

# **TOP TEN STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP**

**CHIEF CHRIS BARRON**

**2025 TEXAS FIRE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION**



Chief  
Chris  
Barron



- 34 years in the fire service--chief for 24 years, served as both Volunteer and Career
- 15 years as Executive Director for State Firefighters' and Fire Marshals' Association of Texas
- International Association of Fire Chiefs- Chief of the Year 2014
- IAFC John Buckman Leadership Award
- IAFC-VCOS Recruitment and Retention Award
- Numerous fire service certifications and AAS, BBA and MBA degrees
- National Fire Protection Association 1720 Committee Member
- CEO, Emergency Services Solutions, LLC



# CONTACT INFO

CHIEF CHRIS BARRON

[CBARRON@TCESD5.ORG](mailto:CBARRON@TCESD5.ORG)

[HTTPS://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/CHRISCBARRON/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/chriscbarron/)

512.765.5144



# WHY THIS PRESENTATION?

- HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF DUE TO:
  - BAD CHOICES
  - LACK ETHICAL VALUES
  - NO GUIDANCE
  - NOT HAVING THE BASIC TRAINING
  - NOT CARING
  - NO EXPERIENCE
  - DOING STUPID THINGS
  - THE CON-ARTISTS





## 10. MAXIMIZE RESOURCES

## DON'T HAVE THE PERSONNEL/EQUIPMENT?

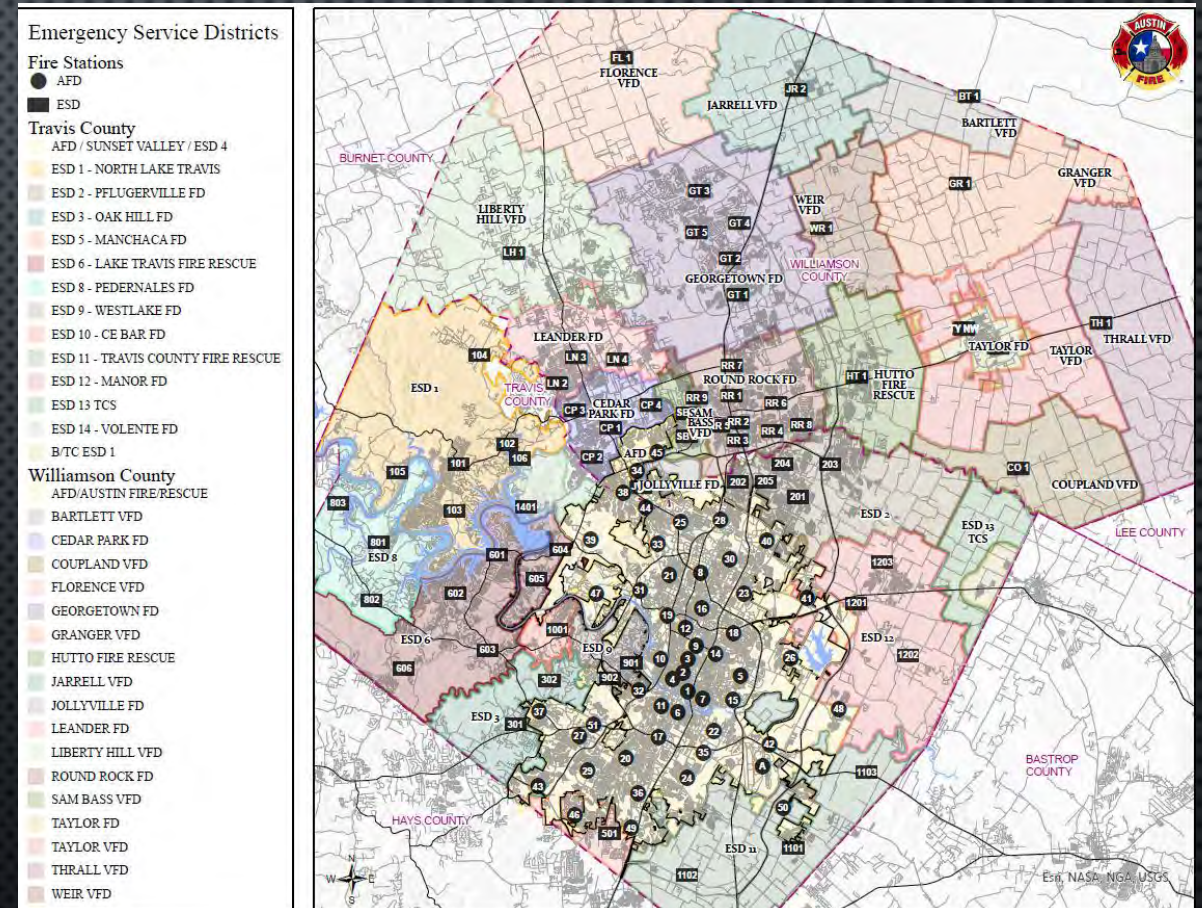
- TASK SPECIFIC PERSONNEL
- OWNERSHIP TO STAFF

