

Organizational Communication in the Tulsa Fire Department

What are we missing?

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ABSTRACT

Effective organizational communication is critical. The problem is that communications made by the Tulsa Fire Department command staff are not being demonstrated by their actions. The purpose of this research is to assess current methods of communication within the Tulsa Fire Department and how other departments have positively affected communication problems. The following questions were answered using descriptive research through a literature review, interviews and survey:

What part does face to face communication play in organizational communication?

What part does body language play in organizational communication?

What part does leadership play in organizational communication?

What information can a survey of Tulsa Fire Department members provide in order to identify their communication needs?

Results concluded communication is complicated and recommendations included short and long term goals.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Abstract.....	2
Introduction.....	4
Background and Significance.....	5
Literature Review.....	9
Procedures.....	20
Results.....	27
Discussion.....	31
Recommendations.....	37
References.....	40
Appendix.....	43

INTRODUCTION

The Tulsa Fire Department, as most other departments' in the nation, struggle with internal communications. Effective communication occurs only if the receiver understands the exact information or idea that the sender intending to transmit (Butler, Ph. D. & Hope, Ph. D., 2). Seventy five percent of the communication heard are actually incorrectly received (Buhler, 2001, 286). In my experience, most conflicts and problems are based on miscommunication. Body language is also directly related to communication. To deliver the full impact of a message, nonverbal behavior is used to raise the channel of interpersonal communication (Butler, Ph. D. & Hope, Ph. D., 2). Eye contact, to name one body language component, is imperative in a face to face personal communication but unavailable on the telephone or in an e-mail.

The TFD has recently gone through some of the toughest financial times ever experienced. I have been employed with the Tulsa Fire Department for twenty three years and can remember only one budget situation similar to the current money woes. It paled in comparison to the current crisis. The situation today is much different. The command staff, of the Tulsa Fire Department, has spent countless hours in the last six months considering departmental implications from various budget cuts applied by city leaders on three separate occasions during this fiscal year. It seems impossible to communicate these actions to field personnel. This is due in part to the panic that could, or likely would, occur due to draft proposals that may include layoffs, demotions or reorganization; a time restriction causes sound communication to be prohibitive. Also involved is a lack of situational awareness for the members related to contracts and municipal budgets. Firefighters resist change fiercely. This resistance influences the departmental culture to foster an "us verses them" mentality with us being field personnel and

them the administration. Having worked on both sides of the fence it does not have to end up this way.

The problem is that communications made by the Tulsa Fire Department command staff are not being demonstrated by their actions. Leadership enters the picture when a “do as I say, not as I do” mentality exists. A leader is said to determine the vision and strategy for the organization, outlining the actions required for reaching that future state (Buhler, 2001, 273). The budget cuts mentioned above are one example of an opportunity to display leadership however; those being communicated with must feel it from the organization not just hear it. Leaders have a responsibility to ensure that those they lead fully understand communications and witness it demonstrated.

The purpose of this research is to assess current methods of communication within the Tulsa Fire Department and how other departments have positively affected communication problems. The descriptive research method will be used in this research Applied Research Project. To accomplish the purpose, this research project will include answers to the following questions:

What part does face to face communication play in organizational communication?

What part does body language play in organizational communication?

What part does leadership play in organizational communication?

What information can a survey of Tulsa Fire Department members provide in order to identify their communication needs?

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Tulsa is a city of more than 400,000 citizens; the city proper is made up of approximately 200 square miles. The City of Tulsa’s governing body is made up of a mayor and city council. The TFD responds to a variety of incidents that range from those simply requiring customer

services to EMS based incidents and major/multiple alarm fires. The Tulsa Fire Department is composed of 687 sworn members. The sworn personnel are a diverse group including factors such as age, sex, race, and experience to name a few.

