

## **Leadership Philosophy**



Chief Fire Officer Program, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Course 3: Leadership

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Ronald Reagan has said, “The greatest leader is not necessarily the one who does the greatest things. He is the one that gets the people to do the greatest things.” This is what I intend to accomplish as one of the leaders of the [REDACTED]. It is not my job to accomplish every goal set for us. My job is to empower all of you to reach your greatest potential and allow you to meet and exceed those goals. How I will do that is outlined in the following pages to help you understand my leadership philosophy. In this writing, you will learn my leadership style, and what you can expect of me. I will explain how I will handle communications, personnel, and my expectations of all of you. I will also define how I will empower you to fulfill our goals for this year and beyond.

### **What You Can Expect of Me**

During my tenure, you will find my leadership style to be chameleon like. This style I had recently learned about, though had adopted long ago without even realizing it. This means that I will take on the style that the current environment demands (Eikansas, 2020). In the calmer setting, I will choose to work along side you. When it is time for you to use your strengths and talents to move towards our goals I will take a more laissez-faire attitude and allow you to work independently. Micro managing would only get in your way (Daum/INC. 500, 2013). When the situation is dire, I will use an autocratic approach if necessary and dictate immediate actions needed. The style used is determined by the situation at hand as well as other circumstances and contexts. This is an approach that I have learned and borrowed from Dr. Mitchell Waite, former Fire Chief.

When there are very important communications in need of sharing, it is my intention to handle those face to face. These are the types of messages of great impact best delivered in person, providing an immediate two-way feedback system. Regular updates pertaining to our department's progress are at a more informal level via e-mail. When the need arises for you to come to me, the door is always open and the inbox is never too full. I am always receptive to feedback and welcome all types of messages from within the ranks.

You are all the most professional individuals I have had the privilege of serving. You exemplify this profession by your actions in the public, during crisis, and in the privacy of the station. That being said mistakes are inevitable, thus so are consequences. I will take my time with these situations, gather facts, and hear many different sides to a story before ultimately having to render a judgment. I will be fair and honest through those processes. There will be no favorites.

I have mentioned fairness, an adaptive style, receptive to feedback and other messages. Another thing you can expect of me is to be assessing for the future of leadership of our department.

Every great and long lasting organization has a succession plan, and so to shall we. My time will come and go, but the department will remain. It will remain strong as long as the right people are in positions to move it forward. It is my intent to continue this organization long into the future by identifying individuals with those traits and encouraging those traits to grow.

### **Organizational Goals**

Our goals for 2020 are to train and gain confidence in our many new recruits. Not only our confidence in them, but also their own self-confidence and their confidence in their mentors. We

will attempt to identify any weakness in our organization and strengthen it by any practical means. This year we will ask a lot of 'why' questions. This is to make certain that elements of our culture remain relevant to our long-term goals. The long-term goals: to learn through study and data collection, use continuous quality improvement principals to drive our training and procedures, and to maintain a strong, healthy, and amicable relationship between [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

You are the operators who will achieve these goals. I cannot do any of the items on those lists on my own. Instead, what I can do and will do is identify those who have the strengths and special interests to handle the means to the end. I will be there to help with decision making if needed, study a topic if asked, and pay the bill when necessary. What I will not do is be a helicopter. I will not hover over you and put in my two cents. I will not micromanage. I will empower those who I identify as ready, willing, and able to accomplish a goal. Be it an individual or a team of individuals working as a committee, you will be the ones who operate this organization. I will be here for guidance and steering.

### **My Expectations of You**

What I am expecting out of all of you is to take care of everything around you and about you. What I mean is to take care of your environment, clean a mess, straighten a pile. A clean shop is a productive and safe shop. Take care of your equipment and it will take care of you. Take care of your co-workers. Your brothers and sisters have your back so be sure to have theirs. Take care of your own actions. When you make a mistake own it, learn from it, and move on. Do not hide from them. Then, teach someone else what you learned from your mistake. Take care of your

family. They are the reason you come to work, to earn a living to raise them right. Go home to them without the burdens from emergency services. Which leads to the most important of all: Take care of yourself. Physically take care, exercise, eat well, and sleep. Mentally take care, seek help if needed, do not work too much. Overtime can be tempting, but I have always said you cannot put a price on time off. Avoid burnout. Your organizational climate will be vastly improved if you take the time to take care. Take care of all of this and you will easily maintain our Mission Statement, the three P's and the new C: Professional, Proficient, Polite, and Compassionate.

Ultimately, we are all in this together. Some of us are titled as leaders, but all of us are leaders in one way or another. When we are all heading in the same direction we are an unstoppable force for the betterment of our community. The year 2020 has gotten off to a strange and unprecedented start that has tried everyone's patients and tolerance so far. We are already righting that ship by taking on the issues head on together. It is my duty to you that I keep us a cohesive unit; we will come out of this stronger than ever.

## References

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