

Identifying Components of a Career Development Guide

for the Schaumburg Fire Department

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that 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, and expressions, or writings of another.

Signed _____

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. Blair", written over a horizontal line.

Abstract

Who is responsible for career development? Should career development be the responsibility of the employer or rest solely on the shoulders of the employee? If unchecked, will employees focus on the wrong skills towards their personal development? These questions among others have plagued many organizations. The problem with the Schaumburg Fire Department is they have not identified the recommended components of a career development guide. The purpose of this research was to identify the recommended components of a career development guide through original research and a comprehensive literature review. An action research approach was determined appropriate with a draft Career Development Guide presented within the appendix. Questions presented during this research asked, what are the benefits of having a career development guide; what components should be included in a career development guide? Additional questions focused on what time is applicable for the implementation of a career development guide and what are other agencies doing for their career development programs? Procedures used to answer these questions included an internal survey, an external questionnaire and key personal communications aimed at industry leading professionals serving in the ranks of battalion chief or similar. An external questionnaire was sent to 30 career fire departments with demographics similar to the Schaumburg Fire Department. Results mirrored findings presented in the literature review; more importantly, information gathered revealed the recommended components of a career development guide. Recommendations include the adoption of the attached draft Career Development Guide as well as recommendations for future researchers.

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Identifying Components of a Career Development Guide for the Schaumburg Fire Department

Today, a debate ensues among many; who is responsible for career development? Should the task of career development be charged with the employee alone or the employer? Like succession planning, career development often takes a subservient role in the operational plan. Many private and public organizations feel the cream will always rise to the top and the concept of career development will take care of itself. Perhaps you have heard of the age-old dilemma amongst two executives: What if we train them and they leave? What happens if we don't (train them) and they stay?

The argument between the two executives can be debated on either side with each making a logical case on their behalf. Consider the following; a married couple makes a purchase to buy a swing set for their children. If you, as the manufacturer, do not include a set of instructions to assemble the swing set they will assemble it in a way that best suits them or their needs. The notion of career development can be viewed in a similar fashion. Without guidance or direct influence from the employer, employees may concentrate on the wrong skill set or secondary education to lead the organization in the years to come.

While the private sector is making strides towards career development, the public sector is trailing once again with exception of our military leaders. With regards to the public sector, specifically the fire service, it comes down to dollars and sense. In their book, *Dollars and Sense: How we Mismatch Money and How to Spend Smarter*, Ariely and Kreisler (2017), suggest that we as a society mismanage our funds entirely. Again, consider the following, have you ever driven around town searching for cheaper gas prices while consuming the very product you're seeking?

Unfortunately, the fire service often views their most valuable asset, personnel, in the same regards they do their expendable resources. With little emphasis or guidance placed on formal career development, the fire service appears to be playing constant catch up. Specifically, the problem is the Schaumburg Fire Department (SFD) has not identified the recommended components of a Career Development Guide (CDG) for members of the organization.

The purpose of this research is to identify the recommended components of a career development guide for the SFD. This career development guide was first conceptualized during the research findings presented in year one, Executive Development, of the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP) while attending the National Fire Academy (NFA) located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Addressing the present problem in the SFD requires an action methodology approach in that the findings of the research have been presented as a draft Career Development Guide for all positions governed by the Schaumburg Fire Department.

This guide is designed to aid all ranks within the SFD beyond the rank of firefighter candidate as they progress throughout their career. More importantly, this guide focuses on the certain aspects, skills, or traits required for each role or position in the organization. Equally important, this guide also doubles as a roadmap for developing future leaders in the organization by allowing them to develop the tools needed for positions based upon personal interest and needs of the department.

This research takes a multi-faceted look at the concepts behind career development. Data gathered to address the concept of a career development guide focused on answering the following research questions:

- What are the benefits of having a career development guide?

- What components should be included in a career development guide?
- What time is applicable for the implementation of a career development guide?
- What are other agencies doing for their career development programs?

Demands for service and a smile are at an all-time high for nearly every profession, and the fire service is no exception. With the almighty tax dollar stretched thin many communities are facing significant cutbacks. In today's era, it is vital for leaders in the public sector to not only continue providing exceptional services, they also need to focus on personal development.

Without guidance from the organization, employees run the risk of concentrating on one area and perhaps ignoring another. The public sector differs from the private in that many of the positions or needs of the organization cannot simply be acquired as needed. Depending on the structure, contracts, or fiscal restraints, many of these vital positions will need to be filled in-house. Skills needed to perform at a higher level (in any organization) typically need to be achieved in a systematic order for optimum results. These results are then beneficial to the employee *and* the employer. In other words, you wouldn't go skydiving without first learning how to pack a parachute.

The goal of this research is to identify and develop the recommended components of a career development guide for the Schaumburg Fire Department. Procedures utilized to accomplish this goal were in the form of a detailed questionnaire to position specific leaders, an internal survey, and personal communications. Combined with a thorough literature review, this new data has been used to formulate a career development guide for Schaumburg Fire Department personnel.

Background and Significance

Objective and Goals

The Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy is designed to tackle significant issues affecting the fire service profession. Of the four-year program, each year concentrates on a particular aspect of the fire service. Year four concentrates its studies and research on executive leadership. Succession planning, primarily career development, falls within the coursework for year one – Executive Development and year four – Executive Leadership. To date, the Schaumburg Fire Department has not addressed a recommended or formal career development guide for personnel.

Equally important, career development prominently enhances the professionalism of the fire service. As depicted in the U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), professional career development encompasses multiple goals such as:

- Lead the Nation's fire and emergency services by establishing and sustaining the USFA as a dynamic organization
- Improve the fire and emergency services' professional status
- Improve local planning and preparedness

History of the Schaumburg Fire Department

Located just northwest of the City of Chicago, Schaumburg is a relatively large suburb consisting of more than 19 square miles and a daytime population of nearly a quarter-million people. Over the past 50 plus years, Schaumburg has witnessed a sizeable increase in not only population and services but the expansion of the village overall. To date, the Village of Schaumburg employs more than 600 people in more than ten areas of concentration operating an

annual budget of more than 250 million dollars. Offering an array of attractions, Schaumburg is second only to the City of Chicago in economic growth within the State of Illinois (Frank, n.d).

Among those, the Schaumburg Fire Department was formed in 1967 consisting of an all-volunteer workforce. As the community grew, so did the fire department. A population boom during the 1970's and 80's led the way to a full-time agency. Today, the Schaumburg Fire Department is supported by a staff of 120 (civil service) firefighters and a support staff of 14 (civilian) personnel. Operationally, the SFD responds to more than 9,000 calls for service throughout any given year. Calls for emergency services are answered by one (or more) of five dedicated stations consisting of the following apparatus:

4 Advanced Life Support Fire Engines	2 Advanced Life Support Trucks
2 Advanced Life Support Heavy Rescue Units	4 Advanced Life Support Ambulances
1 Battalion Chief	4 Command Support Vehicles
1 Utility Vehicle	1 Watercraft

Currently, the SFD operates on a 24/48-hour shift schedule. Line (civil service) personnel work one 24-hour shift followed by a 48 hour period of rest. As manpower fluctuates, daily operations are managed by a Battalion Chief/Shift Commander overseeing approximately 32 members spread across five districts (Schaumburg Fire Department, 2018).

Training required by the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM) is overseen by a dedicated (civilian) training coordinator and implemented by either training liaisons or company officers. Company Officers consists of front-line supervisors whose rank is either a lieutenant or captain. New employees, referred to as candidates undergo rigorous training scheduled throughout their yearlong appraisal period.

Specialty apparatus such as either one of the two trucks or heavy rescue units require additional training per a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the Village of Schaumburg (VOS) and the Schaumburg Professional Firefighters Association Local 4092. Members requesting assignment to these specialty units are required to possess a minimum of three technical rescue certifications for the rescue squad and two technical rescue certifications for a truck assignment. Currently, the Office of the State Fire Marshal (2018), lists more than 40 concentrations or certifications in technical rescue (OSFM, 2018).

Other than guidance or recommendations given by a member's company officer during their performance appraisal period, no official format or suggestions are in place for SFD personnel wishing to advance their career. Line personnel are free to set their own course in terms of additional outside training based upon personal interest or desire. Moreover, no policies exist to mandate additional training as a member advances in rank or position outside that of educational requirements for specific positions such as deputy or fire chief. Failing to offer the recommended course of study allows members to potentially focus on wrong or irrelevant content.

Literature Review

On the surface, the concept of career development appears to be a no-brainer. Why wouldn't an employee want to advance his or her career? Perhaps a greater question to ask is why wouldn't an employer want to advance their employees? Along the lines of succession planning, career development is simply not cut and paste. There are many factors to consider when implementing *career development* regardless if the program is mandatory or voluntary in nature. Depending on the organization and their capabilities, considerations such as obstacles, buy-in, mentoring, and program development may play a greater or lesser role.

