F/W0762 New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

Student Manual

2nd Edition, 1st Printing

July 2026



U.S. Fire Administration

Working for a fire-safe America

FEMA/USFA/NFA
NECO: Contemporary Issues-SM
July 2026
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New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

FEMA

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U.S. Fire Administration

Working for a fire-safe America

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Acronyms

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Acknowledgments

The development of any National Fire Academy (NFA) course is a complex process aimed at providing students with the best possible learning opportunity we can deliver.

There are many players in course development, each of whom plays an equally important part in its success. We want to acknowledge their participation and contribution to this effort and extend our heartfelt thanks for making this quality product.

George Thomas IV
Training Specialist
U.S. Fire Administration (USFA)/NFA
Emmitsburg, Maryland

Chad Crouse
Subject Matter Expert

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FIREFIGHTER CODE OF ETHICS

Background

The Fire Service is a noble calling, one which is founded on mutual respect and trust between firefighters and the citizens they serve. To ensure the continuing integrity of the Fire Service, the highest standards of ethical conduct must be maintained at all times.

Developed in response to the publication of the Fire Service Reputation Management White Paper, the purpose of this National Firefighter Code of Ethics is to establish criteria that encourages fire service personnel to promote a culture of ethical integrity and high standards of professionalism in our field. The broad scope of this recommended Code of Ethics is intended to mitigate and negate situations that may result in embarrassment and waning of public support for what has historically been a highly respected profession.

Ethics comes from the Greek word ethos, meaning character. Character is not necessarily defined by how a person behaves when conditions are optimal and life is good. It is easy to take the high road when the path is paved and obstacles are few or non-existent. Character is also defined by decisions made under pressure, when no one is looking, when the road contains land mines, and the way is obscured. As members of the Fire Service, we share a responsibility to project an ethical character of professionalism, integrity, compassion, loyalty and honesty in all that we do, all of the time.

We need to accept this ethics challenge and be truly willing to maintain a culture that is consistent with the expectations outlined in this document. By doing so, we can create a legacy that validates and sustains the distinguished Fire Service institution, and at the same time ensure that we leave the Fire Service in better condition than when we arrived.



FIREFIGHTER CODE OF ETHICS

I understand that I have the responsibility to conduct myself in a manner that reflects proper ethical behavior and integrity. In so doing, I will help foster a continuing positive public perception of the fire service. Therefore, I pledge the following…

- Always conduct myself, on and off duty, in a manner that reflects positively on myself, my department and the fire service in general.
- Accept responsibility for my actions and for the consequences of my actions.
- Support the concept of fairness and the value of diverse thoughts and opinions.
- Avoid situations that would adversely affect the credibility or public perception of the fire service profession.
- Be truthful and honest at all times and report instances of cheating or other dishonest acts that compromise the integrity of the fire service.
- Conduct my personal affairs in a manner that does not improperly influence the performance of my duties, or bring discredit to my organization.
- Be respectful and conscious of each member's safety and welfare.
- Recognize that I serve in a position of public trust that requires stewardship in the honest and efficient use of publicly owned resources, including uniforms, facilities, vehicles and equipment and that these are protected from misuse and theft.
- Exercise professionalism, competence, respect and loyalty in the performance of my duties and use information, confidential or otherwise, gained by virtue of my position, only to benefit those I am entrusted to serve.
- Avoid financial investments, outside employment, outside business interests or activities that conflict with or are enhanced by my official position or have the potential to create the perception of impropriety.
- Never propose or accept personal rewards, special privileges, benefits, advancement, honors or gifts that may create a conflict of interest, or the appearance thereof.
- Never engage in activities involving alcohol or other substance use or abuse that can impair my mental state or the performance of my duties and compromise safety.
- Never discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual preference, medical condition or handicap.
- Never harass, intimidate or threaten fellow members of the service or the public and stop or report the actions of other firefighters who engage in such behaviors.
- Responsibly use social networking, electronic communications, or other media technology opportunities in a manner that does not discredit, dishonor or embarrass my organization, the fire service and the public. I also understand that failure to resolve or report inappropriate use of this media equates to condoning this behavior.

Developed by the National Society of Executive Fire Officers

Course Goal

The goal of this course is to develop the managerial, administrative, and leadership skills necessary for the new executive chief officer to lead organizational change, build collaborative partnerships, engage the community, and plan capital asset replacement.

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Schedule

TIME	DAY 1	DAY 2
8:00 - 9:00	Introduction Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation	Unit 2: Unit 2: Leadership and Management (cont'd)
9:00 - 9:15	*Break*	*Break*
9:15 - 10:30	Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation (cont'd)	Unit 2: Unit 2: Leadership and Management (cont'd) Unit 3: Community Engagement
10:30 – 10:45	*Break*	*Break*
10:45 - 12:00	Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation (cont'd)	Unit 3: Community Engagement (cont'd) Unit 4: Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition
12:00 - 1:00	*Lunch*	*Lunch*
1:00 - 2:45	Unit 2: Leadership and Management	Unit 4: Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition (cont'd)
2:45 - 3:00	*Break*	*Break*
3:00 - 5:00	Unit 2: Leadership and Management (cont'd)	Final Exam Course Evaluations

Note: This schedule is subject to modification by the instructors and approved by the training specialist.

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Audience, Scope and Course Purpose

The primary audience is persons who have recently (within two years) been promoted to a position as agency head (executive chief officer) of a fire or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) agency, or who are second or third in line to assume the executive chief officer role.

This 2-day course addresses cross-sector collaboration (collective impact, three consolidation types), executive leadership and management (Kotter's 8-Step Change, Sinek Golden Circle, multigenerational workforce, leadership balance), community engagement (power-interest grid, Research, Action, Communication, Evaluation (RACE) model crisis communication, community engagement plan), and capital asset planning and acquisition (life-cycle costing, replacement benchmarks, cooperative purchasing). All frameworks are presented at full executive-level depth.

The purpose of this course is to develop the managerial, administrative, and leadership skills necessary for the recently-promoted executive chief officer to effectively meet their obligations.

Grading Methodology

Each student will complete the multiple-choice Final Exam covering content from all units. Open resource (Student Manual (SM) permitted) but individual work. A minimum final course grade of at least 70 percent is required to pass this course.

Numerical Score	Letter Grade
100 - 90	A
89 - 80	B
79 - 70	C
69 and below	F

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A Student Guide to End-of-course Evaluations

Say What You Mean ...

Ten Things You Can Do to Improve the National Fire Academy



The National Fire Academy takes its course evaluations very seriously. Your comments and suggestions enable us to improve your learning experience.

Unfortunately, we often get end-of-course comments like these that are vague and, therefore, not actionable. We know you are trying to keep your answers short, but the more specific you can be, the better we can respond.

Actual quotes from student evaluations:	Examples of specific, actionable comments that would help us improve the course:
1 "Update the materials."	• The (ABC) fire video is out-of-date because of the dangerous tactics it demonstrates. The available (XYZ) video shows current practices. • The student manual references building codes that are 12 years old.
2 "We want an advanced class in (fill in the blank)."	• We would like a class that enables us to calculate energy transfer rates resulting from exposure fires. • We would like a class that provides one-on-one workplace harassment counseling practice exercises.
3 "More activities."	• An activity where students can physically measure the area of sprinkler coverage would improve understanding of the concept. • Not all students were able to fill all ICS positions in the exercises. Add more exercises so all students can participate.
4 "A longer course."	• The class should be increased by one hour per day to enable all students to participate in exercises. • The class should be increased by two days so that all group presentations can be peer evaluated and have written abstracts.
5 "Readable plans."	• The plans should be enlarged to 11 by 17 and provided with an accurate scale. • My plan set was blurry, which caused the dotted lines to be interpreted as solid lines.
6 "Better student guide organization," "manual did not coincide with slides."	• The slide sequence in Unit 4 did not align with the content in the student manual from slides 4-16 through 4-21. • The instructor added slides in Unit 4 that were not in my student manual.
7 "Dry in spots."	• The instructor/activity should have used student group activities rather than lecture to explain Maslow's Hierarchy. • Create a pre-course reading on symbiotic personal relationships rather than trying to lecture on them in class.
8 "More visual aids."	• The text description of V-patterns did not provide three-dimensional views. More photographs or drawings would help me imagine the pattern. • There was a video clip on NBC News (date) that summarized the topic very well.
9 "Re-evaluate pre-course assignments."	• The pre-course assignments were not discussed or referenced in class. Either connect them to the course content or delete them. • The pre-course assignments on ICS could be reduced to a one-page job aid rather than a 25-page reading.
10 "A better understanding of NIMS."	• The instructor did not explain the connection between NIMS and ICS. • The student manual needs an illustrated guide to NIMS.

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New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

Introduction

Student Manual

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Methodology

This unit uses lecture and discussion.

(Total Time: 30 min.)

30 min.	Lecture/Discussion			
20 min.		I.	Welcome	SM Intro-6
10 min.		II.	Course Introduction	SM Intro-13

Audiovisual

Slides Intro-1 to Intro-11

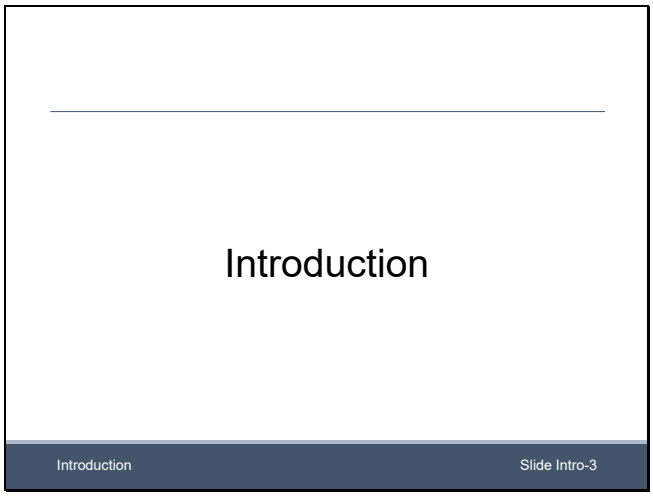
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Welcome to the National Fire Academy (NFA)!

I. Welcome



A. Facilitator introductions.



B. Administrative matters.

1. Emergency exits: Explain the location of primary and secondary exits from the building. Instruct students that in the event of a fire or other emergency, they are to leave via the designated exit, remain with the class for accountability and remain a safe distance from the building until advised that the situation is clear.

2. Class roster: Circulate the class roster. Tell students to correct any mistakes and initial the change.

3. Daily schedule: Class begins promptly at 8 a.m. and ends at approximately 5 p.m. Students must arrive for class on time or security will be sent to investigate their welfare. There will be some evening homework throughout the course.

4. Cellphones should be turned off (or to vibrate when activated) during class time.

5. Breaks: Students will be given breaks throughout the day, including an hour for lunch.

6. Restrooms are located on each floor of J Building. Break rooms with refreshments are located on each floor.

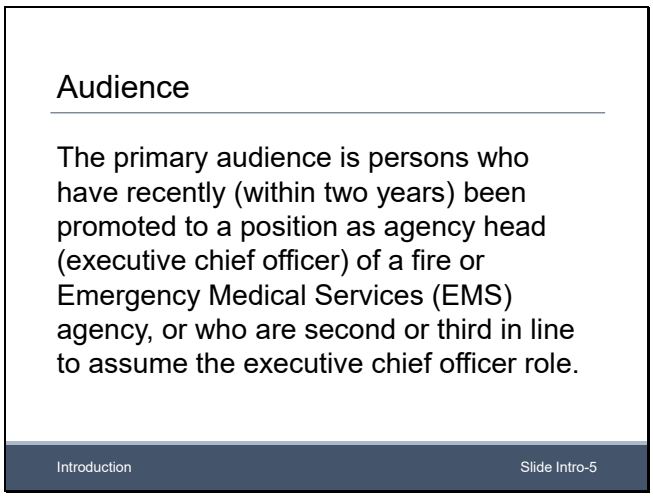
7. Dining hall: Describe the location (K Building), and provide hours of operation.

8. Vehicle parking: Student vehicles must be parked in the parking lot adjacent to the J Building. Tickets are issued by security, and vehicles are towed when necessary.

9. Seat belts are required by Maryland state law. Maryland law also prohibits talking on a handheld phone and texting while driving.

10. Course materials will be covered in more detail later in this unit. Most of the information is in the Student Manual (SM).

11. No smoking is allowed in the classroom or J Building. There are designated smoking areas outside of J Building.



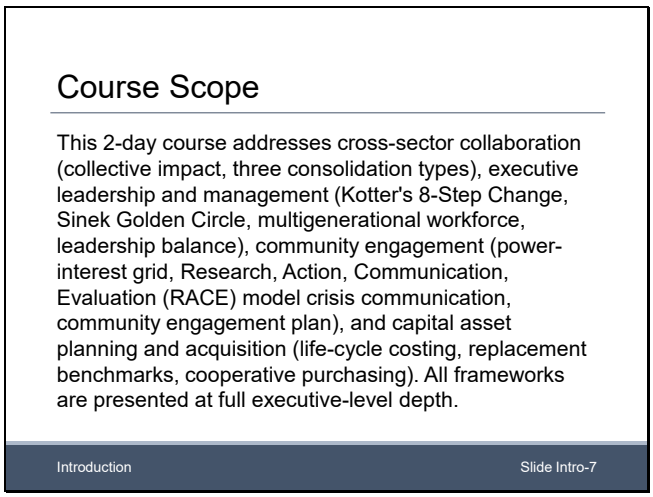
C. Audience.

The primary audience is persons who have recently (within two years) been promoted to a position as agency head (executive chief officer) of a fire or EMS agency, or who are second or third in line to assume the executive chief officer role.



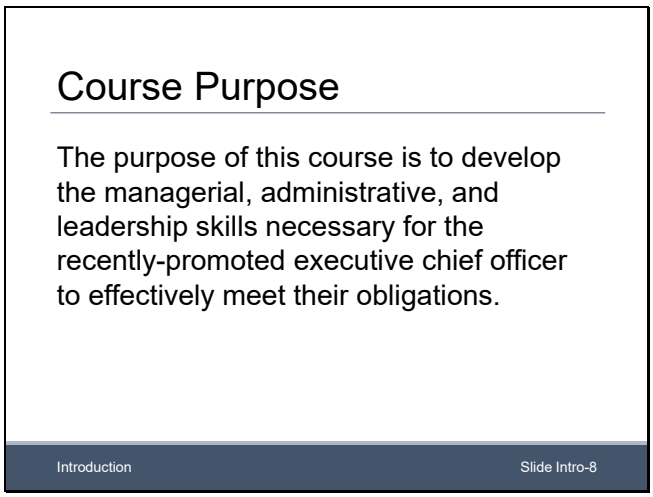
D. Course goal.

The goal of this course is to develop the managerial, administrative, and leadership skills necessary for the new executive chief officer to lead organizational change, build collaborative partnerships, engage the community, and plan capital asset replacement.



E. Course scope.

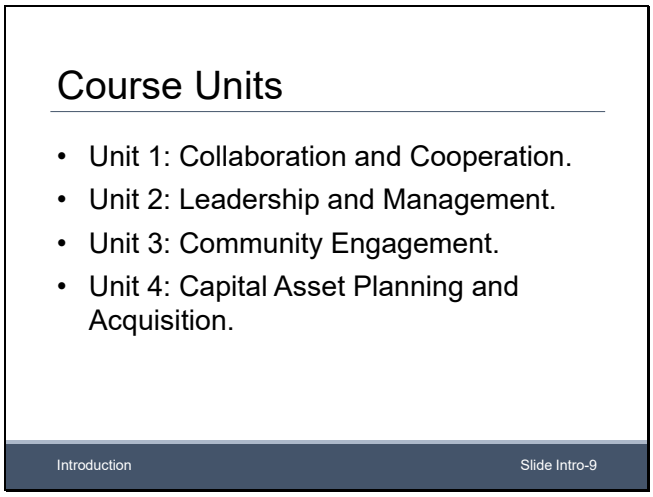
This 2-day course addresses cross-sector collaboration (collective impact, three consolidation types), executive leadership and management (Kotter's 8-Step Change, Sinek Golden Circle, multigenerational workforce, leadership balance), community engagement (power-interest grid, Research, Action, Communication, Evaluation (RACE) model crisis communication, community engagement plan), and capital asset planning and acquisition (life-cycle costing, replacement benchmarks, cooperative purchasing). All frameworks are presented at full executive-level depth.



F. Course purpose.

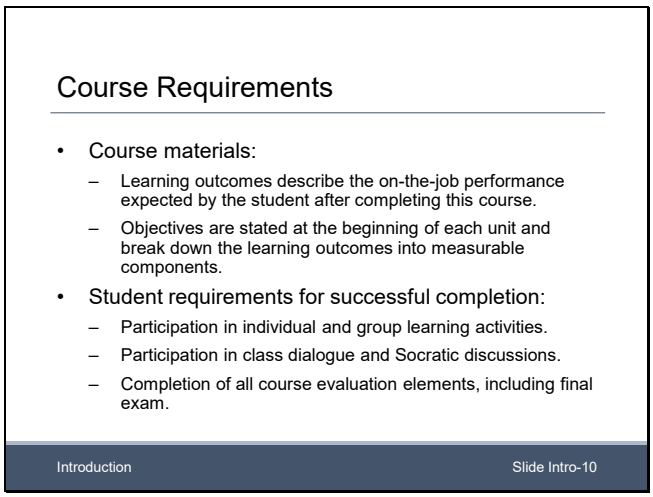
The purpose of this course is to develop the managerial, administrative and leadership skills necessary for the recently-promoted executive chief officer to effectively meet their obligations.

II. Course Introduction



A. Course units.

1. Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation.
2. Unit 2: Leadership and Management.
3. Unit 3: Community Engagement.
4. Unit 4: Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition.



B. Course requirements.

1. Course materials:

   a. Learning outcomes describe the on-the-job performance expected by the student after completing this course.

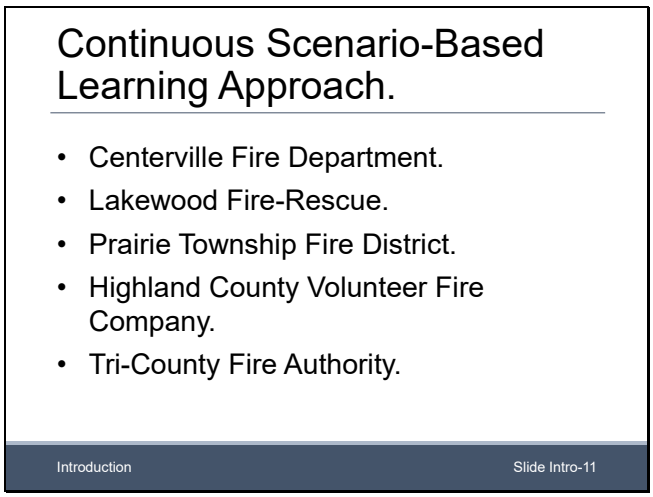
   b. Objectives are stated at the beginning of each unit and break down the learning outcomes into measurable components.

2. Student requirements for successful completion:

   a. Participation in individual and group learning activities.

   b. Participation in class dialogue and Socratic discussions.

   c. Completion of all course evaluation elements, including final exam.



C. Continuous scenario-based learning approach.

1. Centerville Fire Department.
2. Lakewood Fire-Rescue.
3. Prairie Township Fire District.
4. Highland County Volunteer Fire Company.
5. Tri-County Fire Authority.

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New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation

Student Manual

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Unit Learning Outcome (LO)

1.0 The students will be able to apply collaboration, cooperation and consolidation frameworks to build effective internal and external partnerships as an executive chief officer.

Unit Objectives

The students will:

1.1 Define collaboration and cooperation.
1.2 List two internal partners and two external partners.
1.3 Identify two potential external collaborative partnerships.
1.4 Describe three types of consolidation and the changes each may bring.

Objective/Alignment Content

Learning Outcome	Evaluation Method
Apply collaboration, cooperation and consolidation frameworks to build effective internal and external partnerships as an executive chief officer.	Course Evaluation Plan

Objectives	Course Component	Evaluation Method
Define collaboration and cooperation.	Lecture/Discussion	Large Group Dialogue
List two internal partners and two external partners.	Lecture/Discussion	Activity 1.1
Identify two potential external collaborative partnerships.	Lecture/Discussion	Activity 1.1
Describe three types of consolidation and the changes each may bring.	Lecture/Discussion	Large Group Dialogue

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, discussion and small/large group activities.

(Total Time: 2 hr., 30 min.)

150 min.	Lecture/Discussion/Activities		
5 min.	Objectives		SM 1-7
15 min.	I.	Collaboration and Cooperation	SM 1-8
20 min.	II.	Internal and External Partners	SM 1-10
30 min.	III.	Building Effective Partnerships	SM 1-15
25 min.	Small/Large Group Activity 1.1		
		Establishing Effective Partnerships	SM 1-23
25 min.	IV.	Consolidation	SM 1-25
25 min.	Small/Large Group Activity 1.2		
		Benefits and Drawbacks of Consolidation	SM 1-33
5 min.	V.	Summary	SM 1-35
		Reference	SM 1-37

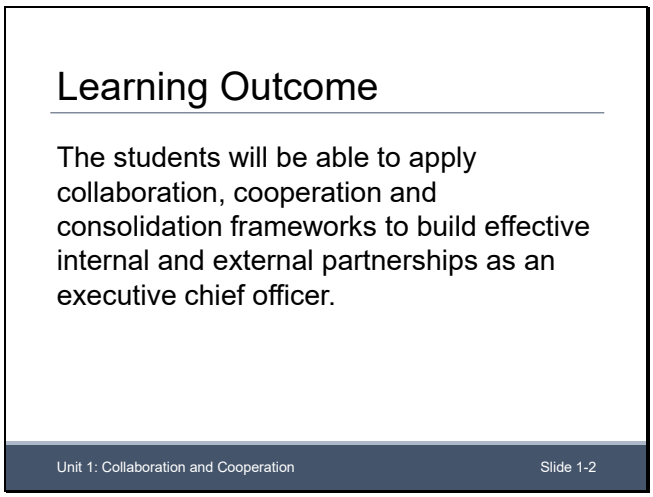
Audiovisual

Slides 1-1 to 1-35

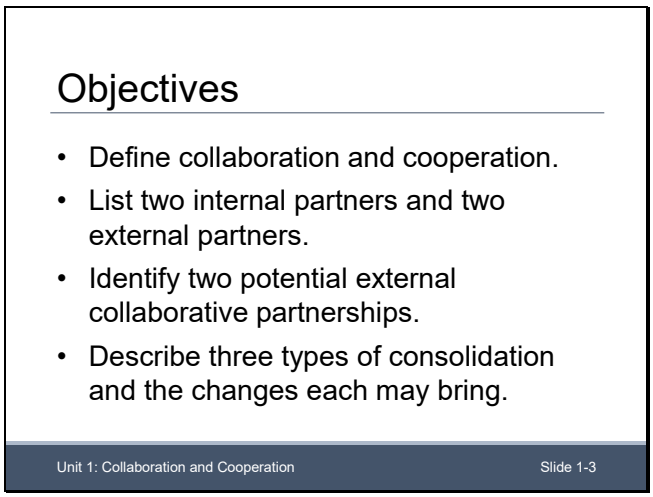
Handout

Handout 1-1: Model Department Scenarios


Collaboration and Cooperation
Unit 1
U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a fire-safe America
Slide 1-1



1.0 The students will be able to apply collaboration, cooperation and consolidation frameworks to build effective internal and external partnerships as an executive chief officer.



