement of policies and procedures, etc. Talking with Assistant Chief Moore, he states that these personnel are unsure of how to handle these situations and need additional trainings. Compounding the factor of inexperienced company officers is the lack of an ongoing and systematic training program to assist them in position specific professional development. These inadequacies have led to inconsistent company officer performance.

The past company officer development regimen relied on their past experience and on-the-job training which continued to perpetuate negative supervisory behaviors. According to Assistant Chief Jesse Moore (personal conversation, September 10, 2009), the first effort to encourage self-development in company officer candidates began several years ago through the incorporation of preferred educational guidelines for promotional eligibility. In addition, a reading list of text books were provided to study from for the promotional process, which consisted of a written test and oral interview to become a company officer. Another addition was the incorporation of the assessment center promotional testing. These additions encouraged candidates to seek professional development for the sake of successful promotion through positive performance ratings while competing in the promotional processes.

Within our department these changes to the promotional process produced positive results within the candidate pool. However, gaps of inconsistency still remain unresolved. First, the training provided was delivered and received through multiple sources. Per Assistant Chief

Jesse Moore (personal conversation, September 10, 2009), this created an absence of continuity and allowed for different interpretations of what will be expected of DTFD company officers. Secondly, due to the absence of a standardized company officer development program, the existing officers are not receiving a source of consistent and ongoing education and reinforcement of organizational values and expectations throughout their careers. This can and does lead to inconsistent performance of company officers. When faced with leadership challenges, newly promoted or acting officers have no recourse but to rely on informal mentorship with existing officers and the skills developed in the self-directed preparation for the promotional testing process. Regardless of their training, education, or skills, the company officers are expected by their subordinates and supervisors to perform to a high level of expectation in a very demanding and challenging position. Another problem is that the career firefighters are expected to temporarily fill in for their lieutenant when the lieutenant is absent due to vacation, training or illness. This substitution is treated very seriously and the expectations by the supervisors are very high for any person in the company officer's role. This substitution further emphasizes the lack of company officer training because the majority of the firefighters have less experience, limited leadership skills, and little supervisory training.

DTFD Training and Education Division hosts numerous voluntary training classes throughout the year to continually educate the lieutenants in areas such as, but not limited to, incident management, strategies and tactics. This informal approach permits individuals to miss out on the training to become effective leaders within our department.

Talking with Assistant Chief Jesse Moore (personal conversation, September 10, 2009), the administrative staff currently wants to promote two of the current lieutenants to the rank of captain. This captain's position would still be a company officer with added administrative

responsibilities, along with being the shift supervisor. There is also one vacant lieutenant's position that needs to be filled. The problem is the senior officers of the department do not feel that they have enough individuals qualified to step up and adequately perform as a lieutenant and/or captain. A few of the issues that we are faced with are inconsistencies with what the company officer accomplishes, time management and making the transition from buddy to boss. Fire Chief Bill Zoz (personal conversation, October 6, 2009) feels the primary issues are not being able to step up in a leadership role and decision making.

The significance of this study has shown the impact of this serious problem is that company officers are being assigned to positions of responsibility while still lacking in some areas of leadership skills, knowledge and experience. On-the-job training for these skills is inadequate or too slow, causing poor performance and decreasing the ability of DTFD to achieve its mission of "Protecting Your Tomorrows Today" (DTFD, 2004, p.1). DTFD does an excellent job of training its personnel to be firefighters, but is not doing enough to develop their supervisory, administrative and managerial skills.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Preparation for this research paper included reviewing published Executive Fire Officer Applied Research Projects (EFO and ARP), books, journal articles, National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, International Fire Service Training Association (IFSTA) manuals, International Association of Fire Chief's (IAFC), department policies, and personal interviews.

Some of the minimum professional standards to work as a company officer can be found as follows:

The International Fire Service Training Association [IFSTA], *Fire Department Company Officer* (1998), describes that the company officer not only provides that vital link during emergency operations, but also fills the same role in day-to-day activities. Consider the impact a truly motivated, progressive company officer has in the following departmental activities: use of rules and regulations, company management, pre-incident planning, fire company inspections, company training, departmental communications, company motivation, implementing goals and objectives, problem solving and career counseling, departmental records and reports, fire ground and fire station safety. “The fact is that the company officer plays an important role in the coordination of departmental goals and objectives and, in most instances, is the person who ensures that action is taken to accomplish day-to-day tasks” (IFSTA, 1998, p. 5).

NFPA Standard 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications* (2009), identifies minimum job performance requirements (JPR's) for certain fire service officer positions. “The standard can be used for training design and evaluation, certification, measuring, and critiquing on the job performance, defining hiring practices, and setting organizational policies, procedures, and goal” (NFPA 1021, 2009, p. 13). NFPA 1021 identifies four levels of

fire officer progression – Fire Officer I, supervisory; Fire Officer II, supervisory/managerial; Fire Officer III, managerial/administrative; Fire Officer IV, administrative (NFPA 1021, 2009). NFPA 1021 creates clear and concise job performance requirements that can be used to determine that an individual, when measured to the standard, possesses the skills and knowledge to perform as a fire officer (Appendix A).

For certification at the Fire Officer I, officers must meet certain requirements such as Firefighter II as outlined in NFPA 1001, Fire Instructor I as outlined in NFPA 1041 and have some general prerequisite knowledge that would be expected of an aspiring officer of the fire service (NFPA 1021, 2009). The Firefighter II designation, which comes from the NFPA 1001 standard, has been accepted as the standard of measurement for all firefighters in the United States (IFSTA, 1998). Firefighter I will provide the minimum level of training necessary for entry level firefighters. Firefighter II allows firefighters to operate under general supervision and to lead similarly trained firefighters in a specific task. Fire Instructor I certification allows firefighters to teach training on fire related topics (IFSTA, 1998). NFPA 1021 also indicates that officers must have training in the following areas in order to meet the Fire Officer I standard: human resource management, community and government relations, administration, inspection and investigation, emergency service delivery and health/safety. The objectives contained in the NFPA 1021 are addressed in the IFSTA, *Fire Department Company Officer* (1998).

This manual is written for firefighters who aspire to the position of company officers determined to remain versed in essential and innovative management, leadership, and human relations concepts; and for training officers responsible for teaching and developing officers and officer candidates. This manual further explains the general responsibilities of a company officer as follows: Maintaining company health and safety;

enforcing departmental rules and regulation, collecting pre-incident plan data; conducting company fire inspections, conducting company training evolutions; facilitating company motivation; implementing departmental goals and objectives; performing career counseling and problem solving; keeping departmental records and making reports. (IFSTA, 1998, p. 2) (Appendix B)

The Delhi Township personnel policy (Appendix C) describes what the expectations of the company officers are in the following job description. The company officer position has direct responsibility for company command during assigned tour. The company officer not only responds to fires and other emergencies, but this position requires a high level of knowledge and expertise in public safety, as well as a high degree of professionalism and courage. The desired knowledge, skills and abilities for the company officers are:

1. Must have the skill to teach and prepare for drills.
2. Must have the skill to apply the department's standard operating procedures.
3. Must have the ability to complete and fill out reports.
4. Must have the ability to lead subordinates and give orders effectively, especially under emergency conditions.
5. Must be able to rescue and render emergency medical assistance to fire and emergency victims.
6. Must be able to assist in writing general orders and memorandums (DTFD, 2006).

The role of the company officer is diverse and demanding which means they must be knowledgeable in a broad range of topics. NFPA 1021 lists a number of areas in which the officer must be knowledgeable. Training in all the areas that are outlined in NFPA 1021 is critical in order for the company officer to be effective in the twenty-first century.

The NFPA and the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) have joined efforts and produced a text, *Fire Officer: Principles and Practices* (2006), and an integrated teaching and learning system for the Fire Officer I and II levels as defined in the NFPA 1021: Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications, 2009 Edition.