Obstacles

Among the considerations, the largest two obstacles are by far are time and cost. Leaders within an organization will need to consider the financial impact of such a program. However, it is vital to any organization to consider the true cost of having a program in comparison to no program at all. Consider a developer mapping out a new residential community. To maximize his profits, he carves out every inch of available real estate to auction off to the highest bidder. However, if he fails to address the use of "green space" in the form of parks and community gathering space the potential homeowner may choose to look elsewhere. The same can be said for employees looking for maximum potential and growth. If an organization deems career development too costly or time-consuming to embrace, the true casualty maybe themselves in terms of a reduction in interested applicants (Lipman, 2013).

Today's workforce is considerably different than generations past. Younger generations such as Gen Y or Millennials (born 1977 – 1994), Gen Z (born 1995 – 2012) show little loyalty to their employer as compared to previous Generations X (born 1966 – 1976) and the infamous Baby Boomers (born 1946 – 1965). In 2015, Rigsby feels today's younger generations are more about making a statement than making an impact. When comparing employment in general to their seniors, younger generations view the work experience in an entirely different perspective. Younger workers today want to be challenged as much as they wanted to be acknowledged for their efforts. Long gone are the days of employee loyalty where an employee stayed with a single employer throughout their career.

In fact, the latest research indicates that younger generations are far more willing to change careers as compared to their parents or older siblings. Among the top five interest of younger employees, personal growth and development rank just behind pay and benefits.

Employees not only want to connect with their employers, but they also want to feel they have a purpose within the organization. They want to feel that they are more than a cog in the machine and see the potential for opportunity and growth (Stahl, 2016). Supporting these figures, Kaiden (2015), feels younger workers are likely to change jobs 14 or more times before settling down with one employer. She adds, while many employers have chosen to eliminate career development programs in favor of employee-centric studies or do it yourself (DIY), research indicates that may not be working. Numerous corporations such as Amazon, Apple, and Google are investing in employee development to not only attract top candidates but retain them for years to come.

Although time and cost may be the largest consideration for many, they are not the only factor. For organizations with a collective bargaining agreement, consideration must be given to contractual language if a program is to be mandatory, available for overtime, or seniority plays a role in the selection process. Union officials may feel completely different in terms of professional growth if it may (at a later point) involve a promotion. Within the State of Illinois, special attention should also be made to the Fair Promotions Act. If participants in a career development program gain a competitive advantage in the promotional process, each party (employer and employee) may have a right to negotiate the process. The Illinois General Assembly defines the Fire Department Promotion Act (50 ILCS 742/) as:

(c) All aspects of the promotion process shall be equally accessible to all eligible employees of the department. Every component of the testing and evaluation procedures shall be published to all eligible candidates when the announcement of promotional testing is made. The scores for each component of the testing and evaluation procedures

shall be disclosed to each candidate as soon as practicable after the component is completed (n.d.).

Obstacles are not necessarily all centered on the employer. Internal peer pressure or culture may play a significant role in what areas an employee may focus his or her training. Organizational culture can play a major role in not only how programs are viewed or accepted in an organization, but it can also play a part in the programs' effectiveness. Organizational culture can be a strong and powerful influencer when it comes to policies, procedures or accepted practices (Kolarik, 2016).

In 2010, Edgar Schein felt leaders who fail to recognize and adjust to organizational culture by amending their own climate may fall victim to it. What this entails is that leaders need to realize there may be an underlying tone to an organization that drives the influences of the employees. These sub-cultures as Schein refer to can manipulate or drive an organization. Furthermore, understanding organizational culture, specifically ones' own culture is the first step in setting an organization on the right path towards growth and prosperity. Heifetz and Linsky (2002), support this concept in their book *Leadership on the Line*. In their book, both men discuss the concept of "Get on the Balcony" as a metaphor for taking a step back and analyzing the situation (p. 53). This concept is applicable in nearly every facet of the organization especially one that potentially has an impact on the future development of its employees and subsequently the organization.

In essence, career development is all about persuasion or influence. How can an employer motivate, persuade or influence their employees to embrace career development and make it a priority, especially if the program is voluntary or DIY. The *Cassandra Conundrum* has plagued even the most talented leaders across many business platforms. In Greek mythology, the

god Apollo granted Cassandra the gift of prophecy as a gesture of his affection. When Cassandra rejected Apollo's advances, he cursed her with the inability to persuade others even though she knew their fate (Lipkin, 2013). The Cassandra Conundrum is an excellent example where leaders know the fate of their employees and the organization if career development, specifically growth, is not heeded by the employee.

Although sometimes used interchangeably, influence and persuasion are not the same. Influence is the ability to win the hearts and minds of your audience which in turn invokes action.

Influence is typically accomplished through relationships and a series of trust situations establishing credibility. Persuasion, on the other hand, usually involves factual data. Employees may be moved towards a common goal once they are provided with the accurate data to support your argument. Manipulation, however, should never be used as means to coerce employees towards policy or program regardless of the result (Lipkin 2013).

Buy-In

Continuing along the same lines on organizational culture, obtaining buy-in from not only your employees but the organization is paramount to the success of the program. Consider the field of leadership as an educational curriculum. Several years ago it would be unheard of to have a major university offer a degree in leadership as opposed to traditions studies such as health, English, mathematics, or science. The University of Arizona has embraced leadership as a necessary skill and has begun offering their unique program across many educational disciplines. The Applied Tailored Leadership Adventure for Success (ATLAS) program provides a certificate in leadership upon the student's completion. When launched in 2007, ATLAS reached a mere 167 students; by 2011 that number had grown to 820 indicating more than 400% increase (Murray & Schultz, 2013).

Why do you ask? Simply stated, the students bought into the program. They, along with the leaders of the university, saw the importance and value of such a program. Achieving buy-in can be no easy task. Like it or not, buy-in is directly attached to influence which in turn is directly connected to power. The higher the power an individual has, the greater the influence.

Lipkin (2013) feels there are multiple levels of power such as:

- Legitimate power – position or title, such as CEO.
- Coercive power – arises from fear or intimidation.
- Expert power – associated with a person's skills, abilities, or even knowledge-based
- Informational power – this power is related to the transfer of information desired or needed. People with knowledge often have power over others who may need or desire the information

Conversely, there are some that do not directly agree with Lipkin. In John C. Maxwell's (2007) popular book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, he discusses among many the law of influence. The law of influence is the leader's ability to bring about change in an organization. Not be confused with management, leadership and influence can take the organization in an entirely new direction whereas managers focus on maintaining systems and processes. The real dispute between Lipkin and Maxwell is their position on leaders within an organization and their ability to influence thus create buy-in. Maxwell feels there are several myths when it comes to influence and persuasion such as:

- Entrepreneur Myth – these individuals are skillful at seeing opportunities

- Knowledge Myth – not all intelligent men and women have the ability to influence and lead others.
- Pioneer Myth – the misconception that those who are out in front are leaders and thus possess the ability to influence others
- Position Myth – leadership and influence are not directly proportionate to a position.

The most profound argument Maxwell makes is his illustration of the position myth can be seen in the historical count of the advertising firm Saatchi & Saatchi. In 1994, the Board of Directors voted Maurice Saatchi out as the firms' CEO. As a result, several of the senior executives, as well as many of their major clients, followed Maurice resulting in their stock plummeting. If you want to create buy-in, you have to have influence. Maxwell (2007) concludes with:

He who thinks he leads but has no followers is only taking a walk. If you can't influence people, then they will not follow you. And if people won't follow, you are not a leader. That's the Law of Influence. No matter what anybody else may tell you, remember that leadership is influence – nothing more, nothing less. (p. 20).

Goals

For practical purposes, goals are in reference to the organization. Personal objectives will be addressed later in this report under professional growth. In a perfect organization, every employee would strive for personal and professional growth mastering all aspects and roles within the organization. In reality, we know this simply isn't true. Many employees are content with their current position and may have little to no desire to take on additional responsibilities. For an employer, this news may be tough to swallow. Getting your employees to align with your

business plan and organizational goals is crucial if you are to succeed. Regardless of the organization is public or private; establishing goals or a strategic plan may mean the difference between success and failure. According to the State of Leadership Development Survey, when organizations leadership or career development programs are designed as part of the strategic plan or organizational goals, businesses have a much higher rate of success. However, the study revealed that many private organizations do not see the return on investment so clearly. In fact, only seven percent of organizations surveyed were deemed to have a best in class system in place. (Rock Products News, 2017).