The students will:

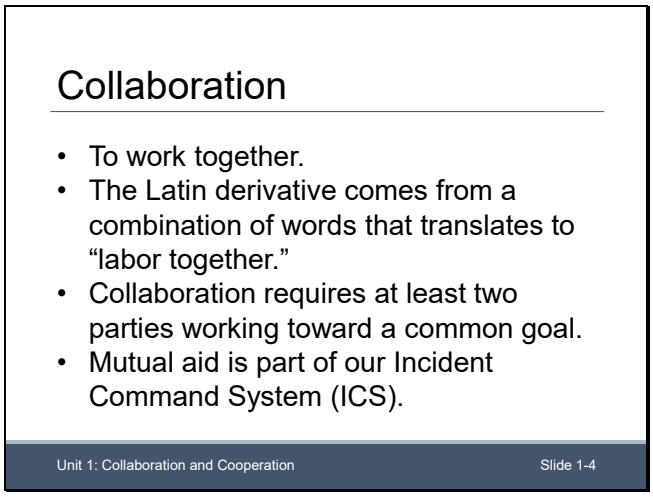
1.1 Define collaboration and cooperation.

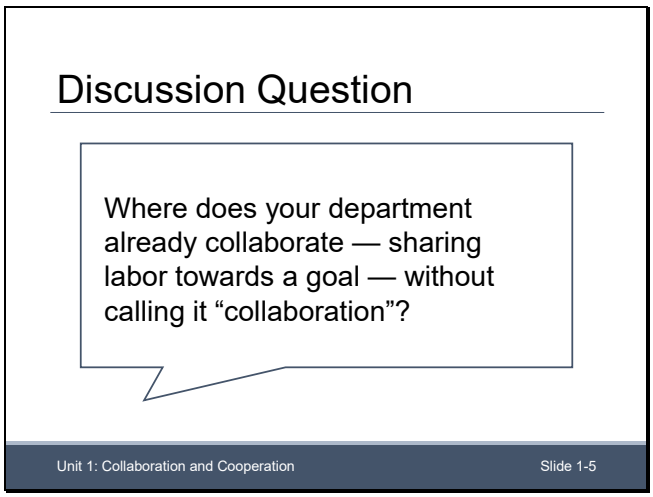
1.2 List two internal partners and two external partners.

1.3 Identify two potential external collaborative partnerships.

1.4 Describe three types of consolidation and the changes each may bring.

I. Collaboration and Cooperation





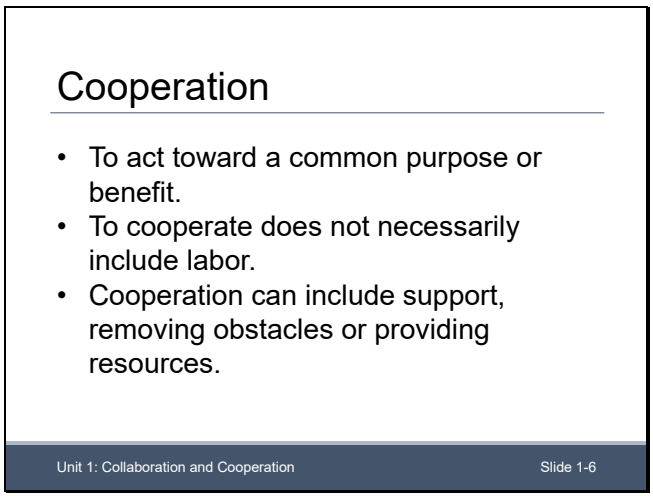
A. Collaboration means to work together.

1. The Latin derivative combines words that translate to "labor together."

2. Collaboration requires at least two parties working toward a common goal — and it requires shared labor, not just shared intent.

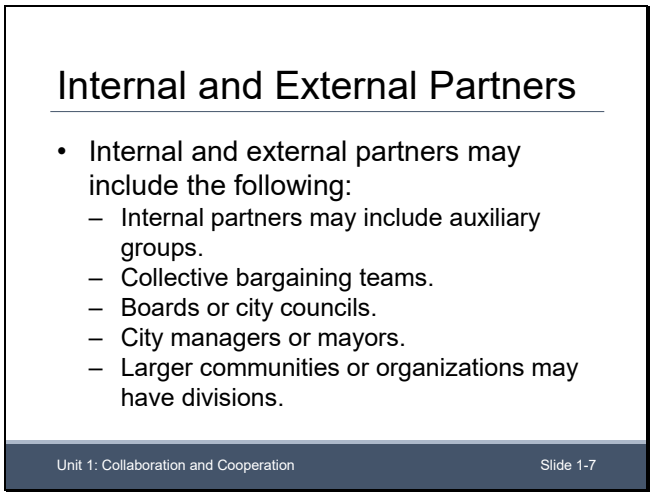
3. Mutual aid is a familiar example, built into the Incident Command System (ICS).

4. Collaboration is ongoing; it is sustained by relationships, not one-time agreements.



B. Cooperation means to act toward a common purpose or benefit. Unlike collaboration, cooperation does not necessarily include shared labor — it can take the form of support, removing obstacles or providing resources.

II. Internal and External Partners

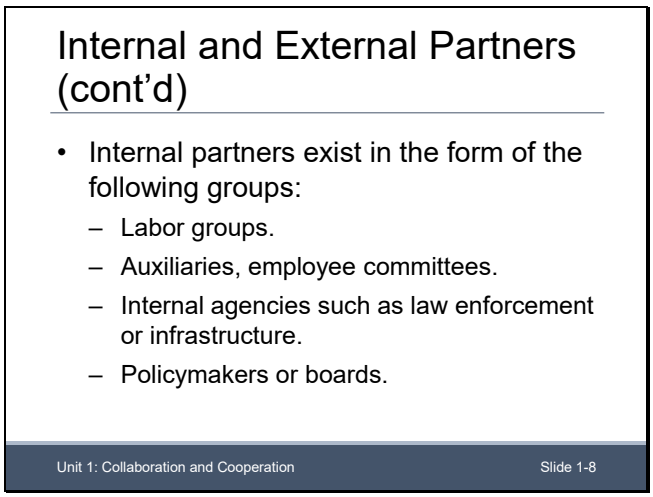


A. Internal and external partners.

1. Internal and external partners may include a wide range of groups. Larger communities or organizations may have divisions that act as partners in their own right.

2. Internal partners exist within the organization (labor groups, auxiliaries, employee committees, internal divisions).

3. External partners exist outside the organization (other agencies, community organizations, regional and federal bodies).



B. Internal partners.

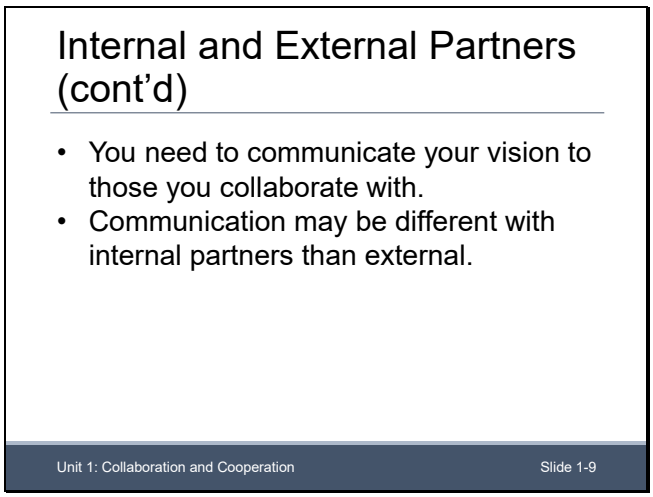
Exist in the form of the following groups:

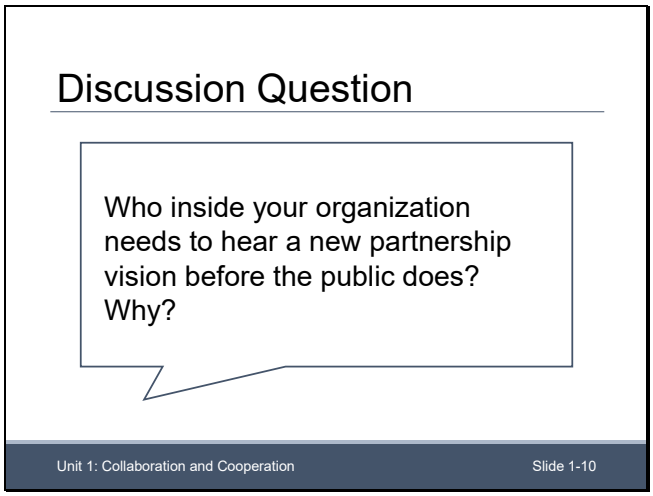
1. Labor groups: International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) locals, volunteer officer associations, battalion chief associations.

2. Auxiliaries and employee committees: volunteer and community-support groups affiliated with the department.

3. Internal agencies and divisions: fire prevention, emergency medical services (EMS), training and dispatch functions whose work supports the broader mission.

4. Policymakers or boards that sit inside the governance structure.

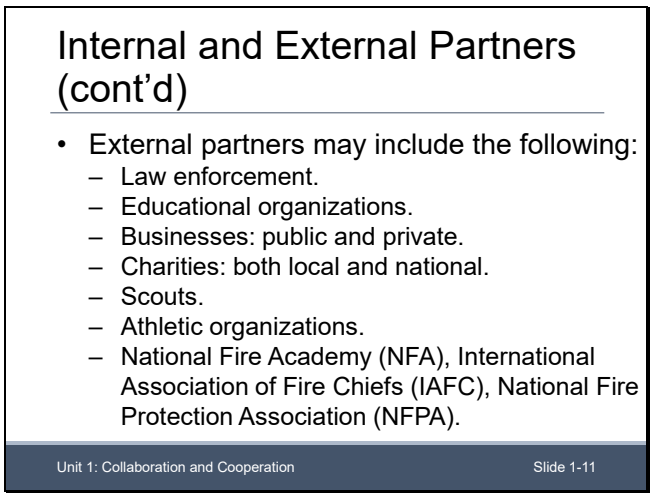




C. Communicating vision to internal partners.

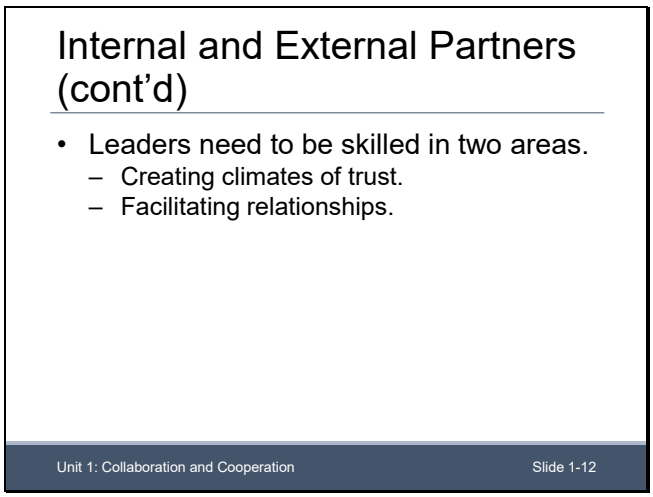
1. You need to communicate your vision to those you collaborate with.

2. Communication with internal partners is often more formal and continuous than with external partners. They live with the consequences daily, so they must hear the vision first and clearly.



D. External partners.

May include law enforcement, educational organizations, businesses (public and private), charities (local and national), and youth groups such as Scouts, hospitals and EMS partners, public-works partners, and regional or federal bodies.

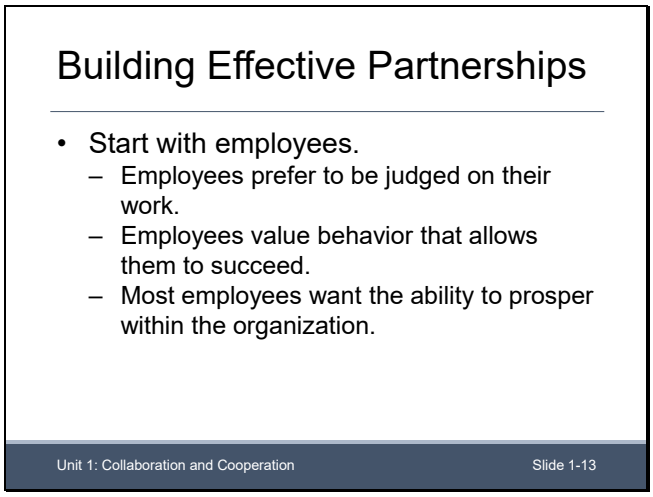


E. Skills for working with partners.

1. Creating climates of trust — the foundation of every partnership; without it, every transaction is harder.

2. Facilitating relationships — the chief often connects partners who would not otherwise work together.

III. Building Effective Partnerships

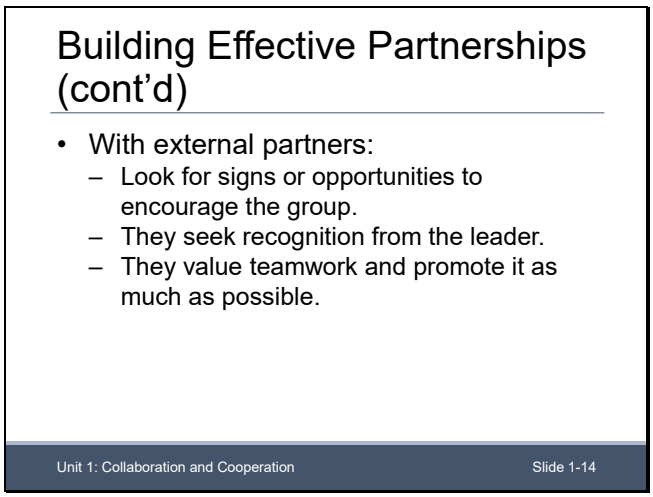


A. Employees.

1. Building trust starts internally.

2. Effective external partnerships begin with internal alignment.

3. Employees prefer to be judged on their work, value behavior that lets them succeed and want the ability to prosper within the organization.



B. External partners.

1. Look for signs or opportunities to encourage the group.

2. Strong external partners seek recognition from the leader, value teamwork and promote it, and share the vision even when their language differs from yours.

Building Effective Partnerships (cont'd)

- The combined group's needs are where the facilitation skills are important.
- Both the internal and external partners must believe the chief has their best interests at heart.

Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation Slide 1-15

Discussion Question

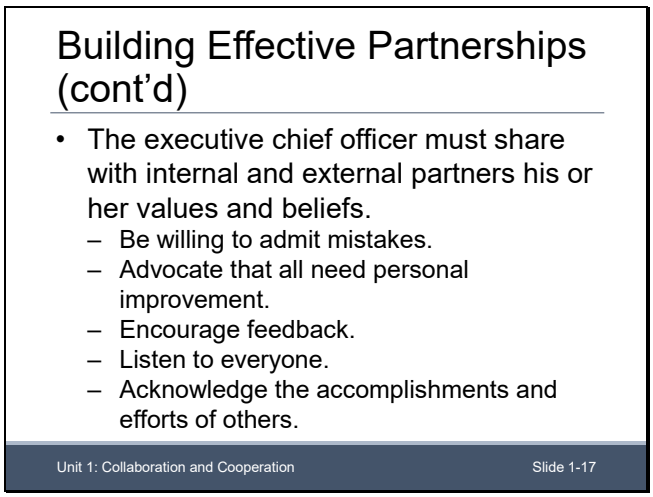
Think of a partnership that broke down. Was it a trust problem, a facilitation problem or a vision problem?

Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation Slide 1-16

C. The combined group's needs.

1. The combined group's needs are where facilitation skills matter most.

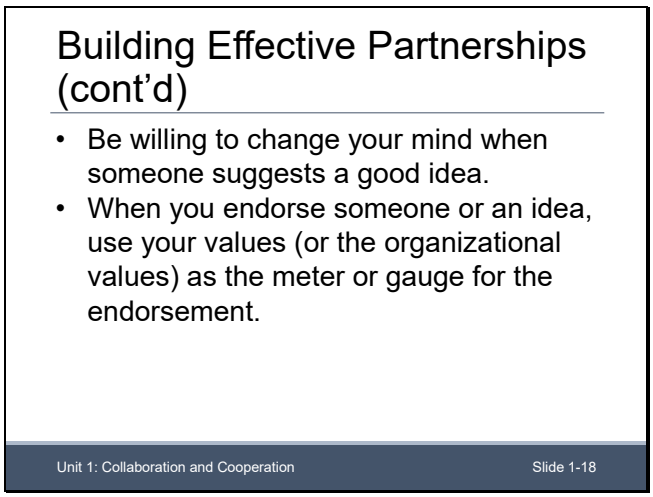
2. Both internal and external partners must believe the chief has their best interests in mind; the chief balances competing needs without favoring one side.



D. Sharing visions and values.

1. The executive chief officer must share his or her values and beliefs about partnership with internal and external partners.

2. Be willing to admit mistakes, advocate that everyone needs personal improvement, encourage feedback, listen to everyone, and acknowledge the accomplishments and efforts of others.

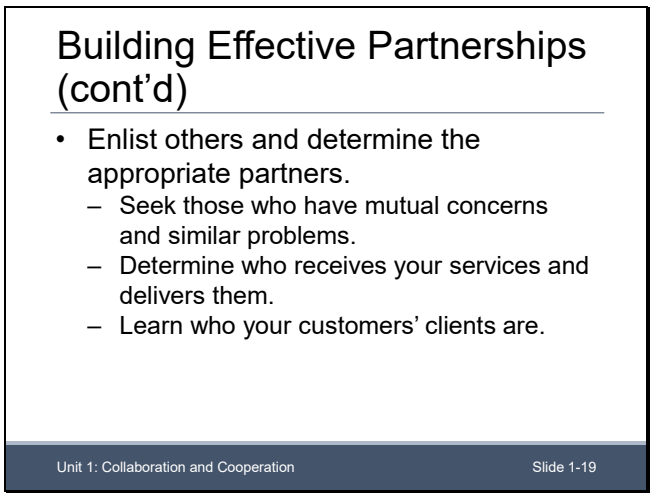


E. Be willing to change.

1. Be willing to change your mind when someone suggests a good idea.

2. When you endorse a person or an idea, use your values — or the organizational values — as the standard.

3. Visible willingness to adapt builds credibility with partners.

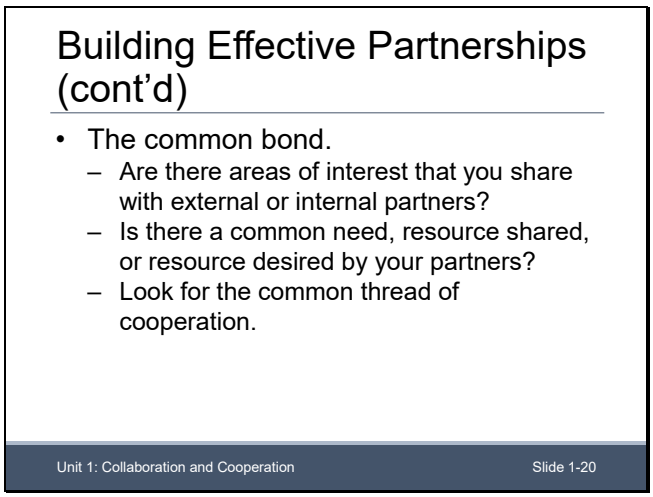


F. Enlist others.

1. Enlist others and determine the appropriate partners.

2. Seek those who have mutual concerns and similar problems.

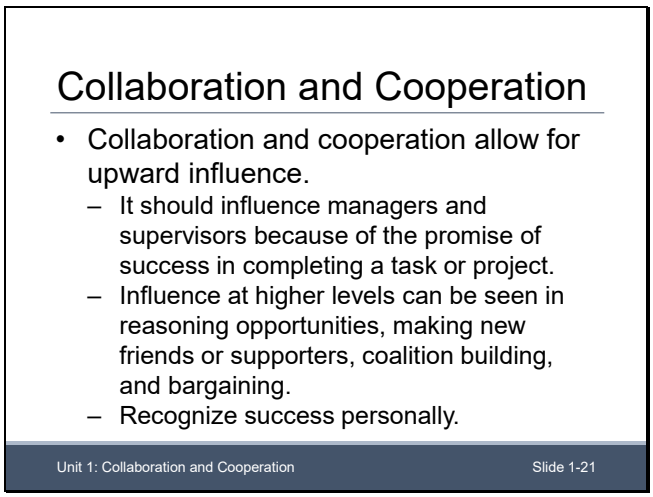
3. Determine who receives and delivers your services; and learn who your customers' clients are.



G. The common bond.

1. Areas of interest you share with external or internal partners is what makes a partnership durable.

2. Look for the common thread of cooperation: a shared need, a shared resource, or a resource one partner has and another desires.



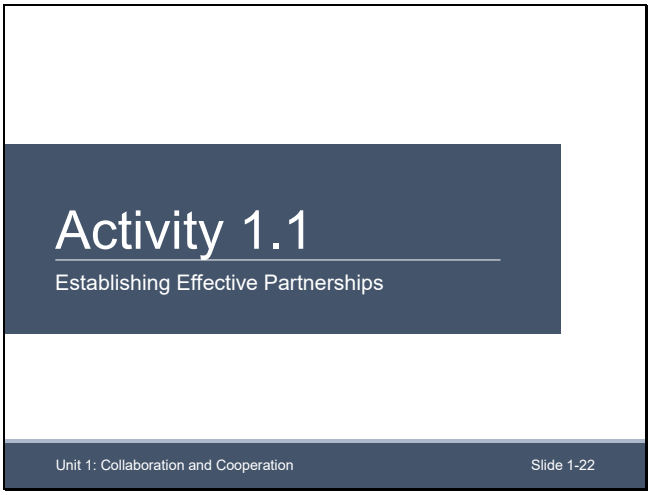
H. Upward influence.

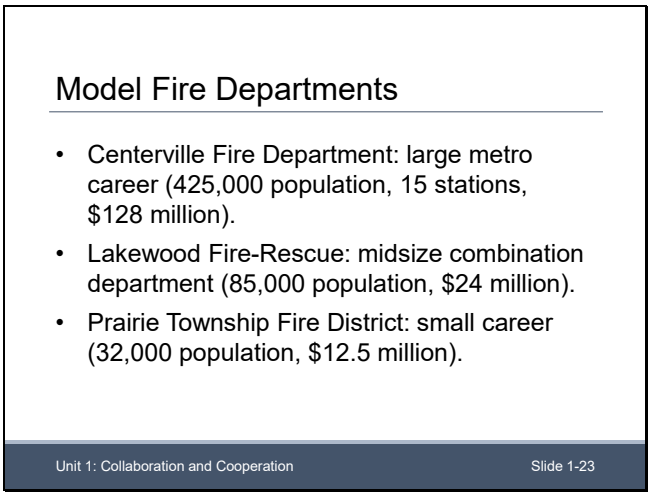
1. Collaboration and cooperation allow for upward influence.

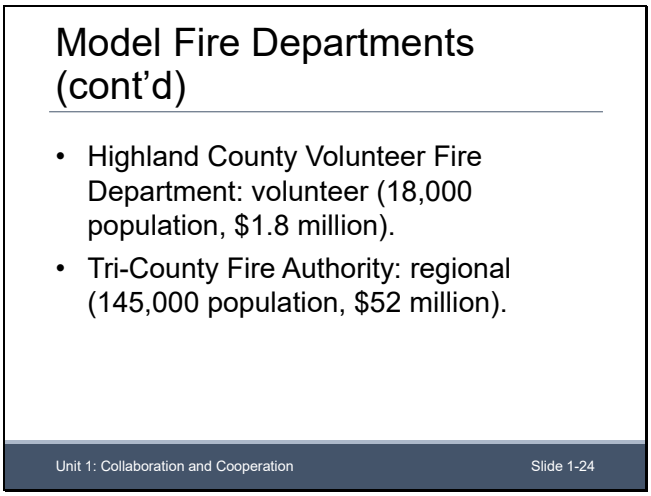
2. Partnership work should influence managers and supervisors because of the promise of shared success.

3. Influence at higher levels shows up as new reasoning opportunities, new relationships and personally recognized success.

Activity 1.1


Activity 1.1
Establishing Effective Partnerships
Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation
Slide 1-22


Model Fire Departments
• Centerville Fire Department: large metro career (425,000 population, 15 stations, $128 million).
• Lakewood Fire-Rescue: midsize combination department (85,000 population, $24 million).
• Prairie Township Fire District: small career (32,000 population, $12.5 million).
Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation
Slide 1-23


Model Fire Departments (cont'd)
• Highland County Volunteer Fire Department: volunteer (18,000 population, $1.8 million).
• Tri-County Fire Authority: regional (145,000 population, $52 million).
Unit 1: Collaboration and Cooperation
Slide 1-24

Small/Large Group Activity Estimated Time: 25 minutes

Activity Purpose

Apply the partnership concepts (collaboration versus cooperation; internal and external partners; the common bond) to an assigned model department scenario.

