

Designing the Future Through Professional Development

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## CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expressions, or writings of another.

Signed:

Date: 11.23.18

### **Abstract**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century fire department has adapted its response and services to community needs with minimal increases to budgets, staffing, or capabilities to provide continual training, education, and professional development for employees at all levels. The City of Portsmouth Fire Department is no different, and has added the delivery of emergency medical treatment and transport, hazardous materials response and mitigation, technical rescue operations, and water response for flood events. The problem is the Portsmouth Fire Department does not have a professional development program. The purpose of this research was to identify contents for a professional development program within the Portsmouth Fire Department. This project used the descriptive research method and was guided by three research questions: a) What benefits will a professional development program bring to the City of Portsmouth? b) What are contents of a professional development program? c) What are other departments doing to promote and encourage professional development? The research process led to the design of surveys of nationwide fire departments, an internal interview, and two external interviews following a literature review. The results of the literature review, surveys, and interviews provided results and discussion that led to recommendations for the City of Portsmouth to use while developing a professional development program. The recommendations for Portsmouth Fire Department were to include department personnel in the design of a professional development program that will provide a path for continuous knowledge, skills, and abilities for all employees. It was recommended that the program be outlined with the specific training and education for all aspects of administration and operations. The recommendations could benefit the employee and the department while motivating personnel to become more proficient and enable the organization to provide enhanced services to the community.

Table of Contents

Abstract ..... 3

Introduction..... 5

Background and Significance ..... 6

Literature Review..... 11

Procedures ..... 23

Results..... 25

Discussion..... 30

Recommendations..... 35

References..... 39

Appendix A - Survey of Fire Departments ..... 43

Appendix B - Interview: Retired Frisco, Texas Deputy Chief Paul Seibert..... 52

Appendix C - Interview: Richmond, Virginia Deputy Chief Dwayne Bonnette..... 53

Appendix D - Interview: Portsmouth Fire Deputy Chief David Harrington ..... 54

### **Designing the Future Through Professional Development**

A fire department composed of blue collar workers, that only responds to structure fires and installs the occasional smoke alarm, is no longer the norm. Additional services offered by many organizations include emergency medical services, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, and emergency management of local and regional disasters. Fire departments “everywhere have been asked to do more with less” (DeShon, 2016, para. 1). Many of these organizations are doing so with limited budgets, staffing, and facilities. These fire departments are additionally struggling to maintain the knowledge, skills, and abilities to provide all the necessary services required for administrative and operational efficiency. Changes in service delivery, technology, and staffing plague many organizations that are not committed to developing their workforce with the diverse skillsets that enable continued growth and success. Departments that have instituted professional development programs “have created change brokers who are empowered to impact their organizations with programs that enhance their skills and promote organizational maturity” (McAfee, 2015, para. 13).

The problem is the Portsmouth Fire Department (PFD) does not have a professional development program. This problem leads to administrative and operational skillsets that lack in the changing needs of the organization and would provide professional growth to current and future employees. Without these skillsets, the department may struggle to maintain its mission and provide the best services to the community.

The purpose of this research is to identify contents for a professional development program within the Portsmouth Fire Department. The identification of professional development programs and content will provide PFD with the ability to develop a program that will allow personnel to strengthen current, and develop new skills to assist in organizational

success. Descriptive research is used to answer three questions for this research: What benefits will a professional development program bring to the Portsmouth Fire Department? What are contents of a professional development program? What are other departments doing to promote and encourage professional development?

### **Background and Significance**

The City of Portsmouth encompasses 33 square miles and is home to approximately 100,000 citizens. Portsmouth is an urban community in the center of Tidewater, Virginia and is connected to the regional cities of Norfolk, Chesapeake, and Suffolk, Virginia Beach, Hampton, and Newport News by two interstate systems and three tunnels. Portsmouth is home to the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth Naval Hospital, the United States Coast Guard Atlantic Fleet Command center, Virginia Port Authority Terminal, APM Shipping Terminal, and the United States Navy's largest fueling depot at Craney Island.

The City of Portsmouth Fire Department (PFD) is committed to the protection of lives and property through fire suppression, emergency medical services (EMS), emergency management, technical rescue operations, hazardous materials management, fire prevention and inspection, public education, and community risk reduction. PFD services are provided to the City of Portsmouth, and surrounding mutual aid partners, by 242 personnel in divisions that include operations, training, emergency management, and administrative support services.

PFD is led by the Fire Chief who has two appointed Deputy Chiefs that oversee department operations and administration. PFD has two administrative Battalion Chiefs to oversee special operations, emergency management, fire prevention and inspection, public education, budget management, logistics, training, and health and safety. Six additional Battalion Chiefs manage the daily fire and EMS operations across two districts that include eight

fire stations, nine pumpers, three aerials, one heavy rescue, and five ambulances. The PFD division of operations provides fire suppression, emergency medical services, and incident management for approximately 20,000 incidents per year. The Training Division provides incumbent training classes, identifies additional educational courses outside of the organization, and leads new hire academies for fire and EMS personnel.

Over the past decade PFD has struggled with maintaining full staffing due to a mass exodus of personnel able to retire under an old retirement system. Personnel hired prior to 1996 could opt for an early retirement that provided reasonable and rewarding benefits. Over the past decade nearly 120 personnel have retired from this old system. All new personnel hired after 1996 fall under the Virginia Retirement system and account for nearly 95 percent of department employees. The Fire Chief, a Deputy Chief, a Battalion Chief, and a couple of fire Captains are all that remain under the old retirement system and can retire immediately. The massive turnover in personnel has led the department to only maintain its minimum standards so that service delivery would continue for the City of Portsmouth.

Eligible requirements to become of Portsmouth firefighter include minimum age of eighteen, high school diploma or GED, completion of a certified polygraph test, and Virginia State Police background check. PFD firefighters, once hired, are provided minimum certification levels of Firefighter one and two, emergency vehicle operations, Virginia Department of Fire Programs certification of basic pump operator, and National Registry certification as emergency medical technician advanced (EMT-A) through an internal academy. In addition to daily station duties, attending company training and community events, responding to fire and EMS incidents, firefighters are expected to be able to drive and operate in the absence

of a fire lieutenant. Currently there are no additional requirements for a firefighter throughout their career in the Portsmouth Fire Department unless there is a desire for promotion.

Considering the past turn-over rate of personnel, the PFD has expanded in delivery of EMS services, hazardous material response, technical rescue capabilities, and maritime incident response. PFD has continued to develop into an organization that additionally responds to mass casualty, active shooter, severe weather, and flood incidents with no additional personnel, training, or educational requirements. In fact, many of the new personnel have been placed into positions for which they have no training with the hopes that it will be achieved as time passes. The slow response to adding personnel has required PFD to change their organizational structure. This change reduced the number of firefighters and was supplemented by the addition of pre-certified full and part-time EMS personnel that were quicker to place into operational capacity on the ambulances. The cascading affect then turned to the fire academies where firefighters graduate with EMT-Basic instead of the previously taught EMT-A. This allowed for the department to overcome staffing concerns several weeks ahead of time. The department will struggle to educate employees back to the level of EMT-A due to staffing, budget constraints, and the time it will take to provide college level education to firefighters only required to have a high school education.

Promotion from the level of firefighter in Portsmouth is to the rank of Fire Lieutenant and equivalent to what many departments call engineer or driver. The earliest a firefighter can become a lieutenant is three years of service with the department. The minimum requirements for promotion to fire lieutenant, and all ranks up to battalion chief, are Fire Officer Level One and Fire Instructor Level One. No additional training or educational requirements are needed for the added responsibilities throughout the ranks of the Portsmouth Fire Department.



For many years, and up until 2017, the promotional process provided extra points for additional training and education as a portion of its scoring process. This provided some motivation for firefighters to obtain training and education; however, these points were easily overcome by seniority points and did little to encourage continued professional development. Under new department leadership, the PFD changed its promotional process for all ranks. This change excluded all additional training and educational points and replaced it with a professional portfolio section that allows personnel to provide supporting documentation on their commitment to the fire service, significant work experience, training and education, and discipline. The new promotional process also removed its previous assessment center, based solely on city and department policies and procedures, and replaced it with a more modern assessment that evaluates an employee's knowledge, skills, and abilities as fire officers and leaders. The assessment still involves operational procedures and administrative policies; however, it includes the ability of an applicant to demonstrate leadership capabilities, provide reasonable actions in response to changing operations, and facilitate human resource management. Although the PFD had taken a step forward by removing the antiquated scoring process it has yet to institute a formal process for identifying professional development to include all aspects of the organization and still only requires Officer and Instructor Level One certification.

The Portsmouth Fire Department has never provided an official professional development program for its personnel. A professional development program could include areas of education, training, and succession planning for all areas in which the Portsmouth Fire Department operates and would not have to limit itself to promotional capabilities of employees. The recent turn-over rate within the PFD has allowed for many of the current officer rank

positions to be filled. These officer positions will be held for many years and will reduce the promotional opportunities for many years to come. The continued growth and additions in service delivery, advancements of technological capabilities, and improvements in operational practices provide an opportunity for Portsmouth to excel by enabling all personnel through professional development. Without a professional development program, the PFD may struggle to organize an effective strategy that can overcome the previous years' loss of experience, training, knowledge, and skills. Firefighters may not be properly trained to be placed into specific department roles and they may become stagnant with the reduced opportunities for promotion. Without a professional development program, there is a continued chance that firefighters and officers will move from apparatus assignments, and into administrative assignments, with little to no training or understanding of what the new position entails. Newly promoted officers are not prepared for the leadership role or know how to deal with personnel, documentation, command and control of incidents, or other various assignments.

Today's fire service personnel are becoming more diverse and providing the opportunity to add additional areas of expertise that can include, but are not limited to medicine, engineering, technology, chemistry, public safety, organizational management, and health and wellness. The Executive Leadership course at the National Fire Academy teaches about providing leadership through involving others and allowing diverse skillsets to help the organization grow and succeed. This researcher also learned from Executive Leadership that looking at the structure of the organization, as whole, will assist in researching and concluding the best practices for PFD to use within a professional development plan. There are so many people within the organization, and so many routes that a person's career could take them, that a larger perspective of needs must be met in a professional development plan (*EL-Student Manual*, 2015). Portsmouth could

harness the abilities of all personnel through a formal professional development program and share internal and external knowledge that will promote the City of Portsmouth's success and provide an environment of continual growth for personnel.

This research will look to identify methods where the PFD can provide professional development for all personnel. This outcome is directly related to the 2014-2018 United States Fire Administration (USFA) goal number four, "advance the professional development of fire service personnel and of other people engaged in fire prevention and control activities" ("U.S. Fire Administration," n.d., p. 9). This research will enable Portsmouth to provide a formal professional development program and in turn provide more skillsets and experience to all personnel that will additionally assist in safe and effective operations. This outcome relates to the 2014-2018 USFA goal number one, "reduce fire and life safety risk through preparedness, prevention, and mitigation" ("U.S. Fire Administration," n.d., p. 9).

