

Forging a Legacy of Excellence: A Proactive Approach to Strategically Managing Chief Officer
Transitions at the Olathe Fire Department

Kevin Weyand

Olathe Fire Department, Olathe, Kansas

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, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed: _____

Abstract

The Olathe Fire Department (OFD) was challenged with preparing and planning for a significant amount of turnover in their administrative leadership in the next 2-4 years. The problem is the OFD currently has no strategy in place to help manage upcoming chief officer transitions, thus making the organization at risk for decreased administrative performance and vulnerable to future disruptions in the delivery of their programs and services. The purpose of this research was to introduce the concept of executive transition management to the OFD and to identify key components of a transitional strategy that could be utilized to help manage upcoming chief officer transitions. A descriptive research methodology was used to answer the following questions: (a) what is executive transition management? (b) what are some of the best practices associated with executive transition management? (c) what plans, programs, and/or best practices are being utilized in the fire service to manage chief officer transitions? (d) what do the current chief officers within the OFD feel is the best way to successfully transition new leadership into their positions? The procedures included a review of literature on the topic of executive transition management and related best practices, the development and dissemination of an external survey to fire department members throughout the United States, and the development and distribution of an internal survey to every chief officer within the OFD. The results provided answers to the research questions, identified strategic components for managing leadership transitions, and demonstrated the department's need for a transitional strategy. Recommendations were made to utilize identified strategic components to develop a chief officer transitional strategy to manage upcoming chief officer transitions at the OFD.

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Introduction

The daunting task of delivering emergency services in today's rapidly evolving society is becoming increasingly more challenging each year for executive leaders in the fire service. As the Olathe Fire Department (OFD) along with other fire departments throughout the nation strive to continue fulfilling their long-standing core mission of protecting lives and preserving property, they are facing what seems like an endless number of technical and adaptive challenges. Confronted with budget constraints, staffing shortages, training and personnel development deficiencies, health and safety concerns, growing service demands, and increased public expectations, fire service leaders are continuously searching for the best way to overcome these issues and position their departments to thrive in the future. However, these challenges are becoming increasingly more difficult to resolve as fire departments have to contend with continuous transitions in their executive leadership.

Transitions in executive leadership are taking place every day throughout the world in every type of organization, and as evident from the abundance of applied research projects at the National Fire Academy written about the topics of leadership change, succession planning and officer development, it is also a major issue within the fire service. Fire departments all across the nation are facing a crisis of leadership change as their senior administrative leaders prepare to exit the workforce. Planning for this future wave of retirements isn't solely about figuring out where the gaps will be and how to transfer the knowledge and skills vital to those positions; it's also about managing the transition process. Too often, chief officer transitions are viewed as an event rather than a process in the fire service, and as a result, the needs, knowledge, and experience of outgoing leaders are not always leveraged to their fullest potential. Instead, if

careful attention was given to managing the entire transition process, the chances for a successful tenure by a new leader could be significantly optimized.

There is a lot of focus today on succession planning and chief officer development in the fire service, but very little is being done to manage the overall leadership transition process from beginning to end with newly promoted executive leaders. Most fire departments rely on a hands-off transition approach which forces new leaders to self-manage their own transitions.

Unfortunately, improperly managed leadership transitions have the potential to weaken an organization significantly and wreak havoc on their forward progression and continuity. On the other hand, proactively managed leadership transitions ensure that newly developed and promoted leaders get properly assimilated and integrated into their organization and set up for success.

Over the next 2-4 years, there is the potential for the Olathe Fire Department (OFD) to lose 80-90 percent of its administrative chief officers due to retirements. As an accredited agency that places tremendous value on continuous improvement and excellence in leadership and service delivery, the OFD recognizes the importance of taking a proactive approach to improving the transitional readiness of their administration, while at the same time reducing potential adverse impacts to the organization's efficiency and effectiveness.

The problem is the OFD currently has no strategy in place to manage chief officer transitions, thus making the organization at risk of decreased administrative performance and vulnerable to experiencing future disruptions in their delivery of their programs and services. The purpose of this research was to introduce the concept of executive transition management to the OFD and to identify key components of a transitional strategy that could be utilized to help manage upcoming chief officer transitions. A descriptive research methodology was utilized to

answer the following questions: (a) what is executive transition management? (b) what are some of the best practices associated with executive transition management? (c) what plans, programs, and/or best practices are being utilized in the fire service to manage chief officer transitions? (d) what do the current chief officers within the OFD feel is the best way to successfully transition new leadership into their positions?

Background and Significance

The research setting for this applied research project is the city of Olathe, Kansas. Founded in 1857, and said to have been named after the Shawnee Indian word for “beautiful,” Olathe is one of the oldest cities in the state of Kansas. It is located in the northeastern part of the state approximately twenty miles southwest of the downtown Kansas City metropolitan area. Situated in the heart of Johnson County, it has been recognized as the county seat since 1859. At the time of this research, Olathe had an estimated population of 130,045 residents, and was recognized as the second largest community in Johnson County and the fourth most populous city in the state of Kansas – just surpassing the capital city of Topeka.

In 1871, after suffering the loss of a substantial number of buildings to fire on the town square, the city council passed an ordinance establishing the Olathe Fire Department (OFD). Since that time, the OFD has progressively endeavored to accomplish its mission of protecting and preserving the life and property of the citizens of Olathe through dynamic emergency response and excellence in training, preparedness, and prevention. This is especially evident with the OFD’s most recent achievement of accreditation status in 2012 – making it one of 187 fire departments to become internationally accredited.

The OFD is a full-time professionally paid local government agency with 132 full time employees. There are a minimum of 28 firefighters on duty everyday at the OFD. Firefighters

work 24-hour shifts from a 3-shift 56-hour weekly schedule to provide emergency services 365 days a year to the community. Daily operational staffing includes two battalion chiefs, eight fire captains, eight fire apparatus operators, and twenty-six firefighters.

There are eight frontline pieces of fire apparatus at the OFD. There are four engine companies, two quint companies, one truck company, and one rescue company that respond to emergencies throughout the community from seven strategically located fire stations. There are a minimum of 3 firefighters on every frontline apparatus, with the exception of the truck and rescue company, which maintain a minimum of 4 firefighters.

On average, the OFD responds to approximately 9,500-10,000 emergencies each year involving fires, medical incidents, technical rescues, hazardous materials, and explosive ordinance disposal. According to Firehouse®, OFD's incident reporting software system, the OFD responded to 10,167 incidents in 2014 and is on track to surpass that total in 2015.

As outlined in the organizational chart in Appendix A, the department is divided into the following three main sections: emergency services, special operations and professional development and community risk management.

The emergency services section is directly managed by an administrative assistant chief and is responsible for daily emergency services response. Uniform personnel maintain equipment in a state of readiness, participate in training, educate the public and conduct life safety inspections as part of a daily routine.

The special operations and professional development section is directly managed by an administrative assistant chief and is comprised of the logistics and support services division, training and safety division, building codes division, emergency management division, and special operations. Each division is responsible for providing services in support of the

department's daily mission and direction of special events planning, emergency management, technical rescue, hazardous materials, and explosive ordnance disposal response.

The risk management section is directly managed by an administrative division chief that also functions as the city's fire marshal. The risk management section is responsible for fire prevention by providing services in fire inspections, fire and explosion investigations, public education, and fire plan reviews.

There are a total of thirteen chief officers at the OFD – seven administrative chiefs and six operational chiefs. The seven administrative chief officers work Monday – Friday 8am-5pm and fill the following ranks and positions: one Fire Chief; one Deputy Chief; two Assistant Chiefs; two Division Chiefs; and one Battalion Chief. The remaining six operational chief officers function as Battalion Chiefs, which work the same 24-hour shift schedule as the firefighters.

In years past, chief officer attrition had not been a significant challenge within the OFD. Transitions in administrative leadership had traditionally taken place at a slow enough rate to manage them easily with minimal impact on the department's overall effectiveness and efficiency. However, looking ahead into the future 2-4 years, there is the potential for the OFD to lose 80-90 percent of its current chief officers due to retirements. This is a significant challenge for every section and division within the OFD. Realistically, this percentage represents the fact that at least 10 out of 13 total executive-level positions within the department will be under new leadership. These impending changes in executive leadership require a strategic approach and timely response in order to reduce the potential adverse impacts on the organization's effectiveness and forward progression.

The author attended the Executive Fire Officer Program's Executive Development (ED) course at the National Fire Academy (NFA) from the dates of November 10th to November 22nd in 2013. The overall focus of the ED course was to improve executive fire officers' skills in managing high-performance teams, managing change, exercising adaptive leadership skills, recognizing and valuing the need for diversity, and utilizing critical thinking skills (USFA, 2012). Since the goal of this applied research project (ARP) was to identify components of a proactive strategy for managing chief officer transitions, a direct and definitive linkage was established between the research purpose and course content related to managing change and organizational transitions mentioned in unit five of the ED Manual (USFA, 2012). Additionally, this ARP supports the U.S. Fire Administration's fourth strategic goal which aims to "improve the emergency services' professional status" by developing future leaders of the fire service (USFA, 2010).

Literature Review

When it comes to best practices for managing executive-level leadership changes within the fire service, two main strategies have been championed by fire service experts over the last two decades as critical elements for transition success – leadership development and succession planning. This became very evident as the author began researching the topic of leadership change in the fire service through the Learning Resource Center at the National Fire Academy.

Through the initial stages of research, the author found an abundance of applied research projects and articles written in fire service periodicals concerning the above mentioned topics, but after careful examination, found minimal information regarding a comprehensive plan or strategy to manage the entire leadership transition process from the time a leader announces his departure until the time the new leader has become successfully assimilated and integrated into

the organization. So, while succession planning and leadership development are both important aspects of leadership change and have played a vital role in the successful transition of many new leaders over past few decades within the fire service, the author felt that their scope was too narrowly focused on the identification and preparation aspects of leadership transitions leaving important post-transitional issues like integration and assimilation unaddressed.

It wasn't until researching literature outside the public sector did the author find a more comprehensive strategy for managing executive leadership transitions that encompassed the entire process from leadership preparation to successful assimilation. What the author found was a specific body of literature written about the consultancy practice of executive transition management (ETM) within the nonprofit sector. A review of literature on the topic of ETM was conducted to provide a working definition for the process, and to identify best practices associated with the process of ETM that could be utilized within the fire service. Researching literature related to the process of ETM exposed the history and main contributors, a three-phase model, and best practices.

A Brief History of ETM and its Main Contributors

According to Tom Adams (2005), the current president of TransitionGuides consulting group, the contributions to the development of ETM are many with the earliest influences coming from Tom Gilmore's (1988) work on executive transitions and William Bridges' (1991) distinction between change and transition. Adams was next to contribute with his work in the early-90s at the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation where he headed a project funded by the Kellogg Foundation aimed at examining executive transitions, and later with the development of transition programs at the Maryland Association of Nonprofits and Annie E.

Casey Foundation. Don Tebbe, the current executive vice president of TransitionGuides, added to ETM's development with his work on executive search in the mid-90s. Tim Wolfred, the director at CompassPoint Nonprofit Services, followed with his development of transition services in the late-90s. Finally, through the collaborative efforts of TransitionGuides and CompassPoint consulting firms coupled with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a model was developed with practical approaches to ETM in the early 2000's. Today, ETM is primarily a consulting service geared towards assisting nonprofit organization through leadership transitions, and is constantly being tweaked and refined to tease out best practices for managing executive transitions (Adams, 2005).