Aligning employee goals with those of the employer is usually best accomplished either during the hiring or promotional process. When listing a job opening, it is essential for the employer to spell out the mission and vision as well as any strategic goals that they may want the employee to concentrate on as terms of their employment. Understanding what is expected of you will no doubt aid in your success as well as the success of the organization. Chaleff (2009) views on goals within the organization can be viewed in his book *Courageous Follower*. His novel depicts the trials and tribulations of an employee and their internal struggles as well as the relationship with their employer. Chaleff feels that there are five dimensions associated with employees. These dimensions are defined as:

- Courage to assume responsibility – for yourself and the organization
- Courage to serve the organization and work hard
- Courage to challenge the organization or leaders
- Courage to participate in transformation
- Courage to take moral action

Specifically, Chaleff's courage to serve the organization and work hard centers on the fact that it is okay to accept leadership roles within the organization when a partnership is formed between employee and employer. More importantly, having the courage to serve implies offering a developmental path in which the employee can grow and prosper alongside the organization.

One would think that understanding and aligning the goals of the organization with those of the employees is a somewhat easy task to accomplish. Surprisingly, in 2015, an independent study titled *The Greatness Gap: the State of Employee Disengagement* revealed that more than 60% of employees surveyed did not know their organizations' goals (Lavoie, 2016). Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and co-founder of Clear Company (talent acquisition and management firm) Lavoie feels the critical aspects of aligning organizational goals with those of their employees is through:

- Constant feedback – 72% of employees felt their performance would improve with better feedback
- Tasks are correctly allocated and assigned – assignments should challenge and provide the employee with an opportunity to grow professionally while understanding the overall business plan
- Employee recognition – 90% of employees felt that proper recognition would enhance employee engagement with the organizational goals

It is somewhat safe to say that without the guidance and resources made available through the U.S. Fire Administration and the National Fire Academy, organizational goals would be somewhat limited. The subject of professional development and goals within the organization have been addressed and researched through the USFA. Specifically, the National Professional Development Model (NPDM) addresses and makes recommendations for all positions from

firefighters through the fire chief (Figure 1). More importantly, the NPDM is a tool to be utilized by local and state agencies designed to minimize redundancy in the fire service by those seeking higher education (United States Fire Administration, n.d.).



Fig 1

Additional resources made available to both employee as well as employers (agencies) are the recommendation made in the *Officer Development Handbook*. Developed by the International Fire Chiefs Association (2003), the handbook addresses professional development from the perspective candidate as well as the needs of the organization. Aspects of the handbook cover specifics within each level of progression such as supervisor, manager, administrative, and executive. Within each of these identified levels, the handbook addresses the training, education, experience, and self-development (Figure 2). Equally important, the handbook brings light to critical areas often overlooked such as motivation, mentorship, mapping, measurement, and maintaining credentials. Stangeland (2016) provides an adaption of the *Officer Development Handbook* in his research for the Moorhead Fire Department. More importantly, his research

recommendations included adopting the information contained within into the Moorhead's career pathways.

<i>L AFC's Recommended Training and Certifications for Fire Officer I through Fire Officer IV</i>	
Position	Training & Certification
Supervising Fire Officer	Firefighter 1*; Firefighter II*; Fire Officer I*; Incident Safety Officer; National Incident Management System; Instructor I*; Inspector I*; Hazardous Materials Operation Level*; local requirements for Emergency Medical Service level and driver's license
Managing Fire Officer	Fire Officer II*; Multi-Company Incident Management; Public Information Officer; Fire Investigator I; Public Educator I; National Fire Academy's Leadership Series
Administrative Fire Officer	Fire Officer III*; Interjurisdictional Incident Management; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning
Executive Fire Officer	Fire Officer IV*; Classes in Influencing and Presentation Skills; Meeting Facilitation, Risk Assessment/Management; Disaster Incident Management; Emergency Operations Center Management

Fig 2

Another often underutilized tool in career planning in the organization. Career planning is a process whereas the organization establishes goals and expectations for their employees either annually or early in the hiring process. Rather than letting the individual select their destiny such as whether or not they want the next promotion, this decision is pre-determined based upon conditions of their employment. Sometimes referred to as career mapping, this formal structure is typically seen in private businesses in the form of assistant managers. Once an opening for manager exists, there is either an internal selection process or the candidate is already known. (Webb, Repetto, Seabrooks-Blackmore, Patterson, Alderfer, 2014). Career mapping is an excellent tool when utilized adequately as it concentrates its efforts on developing willing candidates for increased levels of responsibility within the organization. Where career mapping

falls short is in the pre-determined selection process in that potential candidates may be overlooked or not considered for roles even though they show aptitude and potential.

Mentoring

When it comes to succession planning and career development, perhaps there is no more significant area of importance than mentorship. Long gone are the days when a supervisor says merely "Go find Joe, he can show you how it's done." Today, mentoring has taken on a life of its own as organizations both private and public are utilizing sophisticated forms of mentoring to not only train a candidate while simultaneously evaluating their performance. In 2014, Brun added that mentoring often involves skillful coaching. While coaching is designed to enhance or boost performance, mentoring is designed to improve goals of the organization. She concludes that mentoring can take the shape of several different models ranging from:

- Individual – setting individual goals and performance reviews annually
- Pair – two individuals are paired together to either train or enter into a reciprocal collaborative learning environment
- Team – concentrated on a mission or assignment
- Group – larger areas of concentration
- Organizational – formal or informal career development

Contributing author, Frank Viscuso (2013) of *Fire Engineering* feels that before you begin a mentoring program, it is important to know the pressing issues of your department. In other words, Viscuso suggests that it is important to know where you are and where you want to be. Baseball's Hall of Fame recipient Yogi Berra said it best, "If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up somewhere else." Yogi's twist on words as well as Viscuso reminds us

how important it is to have a clear vision on the purpose of the mentoring program. Most importantly, you should never strive for a position or role where you fool heartedly believe you no longer need a mentor (Viscuso, 2014).

Lasky (2004) shares sentiments with Rigsby in that he feels new generational firefighters do not share the passion, drive or work ethic of their forefathers. While he admits that most of the fault is with them (and their upbringing), Lasky suggests the fire service as a culture is to blame. In the absence of a formal mentoring program, Lasky asks “Where have all the mentors gone?” (2004, p. 71). His passion is evident as he believes we as a profession are failing our successors. In the fire service, mentoring starts and ends at the fire station. What Lasky is referencing is that mentorship does not need to be a structured program with multiple layers. Specifically, the first line supervisor referred to as a company officer is the one individual charged with teaching and training his or her crew. While there are many things out of reach or control for the first line supervisor in the form of policies or protocols; the one thing you can control is your attitude. Motivational speaker Zig Ziglar once remarked, “Attitude, not aptitude will determine your altitude.”

Organizational psychologist Dr. Nicole Lipkin (2013) offers an exciting perspective on mentorship often overlooked. Competitive environments exist in nearly every profession, and the fire service is not immune to this phenomenon; however, not all competition is bad. As a leader, you can cultivate particular norms in your organization by developing star players while simultaneously developing others. To prevent jealousy and envy among coworkers, assigning a mentor role to top performers reinforces the collaborative team environment rather than pit one against another. Lipkin adds, "Good mentorship also provides opportunities for the mentor to learn from the student, which further humanizes the mentor (2013, p. 116).

Unlike their differences depicted previously, Maxwell (2007) and Lipkin (2013) agree when it comes to mentoring. Maxwell explains the dedication mentoring requires under the chapter and sub-title *The Law of Sacrifice*. Maxwell claims that for a leader to "go up, they need to give up." (p. 224). Sacrifice is an ongoing practice that once embraced, continues throughout one's career. In fact, Maxwell claims that as an individual's position or title increases so does their level of commitment or sacrifice resulting in their willingness to give back, to sacrifice. Striking similarities can be seen in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. As one progress through the five stages, they reach self-actualization at the pinnacle. Self-actualization is the realization of your true potential and a desire to give back, to sacrifice your time, to mentor others to follow in your footsteps (Landy & Conte, 2013).

Not all mentoring needs to be structured. Modern mentoring embraces the social network craze among Millennials and utilizes popular websites such as Facebook and YouTube to their advantage (Emelo, 2013). The difference between conventional mentoring and modern mentoring can be seen in a number of fashions. First, traditional mentoring typically involves a mentor and a mentee over an extended period. The two individuals meet on a predetermined cycle to review performance and cover new material. Modern mentoring is a fluid or dynamic process where the exchange of information happens on an as-needed basis, typically in a virtual environment. Second, current mentoring allows the mentee to choose their mentor, someone they connect with. In a conventional mentoring program, the mentor is either the supervisor or a senior coworker with the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities. Third, in modern mentoring, the transfer of information is not always from senior to junior. For example, younger Millennials or Gen X employees may be able to mentor older colleagues on technology or the use of social media. Last, the modern mentoring process involves an asynchronous learning environment.

