

**INCREASING EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN FIRE SAFETY EDUCATION  
PROGRAMS USING NON-MONETARY REWARDS**

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

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## **ABSTRACT**

This research project evaluated various non-monetary means of increasing employee participation in fire safety education activities. The problem confronting the Englewood Fire Division (EFD) was it had no program(s) to provide incentive(s) to motivate more employees to participate fire safety education activities. The purpose of this research project was to develop a program(s) for the EFD that emphasizes primarily non-monetary incentives to motivate employees to participate in fire safety education.

Evaluative, descriptive and action research methods were employed to (a) determine the relationship between rewards and the achievement of organizational objectives, (b) to evaluate the relationship between rewards and employee performance, (c) to determine which non-monetary rewards have the greatest influence on employee behavior, (d) to determine which of the identified non-monetary rewards hold the highest value to EFD employees, and (e) to develop a program(s) designed to initiate higher participation in the Division's fire safety education programs.

The procedures utilized included a review of current literature describing the relationship between rewards and employee motivation, the development of a survey to determine which rewards EFD employees value, and the development of programs designed to increase participation in fire safety education.

The research revealed that an effective rewards program could have a significant impact on the accomplishment of organizational objectives and influence employee behavior. The research identified non-monetary rewards that effectively motivate employees. Additionally, a survey determined which rewards EFD employees value. Three programs were developed to apply this information.

Three programs were recommended based on the research. The first program was designed to link advancement to participation in fire safety education programs. The second program incorporated progressive participation in fire safety education into the firefighter career path. The third program involved the use of low-cost on-the-spot rewards to provide recognition to employees participating in fire safety education activities.

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## INTRODUCTION

The City of Englewood Department of Safety Services – Fire Division serves a population of approximately 34,000 people in an urban environment encompassing 6.5 square miles. The Fire Division is a career fire service organization that provides fire and emergency medical services to a lower-middle to middle class community. Over the past 20 years the organization has placed an increasing emphasis on the fire safety education component of fire prevention. As a relatively small career organization (60 full-time members, including administrative staff), the Englewood Fire Division has limited resources to commit to the ever-increasing demands that the fire safety education effort presents. Historically, the Fire Division has relied on off-duty line personnel to volunteer time or to work overtime to fill these increasing demands. However, this approach has resulted in limited participation in these important programs by the majority of the organization's personnel. The Fire Division has recognized the need to develop strategies to improve employee participation in its fire safety education programs. The problem the Fire Division is confronted with is that there is currently no program to provide incentive(s) to motivate a larger number of employees to participate in the fire safety education efforts of the organization, or to reinforce the importance of this effort to the overall mission of the Division.

The purpose of this research project was to develop a program, or programs, for the City of Englewood Fire Division that employ primarily non-monetary incentives for the purpose of motivating employees to participate in the fire safety education efforts of the organization. Evaluative, descriptive and action research methods will be utilized to answer the following questions:

1. How are employee rewards related to the achievement of organizational objectives?

2. What is the relationship between rewards and employee performance?
3. Which non-monetary rewards have the greatest influence on employee behavior?
4. Which of the identified non-monetary employee rewards are valued the highest by the employees of the Englewood Fire Division?
5. How can the identified rewards be applied to influence higher employee participation in the Englewood Fire Division's fire safety education programs?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The mission statement of the city of Englewood Department of Safety Services is as follows:

*The Department of Safety Services exists to provide a safe, secure environment for the community by minimizing the impact of crime, disaster, disorder, fire, hazardous conditions, illness and injury, through information, public education, quality service, and the efficient utilization of resources.*

During the last decade, the Englewood Department of Safety Services – Fire Division has recognized the increasing importance of fire safety education in its effort to prevent fires and injuries in the community. A code enforcement program utilizing the Uniform Fire Code and targeting the business community has enjoyed considerable success as a fire prevention strategy. However, the need to reach and influence those in the residential community remains. The Fire Division currently employs one full-time staff member to coordinate the delivery of fire safety education programs in the city. The Englewood Fire Division (EFD) is active in a number of fire safety education programs throughout the year that target the elderly, the local school system and the business community. While a core group of employees has supported this effort with their time and energy, it has become increasingly apparent that the policies of the EFD need to reinforce the importance of this proactive effort. The drain on the few willing participants in the

fire safety education effort and the need for increasing human resources to support it, has made it imperative that something be done to increase interest in, and support for, this important mission.

Over the past several years the EFD has emphasized the need for verbal communications and teaching skills in its hiring process. The strategy was, and is, to seek to hire employees that have the basic skills needed to succeed in the public education arena. While this strategy has succeeded in providing some much needed interest in support of the fire safety education effort, it has fallen short of filling the increasing needs the program has for willing and able participants. As mentioned in the introduction to this paper, historically, off-duty personnel have been recruited to provide the needed participation in the fire safety education programs, sometimes as volunteers, other times in return for overtime compensation. However, the same small group of employees has volunteered repeatedly for these opportunities, and their enthusiasm is wearing thin. There is a need organizationally to develop strategies to create incentives for greater participation in the fire safety education efforts of the division.

Researching strategies designed to encourage greater participation in the fire safety education programs of the Division is correlative with the National Fire Academy's Executive Development curriculum in the area of Service Quality/Marketing. It is essential that the EFD improve its quality of service in the fire safety education arena. This research also supports the U.S. Fire Administration's operational objectives of reducing the loss of life from fire by 15%, as well as involving the local fire service in the creation of a multi-hazard risk reduction plan. Increasing the available pool of human resources for fire safety education is one method of improving service quality, reducing the loss of life from fire and reducing other associated hazard risks in the community. Encouraging greater participation through the use of incentives will also serve to underscore the importance the Division places on this aspect of its mission.

Critical to the outcome of the proposed research is cost-effectiveness. This is why research was focused primarily on non-monetary incentives. The City of Englewood is a small urban community with a limited property tax base. The primary revenue source for city services is sales tax. As a result of the continual fluctuation of sales tax revenues, the elected city officials tend towards conservatism in their financial planning. Thus, funds for direct monetary incentives are not easily obtained or retained. Additionally, creating a program that employs non-monetary incentives supports the Division's mission to provide services "through the efficient utilization of resources".

As stated previously, the goal of this research for the future is to impact the number of participants in the EFD's fire safety education programs. Increased participation will serve to increase the quality and quantity of the presentations the Division makes in the future. Through the use of incentives related to this important effort it is expected that the EFD will also shape its future leadership towards strength in this area, further enhancing the over-all effectiveness of public education in the community.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Over the last few decades the business community has undergone a radical transformation. The world has become smaller, not physically, but in terms of communications, competition and economics. This has radically changed the way successful businesses do business and how they look at their employees. This transformation has impacted the private sector significantly and is impacting the public sector as well, both in direct and indirect ways. "Organizations are becoming more responsive to their customers, reducing costs, and improving quality." (Wilson, 1999, p.1) The fact is that our competition is no longer just the neighboring

jurisdiction; it is wherever in the world someone is doing the job better than we are. Today's customer demands value in both products as well as services. "Even more significantly, they do not have to tolerate sub-par performance; they can readily turn to alternative sources that offer faster, cheaper, better and more innovative products and services" (Lawler, 2000; p. 15). The organizations that are succeeding in this global environment are those that have recognized that their people are the greatest factor in their success. "The new organization that is evolving places a greater value on employees than organizations have in the past. It achieves more by creating a process for employees to share in the results that they help achieve" (Wilson, p. 2). Wilson (p. 3) and Lawler (p. 18) both point out that today's successful organizations match their employee reward systems to their strategies, goals and values. An organization's reward system shapes its culture, and defines for the employee what type of behaviors the organization wants to pay for and reinforce (Wilson, p. 294). Wilson also points out that these systems define for the employee, "What's in it for me" (p. 3)?

Lawler argues for what he calls the *new logic*, which describes the way an organization creates the competencies and capabilities in its employees that are necessary to create a competitive advantage (p. 24). Every organization attempts to control the competencies and capabilities of its people in order to accomplish its goals, the difference is in the methodology. "The traditional approach", states Lawler, "argues that control can best be obtained through incentive pay, close supervision, hierarchy, and the careful delineation of responsibilities" (p. 24). The new logic approach involves employees in the business of the organization, looks to them for innovation and solutions, and rewards them when the business succeeds (pp. 24, 25). Some of what is driving this change is an increased competition to obtain and retain human capital. According to Wyatt (2001) 83% of surveyed companies reported difficulty in recruiting

employees that have the skills that are critical to the success of their organizations.

Organizations must develop a rewards strategy that attracts, motivates and retains the human capital they need to succeed.