The second question to be researched is what classes and/or programs do others use to prepare their company officers.

The International Association of Fire Chief's (IAFC) *Officer Development Handbook* (2003), provides a well defined career development map for people that want to lead. This book defines career mapping as: Professional development that is the planned, progressive and a life-long process of education, training, experience, and self development (Appendix D). Training and education form the basis of a nationally recognized model for fire service professional development.

The right side of the Fire and Emergency Services Professional Development Model represents training, which is typically found in fire departments. The basis of this training is contained in the NFPA fire service professional qualifications standards starting with the entry firefighter and proceeding up through the officer ranks. The education side of the pyramid represents that an associate's degree should parallel the position of Fire Officer 1 and 2. The book describes the stages of a fire officer's career as supervisor, manager, administrator, and executive fire officer. The information that is presented in this book provides the recommendations for those professional development experiences, which are believed to have the greatest potential to develop the knowledge and skills for the successful fire officer. (IAFC, 2003)

Connealy from the Houston Fire Department wrote an article that explains that his fire chief enlisted him to create an officer development program for their newly appointed officers. The program consists of a forty-hour officer school and an additional sixteen hours of annual continuing education. The officer school is designed to enhance good management skills while setting the stage for a complete overhaul of standard practices. The continuing education program is broken down into four – four hour classes throughout the year that include a variety of topics such as change in emergency services, how to enhance their personnel power base and ethics, values and attitudes, and situational leadership (Connealy, 2000).

Sott from the Vancouver Fire Department (VFD) writes that he credits his department's company officer development program for his success to rise to his current rank of battalion chief. This program took NFPA's recommended four levels of officer development and added a fifth. The program consists of educational, experimental, and performance components. A firefighter is first promoted from the firefighter rank to the rank of Captain Step 1 level. Each step requires a minimum of two years experience at the previous step and ten or more classes at a higher level of education. The performance component consists of a review by the personnel administrator. Steps 1 and 2 are college level 100 and 200 courses or National Fire Academy courses. Step 3 consists of college level 200 and 300 courses. In Step 3, the captain is expected to work out of grade in the battalion chief's (BC) position when this chief is not on duty. The BC evaluates the captain for six shifts to ensure that the captain is ready for this position. During this time period, the captain is tutored, mentored, and observed on the functions of this position. Step 4 and 5 classes are college level 300 or higher. The Step 5 position is a station captain that is appointed by the fire chief, and there is only one of these per station. He goes on to compare Captain Step 1 to a probationary lieutenant, Captain Step 2 to a lieutenant off probation, Captain

Step 3 to a probationary captain, Captain Step 4 to a captain off probation, and Step 5 is the station captain. The program does require that at least one class per year be completed to foster continuing education.

The VFD company officer program has brought significant educational development to the organization. It has ignited the passions of firefighters wanting to promote, and current officers wanting to advance. Organizationally, our report writing abilities, program participation and leadership skills have grown exponentially. Leadership duties and program direction and oversight have been moved to lower levels of the organization and this has allowed chief officers to focus on the larger organizational picture. (Sott, 2007, p.70)

Mentoring is an important aspect of career development. A successful mentor helps to guide and coach you through the development experience and growth. A good mentor does not tell you what to do but rather gives you options, challenges you to see the big picture, encourages, identifies areas for improvement and helps you refine your skills. (Bruegman, 2009)

Chief Laskey writes in his book that mentoring people means giving them the stuff that they need to learn and improve. A good mentoring program will give the person a good sense of belonging to the organization and that someone else is willing to give them what they need to do their job better and to develop (Laskey, 2006).

Culp writes that succession planning helps the growth of the organization and developing the individual employee.

Succession planning is a process where future generations of a department are cultivated to take on additional or different responsibilities as they move around or up in an organization. Successful succession-planning programs employ a systematic approach to

develop an employee's talent. It guides the employee and establishes a pool of candidates for staffing needs. Succession planning techniques can be deployed to develop members for future assignments and for knowledge and skill enhancement in their current position. (Culp, 2008)

Furthermore, Culp describes the development and implementation of a succession plan involves several key components including job rotation, career path identification, education and mentoring, coaching and special assignments. Job rotation allows employees to experience a variety of jobs in different areas. A career map provides employees with a direction in their careers. The educational development plan ensures that the employee will apply effort where the skills learned will benefit them and the organization. A coach will assist in dealing with a problem or answering questions. A mentor helps develop more complex thinking as he encounters a variety of situations and experiences. Special assignments allow the employee to solve problems while working independently or within a group.

Employees who have experienced a variety of assignments, and made meaningful contributions, can be viewed as more diversified in their experiences. Having this diversity in their career will set the stage for them to tackle a broader range of issues, with experience on their side. Having a succession planning program provides structure for developing employees. When this process works to meet the strategic needs of the organization, the department has people available for identified opportunities, and employees feel their effort and worthwhile. Also, having prepared employees saves valuable ramp-up time when employees are promoted or transferred and helps maintain organizational momentum. (Culp, 2008)

In summary, the research suggested that there are various types of officer training materials such as NFPA 1021, IAFC Professional Development Model, continuing education, mentoring and succession planning that should improve the leadership skills of firefighters that want to promote to company officer. Using this information to develop a program to train firefighters prior to, or soon after being promoted to a lieutenant position, will provide the knowledge, skills and abilities that these company officer's need to become competent leaders for DTFD. This could lead to a proactive approach to address the specific challenges that our fire department is having.

## PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study is to identify strategies, incentives and/or programs that will educate and improve the development of the company officers of DTFD. The author sought peer and mentor interaction to help in the development of the proposal for this applied research project. The researcher also discussed the topic with DTFD Assistant Fire Chief of Operations Jesse Moore. It was vital to get the support of the Chiefs if this research topic is going to be considered for implementation. A descriptive research methodology was utilized to help guide the applied research project in seeking answers to the research questions.

In order to determine the resources that are available for identifying elements of a company officer development program, an initial search was conducted of the on-line Learning Resource Center (LRC) at the National Fire Academy. A review of professional development books, journals, periodicals and ARP's were available for this topic. Many of the resources were either beyond the scope of this study or irrelevant, but several provided background information beneficial to this study.

The researcher visited the local public library in Delhi Township, Ohio to look for additional resources to be used for this project. All of the resources that were being found were already in the author's possession from the National Fire Academy's LRC.

The researcher found several books that addressed what the minimum professional standards for company officers should be. The IFSTA, *Fire Department Company Officer* (1998) describes that the company officer not only provides that vital link during emergency operations, but also fills the same role in day-to-day activities. The NFPA Standard 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications* (2009), identifies minimum JPR's for certain fire service officer positions. And the Delhi Township personnel policy describes what

the expectations of the company officers are in the Lieutenant's job description.

While investigating what processes or programs are already being used by other departments for company officer development, the author found text and journal articles from the initial literature review. This literature was written by members of several departments that have development programs in place and excellent feedback was received. In addition to these resources, data was collected via an external survey (Appendix E) sent to fire departments throughout the State of Ohio on methods, training programs and best practices in training, education and experience that are required of today's company officers. A pilot test survey was sent to members of the Western Hamilton County Training Committee, which consists of multiple departments on the west side of Hamilton County. They were requested to give feedback on any confusion over the meaning of the questions as well as overall interpretation of the questions. The survey questions were then modified based on this feedback. The final survey was sent to 150 fire departments in the State of Ohio using a batch email list from the Ohio Fire Executive Officer alumni and current students. The author wanted to get feedback from around the State of Ohio as to what other departments are doing to develop their company officers and not limit the area to just the southwest Ohio region. All respondents recorded their county, department type, population and run volume so the data could be framed. Similar type departments to DTFD were then analyzed to see if they were successfully training their officers. To ensure single responses from each department, fire department names and FDID numbers were also tracked.