Meaning, the transmission of information is a flexible as their schedule; many Millennials prefer a non-traditional work schedule (Emelo, 2013).

Professional Growth

The fire service is a unique profession in that the very nature of the job requires that you drop everything you are working towards and deal with the crisis at hand. This dedication to the organization can place significant demands on the firefighter who may be trying to advance his or her career much less trying to raise a family. To those unaware, the modern fire service is an all-hazards response that requires thousands of hours of training to not only develop but perfect one's skills. Modern-day firefighters are expected to be skilled in a wide array of specialties ranging from technical rescue, hazardous materials, auto and machinery extrication, structural collapse and confined space rescue to name a few. Perhaps what firefighters are most known for or likely to perform is fire suppression. Anyone of these areas requires years of experience and countless hours of training to become proficient.

Technical proficiency in fire and rescue specialties requires a significant amount of time and dedication. The time spent in mastering these skills ultimately impedes on the additional training or education one would need to advance in the organization. Depending on the organizational structure, professional growth may require an entirely new skill set such as secondary education, advanced certifications or licenses and last but not least an entirely new set of soft skills. Soft or interpersonal skills are those required to interact with one another up and down the corporate chain. Interpersonal skills can be thought of as diplomacy, patience, negotiation, and relationship building to name a few. In fact, the research study *Leadership Development for Millennials* found that 56% of Millennials entering the workforce lacked the

proper skills. Furthermore, of the respondents, 15% of them stated their companies currently are addressing the short-comings of tomorrow's leaders (Lykins & Pace, 2013).

The study also revealed that Millennials themselves believed they were insufficiently prepared to accept higher roles within the organization. Statistics show that approximately one million Millennials enter the workforce each year and within a few short years, 40% of all workers will be those born in 1977 through 1997. Perhaps more intriguing, Lykin & Pace (2013) feel there is a shift happening in younger workers and as a result soft skills are lacking. The authors explored:

Soft skills are more important than technical ability or hard skills when hiring – companies today are hiring for corporate fit over qualifications. Millennials need to get offline and build relationships and social skills to deal with different generations in the workforce (p. 44).

Professional growth means more than just developing soft skills to interact with one another. Professional growth also means problem-solving. When you think about it, the fire service as a profession can be summed up in two words – problem solvers. That's what we've become. When you have a problem, you call the fire department to solve your problems regardless of the situation. This mindset of being a problem solver means that you are willing to tackle issues rather than pass them off to someone else. In 2011, Godin referred to this individual as the linchpin. A linchpin is an individual who is vital or indispensable to the organization. There are more than just two sides in every organization, management, and labor. There is a third side whether we admit it or not; these are the key players who get things done.

Jones (2014) feels that in order to be considered a *key player* in the organization, you should follow the Kudzu Principles. The Kudzu principles, named after a Japanese invasive

plant, suggest the user will develop a healthy *root* system to flourish and build upon. The Kudzu Principles are divided into three categories intrinsic motivations, extrinsic accomplishments, and career milestones. While these principles focus on developing soft skills mentioned previously, they dive much deeper into professional growth. An overview can be seen below (Figure 3).

Kudzu Principles	
Intrinsic Motivations	<i>Principle 1: Personal Branding.</i> What are <i>you</i> known for? What type of work do you produce? Is your work ethic synonymous with quality? What sets you apart from others in your organization?
	<i>Principle 2: Visual goals.</i> What traits or skills would you <u>like</u> to possess? What words would you prefer to be used to describe you? Visual goals should be in the form of a storyboard intended to remind the user to stay on track and work towards achieving their visual perception of themselves.
Extrinsic Accomplishments	<i>Principle 3: Networking</i> Be involved in civic organizations or clubs such as Rotary, Kiwanis, Lions Club, Join committees both internal and community-based. Realize that those before you didn't get there alone.
	<i>Principle 4: Public speaking.</i> Seize opportunities to speak in public. A well-delivered adequately prepared address will lend to credibility and followership.
Career Milestones	<i>Principle 5: Getting published.</i> This is in alignment with <i>Principle 1</i> . What sets you apart from your competition? Being published in trade journals further lends to credibility.
	<i>Principle 6: Become a Grant-Winning Machine.</i> Develop a unique talent or skill set. Be the linchpin in your organization.

Fig 3

Among the soft skills desired by a number of organizations, emotional intelligence is growing in popularity. Emotional intelligence is the ability of an individual to be aware of not only *their* emotions but those of others as well. These skills are especially essential for managers and leaders in the organization who interact with personnel. Having emotional intelligence further develops interpersonal skills such as self-awareness. Bowe and Jones (2017) feel that emotional intelligence is the missing component for enhanced interpersonal collaboration. The other two elements the Air Force officers feel make up the complete package are intelligence quotient (IQ) and personality or likeability.

At some point in career development, you will have to face the education, certification, licensure, or accreditation phase of your plan. Almost every level of achievement or advancement within an organization will require some technical expertise or secondary education. While secondary education is in the form of a college degree (bachelors, masters or doctoral), technical expertise is typically seen with certifications issued by state agencies or professional societies. Cline (2015) feels that to be successful as you progress in the organization you need a blend of education, training, experience and most importantly a professional development plan. Within the program needs to be a systematic order of operation or a checklist. The method not only keeps an individual on track towards their own goals it also provides the organization with some reassurance that employees are preparing themselves for greater levels of responsibility. More importantly, having an (organizational) plan for your employees allows for certain skills to be built upon others. Nason (2015) and Stangeland (2015) conclude in their research findings that education and professional credentialing are necessary components in a career development program.

Literature Review Summary

On the surface, many would conceive that career development takes care of itself. There will always be those with a certain amount of ambition or drive to further advance themselves and ultimately the organization. However, this mindset is flawed given the supporting data. The younger generations entering the workforce today do not see career development in the same light or fashion as their forefathers. Many of the Millennials today expect the employer to train them and *on* their own terms no less.

In order for a career development program to be effective, you need to address several areas such as any obstacles or roadblocks. Without question, the most significant hurdles to overcome in regards to career development are time and money (although some would argue that time *is* money). Beyond time and money, additional considerations should be made to address work ethic differences among generations and labor agreements.

Gaining support for such a program is not as easy as one would think. Any program developed requires buy-in from not only senior leaders in the organization but those willing to participate in the program. The internal culture of an organization can have a tremendous influence on how programs or policies are received. The research informs us that culture is a direct result of organizational climate and organizational climate is set by the leaders within.

Goals should be aligned with the overall strategic plan if the program is to be effective. Furthermore, supporting data suggest that many of the worker's today were unfamiliar with their employers' goals or operational plan. Not only are many of the younger workers ill-prepared to lead an organization now or in the future, they are unaware of the vision of the company they work for. Once they are considered for elevated levels of responsibility, younger workers feel

they are more adapted to learning in a virtual environment as compared to traditional mentoring programs.

Finally, career development focuses on professional growth. This is where the employer has the ability to set expectations for their employees to guarantee the survival of the organization. More importantly, this is where the employer has an opportunity to cultivate or mold their employees in areas of greatest concerns. Even though an employer may have an advantage in regards to suggested training; professional growth is the ultimate responsibility of the employee.

Procedures

The procedures utilized for this research began with the on-campus studies of year four, Executive Leadership of the Executive Fire Officer Program located at the National Fire Academy Emmitsburg, Maryland. Upon conclusion of the course, a proposal was sent to an assigned evaluator on November 25th, 2017 with an amended version being approved on December 4th, 2017.

The questions posed at the beginning of this research were best served by a thorough literature review in conjunction with the original findings gathered during these procedures. This research began with an examination of the fundamental structure of the Schaumburg Fire Department and its operations. The literature review section provided the additional information to tailor the questionnaires based on past research.

In order to gain the insights and perspectives of internal shift commanders, a separate questionnaire was established and emailed directly to those individuals (Appendix B). Additional questionnaires were established and targeted towards those individuals holding the rank of

Battalion Chief or higher from outside the Schaumburg Fire Department (Appendix A). These individuals were randomly selected via social media sites such as LinkedIn and Facebook. To gain a true representation of similar organizations, only career fire departments were contacted to participate in this study. Additionally, preference was given to organizations closely resembling size and structure of the SFD. These parameters included department size (personnel) as well as community size (population) served.

An action methodology was used with the findings presented within this research (Appendix D.). To recall, the research questions originally posed were:

- What are the benefits of having a career development guide?
- What components should be included in a career development guide?
- What time frame is applicable for the implementation of a career development guide?
- What are other agencies doing for their career development programs?