# AUTOMATIC AID

- WORK WITH YOUR NEIGHBORING AGENCIES
- COMMUNICATIONS, EQUIPMENT, APPARATUS, TERMINOLOGY

## SHARING RESOURCES

- FLEET
- GROUP PURCHASING
- COMBINED DISPATCH CENTER





# 10. MAXIMIZE RESOURCES

- REGIONAL GRANT OPPORTUNITIES
  - POOL YOUR RESOURCES/DATA
  - ASK FOR WHAT YOU ARE LACKING
  - BENEFITS FOR EVERYONE
  - RESULTS DRIVEN
- TAKE THE LEAD!



## 9. CHANGE, FOR THE BETTER

- NEW TECHNOLOGY/NEW WAYS
  - WIRELESS SERVICES, RMS/EHR REPORTING
  - REDUNDANT SYSTEMS
  - GROSS DECON, FACE WIPES, SAUNA IN STATION
  - CHANGE IN STAFFING SCHEDULE
- NEW/UPDATED SOGs
  - SOCIAL MEDIA
  - HEALTH/SAFETY/WELLNESS
  - AUXILIARY/SUPPORT SERVICES
  - SOGs FOLLOWING YOUR PRACTICES OR VICE-VERSA



## 9. CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

- UPDATED WAYS OF DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY
  - BE RECEPTIVE TO CHANGE
  - TRIAL BASIS
  - ADOPTION/FULL IMPLEMENTATION
- SACRIFICES
  - GIVING UP SOMETHING TO GAIN SOMETHING
  - SWALLOWING YOUR PRIDE



## 8. LEARN/TRAIN

- DON'T STOP LEARNING!  
>TRAINING <RISK <INJURIES
- DO YOU HAVE YOUR OWN ROAD MAP?
- WHAT SKILLS/EDUCATION NEEDS DO YOU HAVE?
- TRAIN YOUR OFFICERS
- TRAIN YOUR REPLACEMENT





# 7. COMMUNICATE

PROFESSIONAL - CLEAR, CONCISE,  
CONSISTENT

- MEETINGS, EMAILS, TEXTS
- SOCIAL MEDIA - - BE CAREFUL!
- BE CAREFUL WITH “OPEN DOOR POLICY” RATHER... “I HAVE A CHAIN OF COMMAND POLICY”





## 6. MOTIVATE!

- ENCOURAGEMENT/COUNSEL
- INCENTIVES TO:
  - STAY INVOLVED
  - CONTINUE EDUCATION — STIPENDS/BREAKS/INCENTIVE PAY
  - STAYING HEALTHY — WEIGHT LOSS CONTESTS, PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENTS
  - ADVANCED CERTIFICATIONS



## 6. MOTIVATE!

- BENEFITS OF BEING A MEMBER
  - EDUCATION
  - CERTIFICATION
  - FIREFIGHTER DISCOUNT PROGRAMS
  - ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS – STATE/NATIONAL ASSN. MEMBERSHIPS, AD&D, LODD
- CAREER LADDER