### **Literature Review**

A literature review was performed as part of this research and was guided by three research questions. The research questions asked what a professional development program could bring to the Portsmouth Fire Department, what are contents of a professional development program, and what other departments were doing to promote and encourage professional development. Journals, magazine articles, books, and other publications were used in this review and found that there is great deal of information that can be included in the development of a professional development program. This literature review is designed to be used in conjunction with the survey data and interviews that will identify contents that could be used within the City of Portsmouth.

This author first sought to identify what a professional development plan (PDP) was defined as. Throughout the research many definitions were found. Duke University simplified many of the researched definitions and stated that a PDP “documents goals, required skill and competency development, and objectives a staff member will need to accomplish in order to support continuous improvement and career development” (“Duke Professional Plan,” n.d., para. 1). This definition is broad based and allows all types of organizations to develop and PDP that fits the needs for current and future success.

The first research question asked what benefits a PDP would bring to Portsmouth. The research found that a professional development program is a benefit to all organizations. Successful organizations must “invest in employees and create exceptional workforces through a combination of professional training and on-the-job learning experience” (Lynch, 2017, para. 5). It is all too common to hear that new officers are “thrown into the front seat with little more than a slap on the back and congratulations” (Mahoney, 2017, para. 1). The investment of a PDP would lower the chances of personnel being placed into new positions without the training, knowledge, and experience to overcome obstacles. The benefit of this would be the efficient operations of crews on the fire ground, the ability to protect more property and lives for the community, and enabling people within administrative positions to provide a higher level of community risk reductions efforts.

The overall benefit can be identified from the positive results of specific goal achievements and tasks. This research also identified competencies that are strengthened by implementing a PDP. Most organizations provide approximately 70 percent training, 20 percent mentoring, and 10 percent experience for personal development. Studies have shown that just the opposite is needed for a professional development plan that works. In a presentation

published by the International Association for Fire Chief's it was found that the Center for Creative Leadership, Saville Holdsworth Ltd., DDI, Hay-McBer, Personal Decision, Inc., and Lominger, inc. all supported the fact that there are eight main competencies that are applicable to most organizations. The eight main competencies identified for personnel to develop were dealing with ambiguity, innovation management, creativity, planning, motivating others, strategic agility, building effective teams, and managing vision and purpose. The strongest way to develop these skills is through education, training, and experience that will in turn provide a more professional workplace and level of output (IAFC Professional Development Committee, n.d.).

The Peak Performance Center says that there are many benefits to a PDP for both employees and the organization. Three main benefits that can be gained are employee satisfaction, supervisor feedback and collaboration, and the overall goals and productivity levels of the organization. Employee satisfaction is gained through the commitment to development. This can also reduce employees leaving the organization. When a culture of support and encouragement is developed it not only helps the image of the organization but it provides motivation and a sense of ownership for the personnel. This benefit can increase productivity through personnel becoming more competent in needed skills and feeling more confident in their capabilities. The benefit of supervisor feedback and collaboration allows supervisory level personnel to identify professional strength and goals. It also provides those supervisors time to discuss each employee's growth and work on developing their own skills as mentors and coaches. The organization will then be able to "plan, budget, and manage training resources and professional development activities" due to the dually aligned goals and objectives of both

prepared organizations and better equipped employees (“Benefits of Professional Development,” n.d.).

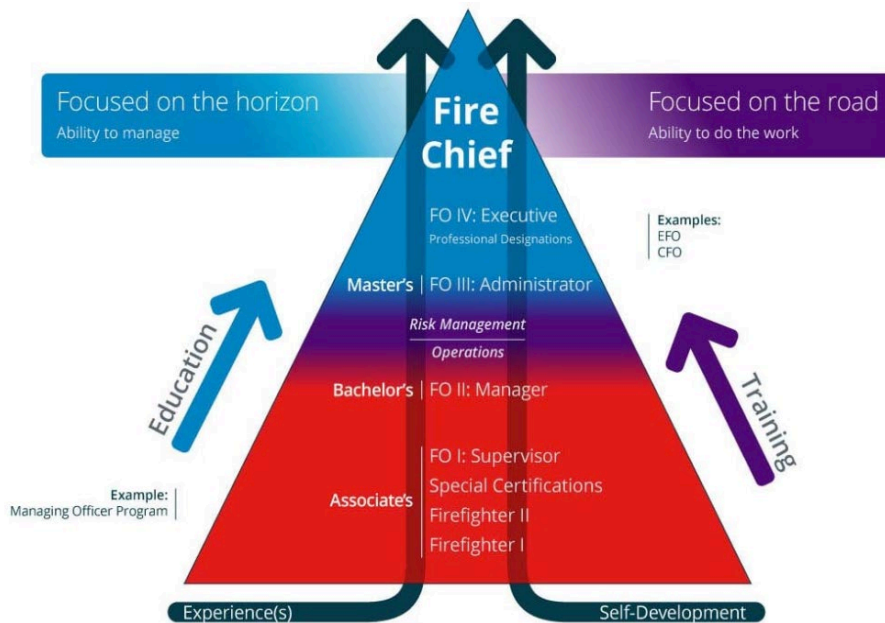
The benefits of a PDP are shown through literature review to be applicable to all organizations. It is notably an area that adopts a human resource perspective; however, this researcher wanted to relate it to the fire service and specifically Portsmouth. In addition to experience, the educational side of a PDP will expand “critical thinking skills for” (Marinucci, 2018, para. 3) firefighters that are paramount in the particularly dangerous work environments. Critical thinking skills provide an opportunity for firefighters to make decisions and operate on the fire ground safely and is why professional development is stated to have “no greater mission than enhancing firefighter life safety” (Kistner, 2010, para. 1).

The overall challenge that implementing a PDP brings is adaptive. Leaders must have an “understanding that the courage to make needed change resides in people who have a long-term perspective and a stake in the organization’s future” (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009, p. 104). Last, but not least, this researcher found that a PDP would enable the PFD to form succession planning for the future of the department. “Succession plans are another clear indicator of how well an organization stacks up” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 105).

The information discovered for this research question concluded that providing a formal PDP for the Portsmouth Fire Department could have a multi-faceted effect that can “develop our next generation of leaders and offer firefighters and officers developmental tools and a format to achieve success and satisfaction” (Scarpa, 2015, para. 3). The information also provided access to be sought after when continuing research for PDP content.

The second question this research focused on asked what are the contents of a professional development program. The research needed to focus on, and identify, what a PDP

provided. “Goals, resources, activities, and learning opportunities for growth” were identified by a lecturer for the Department of Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Kansas (Isaacson, n.d., para. 2). The United States Fire Administration (USFA) has developed a national model for professional development in the fire service. The model, shown below, shows the components of what a fire department PDP should consist of and include education, training, and experiences for both the ability to do the work and manage (United States Fire Administration [USFA], 2018).



(USFA, 2018)

From the model, it is noticed that education, training, and experience starts with the Firefighter Level One certification, leads through specialty certification, and onward to supervisory, management and executive levels. The PFD requires personnel to successfully achieve the levels of Firefighter One and Two; however, there is no minimum requirement for any level above firefighter other than Fire Officer and Fire Instructor One Level One certifications. Additional contents that can be included in a PDP would provide a path for

training and education specific to duties or assignments of firefighters. The State of Virginia Department of Fire Programs (VDFP) is accredited by the International Fire Service Accreditation Congress (IFSAC) and provides Pro Board certification through the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualification (NBFSPQ) (“VDFP Accreditation,” n.d.). Specialty course certifications that can be included in a PDP through the VDFP include Fire Inspector, Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF), Driver Pump Operator, Aerial Operator, Hazardous Materials Operations, various Heavy Technical Rescue disciplines, and National Fire Academy incident management and leadership courses (“Training Programs,” 2018).

The USFA and the Fire and Emergency Services Higher Education (FESHE) initiative group have worked to provide a matrix outlining PDP contents as guidance “to standardize training, education, experience, and certification activities” (“Fire Service Professional Development,” 2018, para. 1). Because the process of employees obtaining certifications and attending college courses is “time and money” “often wasted,” the USFA has developed the National Professional Development Matrix and directions on how it is best utilized by fire and emergency service departments (“Application of Matrix,” 2016, para. 1).

The National Professional Development Matrix provides a PDP outline for the Supervisory Fire Officer (Fire Officer 1), Managing Fire Officer (Fire Officer 2), Administrative Fire Officer (Fire Officer 3), Executive Fire Officer (Fire Officer 4), and the Fire Prevention Officer. The matrix includes competencies that should be met, the correlating National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standard associated with the competency, and the correlating Center for Public Safety Excellence requirement. The matrix also provides a section for educational courses from the National Fire Academy, other higher learning institutions, and



education and training that can be identified at state and local levels. The matrix is completed by a section that includes self-development and experiences (“Application of Matrix,” 2016).

Research has found that fire departments need to think multi-dimensional when developing a formal PDP. The skills necessary for employee growth that contribute to the organizations’ success include more than just the hard skills that we think of for firefighters and officers. Soft skills that need to be included into a PDP were found through literature review and best represented by an educational expert. Janelle Cox wrote that the skills necessary for professional development included adaptability, communication, continuous learner, leadership, organization, commitment, and the understanding of technology (Cox, 2018). Local departments can create their own programs to include specific operational policy and procedure courses, reporting, mapping, and documentation software uses, and department and interpersonal communications expectations. They can also provide special projects or committees to encourage commitment, teamwork, and organizational for individuals. These department specific courses and programs can enhance hard skills while indirectly assisting with development of the soft skills necessary for professional development.

Research found that both hard and soft skills can be more easily identified and obtained with the help of the USFA through certified and accredited programs. The USFA connects departments to the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSI), the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) library, the International Society of Fire Service Instructors (SFSI), and the National Fire Academy’s Managing Officer and Executive Fire Officer Programs (“Fire Service Professional Development,” 2018). The CPSI uses the Commission on Professional Credentialing model to recognize “meeting a specific professional qualification standard” (“CPSI Credentialing,” n.d., para. 1) for Fire Officers, Chief Fire Officers, Chief EMS Officers, Chief

Training Officers, and Fire Marshalls. The NETC library is full of resources, literature, and material that fire service professionals can be used to enhance professional development. The NETC library is often used by students of the NFA Managing and Executive Fire Officer Program. These two programs include highly developed courses that can be used for supervisory and management professional development (DiPietro, 2018). Another component of a professional development program is being accredited or credentialed as an instructor. “The ISFSI credential designation” allows instructors and educators to “bridge the gap between fire service professional development, the professional credentialing of instructors, and the accreditation of emerging training curriculums” (“ISFSI Credential,” 2018, para. 2). These sources provide external information, training, education, and accreditation that personnel can use to increase their soft skills and professional knowledge, and should be considered content for a departments formal PDP.