Population

As mentioned, population surveyed for this research consisted of internal stakeholders serving in the role of Battalion Chief or Shift Commander. Electronic questionnaires were distributed along with a cover letter via the VOS intranet server (Appendix B). Of the six command personnel, six responses were received indicating 100% participation.

Additionally, a questionnaire was sent via electronic means (email) to 30 fire departments. The departments selected were based in Northern Illinois as to have access to similar training programs as well as familiarity with the (Illinois) Office of the Fire Marshal certifications. Furthermore, departments selected work a similar schedule of 24 hours on and 48 hours off. The questionnaire was intended for Battalion Chiefs, Shift Commanders or those ranks

serving in those positions. With a three shift rotation, the targeted population was 90 personnel. Of the questionnaires delivered, 56 responses were received indicating a 62.2% return rate.

Instrumentation

All data gathered for the purpose of this research was obtained by electronic means. Questionnaires distributed to both internal stakeholders as well as external professionals were designed, collected and analyzed by the website QuestionPro®. QuestionPro allows for a convenient collection of data as well as provides analytical results deemed useful in the results section.

Limitations

Electronic dispersal of questionnaires involves certain limitations in regards to the authenticity of the external professional. In addition, while the website QuestionPro offers unique data collection efforts, it allows the user to complete the questionnaire more than once. In addition, link provided to both internal and external users could be forwarded to additional users with a valid email address.

Results

The results of this research were obtained by a comprehensive literature review and the original research conducted within this report. The views, thoughts, and opinions of industry leaders, as well as those researchers presented, are just important as the information presented in this section. It should be noted that in some instances, the information gathered in the literature review drove or guided the research questions to their finality.

The first research question addressed the benefits of having a career development guide. While the majority of the information obtained from the literature review addresses this question; nonetheless, recipients of the external questionnaire (Appendix B) were asked to provide additional thoughts on the subject.

For those organizations with a Career Development Program, what benefits have you seen from the program?

	Percentage
Increase interest in training	33%
A better understanding of policies & procedures	12%
An increased pool of qualified candidates for promotion	35%
No benefits	0%
Other	20%

Table 1.

The research indicated a nearly equal distribution in those interested in additional training (33%) as well as an increase in qualified candidates for promotion (35%). Of the 56 responses received, 11 responders added additional information listed under “Other” as:

- Increased pride and devotion to the department
- Improved work ethic and dedication
- Willingness to give back to other employees – to mentor and coach younger employees

The second research question asked what components should be included in a career development guide. This question was presented to both internal and external battalion chiefs and shift commanders as well as personal communications with a former battalion chief. Internal stakeholders were allowed to select all that apply while external responders could select the best-fit answer. This strategy was intentional as to showcase any differences given the limited

response option. Responses to this question can be found in Appendix A & B as well as in the following table:

What components do you feel should be included in a Career Development Guide?

	Percentage	(External)
Coaching / mentoring	66%	46%
Paid training / certifications	50%	23%
Paid education / tuition reimbursement	50%	16%
Personal goals / departmental expectations	33%	6%
Performance appraisals	66%	9%
	(Internal)	Table 2.

The data collected in the above question was intentionally formatted to allow internal responses to select as many choices they felt pertinent to the study. External questionnaires only permitted the responder to select the most applicable response. By narrowing the choices for the external responses, it forced the participant to weigh the choices more carefully. While internal applicants all determined performance appraisals were a vital component in a career development guide only 9% selected this option when forced to make a choice.

Schaumburg's retired Battalion Chief, Ken Wood offered additional insights into the components of a career development guide. Wood offers his opinions on not only certifications or affiliations necessary for all positions; he includes recommended degree programs as well. Each key position requires a specific skill set as well as degree concentration. Furthermore, there are numerous National Incident Management System (NIMS) classes that are not only required but beneficial to each position. The complete list of recommendations can be found within the draft Career Development Guide (K, Wood. Personal communications November 25, 2017).

The third question posed in the research; what time is applicable for the implementation of a career development guide? Numerous possibilities exist when discussing one's career timeline. To narrow down the scope of this research, responders were asked to focus on the training aspects of firefighters within the first ten years of their career. Results for the timeline applicable for a career development program can be viewed in Table 3. Additional information entered by responders focused on guidance for senior positions. This information has been included in the table as well as in Appendix D.

What time is applicable for the implementation of a career development guide?

Fundamental classes (FF II, FF III, FAE, FSVO) (Years 1-3)

Developmental Classes (Smoke Divers, RIT, FAST, Engine Ops, etc...) (Years 3-6)

Technical Rescue (Rope Ops, Trench, Structural Collapse, etc...) (Years 3-6)

Fire Officer Series (Years 6-9)

Table 3

Both internal and external responders felt identical in the implementation of a career development guide as it relates to the rank of a firefighter and his or her training. Both groups felt fundamental classes should be taken early in one's career, typically years 1-3. Developmental classes are those designed to enhance or perfect various skills such as Smoke Divers – air pack or Self Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) operations. Developmental classes will be listed in Appendix D. Developmental training and technical rescue courses split responders equally. These results may be due to the time frame associated with the questionnaire. Concluding, both groups felt fire officer training should be concentrated on later in one's training.

To further support these findings, an additional question was asked, “How important do you feel the developmental classes listed in question 5 are in relationship to technical rescue classes such as Rope Ops or Structural Collapse?” Once again, both groups shared their sentiments in that 60% felt it was somewhat important and 20% indicated it was more important when comparing developmental training to technical rescue classes. Once more, responders were asked, “As a Battalion Chief, when do you feel firefighters should focus on OSFM Fire Officer I training?” In similar fashion, the majority of responders (60%) indicated they felt Fire Officer I Series should be taken after all other training has been completed. The remaining responses were split with 20% indicating after developmental classes and 20% indicating after technical rescue training.

The final question asked, “What are other agencies doing for their career development programs?” This question was best served by allowing external respondents the opportunity to type in their responses. Of the 56 responses received, 26% percent of respondents completed this question for a total of 14 responses. Duplicate responses were deleted, and some language consolidated for clarity. The results of the final research question are:

- Each interested member sits down with the Division Chief of Training and goes over their performance appraisals as well as career aspirations. An outline is provided for each member to focus on including specific skills, education, and experiences.
- Qualified individuals are allowed to shadow a senior member of the department
- Knowledge, skills, and abilities plus certification & education
- Committee involvement

- Contract depicts requirements for each position. Certain certifications are required for specialty assignments such as the engineer, truck or squad. Also, the CBA spells out requirements for lieutenants and captain promotions
- Each member must go through three tiers within their first 9 years. Stage I consists of fundamental classes such as firefighter II. Stage II consists of technical rescue and hazardous materials training. Stage III is specialty assignment training such as engineer, truck operator, acting company officer, or assignment to the squad. Each stage is 3 years. Stages I & II are mandatory; Stage III is optional
- Voluntary program whereas perspective candidate maps out their strengths and desires then sits down with Chief of Training and plots a course for desired interest such as Company Officer, Shift Commander, Division Chief, etc.

Discussion

Understanding the complex background of career development was best suited with a thorough literature review. During this process, the research concluded the many facets of career development and how instrumental each component is in the successful development of the employee and subsequently the employer. In 2013, Lipman reminded us of the importance of career development as it relates to employee retention. Without a dedicated employee development program, many organizations face higher than expected turn-over as employees may leave for broader opportunities.

Rigsby (2015) supports this notion in that he feels many younger employees lack the dedicated work ethic and commitment to the organizations in comparison to older generations. While this may be true as a generality based upon the findings of the literature review, the results indicate a rejuvenated workforce of those organizations who have an active career development

program. With younger employees centered on career development, it seems prudent that organizations take heed of the research.

Looking back, Kaiden (2015) felt younger generations were much more likely to change jobs as compared to their parents or older siblings. The findings of those organizations with a career development program in place stated they not only saw an improvement in employee performance and dedication, but they also appeared to be more engaged and willing to give back. Stangeland (2015) suggests that career development programs promote psychological satisfaction in that an individual takes ownership of their own destiny while simultaneously benefitting the organization. The feelings of Stangeland mirror those of Schein (2010) in reference to the culture of the organization. The stronger the employee's connection with the organization the stronger the culture. Edgar Schein reminds us that culture is a powerful force to be reckoned with, you can either embrace and foster it or become a casualty of it.

Organizational Psychologist, Lipkin (2013) feels the pull to be a part of the organization comes from the release of a neurotransmitter called dopamine. Dopamine is often referred to as the feel-good drug responsible for many decisions. This theory can be seen in the widespread acceptance of the Applied Tailored Leadership Adventure for Success (ATLAS) program conducted at the University of Arizona. In 2013, the program saw tremendous growth in participation due to the buy-in from students as well as the satisfaction gained from taking charge of their own destiny (Murray & Schultz, 2013).