The department is made up of 30 stations. This make up translates to: 30 engine companies, 14 ladders companies, 2 EMS squads, a technical rescue and hazardous materials team. The city is geographically divided into five districts for coverage. The department supplies firefighters to the Tulsa International Airport; this group makes up a sixth district. Consequently, management of major incidents and daily operations are provided by six district chiefs. This makeup is in jeopardy as applied budget cuts could reduce the department by three to ten companies and middle management.

Communication is a problem for the TFD as recent breakdowns have had a significant negative affect. First, morale for members is very low. You can boost morale by paying attention to employees and acknowledging good work (Bayer, Ph. D., 2009, 1). This approach is not difficult as it doesn't require monetary consideration. However when it comes to departmental leaders acknowledging good work in a department the size of TFD it becomes difficult. Recently during an interview, the Fire Chief expressed his disapproval for the way the local union was handling negotiations. His interview was construed as an attack on the membership by TFD personnel. His intent was to affect the union administration and encourage them to negotiate a deal with city leaders. This reflects the communication environment and the trust these personnel have for the Fire Chief in general. Community equity is an account that Tulsa Firefighters rely on. Deposits are made to this account due to the efforts and customer service our personnel provide. The Fire Chief has a similar account with his members. If the account is overdrawn, trust does not exist and perception is slanted towards this distrust.

The Tulsa Fire Department had produced an internal television show through the local cable company. The original concept was to provide internal communications within the department. In the beginning it was very effective. However, following a change in administration, misinformation, and the need to be in front of the TV when the show aired, eventually reduced its effectiveness. A labor management committee was formed to generate new ideas and rejuvenate the concept without significant improvements. Unfortunately the hosts were not the fire chief and in fact were administrative members that were not respected by field personnel. Departmental communications waned as did the subject matter. Near the end, the program was ineffective at best and its expense outweighed the benefit received and it became a victim to budget cuts.

Currently, the TFD's main communication method is e-mail. One advantage is the ability to know if a message has been opened. Our current e-mail system provides the ability to send a receipt when messages are opened although this also does not indicate who read or was referred to the message. The Tulsa Fire Department also submits a weekly report to the mayor. The intent of this report is to make our city leaders aware of what is occurring within the TFD and the message is broadcast to all fire department e-mail users. It is easy to see that this report is prohibited from including internal communications that may not be appropriate for the mayor.

This problem is very important to me. I firmly believe that everyone deserves clear communication. This must include transparent information flow even when the message is unpleasant. Transparency encourages the building of trust and commitment to all involved. Without transparency, members will apply their own filter or perception to a situation. Now, there is information or situations that are not shared. These situations include disciplinary actions and other sensitive information. From my experience, most members understand that some

information can't be shared but they are frustrated when general information is not disseminated. A saying often heard within the Tulsa Fire Department is that there are three ways to communicate: telephone, tell a friend and tell a firefighter. If this is true the rumor mill will make up a story if not properly informed.

Organizational communication issues must be addressed in order to further departmental goals. In the past, command and control leadership dominated departmental management styles. Today, as in the Executive Fire Officer Program, managers are instructed in leadership styles including transformational leadership. Transformational leadership is the transforming of both individuals and organizations. The transformational leader truly excites subordinates (Buhler, 2001, 279). These students return to their departments and apply these leadership styles. Additionally, we live in an electronic age in which e-mail has become accepted as a formal communication, at least in the Tulsa Fire Department. This presents problems as education levels and computer skills vary so much between generations of firefighters. A young well educated firefighter might have spent their college years on a laptop creating documents and spreadsheets while a seasoned firefighter may have never sent an e-mail.

The student manual for the EAFSOEM class, Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management, states in the course overview that the purpose of the class is to prepare senior officers in the administrative functions necessary to manage the operational component of a fire department effectively. Communication is imperative during emergency operations. It is also critical that the accompanied body language reinforce the communications delivered. A directive given by a senior officer, when the officer seems anxious or overwhelmed, will not be received as clearly as one delivered by a confident and calm person. Additionally, communications within the EOC come into play. Often a personal relationship

does not exist between entities or people. When people don't know one another, body language can make or break communication.