Fire and emergency services organizations are no different than many other companies or businesses. This researcher found that experience, knowledge, training, and education can be organized in a fashion to help guide developers of a formal PDP. Research discovered that the fire service has been working tirelessly to achieve professionalism for its membership. The literature review performed for this research question found an abundance of information to be used as credible content to include in a professional development program. The literature review found information that led to the last research question.

A literature review was performed to answer what other departments were doing to promote and encourage professional development. To promote a program and develop encouragement for an employee to participate in the program means that the organization must understand what employees want or desire. Some departments only encourage development

through the chance of promotion or ability to be a part of a specialized crew. If you study, if you take classes we will promote you or allow you to be a member of this team. No investment in the employee, or the organization is given in this environment. The old saying of using the carrot versus the stick applies to fire and emergency service leadership and encourages personal motivation to achieve the desired outcome. Fire service leaders must truly understand what drives employees so that they can successfully accomplish the goals and mission of the department.

An article in Harvard Business Review simplified what employees wanted into the three categories of career, community and cause. Cause seems to be understood in the fire service for the impact that it has on lives and property; however, cause is more about the employee wanting a meaningful impact due to their individual work and skills. Community refers to an employee needing recognition for work and abilities and having a sense of respect from others. This sense of respect and recognition builds teams. Lastly, an employee desires not just a job but a career. The difference is found in the employee “having a job that provides autonomy”, allowing them “to use strengths, and promotes” their “learning and development” (Goler, Gale, Harrington, & Grant, 2018, para. 7). Another source identified that 87 percent of millennials were more satisfied with a career that provided “opportunities for advancement and professional development” (Stahl, 2016, para. 7).

Literature review identified another study performed that “collected input from 800 business executives, 1,800 human resource leaders, as well as 5,000-plus employees” (Kohll, 2018, para. 3). This large study found the top three items employees desired were flexibility, commitment to health and well-being, and having purpose at work. While flexibility is difficult to deal with in a career fire department, health and well-being is one of the nation’s top priorities.

Lastly the employee was found to desire purpose at work (Kohll, 2018). Knowing what employees want can help a fire service leader enable others to perform above average and promotes continuous desire to develop, learn, perform, and achieve continual purpose.

Knowing what an employee wants out of his or career helps to promote and encourage professional development. Allowing an employee to be involved in different committees, and decision making groups for the organization allows them to feel productive. “For starters, the employee is engaged in identifying gaps” (Scarpa, 2015, para. 12). One department used company officer engagement during training and found that it “facilitated discussions” and “served as a conduit for information feedback to the department’s executive staff” that “were not often part of coffee-table discussions” (Simmons, 2017, para. 9). The same department later hired a consultant to provide training and in turn used staff to design training courses for the department” (Simmons, 2017). Providing education, training, and employee involvement helped this department focus on professional development for the entire organization.

This literature review has identified that most individuals are encouraged by things that drive them mentally and emotionally. Some influencers of professional development have been identified to be an individual’s attitude, aptitude, the environment, and provided inspiration. A professional development program can be promoted and encouraged by providing the ability for each of these to exist for an employee (McCabe, 2018). Providing status to employees can assist in encouraging professional development. “Adding professional credentialing is a must” (Waldo, 2016, para. 3) when developing a program for departments. The IAFC and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) recognize fire service credentialing through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) Commission on Professional Credentialing (CPC) as the “gold standard for fire service professionals” (Waldo, 2016, para. 3).

Credentialing provides a PDP with an opportunity for not only your personnel to achieve a professional designation that is recognized throughout the industry but it allows for the employee to continue their development and provide a benefit to the organization (Waldo, 2016). The path of professional designation involves education, department involvement, and provides an employee with a sense of purpose and encouragement.

The literature research has found several intangible means to promote and encourage professional development. Other ways to promote and encourage professional development may come at a cost which is why many departments use promotion to officer level positions as the motivation. This was found to be common throughout much of the literature review.

Albemarle County Fire Rescue (ACFR) in Virginia created a development program that encouraged professional development and provided financial incentive for all ranks. This program was the most in depth program found during this literature review and will be used to identify the ways in which a PDP can be encouraged and promoted through financial incentives. Albemarle's program identified both horizontal development, within rank, and vertical development, for promotional progress. The horizontal development program was encouraged through a stipend program that incentivized higher levels of emergency medical, driver pump operator, technical rescue, and hazardous materials certification. This horizontal development also ensured that personnel maintained certifications and were involved in continuous hours of training and education (Albemarle County Fire Rescue, 2015).

ACFR broke down firefighter ranks to begin with their vertical development program and was considered as non-competitive. Firefighters, through time and training certifications, could achieve senior firefighter level and be provided a small stipend. The next level to Master Firefighter, also given a stipend, requires time served, additional training and educational

certifications, and an assessment center. Additional time, educational requirements, and certifications are required for promotions to Captain, Battalion Chief, Deputy Chief, and Fire Chief for the department. ACFR encourages CPSE credentialing and provides reimbursement for cost associated with obtaining the professional designations (Albemarle County Fire Rescue, 2015).

The program that ACFR developed also provides direction from the first day as firefighter and encourages them to achieve continuing educational opportunities. They promote mentoring with other firefighters and fire officers. ACFR encourages the shadowing of others to include the dispatch office, police department personnel, city purchasing personnel, health and safety officers, and risk management personnel. The County provides tuition reimbursement for education at accredited colleges. To meet additional needs of personnel, and promote the program, ACFR provides career counseling to all personnel which helps to assist employees with identifying and meeting desired goals (Albemarle County Fire Rescue, 2015). The time and money spent by the organization is an incentive for the employees to participate in their PDP.

This author found the literature review to provide a vast amount of information that pertained to this research project. The information discovered can assist in providing content for the PFD to implement within a formal professional development program. The research questions helped to identify what benefits are gained, what contents can be provided within, and how to promote and encourage a professional development program. Literature review found that the content is strongly supported by an employee's need for satisfaction, inclusion, and desire for continual growth. Survey and interview questions were developed after the literature review to provide additional information to assist in providing content for PDP development.

### **Procedures**

A literature review was performed through sought after publications, online sources, and at the NETC library. The literature review was performed to provide additional information to the surveys and interviews and provide results for this research. A survey was developed after literature review and was guided by the same three research questions. Interview questions were developed to speak with fire service professionals and obtain their insight into professional development programs and gather answers to the research questions. The interviews were designed to obtain additional experiences, thoughts, and opinions from fire service professionals.

Following the literature review a survey was created for fire service personnel. This survey was distributed online to 72 fire service individuals from different departments. It was distributed through a national fire service professional group to gather input and understand what is offered as professional development throughout the country. The research questions were used as a guide to identify if departments offered PDP's, if there were benefits to the program, what contents were provided within their programs, and ways in which the department encouraged personnel to participate. The survey began on November 12, 2018 and was closed on November 17, 2017 with a total of 64 responses. The survey questions can be found in Appendix A.

This research also involved three interviews to include two external fire department personnel and one internal department member. Personnel were chosen because of their positions within the department, an understanding of their own professional growth, and their desire to encourage professional development for others. The interviews were designed to assist in providing continuing information that related to the three research questions and assisted in this authors recommendations.

The first external interview was held on Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at nine A.M. with retired Frisco Fire Department, Texas Deputy Chief Paul Siebert. Due to distance, this interview was conducted by telephone conference. Paul Siebert was chosen for his experience within a quickly growing fire department, his personnel commitment to professional development, and his continual sharing of education and knowledge as part of the engineering extension office for Texas A&M Product Development Center. The interview questions can be found in Appendix B.

The last external interview was also a telephone conference interview with City of Richmond Deputy Chief Dwayne Bonnette. The interview was conducted at 3 P.M. on Tuesday, November 13, 2018. DC Bonnette retired from Alexandria, Virginia and served as Fire Chief for the PFD for one year before moving to Richmond. DC Bonnette was selected for his knowledge of professional development and career development as well as his commitment to mentoring others and creating an environment of individual growth for others. The questions for the interview with DC Bonnette are in Appendix C.

On Wednesday, November 13, 2018 an interview was held with Portsmouth Fire Department Deputy Chief (DC) David Harrington. This interview took place in DC Harrington's office at PFD Administration. DC Harrington was recently promoted to the rank of Deputy Chief after serving over twenty years throughout all ranks of the PFD. DC Harrington was selected because of his position within the PFD, his knowledge of department and city operations as well as the capabilities and drive of PFD firefighters. The interview questions with DC Harrington can be found in Appendix D.

The procedures for this research did provide some limitations. The limitations within the literature research was discovered because many fire service publications only related to career



development versus overall professional development. Content was gathered to include career development within professional development. Limitations were found in the survey due to a completion rate of the only 64 out of 72 responses. The survey had limitations found due to the questions were not asked in how each department was organized or the understanding of how professional development contrasted with career development.

### **Results**

The results of the survey and interview procedures for this research was directed towards answering the research questions necessary to provide content for Portsmouth Fire Department Professional Development program. A review of the results found that PFD could benefit in several ways from developing a PDP, the contents that could be used to develop a PDP, and how to promote and encourage professional development. The results of the survey showed that 95 percent of survey takers were career departments (see Appendix Figure A1) and that over 85 percent of those departments had PDP's (see Appendix Figure A4). The departments ranged in size with approximately half of departments having between 50 and 200 firefighters (see Appendix Figure A2).

Research question number one sought after the benefits of a PDP. "Overall team performance, and ultimately better customer service" are benefits of a formal development program (D. Bonnette, personal communication, November 13, 2018). Literature review found that PDP's could benefit all organizations through enhanced operational capabilities and employee performances. The literature review was supported through the survey results. One hundred percent of surveyed departments found that benefits were noticed in the knowledge, skills, and abilities of the personnel (see Appendix Figure A14) and that the organization had noticeable benefits in operational, administrative, and leadership performance (see Appendix

Figure A15). DC Harrington believes that with Portsmouth's current leadership style, personnel would be able to enhance skills in all areas. He added that PFD needed to provide the opportunity for these skills so that Portsmouth leadership can remain internal in the future (personal communication, November 13, 2018).