It is no secret that goals are an essential component for both the employee and the employer. Without having clear goals in sight, many organizations would fail to survive much less expand and prosper. Maxwell (2011) describes goals differently in that he refers to them as the law of priorities. In his book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, Maxwell describes

priorities or goals as having three R requirements: what is required, what gives the highest return, what brings the greatest reward. The research data follows similar suit in that 33% of respondents indicated having their goals in alignment with the organization was important. Conversely, external questionnaires received had a different perspective. When forced to make a single choice, external responders chose personal goals / departmental expectations only a mere 6%. Although this data is in contradiction to the literature review data, it is important to remember the data presented in the literature review was indicative of Millennials. Given the target audience, many of the responses received were from older generations such as Gen X or even Baby Boomers.

Perhaps the most significant similarity within the literature review and research data is that of mentoring. Numerous authors from a plethora of backgrounds all agree on the benefits of mentoring. Perhaps the most significant disparity when it comes to mentoring is how the program is to be facilitated. Emelo (2013) feels younger generations typically do not respond well to traditional mentoring practices. He adds that younger generations prefer to learn in a virtual or online environment. Viscuso (2014) suggest that in any mentoring program it is vitally important, to begin with the end in mind; this is to suggest that leaders in the organization know where they want the program to lead. Data received from both questionnaires indicated a strong resemblance to the literature review. In fact, although external respondents only had one choice, mentoring topped the list with 46%. Internal responses showed a higher increase in mentoring with 66% (4 of 6).

Interpretation

The feedback instrument presented hereon in conjunction with the literature review offer some valuable insights into career development. The researcher's interpretation of the findings is

in align with the numerous authors represented following the data received in the procedures. Also interesting are the similarities between both internal stakeholders and external respondents when it comes to not only mentoring but the importance of systematic teaching. With regards to fire officer development, an overwhelming majority agreed that these classes should be taken after both fundamental and developmental courses. In 2015, Cline reminded us that in order to have an effective plan you need to have a checklist or a systematic order of operation.

The second takeaway from the research is the importance of mentoring within any career development plan. Not only is mentoring important in the career development process so is its delivery. Emelo (2013) feels strongly that leaders in the organization can no longer ignore how younger generations learn and process information. Being flexible in the delivery of a mentoring program aids in not only the intended purpose but perhaps, more importantly, attracting highly qualified candidates. In 2013, Lipman suggests that organizations that fail to address career development are the real casualties. Supporting this notion, Stahl (2016) suggest that employees want to feel valued in the organization allowing to prosper and grow. Data collected supports this theme in that responders agreed workers had a heightened work ethic while participating in their career development program.

Implications

Neglecting to implement a career development program hinders more than just personal growth. Extensive research supports not only the need for such a program but more importantly the effects of not having a plan or program in place. Kaiden (2015) also reminds us that younger employees are more willing to change jobs seeking that perfect fit. To recall, independent research presented in the literature review suggest. To many, the concept of succession planning merely focuses on the replacement of senior or critical positions within the organization. A key

ingredient of succession planning is having a career pathway for members of the organization to strive and work towards (Stangeland, 2015).

Failing to develop your employees may lead to a critical situation within the organization. While the private sector has greater flexibility in talent recruitment, the fire service may be contractually bound to select candidates internally. Rigsby (2015) tells us that employees today are more concerned with making a statement rather than making an impact. What Dr. Rigsby is referring to is younger employees lack long-term vision. They are unable to vision themselves 15 or 20 years into the future. Respondents both internal and external felt that personal goals should be in alignment with departmental expectations. In fact, 33% of internal respondents felt this was more important than mentoring alone, and 6% of external respondents indicated this was a critical component. Given the fact that external respondents could only select one response is surprising given the choices available.

Recommendations

Recapping, the purpose of this research was to identify the recommended components of a career development guide for the SFD. In conducting this research, much more was gathered in regards to career development. Not only were the components identified during this research, additional information in the form of obstacles, but buy-in, goals, professional growth and mentoring were also brought to light. This comprehensive research is further divided into two recommendations. Primary recommendations are intended for use by the Schaumburg Fire Department. Additional recommendations are intended for future researchers within the fire service and beyond.

Schaumburg Fire Department

Succession planning, specifically career development is a necessary component if the SFD is to continue its proactive approach towards leadership. As the research reminds us, those placed in mentoring roles have a higher success rate towards not only their development but those of others as well. Primary considerations should be set on the following recommendations:

- Adopt the attached [draft] Career Development Guide for Schaumburg Fire Department personnel.
- Place a greater emphasis on personal goals of members on the SFD. Align individual goals with departmental expectations to prevent gaps in leadership or services.
- List departmental expectations of members on the department, specifically those in critical positions such as training, fire prevention, and investigation, as well as senior positions.

Future Researchers

If scores of data suggest succession planning, specifically career development are positive steps in the right direction, then why aren't these issues leading the charge in the fire service or industry in general? With the generation shift happening among many organizations, further research is prudent to the continued success of the employees *and* employers.

An interesting single response recorded by an external respondent may prove to be an excellent future research topic. One respondent stated, "Career development wouldn't help me anyway, my degree is in engineering." This statement led to the impromptu study of my team comprised of seven individuals. Of the seven members, only one of them had a formal education

slated for the fire service. The other six were from various backgrounds and professions. Perhaps the most intriguing background of them all – anthropology.

To date, career development and succession planning have been associated with current and future firefighters. In the past, training, specifically career development, has taken care of itself because members of the fire service *wanted* to be firefighters. They made a proactive step in personal development and set their sights on positions of greater responsibility within the organization. However, there are those who enter this field, not because of a calling or desire to serve the community. There are those members who enter this field for a variety of reasons that warrant additional research.

While this topic may seem too large to tackle, it warrants a further look for the continued success of the fire service. To narrow down the focus for the Executive Fire Officer, future researchers may want to examine:

- The number of career departments requiring a college degree to apply.
 - Further examination into departments that give preference to current firefighters, paramedics, or military veterans.
- The number of fire personnel working outside their formal degree concentration.
 - This information may shed light on where the fire service is heading as well as offer insights into career development for the non-fire service professional.

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Appendix A

External Questionnaire Cover Letter

To: Battalion Chiefs / Shift Commanders / Division Chiefs

From: Kolarik, John M. Lieutenant Schaumburg Fire Department, Schaumburg IL

Subject: Career Development for the Fire Service

Chief Officers,

My name is John Kolarik, and I am a Lieutenant with the Schaumburg Fire Department located in Schaumburg, IL. I am currently enrolled in Year 4 of the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. I am researching career development, specifically what components are vital to a successful program or guide.

If you would, please consider completing the attached questionnaire link below. Rest assured, all information gathered is strictly anonymous. Your feedback will be used to strengthen our career development program while simultaneously further developing the fire service as a profession. The electronic questionnaire link will remain active for 30 days. If you have any difficulties accessing the link or wish to speak to me personally, my contact information is listed below.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

John M. Kolarik | Lieutenant
Schaumburg Fire Department
1601 N. Roselle
Schaumburg, IL 60194
jkolarik@schaumburg.com
708-207-2810 (C)
847-885-6300 (W)

<https://www.questionpro.com/t/ALercZbdLH>

Appendix A

Questions for Battalion Chief / Shift Commanders

1. What is the size of your organization?
 - a. Under 50 (0%)
 - b. 51 to 100 (41 %)
 - c. 101 to 150 (59%)
 - d. 151 or higher (0%)

2. Does your organization have a formal Career Development Plan?
 - a. Yes (26.2%)
 - b. No (40%)
 - c. In development (33.8%)

3. What components do you feel should be incorporated into a Career Development Guide
 - a. Coaching / Mentoring (46%)
 - b. Paid training / certifications (23%)
 - c. Paid education / tuition reimbursement (16%)
 - d. Personal & departmental goals / expectations (6%)
 - e. Other _____ (9%)

4. Does your organization encourage or mandate participation in firefighter developmental classes such as Smoke Divers, RIT, Fire Attack & Suppression Techniques (F.A.S.T.) or Engine/Truck Operations?
 - a. Yes – mandated (6.67%)
 - b. No (26.67%)
 - c. Encouraged but not required (66.67%)

5. Do you feel specific classes should be taken in proper sequence such as the ones listed in question 4?
 - a. Strongly agree (33.3%)
 - b. Somewhat agree (33.3%)
 - c. Agree (27.4%)
 - d. Somewhat disagree (6%)
 - e. Strongly disagree (0%)