In order for a reward to be effective, it must be meaningful to the employee. Further, Wilson points out, rewards “create a mechanism for sharing the benefits of success and form a link between what is expected from people and the results that are achieved” (p. 3). In successful organizations, people are no longer valued merely in conjunction with the job they perform; rather they are valued by the skills and abilities they bring to bear on the business strategies of the organization. Companies today invest in *human capital* and employees barter their personal capital in terms of the competencies and capabilities they bring to the table that are useful to the organization. In order to obtain and retain the human capital necessary to be successful, organizations must “create an environment where people are valued for achieving desired results” (Wilson, p. 293). Rewards must be linked to those activities and behaviors that promote the success of the organization. “The reward system sends messages to managers and employees about what is important and valued by the organization” (Wilson, p. 294). This linkage of organizational goals with employee rewards creates an environment where both the organization and the employee can succeed, and where critical talent is developed, maintained and retained.

What motivates employees? Much has been written and researched regarding human motivation. Abraham Maslow, a research psychologist, suggested a hierarchy of needs that placed basic survival and security needs, i.e. food, clothing, and shelter, at the bottom of a pyramid of human needs. Needs such as acceptance, respect, self-esteem and self-actualization arrive further up the pyramid. Maslow postulated that the higher needs cannot be addressed until

the more basic needs are first satisfied. Once satisfied, the basic needs are no longer motivators (Smoke, pp. 132-133). Thus, some researchers have suggested that money or compensation, once an individual earns enough to meet his/her need for security (a basic need), is no longer a motivator. Frederick Herzberg modified this view somewhat by distinguishing between what he termed as *hygiene factors* and *motivators*. According to Herzberg, while a lack of fair compensation can be a cause of employee dissatisfaction, money alone is not a motivator for employees (Smoke, p.134). Lawler argues, first of all, that neither Maslow nor Herzberg intended to discount money as a motivator. Second, organizations should not eliminate their consideration of money as part of a reward system; rather, they should consider how to use it to get the behaviors they want (Lawler, pp. 68-70). Gubman Consulting (2001, January) cites a survey that corroborates this view; “The survey (Watson Wyatt’s Fifth Annual Strategic Rewards Survey) also found that employers were doing more to align monetary rewards with business goals”.

Today, most experts agree that for a reward to motivate an individual, it must have meaning for him/her personally. Additionally, for monetary rewards, the amount of the reward is key to its ability to motivate the individual. Lawler suggests that for a monetary reward to be sufficient to motivate an individual, it must equate to 5% or more of the individual’s annual salary. However, lesser monetary rewards can have a significant effect on motivation when they are tied to other forms of recognition (p. 71). According to Lawler, the following factors are key to symbolic or non-financially significant forms of recognition:

1. The rewards must be public (gives recognition)
2. The rewards are given infrequently (they are special and significant)
3. The reward process is credible (there is true substance to the cause of the reward)

4. The rewards are associated with winners (history validates the previous recipients)
5. The rewards are meaningful in the culture (they represent value in the context of the organization) (pp. 72-73)

Peters & Waterman suggest that inherent in motivation is the desire each of us has to be a winner. “All of us are self-centered, suckers for a bit of praise, and generally like to think of ourselves as winners...none of us is really as good as he or she would like to think, but rubbing our noses daily in that reality doesn’t do us a bit of good” (p. 55). Motivation, according to Peters & Waterman is also *intrinsic* or internal. We desperately seek for meaning in our work. Organizations that offer us meaning will tend to get higher performance from us in return. At the same time we need to feel independent, to be the captain of our ship, and to stand out from the group (p. 56). Successful organizations, according to Peters & Waterman, use this knowledge, the idea that we like to be winners, to design systems that “continually reinforce that notion” (p. 57). These organizations are constantly capitalizing on positive reinforcement and make great use of non-monetary incentives. Corresponding to this is their understanding of what psychologists term *attribution theory*. The theory suggests that individuals tend to attribute their successes to their own effort or talent and their failures to whatever system they work in. Consequently, a motivational strategy that emphasizes successful behaviors uses this inclination to build further successes, since failures would only be blamed on the system anyway. Furthermore, research in motivation reveals that, “mere association with past personal success apparently leads to more persistence, higher motivation, or something that makes us do better” (Peters & Waterman, pp. 58, 59).

B.F. Skinner, the psychologist famous for his theories on behavioral modification, gives helpful insight into the power of positive reinforcement, or rewarding desired behavior. Skinner

argues that while negative reinforcement does initiate behavioral change, often the results are unpredictable as well as undesirable. For example, instead of achieving a desired behavior, the individual may simply learn to avoid the negative consequence of the undesired behavior. In contrast, positive reinforcement also impacts behavior, but generally in the desired direction and achieving the desired result. Additionally, Peters & Waterman point out, the use of negative reinforcement ignores “people’s dominant desire to be winners” (p. 68).

Skinner suggests several key factors that ensure the success of positive reinforcement. First, the reinforcement must be as *specific* as possible. An individual must know without question what behavior is being reinforced. Second, the reinforcement must be *immediate*. This serves to ensure that the reinforcement (or reward) is *associated* with the specific behavior that is being reinforced. Third, the behavior that is being reinforced must be *achievable*. Big goals must be broken down into smaller objectives that can be reinforced along the way to breed an environment of success. Fourth, desired behavior or performance must get the intangible notice of top management. Recognition from the top of the organization says, “Your contribution does really matter (is significant) and is appreciated”. Finally, positive reinforcement must be *unpredictable* and *intermittent*. Smaller, unexpected rewards are often more powerful than big ones that are expected and considered obligatory (Peters & Waterman, pp. 70-71).

External motivation as a result of positive reinforcement is only a part of the picture, argue Peters & Waterman, “the larger context of high performance, we believe, is intrinsic motivation” (p. 72). Research suggests that an individual will not commit to a task unless he or she feels it has inherent value. In concert with this notion is the desire each of us has to find meaning in life and in our work. Excellent companies, Peters & Waterman suggest, use positive reinforcement to shape the behavior of their employees with the ultimate goal in mind of shaping

their values. The leaders in these organizations literally strive to “make meanings” (p. 75).

These meanings ultimately define the culture of an organization in such a way that its employees instinctively know what to do in given situations because the organization’s values are so imbedded in them. “The excellent companies are marked by very strong cultures, so strong that you either buy into their norms or get out” (p. 77).

In addition to meaning, employees also value self-determination. It is important for an employee to sense that his/her decisions relative to performance can have a direct impact on his/her future. Studies show that when people have this sense of control over their destinies they tend to be more committed to tasks and perform at a higher level. Excellent companies utilize this desire to self determine and control one’s destiny by providing diverse opportunities for employees to stick out in tasks that they themselves consider achievable while at the same time giving them greater latitude in the means they use to accomplish those tasks. This type of approach builds on what psychologists term the *illusion of control*. The illusion is built on perceived options, i.e. the greater number of options I believe I have, whether real or imagined, the more control I believe I have and exercise in my choices (Peters & Waterman, p. 80-81).

Lawler ties much of the above together in a current theory of work motivation termed *expectancy theory*. Expectancy theory, in short, suggests that employees will be motivated to perform “in ways that they believe will lead to rewards they value” (p. 76). Therefore, if an organization wants to motivate a certain type of behavior, it needs to find out what its employees value and offer that as a reward for that behavior. Conversely, if a company fails to reward certain behaviors, it can reliably expect to see less of those behaviors. Intrinsic rewards also figure into this paradigm. While an organization may provide external rewards for certain behaviors, the individual may also reward him/herself for accomplishing something he/she

perceives to be worthwhile. Expectancy theory also argues that rewards must be designed to match the difficulty of the goals they are attached to. If an employee is to be motivated to accomplish a very difficult goal, then the reward, either external, intrinsic or both, must be significant enough to justify the investment and risk of failure to the individual. Consequently, a small reward where there is great risk of failure and/or a high demand of effort results in low motivation (p. 78).

While fire safety education is not necessarily new to the fire service, Kinni (1993) describes well the situation that confronts the Englewood Fire Division in its effort to gain increased numbers of personnel involved in this important program. Whenever a new program is initiated (or in this case a new emphasis on a program), “20 percent of your colleagues will enthusiastically support it, 60 percent will adopt a wait-and-see attitude, and 20 percent will actively resist it”. Kinni acknowledges the importance of motivation in these type circumstances, but points out that “people are motivated by their own desires, not the company’s or the manager’s desires.” Kinni argues that while no one can cause another individual to be motivated, an organization can create an environment that fosters motivation.