An additional benefit was noticed where approximately 95 percent of departments offered professional development on a voluntary basis (see Appendix Figure A5) which prevented that departments from mandating all programs to all employees. Half of all departments surveyed provided benefits to both firefighters and officers (see Appendix Figure A3) and over 70 percent of departments included all personnel to include fire and EMS (see Appendix Figure A6) allowing for inclusion. Retired Deputy Fire Chief Seibert stated that Frisco, TX was in a unique position when they started a professional development program. He stated that they were growing so fast that firefighters were riding in the front seat prior to becoming officers. The benefit they received from their program was the fresh knowledge that was being gained from the department. Retired DC Seibert added that the benefit of a good program is that firefighters naturally provide new skills and information to the others that they work with and claimed that it "feeds itself" (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Deputy Chief Bonnette additionally stated that PDP's are "not just a check box system" for typical training, and have content for "true development for increased performance at all levels" (personal communication, November 13, 2018).

The second research question asked what contents could be included in a professional development program. Design and contents of a PDP needed to include who could participate in the program. Over 85 percent of departments surveyed believed that a PDP should not be based solely on rank and promotion (see Appendix Figure A7). Over 50 percent of departments

involved content within a PDP for EMS personnel, over 70 percent of content were for all ranks between firefighter and Battalion Chief, and almost half included content for ranks above Battalion Chief (see Appendix Figure A8). “We need to ensure that our future Fire Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, and Fire Officers are given the necessary skills to succeed” (D. Harrington, personal communication, November 13, 2018).

The content of PDP’s ranged within the surveyed departments and covered multiple disciplines. All surveyed departments included tactical and incident command and control courses with over 90 percent of departments providing leadership training (see Appendix Figure A13). Driver, pump operations, employee relations, communications, and organizational policies were covered by approximately 70 percent of all departments surveyed and only about 40 percent provided computer and public speaking skills within their PDP (see Appendix Figure A13). DC Harrington stated that PFD should bring more certification courses to the department so that teams, technical rescue and hazardous materials response, can get the classes locally (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Paul Seibert fully believed in providing soft skill education to personnel and added that including some type of “home life or lifestyle management course” can provide a benefit that translates into improved behavioral health (personal communication, November 13, 2018).

In addition to the state level courses, DC Harrington stated that a PDP should include department topic courses such as documentation, incident command, communication, and even the City of Portsmouth’s new leadership development course provided by Human Resources (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Survey response showed that 80 percent of departments included state level courses, and 85 percent included department created courses (see Appendix Figure A9). The survey showed that between 80 and 85 percent of departments

included both college level education and National Fire Academy curriculum into their programs while less than 30 percent included the IAFC Officer Development Program (see Appendix Figure A9).

DC Harrington suggested that any type of program a department had should be monitored and evaluated over time (personal communication, November 13, 2018). The survey allowed for additional comments when asked if the departments' PDP could be enhanced. Eighty percent of departments responded that program enhancement was needed (see Appendix Figure A16). The added notes for what enhancements were needed indicated that courses need to be updated, additional courses such as mentoring would be beneficial, and that more courses needed to be offered outside of local and state lines. DC Bonnette stated that the "fire service is dynamic and ever changing, yet we are resistant to changing the knowledge base and criteria for what we teach and expect" (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Retired DC Seibert said that their department was just beginning to discuss adding credentialing to their departments PDP but the current Chief, who was a new addition to Frisco, wanted more technical skills than soft skills or leadership skills (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Deputy Chief Bonnette added that "languages" could be a component of professional development in some communities that have different cultures (personal communication, November 13, 2018).

The final research question asked, and addressed through surveys and interviews, sought to find ways in which a professional development program could be promoted and encouraged. Deputy Chief Bonnette commented that in some departments it is tough to promote and encourage and stated that "if people want it, they will do it" (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Referring to the benefits of a program being voluntary (see Appendix Figure A5) and inclusive to all ranks (see Appendix Figure A8), retired DC Seibert said that

programs that are open to everyone provide encouragement through opportunity and allow for more people access and use of the program (personal communication, November 13, 2018).

Frisco's development program "was based mainly on promotions because of our growth period. The ability to get a substantial raise was a motivating factor for many" (P. Seibert, personal communication, November 13, 2018). The survey to other fire departments resulted in data showing that almost half of the departments only provided the encouragement through promotional potential and the ability to perform in "acting" capacities (see Appendix Figure A12). Hourly wage increases, salary advancements and stipends for development progression are additional benefits provided to employees to encourage participation (see Appendix Figure A11). Over 25 percent of departments offered salary stipends for personnel participating in the department PDP (see Appendix Figure A10). DC Harrington pointed out that PFD recently added a stipend for members of the Technical Rescue Team and that members of the Hazardous Materials Response Team were given Stipends funded through the State of Virginia (personal communication, November 13, 2018). He also added that Portsmouth had a tuition reimbursement program for personnel that were taking accredited college courses (personal communication, November 13, 2018).

Frisco Fire Department saw a combination of encouragement based on the benefits of a PDP. "Our younger members noticed that the veteran firefighters and officers were better prepared for most operational or station encounters and our courses increased maturity levels that helped them deal with personal situations. This was encouragement for our younger firefighters to participate" (P. Seibert, personal communication, November 13, 2018). DC Harrington agreed that the notable benefits from a program over time would be motivation for participation in a professional development program (personal communication, November 13, 2018). "Make

it the norm and expectation. Sometimes people must be mandated to participate” to get the program moving (D. Bonnette, personal communication, November 13, 2018).

### **Discussion**

This research was developed because the PFD did not have a formal professional development program and asked three research questions to assist in finding content appropriate for a PDP in Portsmouth: a) What benefits will a professional development program bring to the Portsmouth Fire Department? b) What are contents of a professional development program? c) What are other departments doing to promote and encourage professional development?

Interview, surveys, and the literature review provided enough information to conclude that PFD can be improved upon by designing an appropriate PDP that provided the encouragement and content to be beneficial for the department. The survey of fire departments showed that they had seen benefits for both personnel (see Appendix Figure A14) and the organizations (see Appendix Figure A15). “A personal development program must be catered to each department based on their needs assessment” (D. Bonnette, personal communication, November 13, 2018) and can be encouraged and motivated “by watching others grow and develop” (P. Seibert, personal communication, November 13, 2018).

A department can invest in the organization, and its personnel, by providing “professional training and on-the-job learning experiences” (Lynch, 2017, para. 5). This investment can help produce employee satisfaction enabling a sense of ownership that benefits the organization through increased productivity rates and reduced turn-over rates (“Benefits of Professional Development,” n.d.). DC Seibert found that it also helped with employees’ behavioral health and had a positive impact on younger generations that were just learning how to cope with life stressors (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Each of these skills learned and

enhanced can promote a positive moral for the department and improve the employment atmosphere and operations. The fire service works in hazardous conditions on a regular basis and must use critical thinking skills which can be found in a formal PDP's educational content (Marinucci, 2018).

Overall team performance is affected by leadership traits that can be gained through components of a PDP. Designing committees for department projects allows individuals to use skills that can improve the organization and build leadership traits. A PDP can be used to “develop our next generation of leaders” (Scarpa, 2015, para. 3) and the PFD can use this as part of a succession plan (D. Harrington, personal communication, November 13, 2018).

The fire service is dynamic, adaptive, and responding to many different types of incidents. Deputy Chief Bonnette stated that the “overall, intended, goal of a PDP is to provide better customer service” (personal communication, November 13, 2018). The fire service needs to be able to provide better customer service in a work environment that is constantly changing, adding risk, and requiring additional assets. To do this a PDP should provide the ability to develop innovation management, motivational skills, creative minds, strategic thinking, team effectiveness, and strong management vision (IAFC Professional Development Committee, n.d.).

A fire service model has been designed in a working relationship with the USFA, IAFC, and other fire and educational professional. This model provides PFD a way in which a formal PDP can be develop and includes the paths of education, training, and experience, for all ranks, to be able to perform work and manage (USFA, 2018). In addition to higher education, personnel should be able to progress through an educational and training system designed for operational knowledge and experience at all levels. Almost 90 percent of department believe that professional development should include all employees (See Appendix Figure A7). Many

department include tactics, driving, pumping, aerial operations, and incident management courses into their PDP's (see Appendix Figure A13). Many of these courses can be provided at the state levels and are accredited through professional organizations. Accreditation can be included once your department has achieved a practical level of operational capability (P. Seibert, personal communication, November 13, 2018). This author believes that employees who achieve professional credentialing through a PDP can affect positive and ongoing change for the organization. Professional credentialing services are offered and supported by many of the fire service leading organizations ("CPSI Credentialing," n.d.).

Programs for professional development in the fire service should include higher education and additional courses for skills and specific job functions based on the USFA's development Matrix ("Fire Service Professional Development," 2018). The matrix includes NFPA courses, NFA management and leadership courses, as well as college courses related to skillsets necessary for different fire service roles. "The Managing Officer Program and the Executive Fire Officer Program" have shown beneficial growth for several people in the PFD (D. Harrington, personal communication, November 13, 2018). Eighty percent of department include state fire courses, NFA courses, and college education in their PDP's (see Appendix Figure A9).

Over eighty percent of departments also provide departmental development courses (see Appendix Figure A9). These courses include human relations, leadership, communication, computer, and public speaking skills as well as department policy and procedure specific courses. Fire departments operate differently across the country and have area specific needs that must be met. A department must design a PDP and its department related content to be specific to the organization (D. Bonnette, personal communication, November 13, 2018). Some



departments face language barriers where a PDP can benefit customer service. Other departments provide “life skills” and “financial” assistance courses to help increase behavioral health for the employees.

It was found through the research that a PDP can truly help every organization because of its ability to be adapted to each department, skills required can be identified, and the program can change through monitoring and evaluation (see Appendix Figure A16). It is important to recognize that the fire service, and PFD in general, is continually adding service such as medical response, technical rescue, water operations, and hazardous materials. These are additional to the continued mission of fire protection and prevention and require education, training, and experience.

The promotion and encouragement of personnel participating in professional development can be as easy as new employees seeing the personal and professional benefits achieved by veteran employees (P. Seibert, personal communication, November 13, 2018). Motivation can be found in the desire for people to want to become more proficient in their career skills and potentially move upwards in the organization. Promotion is enough encouragement for some people (D. Bonnette, personal communication, November 13, 2018).

Including all ranks within a PDP provides encouragement. Most departments provide courses for all ranks due to the benefits that it brings the organization (see Appendix Figure A8). Some departments can offer stipends as personnel progress through certification and educational paths (see Appendix Figure A10). It is believed that stipends motivate people to continue education and training so that they can enhance the skills required for their positions. The PFD was discovered to provide only stipends for certified member of the technical rescue and

hazardous materials response teams (D. Harrington, personal communication, November 13, 2018).