The eighteen career firefighters and company officers for DTFD were surveyed to collect data to identify what they are doing to prepare themselves for the role of company officer (Appendix F). This data includes each person's training, education, experiences and self-

evaluations. The author needed to find out where the current staff's training and education is so it can be related to current standards. A test survey was sent to two company officers and two firefighters and the survey questions were modified from the feedback obtained.

An electronic web-based research site was used to build the two surveys and they were sent out electronically via email. These two surveys were sent out March 1, 2010, and the author requested that they be completed by the end of March 2010.

In an effort to learn what components should be included at DTFD for a company officer program, the researcher interviewed the three chief officers of our department—Fire Chief Zoz, Assistant Fire Chief Moore and Assistant Fire Chief Campbell (Appendix G). These three chiefs were interviewed due to being the leaders and major stakeholders of the department. In addition, their support and buy-in for this program to be implemented is crucial.

## **Definition of Terms**

Company Officer – A lieutenant or captain in the Delhi Township Fire Department

Captain—This position is the same as a Lieutenant in the DTFD, with the additional administrative responsibilities and supervising the shift.

Lieutenant - This position has direct responsibility for company command during assigned tour: responds to fires and other emergencies. (DTFD, Lieutenant Job Description, 2006)

Fire Department – “An organization providing rescue, fire suppression, and other related activities” (NFPA 1021, 2003, p.6).

Fire Officer I – “The fire officer, at the supervisory level, who has met the job performance requirements specified in the standard for Level I” (NFPA 1021, 203, p.6).

Mentoring – The pairing of a more experienced and knowledgeable worker with a less experienced worker in an attempt to develop the less experienced workers job related knowledge, skills and abilities.

Officer Development Program – A management training program within the fire service designated to provide new and existing front line managers with the skills and resources to perform their jobs with proficiency and consistency.

Standard – used to indicate a source of reference that is published at the State and National level.

Succession Planning – “is the process of identifying and preparing, through mentoring training, education and development, appropriate candidates to replace, as required, key employees within the organization” (Wolf, 2006)

### **Limitations of the Study**

The results of the surveys do have some limitations. The external surveys were only sent to fire departments in Ohio which indicates that the data gathered only represents this area, and not the nation. One of the limitations was that the response to the external survey was limited to thirty-five percent of the departments surveyed. Another limitation was that the majority of departments that responded were larger than DTFD. Seven (30%) of the departments that responded that were of similar size to DTFD have officer development programs. Some departments have contractual limitations to their company officer training programs, along with hiring these individuals. There was a discrepancy of what a “formal” program meant to each individual department that answered the survey.

## RESULTS

**What classes and/or programs do others use to prepare their company officers?** The criteria used for personnel developing themselves as company officers were identified by an external survey instrument.

The external survey sample was sent to 150 departments throughout the State of Ohio. Fifty-three departments (35%) responded to the survey. Twenty-five (47%) of these departments are similar to Delhi Township in that they are combination career and part-time departments. Fifteen (28%) of these departments have a run volume that falls between 3000 to 5000 runs per year, DTFD makes approximately three thousand per year. Twenty-one (40%) have similar population, between 26,000 and 75,000, DTFD has approximately 30,000. Feedback from the external survey instrument revealed that fifteen (29%), of the fifty-three respondents utilized NFPA 1021 in the development of their company officer program. Thirteen (25%) are using a department based program. Five (10%) are using a college based curriculum. Three (6%) are using a program from the National Fire Academy. And only one (2%) is using standards that are set forth by the International Association of Fire Chief's.

The first step in identifying what others are using to prepare their company officers is to determine if other departments in fact have an officer development program. Thirteen (25%) organizations out of the fifty-three have a formal development program or process for their company officers. Out of thirteen respondents who have a program in place, one (8%) stated that the program has been in place for less than one year. Four (31%) of the departments stated that they have had a program in place for one to three years, and eight (62%) stated that their program has been in place for more than three years. Twenty-nine (56%) of the total organizations that responded indicated their department has specific criteria or qualifications that

must be attained by the company officer, twenty-one (40%) reported that they did not, and two (4%) stated that the question was not applicable.

There were thirty-five out of fifty-two departments (67%) that stated that they had no prerequisite training or education prior to becoming a company officer. Sixteen departments (31%) did have prerequisites and one department (2%) stated that it was not applicable. Forty-five of the forty-eight departments (94%) require a high school diploma as the minimum educational requirement to be a company officer while three (6%) indicated that they required other prerequisites. No department stated that they required an associates or bachelors degree. Thirty-nine of the fifty-three (74%) answered that their department does have an educational reimbursement program to attend a college or university.

Almost all the respondents require their company officers to have some sort of training certificates. Fifty (98%) require their company officers to be Firefighter II certified. Twenty-four (47%) respondents require Fire Officer I. Twelve (24%) respondents require Fire Officer II. Twenty-one (41%) require Fire Safety Inspector. Sixteen (31%) require Basic Emergency Rescue Technician (BERT) and Fire Instructor I.

Thirty-one (58%) out of the fifty-three respondents indicate company officers are required to attend some form of continuing education training. Eighteen (34%) departments do not utilize this form of educational methodology. Of the departments reporting that they use continuing education, their training revolves around incident management, fire ground strategies and tactics. Of these thirty-one departments only one half of the departments are training on leadership and administrative topics such as personnel management and communication skills.

Mentoring or experience is another important component to develop company officers. Thirteen of fifty-two (25%) organizations reported that they have a mentoring program in place while thirty-five (67%) that do not have any type of mentoring in place for their company officers.

In terms of the effectiveness of their officer development program, one (4%) of the twenty-seven departments that answered rated their program as “very effective”; Eighteen (66%) departments rated their programs as “somewhat effective”; while eight departments (30%) indicated their programs as being “minimally effective”.

This author followed up with several similar departments to DTFD that responded to the survey for clarification on what they were doing to develop company officers and how effective they were. There was some confusion on the terminology of what a “formal program” means. Several departments advised that they do send officers and officer candidates to classes and seminars. However, they did not classify their department as having a “formal program” due to how it is defined in their respective departments. In addition, they also advised that they have no process of evaluating the effectiveness of what they are doing to develop their company officers.

**What are Delhi Township Fire Department (DTFD) personnel doing to develop themselves to be company officers?** The criteria used for personnel developing themselves as company officers were identified by an internal survey instrument.

Fifteen of the eighteen (83%) members who may be assigned as company officers for DTFD responded to the survey. These members were asked to rate their knowledge, skills and abilities when they were placed in the company officer position. Nine (60%) stated that their knowledge, skills and abilities are “good”, while four (28%) say that they feel “adequate”. They

were then asked if they felt that they had an adequate amount of company officer training to execute all job related duties. Of the fifteen that responded, ten (67%) said that they have “adequate” training to execute all job related duties. They were also asked if there was adequate training for company officers. Out the fifteen, ten (68%) say that they feel “there is not adequate training” for the company officers. They were then asked if they felt that there should be a formal company officer program. Eleven people (73%) say they “strongly agree” that a formal company officer program should be offered. They were asked what they felt was the best way for company officers to develop and learn supervisory skills and abilities. Thirteen (86%) say that they think that mentoring is the best way for company officers to develop and learn the supervisory skills and abilities.

The respondents were asked to provide their highest level of education. Nine of the fifteen (60%) that participated in the survey say that they have some college but didn’t obtain a degree. There are three (20%) that have bachelors and another three (20%) that have an associate’s degree. Four (27%) of the fifteen answered that they have a high school diploma.

The respondents were also asked what training certificates they have acquired. Fifteen (100%) members have obtained the Firefighter II certification. The certification is a State of Ohio requirement to be career firefighter. There were five (33%) that have a Fire Officer I and four (27%) others that have Fire Officer II certifications.

If DTFD were to offer company officer workshops throughout the year, there were eleven (73%) firefighters who indicated that customer service, policies and procedures should be important. Nine (60%) indicated that fire ground strategies and tactics are very important.

