

# **Running A Volunteer Fire Department**

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# Please Share Your Problems

❖ People

❖ Things

❖ Programs

❖ Operations

❖ Communications

# What Are the Parts?

- ❖ Leadership
- ❖ Moral Compass
- ❖ Organization and Management
- ❖ Planning, Organizing and Evaluating
- ❖ Budgeting and Finance

# **Volunteer Fire Departments Are Organizations My Friends**

## **But Just What is an Organization?**

# An Organization

**Pattern of ways in which people, too numerous to have face-to-face contact at all times and engaged in a wide range of tasks, relate to one another in a conscious, systematic manner for the accomplishment of mutually-acceptable goals.**

# What is Management?

**The dynamic process which effectively uses all organizational resources: people, material, and financial in achieving organizational goals and policies.**

# **Management is Also**

**The achievement of tasks through  
the effective allocation of  
people and resources**

# The Organizational Road Map to Success

- ❖ **Organizational Vision**
- ❖ **Mission Statement**
- ❖ **Goals**
- ❖ **Objectives**
- ❖ **Policies**



# Vision

- ❖ **A view of your place in the world**
- ❖ **A long range picture of where you would like to take your organization**
- ❖ **This vision should be a distillation of your thoughts as supplemented by those of your troops.**

# Mission Statement

**A written document which gives the basic reason for the existence of your organization.**

# Goals

**Needs, whether personal or organizational, that must be satisfied in order to work toward the purpose of your organization.**

# Goals

- ❖ **Our department will create a more effective first-due fire attack.**
- ❖ **Our department will improve public safety education in our community.**

# Objectives

**Measurable tasks which, when achieved, move the organization toward its goals and stated mission.**

# Objectives

- ❖ **Our department will control 95 percent of our fires with a first-alarm assignment.**
- ❖ **Our fire prevention bureau will increase its fire inspection program by 25 percent.**

# Policy

**The guidelines that direct organizational members to the goals set by the organization.**

# Policy

- ❖ **Firefighters must be certified as Firefighter I before being allowed to perform structural firefighting operations.**
- ❖ **All officer candidates must complete Fire Officer I before appointment or election.**



# Policy

- ❖ **All newly-hired personnel will be certified as EMT and EMT-D.**
- ❖ **No future employees will be permitted to smoke either on or off duty.**

# Management Tasks

❖ **Planning - Deciding**  
**what to do & how to do it**

# Management Tasks

- ❖ **Organizing - Bringing the resources, people and equipment of the department together to accomplish the organizational mission**

# Management Tasks

- ❖ **Leading - Motivating your people to work efficiently and effectively on your behalf.**

# Management Tasks

- ❖ **Evaluating - Developing a mechanism for telling how well you did in reaching the goals you set.**

**Plan Your Work**

**Work Your Plan**

# Some Good FD Goals

- ❖ Prevent fires
- ❖ Educate the public
- ❖ Enforce codes
- ❖ Extinguish fires
- ❖ Investigate fire causes

# How Do We Accomplish These Goals?

- ❖ Knowledge
- ❖ Planning
- ❖ Training



# How Do We Do This?

❖ **Knowledge - The facts and skills which are necessary to do the job**

# How Do We Do This?

- ❖ **Planning - Anticipating where you wish to go, based upon where you are and where you wish to be**

# How Do We Do This?

- ❖ **Training - Practical applications which combine the use of your skills and knowledge with your actual tasks**

# Organizational Planning: Why Do We Plan?

- ❖ To anticipate future needs
- ❖ To produce an orderly progression of events

# Organizational Planning: Why Do We Plan?

- ❖ To lessen the impact of change
- ❖ To solve problems

# The Basics of Planning

- ❖ Set goals
- ❖ Create objectives

# The Basics of Planning

- ❖ **Develop methods and means to reach objectives**
- ❖ **Assign tasks and responsibilities**

# Elements of Planning

- ❖ **Recognize the situation to be planned by your agency**
- ❖ **Look at all sides of the situation**
- ❖ **Determine a number of ways to accomplish the tasks needed to meet the needs of the situation**



# Elements of Planning

- ❖ **Select the best available solution to the problem and write it down.**
- ❖ **Conduct any training for operational participants**
- ❖ **Assign responsibilities and time constraints for task accomplishments**

# Elements of Planning

- ❖ **Implement the necessary procedures for the plan.**
- ❖ **Evaluate progress against your written plan.**