Executive Transition Management Defined

A review of literature from leading experts in the field of executive transitions in the nonprofit sector provided the author with several definitions for the practice of ETM. In his book, the *Nonprofit Leadership Transition and Development Guide*, Tom Adams (2010) defines ETM as a comprehensive strategy for managing the entire transition process from the current leader's departure to the new leader's successful launch. He adds that unlike succession planning and leadership development which tend to focus more on leadership identification and talent building (Rothwell, 2010), ETM also takes into consideration the importance of providing installation support to the incoming leader to produce a more successful launch into the organization thus reducing the risk of transition failures.

Tim Wolfed (2009) describes the ETM process as a holistic approach to leadership change that embraces the entire departure, search, selection, hiring, and onboarding processes that need to take place during a leadership transition. He adds that ETM consists of a flexible set

of practices that are widely adaptable and consistently result in a positive, forward-looking relationship between an executive and the organization. It's a process for guiding the organization from early-stage thinking about executive succession through the successful launch of the incoming executive (Wolfred, 2009).

In his book, *Chief Executive Transitions: How to Hire and Support a Nonprofit CEO*, Don Tebbe (2008) defines ETM as the process of managing the departure and transition, clarifying the organization's readiness for new leadership, managing search and recruitment activities, and ensuring the successful launch of the new executive. He suggests that the overall goal of ETM is The goal to provide the necessary tools organizations need to manage the organization.

Based on these definitions of ETM, the author felt that this approach to leadership transition would provide a more comprehensive strategic solution to managing chief officer attrition within the OFD. So, further research was conducted to better understand the ETM process and best practices.

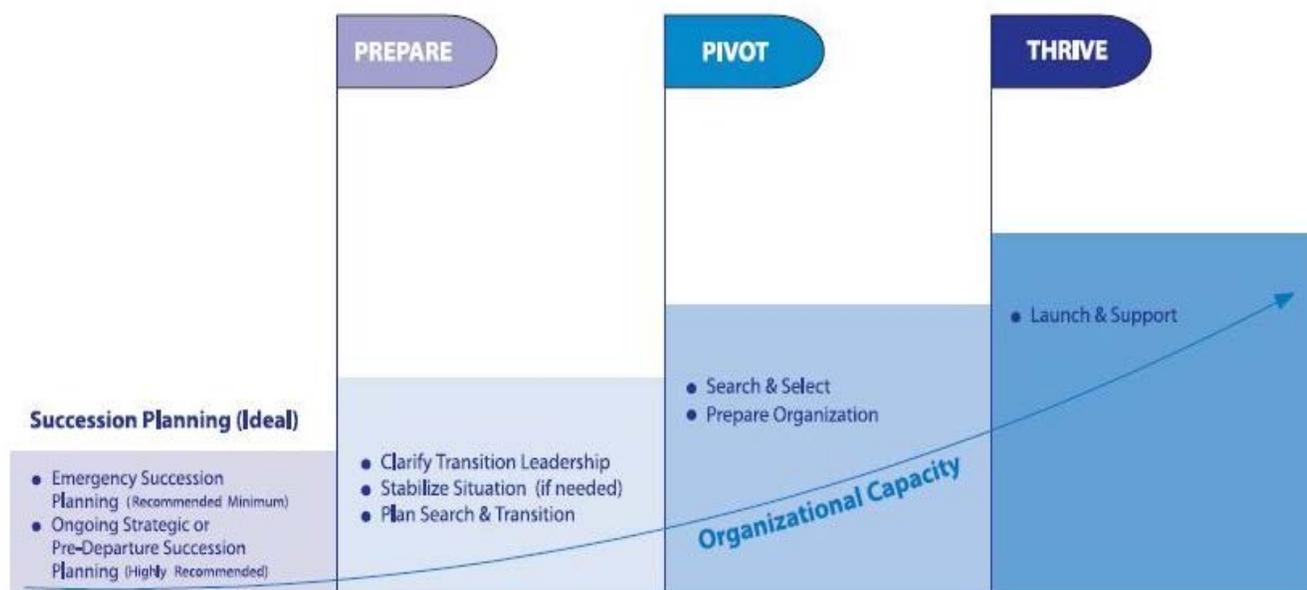
The Executive Transition Management Three-Phase Model

ETM is based on a three-phase model for managing the transition process. According to Wolfred (2009), the ETM three-phase model was the result of further development of the earlier work of William Bridges (1991), who wrote extensively on the topic of change management over a thirty-year career of consulting to corporate leaders. Bridges book titled *Managing Transitions: Making the Most of Change*, provided many useful prescriptions for successfully leading change and mining it for growth opportunities. Eventually, Bridges developed a three-

stage model to describe the emotional and psychological process that accompanies change during transitional periods in an individual's life. This model was the focus of unit five in the author's Executive Development class at the NFA.

Bridges' model, outlined in the Executive Development Student Manual (2012), included the following three stages: endings, a neutral zone, and new beginnings. Bridges stressed that all change begins with an ending and how vital it is to acknowledge the inevitable loss associated with any change. The neutral zone that follows the ending describes the emotional turbulence people experience between the familiar state of the old and the reality of the new. Finally, Bridges emphasizes that the new beginnings stage truly occurs when people have let go of the past, moved through the discomfort and uncertainty of the neutral zone, and begin to accept the changes and focus on the future (USFA, 2012). According to Wolfred (2009), the ETM model which is also broken down into three stages pairs up nicely with Bridges work.

The ETM model is broken down into three phases – prepare, pivot, and thrive – and stems from the viewpoint that an executive-level leadership transition is a pivotal time in an organization, giving them the opportunity to change direction, maintain momentum, and strengthen capacity (Adams, 2010). The figure below illustrates the executive transition management three-phase model.

Figure 1 – Executive Transition Management Model (Adams, 2004).

Wolfred (2009) provides descriptions for each stage below:

Prepare: Planning for leadership transition. At this stage, the focus is on helping the current CEO decide how to leave; strengthening the board’s capacity to manage the transition; and clarifying the organization’s strategic direction by conducting an assessment of where the organization has been, where it is headed, and the leadership required to get it there.

Pivot: Search, selection and organizational preparation. Here, the focus is on recruitment, the search, and leader selection, as well as continued strengthening of particular areas of the organization’s infrastructure to smooth the way for the new executive.

Thrive: Post-hire launch and support. The focus from this point is on the successful launch of the new executive and ongoing capacity building. This stage often involves the creation of a social contract between the new CEO and the board, spelling out roles, priorities, and procedures for the next 12 to 18 months.

Adams (2010) indicates that the preparation stage activities usually include transition planning, conducting an organizational assessment, and creating a skill profile for the incoming leader. He suggests that the overall goal of the preparation phase is to clarify the organization's strategic direction by conducting an assessment of where the organization has been, where it is headed, and the leadership required to get it there.

Adams (2010) suggests that the pivot stage activities focus on recruitment, the search process, and leader selection. They usually include all of the necessary steps from executive search to the formal hire itself. The overall objective is to strengthen the organizational foundation so that the new executive can succeed.

Adams (2010) recommends that the organization should plan and conduct an appropriate welcome for the new executive during the thrive stage. Also, the executive should develop an entry plan while the board and executive create a leadership agenda. Finally, there may be a variety of capacity-building activities continued from earlier phases or even introduced for the first time depending on the transition. The primary goal in this stage is to ensure that the new leader has the necessary support to succeed in their new position.

Executive Transition Management Best Practices

The second research question sought to uncover best practices associated with the practice of ETM that could be useful if adopted and implemented into the fire service. A review of literature exposed minimal information as it directly related to best practices within ETM.

In 2004, Mindy Price from Leading Transitions, LLC, authored a report titled *Executive Transition Initiative: Departure Defined Transition Toolkit*. Within the report, Price identified 10 strategies for managing departure defined executive transitions. She notes the importance of utilizing the ETM model and associated planning activities, which include communicating the transition to the board, staff and community stakeholders, conducting an organizational assessment, building organizational capacity and sustainability, recruiting and hiring a new executive, and celebrating the leadership succession. She goes on to write about the development of a departure defined executive transition toolkit, which provides organizations with a helpful roadmap to guide them through the executive transition process. It consists of the following 10 strategic best practice components:

1. With the help of a committee, create good endings and new beginnings.
2. Engage the board, staff and stakeholders in the impending transition and managing communication to reduce anxiety.
3. Explore hiring a transition consultant.
4. Establish a leadership succession team.
5. Communicate the leadership transition to stakeholders.

6. Conduct an organizational assessment to identify future leadership needs and uncover strengths and vulnerabilities within the organization.
7. Use a strategic plan to assess future leadership needs.
8. Translate the assessment into a leadership succession plan.
9. Conduct an executive search.
10. Announce and celebrate the leadership succession.

In 2011, a report was presented at the 11th Annual Governance of Nonprofit Organizations Conference by Francine Breckenridge and Katherine David. The report titled *Nonprofit Executive Transition Management: Best Practices for Employee Recruitment, Retention & Termination*, outlined the steps of having a proper executive transition management plan. In the report, Breckenridge and David identified the following best practices associated with each stage of the ETM model:

1. Form a committee to address transitional issues and develop a transition plan.
2. Develop and communication plan to help keep everyone informed before, during, and after the transition.
3. Perform an organizational needs assessment.
4. Revisit the mission, vision and value statements and update strategic plan if necessary.
5. Conduct an analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

6. Ensure the new job description aligns with the mission, vision, values, and goals of the organizations.
7. Provide the new leader with the results from the organizational assessment, updates strategic plan, and a one-year operation plan to guide decision-making.
8. Provide the new leader with a mentor for the first 90 days.

These ETM best practices would be beneficial to the author's research problem for several reasons. First, it emphasizes the importance of committee planning and unified communication. The idea of forming a committee to develop a transition plan and a communication plan makes sense to the author. Traditionally, committee involvement from internal stakeholders has worked well over the years at the OFD to create new plans or overcome difficult challenges. Second, the idea of conducting an organizational needs assessment would prove invaluable to the OFD before losing a large percentage of its leadership. As suggested, executive transitions provide organizations with a unique opportunity to perform a self-audit or S.W.O.T. analysis in an effort to gauge whether or not their current mission, vision, values will remain relevant after the departure of an executive. It has been the author's experience in the fire service that these types of assessments are usually only performed every five years when creating a new strategic plan. Utilizing this assessment strategy for upcoming leadership transitions at the OFD could help bolster stability and improve effectiveness in the affected divisions thus reducing the potential of chasing after outdated goals by the new leader. Lastly, the idea of providing the new leaders with post-hire support, updated goals and plans, and a transition mentor would also prove invaluable for the new incoming leaders at the OFD. Traditionally, leaders have vacated at a slow rate from the OFD, allowing remaining leadership to assist in the

integration process of new chief officers. With the upcoming attrition of 80% of the administrative chief officers, it is evident that the new leaders will require a new method of becoming familiarized and integrated into their new roles to avoid performance and continuity issues. Providing them with the necessary tools and support through information sharing and mentoring would help tremendously during the transition process.

Procedures

Research Methodology

The purpose of this research was to introduce the concept of executive transition management to the OFD and to identify key components of a transitional strategy that could be utilized to help manage upcoming chief officer transitions. A descriptive research methodology was utilized to answer the following questions: (a) what is executive transition management? (b) what are some of best practices associated with executive transition management? (c) what plans, programs, and/or best practices are being utilized in the fire service to manage chief officer transitions? (d) what do the current chief officers within the OFD feel is the best way to successfully transition new leadership into their positions?

The procedures utilized for this ARP were clearly delineated to permit replication, and were appropriate to achieve the stated research purpose of this project. The procedures included a comprehensive review of literature researching the topic of executive transition management in the nonprofit sector, the development and dissemination of an external survey to fire department members throughout the United States, and the development and distribution of an internal survey to all chief officers in the OFD. The overall goal of each procedural element was to provide answers to the research questions, and identify strategies and industry best practices

concerning managing executive leadership transitions that could be evaluated for implementation at the OFD.