When desire is lacking, and promotional capabilities are hard to reach, there are other factors that can provide encouragement and participation. Deputy Chief Harrington stated that PFD can fund and provide training leave for employees (personal communication, November 13, 2018). Employees can find personal benefit from being able to learn at the expense of the department. This is the investment that employers need to make in their people to achieve employee satisfaction and overall organizational support (Mahoney, 2017). Like many localities, the City of Richmond encourages people to continue with college and university education through tuition reimbursement (D. Bonnette, personal communication, November 13, 2018).

Research identified a PDP in Albemarle County that was well thought out and provided progression for all personnel. It was well drafted and explained the job descriptions, expectations, training opportunities, and requirements for all personnel. These types of PDP's show the support of the organization in professional development and encourage everyone to participate through continued learning and potential advancement (Albemarle County Fire Rescue, 2015).

It is shown in the results that fire and emergency service departments can gain benefits from providing a professional development program. The benefits of, content within, and necessary motivation needed all tie together in a human resources perspective for the organization. The benefits of a Portsmouth PDP can be found through the successful progression by employees who are motivational for others participation. The content of programs was often seen as motivating factors because it affected professional skills and the skills necessary to lead a

productive home life (P. Seibert, personal communication, November 13, 2018). An organization that provides promotional opportunity, or career advancement, through a PDP allows for the benefit of increased production capabilities and enhanced customer service skills. It was important to understand the answers of the research questions to be able to provide the content appropriate for Portsmouth.

### **Recommendations**

Portsmouth has the opportunity and ability to benefit from the experience, training, and education that can be provided for all department personnel. A process by which program development is created and encouraged will provide the PFD with benefits that will increase the capabilities of firefighters, officers, and administrative personnel. The benefits of continued growth and organizational development must be obtained for the PFD to continue to operate as an organization that provides multiple services to the community.

The research purpose was to identify contents for a professional development program within the Portsmouth Fire Department. The contents proposed are not specific in all areas to allow for full department participation but directed towards learning job functions, continual education and training, and providing an outline for full department disclosure. This will provide encouragement and motivation through the information gathering process of collecting and distributing information.

The contents of a PDP for Portsmouth should promote the benefits to personnel and the organization. Contents should also provide various developmental courses and a systematic training and education path for department specific roles and responsibilities. The content should include any incentives offered through the program that will serve as motivating or

encouraging factors for all personnel. Use of Albemarle County Fire Rescue can assist with developing a final draft for the Fire Chief.

Portsmouth currently has several different committees for organizational projects that can promote encouragement and involvement. Most of these committees require little technical skill or provide additional learning opportunities. It is recommended to support the committees and add leadership that will develop the skills and abilities of personnel so that others will see the benefits of participation. Committee participation should be included in a PDP as a requirement for career development.

It is recommended that Portsmouth compose a group, or committee, to draft a formal PDP for the department. The group should gather and include input from throughout the organization to develop the proper content for a PDP. A questionnaire of preferred state courses, that can be brought to the city of Portsmouth, will assist with financial planning and yearly budgeting processes. The questionnaire should also include a section for additional courses, conferences, and speakers that personnel would like to be able access. It is recommended to search for outside agencies, non-fire service related, that can provide additional opportunities for growth. State of Virginia Department of Fire Programs and NFA certification courses should be included as course content for both required and additional learning opportunities that are supported by the PDP.

Portsmouth should include training, education, and opportunity for experience for all positions in the department. This should include fire, EMS, fire prevention and investigation, training, and administration to gain the maximum benefit of a PDP. This also encourages personnel to create their own career path as positions become available. It is recommended that

mentoring, and partnering with other agencies be included in the PDP to enable others to learn additional skills and functions within the department.

The PFD needs to provide liability protection as well as education and training for specific positions within the organization. It is recommended that required certifications for positions as drivers, pump operators, technical rescue and hazardous materials team members be identified at a minimum level. Personnel that respond to water related incidents should be certified and prepared for water entry. A progression of education and training for these roles should be included within the program for continual development.

It is recommended that a previous department program for probationary firefighter be reviewed, updated, and included as developmental content within the PDP. Additional manuals and programs should be created to develop skills for driving, pumping, and acting officer positions.

Fire Officers need to be well trained and prepared for daily responsibilities, personnel management, communications, and operational functions. It is recommended that department specific courses be developed and required as part of a progression from firefighter level. Courses should include skills for working with others, documenting and software knowledge, incident command and control, and station level budget management. The executive leadership of the PFD should examine and include the participation, or completion of the City of Portsmouth's leadership program, NFA's Managing Officer Program, Executive Fire Officer Program, and the CPSE designation programs for officer ranks.

The Portsmouth PDP should contain an area explaining any incentive provided by the department or city. These should include educational reimbursements or allowances, stipends, or financial assistance provided for taking training and educational courses outside the City of

Portsmouth. The executive staff should also evaluate the stipend program that is in place and consider incentives for increased EMS certifications, mask room technicians, and other personnel who assist logistics with providing maintenance to equipment outside their normal job functions. One of Portsmouth's biggest encouragement factors is that of promotion. A formal PDP is recommended to include the promotional process and the requirements for each position.

A formal PDP is recommended to be placed in writing and entered as department policy and procedure. The creation of a formal policy and procedures of a PDP shows the departments commitment to employee development and its continuing desire to be an organization that provides professional service for the City and community of Portsmouth, Virginia.

In conclusion, it was discovered that contents of a PDP for Portsmouth Fire Department can provide the necessary information that is encouraging for all personnel and enables continual growth for skills and knowledge. A formal PDP will ensure that PFD can continually benefit in operations, administration, and overall customer service capabilities. It was identified that the fire service is continually maturing and that content is being updated and developed. For this reason, the PFD is recommended to continually monitor, evaluate, and adjust the PDP so that growth and personal development does not remain stagnant, maintain the service delivery expectations, or falter due to technological abilities of the department.