# What Do You Plan For?

- ❖ Personnel needs
- ❖ Facility requirements
- ❖ Apparatus needs
- ❖ Tactical considerations
- ❖ Strategic considerations

# Three Types of Plans

- ❖ **Short-Range - Less than one year**
- ❖ **Medium-Range - One to three years**
- ❖ **Long-Range - Over five years**

# The Key to Success

**Plan for the Future**

**Do Not Let the Future  
Happen to You**

# Organizing

**The process whereby one determines, assembles and arranges the resources of the organization by function to meet its planned goals and objectives.**

# Principles of Organizing

- ❖ **Give clear responsibilities (Who does What).**
- ❖ **Give people enough authority to do their jobs.**
- ❖ **Have each person report to a single supervisor.**

# Principles of Organizing

- ❖ **Provide sufficient staff resources**
- ❖ **Have no one supervise more people than they can handle.**
- ❖ **Group like functions together.**



# Strengthening Your Organization

**You must sometimes break it down into its parts and rebuild them in a manner which more closely reflects your current operational needs.**

# Strengthening Your Organization

- ❖ **Chain of Command - Use it to get information & commands out, and to receive feedback from the troops**

# Strengthening Your Organization

- ❖ **Unity of Command - Know who is in charge, where you are going and work together to get there.**

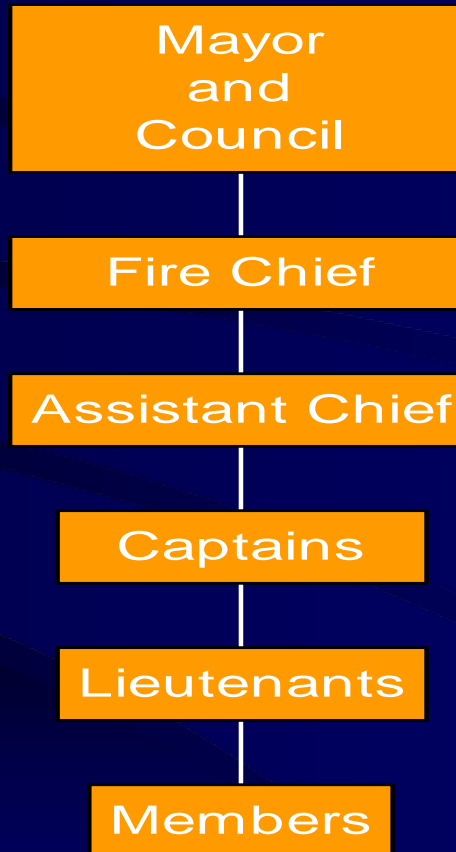
# Examples of Organizations

- ❖ **Human body**
- ❖ **Congress**
- ❖ **Veteran's of Foreign Wars**
- ❖ **Little League Baseball**