Activity Directions

1. Your group will be assigned a model department scenario from Handout 1-1: Model Department Scenarios:

    a. Group 1: Centerville.

    b. Group 2: Lakewood.

    c. Group 3: Prairie Township.

    d. Group 4: Highland County.

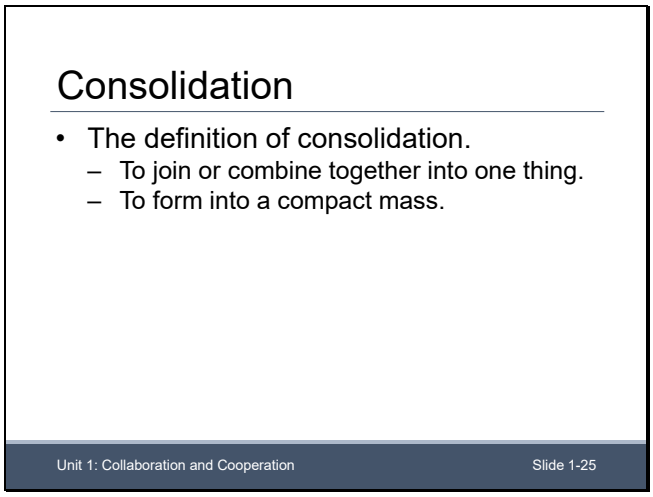
    e. Group 5: Tri-County.

2. Your group will identify at least two internal and two external partners for the scenario.

3. Your group will name the common bond among partners and draft the vision statement the executive chief officer would share.

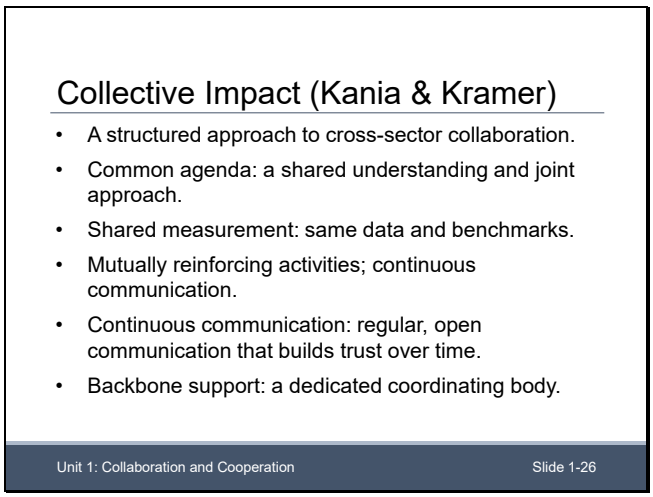
4. Your group will report out.

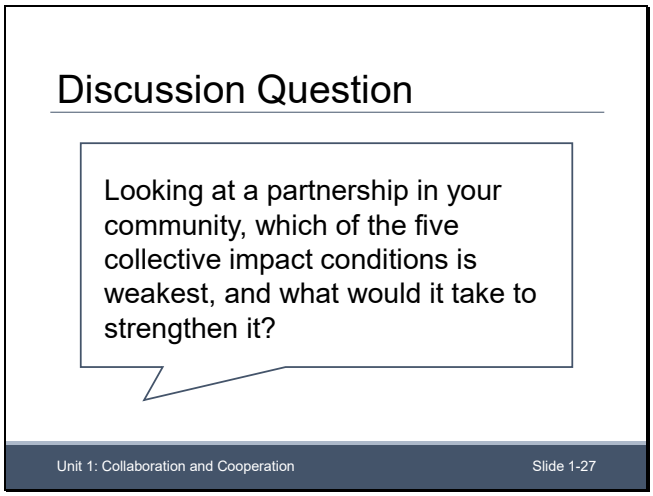
IV. Consolidation



A. Definition of consolidation.

Consolidation means to join or combine together into one thing — to form into a compact mass. In the fire service it ranges from sharing a single function to fully merging departments.

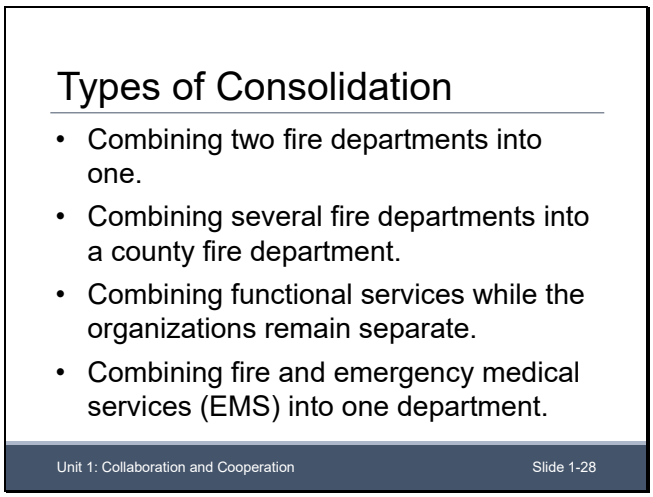




B. Collective impact (Kania & Kramer, 2011).

Collective impact is a structured approach to cross-sector collaboration and a useful lens for evaluating any consolidation or large partnership. Its five conditions are:

1. Common agenda: a shared understanding of the problem and a joint approach.
2. Shared measurement: the same data and benchmarks across partners.
3. Mutually reinforcing activities: each partner does what it does best, coordinated with the others.
4. Continuous communication: regular, open communication that builds trust over time.
5. Backbone support: a dedicated coordinating body that keeps the effort moving.



C. Types of consolidation.

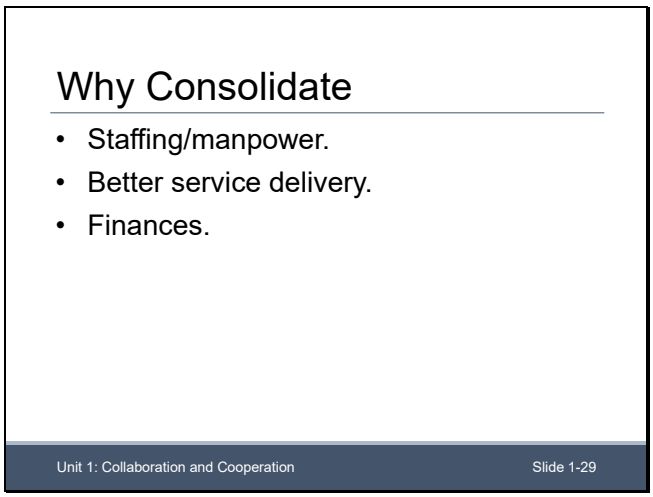
Consolidation takes several forms:

1. Combining two fire departments into one.

2. Combining several departments into a county fire department or regional authority.

3. Combining functional services (training, dispatch, fire prevention) while the organizations otherwise remain separate.

4. Combining fire and EMS into one department or combining staffing models within a single department.



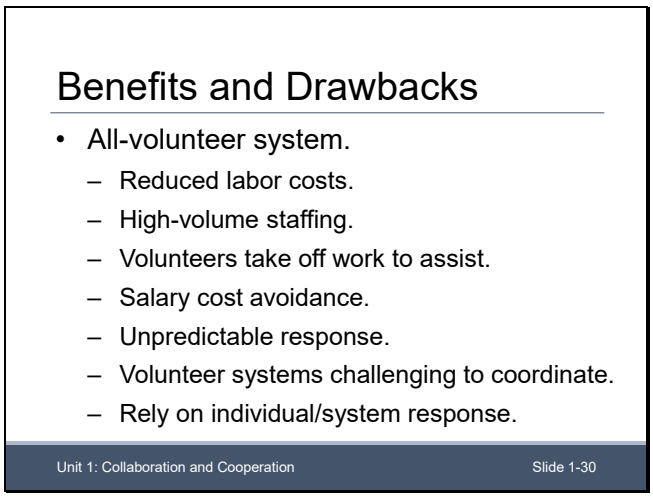
D. Why consolidate.

The common drivers of consolidation are:

1. Staffing/manpower: improving response capacity by combining workforces.

2. Better service delivery: specialty capability no single department could afford alone.

3. Finances: cost savings through shared overhead, joint procurement and eliminated duplication.



E. Type 1: all-volunteer system.

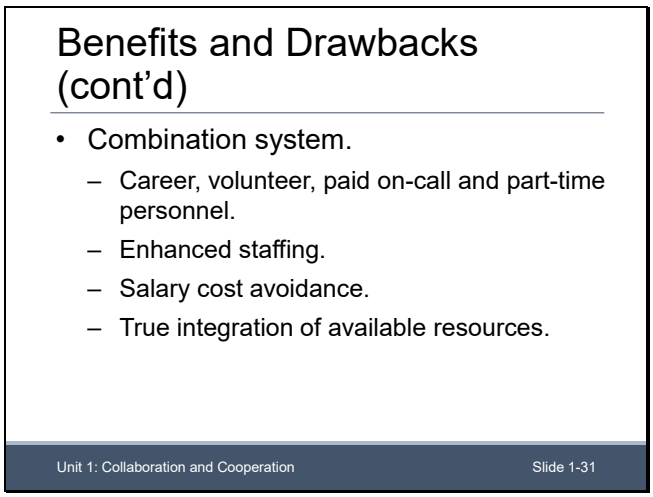
Combining departments or staffing into an all-volunteer system:

1. Reduced labor costs (no career-personnel salaries) and salary cost avoidance.

2. High-volume staffing and strong community ties (volunteers are typically community members).

3. Volunteers take time off work to assist, which makes response less predictable.

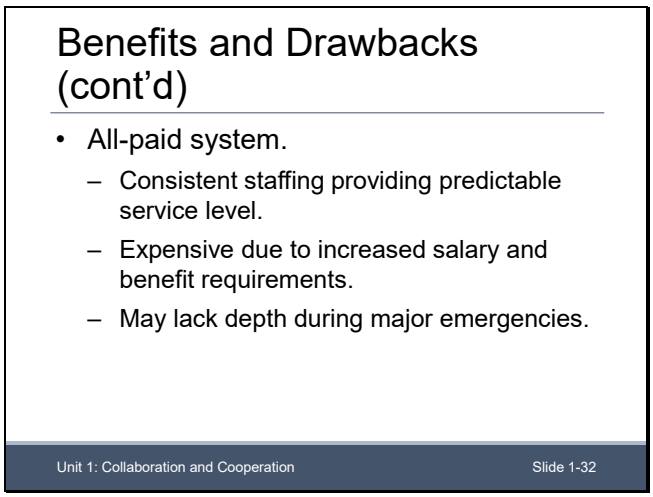
4. Volunteer pipeline pressure is the primary risk to long-term sustainability.

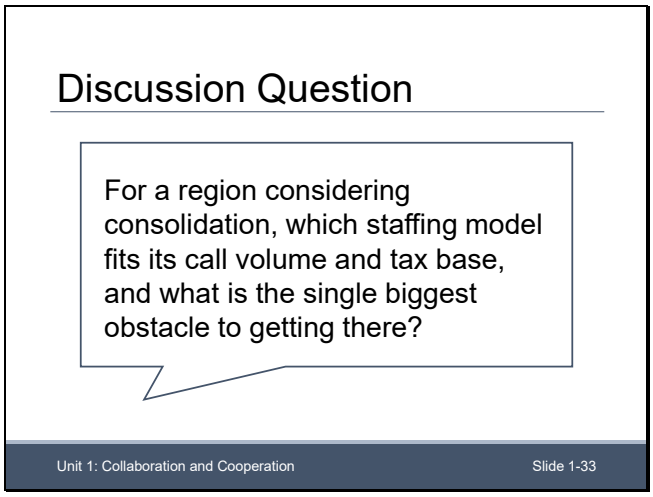


F. Type 2: combination system.

Combining career, volunteer, paid on-call and part-time personnel.

1. Enhanced staffing and true integration of available resources.
2. Provides 24/7 coverage with cost flexibility and salary cost avoidance.
3. Cultural integration risk: career and volunteer cultures often sit in tension.





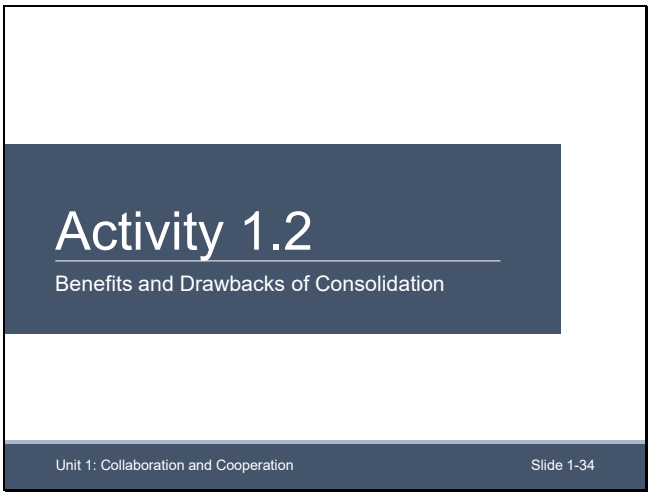
G. Type 3: All paid (career) system.

Combining departments or staffing into an all-paid (career) system:

1. Consistent staffing providing a predictable service level and strong professional discipline.
2. Expensive due to full salary, benefit and pension obligations.
3. May lack depth during major emergencies and offers less flexibility to scale up.

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Activity 1.2



Small/Large Group Activity Estimated Time: 25 minutes

Activity Purpose

Apply the three-type framework to a consolidation decision for an assigned model department, weighing benefits against drawbacks.

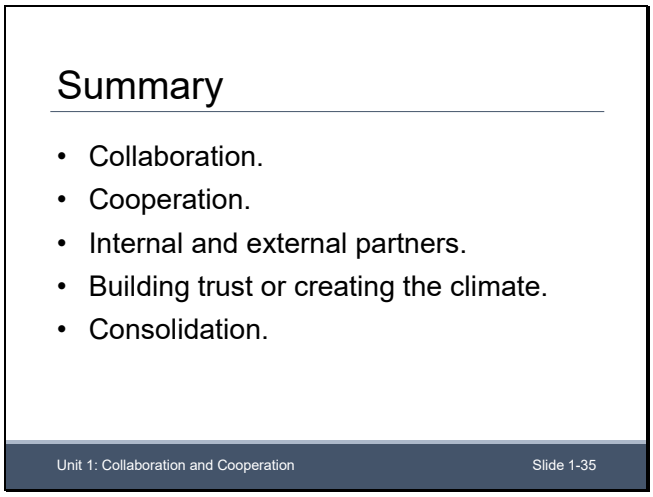
Activity Directions

1. Using your assigned scenarios, your group will select the staffing model that best fits the department and list three benefits and three drawbacks.

2. Your group will report out defending your choice while the class will challenge the trade-offs.

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V. Summary



A. Collaboration versus cooperation.

B. Internal and external partners.

C. Building trust and creating the climate.

D. Consolidation.

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Reference

Kania, J. & Kramer, M. (2011). Collective Impact. Stanford Social Innovation Review 9(1), 36-41.

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New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

Unit 2: Leadership and Management

Student Manual

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Unit Learning Outcome (LO)

2.0 The students will be able to identify techniques of leadership as they relate to change management, professional development, work ethics and setting priorities.

Unit Objectives

The students will:

2.1 Explain change management strategies and succession planning in a fire department context.
2.2 Identify professional development opportunities and their relationship to organizational culture.
2.3 Describe the values and strengths each generation brings to the fire service workforce.
2.4 Apply leadership principles to achieve balance between operational and strategic responsibilities.

Objective/Alignment Content

Learning Outcome	Evaluation Method
Identify techniques of leadership as they relate to change management, professional development, work ethics and setting priorities.	Course Evaluation Plan

Objectives	Course Component	Evaluation Method
Explain change management strategies and succession planning in a fire department context.	Lecture/Discussion/ Activity	Activity 2.3
Identify professional development opportunities and their relationship to organizational culture.	Lecture/Discussion	Large Group Dialogue
Describe the values and strengths each generation brings to the fire service workforce.	Lecture/Discussion	Large Group Dialogue
Apply leadership principles to achieve balance between operational and strategic responsibilities.	Lecture/Discussion/ Activity	Activity 2.2

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, discussion, and individual and small/large group activities.

(Total Time: 3 hr., 30 min.)

210 min.	Lecture/Discussion/Activities		
5 min.	Objectives		SM 2-7
25min.	Graded Small/Large Group Activity 2.1		
		Current Event Group Presentations	SM 2-9
25 min.	I.	Leadership Balance	SM 2-11
15 min.	Individual Activity 2.2		
		Leadership Balance Self-Examination	SM 2-15
25 min.	II.	Leadership Characteristics and	
		the Importance of Why	SM 2-17
30 min.	III.	Change Management Overview	SM 2-21
40 min.	Small/Large Group Activity 2.3		
		Leading Through Change: Model Departments	SM 2-27
25 min.	IV.	Professional Development	SM 2-29
15 min.	V.	Generations in the Fire Service:	
		Strengths and Development	SM 2-35
5 min.	VI.	Summary	SM 2-41
	References		SM 2-43

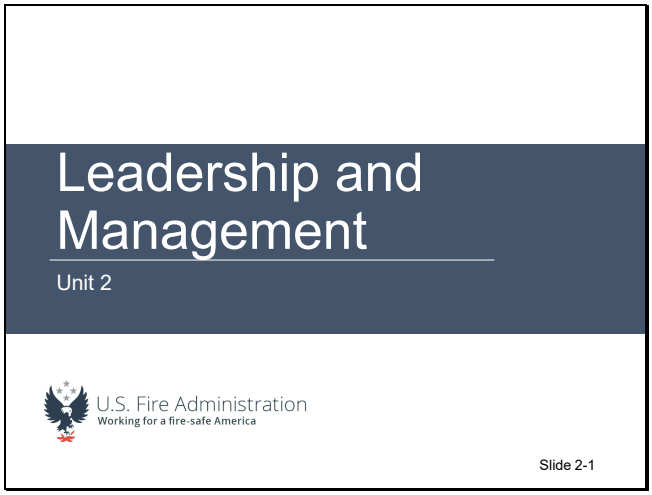
Audiovisuals

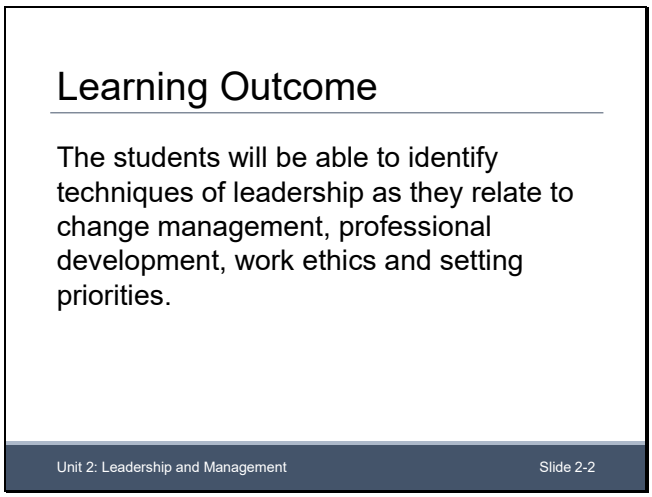
Slides 2-1 to 2-53

Video: “Start with why -- how great leaders inspire action | Simon Sinek | TEDxPugetSound”

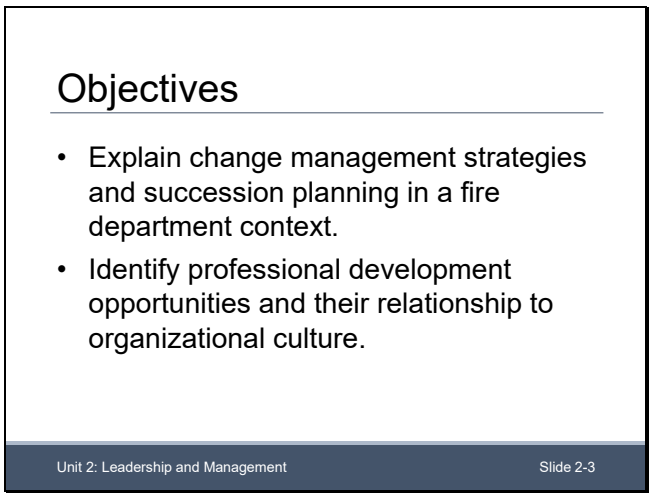
Handouts

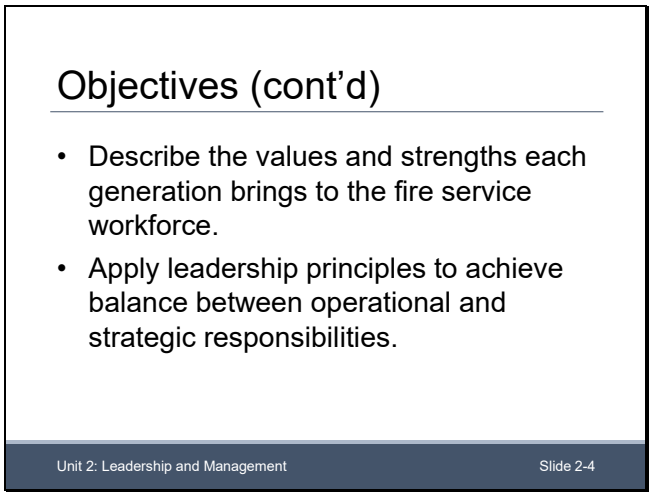
Handout 2-1: Leadership Balance Self-Examination
Handout 2-2: Kotter 8-Step Model Quick Reference
Handout 2-3: Model Department Scenarios


Leadership and Management
Unit 2
U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a fire-safe America
Slide 2-1



2.0 The students will be able to identify techniques of leadership as they relate to change management, professional development, work ethics and setting priorities.





The students will:

2.1 Explain change management strategies and succession planning in a fire department context.

2.2 Identify professional development opportunities and their relationship to organizational culture.

2.3 Describe the values and strengths each generation brings to the fire service workforce.

2.4 Apply leadership principles to achieve balance between operational and strategic responsibilities.

Unit 2 Roadmap

- Applying leadership techniques to change management.
- Professional development and organizational success.
- Recognizing the strengths each generation brings.

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-5

Unit 2 Roadmap (cont'd)

- Balancing personal leadership style with organizational needs.
- Practical change management using evidence-based frameworks.

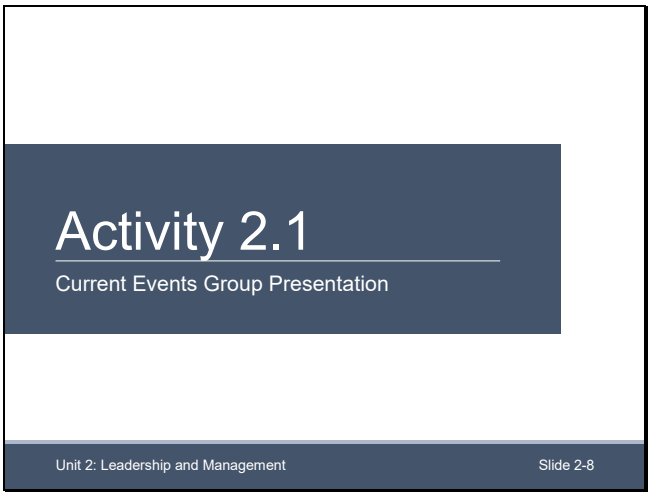
Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-6

Discussion Question

What is the difference between management and leadership?

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-7

Activity 2.1



Graded Small/Large Group Activity Estimated Time: 25 minutes

Activity Purpose

Connect current fire service events to the leadership concepts in this unit.