They were asked what should be incorporated in the program. There were thirteen (87%) firefighters that indicated that the act of mentoring a practical application exercises should be

included in a company officer program. Thirteen indicated they would like to see fire/emergency medical scenarios. And there are eight (53%) who would like to have employee counseling scenarios.

**What do the chief officer's of the department think should be included in a company officer professional development plan?** The method used to determine what the chief officers think should be included in a company officer development program was an interview. The three chief officers were given the same questions (Appendix G).

The chief officers were asked what some of the operational issues were with the current company officers. The chief officers indicated that the current company officer's deficiencies were inconsistencies with completing station activities, time management in completing tasks, leadership of their personnel and the transformation from buddy to boss. Furthermore, the company officers indicated that the company officer's struggle to bring people together who have different backgrounds.

They were asked what should be the components of an officer development program. All three chiefs would like to see the department have a formal company officer development program that will provide continuity and a path that works towards the future. The chiefs' agree that the components need to include interpersonal skills, team building and leadership. Furthermore, the foundation should be the objectives and standards in NFPA 1021. All three also agreed that an associate's degree should be the minimum for company officers. The chiefs' consensus opinion was that the department should have a development program in place that the candidates could participate if they want to be promoted to an officer position. All three chiefs' agreed that NFPA 1021 needs to be used as a standard to develop the company officer program.

## **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to identify strategies, incentives and programs that will educate and improve the development of the company officers. The problem that this study addressed was the DTFD has no formal process for professional development for company officers to correct operational deficiencies that are occurring. This study looked at what professional standards are available, what other departments are doing to develop their firefighters and how effective are they. It also examined what current DTFD members are doing to develop themselves, and where they are deficient and what do the chief's of DTFD feel is needed.

The results from the literature review indicate that NFPA 1021 is a nationally recognized standard that may be used to prepare candidates to become company officers. There are also other models, standards and programs that are used to prepare officers. NFPA 1021 establishes the minimum job performance requirements for service as a fire officer. The intent of the document is to define progressive levels of performance required at the various levels of officer responsibility. However, the authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) has the option to combine or group the levels to meet local needs. There is nothing that prohibits any jurisdiction from exceeding minimum requirements.

NFPA 1021, Fire Officer I standard is the first level of progression designed for supervisors of a fire department. This standard outlines that the fire officer should have certain qualification, such as Firefighter II, and Fire Instructor I. All career firefighters in the State of Ohio are required to be certified to the level of Firefighter II. The Fire Instructor I certification is important for our members to have due to the fact that they are directly responsible for training the personnel assigned to them. This certification can be obtained locally and is relatively

inexpensive. Seven (47%) of the firefighters replied that they are certified fire instructors. This means that there are at least eight people that are required to operate as a company officer in DTFD that are not fire instructors. It is important for company officers to have this certification so they are better prepared to educate their crews in a variety of firefighting topics. DTFD has the resources to host this class in-house to further reduce the cost. Further cost reductions can be incurred by opening this training to other departments at a minimal cost. The standard for Fire Officer I also suggests that additional training in areas such as human resource management, community and government relations, administration, inspections and investigation, emergency service delivery and health/safety. Such topics could be offered either in one hour sessions at the beginning of officer and staff meetings or in daily company drills.

The IAFC has developed a program that defines a career development model for those that may want to lead in the fire service. This model incorporates the NFPA 1021 standard with other trainings, education and experience to form the bases of a nationally recognized model for fire service professional development. This professional development model includes trainings such as Fire Officer I and II. Additionally, it includes education paralleling these trainings with obtaining an associates or bachelors degree. There are some larger departments that have successfully incorporated these into their career development programs. Smaller departments similar to DTFD may not have the funding to offer both training and education to company officers or other members that are inspiring to become officers. DTFD does have resources to offer Fire Officer I and II classes for their personnel. These training classes may be setup in-house to reduce the financial burden to obtain the qualifications. DTFD does not have the funding to send all the members to get a college education. However, the department may be able to fund a few classes per semester for those that are interested. The department can support

these members in other ways such allowing members to attend classes while on-duty and covering their shifts.

The Houston Fire Department developed an officer development program that consisted of four classes that are conducted each year to provide sixteen hours of continuing education for all officers. Houston's training program has proven to be very successful and has exceeded the command staff's expectations. The survey revealed that thirty-one (58%) departments indicated that company officers are required to attend some form of continuing education. The continuing education workshop topics may be fire ground strategy and tactics, incident management, sexual harassment, leadership communication, policies and fire fighter health and safety. DTFD has trained informally on some of these topics in the past; training is encouraged but not a requirement for the officers. DTFD may be able to apply this type of training to its members on a smaller scale. It may be possible to have continuing education workshops on a bi-annually basis, along with incorporating a one hour officer training session at the beginning of each officers meetings.

The Vancouver Fire Department's program consists of educational, experimental and performance components. Their captains are tutored, mentored and observed on the functions of their position. "The VFD company officer program has brought significant educational development to the organization. It has ignited the passions of firefighters wanting to be promoted and current officers wanting to advance. "Organizationally, our report writing abilities, program participation and leadership skills have grown exponentially. Leadership duties and program direction and oversight have been moved to lower levels of the organization and this has allowed chief officers to focus on the larger organizational picture" (Sott, 2007, p.70).

In talking with the chief's at DTFD, this is one of the areas that our personnel need to improve on. The chief's would like for our company officers to take on additional responsibilities. The chief's have also commented on the lack of motivation of our personnel to take on such tasks within the organization. DTFD needs to research ways to bring enthusiasm back to the individuals that are in this crucial role within the organization.

Chief Laskey feels that mentoring people means giving them the stuff that they need to learn and improve. A good mentoring program will give the person a good sense of belonging to the organization and that someone else is willing to give them what they need to do their job better and to develop (Laskey, 2006). Thirteen (25%) departments have a mentoring program for the development of their company officers. This author followed up with these departments that have a mentoring program and they state that this method of development has been very successful in their officers. Thirteen (87%) of our firefighters replied that mentoring should be part of the development program. DTFD firefighters think that mentoring is the best way to teach them how to do the job of a company officer. Historically, DTFD has assigned the company officers directly into the position without mentoring or direction. The chief's have stated that this may have caused the individuals to be indecisive with their decision making process. This applies to both the non-emergency and emergency tasks that need to be completed. DTFD could create a mentoring program to develop newly appointed company officers as well as the members seeking to promote to the company officers prior to being assigned into a company officer position.

One (4%) department surveyed rated their organization's officer development program as being very effective. Eighteen (67%) agencies indicated their program as being somewhat effective, and eight (30%) organizations feel they are minimally effective in the development of

their company officers. The author followed up with some of these departments to obtain what criteria they used to determine the effectiveness of their company officer development programs. The effectiveness for the majority of these departments was subjective and they all responded that it could be improved by developing an objective evaluation process. DTFD currently has an annual subjective evaluation process and may benefit from implementing an objective process.

The results of the survey of fire departments indicated that thirteen (25%) responding departments had officer development programs in place. This is a significant finding due to 75% not having a formal process in place. However, twenty-nine (56%) do have specific criteria or qualifications that their company officers must meet. The survey revealed that even though they do not have a formal program in place, they do have specific criteria that they must meet. There was no correlation between departments that have a formal process and those that do not. There are departments of various sizes, both large and small, that have officer development programs in place. These departments have a wide range of budgets as well. On average, these departments are spending only 2% of their total operating budgets on training company officers. DTFD spends 1.4% on developing their company officers. This could possibly be due to the lack of interest on the members to obtain officer training. The DTFD training requests were obtained and revealed that all the officer trainings that were submitted by members were approved by the fire administration.