Creating a motivation rich work environment begins with the manager knowing him/herself by evaluating his/her ability to empower others and help them capture his/her vision for the future. Second, the manager must know his/her employees; this allows the manager to determine what his/her employees want, so he/she can offer what they want to get what he/she wants. Knowing his/her employees also allows the manager to actively recognize each one’s strengths and positively address his/her weaknesses. Third, the manager must set the attitude. This, according to Kinni, involves using predominantly positive reinforcement, recognizing and implementing employee suggestions whenever possible, and making the workplace a fun place

to be. Fourth, the manager must develop goals that mutually address both organizational needs as well as the employee's needs. Goals must be realistic, demanding, and clearly communicated. Fifth, the manager must monitor progress. This involves breaking down big goals into bite size pieces so the manager and employees can evaluate progress and make adjustments as necessary. Finally, it is essential to celebrate success. Kinni points out; "Appreciation and recognition for a job well done consistently places near the top of employee 'want lists' ... recognition is one of the classic motivators".

Norris (1992) describes four motivational models that utilize differing approaches to motivate employees. The first, the *persuasion model*, involves using positive reinforcement to develop a can do attitude in the employee. The persuasion model also allows for learning by giving the employee the latitude to make mistakes. Positive reinforcement can take the form of giving the employee interesting assignments, more challenging tasks, a greater opportunity to work unsupervised, involvement in organizational decision-making, time-off with pay, as well as providing praise and recognition by means of awards and symbols of achievement. Under the persuasion model, goal setting and action planning address unsatisfactory performance.

The next motivational approach, according to Norris, is the *productivity gainsharing model*. This model attempts to motivate the employee by giving him/her direct involvement in decisions regarding how his/her work can be improved. The methods used here are *job rotation*, allowing the employee to rotate to a different location or position to be able to better understand how other parts of the organization function; *Open communication*, the method by which the employee is allowed to give input into their work situation and receive feedback; and *performance feedback*, the process whereby the employee is informed of how his/her

performance matches up to organizational goals and expectations, including the development of an improvement plan when necessary.

The third model Norris describes is the *job enrichment model*. This model is based on the research conducted by Frederick Herzberg and emphasizes the use of motivators to “increase the employee’s psychological growth” (1992). Norris states, “Job enrichment is not a one-time solution to motivation problems but is rather a continual function of management.” Job enrichment incorporates achievement, recognition, the work itself, increased responsibility, job-related growth and advancement, all seen by Herzberg as motivators, to increase the performance of employees. Each of the above factors, argues Norris, must be incorporated in such way that employees are involved in the process of implementation.

The final model Norris presents is the *separation model*. This model recognizes that there are some employees that will not be motivated by any approach tried. In such cases, argues Norris, their termination may provide motivation to others who tend to be poor performers. Additionally, Norris points out, while this alternative is a last resort, it is important for management to have the courage to take the step when necessary as poor performers tend to drag down the performance of those around them.

Hennessey (1991) relates motivation and incentives to the fire service specifically. It is difficult, Hennessey points out, to incorporate pay-based incentives in fire service organizations due to the fact that most career organizations are bound by a union contract in relation to compensation. As a result, most fire organizations only offer punitive incentives that are related to poor performance or unacceptable behaviors. “Many times firefighters only hear about their job performance when it is not acceptable to their supervisor” (Hennessey, 1991). Hennessey suggests that fire organizations learn to recognize and reward performance that is special or

above the expectations outlined in job descriptions. For example, if a firefighter exceeds the department's minimum certification requirements or earns college credits, the organization could offer tuition reimbursement or some other type of reward. Some examples Hennessey offers include: A letter or memo acknowledging the action or performance of an individual; A plaque or gift recognizing a contribution or effort; A citation or medal awarded for the performance of either an individual or an entire company; Or, finally, a monetary or compensatory time award given in recognition of an accomplishment. Hennessey points out that, to be effective, rewards must be "formal, consistent and tailored to the members of your department" (Hennessey, 1991). Firefighters, like the general population, are motivated differently, so it is essential that the supervisor know what is important to his/her people. A reward system, says Hennessey, also capitalizes on the natural competitiveness of firefighters. When one is rewarded, it will stimulate the others to a higher level of performance seeking recognition in kind.

ICMA's Amy Cohen Paul (1985) cites Philip C. Grant in support of the idea that money is no longer a chief motivator; "The average worker wants job security, interesting, challenging work, good relations with supervisors and peers, opportunities for advancement, and status and recognition in return for performance". According to Paul, some of the differing methods organizations use to motivate employees include the following: Educational incentives, specifically tuition reimbursement and time off to attend classes; Variation in working hours, including flextime and a four day work week; Task system, which allows an employee to leave work once a specified task is accomplished while still receiving a full day's pay; Attendance incentives, which provide both monetary and non-monetary rewards for increasing attendance and reducing tardiness; Job enrichment, which includes methods whereby an employee's job is made more interesting or his/her responsibility is increased; And awards programs, the use of

incentive programs that reward employees for a variety of organizational improvements or cost reductions. Paul lists in order, educational incentives, attendance incentives, task system, and variation in working hours to be the most highly used of motivational methods in organizations.

“Money might talk”, says Clark (2000), “but a surprisingly large number of employees now say what they earn isn’t as important to them as how much they’re appreciated for the work they do”. Management consultants suggest that a company’s use of incentives is directly proportional to how much they value their people. Employees indicate that the work environment is a key to their performance. Clark argues; “The good news is simple applause and appreciation could be what employees want most, a common-sense solution without a price tag” (2000). Bob Nelson of Nelson Motivation Inc. says, “Praise is priceless, yet it costs nothing”. Nelson offers a simple acronym for effective praise called “ASAP cubed...That is, praise should be given as soon, as sincere, as specific, as personal, as positive and as proactive as possible” (Clark, 2000). Soon means as close to the event as possible; sincere means to genuinely appreciate the performance or contribution; specific means to describe exactly what generated the praise; personal means in person, face-to-face; positive means no “buts...with a bit of criticism thrown in”; and finally, proactive means finding out what employees want and getting it for them.

Clark suggests that employees like to be consulted about their work environment. Those that have a say tend to be more productive. The opportunity for advancement is one of the better motivators. Employees crave feedback and like to have the power to improve their performance. Finally and “most importantly”, Clark concludes, “is once you’ve asked employees what they want, be sure to gear incentives toward those desires” (2000).

Fuller & Tinkham (2002) pose a caveat in the process of rewarding employees. They stress the necessity of *differentiation* in any successful rewards program. Differentiation, in simple terms, means that in an organization the top performers are rewarded more and/or more frequently than the average or low performers. This process is particularly important in tough economic times when the monies available to reward employees are limited. Differentiation recognizes the efforts the organization wants to foster “in a way that produces the greatest return and clearly communicates the value placed on top performance”. According to Fuller and Tinkham, differentiation provides the following benefits to an organization:

1. Aligns rewards with performance and organizational values
2. Promotes the retention of top performers
3. Promotes the attrition (or performance improvement) of low performers
4. Supports the business strategy
5. Provides visible evidence that certain employees create more value than others
6. Makes the best use of scarce reward resources (2002)

Wiscombe (2002) cites a study performed by Nelson (above) that reinforces the notion that non-monetary incentives have a significant impact on performance. In a study, conducted from September 1999 through June of 2000, Nelson queried managers and employees from 34 organizations and found that recognizing employees with non-monetary rewards increased motivation, increased performance, provided a practical means of feedback, helped in getting work done, increased productivity, and facilitated the achievement of the manager’s personal and professional goals. Nelson states; “If you look at companies employees love to work for, you’ll find that they recognize their people and tell them they’re doing a great job.... Non-cash awards and incentives lower stress, absenteeism, and turnover, and raise morale, productivity,

competitiveness, revenue, and profit.” Nelson’s mantra, says Wiscombe, is; “You get what you reward” (2002).

Reddy (2000) underscores the need for non-monetary incentives in the workplace. “Recognition is a powerful motivator” that establishes a “positive work culture”, insists Reddy. Recognition also serves to encourage employees to believe in themselves, to deliver quality products and services, and to generate loyalty to the organization.

Platten (2001) reports that employers identified the following five reward factors as those rated the highest by their top performers, under age 30:

1. Opportunity to develop skills
2. Opportunity for promotion
3. Compensation
4. Vacation/paid time off
5. Type of people/culture

In keeping with the above, Wyatt (2001) makes an important distinction regarding what types of rewards motivate employees. Different demographic groups are motivated differently.

Employees that are younger in the workforce or are involved in the more technical professions tend to be more motivated by the prospect of professional development and promotional opportunities, while women and older workers tend to be more motivated by benefits.