## #5 GET RID OF THE BAD APPLES!

- STOP THE CANCER BEFORE IT SPREADS
- DON'T LET ONE RUIN THE BUNCH
- DON'T BE AFRAID TO FIRE THE VOLUNTEER





# #5 GET RID OF THE BAD APPLES!

- DO YOU HAVE THE MECHANISMS IN PLACE?
  - PERSONNEL HANDBOOK — IS IT CURRENT?
  - CODE OF CONDUCT
  - DEFINE/ENFORCE “ACTIVE MEMBER”
  - DISCIPLINARY FORMS/NOTICE OF DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Travis County Emergency Services  
District  
No. 5



Manchaca Fire/Rescue

Personnel Handbook

December 2024



# #4 BUDGET – PEOPLE/THINGS

- BENEFITS
  - BENEFITS/INCENTIVES FOR YOUR PERSONNEL!
  - ANNUAL PHYSICALS, NUTRITIONIST, CANCER SCREENING, RETURN TO WORK PLANS
- APPARATUS
  - \$\$\$\$
  - EQUIPMENT TOO?
- PAY
  - INCENTIVES/STIPENDS FOR VOLUNTEERS
  - PAY COMPARABLE TO SURROUNDING DEPARTMENTS



## #4 BUDGET – PEOPLE/THINGS

- STATIONS
  - PHYSICAL STATION BUDGET (LAND, BUILDING)
  - EQUIPMENT, FURNISHINGS
  - GYM
  - WASHER/DRYER, EXTRACTOR & ANNUAL SERVICE
  - ROOM FOR GROWTH
  - CONSOLIDATION OF SERVICES/JOINT USE FACILITIES?



# #3 THINK/PLAN AHEAD

- WHERE IS YOUR DEPARTMENT/COMMUNITY GOING?
  - NEW DEVELOPMENTS
    - MAJOR (IMPACTING FIRE PROTECTION SERVICES IE, NEED FOR A LADDER TRUCK?)
  - COMMUNITY RISK REDUCTION
  - NEW TECHNOLOGY
    - MULTI-YEAR BUDGET PLANNING FOR REPLACEMENTS
- CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEDULE
- BUDGETING AHEAD! – REPLACEMENT PLANS



## #2 DOCUMENT

- OK, LET'S FACE IT, COMING UP THROUGH THE RANKS, WE DIDN'T LIKE PAPERWORK
- DOES OUR PERSONNEL HAVE THE SKILL SET TO PROPERLY COMMUNICATE, WRITE REPORTS AND PROPERLY DOCUMENT ITEMS WHICH MAY SOME DAY BE REQUESTED TO APPEAR IN COURT



Adult siblings were in an argument over the last cup of coffee. One assault by contacted the other. Parties separated. Report taken.





# #2 DOCUMENT!

- GETTING ALL SIDES OF THE STORY?  
TAKE AMPLE AMOUNT OF NOTES,  
TRANSFER TO ELECTRONIC FORMAT  
AND PUT IN PERSONNEL FILE
- DO YOU HAVE A RULE FOR HOW  
MANY “STRIKES” A PERSON IS GIVEN  
BEFORE A FINAL WARNING OR A  
PERSON IS TERMINATED?

	<b>TRAVIS COUNTY ESD #5 MANCHACA FIRE RESCUE Department Policy / Best Practices</b>	<b>X102</b>
	Authorized by:  Fire Chief Chris Barron	Effective: 03/10/2023
	<b>Discipline</b>	Rescinds:
		Reference:
		Application: All Personnel

**I. Purpose**

To provide guidance to supervisors for the consistent and fair administration of discipline, as well as the proper documentation of disciplinary action. It is also to provide members with an understanding of Manchaca Fire/Rescue's philosophy and practice of discipline in its goal of maintaining the high professional standards of the organization.