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Appendix A

Survey of Fire Departments

Figure A1

**Is your Fire Department Volunteer or Career?**

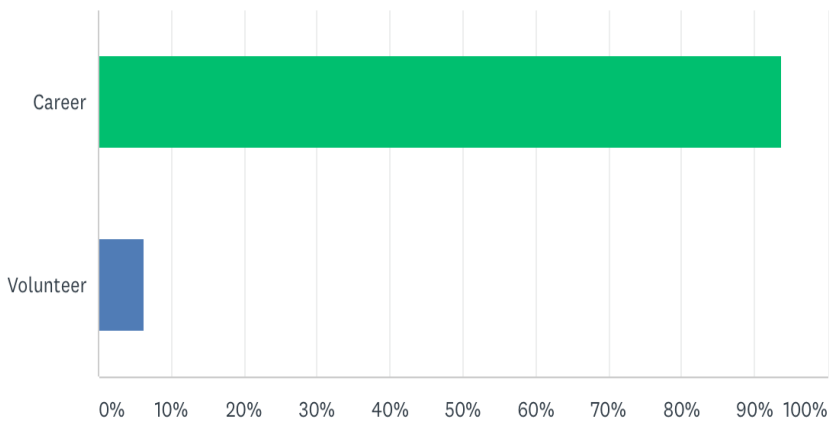


Figure A2

**How many firefighters does your organization have?**

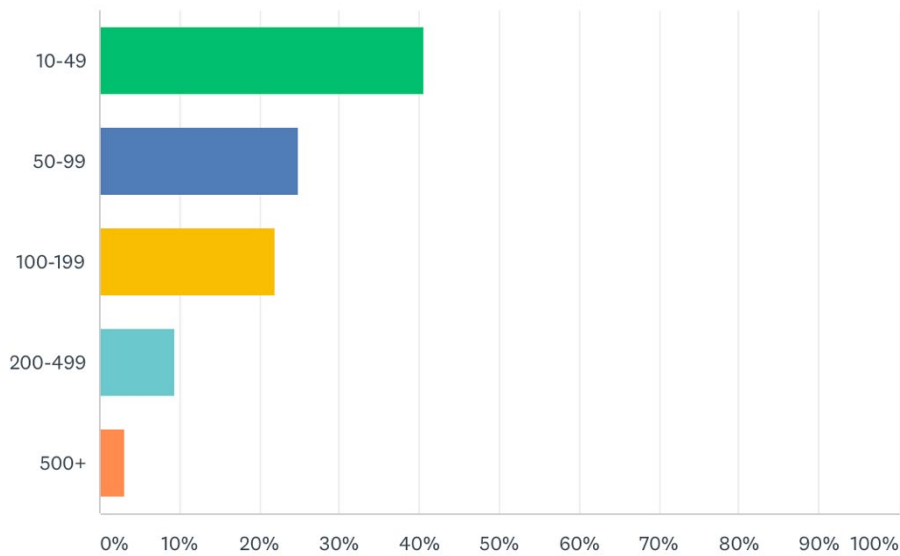


Figure A3

**Is professional development only provided through rank and structure?**

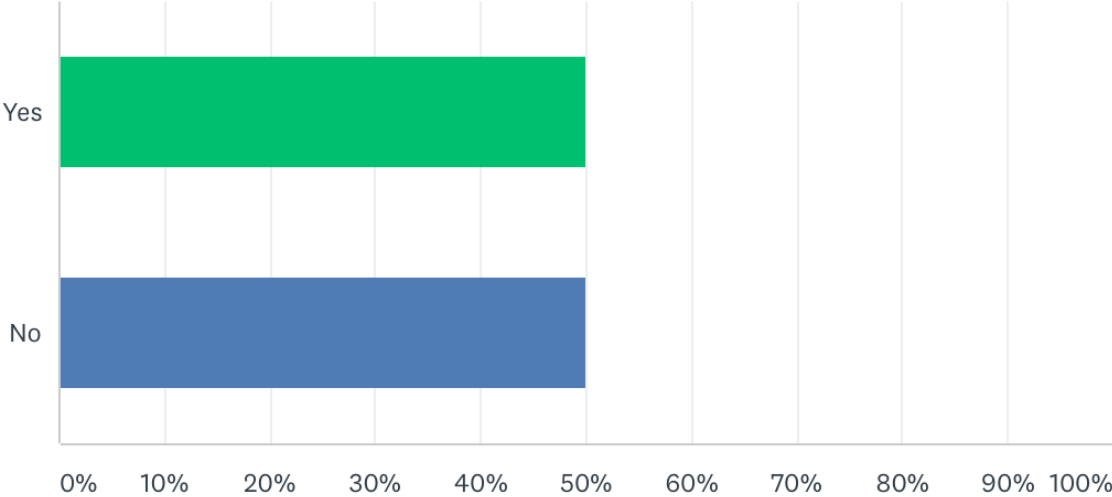


Figure A4

**Does your department have a professional development program?**

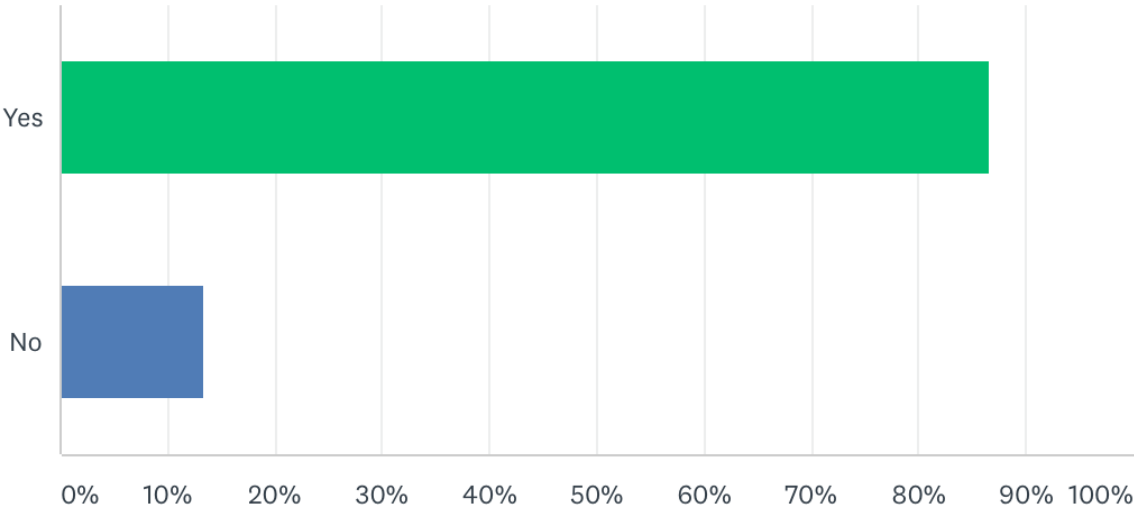


Figure A5

**Is your professional development program voluntary?**

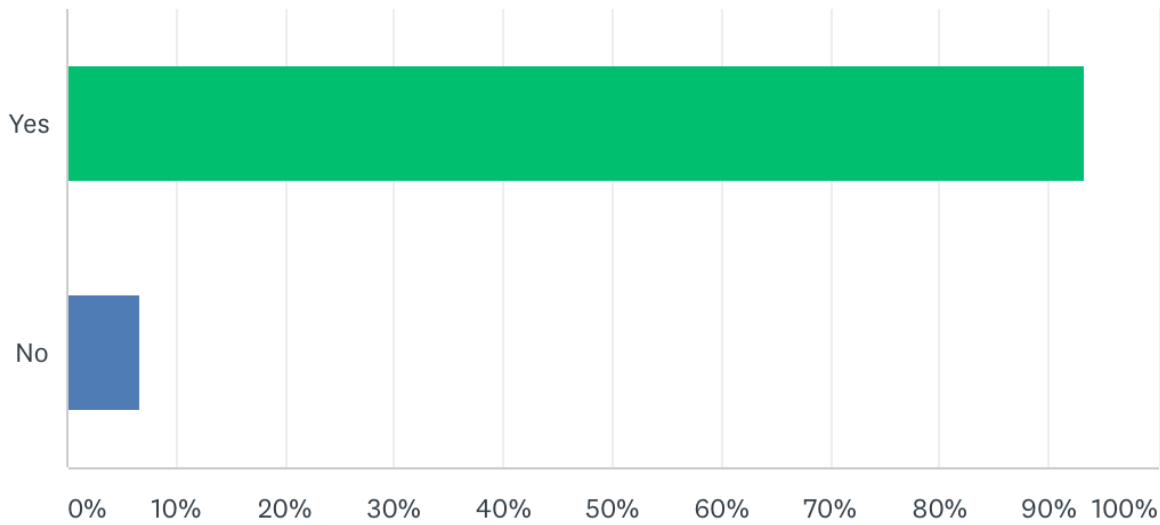


Figure A6

**If you are both Fire and EMS based, is your professional development program for either or all?**

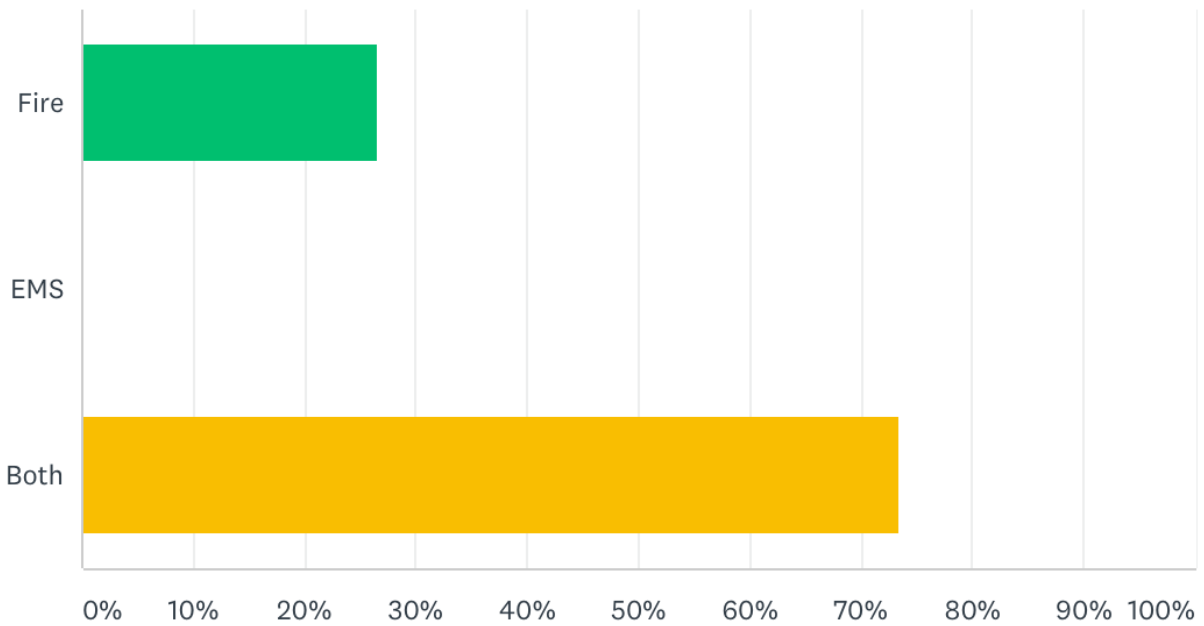


Figure A7

**Opinion: Should Professional Development only be based on rank and promotion for the department?**

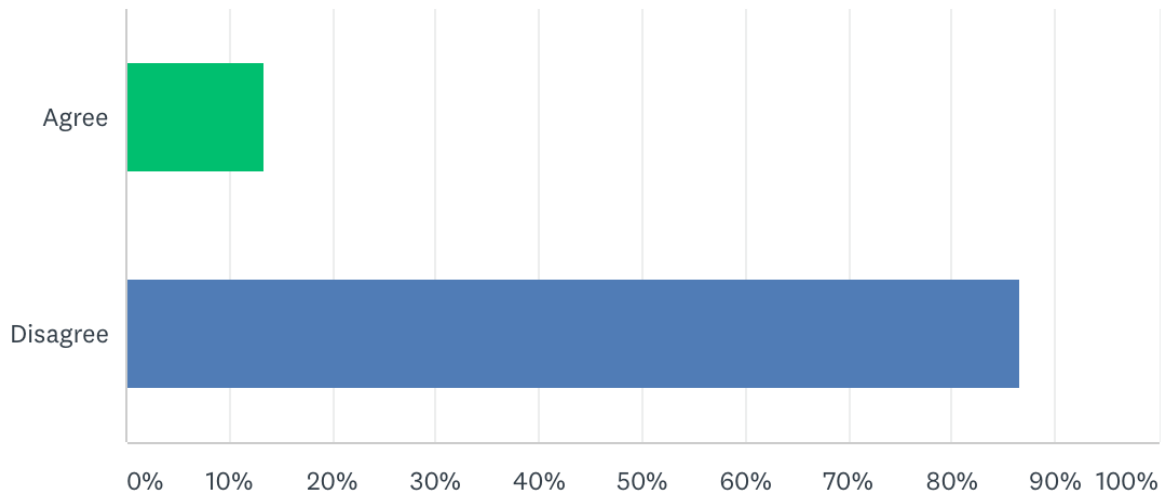


Figure A8

**What ranks does your program benefit?**

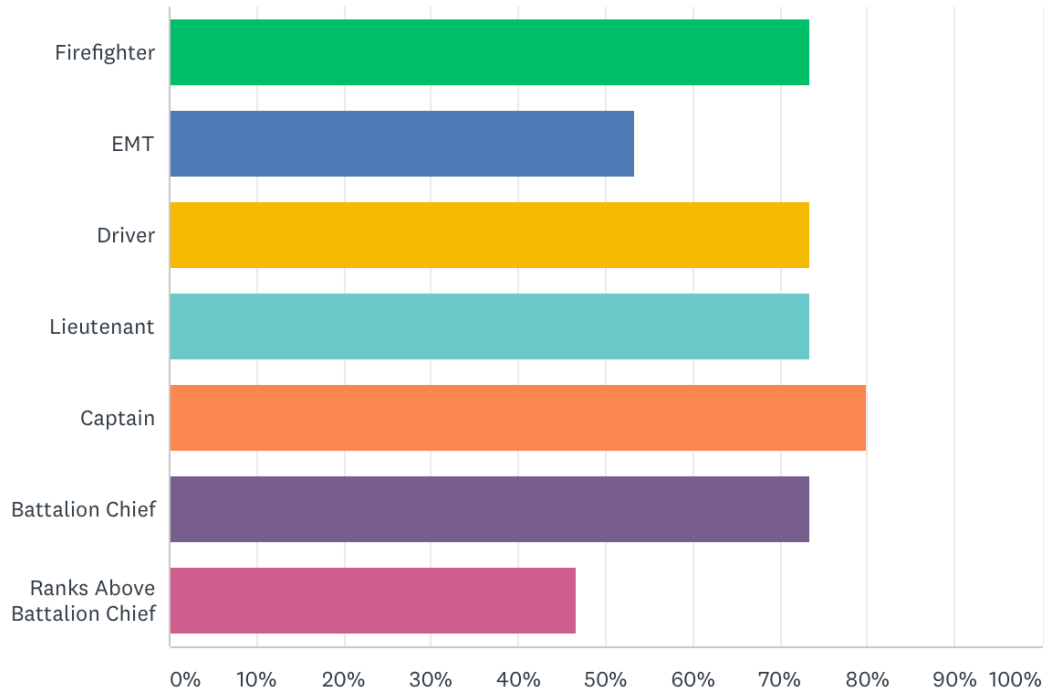


Figure A9

**Which of the following is included in your professional development program?**

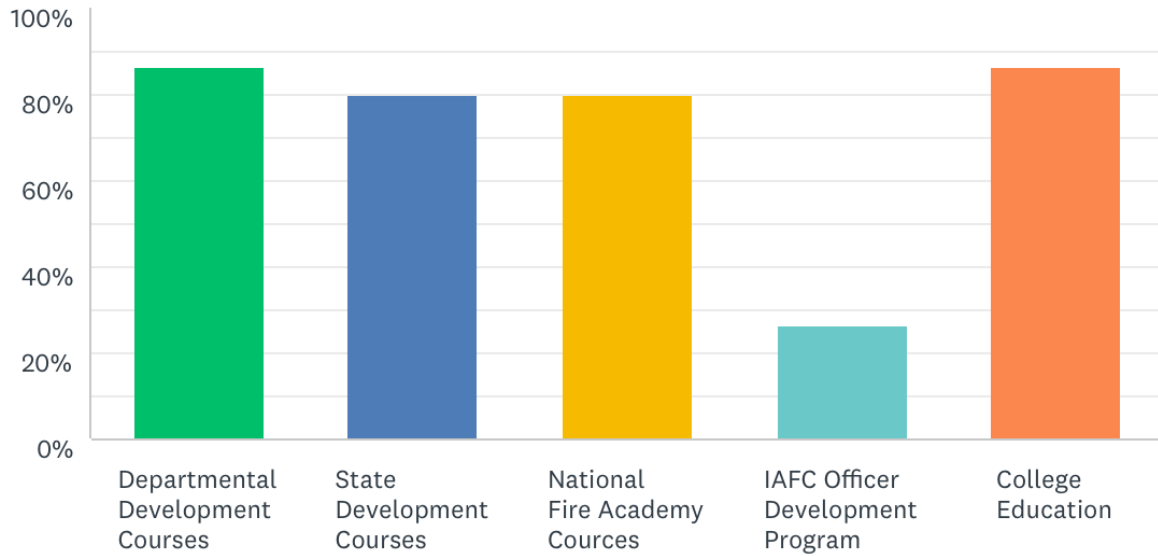


Figure A10

**Does your department provide stipends for progressing through professional development?**

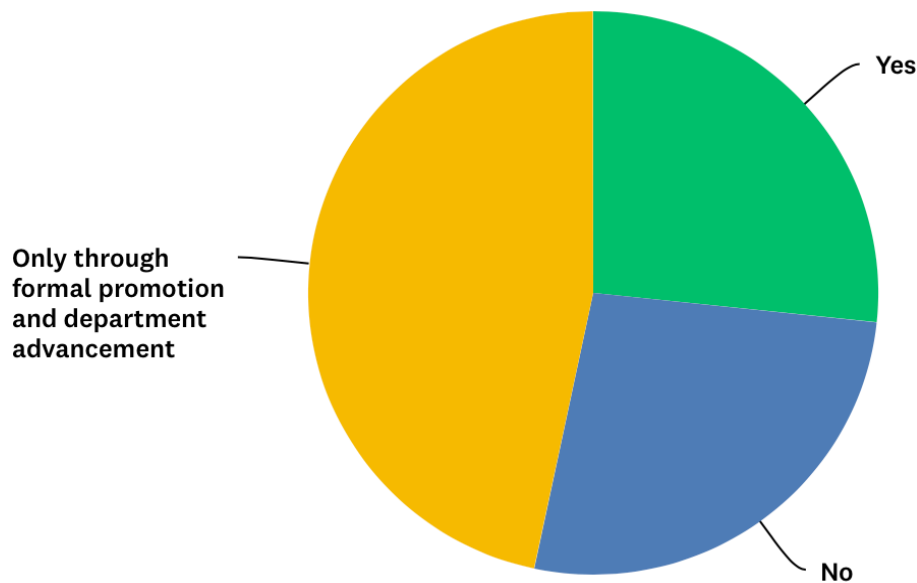


Figure A11

**Do you offer other financial incentives within your program?**

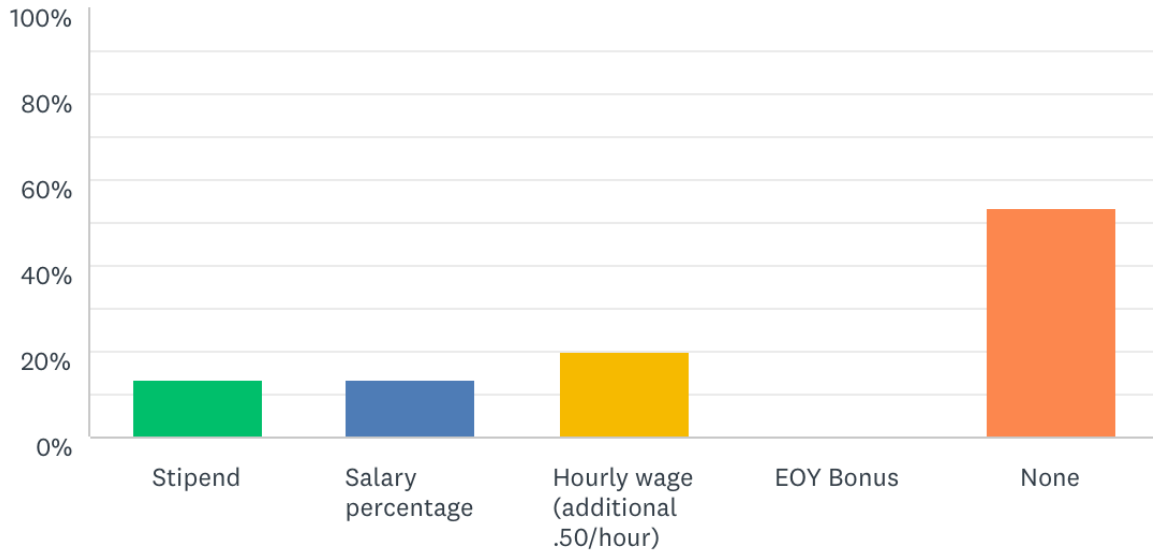


Figure A12

**What additional benefits do you offer in your program?**

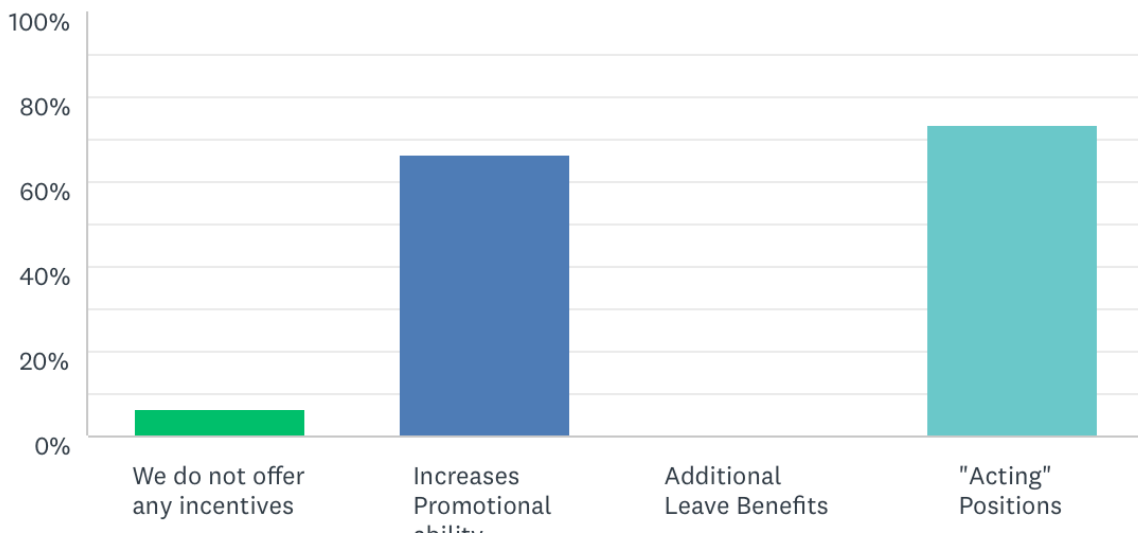




Figure A13

**What skills does your program enhance?**

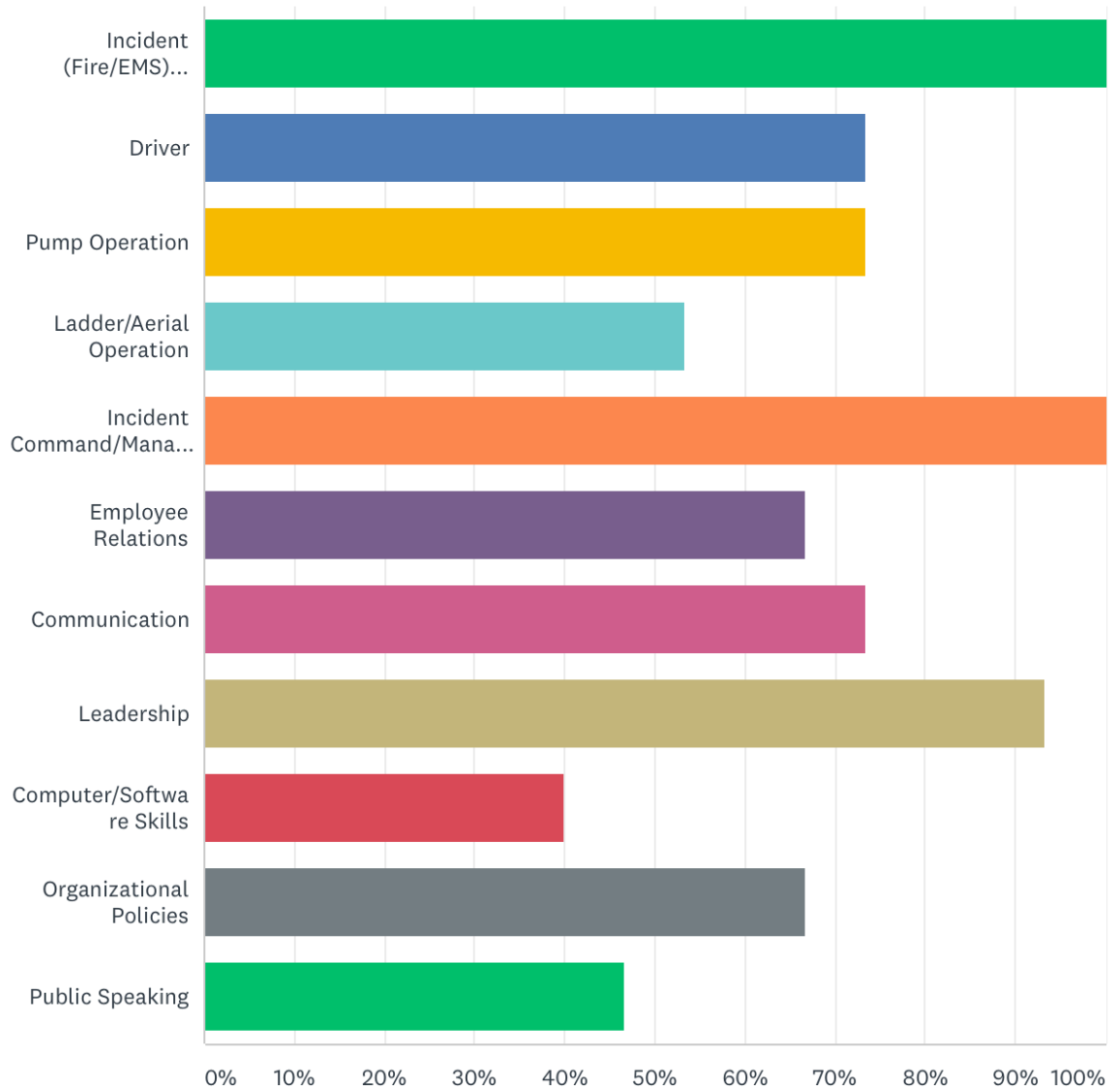


Figure A14

**Is a benefit noticed in the KSA's of your personnel by progressing through your professional development program?**

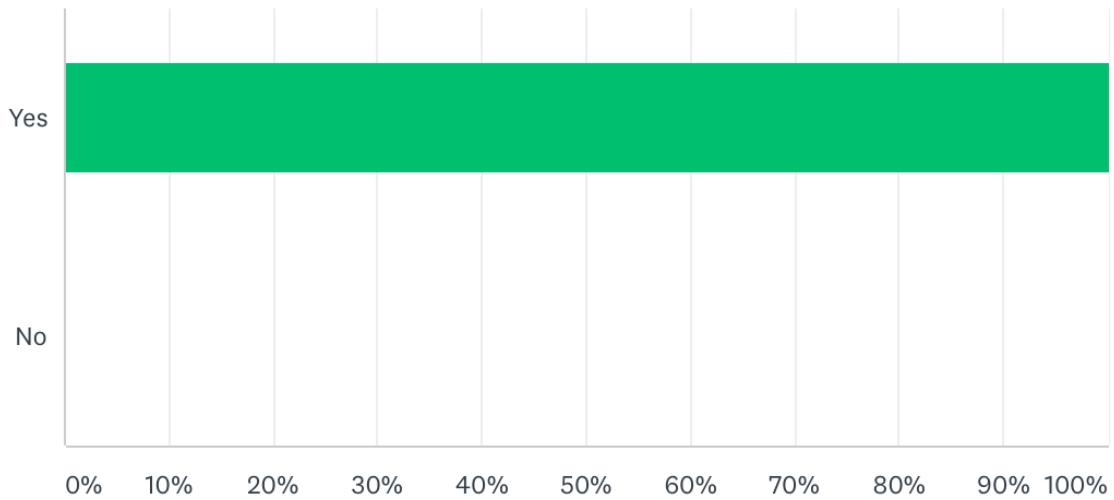


Figure A15

**Has your department noticed operational, administrative, and leadership benefits from your program?**

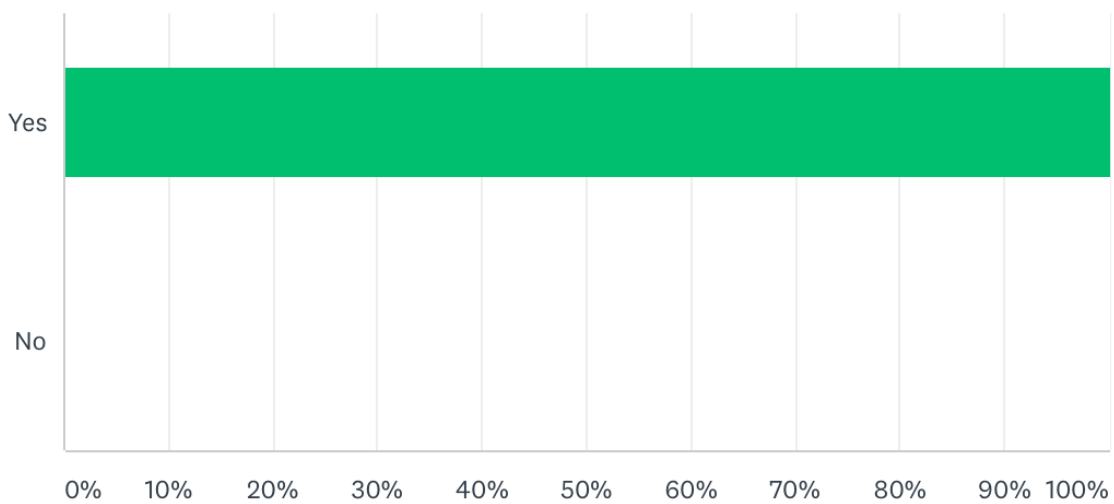
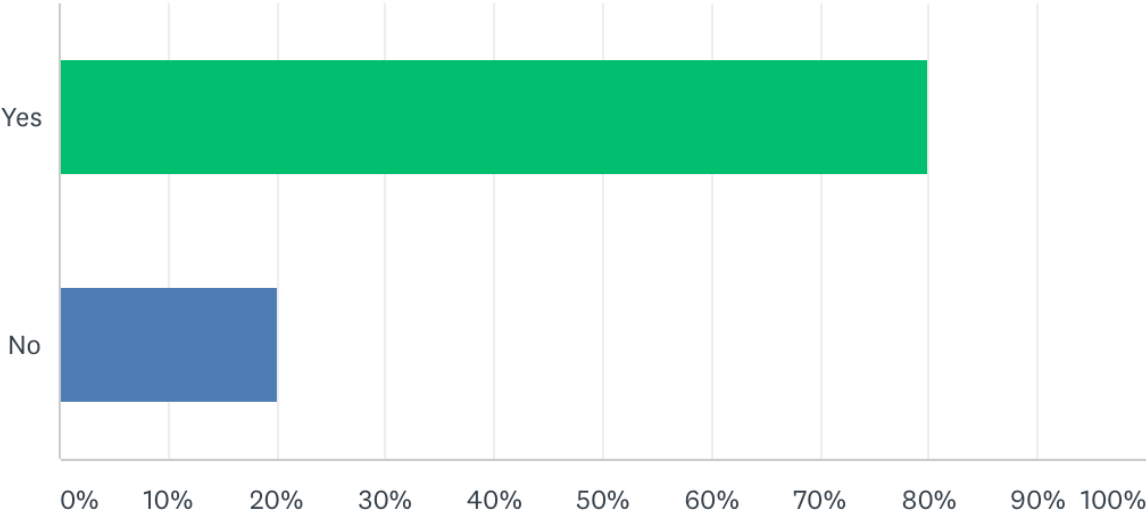


Figure A16