The GMP Institute (2002, November) suggests the use of non-monetary rewards is often overlooked by organizations. Non-monetary rewards can be used more frequently and tend to have a longer-lasting effect than monetary rewards. The GMP Institute points out that many of these type rewards can be given “on-the-spot when an employee is doing an especially good job, which, reinforces good performance, provides recognition of the employee when peers are

present, and encourages everyone to strive for the best”. These types of rewards are *internal*, according to the GMP Institute, due to the fact that they address the internal needs of employees such as self-esteem, recognition and fulfillment. Accordingly, whether or not an employee’s internal needs are being met significantly impacts his/her job satisfaction and motivation.

Motivation is one of the top five problems fire chiefs face in their organizations today, according to Carter (1991). Typically, a lack of motivation is attributed to a lackadaisical attitude on the part of the members in the organizational trenches. Carter, however, lays this problem right at the feet of those at the top of fire organizations. “It is, more often than not, the failure of the fire chief and/or the management team to develop an environment where people want to buy into the success of the organization” (Carter, 1991). Carter lists the following failures of management as the primary reasons for lack of employee motivation:

- Failure to decide what the organization is supposed to do.
- Failure to decide what the organization is going to do.
- Failure to develop reasonable goals and objectives for the organization.
- Failure to care about the people themselves. (Carter, 1991)

It is up to the manager to create an environment that leads to “a stimulating workplace...where people feel challenged and satisfied by the outcome of their efforts” (Carter, 1991). Like Lawler, Peters & Waterman above, Carter also stresses the need for the organization to try to “blend personal and organizational needs fulfillment whenever possible”. Employee motivation is higher when employee and organizational success are intertwined.

Gubman Consulting (2001) sums up the concept of employee motivation well with their idea of *Total Rewards*. The idea of total rewards comes from studies that have shown that employees “look at all of the things you offer when they are thinking about whether to stay or

leave, and how hard to work”. Organizations that take into account both compensation and non-monetary incentives and incorporate both into a system that rewards effort and behavior that furthers the organization’s goals and objectives tend to be the most successful.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **Definition of Terms**

Incentive: “Something that incites or is likely to incite to determination or action” (Webster, 1999).

Motivation: “To provide with something, such as a need or desire, that causes a person to act” (Webster, 1999).

### **Research Methodology**

The goal of the research was to determine the most effective means with which to link the Englewood Fire Division’s need for increased interest and participation in fire safety education activities with rewards that would provide incentive for participation and provide motivation to employees to address that need. The resulting research incorporated evaluative, descriptive and action elements. The research was evaluative in its attempt to discover what experts in the field of human/employee motivation have to say regarding that question. A literature review was conducted to examine the relationship between rewards, employee performance and the achievement of organizational objectives. An additional purpose of the literature review was to determine which non-monetary rewards have the greatest influence on employee behavior.

The research was descriptive in the use of an *Employee Incentive Survey* (Appendix A) to determine which rewards, especially those of a non-monetary nature, are the most valued and motivational to Englewood Fire Division employees. The survey, developed by the author based

on information gained from the literature review, was completed by 42 of Englewood Fire Division's 51 line personnel as well as by 3 mid-level administrative staff personnel (the sample was limited to personnel available on duty). The survey addressed seven of the most highly rated employee incentives as described in the literature review and asked each employee to evaluate each incentive both in its personal value to the individual and in its ability to motivate the individual to participate in an activity beyond normal duty requirements. The survey also addressed a side issue relative to the employee's motivation to participate in a pre-developed fire safety education program or in a program that he/she either developed or had a part in developing.

Finally, the research resulted in action being taken to develop a system of rewards that can be applied within the Englewood Fire Division to provide incentive and motivation to employees to increase their participation in fire safety education activities. The first of these actions was the development of a system called *service credits* (Appendix B). Service credits are points that can be accumulated in return for participation in fire safety education activities. Service credit points can be applied to final promotional examination scoring resulting in an enhanced promotional opportunity for the employee. Service credits address the results of the Employee Incentive Survey that suggests enhanced promotional opportunity is both valued and considered motivational to Englewood Fire Division employees. Second, since some of the more recent literature suggests that monetary rewards remain a significant motivator for employees, and the fact that the Employee Incentive Survey supports this contention, a revision of the Fire Division Career Path (Appendix C) was implemented to take advantage of this motivator. Finally, it was recommended that the Division budget for a system of on-the-spot rewards designed to spontaneously recognize employee contributions and customer service in a

variety of areas to include extraordinary efforts in the arena of fire safety education (Appendix D). This action serves to address the factor of recognition that the literature review and the Employee Incentive Survey identified as a motivator.

### **Limitations**

Due to operational, contractual and budgetary constraints along with a regional economic downturn, some potential motivational methods were not given consideration at this time. Given the high motivational value of increased pay, for example, a pay-for-performance system (Lawler, pp. 68-71; 150+; Hennessey, 1991) would seem to have merit, however, such a system would have to be negotiated with the local association and would have to have the blessing of the city's Human Resources Department. The research was focused on identifying those motivational methods that involved no or minimal expenditure of funds due to the economic constraints of the city.

Although greater work flexibility ranked high as a motivator in the Employee Incentive Survey, the nature of shift work for firefighters doesn't allow for much creativity in this area. Job rotation (Norris, 1992) also is difficult to employ due to the organization's promotional system and hierarchical nature. Generally, only qualified individuals can move into different job functions without creating conflict with the association contract or compromising safety.

The Employee Incentive Survey was limited to personnel on hand (those on vacation or sick leave did not participate). This still allowed for a sample at the 95% confidence level, which should be representative of the organization.

## RESULTS

### **Research Question #1: How are rewards related to the achievement of organizational objectives?**

Reward systems are an integral piece of the success of today's best organizations. With competition reaching the global arena, companies are recognizing that their employees provide their greatest opportunity for success. The value an organization places on its employees is directly related to its rewards systems. Rewards supply the incentive and motivation employees need to expend their capital (their skills and abilities) toward the success of the organization. (Wilson, p.2; Lawler, p.7). Organizational goals and objectives are more readily accomplished when they are linked to employee rewards. In this way both the individual and the organization succeed together (Wilson, p.3; Lawler, p. 18; Fuller & Tinkham, 2002; Wiscombe, 2002).

An effective reward system gives the organization the ability to communicate to its employees what is "important and valued by the organization" (Wilson, p. 294). Lawler's new business logic seeks to involve the employee in the operation of the business and blends organizational success with personal success (pp. 24-25). Fuller & Tinkham point out the importance of differentiating rewards. Those that contribute more to the success or achievement of organizational goals should receive the greater rewards (2002).

Organizations must first determine what it is their employees value, and then tie those items to behaviors that foster the success of the organization. Expectancy theory offers the idea that if an organization wants to generate a certain behavior, it must tie the attainment of what its employees value to that behavior (Lawler, p. 78). The manager in a successful organization must seek first to know him/herself and then to know his/her employees. He/she must communicate a clear vision and then empower his/her employees to accomplish that vision by

knowing what his/her employees value and “developing goals that mutually address both organizational needs as well as the employee’s needs” (Kinni, 1993).

**Research Question #2: What is the relationship between rewards and employee performance?**

An employee is motivated to perform when a task has both inherent value and provides something to the employee that he/she values or desires. An organization’s rewards systems define for the employee, “what’s in it for me?” In order for a reward to be an effective motivator it must first be meaningful to the employee (Wilson, p.3; Lawler, pp. 68-70). Most people will not be motivated to perform a task unless they are convinced of its inherent value. Successful companies either learn to tie organizational success to the personal values of the employee or shape the values of the employee in the company’s image (Peters & Waterman, p. 77).

The power of positive reinforcement is a key to employee motivation. People like to think of themselves as winners. Successful organizations capitalize on this understanding. Using positive reinforcement these organizations build big success on small, repeated, reinforced successes, constantly reinforcing the idea that their employees are winners (Peters & Waterman, p. 57; Wiscombe, 2002). Positive reinforcement can take many forms, however, key ingredients of positive reinforcement include:

- 1) It must be specific - an employee must know what he/she is being rewarded for
- 2) It must be immediate – this serves to better associate the behavior with the reward
- 3) It must be achievable – big goals must be broken down into bite size pieces
- 4) It must get the notice of top management – suggests the contribution has true value and meaning to the organization

- 5) It must be unpredictable and intermittent – expected rewards become obligatory and lose their impact (Peters & Waterman, pp. 70-71)

Organizations surveyed report that recognizing employees through an effective rewards system increases employee motivation and performance, provides practical feedback, enhances task accomplishment, increases productivity, and facilitates the realization of managerial and organizational goals (Wiscombe, 2002). Rewards also address the internal needs of employees for self-esteem, recognition and fulfillment (GMP Institute, 2002).