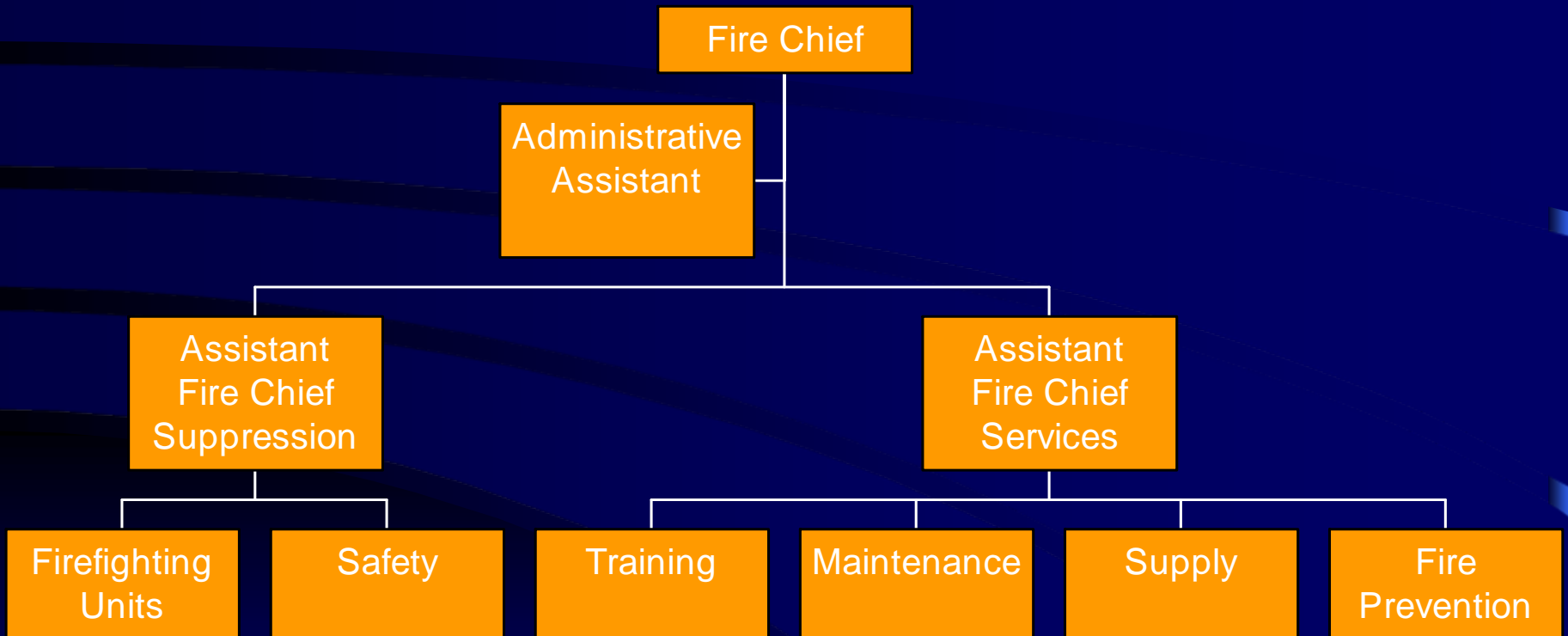
# Quite Simply

**A bunch of guys and gals  
working together to reach the  
same goals. You are all fire  
people, working on together on  
fire-related matters.**

# A Basic Organizational Chart



# Larger Organization Chart



# Fire Department Written Documents

- ❖ **Constitution and By-Laws**
- ❖ **Rules and Regulations**
- ❖ **Policy Book**
- ❖ **General Operating Guidelines**



# Major Problems

- ❖ **Poor leadership**
- ❖ **Too many rules**
- ❖ **Ridiculous rules**
- ❖ **Membership requirements are too difficult to fit into a busy life**

# Money

## The Root of Too Many Evils

# Where Does The Money Come From?

- ❖ **A municipal budget**
- ❖ **A fire district budget**
- ❖ **Direct fundraising efforts**

# Money is Raised By:

- ❖ **Taxation**
- ❖ **Assessment of user fees**
- ❖ **Funds from other levels of government**
- ❖ **Borrowing from a variety of sources**
- ❖ **Asking people to give you money**

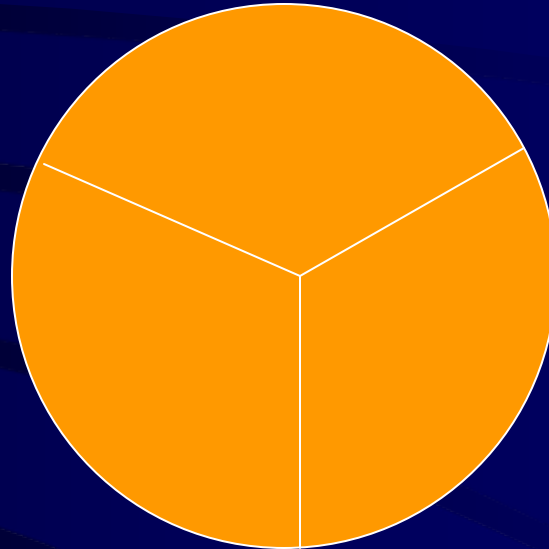
# Is a Tax Fair?

- ❖ **Yield**
- ❖ **Equity**
- ❖ **Neutrality**
- ❖ **Ease of administration**
- ❖ **Political feasibility**

# Circle of Success

**Facts**

**Figures**



**Friends**

# Budget

**Plan for the future  
expressed in financial terms**

# Expense Budget

**Budget that contains items of a recurring nature, such as fuel, salaries, paper products, etc.**



# Capital Budget

**Budget for high-cost items that have an extended service life or are only purchased infrequently**

# Line-Item Budget

**Each type of expense is listed on a separate line, for ease of accounting purposes**

# Sample Line-Item Budget

Account Number	Classification	Current Year (\$)	Last Year (\$)
0001	Apparatus repair	27,500	23,670
0002	Software	7,000	3,200
0003	Computer system	43,000	27,900
0004	Office supplies	3,700	3,500
0005	Firefighting hand tools	4,750	3,800
0006	Motor vehicle fuels	10,000	7,500
0007	Station heating costs	5,000	4,500
		<b>\$100,950</b>	<b>\$74,070</b>