6. Please list in order of importance the following classes you feel should be taken in the developmental stage of a firefighter.
 - a. Smoke Divers (2nd)
 - b. Rapid Intervention Team (R.I.T) (1st)
 - c. Fire Attack and Suppression Techniques (F.A.S.T.) (3rd)
 - d. Engine Operations (4th)
 - e. Truck Operations (5th)
 - f. First In Company Officer (6th)

7. Please identify at what time frame the following classes should be taken?
 - a. Fundamental classes (FF II, FF III, FAE, FSVO) (Years 1-3)
 - b. Developmental Classes (Smoke Divers, RIT, FAST, Engine Ops, etc...) (Years 3-6)
 - c. Technical Rescue (Rope Ops, Trench, Structural Collapse, etc...) (Years 3-6)
 - d. Fire Officer series (Years 6-9)

8. How important do you feel the developmental classes listed in question 5 are in relationship to technical rescue classes such as Rope Ops or Structural Collapse?
 - a. More important (20%)
 - b. Somewhat important (60%)
 - c. Important (6.67%)
 - d. Somewhat unimportant (6.67%)
 - e. Unimportant (6.67%)

9. As a Battalion Chief, when do you feel firefighters should focus on OSFM Fire Officer I training curriculum?
 - a. After completion of fundamental classes (FF II, FAE, FSVO) (0%)
 - b. After completion of developmental classes (Smoke Divers, RIT, FAST etc.) (20%)
 - c. After completion of technical rescue classes (OSFM ops & technician) (20%)
 - d. After all of the above (60%)

10. Do you feel firefighter growth would be enhanced by a recommended Career Development Plan/Program?
 - a. Strongly agree (75%)
 - b. Somewhat agree (25%)
 - c. Agree (0%)
 - d. Somewhat disagree (0%)
 - e. Disagree (0%)

11. For those organizations with a Career Development Program, what benefits have you seen from the program?

- a. Increased interest in training (33%)
- b. Better understanding of policies and procedures (12%)
- c. Increased pool of qualified candidates for advancement (35%)
- d. No benefits (0%)
- e. Other _____ (20%)

12. If applicable, please generalize the structure of your career development program. (Top responses listed and consolidated)

- Each interested member sits down with the Division Chief of Training and goes over their performance appraisals as well as career aspirations. An outline is provided for each member to focus on including specific skills, education, and experiences.
- Qualified individuals are allowed to shadow a senior member of the department
- Knowledge, skills, and abilities plus certification & education
- Committee involvement
- Contract depicts requirements for each position. Certain certifications are required for specialty assignments such as the engineer, truck or squad. Also, the CBA spells out requirements for lieutenants and captain promotions
- Each member must go through three tiers within their first 9 years. Stage 1 consists of fundamental classes such as firefighter II. Stage II consists of technical rescue and hazardous materials training. Stage III is specialty assignment training such as engineer, truck operator, acting company officer, or assignment to the squad. Each stage is 3 years. Stages 1 & 2 are mandatory, Stage 3 is optional
- Voluntary program whereas perspective candidate maps out their strengths and desires then sits down with Chief of Training and plots a course for desired interest such as Company Officer, Shift Commander, Division Chief etc.

Appendix B

Internal Questionnaire Cover Letter

To: Battalion Chiefs & Shift Commanders

From: Kolarik, John M. Lieutenant Schaumburg Fire Department, Schaumburg IL

Subject: Career Development Guide for the Schaumburg Fire Department

Gentlemen,

As many of you are aware, I am attending the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. I am researching a Career Development Guide for our personnel; specifically, what components or steps are vital to a successful program or guide.

If you would, please complete the questionnaire by clicking the link below. Rest assured, all information gathered is strictly confidential. Your feedback will be used to develop our guide/program. The electronic questionnaire link will remain active for 30 days.

If you have any difficulties accessing the link, please contact me at Station 51. Additionally, if you have any thoughts or suggestions on the subject, please feel free to email me. Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

John M. Kolarik | Lieutenant
Schaumburg Fire Department
1601 N. Roselle
Schaumburg, IL 60194
jkolarik@schaumburg.com
708-207-2810 (C)
847-885-6300 (W)

<http://questionpro.com/t/ALercZSuaD>

Appendix B

Internal Questionnaire (Results in Red)

1. What components do you feel should be incorporated into a Career Development Guide for Schaumburg Fire Department personnel? (Select all that apply)
 - a. Coaching / Mentoring (66% - 4 of 6)
 - b. Paid training / certifications (50% - 3 of 6)
 - c. Paid education / tuition reimbursement (50% - 3 of 6)
 - d. Personal & departmental goals / expectations (33% - 2 of 6)
 - e. Performance Appraisals (66% - 4 of 6)

2. Do you feel the department should encourage or mandate firefighter developmental classes such as Smoke Divers, RIT, Fire Attack & Suppression Techniques (F.A.S.T.) or Engine/Truck Operations?
 - a. Yes – mandated (6.67%)
 - b. No (26.67%)
 - c. Encouraged but not required (66.67%)

3. Do you feel specific classes should be taken in proper sequence such as the ones listed in question 3?
 - a. Strongly agree (33.3%)
 - b. Somewhat agree (33.3%)
 - c. Agree (27.4%)
 - d. Somewhat disagree (6%)
 - e. Strongly disagree (0%)

4. Please list in order of importance the following classes you feel should be taken in the developmental stage of a firefighter.
 - a. Smoke Divers (1st)
 - b. Rapid Intervention Team (R.I.T) (2nd)
 - c. Fire Attack and Suppression Techniques (F.A.S.T.) (3rd)
 - d. Engine Operations (4th)
 - e. Truck Operations (5th)
 - f. First In Company Officer (6th)

5. Please identify at what time frame the following classes should be taken?
 - a. Fundamental classes (FF II, FF III, FAE, FSVO) (Years 1-3)
 - b. Developmental Classes (Smoke Divers, RIT, FAST, Engine Ops etc...) (Years 3-6)
 - c. Technical Rescue (Rope Ops, Trench, Structural Collapse, etc...) (Years 3-6)
 - d. Fire Officer series (Years 6-9)

6. How important do you feel the developmental classes listed in question 5 are in relationship to technical rescue classes such as Rope Ops or Structural Collapse?
 - a. More important (20%)
 - b. Somewhat important (60%)
 - c. Important (6.67%)
 - d. Somewhat unimportant (6.67%)
 - e. Unimportant (6.67%)

7. As a Battalion Chief, when do you feel firefighters should focus on OSFM Fire Officer I training curriculum?
 - a. After completion of fundamental classes (FF II, FAE, FSVO) (0%)
 - b. After completion of developmental classes (Smoke Divers, RIT, FAST etc.) (20%)
 - c. After completion of technical rescue classes (OSFM ops & technician) (20%)
 - d. After all of the above (60%)

8. Do you feel firefighter growth would be enhanced by a recommended Career Development Plan/Program?
 - a. Strongly agree (75%)
 - b. Somewhat agree (25%)
 - c. Agree (0%)
 - d. Somewhat disagree (0%)
 - e. Disagree (0%)

Appendix C

List of Fire Departments

1. Addison, IL
2. Alsip, IL
3. Aurora, IL
4. Bensenville, IL
5. Broadview, IL
6. Buffalo Grove, IL
7. Chicago Heights, IL
8. Clarendon Hills, IL
9. Downers Grove, IL
10. Effingham, IL
11. Elgin, IL
12. Elk Grove Township, IL
13. Elk Grove, IL
14. Elmhurst, IL
15. Evanston, IL
16. Flossmoor, IL
17. Frankfort, IL
18. Freeport, IL
19. Lincolnwood, IL
20. Lombard, IL
21. Loves Park, IL
22. Mt. Prospect, IL
23. Naperville, IL
24. Park Forest, IL
25. Prospect Heights, IL
26. Romeoville, IL
27. Villa Park, IL
28. Waukegan, IL
29. Westchester, IL
30. Wilmette, IL

Appendix D

Schaumburg Fire Department



[Draft]

Career Development Guide

Appendix D

PURPOSE

The fire service is a unique profession full of challenges and rewards. No other profession offers so many ways to serve the public. Emergency medical services, fire suppression, fire prevention, fire investigation, inspection and of course technical rescue are just a few of the many facets you will encounter along your career. Each of these specialties requires a unique set of skills and education.

In order to optimize time and resources, the following guide is designed to minimize the amount of time spent in preparation for further advancement by focusing on classes of interest. The purpose of this manual is to provide guidance for SFD personnel wishing to further their own professional development while simultaneously preparing future leaders within the Schaumburg Fire Department.

While the department provides routine training, professional and personal growth requires initiative on the part of the employee. Taking advanced courses aids in the development of your knowledge, skills, and abilities to better serve you in your current and future roles with the SFD. Keep in mind, with advancement brings not only an increase in salary, yet added responsibility.