Expectancy theory states that employees will perform “in ways that they believe will lead to rewards they value” (Lawler, p. 76). Therefore, if an organization wishes to influence a type of behavior it will determine what its employees value and reward them accordingly. Rewards must also correlate with the difficulty of the behavior or goal. For example, too small a reward attached to a large difficult task ultimately has little motivational power (Lawler, p. 78). Kinni aptly points out that employees are “motivated by their own desires”, not the desires of the manager or the organization (1993). Thus, incentives must be guided by what is important to the employee, and each organization’s employees will differ in what they value and are motivated by.

**Research Question #3: Which non-monetary rewards have the greatest influence on employee behavior?**

In general, rewards that are public, infrequent, credible (there is true substance to the cause of the reward), are associated with recognized winners, and meaningful within the organization have influence on employee behavior (Lawler, pp. 72-73; GMP Institute, 2002). Kinni suggests that, “appreciation and recognition for a job well done consistently places near the top of employee ‘want lists’ ... recognition is one of the classic motivators” (1992). Clark

argues that employees are not so much concerned with what they make as “how much they are appreciated for the work they do”. Clark points out; “The good news is simple applause and appreciation could be what employees want most, a common-sense solution without a price tag” (2000). Bob Nelson of Nelson Motivation Inc. concurs; “Praise is priceless, yet it costs nothing” (Clark, 2000).

Non-monetary rewards can take many forms, again, it is important first to determine what rewards an organization’s specific employees value. In the fire service specifically, it is important to recognize the *above and beyond* activity, the performance that exceeds minimum expectations. Hennessey (1991) suggests tuition reimbursement, memos of commendation, plaques, gifts, citations, medals, and monetary or compensatory time awards as possibilities for the fire service in particular. Such rewards have the additional benefit in the fire service of playing to the natural competitive nature of firefighters. Norris (1992) suggests interesting assignments, challenging tasks, unsupervised work assignments, involvement in decision making, time-off with pay, in addition to praise and recognition through awards and symbols as effective types of non-monetary rewards. Additionally, Norris suggests open communication in the form of feedback for suggestions and performance as another motivator. Finally, when all else fails, termination of an individual who fails to be motivated no matter the approach, can serve to provide incentive to others in a similar category.

The ability to control one’s future also is a significant factor in employee performance. Peters and Waterman suggest that employees that feel a sense of control over their professional destinies tend to be more motivated and perform at a higher level (pp. 80-81). Along this line of thinking, Clark (2000) and Platten (2001) identify the opportunity for advancement as one of the better non-monetary incentives.

Wyatt (2001) points out that the preference for certain types of rewards is tied to demographics. Younger and more technical employees are more motivated by professional development and advancement opportunities, while older employees and women gravitate towards benefits.

Reddy identifies numerous forms of non-monetary recognition that are available to organizations. The broad categories include:

*Treats:* Free lunches, festival bonus, coffee breaks, picnics, dinner with the boss, dinner for the family, birthday treats etc.

*Knick Knacks:* Desk accessories, company watches, tie-pins, broaches, diaries/planners, calendars, wallets, T-shirts.

*Awards:* Trophies, plaques, citations, certificates, scrolls, letters of appreciation.

*Social Acknowledgement:* Informal recognition, recognition of office get-togethers, friendly greetings, smiles, email, solicitation of advice, suggestions, use of company facilities for personal projects.

*Office environment:* Redecoration, office with a window, piped music, flexible hours.

*On the job:* More responsibility, job rotation, special assignment, training, representing the company at public forums.

*Tokens:* Movie tickets, vacation trips, coupons redeemable at stores, early time off, anniversary, dating and Birthday allowances/presents (Reddy, 2000, italics mine).

Lawler (pp. 68-71) and Gubman Consulting (2002) both suggest that monetary rewards remain an important means of motivating employees. Organizations must be innovative in their use of money as a motivator, but this method does not necessarily need to be tied to increased budgets.

**Research Question #4: Which of the identified non-monetary employee rewards are valued highest by the employees of the Englewood Fire Division?**

To answer this question the author developed a survey to be completed by the personnel in the Fire Division (Appendix A). Due to the many categories of non-monetary rewards or incentives identified by the literature review, the field was narrowed to represent both some general categories as well as some that were specific and considered achievable within the financial constraints of the Fire Division. Six categories were selected as follows:

- Increased or additional pay
- Additional time off with pay
- Recognition
- Award (medal, plaque, certificate etc.)
- Enhanced promotional opportunity
- Greater work flexibility

While the primary purpose of the research paper was to identify effective non-monetary incentives, the category of increased or additional pay was included in this survey to verify or refute the contention of some of the literature that suggested the limited value of money as an incentive. Additionally, it is believed by the author that there are methods available to incorporate the category of pay/money into the rewards process without requiring the organization to increase its budget. Time off with pay, for example, while normally assumed to be a monetary reward, within the parameters of the shift schedule worked by firefighters, can be selectively awarded without incurring additional expense. Recognition is a general category with a variety of methods of application and is highly rated in most of the reviewed literature. The intention of the survey was to determine the value and motivation power of this category in

comparison to the other incentives listed. Greater responsibility was included to give consideration to increased employee participation in decision-making, job design, scheduling of work, challenging assignments etc. The category of award (medal, plaque, certificate etc.) was included to evaluate the value and motivational power of these forms of low cost recognition that the Division has used in the past with limited success. The category of enhanced promotional opportunity was included because the literature review identified this as a powerful incentive and is, when linked as a reward to specific behaviors (in the case of this research, to participation in fire safety education programs), additionally a means of molding the future leadership of the organization. Greater work flexibility was included to address incentives such as job rotation, variation in working hours, task system, flex time etc.... While difficult to employ within the parameters of shift work, the value and motivational power of this category is well represented in the literature.

Personnel were directed to rate the seven categories both for the value each represented to them personally and for their predicted ability as incentives to motivate them to participate in activities beyond their normal job responsibilities. Each category was rated on a scale of one to five, with a one indicating a low value or motivational power, and a five indicating a high value or motivational power, with a score of three being a median. The design of the survey attaches positive value/power to any category rating over three, and a low or negative value/power to categories ranked below three.

The results of the survey indicate that the employees of the Englewood Fire Division attach a relatively high value to all the incentive categories with the exception of awards (medal, plaque, certificate etc.). However, interestingly, not all the categories valued were predicted to have the power to motivate employees to participate in activities that went beyond their normal

job responsibilities. Increased pay, additional time off with pay, enhanced promotional opportunity and greater work flexibility all were rated above the median for both categories of value and motivational power. However, while the Division's employees valued recognition and greater responsibility, they were less convinced that either had the power to motivate them to participate in activities considered above and beyond their normal duties. In the final analysis, increased pay, additional time off with pay, enhanced promotional opportunity and greater work flexibility seem to be the most valued and powerful means of reward to the employees of the Englewood Fire Division.

An additional component was included separately in the survey called program design. This question was included to evaluate the motivational aspect of giving an employee greater involvement and responsibility in regard to job design, in this case, specifically to the development of fire safety education programs. The question seeks to determine whether personnel would be more motivated to participate in a program that was pre-designed for them, or in one which they either designed themselves or had a part in designing. The survey asked personnel to rate their preference on a scale of one to five, with a one indicating a strong preference for participation in a pre-developed program, a three indicating neutrality, and a five indicating a strong preference for participating in a self-developed program. The average ranking indicated a very slight over-all preference towards participation in self-developed programs. This would correlate to a degree with the somewhat lower value ranking of the motivational category of greater responsibility and the ambiguity personnel displayed toward its power to motivate. The encouraging aspect of this information remains that while many personnel are neutral as to whether or not they would prefer to develop their own fire safety

education programs, the survey seems to indicate that there is a slight bias towards self-development.

**Research Question #5: How can the identified rewards be applied to influence higher employee participation in the Englewood Fire Division's fire safety education programs?**

Given the information provided by the evaluative research and the descriptive research, any reward system that involves increased or additional pay, time off with pay, enhanced promotional opportunity, greater work flexibility, and to a lesser degree recognition and greater responsibility should provide some incentive for greater participation in the Division's fire safety education programs.

Three approaches are suggested by the author and are included in the appendices of this paper. The first approach is a program called *service credits* (Appendix B). Service credits are awarded for participation in various fire safety education activities as well as any other above-and-beyond normal duty requirements activities. Service credits can be accumulated to add additional percentage points to final scores on promotional examinations. This program addresses the value and power of the enhanced promotional opportunity incentive. Service credits also specifically address the need for differentiation, or tying greater rewards to activities that support the achievement of organizational goals (Fuller & Tinkham, 2002).