Ten (67%) of the firefighters replied that they have “adequate training” to execute the job related functions of a company officer. Nine (60%) of the firefighters replied that they have “good” knowledge, skills and abilities when they are assigned in the role of the company officer. These numbers are lower than desired by the chief officers and need to be increased through training, education and mentoring. Ten (67%) of the firefighters reported that there is “not

adequate” training for the company officers. This number is a lot higher than desired. The chief officers feel that the training is available to the members that want to pursue it. It is believed by the chief officers that the firefighters would like for the training to be brought to them, instead of having to go outside the organization. There seems to be a verbal conflict that could be improved by communicating the expectations of each other.

After reviewing all the programs, DTFD lacks a foundation on which to build decision-making models. DTFD has developed an active training division that must remain flexible and be willing to initiate programs to provide professional development experiences to prepare firefighters to become company officers. In the future, it will be critical for DTFD to provide a structured development program to prepare personnel for leadership positions and ensure that firefighters understand the similarities and differences between their roles and responsibilities and that of company officers.

An officer development program can enhance management skills while setting the stage for a complete overhaul of substandard practices. The results from the literature review, the DTFD firefighters, and the DTFD chiefs indicate that our members and the department would benefit from having officer training beyond what is currently being done.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

After reviewing the results of the literature and survey instruments, DTFD should create an officer development program to educate and train their company officers to better handle the challenges of the future and to better serve the community. The company officer development program should use NFPA 1021 and the IAFC Officer Development Handbook as its basis. The program should be setup to continually educate all members throughout the year on key topics

within the fire service and our organization. In addition, the program should include mentoring for candidates and new officers to help them develop their knowledge, skills and abilities. It is recommended that an officer development program incorporate all these facets to better prepare our current company officers along with officer candidates of the future.

This research provides a reference base for program content that not only meets standard applications but also provides specific content unique to the needs of DTFD personnel. The research project has reported on different aspects of company officer development that has benefited other departments and may benefit DTFD as well.

It is recommended that DTFD create an objective based officer development program to be implemented that will improve the effectiveness of the company officer. Based on information gathered from the literature review, surveys and results of this project, the following recommendations are designed to facilitate the development of a company officer program for DTFD.

1. The first step that needs to be taken is to obtain support from our chief officers of the department to implement a company officer development program.
2. The second step is to present the rough program ideas to the department's Training Committee to work out the details of the program. This program will have several components to it, including:
  - a. The company officers shall be certified as Fire Instructors.
  - b. The company officers must have attended a Fire Officer I class that meets the NFPA 1021 standard.

- c. Continuing education for the officers that are conducted bi-annually for a total of eight hours. The topics for these classes will be taken from the list in appendix “E” of this document.
  - d. A mentorship program should be implemented for members aspiring to be officers and newly appointed company officers. This program could be objective based so that the candidates would complete this while on-shift.
  - e. Evaluation Process – The candidates and the program need to be objectively evaluated to make sure that everyone is getting the results that we are seeking.
3. The third task is to create a change initiative to plan for scheduling and implementation. This will need to be strategically executed for a positive reception within the organization.

An objective based development program will be beneficial to both the Township and the individual by preparing individuals for critical roles within the organization. A better educated, trained and well rounded officer will increase the credibility of the organization and improve its effectiveness in dealing with current and future opportunities. In order to achieve this level of professionalism, we will need to implement an officer development program. This program will better prepare the members to ensure they will be able to function in achieving the larger goals of the organization which will better prepare them for future promotions within the organization.

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**APPENDIX A – NFPA 1021: STANDARD FOR FIRE OFFICER PROFESSIONAL  
*QUALIFICATIONS.***

NFPA 1021 identifies the required qualifications that the company officer candidate must meet in order to meet the Fire Officer I standard as follows:

- Human Resource Management – This duty involves utilizing human resources to accomplish assignments in accordance with safety plans and in an efficient manner. This duty also involves evaluating member performance and supervising personnel during emergency and nonemergency work periods, according to including assignments at an emergency operation, so that the instructions are complete, clear, and concise; addresses safety considerations and conveying desired outcomes.
- Community and Government Relations – This duty involves dealing with inquiries of the community and projecting the role of the department to the public and delivering safety, injury and fire prevention education programs, according to the following job performance requirements (JPR): Initiate action on a community need, given policies and procedures, so that the need is addressed.
- Administration – This duty involves general administrative functions and the implementation of departmental policies and procedures at the unit level, according to the following JPR: Recommend changes to existing departmental policies and/or implement a new departmental policy at the unit level, given a new departmental policy, so that the policy is communicated to and understood by unit members.

- Inspection and Investigation – The duty involves conducting inspections to identify hazards and address violation, performing a fire investigation to determine preliminary cause, securing the incident scene, and preserving evidence, according to the following JPR: Describe the procedures of the AHJ for conducting fire inspections, given any occupancy so that hazards, including hazardous materials, are identified, approved forms are completed, and approved action is initiated. Identify construction, alarm, detection, and suppression features that contribute to or prevent the spread of fire, heat, and smoke throughout the building or from one building to another, given an occupancy, and the policies and forms of the AHJ so that a pre-incident plans for any type of occupancies is developed. Secure an incident scene, given rope or barrier tape, so that unauthorized persons can recognize the perimeters of the scene and are kept from restricted areas, and all evidence or potential evidence is protected from damage or destruction.
- Emergency Service Delivery – This duty involves supervising emergency operations, conducting pre-incident planning, and deploying assigned resources in accordance with the local emergency plan and according to the following JPR. Develop and implement an action plan at an emergency operation. Develop and conduct a post incident analysis.
- Health and Safety – This duty involves integrating health and safety plans, policies, and procedures into daily activities as well as the emergency scene, including the donning of appropriate levels of personal protective equipment to ensure a work environment that is in accordance with health and safety plans for

all assigned members, according to the following JPR: Apply safety regulations at the unit level, given safety policies and procedures, so that required reports are completed, in-service training is conducted, and member responsibilities are conveyed. Conduct an initial accident investigation, given an incident and investigation forms, so that the incident is documented and reports are processed in accordance with policies and procedures of the AHJ. Explain the benefits of being physically and medically capable of performing assigned duties and effectively functioning during peak physical demand activities, given current fire service trends and agency policies, so that the need to participate in wellness and fitness programs is explained to members (NFPA, 2009).

**APPENDIX B – INTERNATIONAL FIRE SERVICE TRAINING ASSOCIATION (1998).*****FIRE DEPARTMENT COMPANY OFFICER. (3<sup>RD</sup> ED.).***

This manual is written for firefighters who aspire to the position of company officers determined to remain versed in essential and innovative management, leadership, and human relations concepts; and for training officers responsible for teaching and developing officers and officer candidates. This manual further explains the general responsibilities of a company officer as follows: Maintaining company health and safety; enforcing departmental rules and regulation, collecting pre-incident plan data; conducting company fire inspections, conducting company training evolutions; facilitating company motivation; implementing departmental goals and objectives; performing career counseling and problem solving; keeping departmental records and making reports (IFSTA, p. 2)

The manual has chapters that addressed the specific topics indicated above as follows:

- General - Assuming the role of company officer; fire department structure; company officer's legal responsibility and liability
- Human Resources Management - The company as a group; leadership as a group influence; elements of supervision and management; company level training
- Community and Government Relations – Government structure; community awareness and public relations; public education program development and implementation

- Administration – Labor relations; budgeting; information management; fire departmental communications
- Inspection and Investigation – Fire and life safety inspections; fire investigation
- Emergency Service Delivery – Pre-incident planning; incident scene communications; incident scene management; size-up and incident plans; action plan implementation.
- Safety – Firefighters safety and health (IFSTA, 1998, p. vi).

**APPENDIX C – DELHI TOWNSHIP. (2006). PERSONNEL POLICY.**

The Lieutenant (company officer) position has direct responsibility for company command during assigned tour. Responds to fires and other emergencies. Position requires a high level of knowledge and expertise in public safety, as well as a high degree of professionalism and courage. Employees in this position work operationally under the supervision of the duty Captain and administratively under their assigned Captain (DTFD, 2006).