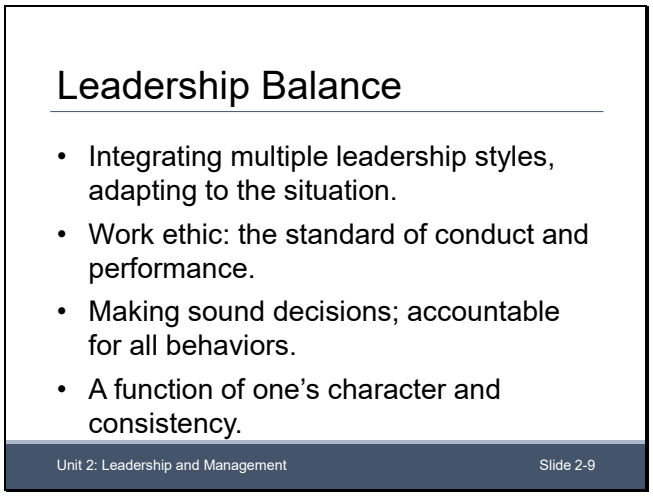
Activity Directions

1. Your group will use a current event to present to the class.

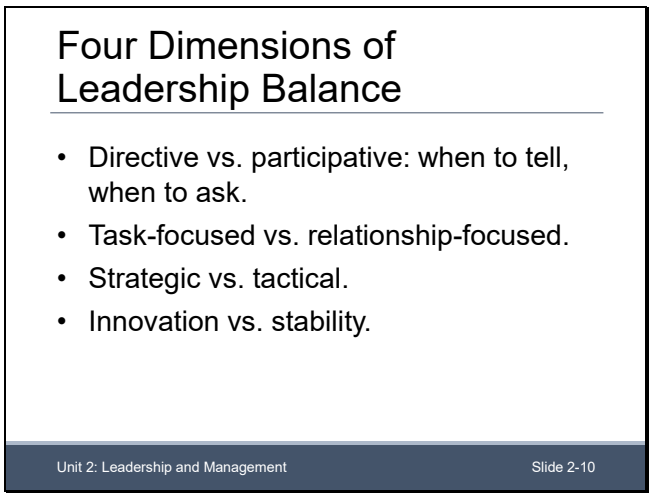
2. Your group will identify the leadership issue and how an executive chief officer might respond.

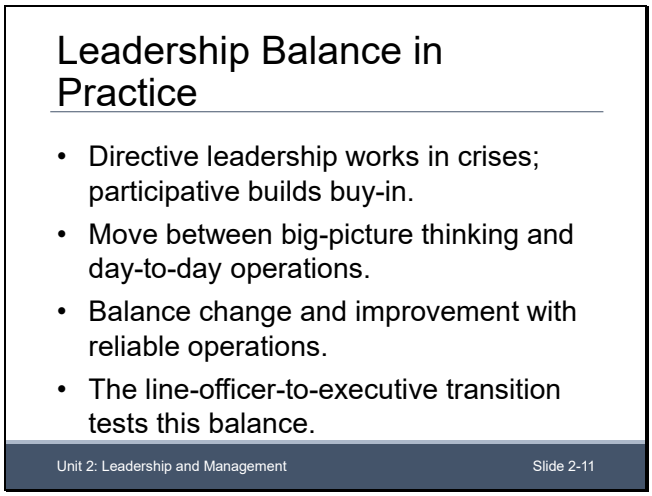
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I. Leadership Balance



A. Leadership balance refers to the ability to integrate multiple leadership styles and approaches, adapting based on situation, people and context. Effective leaders develop flexibility rather than relying on a single approach.





B. Key dimensions of leadership balance:

1. Directive vs. participative.
2. Task-focused vs. relationship-focused.
3. Strategic vs. tactical.
4. Innovation vs. stability.

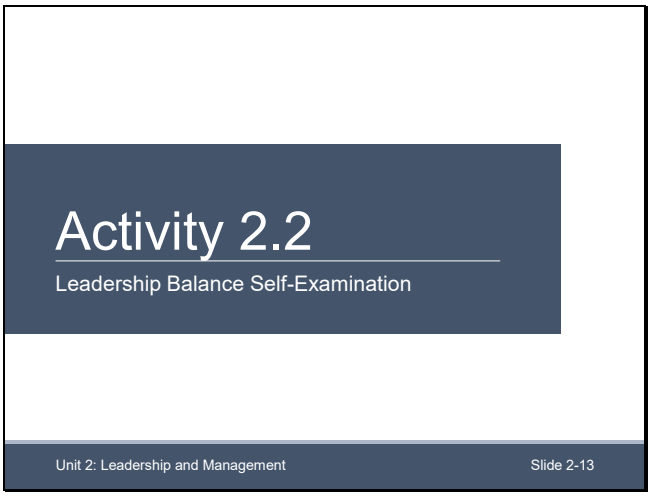
Anchor Yourself: Leadership Resilience

- Distinguish your role from your self. Roles end; identity endures.
- Keep confidants (a safe place), not just allies with competing loyalties.
- Seek sanctuary, a place of reflection and renewal.
- Sustaining yourself sustains your capacity to lead.

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-12

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Activity 2.2



Individual Activity Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Activity Purpose

Assess where students currently sit on each pf the four balance dimensions and identify one area to develop.

Activity Directions

1. Use Handout 2-1 to rate yourself on the four dimensions and note a development goal.

2. Briefly share with a partner.

3. Facilitators will then invite two to three volunteers to share insights.

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II. Leadership Characteristics and the Importance of Why

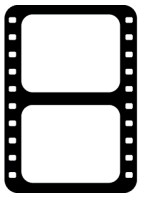
Discussion Question

Why do people follow leaders?

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-14

Video Presentation

"*Start with why -- how great leaders inspire action | Simon Sinek | TEDxPugetSound*"

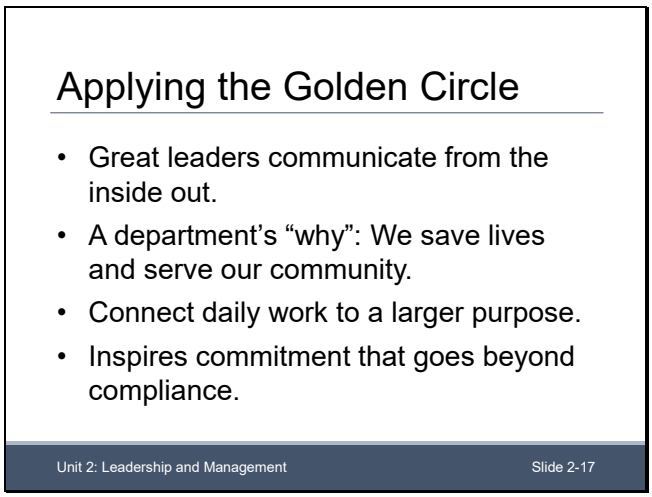


Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-15

Simon Sinek: Start With Why

- The Golden Circle: Why → How → What.
- Why: your purpose, cause or belief.
- How: your values and guiding principles.
- What: your actions and results.

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-16



A. Key concepts from Simon Sinek Golden Circle.

1. The Golden Circle (Why -> How -> What) provides a framework for understanding leadership effectiveness:

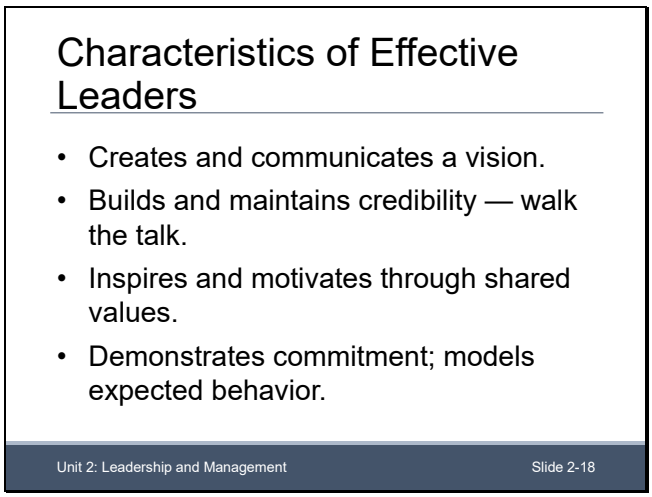
   a. Why: your purpose, cause or belief. Why does your department exist beyond fighting fires?

   b. How: your values and principles. What values guide how you operate?

   c. What: your actions and results. What do you do?

2. Most organizations communicate from the outside in (What -> How -> Why). Great leaders communicate from the inside out (Why -> How -> What).

3. For fire service leaders: Your department Why might be we save lives and serve our community, or we provide hope and security when needed most. This purpose-driven approach attracts and retains the right people.



B. Building on the Sinek framework, effective leaders demonstrate these characteristics:

1. Creates and communicates vision (from Unit 1: Responsibilities of the Executive Chief Officer, reinforced here): A compelling vision provides direction and purpose. Vision must be communicated consistently across multiple channels.

2. Builds and maintains credibility: Credibility comes from competence, reliability and integrity. Match words with actions — walk the talk.

3. Inspires and motivates others: Appeal to shared values and purpose, not just incentives. Recognize and celebrate successes.

4. Demonstrates commitment: commitment to the mission, the people and continuous improvement. Model the behavior and attitude you expect.

Leadership Tools for Adaptive Challenges

- Get on the balcony: Step back to see patterns and the big picture.
- Think and act politically. Map stakeholders and build alliances.
- Orchestrate conflict productively. Surface and manage tension.
- Based on adaptive leadership principles (Heifetz and Linsky, 2009).

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-19

III. Change Management Overview

Discussion Question

What changes have you observed or anticipated in the fire service?

Why Change Management Matters

Change is constant in the fire service:

- Regulatory and compliance (National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)).
- Technological evolution (equipment, communications, data).

Why Change Management Matters (cont'd)

- Demographic shifts (workforce and community).
- Resource constraints (budget, personnel, facilities).
- Public expectations and community demand.

A. Change is constant in the fire service.

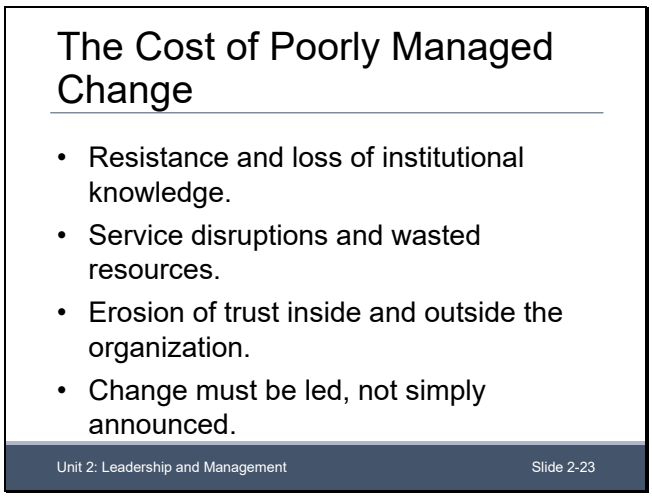
1. Regulatory and compliance changes (National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)).

2. Technological evolution (new equipment, communication systems, data management).

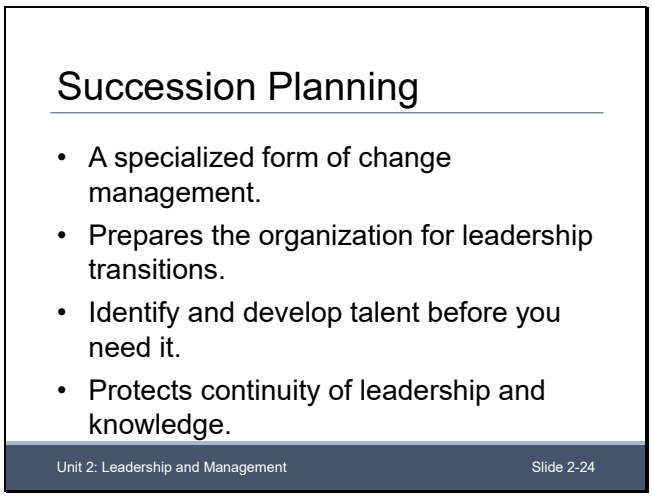
3. Demographic changes (workforce, community).

4. Resource constraints (budget, personnel, facilities).

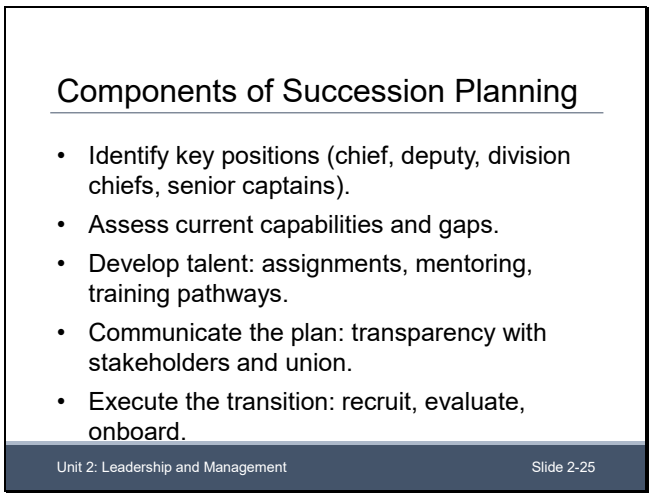
5. Public expectations and community demand.



B. Poorly managed change creates resistance, loss of institutional knowledge, service disruptions and wasted resources. Well-managed change delivers smoother transitions, higher staff engagement, better outcomes and organizational learning.



C. Succession planning: a critical change management responsibility. Succession planning is a specialized type of change management that prepares an organization for leadership transitions.



D. Components of effective succession planning.

1. Identify key positions. Which roles are critical? Fire chief, deputy chief, division chiefs, senior captains, specialized positions.

2. Assess current capabilities: Who are potential successors? What gaps exist?

3. Develop talent: Create developmental assignments, mentoring relationships and training pathways.

4. Communicate the plan: Be transparent with stakeholders and union representatives.

5. Execute the transition: Clear process for recruitment, evaluation and onboarding.

Kotter's 8-Step Change Model

- An evidence-based framework for leading change.
- Steps are sequential but overlapping.
- Builds momentum and anchors change in the culture.
- Applied next to five model departments.

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-26

Kotter Steps

1. Create a sense of urgency: Why must we change?
2. Build a guiding coalition: key stakeholders and influencers.
3. Form a strategic vision and initiatives.
4. Enlist a volunteer army: communicate broadly, build enthusiasm.

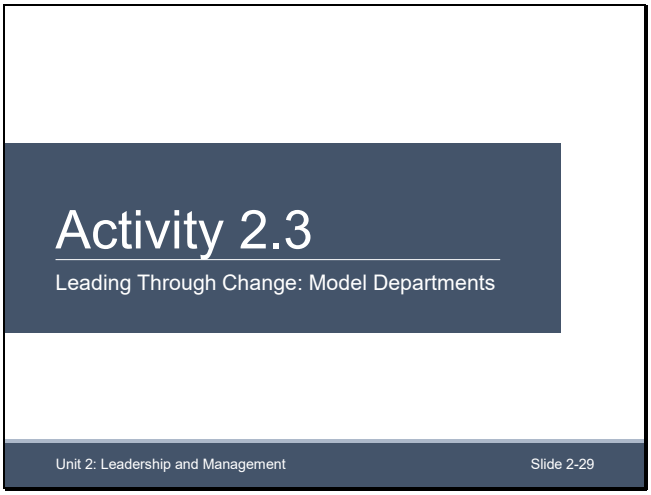
Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-27

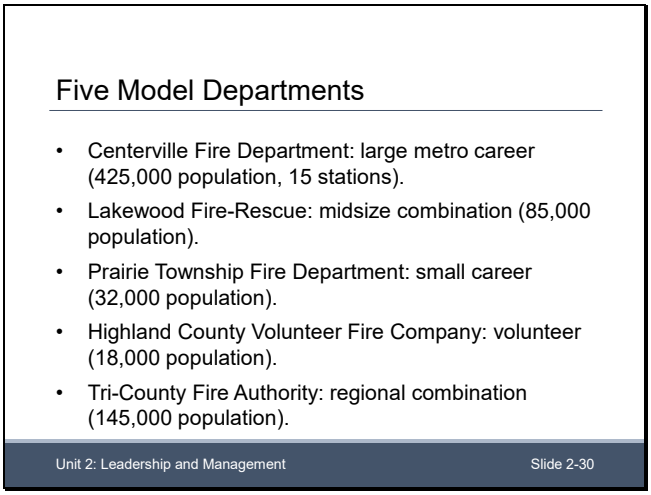
Kotter Steps (cont'd)

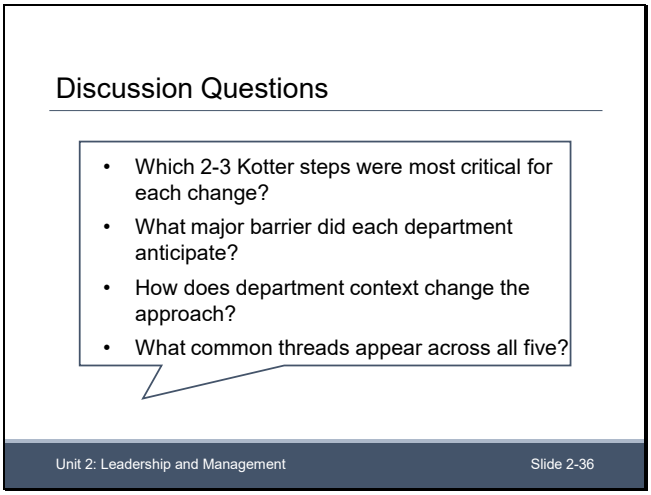
5. Enable action by removing barriers.
6. Generate short-term wins.
7. Sustain acceleration: Prevent change fatigue.
8. Institute change: Anchor it in organizational culture.

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-28

Activity 2.3


Activity 2.3
Leading Through Change: Model Departments
Unit 2: Leadership and Management
Slide 2-29


Five Model Departments
• Centerville Fire Department: large metro career (425,000 population, 15 stations).
• Lakewood Fire-Rescue: midsize combination (85,000 population).
• Prairie Township Fire Department: small career (32,000 population).
• Highland County Volunteer Fire Company: volunteer (18,000 population).
• Tri-County Fire Authority: regional combination (145,000 population).
Unit 2: Leadership and Management
Slide 2-30


Discussion Questions
• Which 2-3 Kotter steps were most critical for each change?
• What major barrier did each department anticipate?
• How does department context change the approach?
• What common threads appear across all five?
Unit 2: Leadership and Management
Slide 2-36

Small/Large Group Activity Estimated Time: 45 minutes

Activity Purpose

Apply the Kotter 8-Step Change Management Model to a real change challenge for an assigned model department.

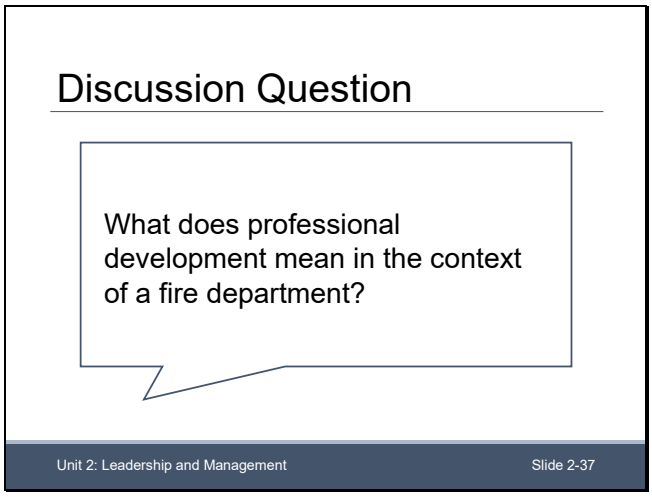
Activity Directions

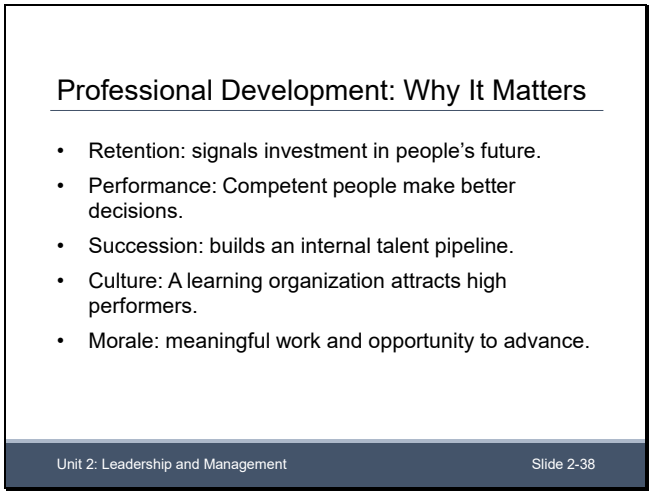
1. You will be divided into five groups by assigned department.

2. Your group will map the change to the 8 steps, naming the urgency, coalition, quick wins and anchor.

3. Your group will report to the class and compare approaches.

IV. Professional Development





A. Why professional development matters.

1. Retention: Employees want to grow. Professional development signals investment in their future.

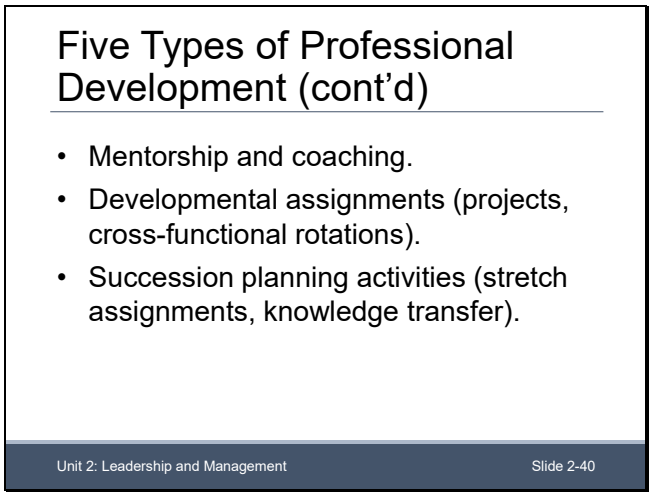
2. Performance: Trained, competent people perform better and make better decisions.

3. Succession: Developing people from within builds internal talent pipeline.

4. Culture: An organization that values learning attracts high performers.

5. Morale: People want meaningful work and opportunity to advance.





B. Types of professional development in fire service.

1. Formal training: National Fire Academy (NFA), EMS, NFA courses, specialized certifications.

2. Educational advancement: college degrees, executive education (Master of Public Administration (MPA), Master of Business Administration (MBA)), tuition assistance.

3. Mentorship and coaching: formal mentoring, senior officer guidance, one-on-one coaching.

4. Developmental assignments: special projects, cross-functional rotations, leadership opportunities.

5. Succession planning activities: stretch assignments, knowledge transfer, deliberate preparation for promotion.

Executive Core Competencies

- Legal authorities, administrative structure, and policies and procedures.
- Community assessment and strategic planning.
- Financial planning and capital asset management.
- Workplace safety; physical and human resource management.
- Risk management; training systems; and stakeholder relationships.

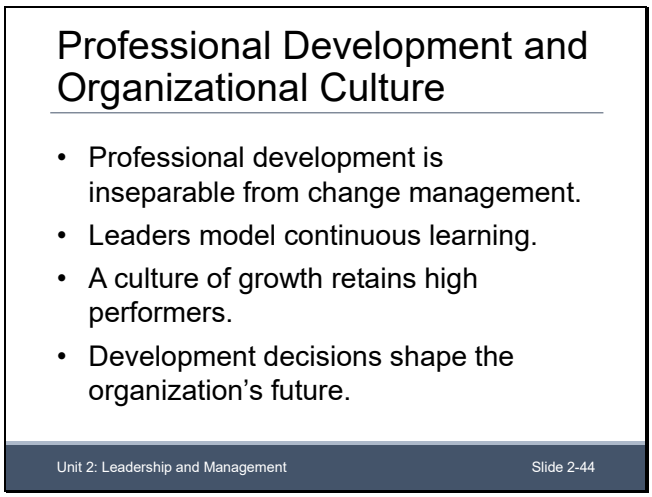




C. Building an integrated professional development strategy.

Effective departments integrate these components into a coherent strategy:

1. Step 1: Assess needs. What skills/knowledge gaps exist? What are department priorities?
2. Step 2: Create pathways. Establish clear career progression with required training at each level.
3. Step 3: Allocate resources. Training budget, tuition assistance, scheduling for participation.
4. Step 4: Support and accountability. Connect development to performance management.
5. Step 5: Evaluate and adjust. Track promotion readiness, retention, competence improvement.