# Sample Capital Budget

Account	Classification	First Year	Second Year	Third Year	Fourth Year	Fifth Year
0001	New Station	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000
0002	New Aerial	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000
0003	Compressor System		100,000			
0004	New Rescue Vehicle				570,000	

# The Budgetary Process

- ❖ **Formulation**
- ❖ **Transmittal**
- ❖ **Approval**
- ❖ **Management**

# Formulation

**The budget is created within your department using the talents and opinions of your staff. You review past budgets and express your thoughts for the future in dollar form.**

# Transmittal

**Your budget proposal is sent to the approving authority via the existing government system.**

# Approval

**The powers that be look at your budget and decide how much, or how little, you will receive**



# Management

**You must live within the guidelines of the budgetary figures that were approved for your fire department.**

# Things You Must Decide

- ❖ **Who sends the budget forward?**
- ❖ **What information for justification?**
- ❖ **Is the documentation for the justification attached to the budget, in case questions arise?**

# Things You Must Decide

- ❖ **Who is out there hiding in the system to ambush your budget?**
- ❖ **Who are your friends in the system?**
- ❖ **Who are you enemies in the system?**

# **But Above All - You Must**

- ❖ Stay within your budget.**
- ❖ Do not place yourself into situations where it is necessary to make emergency requests for more money.**
- ❖ Remember that staying within budget limits is difficult.**

# What Is Leadership?

**The ability to get something  
done by, by someone else,  
because they want to do it.**

# Leadership?

**You cannot succeed as the leader of a volunteer fire department if you lack the skills to be a leader.**

# Leadership Principles

- ❖ **Be technically proficient**
- ❖ **Know yourself**
- ❖ **Seek self improvement**

# Leadership Principles

- ❖ **Know your people**
- ❖ **Always look out for their welfare**
- ❖ **Keep your folks informed**



# Leadership Principles

- ❖ **Set the example**
- ❖ **Be sure to explain each task**
- ❖ **Be sure that people understand what you have said**

# Leadership Principles

- ❖ Provide just enough supervision
- ❖ Do not smother your people
- ❖ Do not let them run amuck
- ❖ Support and guide the troops

# Leadership Principles

- ❖ **Train as a team**
- ❖ **Support the individual**
- ❖ **Nurture the group**
- ❖ **Come to know them as individual human beings**

# Leadership Principles

- ❖ **Make sound decisions**
- ❖ **Make decisions at the proper time**
- ❖ **Cultivate responsibility among your people**

# Leadership Principles

- ❖ **Know the capabilities of your team**
- ❖ **Operate within those levels of competency**
- ❖ **Seek responsibility and take command**

# Your Personal Leadership Compass: The Key to Leading a VFD

- ❖ Integrity
- ❖ Courage
- ❖ Honesty
- ❖ Pride

# The Keys to Leading a VFD

- ❖ Faith
- ❖ Determination
- ❖ Forcefulness
- ❖ Good Judgement

# The Keys to Leading a VFD

- ❖ **Tact**
- ❖ **Decisiveness**
- ❖ **Persistence**
- ❖ **Initiative**



# The Keys to Leading a VFD

- ❖ **High Principles**
- ❖ **Take Responsibility**
- ❖ **Unselfishness**
- ❖ **Good Personal Bearing**

# The Keys to Leading a VFD

❖ **Loyalty**

❖ **Dependable**

❖ **Reliable**

# The Keys to Leading a VFD

- ❖ **Unselfish**
- ❖ **Self-Disciplined**
- ❖ **Thirst for Knowledge**
- ❖ **Servant of the troops**

# Critical Skills of a Leader

- ❖ **Forward thinker**
- ❖ **Good innovator**
- ❖ **A constant flow of ideas**

# What is a Volunteer Fire Department?

- ❖ **People**
- ❖ **Things**
- ❖ **Money**
- ❖ **Programs**
- ❖ **Policies**
- ❖ **Planning**

# Like It or Not: The Future Will Happen

- ❖ Things will go better if you plan
- ❖ Things will be stronger if you support your troops
- ❖ Plan for the future
- ❖ Prepare your budget with an eye to the future

# **Like It or Not: The Future Will Happen**

- ❖ Preach Safety – Live Safety**
- ❖ Learn from your experience**
- ❖ Constantly Monitor your plan for the future of your department**
- ❖ Be sure to say “Thank You” a lot**

**I Need Your Feedback**

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