Second, it is proposed that the career path through the firefighter ranks be modified to include progressive participation in and the development of an increasing skill base for the Division's fire safety education programs (Appendix C). This approach will indirectly capitalize on the incentive of increased or additional pay and the idea of total rewards (Gubman Consulting, 2001) by attaching increasing participation and skill in the fire safety education arena to the pay grades within the firefighter ranks. The plan incorporates a three level process

of participation and development beginning with the *awareness* level, following that with the *operations* level, and ending with the *technician's* level. This progressive process incorporates common terminology utilized by the EFD in our career path to designate an increasing skill and responsibility level in a particular discipline.

Third, it is proposed that the Division budget a modest amount each year for an on-the-spot-rewards program (Appendix D). This program will address the incentives of recognition and additional time-off with pay utilizing the process of positive reinforcement and appreciation through small but tangible rewards. Items such as movie tickets, restaurant coupons, store coupons, sports tickets, and compensation time coupons will be incorporated into this program with the intent to follow the recommendations of Lawler (pp. 72-73), Peters & Waterman (pp. 70-71), Reddy (2000), GMP Institute (2002) and Nelson (Clark, 2000). This program will seek to employ the recommendation of these authors that such rewards be public, personal, infrequent, unpredictable/intermittent, immediate, specific (associated with the behavior that caused the reward), and given in a positive fashion.

## **DISCUSSION**

This study has shown that rewards, when linked to organizational objectives, have the power to influence employees to a higher level of achievement of those objectives (Wilson, pp. 1-3, 18, 293-294; Lawler, pp. 18, 24-25, 76-78; Kinni, 1993; Carter 1991; Wiscombe, 2002; Fuller & Tinkham, 2002)). Along the same vein, performance is enhanced by rewards that employees value and have meaning for them (Wilson, p. 3; Lawler, pp. 24, 68-73, 76, 78; Peters & Waterman, pp. 55-59, 68, 70-72, 75, 77, 80-81; Kinni, 1993; GMP Institute, 2002). The

implications for the Englewood Fire Division (EFD) are clear, valued rewards must be linked to participation in the Division's fire safety education efforts.

There are a variety of non-monetary rewards that have been proven to influence employee behavior. Appreciation and recognition, expressed through means that employees value, have proven to be significant motivators (Lawler, pp. 72-73; Peters and Waterman, pp. 55-57; Kinni, 1993; Clark, 2000; Norris 1992; Reddy 2000; Platten, 2001). In the fire service, recognizing and rewarding efforts that are above and beyond an employee's typical responsibilities is particularly important. Hennessey (1991) suggests a variety of non-monetary methods of recognizing and rewarding firefighters including gifts, plaques, citations, and medals. Reddy (2000) suggests treats, knick-knacks, awards, social acknowledgement, an improved office environment and various tokens (movie tickets, vacation trips, store coupons etc.) as effective low-cost or no-cost employee rewards.

Recent studies suggest, contrary to some research in the past (Herzberg, Maslow, Grant etc...), that monetary and compensatory time-off rewards can have a great deal of influence on employee behavior, including those in the fire profession (Hennessey, 1991; Lawler pp. 68-71; Platten, 2001; Gubman Consulting, 2001). While it was not the original intent of this research to consider monetary type rewards, the research has suggested that innovative methods of applying this important motivator are worthy of consideration, even during difficult economic times.

Employees value the ability to have input into their workplace and a measure of control over their own destinies. An organization can capitalize on these values by providing their employees opportunities to redesign their work, take on challenging assignments, assume increased responsibility, have greater decision-making input, and rotate into different positions or locations in the workplace (Peters and Waterman, pp. 80-81; Norris, 1992; Paul 1985; Reddy,

2000). Additionally, time-off with-pay and increased opportunity for advancement are prime motivators (Clark, 2000; Platten, 2001). It is important when considering any of the reward programs mentioned above to differentiate between top, average and low performers (Fuller & Tinkham, 2002). The implication for the EFD is a need to evaluate which of the rewards cited can be successfully implemented within the organizational system and within budget constraints.

The survey created by the author based on the above research suggests that EFD employees value recognition. The means of recognition that appear to provide the higher degrees of motivation include increased or additional pay, additional time-off with pay, greater work flexibility and enhanced promotional opportunity. These results generally concur with the evaluative research. Interestingly, suggestions by Lawler (p. 68-71), Gubman Consulting (2001) and Hennessey (1991), that monetary incentives can indeed influence employee motivation, are corroborated by the survey results. In a financially limited environment, it is left to the individual organization to find ways to apply this motivator in a manner that is feasible within budgetary limitations. The implication for the EFD is that means must be developed to utilize the identified motivators in such a way to influence increased employee participation in fire safety education activities. The action research attempts to do just that by employing the desire for enhanced promotional opportunity, the value of recognition, and the value attached to increased pay and time-off towards motivating EFD employees towards greater participation in fire safety education activities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

In order to capitalize on the motivational power of enhanced promotional opportunity (Peters & Waterman, pp. 80-81; Clark, 2000; Platten, 2001), the author first recommends the

implementation of the Service Credit program (Appendix A). The purpose of this program is to link the increased possibility of promotion to an individual's participation and support for the Division's fire safety education program, as well as for other above-and-beyond-the-call efforts. The underlying purpose of this reward system not only includes providing an incentive for employees to become involved in the various fire safety education efforts of the Division, but as a secondary benefit will serve to shape the future leadership of the organization with an affinity for this aspect of the mission. The service credit program would involve awarding a predetermined number of "service credits" to various fire safety education activities (or, as stated above for other efforts the Division is trying to foster). During a two-year period (the timeframe current eligibility lists remain open), the employee may apply accrued service credits to their final percentage score on any promotional examination. The maximum percentage accrual would be 10%. The program design is such that the accrual of the maximum percentage benefit will require considerable effort to attain, however, provides for some benefit to all who willingly participate in and support the fire safety education effort. For those individuals not interested in promotion, or for whom promotion is more than two years in the future, the service credits could be exchanged at various levels for other rewards, such as time-off, gift certificates, movie tickets, restaurant vouchers etc....

Second, the author recommends a progressive program of development in fire safety education skills and participation be included in the EFD career path. The Division career path in the firefighter rank presently proceeds through four levels with an approximate 10% pay increase tied to progression to each successive level. The recommended changes to the career path define specific objectives to be completed to attain three successive levels of competency in the area of fire safety education. To achieve top-grade firefighter level and pay, an individual

will be required to progress through all three levels of competency and maintain the highest level. While the stated purpose of this research was to identify primarily non-monetary means of rewarding increased participation in fire safety education activities, it is the author's belief that since this recommendation accomplishes the goal of providing a monetary incentive without increasing budgeted salaries, the intent of the study is met. This recommendation is tied to the results of the evaluative and descriptive research (Appendix A; Lawler, pp. 68-70; Hennessey, 1991; Clark, 2000; Gubman Consulting, 2001), which indicate that employees are motivated to achieve organizational objectives that are tied to advancement and increased pay. Service credits also provide a means of differentiation (Fuller & Tinkham, 2002) by substantively rewarding those employees that contribute to the achievement of an important organizational goal.

A third recommendation is the implementation of an "on-the-spot" reward system that would include various non-cash rewards including movie tickets, dinner vouchers, gift certificates, compensation time coupons etc, to be awarded to employees that participate in fire safety education and other above-and-beyond activities (Lawler, pp. 72-73; Peters & Waterman pp. 70-71; Reddy, 2000; Clark 2000; GMP Institute, 2002). These rewards will be available to the Captain (district officer) level and up to distribute. While not limited to fire safety education, this reward system would apply towards the recognition of efforts allied to that mission. This recommendation, obviously, is not without some cost to the organization. However, it is the author's belief that in light of the descriptive research, these methods of recognition, especially the ability to earn time-off with pay, will provide an incentive to EFD personnel to engage in fire safety education activities and other above-the-call-of-duty activities.

The literature review and evaluative research clearly indicate the critical nature of a clear organizational vision and purpose to any system of rewards designed to motivate employees

(Peters and Waterman, p. 75; Kinni, 1993; Carter, 1991; Fuller & Tinkham, 2002). While the EFD mission statement certainly provides this to a large extent, the author recommends as a future consideration the adoption of a Division slogan that represents the values and meaning we are trying to foster as an organization. *Here to make a difference* is the recommended slogan. The intention would be to place this slogan in each fire station with a picture of the Fire Division logo above it and the mission statement on top of that. Additionally, this slogan would be printed below the Fire Division logo on all Fire Division apparatus and included on all Division letterhead and official documents. This slogan certainly reflects the effort to prevent fires and injury through education and would serve as the official method, in conjunction with the mission statement, of giving foundational meaning to the fire safety education effort.