D. Professional development and organizational culture.

Professional development is inseparable from organizational change and workforce management. When you lead significant change, professional development helps people adapt. When leading a multigenerational team, professional development is the great equalizer — it closes individual gaps, builds on existing strengths and creates shared purpose.

Agency Accreditation (Commission on Fire Accreditation International/Center for Public Safety Excellence)

- Voluntary peer assessment through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE).
- Evaluates 10 organizational competency categories.
- Areas include assessment and planning, resources, governance, programs, training.
- Drives continuous improvement and accountability.

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-45

V. Generations in the Fire Service: Strengths and Development

Discussion Questions

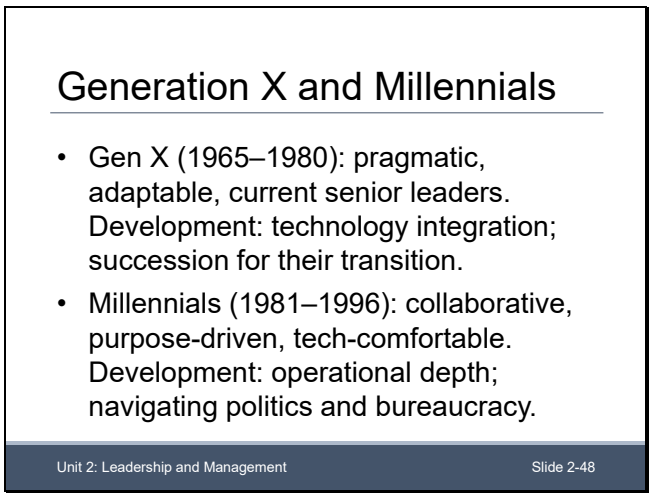
- When you look around your department, what strengths do you see in your newest members?
- What about your most experienced members?

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-46

Generations in the Fire Service

- Every generation enters with unique strengths.
- Frame positively: strengths, not stereotypes.
- Leverage strengths and bridge differences.
- Four generations are now active in the workforce.

Unit 2: Leadership and Management Slide 2-47



A. Generation X (born 1965-1980): current senior leaders.

1. What they bring: pragmatism, adaptability and independence. Gen X leaders bridge traditional and modern approaches.

2. Fire service strengths: Many current chiefs and deputy chiefs are Gen X. They bring operational experience, a results-driven mindset, and the ability to mentor up and down the chain.

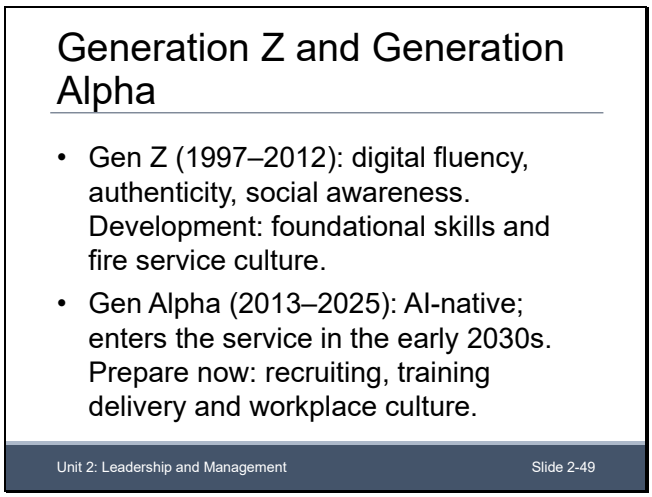
3. Development focus: Technology integration, digital communication and succession planning for their own transition.

B. Millennials (born 1981-1996): rising officers and company leaders.

1. What they bring: collaboration, purpose-driven motivation and comfort with technology.

2. Fire service strengths: filling officer ranks with fresh energy in recruitment, community engagement and training innovation. Strong advocates for wellness and inclusive culture.

3. Development focus: operational depth, navigating politics and bureaucracy, and building resilience through progressive responsibility.



C. Generation Z (born 1997-2012): newest firefighters and recruits.

1. What they bring: digital fluency, entrepreneurial thinking, authenticity and social awareness.

2. Fire service strengths: comfort with technology that can modernize operations — data-driven decisions, social media outreach. They ask why, because understanding purpose drives their best performance.

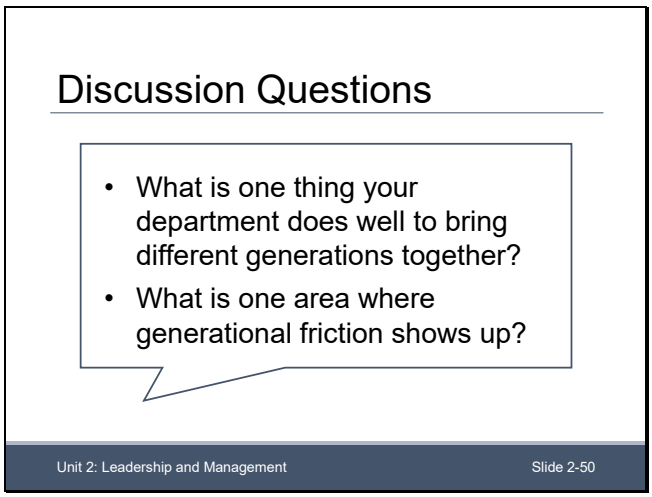
3. Development focus: foundational operational skills, fire service culture, patience with career progression, face-to-face communication and building institutional loyalty.

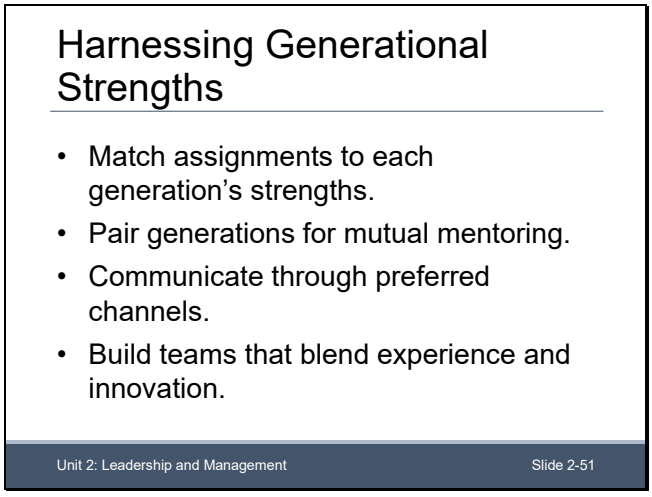
D. Generation Alpha (born 2013-2025): the next wave.

1. Fully immersed in artificial intelligence (AI), automation and instant information. Will enter the fire service in the early 2030s.

2. Anticipated strengths: intuitive technology adoption, comfort with AI-assisted decision-making, global perspective.

3. The fire service must begin preparing now — modernizing recruiting, training delivery and workplace culture.





E. Harnessing generational strengths: practical strategies.

1. Strategy 1. Intergenerational mentoring (two-way). Senior officers mentor on leadership and operations; newer members mentor on technology and evolving expectations.

2. Strategy 2. Communication that meets people where they are. Use multiple channels. Consistency of message matters more than forcing one mode.

3. Strategy 3. Professional development as the great equalizer. Every generation has gaps — they are just different gaps. Build development plans around individual needs.

4. Strategy 4. Shared purpose over shared background. The fire service mission transcends generational differences.

5. Strategy 5. Recruit for the future, retain through culture. Departments that invest in positive, development-oriented culture retain across all generations.

F. Building a strengths-based team.

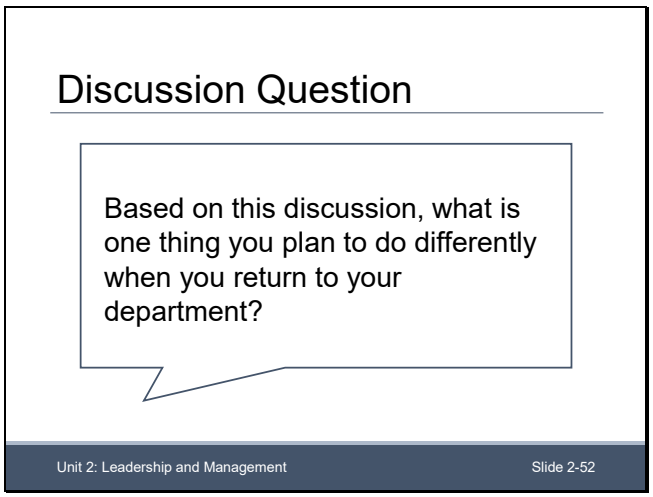
Key principles for the executive chief officer:

1. See generational diversity as an asset that strengthens problem-solving and organizational resilience.

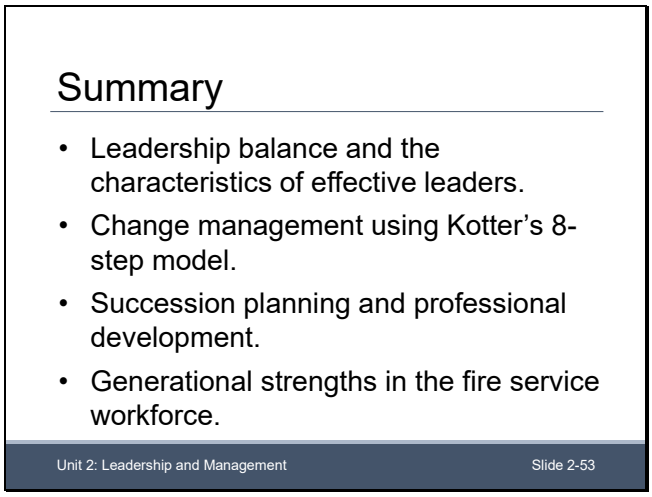
2. Invest in professional development for everyone — not just new members.

3. Model the culture you want. The executive chief officer behavior sets the standard.

4. Prepare for what's coming. Gen Alpha arrives within a decade.


Discussion Question
Based on this discussion, what is one thing you plan to do differently when you return to your department?
Unit 2: Leadership and Management
Slide 2-52

VI. Summary



A. Leadership balance: Effective fire service leaders develop flexibility, moving between directive and participative, task and relationship, and strategic and tactical as the situation demands.

B. Leadership characteristics and purpose: Great leaders start with why — a clear sense of purpose that guides decision-making and inspires followership.

C. Change management: Change is constant; change management is a critical leadership skill. Kotter 8-step model provides a practical framework for leading organizations through transition.

D. Succession planning: Fire service demographics require proactive succession planning. Identify key positions, develop talent, communicate plans and execute transitions thoughtfully.

E. Professional development is a strategic tool for retention, performance, succession and culture.

F. Generations in the fire service: Every generation brings unique strengths. The executive chief officer job is to build a culture where every member's strengths are recognized, developed and put to work.

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References

Heifetz, R. A., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). The practice of adaptive leadership: Tools and tactics for changing your organization and the world. Harvard Business Press.

Kotter, J. P. (1996). Leading change. Harvard Business School Press.

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New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

Unit 3: Community Engagement

Student Manual

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Unit Learning Outcome (LO)

3.0 The students will be able to engage the community through risk reduction, marketing, and media relations strategies, and manage the fire department's public perception.

Unit Objectives

The students will:

3.1 Outline an annual community engagement plan.
3.2 Describe ways to manage public perception.
3.3 Map community stakeholders by power and interest.
3.4 Develop a media relations approach for the organization.

Objective/Alignment Content

Learning Outcome	Evaluation Method
Engage the community through risk reduction, marketing, and media relations strategies, and manage the fire department's public perception.	Course Evaluation Plan

Objectives	Course Component	Evaluation Method
Outline an annual community engagement plan.	Lecture/Discussion	Activity 3.1
Describe ways to manage public perception.	Lecture/Discussion	Large Group Dialogue
Map community stakeholders by power and interest.	Lecture/Discussion	Large Group Dialogue
Develop a media relations approach for the organization.	Lecture/Discussion	Activity 3.2

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, discussion and small/large group activities.

(Total Time: 2 hr., 30 min.)

150 min.	Lecture/Discussion/Activities		
5 min.	Objectives		SM 3-7
20 min.	I.	Community Engagement and Risk Reduction	SM 3-8
20 min.	II.	Fire Prevention, Education and Investigation	SM 3-10
20 min.	III.	Marketing and the Power-Interest Grid	SM 3-16
20 min.	Small/Large Group Activity 3.1		
		Annual Community Engagement Plan	SM 3-19
30 min.	IV.	Managing Perception and the Media	SM 3-21
15 min.	V.	Reputation and Professional Conduct	SM 3-27
15 min.	Small/Large Group Activity 3.2		
		Frequently Asked Questions	SM 3-33
5 min.	VI.	Summary	SM 3-35

Audiovisuals

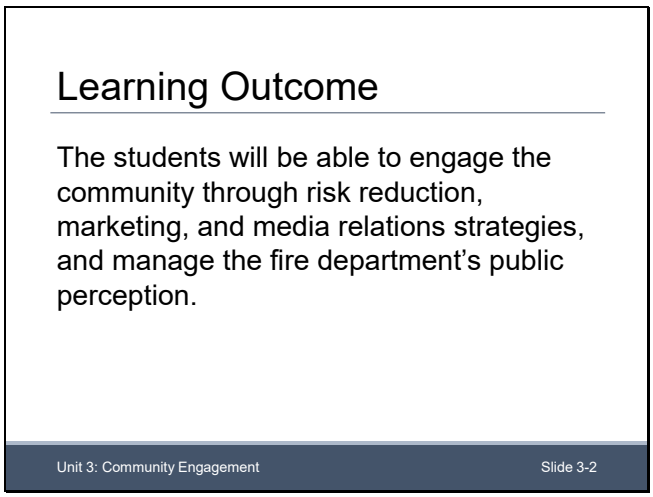
Slides 3-1 to 3-35

Video: “Fire Officer Community Relations”

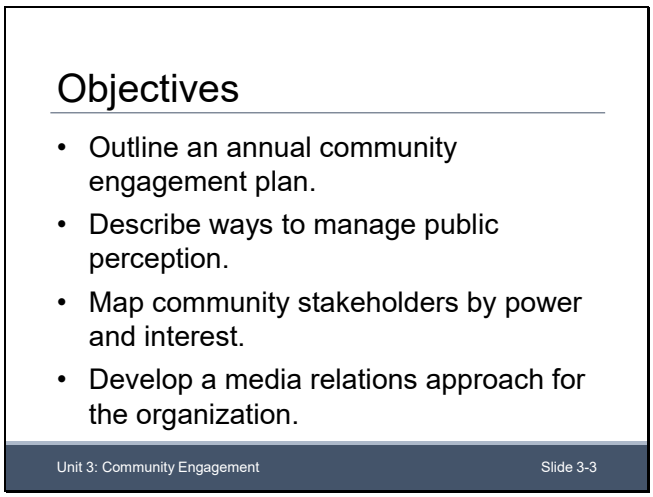
Handouts

Handout 3-1: Stakeholder Power/Interest Grid Template
Handout 3-2: Frequently Asked Questions


Community Engagement
Unit 3
U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a fire-safe America
Slide 3-1



3.0 The students will be able to engage the community through risk reduction, marketing, and media relations strategies, and manage the fire department's public perception.



The students will:

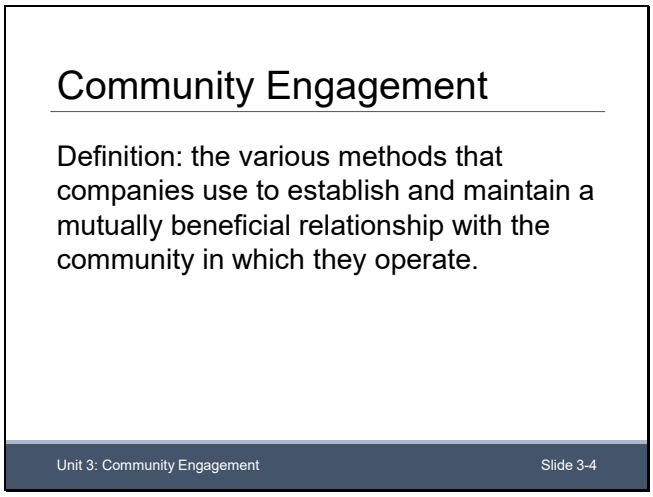
3.1 Outline an annual community engagement plan.

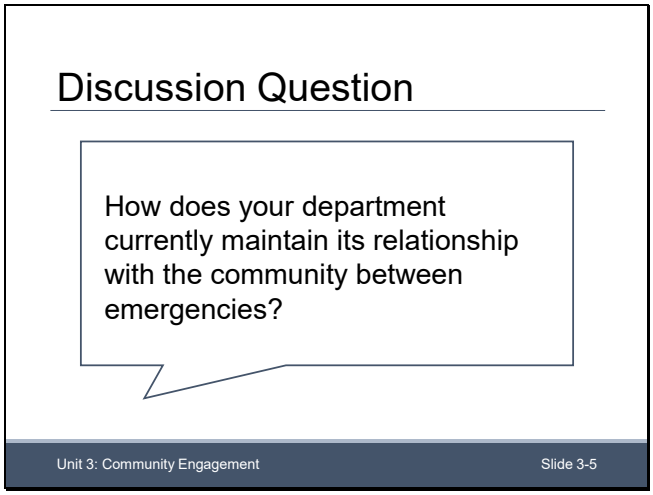
3.2 Describe ways to manage public perception.

3.3 Map community stakeholders by power and interest.

3.4 Develop a media relations approach for the organization.

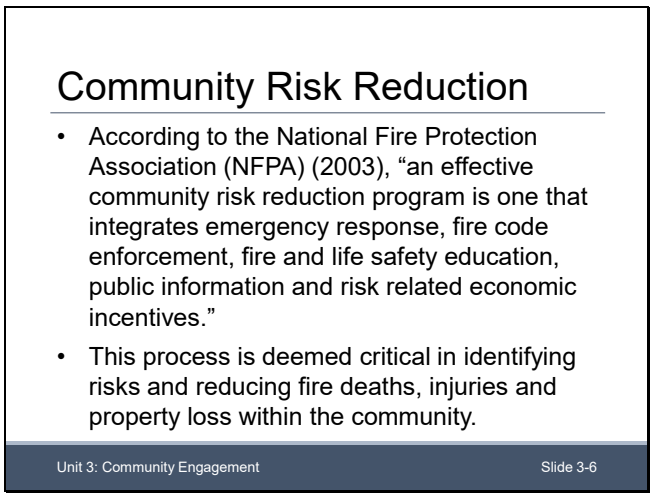
I. Community Engagement and Risk Reduction





A. Defining community engagement.

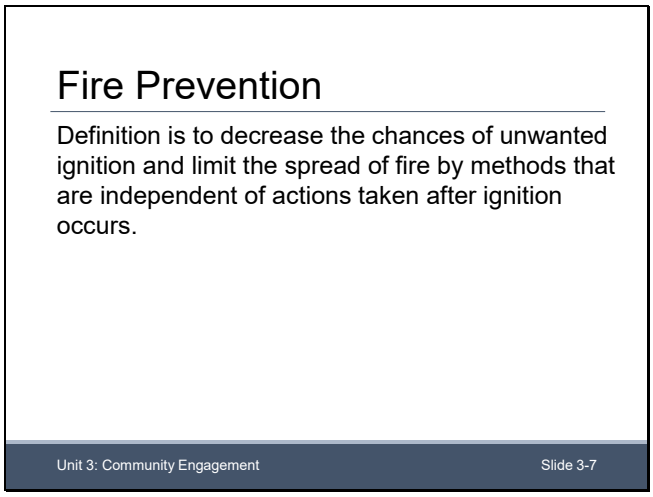
Community engagement is the set of methods a department uses to establish and maintain a mutually beneficial relationship with the community it serves. It is relational and ongoing, not transactional.



B. Community risk reduction (CRR).

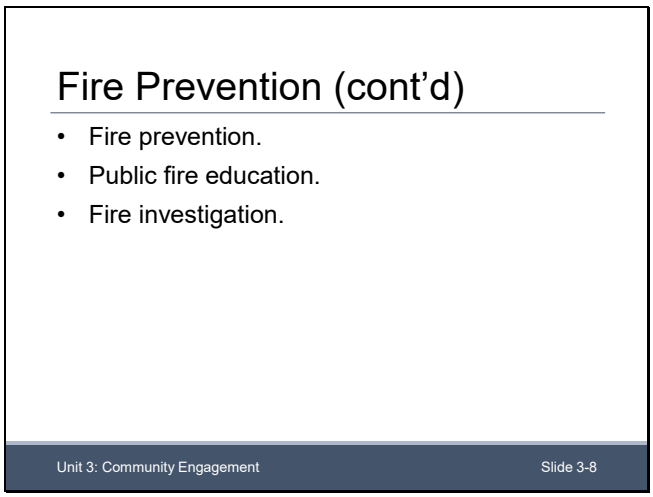
Per the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) (2003), an effective CRR program integrates emergency response with prevention, education and engineering. CRR is the strategic umbrella over the prevention activities that follow.

II. Fire Prevention, Education and Investigation



A. Fire prevention defined.

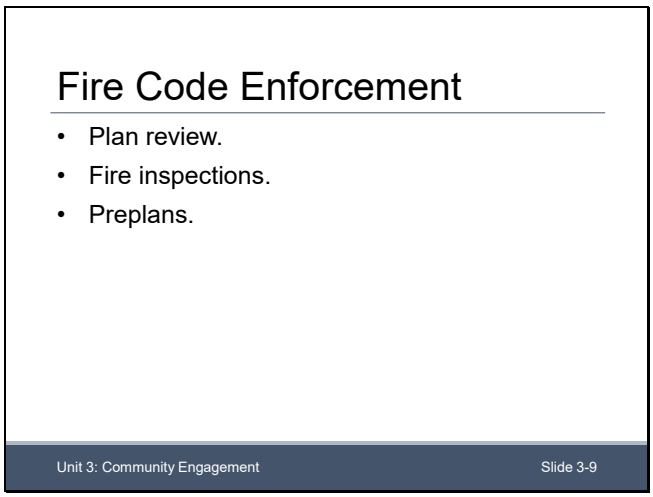
Fire prevention is decreasing the chances of unwanted ignition and limiting fire spread through methods that are largely independent of suppression. It is the front end of risk reduction.



B. The three prevention functions.

Fire prevention works through three connected functions. Each feeds the others.

1. Fire prevention (code work).
2. Public fire education.
3. Fire investigation.



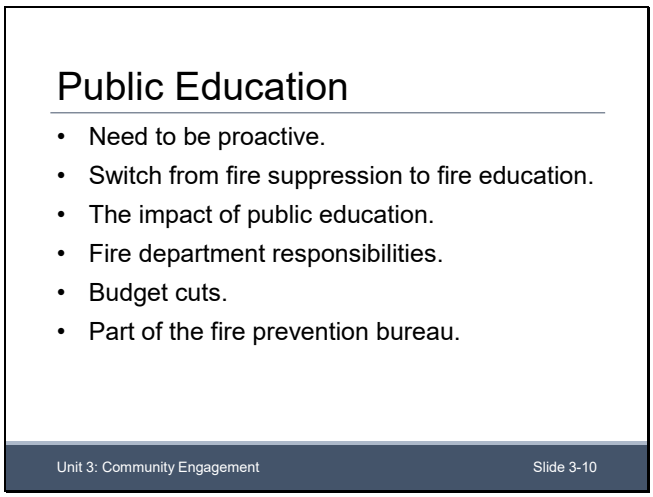
C. Fire code enforcement.

Code enforcement covers plan review, fire inspections and preplans. It is the engineering-and-enforcement leg of CRR.