**Could your program be enhanced and if so how?**



## Appendix B

Interview: Retired Deputy Chief Paul Seibert  
Date: November 13, 2018  
Location: Telephone Interview

1. What do you think a Professional Development Program's purpose is?
  - a. Create an environment for officer development.
  - b. Fire service is dynamic and ever changing
  
2. Why was a PDP important for Frisco?
  - a. We were growing at a substantial rate
  - b. FF's were acting as officers
  - c. Hiring lots of new people
  
3. What were your benefits of having a PDP?
  - a. All the new fire officers were maturing
  - b. Learning how to make decision
  - c. Customer service quality improved
  - d. Administrative duties were enhanced
  - e. Communication skills and personal growth was enhanced
  - f. Improved technological capabilities were brought in
  
4. Should a PDP include all ranks?
  - a. No
  - b. But Frisco wasn't yet at that point
  - c. It was designed for officers initially but FF's participated
  - d. We started to talk about requiring accreditation for officers
  - e. The skills taught helped people in there home life
  - f. Helped with behavioral health
  
5. What core competencies included in Frisco's PDP?
  - a. Local and state courses
  - b. National Fire Academy
  - c. Accreditation- was close but went back to technical skills
  - d. Lifestyle and financial course
  - e. Communication
  - f. Computer and technology
  - g. Bring stuff from outside people
  
6. How did Frisco promote and encourage the PDP?
  - a. Brought people from outside the department
  - b. Used experienced likable people to teach courses
  - c. It was self-initiated in watching others grow and develop

## Appendix C

Interview: Richmond, Virginia Deputy Chief Dwayne Bonnette  
Date: November 13, 2018  
Location: Telephone Interview

1. What do you think a Professional Development Program's purpose is?
  - a. Prepare the membership to perform at an optimal level
  - b. Not just a check box system
  - c. True development for increased performance at all levels
  - d. Team performance increases
2. What are the benefits of having a PDP?
  - a. Team performance and individual