The author recommends that future readers of this research paper give strong consideration to the power of rewards and their ability to influence employee behavior towards the accomplishment of organizational goals. Clearly, the effective means of rewarding employees will vary within different organizations. It is imperative that any organization that wishes to succeed in this effort, must first evaluate and determine what it is their employees value. This information can then be applied to the development of reward systems designed to foster the behaviors that move the organization towards achieving its objectives. It is also clear that a well-developed rewards system allows both the organization and its employees to mutually share in the benefits of success.

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Employee Incentive Survey**

## Employee Incentive Survey

**You will note that there is no place to identify yourself on this survey. This is intentional. Please complete the following survey and return it to the Training Chief's office. Your cooperation and honesty is appreciated.**

### Incentive Value:

Rate the following incentives according to the **personal value** you place on each one. A rating of 1 (one) indicates that you attach very low value to the incentive, a 3 (three) would indicate a medium value, and a 5 (five) indicates that you attach a high value to a particular incentive. (circle your answer)

	Lower value	←	→	Greater value	
Increased or additional pay:	1	2	3	4	5
Additional time off with pay:	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition:	1	2	3	4	5
Greater responsibility:	1	2	3	4	5
Award (medal, plaque, certificate etc...)	1	2	3	4	5
Enhanced promotional opportunity:	1	2	3	4	5
Greater work flexibility:	1	2	3	4	5

### Incentive Power:

Rate the incentives again based on **the probability that each one would motivate you** to participate in a job-related activity that is in addition to your normal duties and duty schedule. In this case, a rating of 1 (one) indicates that you would not be motivated by the incentive, a 3 (three) would indicate you would probably be somewhat motivated by the incentive, and a 5 (five) indicates that you would be highly motivated by a particular incentive. (circle your answer)

	Lower motivation	←	→	Greater motivation	
Increased or additional pay:	1	2	3	4	5
Additional time off with pay:	1	2	3	4	5
Recognition:	1	2	3	4	5
Greater responsibility:	1	2	3	4	5
Award (medal, plaque, certificate etc...)	1	2	3	4	5
Enhanced promotional opportunity:	1	2	3	4	5
Greater work flexibility:	1	2	3	4	5

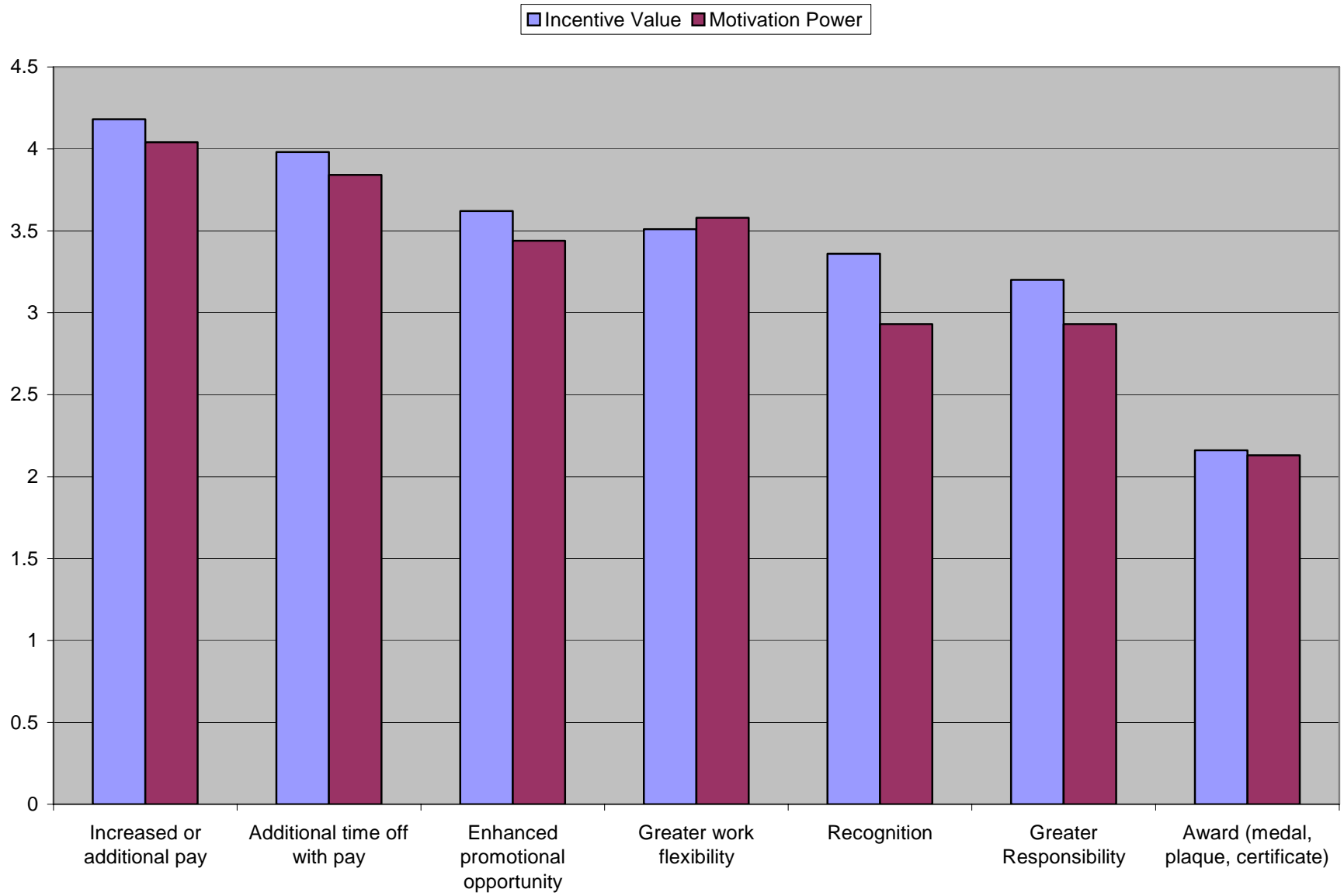
### Program design:

Given the choice, would you be more likely to participate in an fire safety education program that you developed or helped to develop, or one that was developed for you with all the pieces in place? In this case, a rating of 1 would indicate a much stronger motivation to participate in a pre-developed program, a 3 (three) would indicate neutrality, and a 5 (five) would indicate a much greater motivation to participate in a self-developed program.

Pre-developed program    1            2            3            4            5            Self-developed program

## Employee Incentive Survey Results

<b>Employee Incentive Survey</b>	<b>Average Ranking</b>	<b>Sample #</b>
<b>Incentive Value (Personal Value)</b>		
Increased or additional pay	4.18	45
Additional time off with pay	3.98	45
Enhanced promotional opportunity	3.62	45
Greater work flexibility	3.51	45
Recognition	3.36	45
Greater Responsibility	3.2	45
Award (medal, plaque, certificate)	2.16	45
<b>Incentive Power (Probability to motivate)</b>		
Increased or additional pay	4.04	45
Additional time off with pay	3.84	45
Greater work flexibility	3.58	45
Enhanced promotional opportunity	3.44	45
Recognition	2.93	45
Greater Responsibility	2.93	45
Award (medal, plaque, certificate)	2.13	45
<b>Program design</b>		
Pre-developed vs. Self developed	3.11	45



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Service Credits Program**

## **PROPOSAL**

**To: The Director of Safety Services and Division Chief of Fire Operations**

**From: Kraig Stovall, Training and Professional Development**

**Date: 12/6/02**

**Subject: Service Credits Program**

### **Prospective:**

The Service Credit program is offered as means of providing incentive for personnel to perform services and to become involved in activities that exceed the scope of their routine duties as defined by their job descriptions. The Service Credit program is designed to reward effort that is "above and beyond" in nature in a tangible fashion that equates to the furthering of an individual's career goals and aspirations. The Service Credit program also provides a means of emphasizing the type of service and commitment the organization expects of its leaders. The use of the Service Credit program in conjunction with the probationary period following promotion also serves to foster a service-minded orientation within the organization. Service Credits would be earned with the objective in mind of adding value to an individual's service to the Fire Division and community in areas above and beyond their duties as described in their job description. Some such services would include (but are not limited to):

- Volunteering for fire safety education presentations or events.
- Taking an assignment requiring the teaching or training of firefighters.
- Facility/apparatus or equipment modification, maintenance or upgrade that is outside of normal maintenance or upkeep duties.
- Coordinating a special team or effort.
- Fulfilling a special assignment that is of benefit to the community or organization.
- Initiating or developing a new program that is of benefit to the community or organization.
- Any activity or duty as determined by the Director or his representative to be of such value to the organization as to warrant said credits.