1. Plan review: catching hazards before construction.

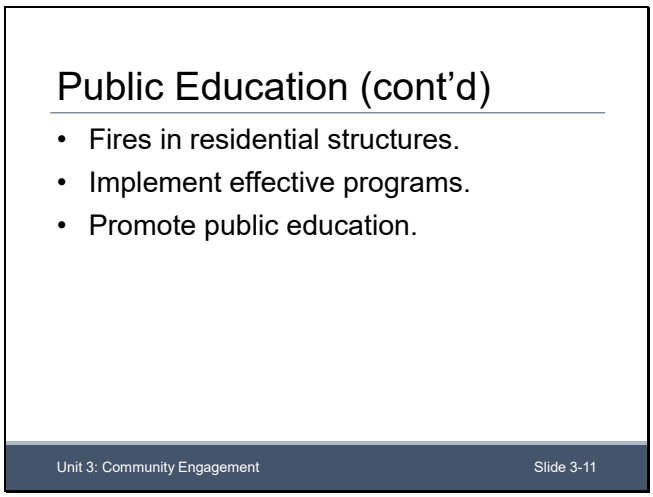
2. Fire inspections: verifying ongoing compliance.

3. Preplans: preparing responders for specific occupancies.



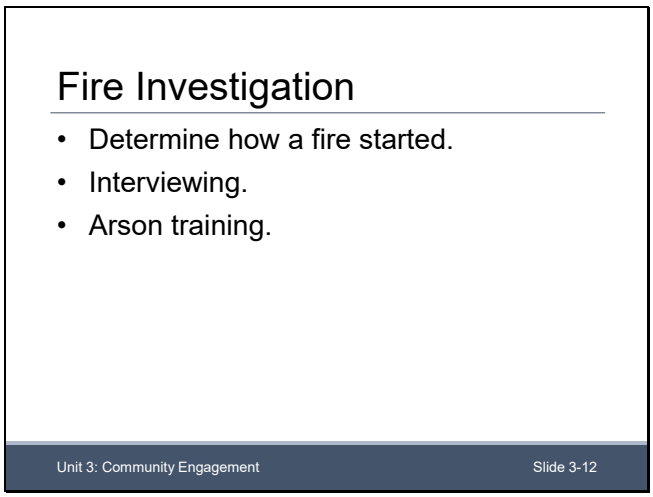
D. The shift to public education.

The challenge now and in the future is to be proactive — to shift emphasis from fire suppression toward fire education. Public education has measurable impact on the community's risk profile.



E. Public education programs.

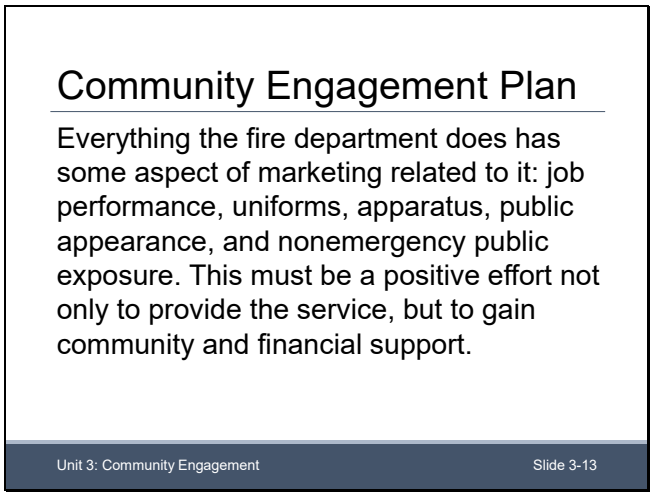
Most fire deaths occur in residential structures. Implementing effective, well-promoted public-education programs is among the highest-leverage risk reduction investments an executive chief officer can make.

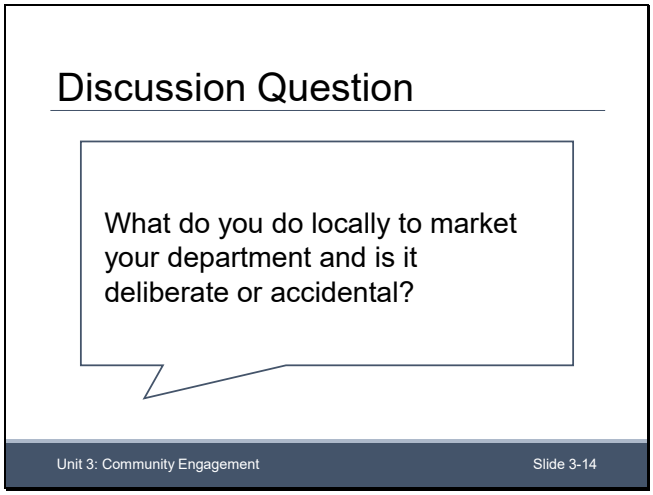


F. Fire investigation.

Fire investigation determines how a fire started, relying on interviewing skills and arson training. It closes the loop: findings inform prevention and education priorities.

III. Marketing and the Power-Interest Grid



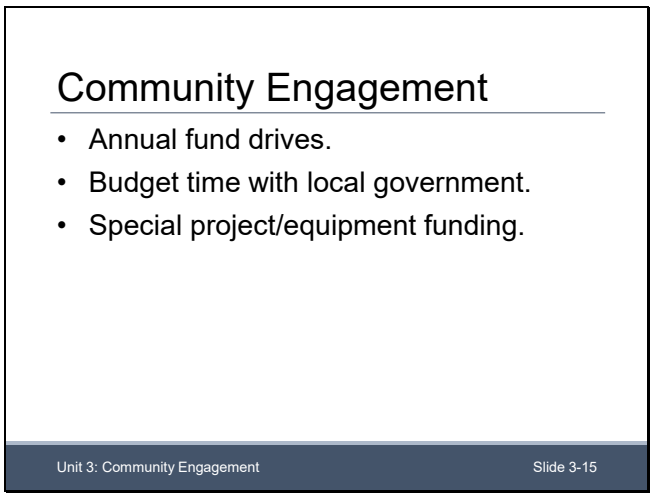


A. Everything is marketing.

Everything the fire department does has a marketing aspect — how members perform, their uniforms, the apparatus and public interactions all shape perception. Marketing is not a campaign; it is the sum of daily impressions.

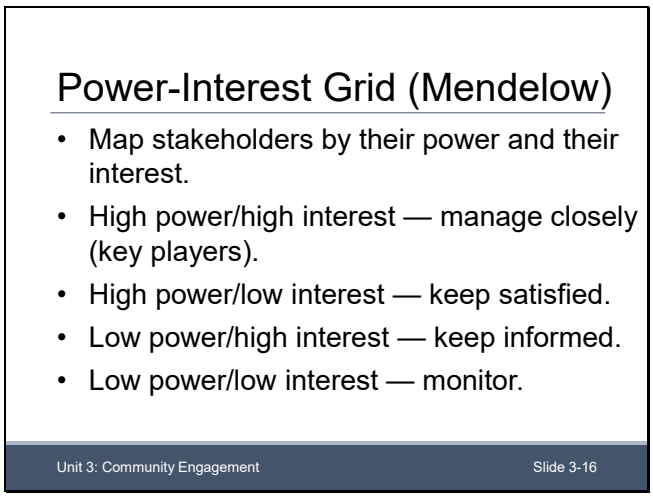
B. Marketing the department locally.

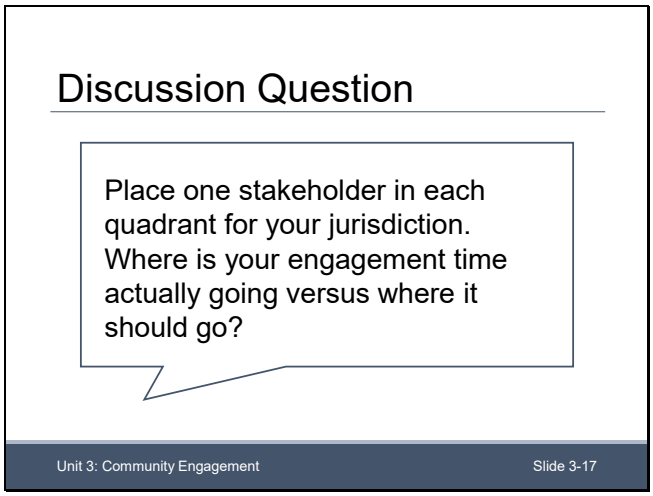
Local marketing builds the goodwill the department draws on at budget time and during incidents.



C. Engagement activities.

Common engagement activities include annual fund drives, budget time with local government, and special project or equipment funding campaigns. Each is an opportunity to convert goodwill into support.



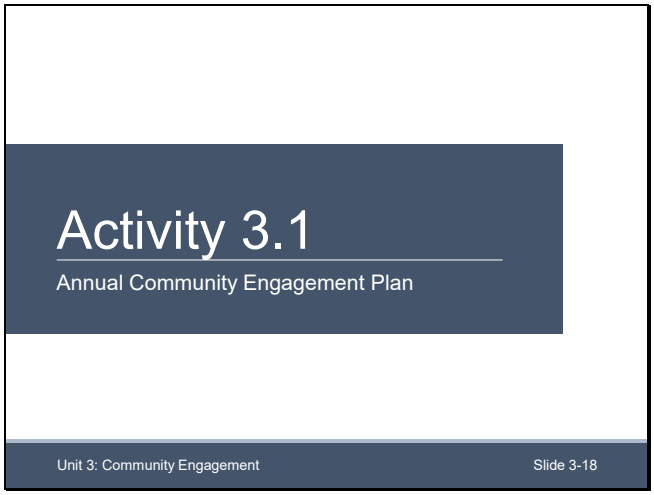


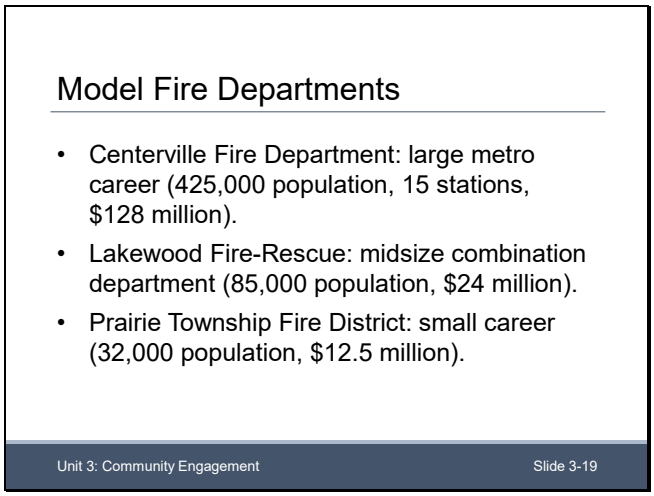
D. Power-Interest Grid (Mendelow).

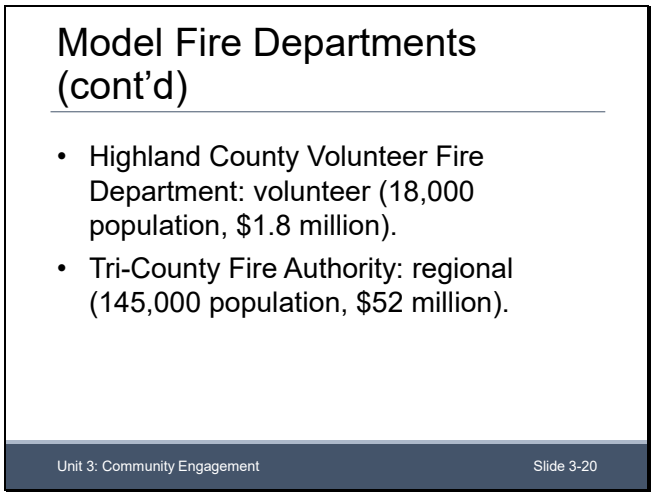
Map community stakeholders on two axes — their power and their interest — to decide where to invest engagement effort:

1. High power/high interest — manage closely (key players).
2. High power/low interest — keep satisfied.
3. Low power/high interest — keep informed.
4. Low power/low interest — monitor with minimal effort.

Activity 3.1


Activity 3.1
Annual Community Engagement Plan
Unit 3: Community Engagement
Slide 3-18


Model Fire Departments
• Centerville Fire Department: large metro career (425,000 population, 15 stations, $128 million).
• Lakewood Fire-Rescue: midsize combination department (85,000 population, $24 million).
• Prairie Township Fire District: small career (32,000 population, $12.5 million).
Unit 3: Community Engagement
Slide 3-19


Model Fire Departments (cont'd)
• Highland County Volunteer Fire Department: volunteer (18,000 population, $1.8 million).
• Tri-County Fire Authority: regional (145,000 population, $52 million).
Unit 3: Community Engagement
Slide 3-20

Small/Large Group Activity Estimated Time: 20 minutes

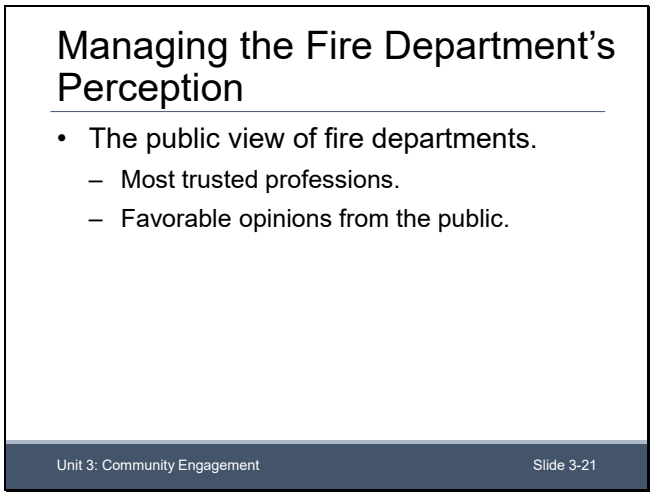
Activity Purpose

Outline a 12-month community engagement plan for an assigned model department, using the Power-Interest Grid to prioritize stakeholders.

Activity Directions

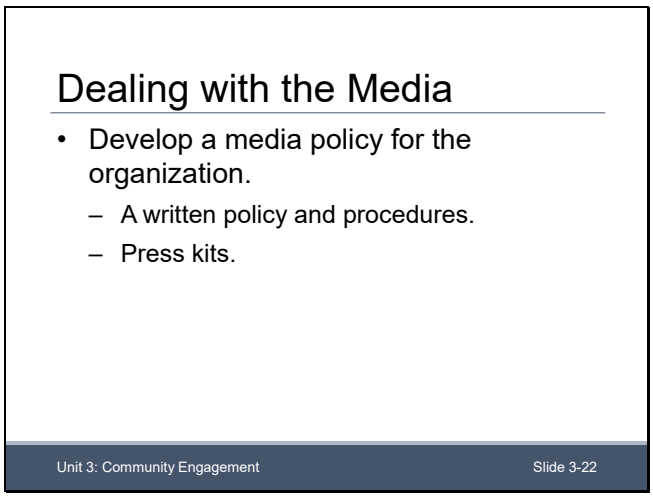
1. Your group will use your assigned model department scenarios:
    a. Group 1: Centerville.
    b. Group 2: Lakewood.
    c. Group 3: Prairie Township.
    d. Group 4: Highland County.
    e. Group 5: Tri-County.
2. Your group will use the Power-Interest Grid and place key stakeholders.
3. Your group will draft a quarter by quarter engagement calendar tied to those stakeholders.
4. Each group will report out.

IV. Managing Perception and the Media



A. The public view of the fire department.

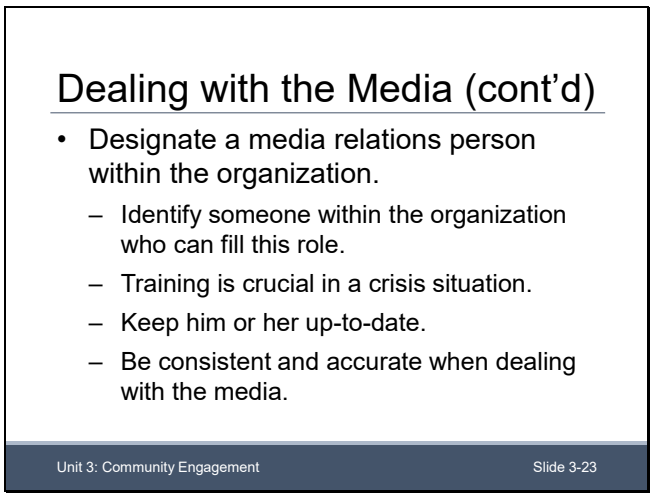
Firefighting consistently ranks among the most trusted professions, drawing favorable public opinion. That trust is an asset the executive chief officer must protect — it is easier to keep than to rebuild.



B. Dealing with the media.

1. Develop a media policy.

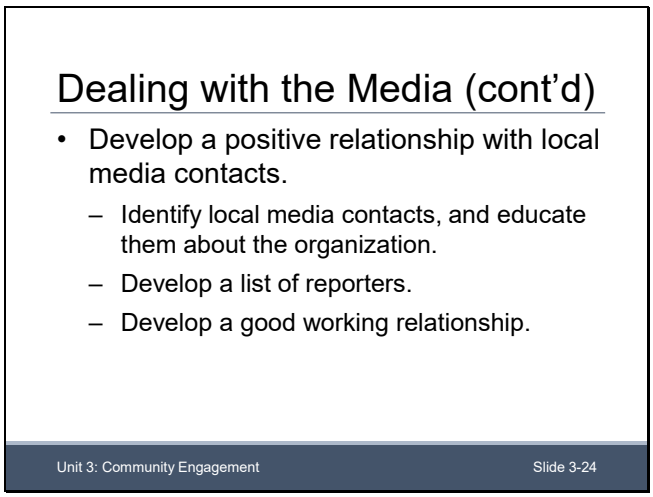
Develop a written media policy and procedures for the organization, including press kits. A policy set before a crisis prevents improvised, damaging responses during one.



2. Designate a media relations person.

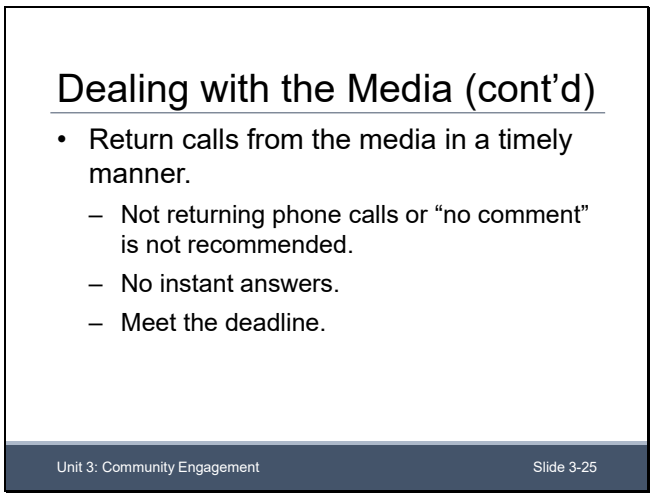
   a. Designate and train a media relations person within the organization.

   b. Identify someone who can fill the role and invest in their training before it is needed.



3. Build relationships with the media.

   Develop positive relationships with local media contacts. Identify them, educate them about the organization and build the relationship before a crisis forces the first contact.

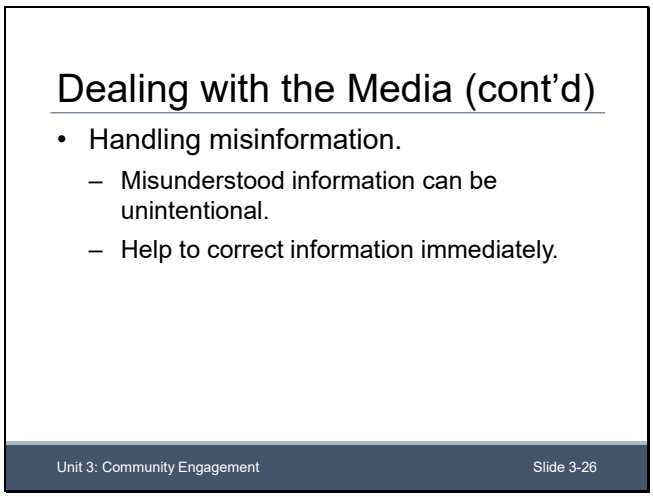


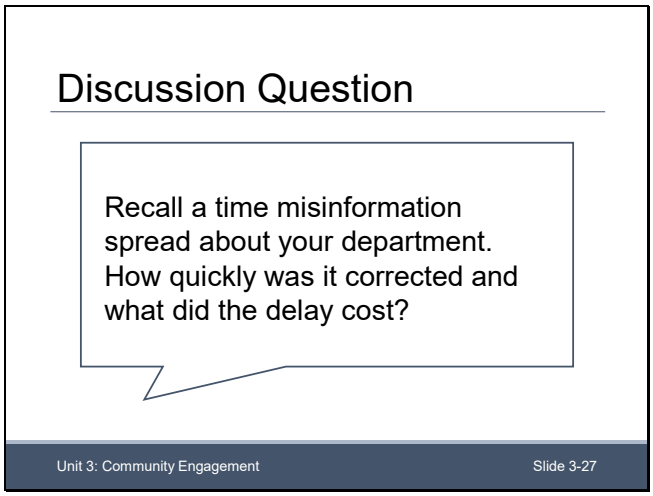
4. Return calls promptly.

   a. Return media calls in a timely manner.

   b. "No comment" or unreturned calls are not recommended. They create a vacuum that gets filled with speculation.

   c. You need not have instant answers, but you must respond.

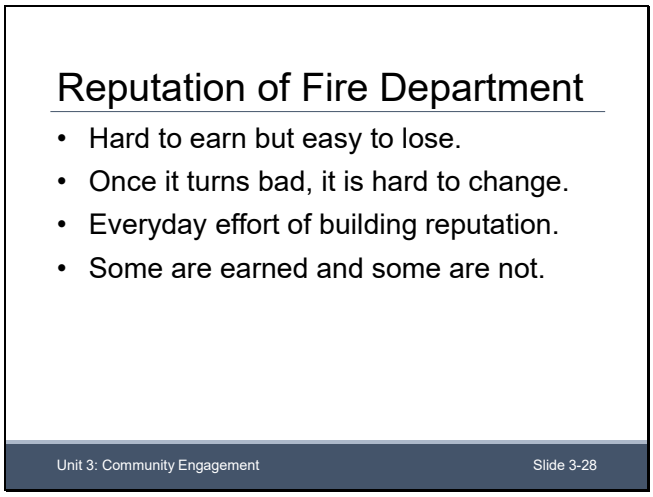




5. Handling misinformation.

   Misunderstood information is often unintentional. Correct it immediately and directly. The longer misinformation stands, the harder it is to undo.

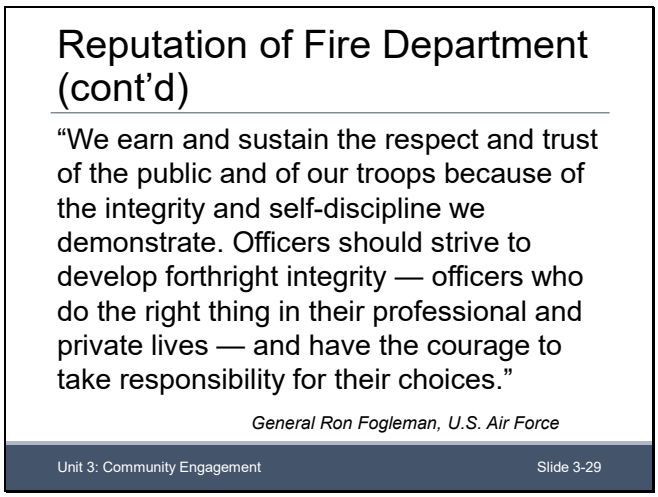
V. Reputation and Professional Conduct



A. Reputation.

1. Reputation is hard to earn but easy to lose, and once it turns bad it is hard to change.

2. It is sustained by the everyday effort of building it — not by a single good moment.

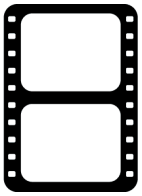


B. Integrity and self-discipline.

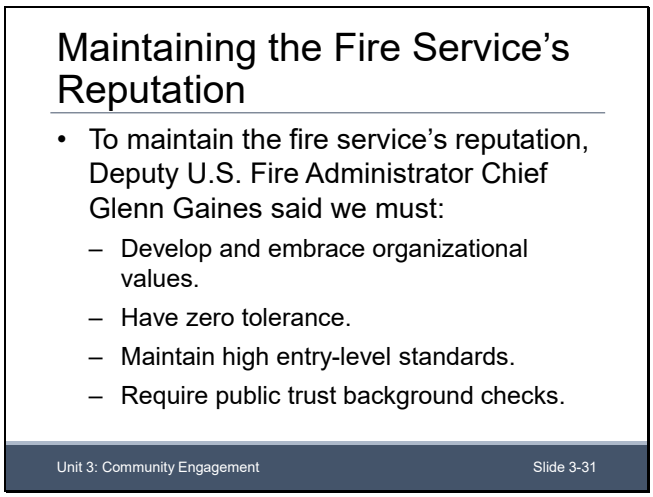
The department earns and sustains the respect and trust of the public and of its own members through demonstrated integrity and self-discipline. Officers set the tone.