Literature Review

The literature review for this applied research project (ARP) initially began at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) located on the campus of the National Fire Academy (NFA) in Emmitsburg, MD in November of 2013. Several books, journal articles, trade magazine articles, and EFO papers related to leadership transition, succession, and development were reviewed to help gain insight into the research problem.

Upon returning home, the author utilized the Gardner, Kansas branch of the Johnson County Public Library system to further research information on managing executive leadership transitions. Additionally, internet searches were conducted on the World Wide Web using Google® as a search engine. Key phrases such as “managing leadership change,” “managing leadership transitions,” “leadership transition planning,” “leadership transition strategies,” and “executive transition management” were utilized to find information on the author’s research topic. The overall goal of the literature review process was provide answers to the author’s research questions by summarizing critical findings of others who have published documents related to the author’s research problem. In the end, the literature review identified relevant and practical information regarding executive transition management and best practices for managing leadership transitions.

Survey Instruments

In order to provide further depth into the research question inquiring what plans, programs, and/or best practices are being utilized in the fire service to manage chief officer transitions, an internet-based external survey (Appendix B) was developed by the author using

SurveyMonkey.com®. The survey was designed with the intent of determining if outside fire agencies were utilizing formalized plans or programs to help strategically manage chief officer transitions, and whether or not they were successful. The survey was made available to fire department members of all ranks across the United States using the Training Resources and Data Exchange Network (TRADENET). To accomplish this, the author sent an email to TRADENET requesting assistance with survey participation for an ARP in the EFOP. The email included a brief description of the survey topic along with the survey link.

The actual population size for the external survey was unidentified by the author due to the unknown nature of the number of subscribing fire department members to TRADENET. However, there were a total of 98 respondents to the external survey from TRADENET within a four-week period of time. All respondents were anonymous, but certain demographic information was collected within the survey to determine the respondent's city population, amount of fire department members, years of career service, current rank, and years of service in current rank. This information was useful in helping determine comparability with the author's fire department. Additionally, the survey was designed with the intent of determining how each respondent felt about chief officer transitions in regard the following matters: recent chief officer attrition, internal vs. external replacements, whether or not certain plans or programs were in place to manage chief officer transitions, and whether or not those plans or programs were successful.

In order to provide further depth to the research question inquiring what do the current chief officers within the OFD feel is the best way to successfully transition new leadership into their positions, an internet-based internal survey (Appendix D) was also developed by the author using SurveyMonkey.com®. This survey was sent interdepartmentally via email to a population

of thirteen chief officers within the OFD. A link to the survey was contained in the email. The survey was designed with the intent of determining how each member felt about chief officer transitions in regard the following matters: internal vs. external replacements, the quality of internal chief officer training and development, and the accuracy of current chief officer position guides, their comfort level upon being promoted, whether or not they would have benefited from transitional support before and after their promotion, and how they would rank in order of importance different programs aimed at facilitating transitional support to newly promoted or appointed chief officers.

Assumptions and Limitations

Two main assumptions were made by the author while conducting research for this project. First, the author assumed that all information researched and gathered through the literature review was both factual and unbiased. Additionally, the author assumed that the data gathered from both survey's respondents were factual, unbiased, and beneficial for the fire service.

The research was limited by the following three factors: time, amount of literature, and the scope of both survey instruments. First, the amount of time the author had available to conduct research and collect data was limited to a 6-month timeframe. This deadline did not allow time for the author to follow-up with survey respondents concerning pre and post transitional strategies, programs, and plans. Second, the amount literature reviewed on the subject of executive transition management was limited by the author's abilities to conduct research, and the limited amount of information on the subject. Finally, the scope of the research was limited by the population sizes and number of responses returned in both survey instruments.

Results

The results of this descriptive research were based upon a comprehensive review of literature and survey responses from two internet-based instruments that were developed and distributed by the author using SurveyMonkey.com®. The information gathered from the research was utilized to answer the four research questions developed by the author.

Research Question #1:

What is executive transition management?

To answer this question, a review of literature concerning the topic of executive transition management was conducted by the author. The research revealed that executive transition management is a comprehensive, systematic approach to anticipating and addressing the changes that occur when a leader departs, whether planned or unexpected, and a new leader must be identified and integrated into the organizational structure and operation (Adams, 2010). The literature indicated that ETM's genesis was the result of collaborating consulting groups and was developed as an approach to reducing risks and maximizing the potential associated with leadership transition periods (Adams, 2005).

The literature reviewed also described ETM as a holistic approach to leadership change that was based on model aimed at assisting organizations during the departure, search, selection, hiring, and onboarding process that takes place during leadership transitions (Wolfred, 2009). The ETM model, consisting of three phases – prepare, pivot and thrive – stemmed from the viewpoint that an executive-level leadership transition were pivotal moments in organizations, allowing them the opportunity to change direction, maintain momentum, and strengthen capacity (Adams, 2010). Literature also indicated that the ETM model was the result of the earlier work

of William Bridges where he developed a three-stage model based on endings, the neutral zone, and new beginnings that accompany change during transitions (1991).

Research Question #2:

What are some of the best practices associated with executive transition management?

To answer this question, a review of literature was conducted by the author to identify the best practices associated with executive transition management. Although minimal, the research revealed several best practices that the author could apply or even implement within the OFD during the upcoming transitions. First, a report authored by Mindy Price (2004) identified the following ten strategic best practice components associated with departure defined executive transitions:

1. With the help of a committee, create good endings and new beginnings.
2. Engage the board, staff and stakeholders in the impending transition and managing communication to reduce anxiety.
3. Explore hiring a transition consultant.
4. Establish a leadership succession team.
5. Communicate the leadership transition to stakeholders.
6. Conduct an organizational assessment to identify future leadership needs and uncover strengths and vulnerabilities within the organization.
7. Use a strategic plan to assess future leadership needs.
8. Translate the assessment into a leadership succession plan.
9. Conduct an executive search.
10. Announce and celebrate the leadership succession.

Also, the author found a report written by Francine Breckenridge and Katherine David (2011) which identified the following best practices associated with each stage of the ETM model:

1. Form a committee to address transitional issues and develop a transition plan.
2. Develop and communication plan to help keep everyone informed before, during, and after the transition.
3. Perform an organizational needs assessment.
4. Revisit the mission, vision and value statements and update strategic plan if necessary.
5. Conduct an analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
6. Ensure the new job description aligns with the mission, vision, values, and goals of the organizations.
7. Provide the new leader with the results from the organizational assessment, updates strategic plan, and a one-year operation plan to guide decision-making.
8. Provide the new leader with a mentor for the first 90 days.

Research Question #3:

What plans, programs, and/or best practices are being utilized in the fire service to manage chief officer transitions?

To answer this research question, an internet-based external survey (Appendix B) was developed by the author using SurveyMonkey.com®. The charts and summary tables listing the statistical findings for this survey are located in Appendix D. The survey was designed with the intent of determining if outside fire agencies were utilizing formalized plans or programs to help strategically manage chief officer transitions, and whether or not they were successful. The

survey was made available to fire department members of all ranks across the United States using the Training Resources and Data Exchange Network (TRADENET). To accomplish this, the author sent an email to TRADENET requesting assistance with survey participation for an ARP in the EFOP. The email included a brief description of the survey topic along with the survey link.

The actual population size for the external survey was unidentified by the author due to the unknown nature of the number of subscribing fire department members to TRADENET. However, there were a total of 98 respondents to the external within a four-week period of time. All respondents were anonymous, but certain demographic information was collected within the survey to determine the respondent's city population, amount of fire department members, years of career service, current rank, and years of service in current rank. This information was useful in helping determine comparability with the author's fire department. Additionally, the survey was designed with the intent of determining how each respondent felt about chief officer transitions in regard the following matters: recent chief officer attrition, internal vs. external replacements, whether or not certain plans or programs were in place to manage chief officer transitions, and whether or not those plans or programs were successful. The survey contained the following ten questions:

1. What is the population of your community?
2. How many members are in your department?
3. How long have you been in the fire service?
4. What is your current rank?
5. How long have you been in your in current position?

6. Has your department experienced any chief officer attrition or promoted and chief officers over the past five years?
7. Were the vacated chief officer positions or promotions filled internally?
8. Does your department offer any of the following types of programs to help strategically manage chief officer transitions? Check all that apply.
9. Does your department have a strategic plan to help strategically manage chief officer transitions?
10. In your opinion, have the support programs and/or formalized plans been successful at managing chief officer transitions?

Survey question #1 asked respondents to identify their community's population range. Eleven (11.22%) respondents answered that their population was between 0-9,999, forty-four (44.09%) between 10,000-49,999, nineteen (19.39%) between 50,000-99,999, nine (9.18%) between 100,000-199,999, seven (7.14%) between 200,000-499,999, six (6.12%) between 500,000-999,999, and two (2.04%) were over one million. This data was helpful in determining the size of the community in comparison with Olathe.

Survey question #2 asked respondents to identify a range of the amount of members within their departments. Thirty-six (36.73%) respondents answered that their department membership was between 0-50 people, twenty-nine (29.59%) between 51-100, eighteen (18.37%) between 100-200, three (3.06%) between 200-300, zero (0%) between 300-400, three (3.06%) between 400-500, and nine (9.18%) had over 500. This data was useful in determining the size of the department in comparison with the Olathe Fire Department.

Survey question #3 asked respondents to identify how long they had been in the fire service. Only 96 of 98 total respondents answered this question. Zero (0%) respondents

answered that they had been in the fire service for 1-5 years, two (2.08%) answered for 5-10 years, eight (8.33%) answered for 10-15 years, seventeen (17.71%) answered for 15-20 years, twenty-five (26.04%) answered for 20-25 years, and forty-four (45.83%) answered over 25 years. This data was helpful in determining the respondent's tenure in the fire service.

Survey question #4 asked respondents to identify their current rank. Twenty-one (21.43%) respondents were fire chiefs, twenty (20.41%) were deputy chiefs, six (6.12%) were assistant chiefs, six (6.12%) were division chiefs, thirteen (13.27%) were battalion chiefs, nineteen (19.39%) were captains, ten (10.20%) were lieutenants, and three (3.06%) were firefighters. This data was helpful in determining the respondent's rank, which provided insight into how the questions might be answered.

Survey question #5 asked respondents to identify how long they have been in their current position. Forty-nine (50%) answered that they have been in their current position for 1-5 years, twenty-eight (28.57%) answered 5-10 years, fifteen (15.31%) answered 10-15 years, two (2.04%) answered 15-20 years, three (3.06%) answered 20-25 years, and one (1.02%) answered 25+ years. This information was helpful in determining tenure in current position.

Survey question #6 asked respondents to identify if their department has experienced any chief officer attrition or promoted any chief officers over the past five years. Eighty-six (87.76%) respondents answered "yes" to the question, while twelve (12.24%) answered "no" to the question. This helped the author determine if chief officer attrition was being experienced by other departments across the United States.

Survey question #7 asked respondents to identify whether or not chief officer positions or promotions were filled internally. Only 95 of 98 total respondents answered this question. Seventy-three (76.84%) respondents answered "yes" to the question, while twenty-two (23.16%)

respondents answered “no” to the question. This data provided insight into whether or not fire departments across the United States tended to fill chief officer positions internally or externally. Over 75% of the respondents answered that they filled chief officer positions internally.