Service credits will be attached to a service or activity performed based on its value as determined by the Director of Safety Services or his representative.

### **Procedures:**

The following procedures are recommended:

- Service credits may be accumulated towards percentage points to be added to an individual's final score on promotional examinations.

- An individual may receive a maximum of ten percentage points towards their “overall” promotional examination score through the accumulation of service credits.
- Service credits will be accumulated on an ongoing basis, however; only those acquired during the 24 months prior to a promotional examination may be applied to that exam.
- As a part of the career path, a determined number of service credits will be required as a part of the completion of each probationary period, this will include the progressive ranks of firefighter as well as all promotional probationary periods. Completion of service credits as a part of a probationary requirement will not eliminate those credits from applying to a subsequent promotional examination.
- The records of service credits will be kept in the office of the Division Chief of Fire operations.
- Service credits will be received and applied only when submitted for approval on the required form (see attachment).

### **Values:**

The following point values are recommended:

- The maximum number of service credits that may be applied to a promotional examination is 200.
- 200 service credits will be equal to 10 percentage points on a given promotional exam.
- 20 service credits will be required to achieve 1 percentage point.
- 2 service credits are required to achieve a tenth of a percentage point. A tenth of a percentage point is the smallest credit increment that may be applied. For example, if an individual has 25 credits, the percentage value that may be applied to a promotional exam is one and two-tenths percent (1.2%).
- The maximum value that may be assigned any service or activity is 25 credits. Most services and activities will be in the 5-10 service credit range. For example, someone who volunteers to teach a fire extinguisher class to a business might expect to receive 5 service credits for completing that assignment. An individual that develops a training class to deliver to all three shifts might receive 10 service credits. An individual that serves as an instructor at MFTC for a recruit academy might receive the maximum value of 25 service credits for that assignment. The greater the investment of time and energy, as well as the greater the value to the organization or community, the greater the value in credits that will be attached to the service or activity.
- When a service or activity opportunity with credits attached to it is announced, the value in credits associated with its completion will also be announced.
- All service credit values are subject to the approval of the Director of Safety Services or his representative.

**Englewood Department of Safety Services – Fire Division  
Service Credit Application Form**

Name:	Date:
Description of Service or Activity:	
Date(s) Performed:	Assigned Service Credit Value:
Signature of Supervising Authority (verification of completion)	Date:
Signature of Division Chief of Fire Operations	Date:

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Career Path Recommendation**

## **PROPOSAL**

**To:** Tracey Minoggie, Fire Safety Education Specialist; Kieth Lockwood, Division Chief of Fire Operations

**From:** Kraig Stovall, Chief of Training and Professional Development

**Date:** 12/20/2002

**Subject:** Firefighter Career Path: Fire Safety Education Requirements

In keeping with current practice in the special operations of the Fire Division, I am recommending the firefighter career path be amended to include the following requirements for fire safety education skill and participation at the indicated levels:

### **Probationary Firefighter – Awareness Level:**

During the firefighter's probationary year he/she will be required to achieve the "awareness level" in fire safety education operations. The awareness level will include the following assignments:

- Participates in five (5) fire safety education activities, with a minimum of two (2) outside of normal shift operations. Participation in Fire Prevention Week activities may be counted as fulfilling one of these requirements and only one station tour may apply to this total.
- Completes the basic Child Passenger Safety Seat course.

### **Firefighter III – Operations Level:**

During the firefighter's second year of employment he/she will be required to achieve the "operations" level in fire safety education operations. The operations level will include the following assignments:

- Annually participates in seven (7) fire safety education activities, with a minimum of three (3) outside of normal shift operations and serves as the lead instructor for two of these. Again, participation in Fire Prevention Week activities may be counted as fulfilling one of these requirements, one station tour may count towards this total.
- Completes the Child Passenger Safety Seat Technician Course
- Completes the CPR Instructor Course

### **Firefighter II – Operations or Technician Level:**

During the firefighter's third year of employment he/she has the option of continuing at the operations level in fire safety education operations or continuing on to the "technician level". The technician level will include the following assignments:

- Annually participates in a minimum of ten (10) fire safety education activities and serves as the lead instructor for at least 5 of these. Participation in Fire Prevention Week

activities may be counted as fulfilling one of these requirements, station tours may count for two (2) of these activities.

- Maintains certification as a Child Passenger Safety Seat Technician
- Maintains certification as CPR Instructor
- Certifies as a Fire Instructor I
- Attends required courses to become a member of the “Safety Crew” (clowning and puppetry team) or attends the required courses to become a Juvenile Fire Setter Counselor

### **Firefighter I (Master Firefighter) – Technician Level**

When the firefighter enters his/her fourth year he/she has the option of becoming a Master Firefighter (Firefighter I). This level of firefighter is not a required level in the career path and the individual that aspires to it must meet a number of requirements to achieve and maintain this rating and pay grade. Included in this rating and pay grade is the requirement to become a Fire Safety Education Technician and maintain this status.

## **APPENDIX D**

### **On-The-Spot Rewards Proposal**

## **PROPOSAL**

**To:** Kieth Lockwood, Division Chief of Fire Operations

**From:** Kraig Stovall, Chief of Training and Professional Development

**Date:** 12/20/2002

**Subject:** Policy Proposal: On-The-Spot Rewards

### **Purpose:**

To establish a system of tangible rewards to be administered as a reinforcement of desired employee behaviors and activities aligned with the fire safety education mission of the Fire Division and other noteworthy activities that support the over-all mission the Division.

### **Scope:**

All Fire Division personnel.

### **Policy:**

It is the intent of the Fire Division to seek to recognize and reward the efforts of personnel engaged in extra-ordinary activities associated with the Division's fire safety education mission as well as any activities that are noteworthy which support the vision and desired culture of the organization.

- A. Administration of rewards: The following factors are essential to the reward process:
  - 1) The reward must be *public* – whenever possible the reward should be issued in the presence of the employee's workgroup.
  - 2) The reward must be *specific* – the employee must know exactly what he/she is being rewarded for, i.e. the specific behavior or activity.
  - 3) The reward must be *immediate* – the reward must be issued as soon after the observed behavior or activity as is possible to ensure that the two are associated with each other.
  - 4) The reward must be *unpredictable* and *intermittent* – these rewards are not intended to become routine or expected in relation to normal activities within the Division, rather they are to be issued when expectation is exceeded or the associated activity goes beyond normal or routine to the innovative.
- B. Types of rewards: Rewards are intended to bestow a tangible benefit to the employee. The following list includes suggested possibilities, but is not all-inclusive.

- 1) Movie ticket vouchers (minimum of two)
- 2) Restaurant vouchers (breakfast, lunch or dinner for two)
- 3) Gift certificates (for redemption at local retail outlets)
- 4) Comp-time coupons (4-6 hr denominations, to be used when staffing permits or to off-set Annual Leave, Holiday Leave or Personal Leave use)
- 5) Sporting event ticket vouchers (minimum of two seats)
- 6) Theater ticket vouchers (minimum of two)
- 7) Local amusement park ticket vouchers (minimum of two)
- 8) Ski-lift ticket vouchers (minimum of two)

- C. Distribution of rewards: Supervisors at the Captain rank or above may distribute rewards, however, any officer may recommend the issuance of a reward. Rewards will be kept in a file in the Operations Chief's and Battalion Chief's offices. This is to ensure the availability and immediacy of the reward during evening and weekend shift duty hours. A reasonable number and variety of rewards should be kept on hand at all times in both locations to ensure the timeliness of reinforcement. Whenever possible, rewards are to be issued at a meeting of the employee's assigned shift, or at minimum in the presence of his/her assigned station crew. When presented, the specific occasion (cause) for the reward should be highlighted.
- D. Review of rewards: When possible, the Operations Chief or his/her designee should review the occasion for the reward prior to its issuance to ensure consistency with established criteria.
- E. Reward criteria: Rewards will be issued to employees engaged in activities that *exceed* normal duty requirements *either in scope or quality*. Supervisors are encouraged to look for opportunities to use the reward system to reinforce behaviors and activities that are supportive of the vision and mission of the Fire Division. It is the desire of the Fire Division to specifically recognize innovative effort in the area of fire safety education, but the reward system is not limited to these activities. Rewards should not be issued for performance of routine duty assignments unless such performance far exceeds expectation in scope or quality.