This document goes on to describe the Lieutenant's duties and responsibilities as:

- Assumes command of emergency operations and whenever necessary, orders extra equipment, in the absence of a senior officer.
- Attends drills as required.
- Responsible for taking care of the apparatus and equipment during working hours.
- Thorough knowledge of the occupational hazards and corresponding safety precautions necessary for the safe performance of assigned duties.
- Thorough knowledge of fire prevention codes and the techniques necessary to conduct fire inspections.
- Performs emergency medical services.

Responds to all emergency incidents in the assigned area which he/she supervises.

- Ability to act quickly and calmly in emergency situations.
- Ability to understand and execute complex oral and written directions and to prepare clear and comprehensive reports.
- Must meet and maintain certification requirements to be certified as a paramedic in the State of Ohio

- Must meet and maintain certification requirements to be certified (at a minimum) to the level of FF-2 in the State of Ohio.
- Certified to Fire Officer II in accordance with NFPA 1021 within 3 years of appointment.
- Must maintain certification requirements to be certified as a fire inspector in the State of Ohio.
- Assists in coordinating of companies.
- Recommends discipline but does not have independent authority to impose discipline.
- Assists in supervising the work of personnel at an emergency scene.
- Assists in the enforcement of the rules, regulations, policies, procedures and orders of the department.
- Assists in maintaining order, discipline, and morale among members.
- Coordinates station activities through regular communication with other officers.
- Keeps abreast of the contemporary principles, practices, and methods of fire and emergency medical services.
- Trains and supervises company personnel.
- Enforces department rules, regulations, and procedures
- Assists in the maintenance of departments fire apparatus, vehicles, and equipment.
- Performs emergency medical services.
- Counsel subordinates regarding performance problems.
- Assists in the training and orientation of probationary employees.
- Skill in the use, care and maintenance of firefighting equipment.

- Assists in the department's fire prevention and community safety programs.
- Responds to complaints from citizens.
- Enforces the rules, regulations, policies, procedures, and orders of the department.
- Performs related duties as assigned.

The desired knowledge, skills and abilities for the Lieutenants are:

- Must have the skill to teach and prepare for drills.
- Must have the skill to apply the department's standard operating procedures.
- Must have the ability to complete and fill out reports.
- Must have the ability to lead subordinates and give orders effectively, especially under emergency conditions.
- Must be able to rescue and render emergency medical assistance to fire and emergency victims.
- Must be able to assist in writing general orders and memorandums.

This document goes on to explain the minimum qualification for Lieutenant:

- Must be a Delhi Township Department Career Firefighter for a period of four (4) years; or a Delhi Township Career Firefighter for a period of three (3) years and have an Associates Degree in firefighting; or must be a Delhi Township Department Career Firefighter for a period of two (2) years if having served as a Career Firefighter with another jurisdiction for a period of four years.
- This position requires administrative competence, leadership, and management abilities appropriate for the position of a first-line supervisor and requires a thorough knowledge of paramedic protocol.

- Ability to establish the command system on all emergencies including EMS and mass casualty incidents.
- Thorough understanding of the principles, practices, procedures, and equipment used in modern firefighting and EMS.
- Ability to analyze problems and develop methodical solutions.
- Thorough awareness of national contemporary trends affecting the fire and EMS services.
- Thorough understanding of the concepts related to superior customer service.
- Basic knowledge of the use of personal and laptop computers, including word processing and spreadsheet software, plus any department specific software;

**APPENDIX D – INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF FIRE CHIEFS, OFFICER  
DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK**

Supervising Fire Officer: *Training*

Element	Note
Firefighter 1	NFPA 1001; Firefighter 1
Firefighter II	NFPA 1001; Firefighter II
Fire Officer I	NFPA 1021; Fire Officer I
Incident Safety Officer	NFPA 1521
IMS	NIIMS
Instructor 1	NFPA 1041
Inspector 1	NFPA 1031
Emergency Medical Services	Per local requirements
Valid Driver's license	Per local requirements
HazMat; Operations Level	NFPA 472

Supervising Fire Officer: *Education*

Outcome	Discipline:	Communications
Ability to write detailed prose.	Level:  Suggested:	100  English Composition
Understanding and using basic interpersonal, group and public communication skills	Level:  Suggested:	100  Public Speaking

Ability to write accurate and clear letters, memos, technical reports and business communications.	Level: Suggested:	100 Business Communications
Understanding about ecosystem construction and destruction, energy production and use and waste generation and disposal	Level: Suggested:	100 Biology
Understanding basic principles of general chemistry including the metric system theory and structure.	Level: Suggested:	100 Chemistry
Understanding basic principles of areas of psychology: physiology, cognition, motivation, learning, intelligence, personality, and mental health.	Level: Suggested:	100 Psychology
Understanding basic principles of social groups, forces, structures, processes, institutions and events.	Level: Suggested:	100 Sociology
Understanding and using the basics of mathematical models; elementary concepts of probability and simulation; emphasis on business applications.	Level: Suggested:	100/200 Intro to Finite Math/Algebra
Understanding basic principles of information technology and business computer systems for effective daily use.	Level: Suggested:	100 Business Computer Systems

Understanding and implementing the basic principles of health, fitness and wellness	Level: Suggested:	100 Health/Wellness
Understanding basic concepts of government at the federal, state, and local levels.	Level: Suggested:	100 American Government
Understanding functional areas of human resource management and laws; job analysis, testing; performing interviewing, selection, training and performance evaluation.	Level: Suggested:	200 Human Resource Management
Understanding basic theories and fundamentals of how and why fire starts, spread and are controlled.	Level: Suggested:	100 Fire Behavior and Combustion
Understanding the components of building construction related to fire and life safety, including inspections, preincident planning and emergency operations.	Level: Suggested:	100 Building Construction
Understanding and performing basic responsibilities of company officers including supervision, delegation, problem solving, decision making, communications and leadership.	Level: Suggested:	200 Fire Administration 1

Supervising Fire Officer: *Experience*

Element	Application
Agency Operations	Qualified Responder: 3-5 years
Coaching	Peer coaching; e.g. recruits and other organizational workgroups. Small group leadership; sports teams, youth clubs, etc.
Directing Resources	Acting Officer: 200 hours including emergency response and non-emergency activities.
Incident Management	Function as the supervisor of a single resource unit.
Planning	Participate in a planning process
Instruction	Develop and deliver training classes
Human Resource Management	Develop teamwork skills
Financial Resource Management	Participate in or contribute to a station, project or small program budget
Project Management	Participate in an organizational work project.
Interagency	N/A
Emergency Management	Participate in mass casualty training, exercises and incidents
Community Involvement	Interact with homeowners associations, service clubs, etc.
Professional Associations	Network with others in the service; involvement in local, state, and/or regional professional association(s)

Supervising Fire Officer: *Self Development*

Element	Application
Health/Fitness	Ongoing health and wellness program
Physical Ability	Maintain according to job requirements
Career Mapping	Personal and professional inventory; identify personal traits, strengths and areas of development
Communication	Written and oral communication; listening; giving/receiving constructive feedback
Interpersonal Dynamics/Skills	Customer service skills, teamwork, conflict resolution
Diversity	Understanding the value/importance of organizational and community diversity
Ethics	Understand, demonstrate and promote ethical behavior for the individual
Legal Issues	Understanding the value/importance of law in its application to the organizational work unit
Technology	Awareness of the importance and value of technology in the work unit; develop/maintain skills to use technology in the work unit
Local and/or Contemporary hazards/Issues	Develop a current awareness and understanding of unique local hazards and emerging issues

**APPENDIX E – SURVEY INSTRUMENT - EXTERNAL SURVEY****Survey Instrument – External Survey**

The external survey instrument was sent out to all current and past participants of the Ohio Fire Executive program. There were a total of 53 people that participated in this survey.

1. Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Department's FDID: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Station s: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Personnel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of organization is your department?

- 20      38%      Career
  - 0      0%      Part-time
  - 25      47%      Combination (Part-time/career)
  - 8      15%      Combination (Career/Volunteer)
  - 0      0%      Volunteer
- 53                      Total

3. What is your departments total run volume per year?

- 1      2%      Less than 500
- 3      6%      500 to 1000

- 12 23% 1000 to 2000
- 12 23% 2000 to 3000
- 15 28% 3000 to 5000
- 10 10% Over 5000

4. What is your department's population?

- 5 9% Less than 10,000
- 25 47% 10,000 to 25,000
- 21 40% 26,000 to 75,000
- 2 4% 76,000 to 100,000
- 0 0% Over 100,000

5. How many members does your organization have?

- Less than 100
- 100 to 200
- Greater than 200

6. Does your department have a formal career development plan or process for company officers?

- 13 25% Yes
- 40 75% No  
53 total

7. How long has the program been in place?

- 2 4% 0-1 years
- 4 8% 1-3 years
- 4 8% 3-5 years
- 4 8% > 5 years
- 38 73% Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_  
52 total

8. Does your department have any specific criteria or qualifications that must be attained by the company officer?

- 29      56%      Yes
- 21      40%      No
- 2      4%      N/A
- 52                      Total

9. What standard did your department use to develop your company officer program?

- 15      29%      NFPA 1021
- 1      2%      International Association of Fire Chiefs
- 3      6%      National Fire Academy
- 5      10%      College Based curriculum
- 13      25%      Department based program
- 3      6%      Other, specify: FESHE, Company Officer 1, Civil Service, OFCA  
26                      total

10. Does your department require any prerequisite training and education prior to becoming a company officer?

- 16      2%      Yes
- 35      26%      No
- 1      2%      N/A
- 52                      total

11. Does any of the training and education have to be achieved within a certain time period after promotion?

- 2      4%      Yes, specify: One year, Fire Inspector in 2 yrs, Fire Officer classes
- 26      50%      No
- 12      23%      N/A  
40                      total

12. What happens if this requirement is not achieved in the allotted time frame? The consensus is that the individual would enter the disciplinary system and receive a demotion of this rank.

13. What are the minimum educational requirements for the company officer?

- 45      94%      High School Diploma
- 0      0%      Associate Degree
- 0      0%      Bachelor Degree
- 3      6%      Some college
- 3      6%      Other, specify: 1) We are working on making basic company officer requirement to take the test and/or be acting. Once promoted then OFE, 2) Fire Officer 1 (lieutenant) Fire officer 2 (Captain) B.E.R.T., Basic Fire Investigation(Lieutenant) Advanced Fire Investigation (Captain) Incident Safety Officer, Paramedic, Anniston Hazmat Training, Hazmat Tech, Fire Inspector, O.F.E. or College Degree (Captain), Assistant EMS Instructor, Assistant Fire Instructor.

14. Does your department provide educational reimbursement to attend classes at a college or university?

- 39      74%      Yes
- 14      26%      No
- 1      2%      N/A
- 54                  total

Comments: 1). \$1800 per person per year, 2) 80% with a grade of “A”, 3) 50% up to \$3000 per year 4) Employees obtaining an “A” or better will receive 100% reimbursement, employees obtaining a “B” will receive 75% reimbursement, employees obtaining a “C” will receive 50% reimbursement and employees receiving less than a “C” will receive 0% reimbursement. 4) Personnel may receive up to \$4000/year.

15. What training certificates are required for company officers? (select all that apply)

- 50      98%      Firefighter II
  - 16      31%      Basic Emergency Rescue Technician
  - 13      25%      Hazardous Materials Technician
  - 24      47%      Fire Officer I
  - 12      24%      Fire Officer II
  - 16      31%      Fire Instructor
  - 21      41%      Fire Safety Inspector
  - 6      12%      Other, specify: 1) Paramedic, 2) NIMS, 3) MCTO series, 4) Fire Investigator, 5) CPR, 6) WMD
- 51                  total

16. Does your program provide continuing education for company officers?

- 31      58%      Yes
  - 18      34%      No
  - 4      8%      N/A
- 53                  total

17. If yes, what type of continuing education? (Check all that apply)

- 26      76%      Fire Ground Strategy & Tactics
- 27      79%      Incident Management
- 16      47%      Firefighter Health and Safety
- 15      44%      Fire Prevention
- 5      15%      Human Resource Management
- 11      32%      Personnel Management
- 4      12%      Time Management
- 20      59%      Sexual Harassment Training
- 17      50%      Leadership Communication
- 10      29%      Communications/ Written Skills
- 4      12%      Strategic Planning

- 9      26%    Problem Solving
- 10     29%    Team Building
- 8      24%    Managing Conflict/Counseling Skills
- 11     32%    Customer Service, Community and Public Service
- 16     47%    Policies and Procedures
- 11     32%    Ethics
- 12     35%    Completing Performance Evaluations
- 11     32%    Computerized Information Systems
- 3      9%    Other, specify: *1) All training is encouraged although not a requirement. A guy who goes out and gets the additional training on his own accord is likely to stand out among others (with everything else equal). 2) We have a montly staff meeting that has atleast 30 minutes of continuing education covering policies, table top scenarios, human resource issues, personnel management issues. 3) Will soon include OFCA Fire Officer 1 and Fire Officer 2 requirements.*

18. Does your program include a mentoring program?

- 13     25%    Yes
- 35     67%    No
- 4      8%    N/A
- 52                total

19. What is the length of your mentoring program?

- 2      13%    Less than one week
- 4      25%    One week to four weeks
- 10    63%    Greater than four weeks
- 16                total

20. Is your mentoring program designed to develop:

- 6      43%    Officer candidates
- 9      64%    Probationary company officers

9      64%    Company Officers  
          14                        total

21. Does your program have a practical application to develop the company officer?

8      16%    Yes  
 22     45%    No  
 19    39%    N/A  
          49                        total

22. If yes, check all that apply

7      88%    Fire/EMS scenarios  
 5      63%    Role Playing  
 4      50%    Demonstration of equipment  
 1      13%    Written practical exercises  
 3      38%    Employee counseling scenario  
 3      13%    Citizen complaint exercise  
 3      38%    Oral presentation  
 1      13%    Other,  
          specify: \_\_\_\_\_

23. In your opinion, how effective has this program been in developing your company officers?

1      4%    Very Effective  
 18     66%    Somewhat effective  
 8      30%    Minimally effective  
          27                        Total

## **APPENDIX F – SURVEY INSTRUMENT - INTERNAL SURVEY**

This survey is directly related to my third research question of what are DTFD personnel doing to develop themselves to be company officers. The intended audience is the personnel in our department that currently work in the company officers role. The sample size of this survey will be eighteen people.

1) What is your Name?

2) What is your current rank?

9 Firefighter

6 Lieutenant

15 Total

3) How many years have you been career at Delhi?

7      47%    Less than 5 years

5      33%    5 to 10 years

2      13%    10 to 20 years

1      6%    Greater than 20 years

15                  Total

4) How many years have you been in the fire service total?

2      13%    Less than 5 years

4      27%    5 to 10 years

5      33%    10 to 20 years

4      27%    Greater than 20 years

15                  Total

5) How many shifts do you work as a company officer per year, approximately?

4      27%    Less than 20 shifts

4      27%    20 to 40 shifts

<input type="checkbox"/>	1	6%	40 to 60 shifts
<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0%	60 to 80 shifts
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>6</u>	40%	Greater than 80 shifts
	15		Total

6) How would you rate your knowledge, skills and abilities when you are in the company officer role?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1	6%	Excellent
<input type="checkbox"/>	9	60%	Good
<input type="checkbox"/>	4	28%	Adequate
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>1</u>	6%	Needs improvement
	15		Total

7) Do you feel that you have an adequate amount of company officer training to execute all job related duties?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1	6%	Strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	67%	Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	20%	Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>1</u>	6%	Strongly disagree
	15		Total

8) Do you feel there is adequate training for our company officers?