Survey question #8 asked respondents to identify whether or not their department offered certain programs from a list to help strategically manage transitions. Only 96 of 98 total respondents answered this question. Sixty-two (64.58%) respondents answered “no,” twenty-three (23.96%) respondents answered that they utilized a chief officer training/development program, eleven (11.46%) respondents answered that they utilized a chief officer mentoring program, and thirteen (13.54%) respondents answered that they utilized a chief officer orientation program. This data was helpful in determining what types of chief officer transition programs were being utilized by fire departments across the United States.

Survey question #9 asked respondents to identify whether or not their department had a formalized plan in place to strategically manage chief officer transitions. Seven (7.14%) respondents answered “yes” to the questions, while ninety-one (92.86%) respondents answered “no” to the question. This data was useful for determining whether or not formalized plans were being utilized to manage chief officer transitions within fire departments across the United States. From the data provided, it would appear that a majority of departments do not have a plan to strategically manage chief officer transitions.

Survey question #10 asked respondents whether or not support programs and/or formalized plans have been successful at managing chief officer transitions within their departments. Only 90 of 98 total respondents answered this question. Twenty-seven (30%) respondents answered “yes” to the question, while sixty-three (70%) respondents answered “no”

to the question. This data was useful for determining whether or not formalized plans and/or programs were successful at managing chief officer transitions.

Research Question #4:

What do the current chief officers within the OFD feel is the best way to successfully transition new leadership into their positions?

To answer this research question, an internet-based internal survey (Appendix C) was developed by the author using SurveyMonkey.com®. The charts and summary tables listing the statistical findings for this survey are located in Appendix E. This survey was sent interdepartmentally via email to a population of 13 chief officers within the OFD. A link to the survey was contained in the email. Of the 13 surveys disseminated to chief officers, 12 (92%) of them were completed. The survey was designed with the intent of determining how each member felt about chief officer transitions in regard the following matters: internal vs. external replacements, the quality of internal chief officer training and development, and the accuracy of current chief officer position guides, their comfort level upon being promoted, whether or not they would have benefited from transitional support before and after their promotion, and how they would rank in order of importance different programs aimed at facilitating transitional support to newly promoted or appointed chief officers. The survey contained the following 12 questions:

1. How long have you been a member of the Olathe Fire Department?
2. What is your current rank?
3. How many years have you been a chief officer?
4. When you retire, do you feel that your replacement should come from within the organization?

5. Do you feel that the way we currently train and develop our members properly prepares them for chief officer positions?
6. Do you feel that the Olathe Fire Department has qualified candidates to succeed the current chief officer positions when they become vacated?
7. Do you feel that the current position guides accurately define your job roles and responsibilities?
8. When you were promoted to a chief officer, do you feel like you possessed the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform all of the roles and responsibilities listed in the guide for your position?
9. After you were promoted to a chief officer, how long did it take for you to feel comfortable in your position?
10. Do you feel that you would have benefitted as a newly promoted chief officer if a plan was in place that offered support before and after your transition?
11. From the list below, which of the following items (as you would define them) do you feel would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition into your position after you retire? Check all that apply.
12. From the list below, how would rank the following items (as you would define them) in terms of importance to help facilitate a chief officer transition into your position after you retire?

Survey question #1 asked respondents to identify how long they have been a member of the Olathe Fire Department. One (8.33%) of the respondents has been member of the OFD for 10-15 years. One (8.33%) of the respondents has been member of the OFD for 15-20 years.

Three (25%) of the respondents have been members of the OFD for 20-25 years. Lastly, seven (58.33%) of the respondents have been members of the OFD for 25+ years. This information provided insight into the respondent's experience level and tenure with the department.

Survey question #2 asked respondents to identify their current rank. One (8.33%) respondent answered that their rank was a fire chief. One (8.33%) respondent answered that their rank was a deputy chief. Two (16.67%) respondents answered that their rank was an assistant chief. Two (16.67%) respondents answered that their rank was a division chief. Six (50%) respondents answered that their rank was a battalion chief. This data was helpful in determining which chief officers participated in the survey.

Survey question #3 asked respondents to identify how many years they had been a chief officer. Three (25%) respondents answered that they had been a chief officer for 1-5 years. Five (41.67%) respondents answered that they had been a chief officer for 5-10 years. Two (16.67%) respondents answered that they had been a chief officer for 10-15 years. One (8.33%) respondent answered that they had been a chief officer for 15-20 years. One (8.33%) respondent answered that they had been a chief officer for 20+ years. This data was helpful in determining tenure within the chief officer ranks.

Survey question #4 asked respondents to identify if they felt that their replacement should come from within the organization when they retire. Eleven (91.67%) respondents answered yes to the question, while one (8.33%) respondent answered no to the question. This information was useful in showing that almost every chief officer felt that their position should be filled by someone internally.

Survey question #5 asked respondents to identify if they felt that the way we currently train and develop our members properly prepares them for chief officer positions. Five (41.67%)

of respondents felt that we do properly prepare our members for chief officer positions, while seven (58.33%) felt like we did not properly prepare them. This data was useful in determining if there were gaps or needs in the department's chief officer training and development.

Survey question #6 asked respondents to identify if they felt that the department had qualified internal candidates to succeed their positions when they retire. Nine (75%) respondents felt that the department did have qualified internal candidates, while three (25%) respondents felt that we did not have qualified candidates. This information was useful in determining whether or not the potential internal candidates are qualified to be chief officers in the opinion of the current chief officers.

Survey question #7 asked respondents to identify if they felt that the current position guides accurately define their job roles and responsibilities. Seven (63.64%) respondents felt that their position guides did accurately define their job roles and responsibilities, while four (36.36%) respondents felt that they did not accurately define their job roles and responsibilities. This data was useful in determining that one-third of the current chief officers feel that what they currently do is not reflected in their position guides, suggesting the need to update them before transitioning new leadership into their position.

Survey question #8 asked respondents when they were promoted to a chief officer if they felt like they possessed the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to perform all the roles and responsibilities listed in their position guide. Six (50%) respondents answered "yes", and six (50%) answered "no" to the question. This data was useful for determining whether or not the current chief officers felt like they were properly developed and prepared for their chief officer positions. The data suggests that fifty percent of the current chief officers felt that they were not as prepared as they needed to be before taking on their new role, suggesting the need to

implement more preparatory and developmental programs for chief officer positions within the OFD.

Survey question #9 asked respondents to identify how long it took to feel comfortable in their chief officer position after being promoted. One (8.33%) respondent answered that it took on 1-3 months to feel comfortable. Two (16.67%) respondents answered that it took 3-6 months to feel comfortable. Two (16.67%) respondents answered that it took 6-9 months to feel comfortable. Two (16.67%) respondents answered that it took 9-12 months to feel comfortable. Five (41.67%) respondents answered that it took 12+ months to feel comfortable in their chief officer position after being promoted. This data was useful in determining the length of time that was required to feel comfortable in a chief officer position. The data suggests the need for more transitional support over a longer period of time for newly promoted chief officers.

Survey question #10 asked respondents to identify if they felt that they would have benefitted from transitional support before and after they promoted to a chief officer position. Nine (75%) respondents answered “yes” that they would have benefitted from transitional support, while three (25%) respondents answered “no” to the question. This data helps determine whether or not transitional support could be helpful for future chief officer transitions.

Survey question #11 asked respondents to choose which items from a list they felt would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition. Five (41.67%) respondents answered that updated positions guides would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition. Eleven (91.67%) respondents answered that succession planning would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition. Six (50%) respondents answered that a chief officer mentoring program would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition. Three (25%) respondents answered that a chief officer orientation program would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition. Two

(16.67%) respondents answered that a chief officer training program would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition. Lastly, six (50%) respondents answered that a chief officer development program would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition. This data was helpful in determining how chief officers felt about the usefulness of different plans and programs in facilitating successful chief officer transitions. The data suggests that current chief officers feel that the OFD would benefit from programs related to succession planning, chief officer mentoring, and chief officer development.

Survey question #12 asked respondents to select how they would rank certain items from a list in terms of importance to facilitate successful chief officer transitions. Data for this question was shown in an average ranking, which represented the average amount of respondents placing it as most important. Updating position guides received an average ranking 3.92. Succession planning received an average ranking of 4.75. A chief officer mentoring program received an average ranking of 3.25. A chief officer training program received an average ranking of 3.17. A chief officer development program received an average ranking of 3.83. Lastly, a chief officer orientation program received an average ranking of 2.08. These average rankings proved useful in determining how current chief officers felt about the importance of each program.

Discussion

The literature available on leadership succession planning and leadership development programs in both the public and private sectors is overwhelming to say the least. However, literature relating specifically to best practices for managing executive-level transitions from beginning to end was sparse. It wasn't until researching literature in the nonprofit sector did the author find suitable answers for the research questions posed in this project.

The first research question asked, ‘what is executive transition management?’ The literature indicated that ETM’s genesis was the result of collaborating consulting groups (Adams, 2010), and was developed as an approach to reducing risks and maximizing the potential associated with leadership transition periods (Adams, 2005).

The literature reviewed also described ETM as a holistic approach to leadership change that was based on model aimed at assisting organizations during the departure, search, selection, hiring, and onboarding process that takes place during leadership transitions (Wolfred, 2009). The ETM model, consisting of three phases – prepare, pivot and thrive – stemmed from the viewpoint that an executive-level leadership transition were pivotal moments in organizations, allowing them the opportunity to change direction, maintain momentum, and strengthen capacity (Adams, 2010). Literature also indicated that the ETM model was the result of the earlier work of William Bridges where he developed a three-stage model based on endings, the neutral zone, and new beginnings that accompany change during transitions (1991). From the research, the author felt that this approach to leadership transition would provide a more comprehensive strategic solution to the chief officer attrition problem taking place within the Olathe Fire Department

The second research question asked, ‘what are some of the best practices associated with improperly managing leadership transitions?’ Although minimal, the literature indicated several possible strategies and best practices that could be utilized by the author to manage upcoming chief officer transitions.

Mindy Price (2004) from Leading Transitions, LLC, suggested implementing the following ten strategies for managing departure defined executive transitions:

1. With the help of a committee, create good endings and new beginnings.

2. Engage the board, staff and stakeholders in the impending transition and managing communication to reduce anxiety.
3. Explore hiring a transition consultant.
4. Establish a leadership succession team.
5. Communicate the leadership transition to stakeholders.
6. Conduct an organizational assessment to identify future leadership needs and uncover strengths and vulnerabilities within the organization.
7. Use a strategic plan to assess future leadership needs.
8. Translate the assessment into a leadership succession plan.
9. Conduct an executive search.
10. Announce and celebrate the leadership succession.

Breckenridge and David (2011) identified the following best practices associated with each stage of the ETM model:

1. Form a committee to address transitional issues and develop a transition plan.
2. Develop and communication plan to help keep everyone informed before, during, and after the transition.
3. Perform an organizational needs assessment.
4. Revisit the mission, vision and value statements and update strategic plan if necessary.
5. Conduct an analysis to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

6. Ensure the new job description aligns with the mission, vision, values, and goals of the organizations.
7. Provide the new leader with the results from the organizational assessment, updates strategic plan, and a one-year operation plan to guide decision-making.
8. Provide the new leader with a mentor for the first 90 days.