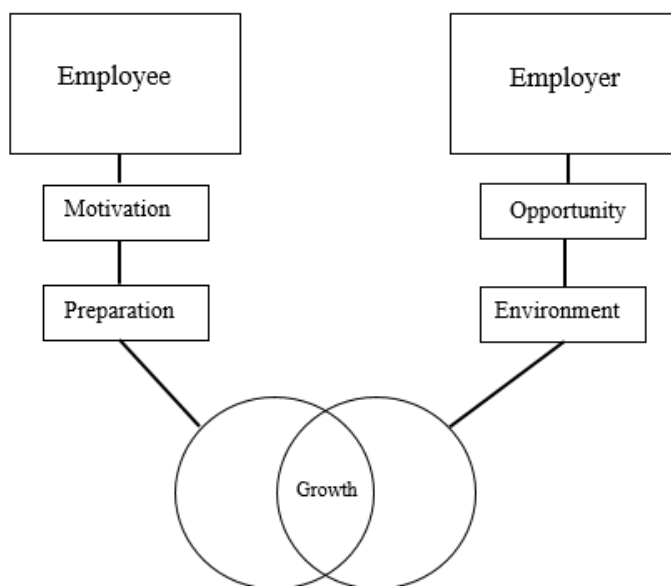
Several of the skills, certifications, and education listed in this manual are beneficial regardless of your current or desired position. The information contained within is a culmination of extensive research and is based on current practices as well as future needs of the department.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Career development is the first stage of a successful succession plan. The primary factors for career development are opportunity and motivation. Motivation is on behalf of the employee seeking to further their professional development. Opportunity is in the form of potential advancement of a well-prepared workforce.

For the Schaumburg Fire Department to adequately prepare its leaders, specific steps will need to be taken on behalf of the employee. The recommended actions are presented in this manual. By following this guide, will you be taking charge of your personal, professional growth plan; simultaneously, the department is provided with knowledgeable, productive, and effective members working together to improve the department.

Research has shown that a well-planned career development program is systematic in nature. The fundamental and developmental classes/courses listed within this guide are designed to be built upon each other. The Schaumburg Fire Department is committed to all its members and to the preparation of its current and future leaders.



RESOURCES

Tuition Reimbursement – The Village of Schaumburg is committed to the advancement of its personnel. The village has a well-established tuition reimbursement program. Please see the Training Officer or Human Resources representative for more information regarding the program.

Foreign Fire Education Fund – The SFD has allocated resources to allow individuals an opportunity to attend training opportunities or classes not covered under the formal tuition reimbursement program. Examples of these opportunities can be Office of the State Fire Marshal certification courses, seminars, to name a few. For more information, please a representative of the Foreign Fire Insurance Board for more information.

POSITIONS

➤ **FIREFIGHTER**

- Fundamental Classes – to be taken in years 1-3
 - OSFM - Advanced Tactical Firefighter (previously Firefighter III)
 - OSFM - Hazardous Materials Operations (if not taken during FF II)
 - OSFM - Fire Service Vehicle Operator
 - OSFM - Fire Apparatus Engineer
- Developmental Classes – to be taken in years 3-6
 - IFSI - Rapid Intervention Team (RIT)
 - IFSI - Smoke Divers / Advanced SCBA Training
 - IFSI - Fire Attack & Suppression Techniques
 - IFSI - Engine Company Operations
 - IFSI - Truck Company Operations
 - IFSI - First-In Company Officer
- Technical Rescue Training – to be taken in years 6-9
 - OSFM Hazardous Materials Technician
 - OSFM Rope Operations & Technician
 - OSFM Confined Space...
 - OSFM Trench Rescue
 - OSFM Structural Collapse Operations & Technician
- Fire Officer I Series – to be taken after completion of Developmental Classes
 - OSFM
 - To be taken in years 5+

➤ **ENGINEER (unofficial position)**

- OSFM Fire Apparatus Engineer
- OSFM Fire Service Vehicle Operator
 - Recommended
 - Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) in-house training
 - SFD Internal FAE Course (currently non-existent)

➤ **LIEUTENANT**

- Associate's Degree
- OSFM Fire Officer I
- OSFM Instructor I
- NIMS 100, 200, 700, & 800
 - Recommended
 - OSFM Fire Inspector
 - OSFM Fire Investigator
 - NIMS 300 & 400
 - SFD Internal Officer Training Program (currently non-existent)

➤ **CAPTAIN**

- Bachelor's Degree
- OSFM Fire Officer II
- OSFM Instructor II
- NIMS 300 & 400
 - Recommended
 - SFD Internal Officer Training Program (currently non-existent)

- Schaumburg Fire Department Internal Collective Bargaining Agreement Training (currently non-existent)
- OSFM Incident Safety Officer
- OSFM Hazardous Materials Incident Management
- IFSI – Fire ground Company Officer
- NFA – Command & Control Series

➤ **BATTALION CHIEF**

- Bachelor's Degree
- OSFM Fire Officer II
- OSFM Instructor II
- NIMS 300 & 400
 - Recommended
 - NFA – Managing Fire Officer
 - NFA – Executive Fire Officer
 - OSFM – Chief Fire Officer
 - SFD Internal Officer Training Program (currently non-existent)
 - Schaumburg Fire Department Internal Collective Bargaining Agreement Training (currently non-existent)
 - OSFM Incident Safety Officer
 - OSFM Hazardous Materials Incident Management
 - IFSI – Fire ground Company Officer
 - NFA – Command & Control Series

➤ **TRAINING**

- Bachelor's Degree
- OSFM - Instructor I, II, & III
- OSFM - Fire Officer I
- OSFM - Incident Safety Officer
- OSFM - Training Program Manager
 - Recommended
 - NFA – Fire & Emergency Services Training Program Management

➤ **EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

- Bachelor's Degree
- Ten years of experience as an EMT-Paramedic (current licensed preferred)
 - Recommended
 - OSFM Instructor I & II
 - NFA – Management of Emergency Medical Services

➤ **FIRE MARSHAL**

- Bachelor's Degree (see below)
- OSFM Fire Officer I
- OSFM Fire Prevention Officer
- OSFM Fire & Arson Investigator
- OSFM Youth Fire Prevention Officer
 - Recommended
 - BS - Fire Protection and Safety Engineering Technology (Oklahoma State University) or Fire Protection Engineering (University of Maryland)

- OSFM Fire Officer II
- Certified Fire Inspector I & II
- OSFM Advanced Fire Prevention Officer
- NFA – Managing Effective Fire Prevention Programs

➤ **EMERGENCY MANAGER**

- Bachelor's Degree (Emergency Management preferred)
- OSFM Fire Officer I
- OSFM Instructor I
- IEMA – Illinois Professional Emergency Manager (IPEM)
- FEMA – Professional Development Series
- NIMS – see IEMA's website under IPEM
 - Recommended
 - OSFM Fire Officer II
 - OSFM Instructor II
 - Homeland Security & Exercise Evaluation Program (HSEEP)

➤ **DEPUTY CHIEF OF OPERATIONS**

- Bachelor's Degree in fire science, public administration, or related field
- OSFM Fire Officer II
- OSFM Incident Safety Officer
- OSFM Hazardous Materials Incident Management
 - Recommended
 - OSFM – Chief Fire Officer
 - NFA – Command & Control Series

- NFA – Managing Fire Officer
- NFA – Executive Fire Officer

➤ **DEPUTY CHIEF OF ADMINISTRATION**

- Bachelor’s Degree in fire science, public administration, or related field
- OSFM Fire Officer II
- OSFM Incident Safety Officer
- OSFM Hazardous Materials Incident Management
 - Recommended
 - OSFM – Chief Fire Officer
 - NFA – Command & Control Series
 - NFA – Budget & Finance
 - NFA – Managing Fire Officer
 - NFA – Executive Fire Officer

➤ **FIRE CHIEF**

- Master’s Degree in fire science, public administration, or related field
- IEMA – Illinois Professional Emergency Manager
 - Recommended
 - NFA – Executive Fire Officer
 - OSFM – Chief Fire Officer
 - CPSE – Chief Fire Officer

Appendix E**Glossary of Terms**

CBA – Collective Bargaining Agreement

CDG – Career Development Guide

CPSE – Center for Public Safety Excellence

EFOP – Executive Fire Officer Program

FEMA – Federal Emergency Management Agency

IEMA – Illinois Emergency Management Agency

IFSI – Illinois Fire Service Institute

NAF – National Fire Academy

NIMS – National Incident Management System

NPDM – National Professional Development Model

OSFM – Office of the State Fire Marshal

SFD – Schaumburg Fire Department

USFA – United States Fire Administration

VOS – Village of Schaumburg