<input type="checkbox"/>	0	0%	Strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	5	33%	Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	10	68%	Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>0</u>	0%	Strongly disagree
	15		Total

9) Do you believe a formal company officer development program should be offered?

<input type="checkbox"/>	11	73%	Strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	3	20%	Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	7%	Disagree

0      0%      Strongly disagree  
15      Total

10) How do you feel is the best way for company officers to develop and learn supervisory skills and abilities?

- 13 86% Mentoring by experienced officers
  - 11 71% Formal education through training and education
  - 10 64% Self taught through experience
  - 2 14% Other, specify: 1)Hands on, 2) Mentorship

11) What is the highest level of education that you have obtained?

- 4      27%    High School Diploma

9      60%    Some college classes, no degree

3      20%    Associate Degree

3      20%    Bachelor Degree

0      0%    Master Degree

0      0%    Other,  
specify \_\_\_\_\_

12) What training certificates do you currently have? (select all that apply)

- 15 100% Firefighter II
  - 7 47% Basic Emergency Rescue Technician
  - 5 33% Hazardous Materials Technician
  - 5 33% Fire Officer I
  - 4 27% Fire Officer II
  - 7 47% Fire Instructor
  - 14 93% Fire Safety Inspector
  - 6 40% Other, specify :(CPR, Paramedic, Fire Investigator, Car seat Technician)

13) If Delhi offered company officer continuing education workshops throughout the year, which topics would you like to see? (rate the following in order of importance, 1= most important, 5=least important)

	<i>Not</i>	<i>Somewhat</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Very</i>
Fire Ground Strategy & Tactics	0%	0%	40%(6)	60%(9)
Incident Management	0%	0%	40%(6)	60%(9)
Firefighter Health and Safety	7%(1)	27%(4)	53%(8)	13%(2)
Fire Prevention	0%	67%(10)	33%(5)	0%
Human Resource Management	0%	27%(4)	60%(9)	13%(2)
Personnel Management	0%	13%(2)	40%(6)	27%(4)
Time Management	20%(3)	27%(4)	13%(2)	40%(6)
Sexual Harassment Training	0%	0%	40%(6)	60%(9)
Leadership Communication	0%	7%(1)	60%(9)	33%(5)
Communications/ Written Skills	20%(3)	27%(4)	13%(2)	60%(6)
Strategic Planning	0%	0%	47%(7)	53%(8)
Problem Solving	0%	7%(1)	53%(8)	60%(6)
Team Building	7%(1)	7%(1)	53%(8)	33%(5)
Managing Conflict/Counseling Skills	0%	7%(1)	53%(8)	33%(6)
Customer & Community Service	0%	0%	73%(11)	27%(4)
Policies and Procedures	0%	13%(2)	73%(11)	13%(2)
Ethics	13%(2)	0%	47%(7)	40%(6)
Performance Evaluations	13%(2)	13%(2)	53%(8)	20%(3)

Computerized Information Systems    7%(1)    47%(7)    40%(6)    7%(1)

Other, specify: None

14) Should mentoring be included in a company officer development program?

- 13    87%    Yes
  - 2    13%    No
- 15                      Total

15) Should there be a practical application to develop the company officer?

- 13    87%    Yes
  - 2    13%    No
- 15                      Total

16) If yes, please indicate the type of scenarios you would like to see. (check all that apply)

- 14    93%    Fire/EMS scenarios
- 8    53%    Role Playing
- 2    13%    Demonstration of equipment
- 5    33%    Written practical exercises
- 9    60%    Employee counseling scenario
- 8    53%    Citizen complaint exercise
- 2    13%    Oral presentation
- 2    13%    Other, specify: (Practical field experience)

## APPENDIX G – SURVEY INSTRUMENT-CHIEF'S INTERVIEW

### **Survey Instrument – Chiefs Interview**

The intended audience for this interview is our three Chief Officers within our department. The author is looking to get feedback on what DTFD career personnel should be doing to develop themselves as company officers.

1) What are some of the operational issues with our current company officers?

- a. FC Zoz – One of the problems is that they don't want to step forward in a leadership role.
- b. AC Moore – Our current company officers are inconsistent with what they accomplish. There are a few that are experiencing problems managing their time. And there are a few that are have a difficult time making the transformation from buddy to boss.
- c. AC Campbell – our current company officers are inconsistent with their report writing, specifically accident report investigations. The company officers struggle with team building, bringing people together that have different backgrounds.

2) What are some of the issues with training company officers within our department?

- a. FC Zoz – Each company officer has a different knowledge base and this makes it difficult to equal the playing field for training them.
- b. AC Moore – One of the issues is financial due to having to pay them to come in off-duty. Another issue is they don't get enough training and experience as a firefighter, then promoting into a company officer compounds this by default.

- c. AC Campbell – The cost to do it correctly, both internally and externally.
- 3) Do you think the DTFD should have a formal officer development program for company officers?
- a. FC Zoz – Yes!
  - b. AC Moore – Yes!
  - c. AC Campbell – Yes, it will provide continuity and the path work towards the future.
- 4) What should the components of an officer development program be?
- a. FC Zoz – There are several components that need to be considered. One would be to educate them on how to interact with people. We need to modify their behavior on the fire ground. And we need to modify their interpersonal skills when dealing with people. They need to learn the art of leading people, and managing assets.
  - b. AC Moore – We need to teach our company officers to lead people. Yes, this can be taught. Strategy and tactics should not be considered at this level. They should have learned these at the firefighter level. A subcategory of this would be people building; we need to search in and out of the fire service for successful ways to accomplish this. Some other important components would be conflict resolution, administering discipline, and customer service.
  - c. AC Campbell – The foundation should be NFPA 1021 to set the objectives and the standards of the program. This needs to be complimented with department specific criteria to meet the needs of our system. We also need to develop individuals personal skills.

- 5) Do you think there should be any requirements for a college education?
  - a. FC Zoz – Yes, there should be a minimum of an associate's degree in a related field, and progressing to obtain their bachelor's.
  - b. AC Moore – Yes, there should be a minimum of an associate's degree for the company officers, and bachelors for any rank above the company officer.
  - c. AC Campbell – Yes, an associate's degree should be required. This will give the company officer the basic communication skills that are needed for the position.
- 6) Do you think the DTFD should mandate an officer development program for future officers?
  - a. FC Zoz – No, not mandate the officer development program. We should give them the requirements of the program and let them be self motivated to obtain these requirements.
  - b. AC Moore – Yes, all company officers have a duty and responsibility to meet the requirements of the company officer development program. No, they should not have to obtain these requirements prior to being promoted.
  - c. AC Campbell – Yes, there should be an officer development program that is mandatory for our company officers to partake in. They need to have annual continuing education to meet the benchmarks that are established for the program.
- 7) Do you think the program should be a prerequisite for promotion, or should there be a requirement for completing the program?
  - a. FC Zoz – In the past, we promoted the best technician and we need to change this to the best leader or individual for officer positions.
  - b. AC Moore – No, not the entire program; but they should be working towards it.

- c. AC Campbell – No, not for promotion. The candidate may have the knowledge and skill set to build from. They need to step up and demonstrate their abilities.
- 8) Should company officers of the DTFD be required to meet the professional qualifications outlined in the NFPA 1021, standard for company officer?
- a. FC Zoz – Yes, the question is when should them meet it, one, two or three years?
  - b. AC Moore – Indirectly – No, it should be used as a standard to develop the company officer program.
  - c. AC Campbell – Yes, this needs to be the foundation on the what the program is developed.