These ETM best practices would be beneficial to the author's research problem for several reasons. First, it emphasizes the importance of committee planning and unified communication. The idea of forming a committee to develop a transition plan and a communication plan makes sense to the author. Traditionally, committee involvement from internal stakeholders has worked well over the years at the OFD to create new plans or overcome difficult challenges. Second, the idea of conducting an organizational needs assessment would prove invaluable to the OFD before losing a large percentage of its leadership. As suggested, executive transitions provide organizations with a unique opportunity to perform a self-audit or S.W.O.T. analysis in an effort to gauge whether or not their current mission, vision, values will remain relevant after the departure of an executive. It has been the author's experience in the fire service that these types of assessments are usually only performed every five years when creating a new strategic plan. Utilizing this assessment strategy for upcoming leadership transitions at the OFD could help bolster stability and improve effectiveness in the affected divisions thus reducing the potential of chasing after outdated goals by the new leader. Lastly, the idea of providing the new leaders with post-hire support, updated goals and plans, and a transition mentor would also prove invaluable for the new incoming leaders at the OFD. Traditionally, leaders have vacated at a

slow rate from the OFD, allowing remaining leadership to assist in the integration process of new chief officers. With the upcoming attrition of 80% of the administrative chief officers, it is evident that the new leaders will require a new method of becoming familiarized and integrated into their new roles to avoid performance and continuity issues. Providing them with the necessary tools and support through information sharing and mentoring would help tremendously during the transition process.

Recommendations

The problem is the OFD currently had no strategy in place to manage upcoming chief officer transitions, thus making the organization at risk for decreased administrative performance and vulnerable to experiencing future disruptions in the delivery of their programs and services. The purpose of this research was to identify key components of a transitional strategy that could be utilized by the OFD to successfully manage chief officer transitions.

The literature review and survey results have identified several key strategic components for managing leadership transitions in the private and nonprofit sectors, the fire service, as well as what current OFD chief officers feel would be the best way to transition new leadership into their positions upon vacancy. Based upon the research conducted and analysis of the results, the following recommendations are made by the author:

1. The OFD shall establish a transition committee to begin the transition planning process.
2. The OFD shall conduct an assessment of the department to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to the organization.
3. The OFD shall revisit the mission, vision, and values of the organization to ensure that they are still in alignment with the current direction of the department and update the strategic plan as needed.

4. The OFD shall establish a comprehensive chief officer transition plan, which will include the following strategic planning components:
 - a. A communication plan outlining the transition process for both internal and external stakeholders.
 - b. A staffing plan outlining upcoming gaps in leadership, and making sure position guides, job descriptions, roles and responsibilities are properly updated to match the new goals and objectives for the vacated position.
 - c. A search/recruitment plan outlining the entire hiring/promotional process from beginning to end.
 - d. An orientation/onboarding plan to provide post transition support for the new leader for the first budget cycle.
5. The OFD shall perform an evaluation after each chief officer hiring/promotional process in an effort to fine-tune and continuously improve upon the transition plan and process.

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Author.

Appendix A: OFD Organizational Chart

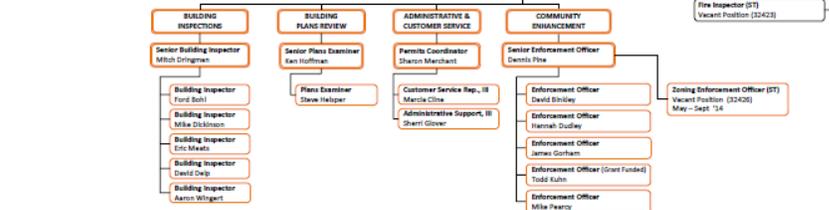
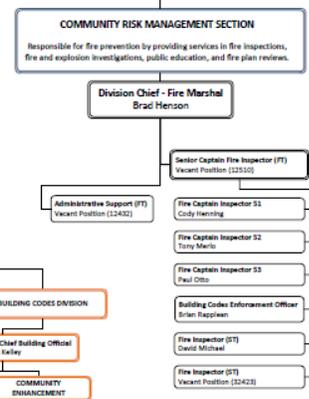
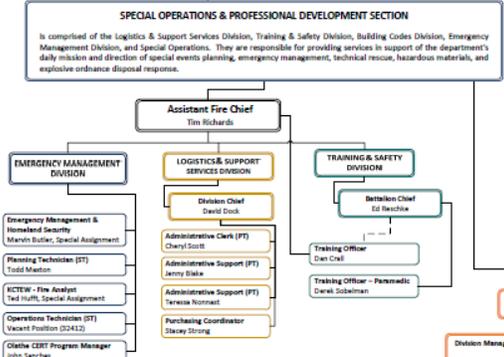
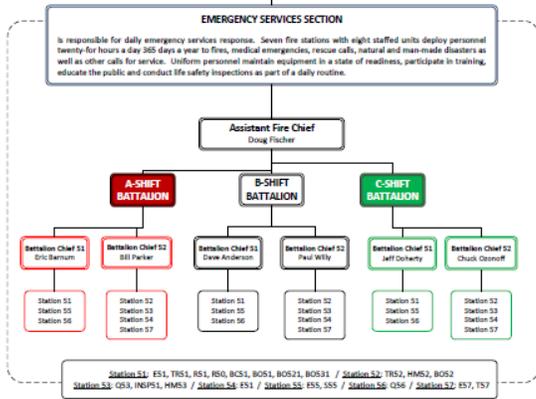
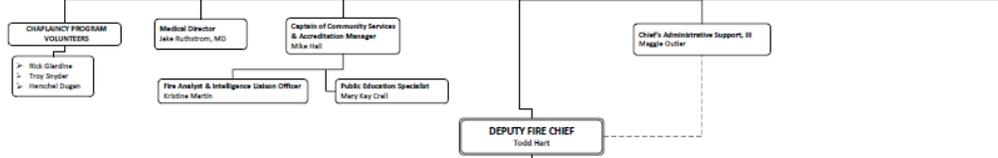


OLATHE FIRE DEPARTMENT
ORGANIZATION CHART – 03/03/2014

MAYOR OF OLATHE & CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

FIRE CHIEF & EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR
Jeff DeGraffenreid



— Direct Report (FT) Full Time (ST) Seasonal Time (PT) Part Time
- - - - - Secondary Report

Appendix B: External Survey Instrument**EFO Executive Development External Survey****Thank You**

I am working on an applied research project for the Executive Fire Officer Program in regard to managing chief officer transitions. If you would like to contribute, I would greatly appreciate it if you could please take a moment and complete my survey.

1. What is the population of your community

- 0-9,999
- 10,000-49,999
- 50,000-99,999
- 100,000-199,999
- 200,000-499,999
- 500,000-999,999
- 1 Million+

2. How many members are in your department?

- 0-50
- 51-100
- 100-200
- 200-300
- 300-400
- 400-500
- 500+

3. How long have you been in the fire service?

- 1-5 Years
- 5-10 Years
- 10-15 Years
- 15-20 Years
- 20-25 Years
- 25+ Years

EFO Executive Development External Survey**4. What is your current rank?**

- Fire Chief
- Deputy Chief
- Assistant Chief
- Division Chief
- Battalion Chief
- Captain
- Lieutenant
- Firefighter

5. How long have you been in your current position?

- 1-5 Years
- 5-10 Years
- 10-15 Years
- 15-20 Years
- 20-25 Years
- 25+ Years

6. Has your department experienced any chief officer attrition or promoted any chief officers over the past five years?

- Yes
- No

7. Were the vacated chief officer positions or promotions filled internally?

- Yes
- No

EFO Executive Development External Survey

8. Does your department offer any of the following types of programs to help strategically manage chief officer transitions? Check all that apply.

- No
- Succession Planning
- Chief Officer Training and Development
- Chief Officer Mentoring
- Chief Officer Orientation/Onboarding

Others (please specify)

9. Does your department have a formalized plan in place to help strategically manage chief officer transitions?

- Yes
- No

If yes, please explain

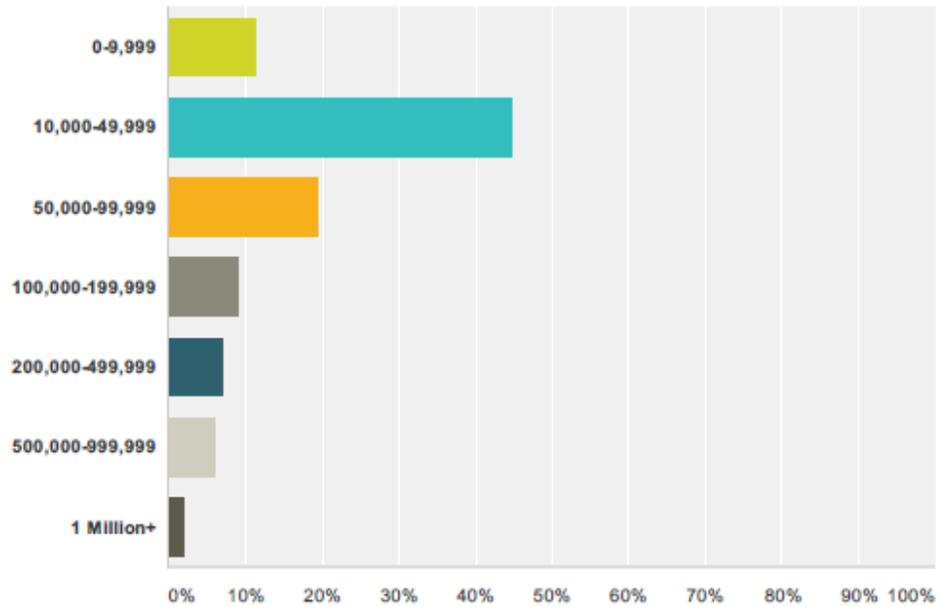
10. In your opinion, have the support programs and/or your formalized plans been successful at managing your chief officer transitions?

- Yes
- No

Appendix C: External Survey Results

Q1 What is the population of your community

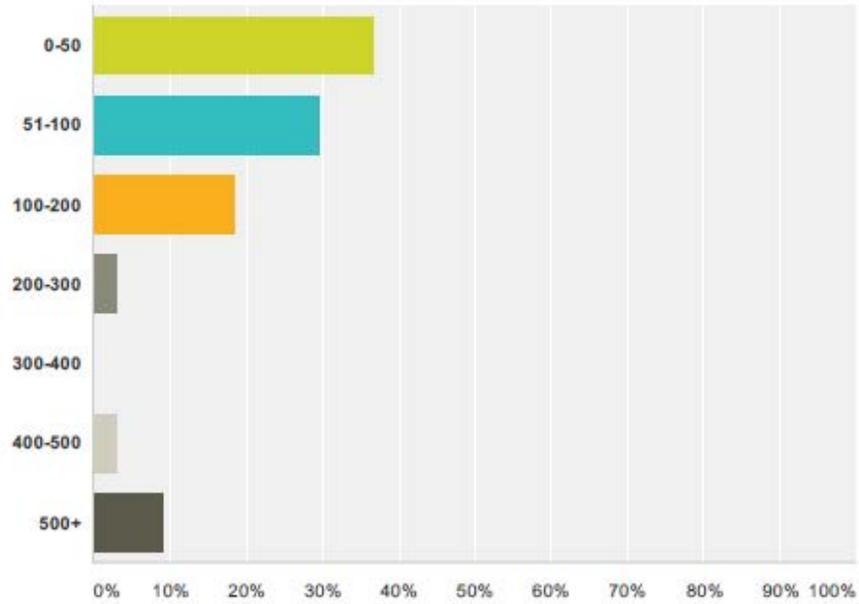
Answered: 98 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
0-9,999	11.22%	11
10,000-49,999	44.90%	44
50,000-99,999	19.39%	19
100,000-199,999	9.18%	9
200,000-499,999	7.14%	7
500,000-999,999	6.12%	6
1 Million+	2.04%	2
Total		98

Q2 How many members are in your department?