Video Presentation

"*Fire Officer Community Relations*"

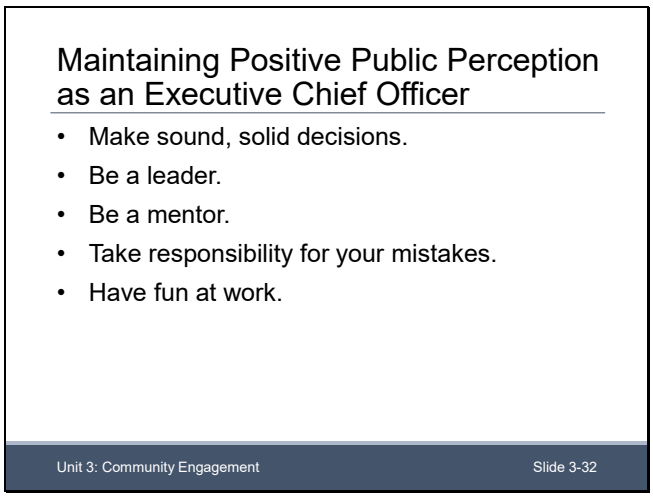


Unit 3: Community Engagement Slide 3-30



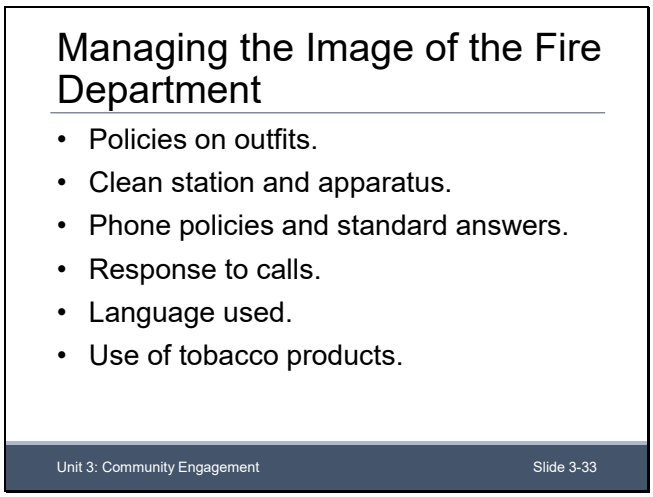
C. Sustaining the reputation.

To maintain the fire service's reputation, leaders must develop and embrace organizational values and model them visibly and consistently.



D. Leadership behaviors.

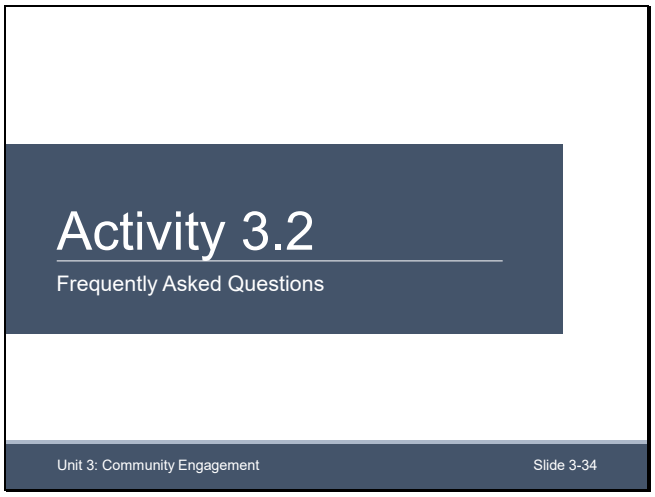
Make sound, solid decisions; be a leader; be a mentor; take responsibility for your mistakes; and have fun at work. These behaviors compound into reputation over time.



E. Everyday standards.

Reputation lives in details: policies on outfits, clean stations and apparatus, phone policies and standard answers, response to calls, and the language used. The executive chief sets and enforces these standards.

Activity 3.2



Small/Large Group Activity Estimated Time: 15 minutes

Activity Purpose

Prepare consistent, on-message answers to the questions a department most often faces from the public and media.

Activity Directions

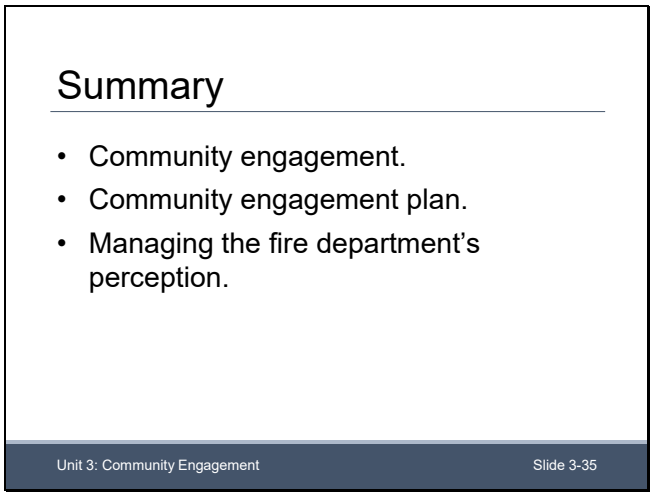
1. Your group will use the previously assigned model departments.

2. Use Handout 3-2: Frequently Asked Questions and your model departments to write concise, value-aligned answers using the RACE discipline.

3. Groups will exchange answers and critique for clarity and consistency.

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VI. Summary



A. Community engagement.

B. Community engagement plan.

C. Managing the fire department's perception.

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New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

Unit 4: Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition

Student Manual

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Unit Learning Outcome (LO)

4.0 The students will be able to plan and acquire capital assets — facilities, vehicles and equipment — using a structured committee process and appropriate financing strategies.

Unit Objectives

The students will:

4.1 Describe the characteristics of a capital asset and identify five examples typical to fire and emergency medical services (EMS).
4.2 Explain the role, responsibilities and benefits of a capital asset planning committee.
4.3 Identify at least four resources available to assist in capital planning.
4.4 Apply real property, vehicle and equipment acquisition considerations to a planning decision.

Objective/Alignment Content

Learning Outcome	Evaluation Method
Plan and acquire capital assets — facilities, vehicles and equipment — using a structured committee process and appropriate financing strategies.	Course Evaluation Plan

Objectives	Course Component	Evaluation Method
Describe the characteristics of a capital asset and identify five examples typical to fire and emergency medical services (EMS).	Lecture/Discussion/ Activity	Large Group Dialogue
Explain the role, responsibilities and benefits of a capital asset planning committee.	Lecture/Discussion/ Activity	Large Group Dialogue
Identify at least four resources available to assist in capital planning.	Lecture/Discussion/ Activity	Large Group Dialogue
Apply real property, vehicle and equipment acquisition considerations to a planning decision.	Lecture/Discussion/ Activity	Activity 4.1

Methodology

This unit uses lecture, discussion and a small/large group activity.

(Total Time: 2 hr., 25 min.)

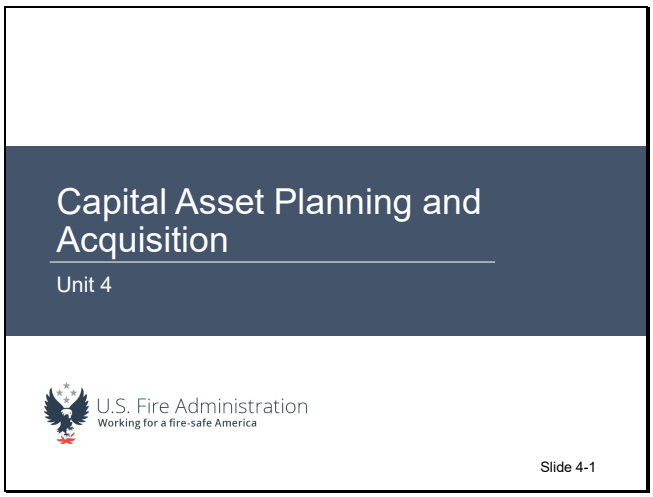
145 min.	Lecture/Discussion/Activity		
5 min.	Objectives		SM 4-7
15 min.	I.	Capital Asset Characteristics	SM 4-8
30 min.	II.	Real Property Planning and Acquisition	SM 4-10
30 min.	III.	Capital Equipment and Vehicles	SM 4-20
20 min.	IV.	Capital Planning Committee	SM 4-29
15 min.	V.	Financing and Amortization	SM 4-35
25 min.	Small/Large Group Activity 4.1		
		Capital Asset Acquisition Plan	SM 4-39
5 min.	VI.	Summary	SM 4-41

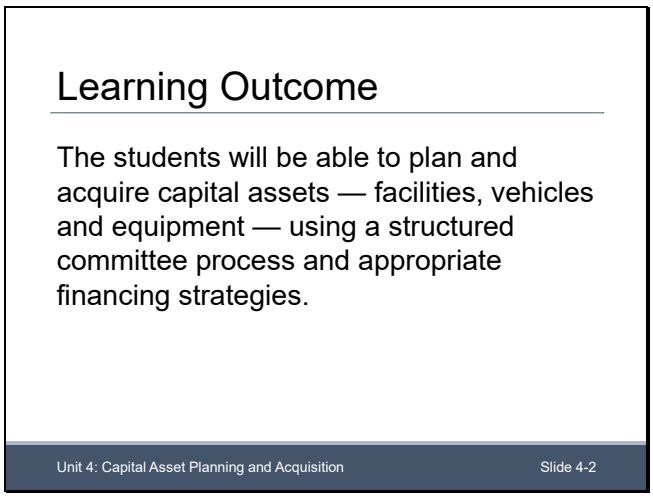
Audiovisual

Slides 4-1 to 4-41

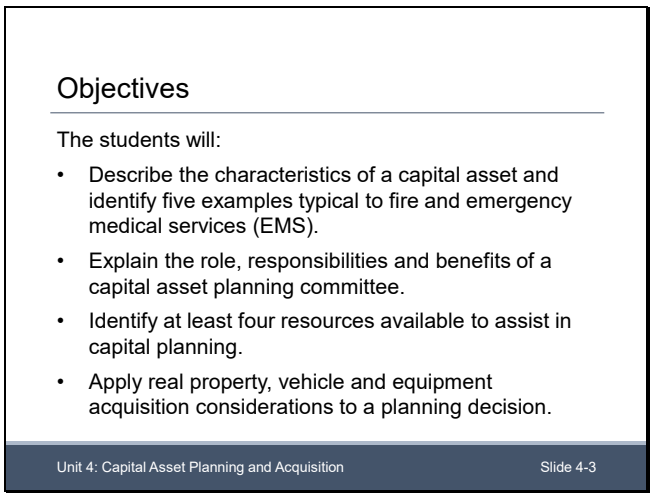
Handout

Handout 4.1: Model Department Scenario Summaries


Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition
Unit 4
U.S. Fire Administration
Working for a fire-safe America
Slide 4-1



4.0 The students will be able to plan and acquire capital assets — facilities, vehicles and equipment — using a structured committee process and appropriate financing strategies.



The students will:

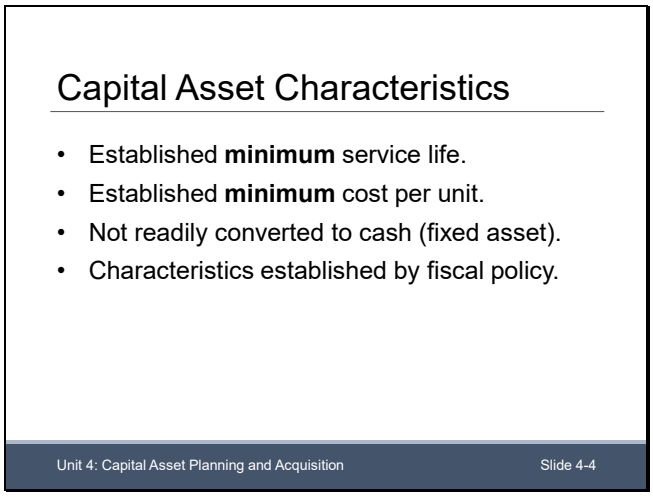
4.1 Describe the characteristics of a capital asset and identify five examples typical to fire and emergency medical services (EMS).

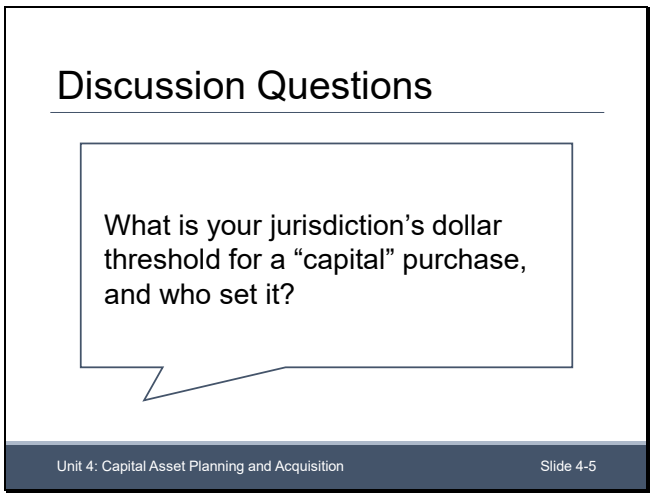
4.2 Explain the role, responsibilities and benefits of a capital asset planning committee.

4.3 Identify at least four resources available to assist in capital planning.

4.4 Apply real property, vehicle and equipment acquisition considerations to a planning decision.

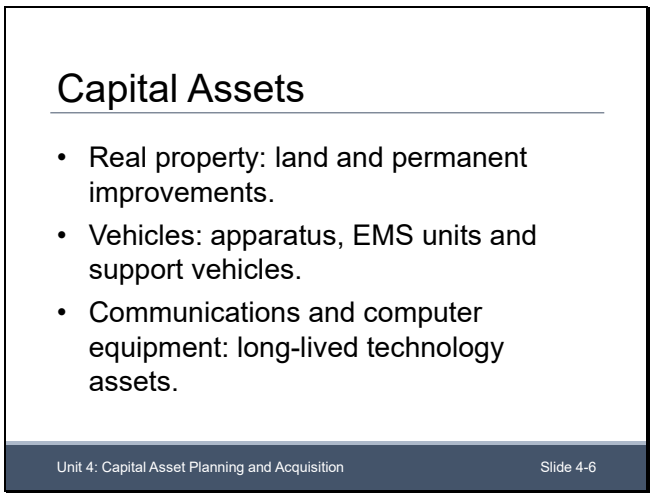
I. Capital Asset Characteristics





A. What makes an asset "capital."

A capital asset has an established minimum service life, an established minimum cost per unit, and is not readily converted to cash (a fixed asset). These characteristics are what justify a separate, multiyear planning process.



B. Examples of capital assets.

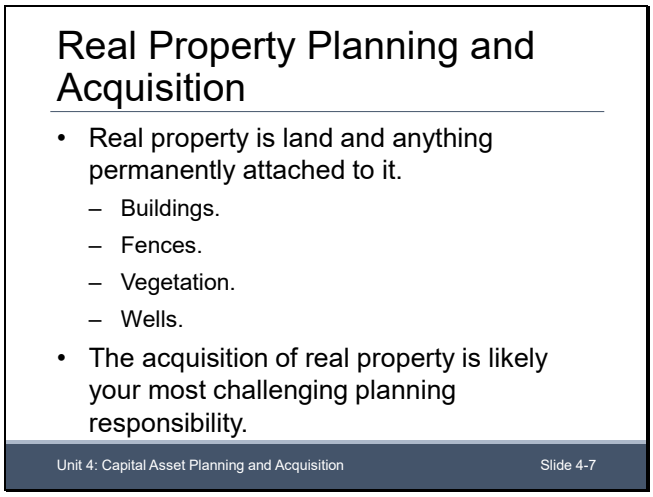
Capital assets typical to fire and EMS include real property, vehicles, communications equipment and computer equipment.

1. Real property: land and permanent improvements.

2. Vehicles: apparatus, EMS units and support vehicles.

3. Communications and computer equipment: long-lived technology assets.

II. Real Property Planning and Acquisition



A. Defining real property.

1. Real property is land and anything permanently attached to it — buildings, fences, vegetation and wells.

2. It is typically the longest-lived and most consequential capital asset a department owns.



B. Planning considerations: community.

1. Facility planning starts with community context.

   a. Current and future growth.

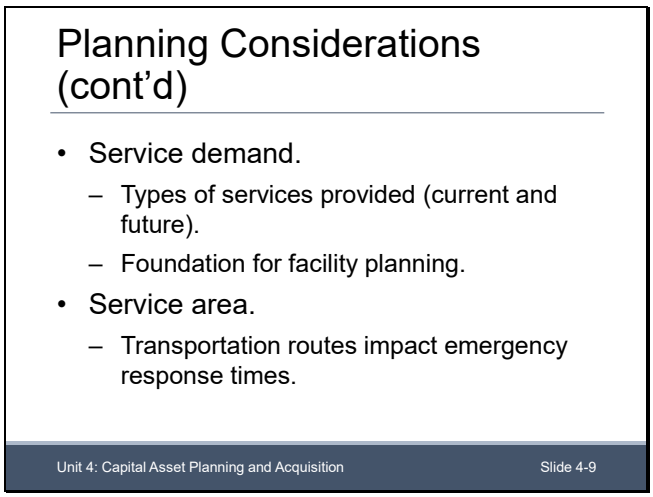
   b. General and specific plans.

   c. Community strategic plan or policies.

   d. Economic trends.

   e. Demographic trends.

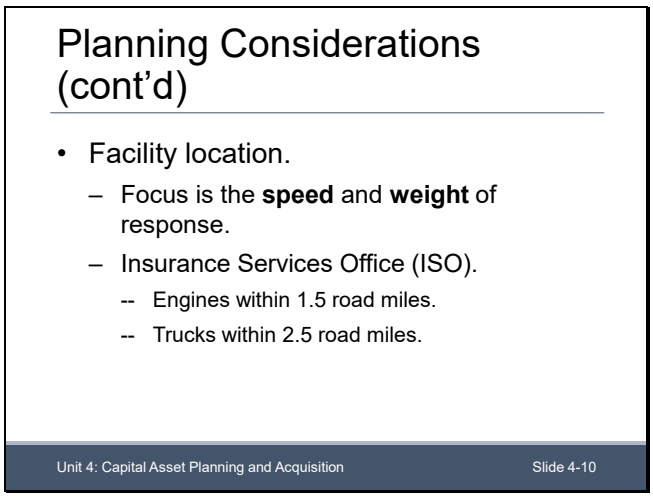
2. The station you build serves a community that will change.



C. Planning considerations: service demand.

1. Service demand drives facility planning: types of services provided now and in the future.

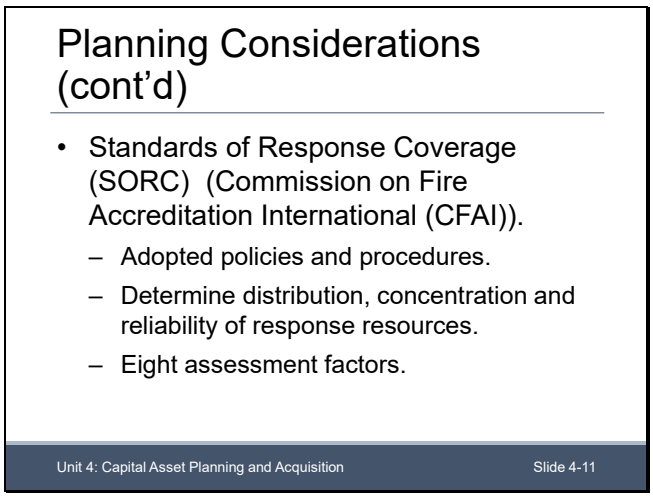
2. Service area: transportation networks form the foundation for where and what to build.



D. Facility location: speed and weight of response.

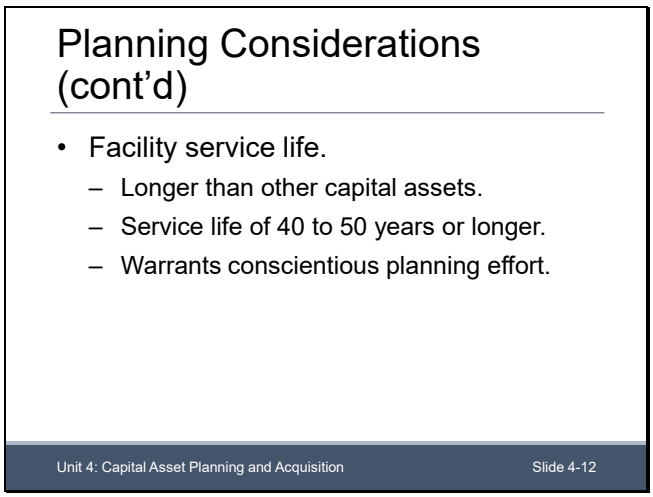
1. Location focuses on the speed and weight of response.

2. Insurance Services Office (ISO) guidance references engines within 1.5 road miles and ladders within 2.5 road miles as planning benchmarks.



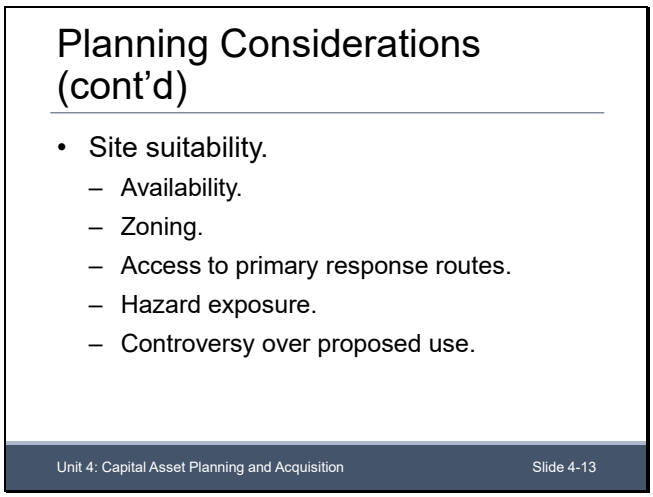
E. Standards of Response Coverage (SORC).

The Commission on Fire Accreditation International (CFAI) SORC frame location decisions through adopted policies, determined service levels and measured performance.



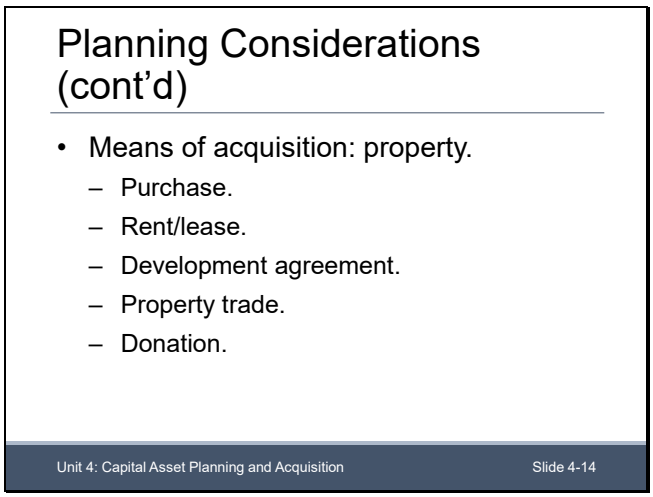
F. Facility service life.