  - b. Single teams, rescue teams, task force, haz-mat
  - c. Administrative capabilities are increased.
  - d. Ultimately about customer service
3. Should a PDP include all ranks?
  - a. Yes
  - b. Everyone. Top to bottom
  - c. Not just officers- FF's get new skills
  - d. Officers can continue to learn
4. What core competencies does Richmond desire in the PDP?
  - a. Technical skills
  - b. Administrative
  - c. Fire service dynamic and resistant to change as well
  - d. Learning skills
    - i. See things a different way
    - ii. Languages
    - iii. IAFC officer
    - iv. And of those outside- leadership courses, human resource
5. How does your department promote and encourage people to participate in the PDP?
  - a. Promotions
  - b. Its tough... if people want it they will do
  - c. Make it the norm and expectation
  - d. Make officers, at least a BC attend one conference or class
  - e. PDP must be catered to each department

## Appendix D

Interview: Portsmouth Deputy Chief David Harrington  
Date: November 13, 2018  
Location: Portsmouth Fire Administration

1. What do you think a Professional Development Program's purpose is?
  - a. To develop individuals and prepare them for the step above
2. Is a PDP needed in the Portsmouth Fire Department?
  - a. We need a formal PDP
  - b. Ensures continued growth
3. What would be the hopeful benefits of having a PDP?
  - a. Succession planning
  - b. Improved knowledge, skills, and abilities
4. Should a PDP include all ranks?
  - a. Yes
  - b. Some firefighters will remain at that rank throughout their career
  - c. We need them through to Deputy Chief and Fire Chief for succession planning
5. What core competencies should we include in a PDP?
  - a. More state classes offered locally
  - b. Incident command
  - c. National Fire Academy- MFO, EFO
  - d. People need to take more college level courses
6. How can Portsmouth promote and encourage a PDP?
  - a. We have stipends for tech rescue now
  - b. State stipends for Haz-Mat
  - c. The city offers tuition reimbursement
  - d. Training leave for personnel
  - e. The raises offered through promotion should be motivation