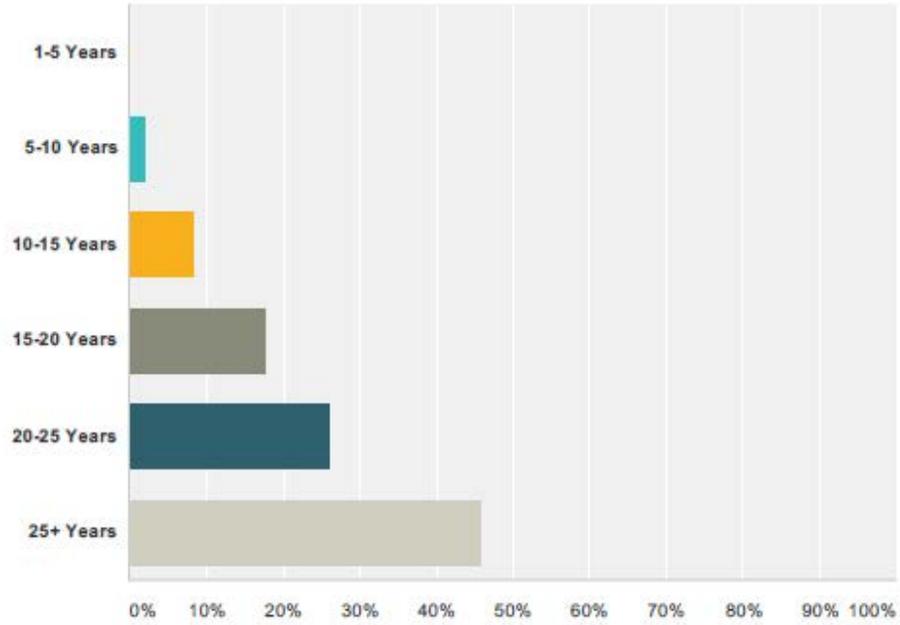
Answered: 98 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	Count
0-50	36.73%	36
51-100	29.59%	29
100-200	18.37%	18
200-300	3.06%	3
300-400	0.00%	0
400-500	3.06%	3
500+	9.18%	9
Total		98

Q3 How long have you been in the fire service?

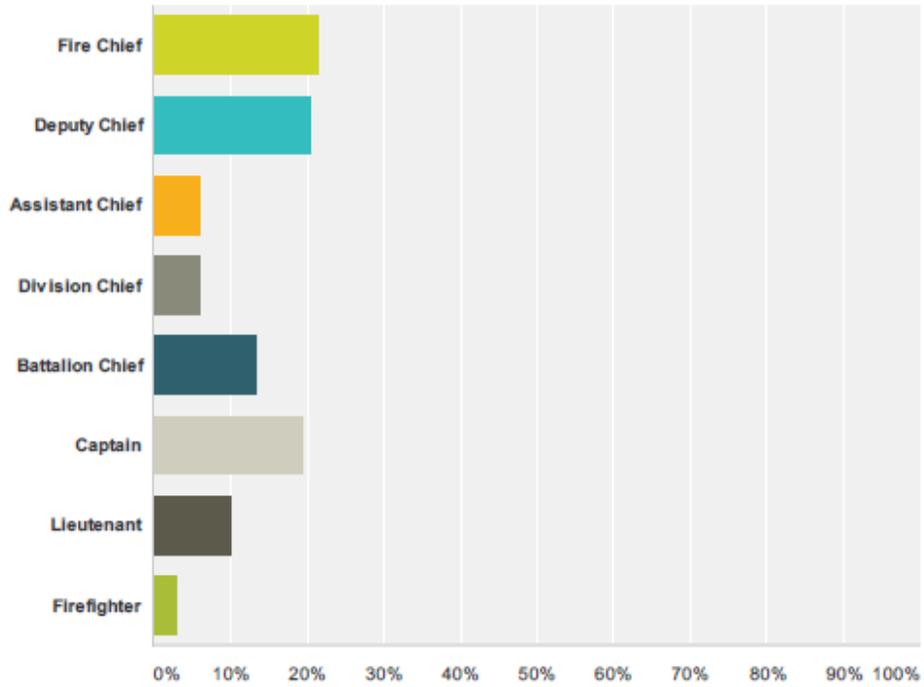
Answered: 96 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
1-5 Years	0.00%	0
5-10 Years	2.08%	2
10-15 Years	8.33%	8
15-20 Years	17.71%	17
20-25 Years	26.04%	25
25+ Years	45.83%	44
Total		96

Q4 What is your current rank?

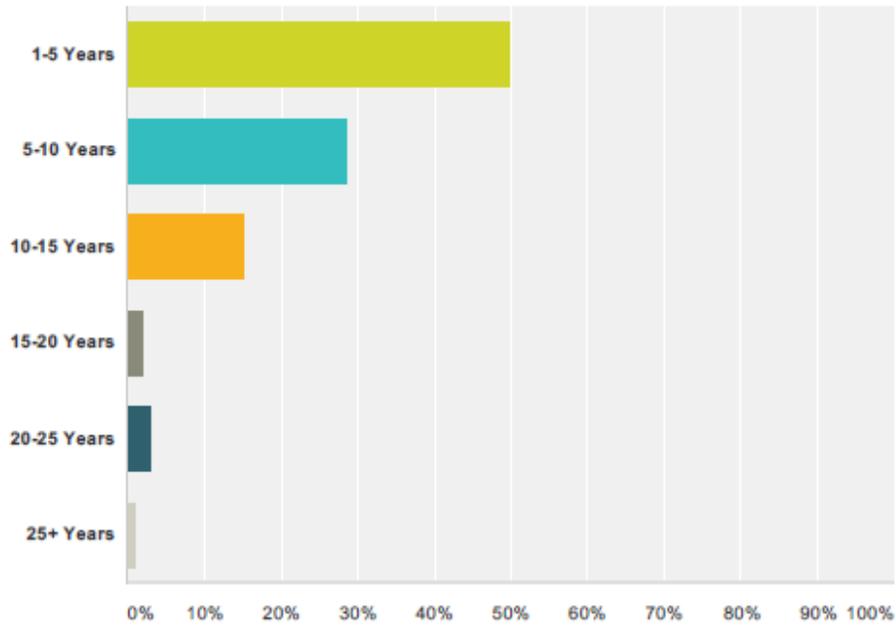
Answered: 98 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Fire Chief	21.43%	21
Deputy Chief	20.41%	20
Assistant Chief	6.12%	6
Division Chief	6.12%	6
Battalion Chief	13.27%	13
Captain	19.39%	19
Lieutenant	10.20%	10
Firefighter	3.06%	3
Total		98

Q5 How long have you been in your current position?

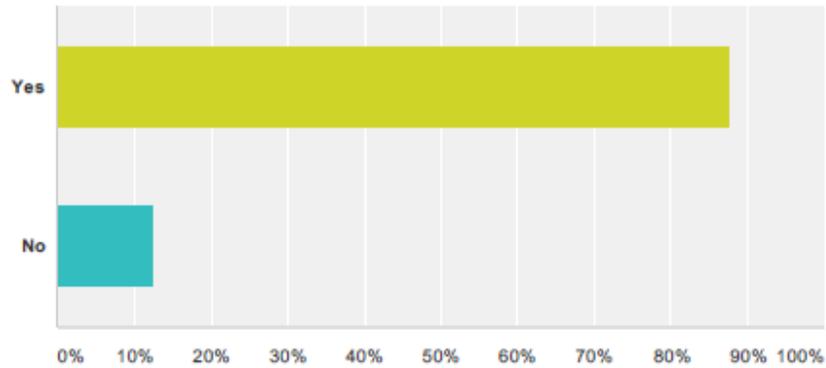
Answered: 98 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
1-5 Years	50.00% 49
5-10 Years	28.57% 28
10-15 Years	15.31% 15
15-20 Years	2.04% 2
20-25 Years	3.06% 3
25+ Years	1.02% 1
Total	98

Q6 Has your department experienced any chief officer attrition or promoted any chief officers over the past five years?

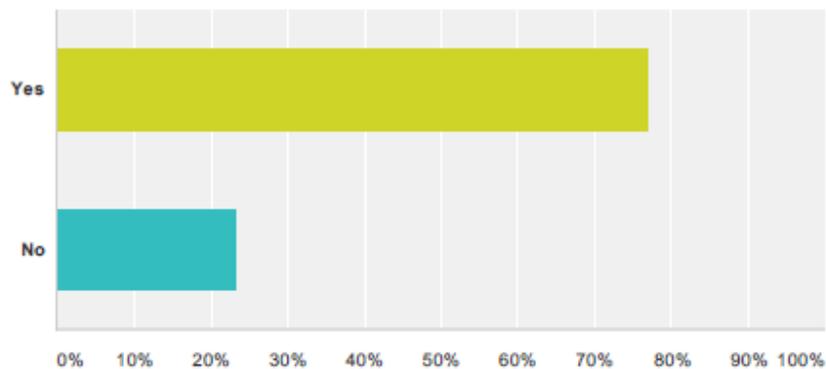
Answered: 98 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	87.76%	86
No	12.24%	12
Total		98

Q7 Were the vacated chief officer positions or promotions filled internally?

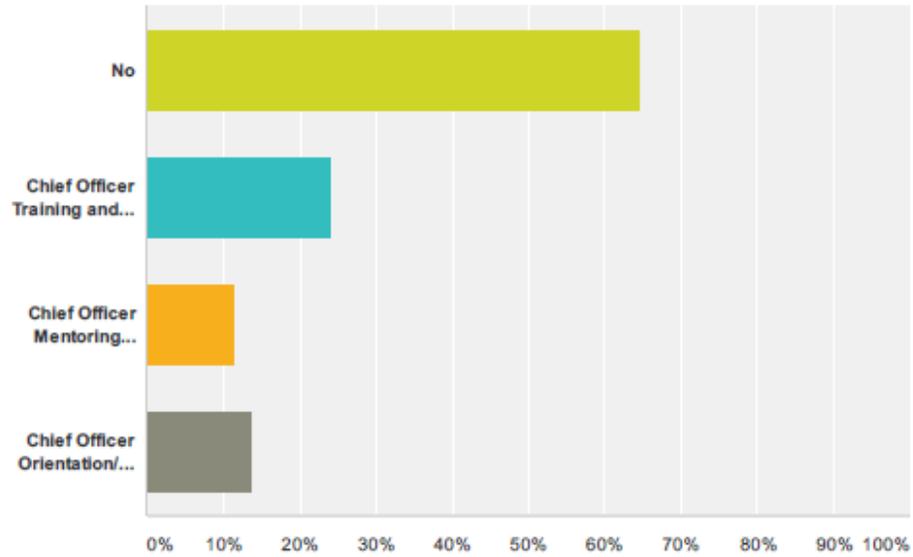
Answered: 95 Skipped: 3



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	76.84%	73
No	23.16%	22
Total		95

Q8 Does your department offer any of the following types of programs to help strategically manage chief officer transitions? Check all that apply.

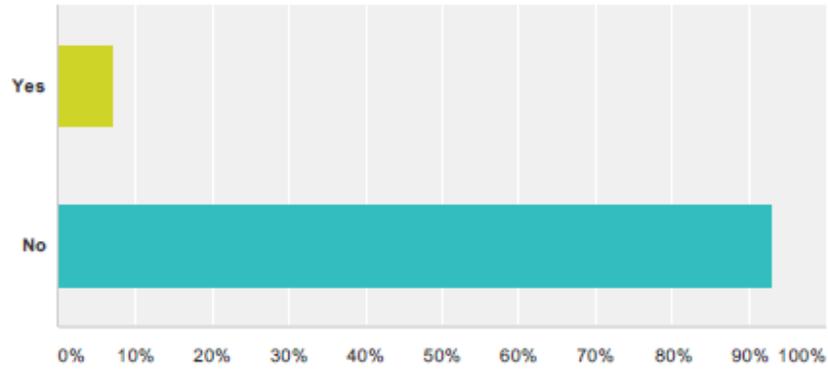
Answered: 96 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
No	64.58% 62
Chief Officer Training and/or Development Program	23.96% 23
Chief Officer Mentoring Program	11.46% 11
Chief Officer Orientation/Onboarding Program	13.54% 13
Total Respondents: 96	

Q9 Does your department have a formalized plan in place to help strategically manage chief officer transitions?