Facilities have the longest expected service life of the capital assets, often 40 to 50 years or longer. That horizon warrants conscientious, far-sighted planning effort.



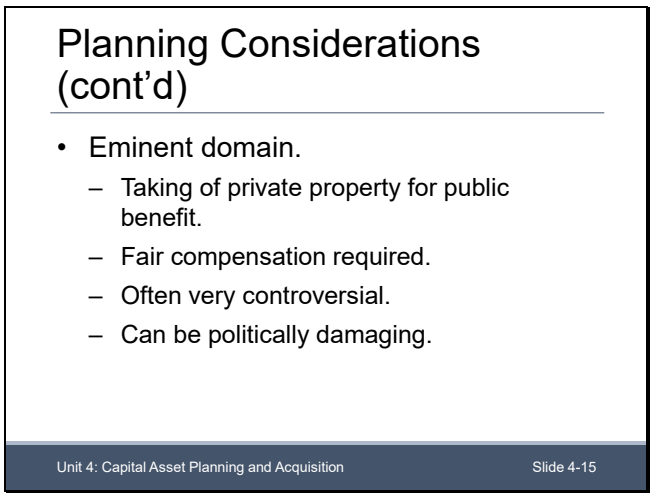
G. Site suitability.

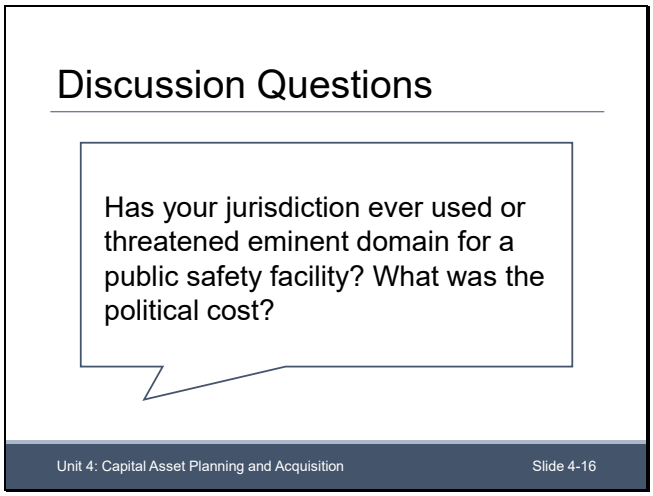
Site suitability factors include availability, zoning, access to primary response routes, hazard exposure and potential controversy over the proposed use.



H. Means of acquisition: property.

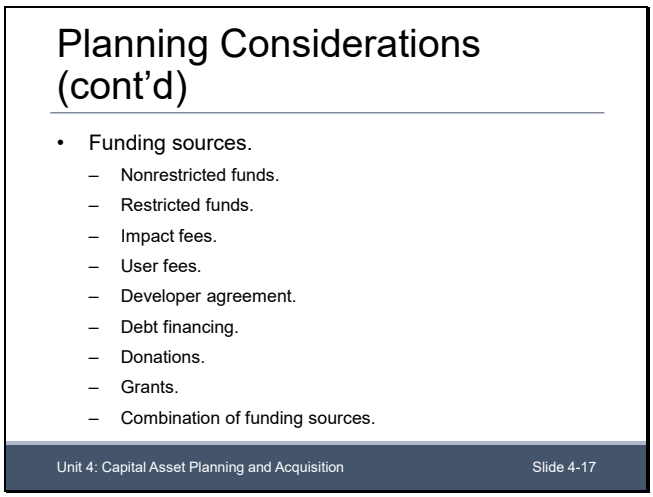
Real property can be acquired by purchase, rent or lease, development agreement, property trade or donation. Each carries different cost, control and timeline trade-offs.





I. Eminent domain.

Eminent domain is the taking of private property for public benefit with fair compensation. It is often very controversial and is generally a last resort.

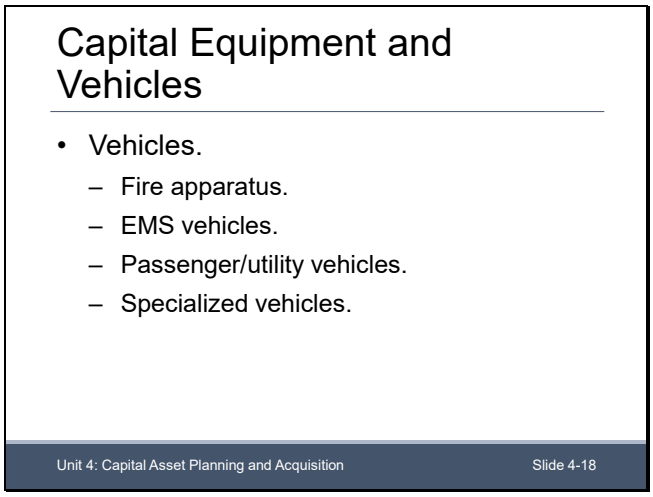


J. Funding sources: real property.

1. Funding sources for real property include nonrestricted funds, restricted funds, impact fees, user fees, developer agreement, debt financing, donations, grants and a combination of funding sources.

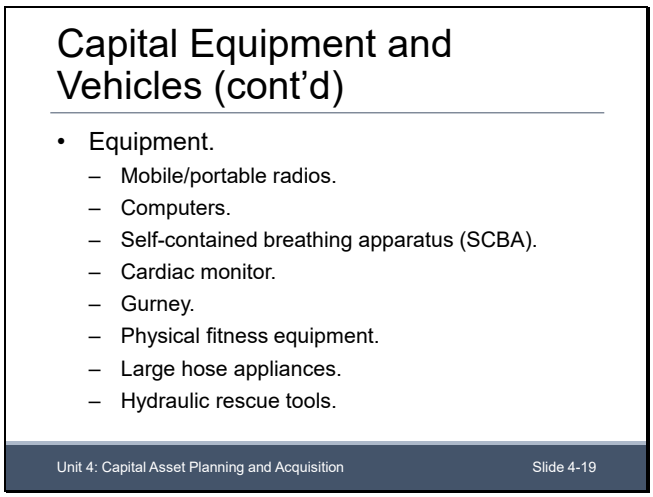
2. Matching the funding source to the asset is part of sound capital planning.

III. Capital Equipment and Vehicles



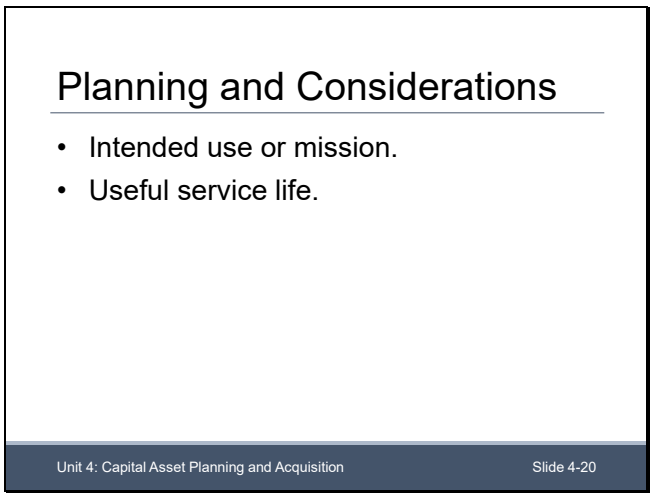
A. Vehicles.

Vehicle capital assets include fire apparatus, EMS vehicles, passenger and utility vehicles and specialized vehicles. Each has a distinct replacement cycle and specification process.



B. Equipment.

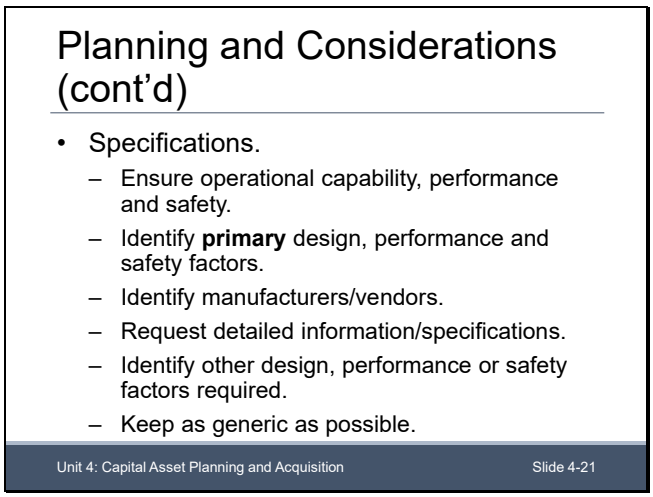
Capital equipment includes mobile and portable radios, computers, self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), and cardiac monitors — high-cost, long-lived items that warrant capital treatment.



C. Planning and considerations.

1. Plan around intended use or mission and useful service life.

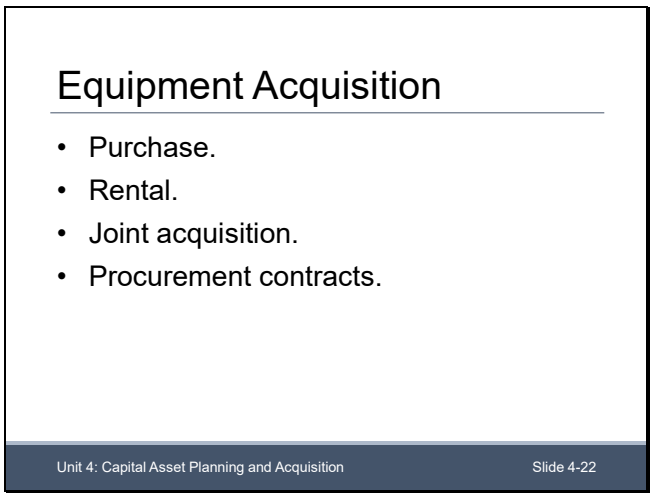
2. The mission defines the specification; the service life defines the replacement schedule.



D. Specifications.

1. Specifications ensure operational capability, performance and safety.

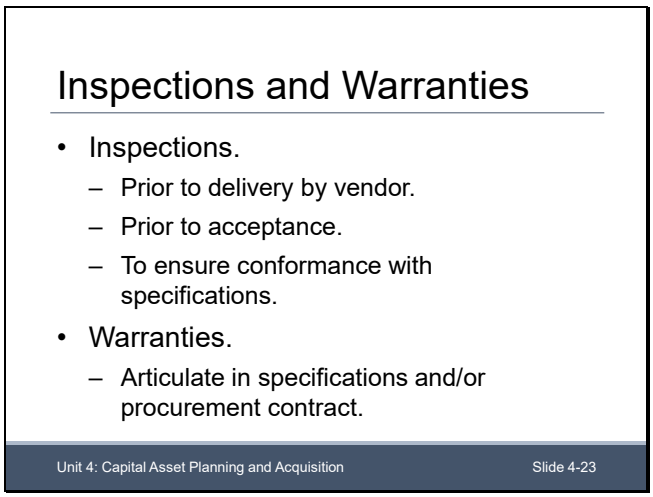
2. Identify the primary design, performance and safety factors before going to market.



E. Equipment acquisition.

1. Equipment can be acquired by purchase, rental, joint acquisition or procurement contracts.

2. Joint acquisition with neighboring agencies can lower unit cost.

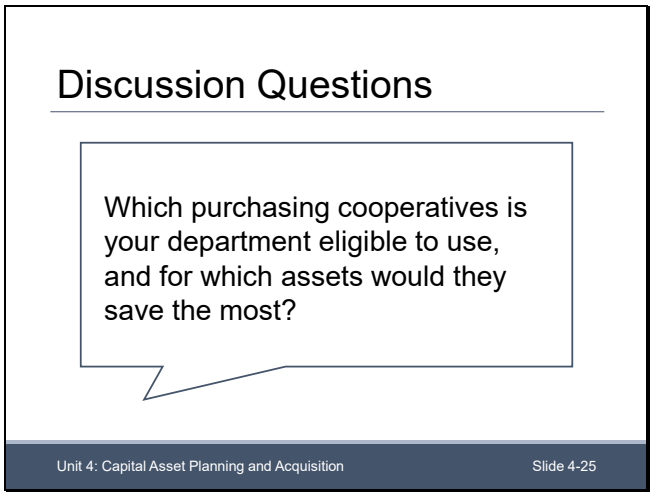


F. Inspections and warranties.

1. Inspect prior to delivery and prior to acceptance to ensure conformance with specifications and track warranties.

2. Acceptance inspection is the executive chief officer's last leverage point before payment.

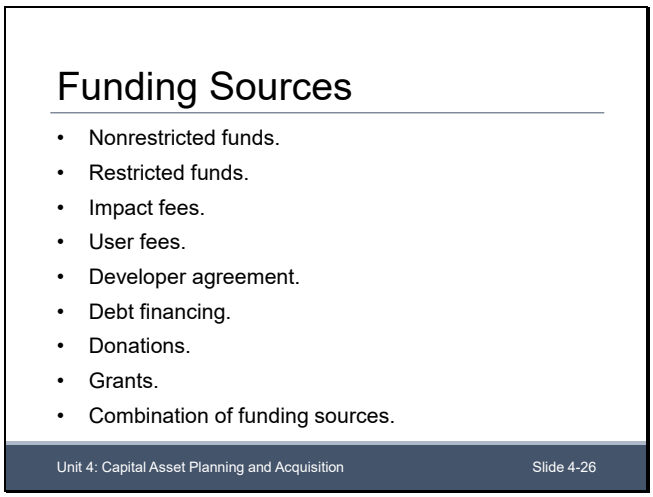




G. Cooperative purchasing.

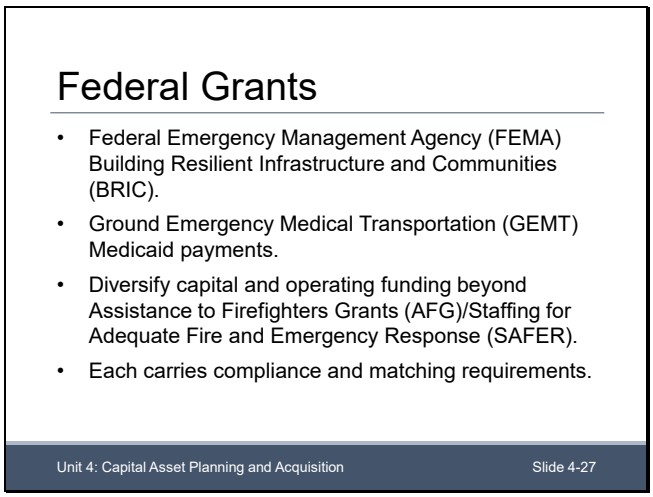
1. Buy through cooperatives — Sourcewell, HGACBuy, NASPO ValuePoint — to access pre-negotiated volume discounts and compliant contracts.

2. Cooperative purchasing yields significant savings and reduces procurement workload.



H. Funding sources: equipment.

Equipment funding sources include nonrestricted funds, restricted funds, impact fees, user fees, developer agreements, debt financing, donations, grants and a combination of funding sources.



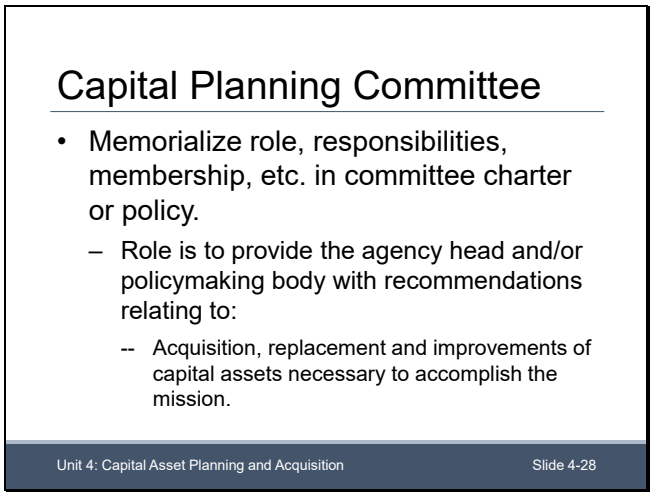
I. Federal grants: Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) and Ground Emergency Medical Transportation (GEMT).

Diversify capital funding with external programs.

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) BRIC supports resilience-focused capital projects.

2. GEMT recovers Medicaid payments that can offset EMS capital costs.

IV. Capital Planning Committee



A. Establishing the committee.

Memorialize the committee's role, responsibilities and membership in a charter or policy. Its role is to provide the agency head and policymaking body with sound capital recommendations.



B. Committee responsibilities: the acquisition plan.

The committee develops a Capital Asset Acquisition Plan. It identifies the capital assets necessary to accomplish the mission and the improvements needed to existing assets.



C. Replacement scheduling.

The committee recommends a schedule for planned replacement of capital assets and identifies improvements needed to existing assets to meet the mission.



D. Needs assessment.

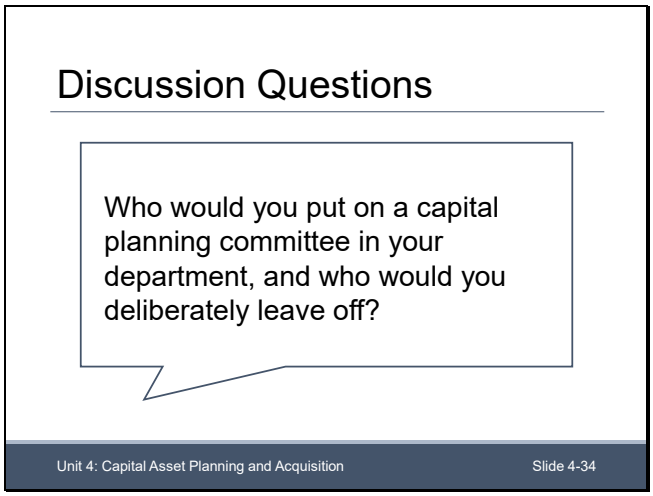
For a specific acquisition, the committee conducts a needs assessment for a facility, a vehicle or capital equipment before recommending the purchase.



E. Committee membership.

Membership is established by the agency head or policymaking body, is usually ad hoc and should provide cross-sectional representation of key stakeholders.



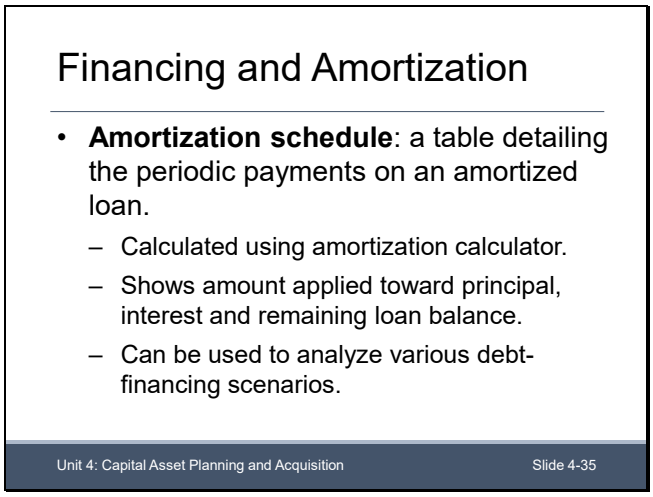


F. Committee value and benefits.

1. A standing committee promotes organizational involvement and ownership, and reduces the planning workload on any single leader.

2. Shared ownership makes hard capital choices more durable.

V. Financing and Amortization



A. Amortization.

1. An amortization schedule is a table detailing the periodic payments on an amortized loan, calculated with an amortization calculator.

2. It shows how each payment splits between principal and interest over the life of the loan.

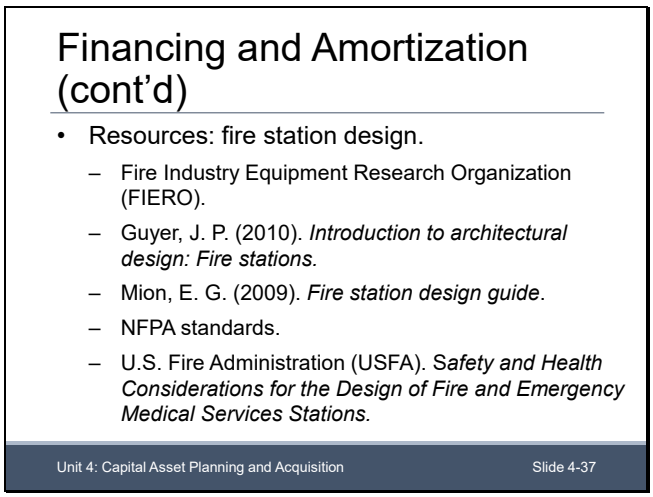


B. Resources: budgeting and apparatus.

1. Capital budgeting resources include the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

2. Fire apparatus and equipment design resources include National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards.

3. These anchor specifications and budgeting in recognized standards.



C. Resources: fire station design.

Station-design resources include Fire Industry Equipment Research Organization (FIERO) and published architectural design guidance (e.g., J. P. Guyer's "Introduction to architectural design: Fire stations," 2010). Use them to avoid reinventing facility standards.

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Activity 4.1

Activity 4.1

Capital Asset Acquisition Plan

Unit 4: Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition Slide 4-38

Model Fire Departments

- Centerville Fire Department: large metro career (425,000 population, 15 stations, $128 million).
- Lakewood Fire-Rescue: midsize combination department (85,000 population, $24 million).
- Prairie Township Fire District: small career (32,000 population, $12.5 million).

Unit 4: Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition Slide 4-39

Model Fire Departments (cont'd)

- Highland County Volunteer Fire Department: volunteer (18,000 population, $1.8 million).
- Tri-County Fire Authority: regional (145,000 population, $52 million).

Unit 4: Capital Asset Planning and Acquisition Slide 4-40

Small/Large Group Activity Estimated Time: 25 minutes

Activity Purpose

Apply the planning process to a real capital need for an assigned model department.

Activity Directions

1. Your group will be assigned a model department and a capital need (station, apparatus or major equipment).

    a. Group 1: Centerville Fire Department (large metro career).

    b. Group 2: Lakewood Fire-Rescue (midsize combination).

    c. Group 3: Prairie Township Fire District (small career).

    d. Group 4: Highland County Volunteer Fire Department (volunteer).

    e. Group 5: Tri-County Fire Authority (regional).

2. Your group will run a brief needs assessment, pick an acquisition method and identify funding sources (including cooperatives and BRIC/GEMT where relevant).

3. Each group will present its acquisition plan. The class will test the funding and timeline assumptions.

VI. Summary



A. Capital asset characteristics.

B. Real property planning and acquisition.

C. Capital equipment planning and acquisition.

D. Capital planning committee.

E. Capital asset planning and acquisition tools.

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New Executive Chief Officer: Contemporary Issues

Acronyms

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Acronyms

AFG	Assistance to Firefighters Grants
AI	artificial intelligence
BRIC	Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities
CAD	computer-aided design
CBA	collective bargaining agreement
CFAI	Commission on Fire Accreditation International
CPSE	Center for Public Safety Excellence
CRR	community risk reduction
EEOC	U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
EMS	emergency medical services
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIERO	Fire Industry Equipment Research Organization
GEMT	Ground Emergency Medical Transportation
HR	human resources
IAFC	International Association of Fire Chiefs
IAFF	International Association of Fire Fighters
ICMA	International City/County Management Association
ICS	Incident Command System
ISO	Insurance Services Office
IT	information technology
LO	learning outcome
MBA	Master of Business Administration

MOU	memorandum of understanding
MPA	Master of Public Administration
NECO	“New Executive Chief Officer”
NECO: AI	“New Executive Chief Officer: Administrative Issues”
NFA	National Fire Academy
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
PIO	Public Information Officer
PSAP	Public Safety Answering Point
RACE	Research, Action, Communication, Evaluation
SAFER	Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response
SCBA	self-contained breathing apparatus
SOP	standard operating procedure
SORC	Standards of Response Coverage
SM	Student Manual
USFA	U.S. Fire Administration