# #2 DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT, DOCUMENT

- RECORD
  - KNOW THE LAW FOR YOUR STATE
  - RECORD DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES
    - TEXAS IS A "ONE-PARTY CONSENT" STATE, MEANING THAT ONLY ONE PERSON IN A CONVERSATION NEEDS TO CONSENT TO THE RECORDING FOR IT TO BE LEGAL. THIS APPLIES TO BOTH IN-PERSON AND PHONE CONVERSATIONS.
  - LET THE INDIVIDUAL KNOW THE CONVERSATION IS BEING RECORDED SO THAT YOU MAKE SURE YOU GET EVERYTHING DOCUMENTED CORRECTLY
  - TRANSCRIBE YOUR NOTES ON THE INTERVIEW ASAP!





# #2 DOCUMENT

- INTERVIEW PANELS
  - DO THEY HAVE A SCORING SHEET?
  - DO THEY ASK THE SAME QUESTIONS
  - PHYSICAL ASSESSMENT TESTS?
  - STANDARDIZED/REGIONAL
  - ONGOING



## Emergency Services District 5 - Manchaca Fire/Rescue Hiring Process Interview – Firefighter

Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Tell us about yourself.

2. Tell us what you know about ESD5 and Manchaca Fire/Rescue.



# #2 DOCUMENT

## CAMERAS

- HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE THESE FOR YOUR STATION? WAS IT OUT OF NECESSITY?
- FOLLOW PRIVACY RULES
- YOUR STAFF KNOWING THEY ARE IN PLACE!





## #2 DOCUMENT – THE UNEXPECTED....





# #1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1



- MAKING CUSTOMER SERVICE YOUR NUMBER ONE PRIORITY
- BE AN ADVOCATE FOR IMPROVED SERVICES
- BE AN ADVOCATE FOR HEALTH & SAFETY
- WE WANT TO MAKE OUR CUSTOMERS DAY BETTER
- TREAT OTHERS "BETTER" THAN THEY EXPECT



# #1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

- ARE WE MAKING/KEEPING OUR CUSTOMERS HAPPY?
  - HUMANS ARE OUR #1 ASSET – DOES YOUR BUDGET SHOW IT?
  - DOES YOUR FD INCENTIVES/BENEFITS FOR BEING A MEMBER (PAID OR VOLUNTEER)
    - ANNUAL NFPA 1582 PHYSICAL/CANCER SCREENING
    - RESPONSIVE INCENTIVES
    - YEARS OF SERVICE RECOGNITION



# #1 - CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1

- “CLIMATE SURVEYS”
- EXPECTATIONS
- RETAINMENT:
  - EAP
  - TEAM BUILDING
  - BENEFITS





# 10 KEY STRATEGIES TO SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

- 10. MAXIMIZE RESOURCES
- 9. CHANGE, FOR THE BETTER
- 8. LEARN/TRAIN
- 7. COMMUNICATE
- 6. MOTIVATE

- 5. GET RID OF BAD APPLES
- 4. BUDGET – PEOPLE/THINGS
- 3. THINK/PLAN AHEAD
- 2. DOCUMENT
- 1. CUSTOMER SERVICE IS #1



# SUMMING IT UP!

- BEING A LEADER IS A TOUGH JOB
- A US ARMY GENERAL ONCE SAID THAT IT IS LIKE BEING THE FLAG AT THE TOP OF A FLAG POLE!
- PEOPLE LOOK UP TO YOU AND SEE YOU
- TARGET
- OFTEN, IT'S LONELY AT THE TOP





# ONE LAST, BUT PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT, TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF!

- BEING A LEADER CAN TAKE A TOLL ON YOURSELF
- TAKE TIME FOR YOURSELF (PERSONAL DAYS OFF, VACATIONS, LEARNING)
- DON'T BE BECOME A VICTIM OF THE STRESS
- DON'T LET THE JOB WEAR YOU DOWN OR OUT
- TALK WITH OTHERS IN THE INDUSTRY
  - FIND A MENTOR OR SOMEONE RETIRED FROM THE SERVICE









QUESTIONS??

THANK YOU!

CHIEF CHRIS BARRON

[CBARRON@TCESD5.ORG](mailto:CBARRON@TCESD5.ORG)

[HTTPS://WWW.LINKEDIN.COM/IN/CHRISCBARRON/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/chriscbarron/)

512.765.5144