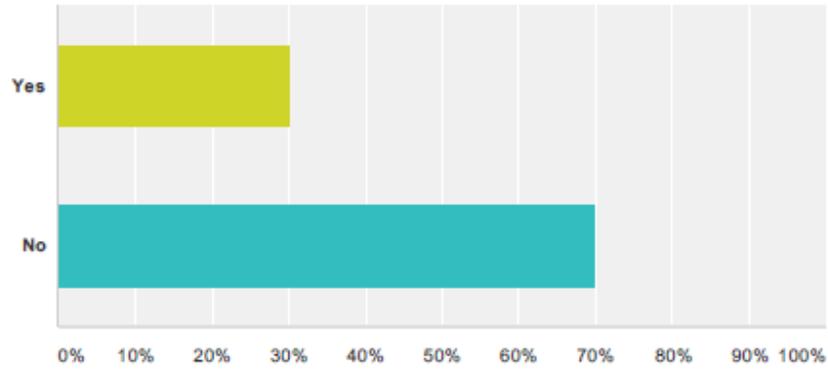
Answered: 98 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	7.14% 7
No	92.86% 91
Total	98

Q10 In your opinion, have the support programs and/or your formalized plans been successful at managing chief officer transitions?

Answered: 90 Skipped: 8



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	30.00%	27
No	70.00%	63
Total		90

Appendix D: Internal Survey Instrument

EFO Executive Development Internal Survey**1. How long have you been a member of the Olathe Fire Department?**

- 10-15 years
 15-20 years
 20-25 years
 25+ years

2. What is your current rank?

- Chief
 Deputy Chief
 Assistant Chief
 Division Chief
 Battalion Chief

3. How many years have you been a chief officer?

- 1-5 years
 5-10 years
 10-15 years
 15-20 years
 20+ years

4. When you retire, do you feel that your replacement should come from within the organization?

- Yes
 No

5. Do you feel that the way we currently train and develop our members properly prepares them for chief officer positions?

- Yes
 No

If No, please explain

EFO Executive Development Internal Survey

6. Do you feel that the Olathe Fire Department has qualified candidates to succeed the current chief officer positions as they become vacated?

Yes

No

If No, please explain

7. Do you feel that the current position guides accurately define your job roles and responsibilities?

Yes

No

If No, would you be in favor of personally updating them to reflect your current roles and responsibilities?

8. When you were promoted to a chief officer, do you feel like you possessed the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform all of the roles and responsibilities listed in the guide for your position?

Yes

No

If No, please explain

9. After being promoted to a chief officer, how long did it take for you to feel comfortable in your position?

1-3 months

3-6 months

6-9 months

9-12 months

12+ months

10. Do you feel you that you would have benefited as a newly promoted chief officer if a plan was in place that offered support before and after your transition?

Yes

No

If No, please explain

EFO Executive Development Internal Survey

11. From the list below, which of the following items (as you would define them) do you feel would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition into your position after you retire? Check all that apply.

- Updated and Accurate Position Guides
- A Succession Plan
- A Chief Officer Mentoring Program
- A Chief Officer Orientation Program
- A Chief Officer Training Program
- A Chief Officer Development Program

Others (please specify)

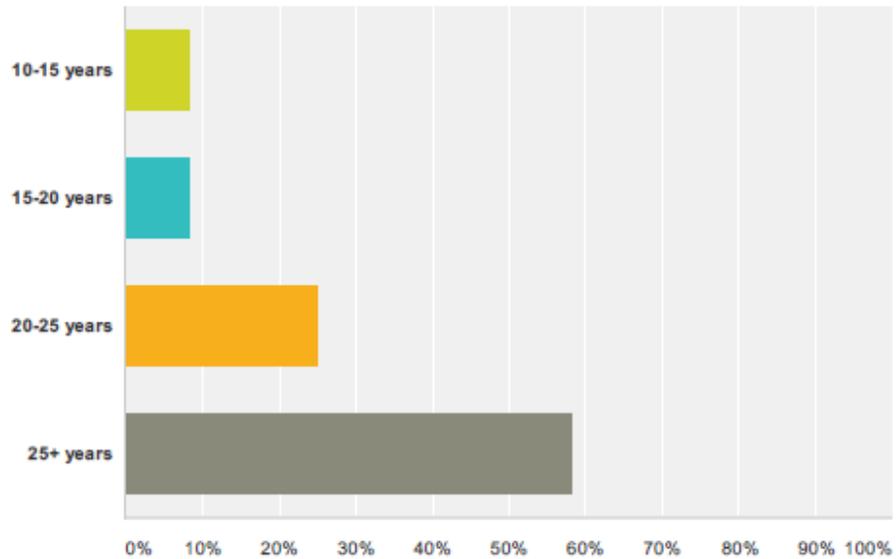
12. From the list below, how would you rank the following items (as you would define them) in terms of importance to help facilitate a successful chief officer transition into your position after you retire?

<input type="text"/>	Updated and Accurate Position Guides
<input type="text"/>	A Succession Plan
<input type="text"/>	A Chief Officer Mentoring Program
<input type="text"/>	A Chief Officer Training Program
<input type="text"/>	A Chief Officer Development Program
<input type="text"/>	A Chief Officer Orientation Program

Appendix E: Internal Survey Results

Q1 How long have you been a member of the Olathe Fire Department?

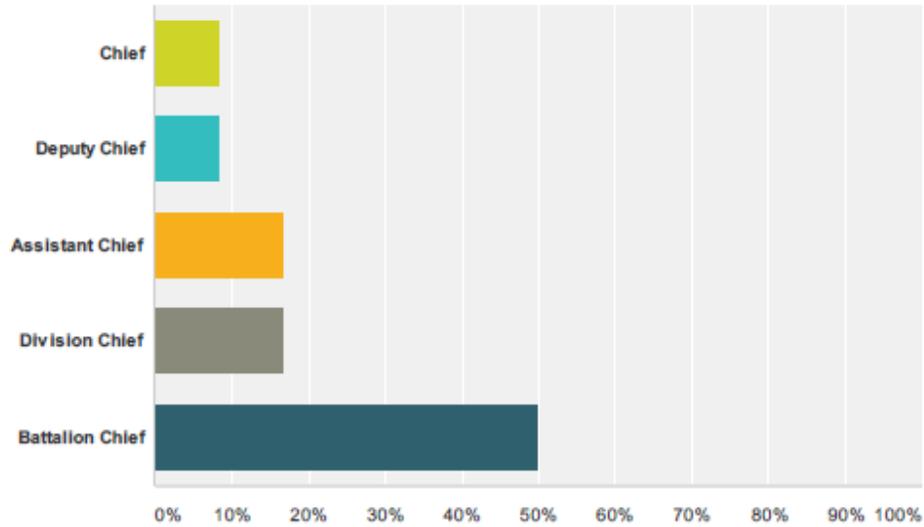
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
10-15 years	8.33%	1
15-20 years	8.33%	1
20-25 years	25.00%	3
25+ years	58.33%	7
Total		12

Q2 What is your current rank?

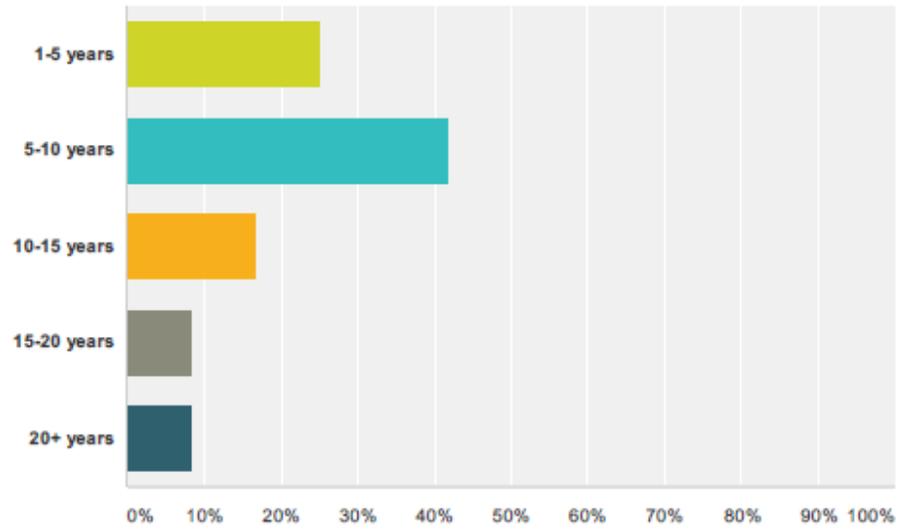
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Chief	8.33% 1
Deputy Chief	8.33% 1
Assistant Chief	16.67% 2
Division Chief	16.67% 2
Battalion Chief	50.00% 6
Total	12

Q3 How many years have you been a chief officer?

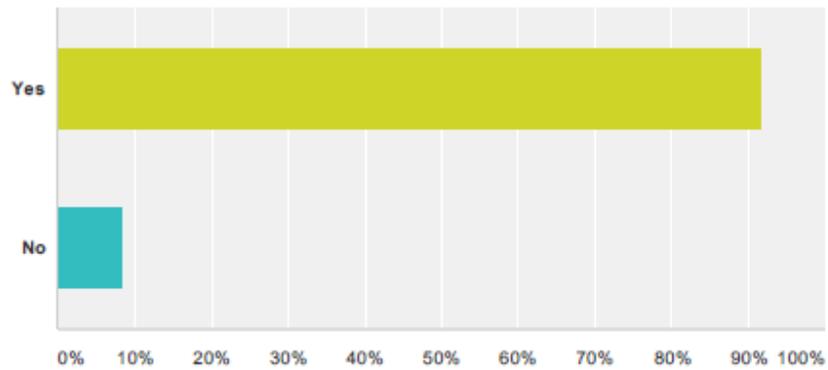
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
1-5 years	25.00% 3
5-10 years	41.67% 5
10-15 years	16.67% 2
15-20 years	8.33% 1
20+ years	8.33% 1
Total	12

Q4 When you retire, do you feel that your replacement should come from within the organization?

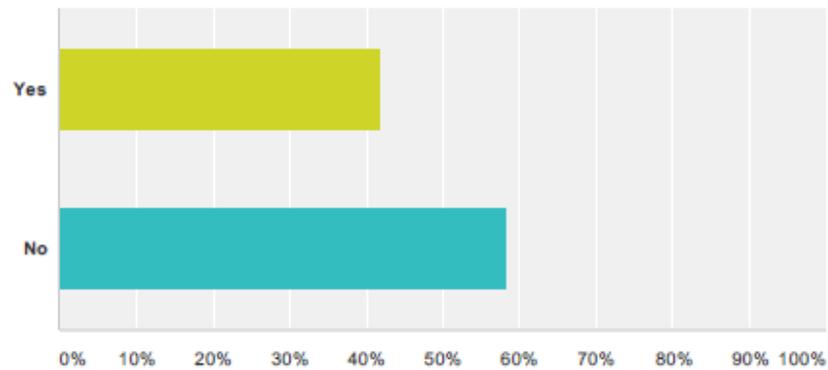
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	91.67% 11
No	8.33% 1
Total	12

Q5 Do you feel that the way we currently train and develop our members properly prepares them for chief officer positions?

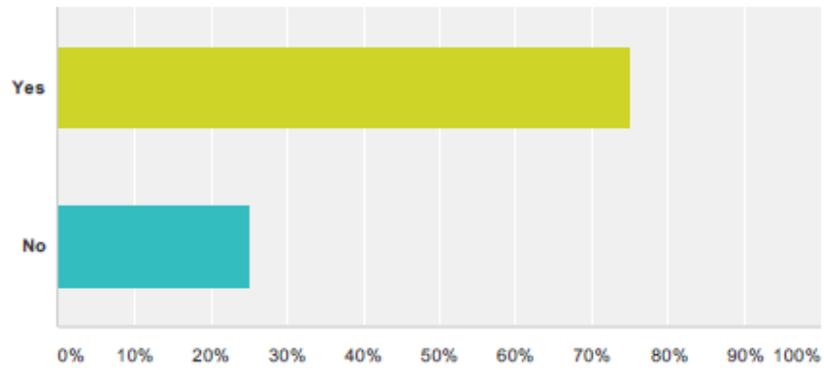
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	41.67% 5
No	58.33% 7
Total	12

Q6 Do you feel that the Olathe Fire Department has qualified candidates to succeed the current chief officer positions as they become vacated?

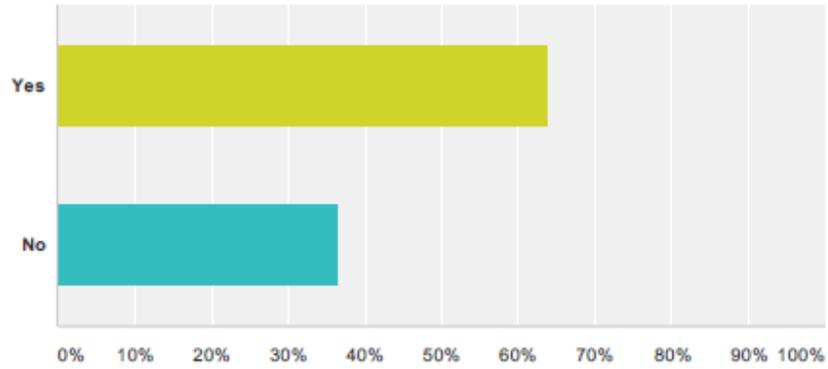
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	75.00%	9
No	25.00%	3
Total		12

Q7 Do you feel that the current position guides accurately define your job roles and responsibilities?

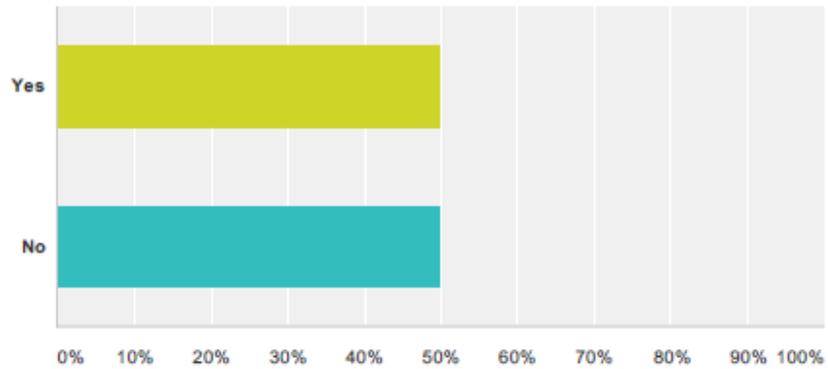
Answered: 11 Skipped: 1



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	63.64%	7
No	36.36%	4
Total		11

Q8 When you were promoted to a chief officer, do you feel like you possessed the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform all of the roles and responsibilities listed in the guide for your position?

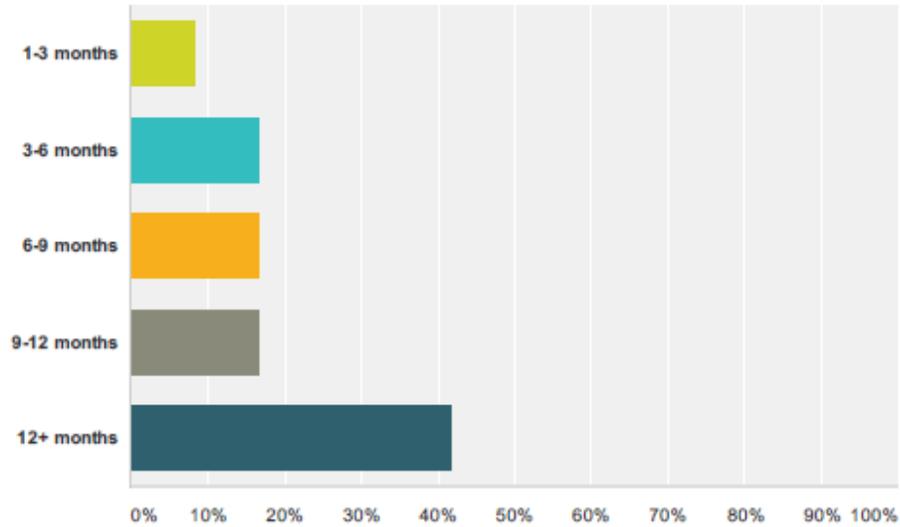
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	50.00%	6
No	50.00%	6
Total		12

Q9 After being promoted to a chief officer, how long did it take for you to feel comfortable in your position?

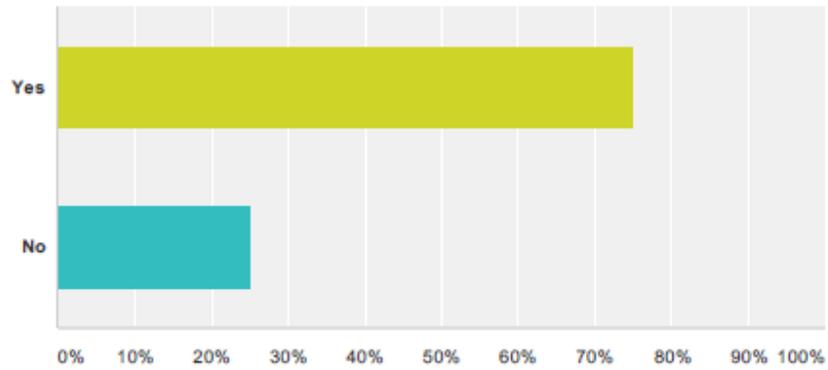
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
1-3 months	8.33% 1
3-6 months	16.67% 2
6-9 months	16.67% 2
9-12 months	16.67% 2
12+ months	41.67% 5
Total	12

Q10 Do you feel you that you would have benefited as a newly promoted chief officer if a plan was in place that offered support before and after your transition?

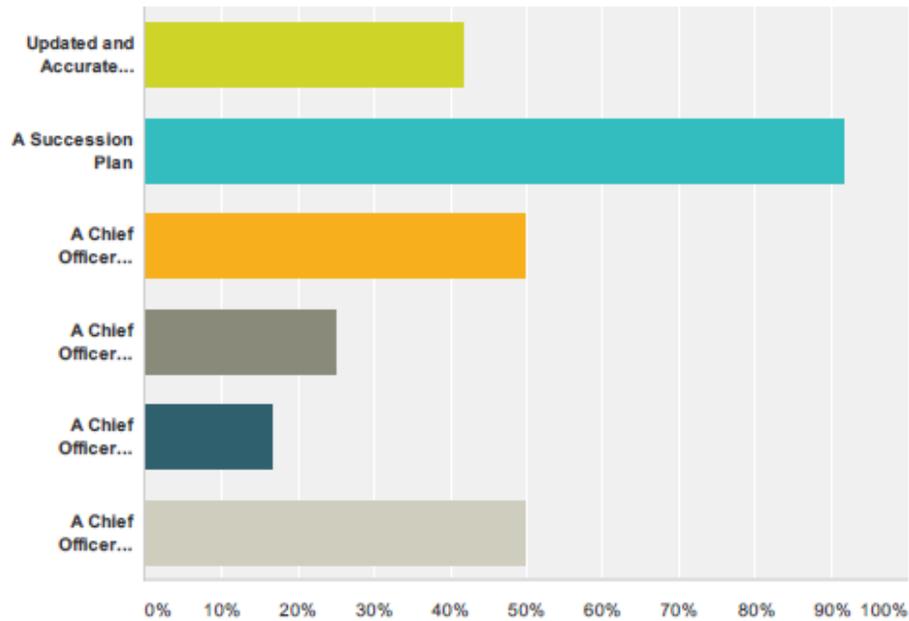
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	75.00%	9
No	25.00%	3
Total		12

Q11 From the list below, which of the following items (as you would define them) do you feel would help facilitate a successful chief officer transition into your position after you retire? Check all that apply.

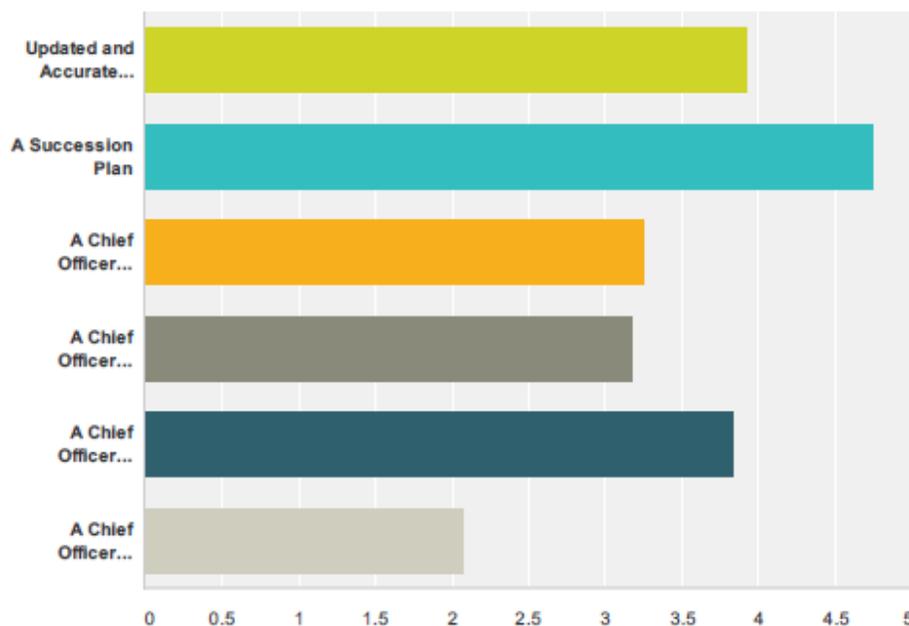
Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
Updated and Accurate Position Guides	41.67% 5
A Succession Plan	91.67% 11
A Chief Officer Mentoring Program	50.00% 6
A Chief Officer Orientation Program	25.00% 3
A Chief Officer Training Program	16.67% 2
A Chief Officer Development Program	50.00% 6
Total Respondents: 12	

Q12 From the list below, how would you rank the following items (as you would define them) in terms of importance to help facilitate a successful chief officer transition into your position after you retire?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 0



	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Average Ranking
Updated and Accurate Position Guides	33.33% 4	25.00% 3	8.33% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	33.33% 4	12	3.92
A Succession Plan	41.67% 5	33.33% 4	8.33% 1	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	8.33% 1	12	4.75
A Chief Officer Mentoring Program	8.33% 1	16.67% 2	16.67% 2	33.33% 4	0.00% 0	25.00% 3	12	3.25
A Chief Officer Training Program	0.00% 0	8.33% 1	25.00% 3	41.67% 5	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	12	3.17
A Chief Officer Development Program	16.67% 2	16.67% 2	25.00% 3	16.67% 2	25.00% 3	0.00% 0	12	3.83
A Chief Officer Orientation Program	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	16.67% 2	8.33% 1	41.67% 5	33.33% 4	12	2.08