The United States Fire Administration, in its five year plan, has brought forth operational directives to the modern fire service. One of these directives "appropriately respond in a timely manner to emergent issues" fits the need to evaluate and improve departmental communications. While communication is not a new concept, new inputs are causing the need to take a fresh look at communication. The fire service, from an employee standpoint, has changed. While firefighters have always been revered by the public, the employee pool has changed. In the past, the job of firefighter was considered blue collar and a tough, physical job that attracted employees that were not usually college educated. Today most departments, including the Tulsa Fire Department, seek college educated employees. This causes the aforementioned difference in computer skills, among other skills, between seasoned firefighters and new employees.

The efficiency of departmental operations and effectiveness are at risk when communications are ineffective. Also at risk is the safety of operational personnel. Organizational makeup in the fire service is modular and includes a paramilitary rank structure. This is similar to the military and due to the danger involved and the quick decisions that must be made. Firefighters are taught in training to observe orders and directives they receive unless these orders will endanger their lives. We must transition in the fire service from a command and control leadership used during incidents to a transformational leadership style.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted to answer the questions brought forth by this Applied Research Project. The research began at the National Fire Academy's Learning Resources Center. After returning to Tulsa, the research was continued at the TFD Library, and local public

libraries. The internet was referenced although care was used to ensure reliable and trusted sources were selected. Search engines were used to narrow the search to include government publications, magazine articles, and published trade journals. Interviews were conducted, to gain insight and knowledge into the problem. Additionally, a survey of members of the TFD was conducted to gain additional information.

The first priority is to establish what communication is. Communication is the exchange of thoughts, messages, or information, as by speech, signals, writing, or behavior (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1). This is a very broad definition that encompasses all communication. Assumptions due to perceived good communication can cause serious problems. An emergency incident sometimes only gives you one shot at getting your message across correctly (Okray & Lubnau II, 2004, 108). This fact has implications related to firefighter and citizen safety. For example, if an order to ventilate in a certain area is not clearly communicated an incident could increase significantly. Organizational communication has been defined as the process by which information is exchanged and understood by two or more people, usually with the intent to motivate or influence behavior. It is important to note that this definition of communication stresses its intent which may go beyond just transferring information (Santra & Giri, 102). Verbal communications seem simple but are very complex. Included in these complications are: tone, volume, emotion, emphasis, speed, and word selection. All of those listed can affect the sending, receiving, and understanding of any message.

Tone, as it relates to communication, is defined as the pitch of a word used to determine its meaning or to distinguish differences in meaning (The American Heritage Dictionary, 1). This indicates that the meaning of a message can be received differently only by the tone taken by the sender. Tone can also be involved with emergency or nonemergency situations. For example, if a

seasoned dispatcher is excited while dispatching personnel to an incident and providing supplemental information, a crew will become more anxious and likely perceive the incident as significant. This may or may not match what they find on arrival as the tone of the caller also influenced the dispatcher. Another example of tone would be a meeting with a superior officer. If he or she relayed the budget implications were not severe, although the tone of the communication was not consistent with the message, most would perceive the problem differently. This perception could be that the problem is much more serious than communicated. All of these examples lead to miscommunication. Emotion and emphasis are also complications. They are both influenced by and related to tone. Volume and speed are complications related to effective communications. One example of these is an incident in which a dispatcher is speaking louder and faster than normal, they may lose some of the polished jargon that the department and responders have become familiar with (Okroy & Lubnau II, 2004, 99).

Word selection is another complication. Acronyms are widely used in various industries today including the fire service. In fact, while language and words are a critical component of the communication process itself, they also pose a barrier as many of the words and phrases are vague (Buhler, 283). Care must be taken because these acronyms often have one meaning in one industry, and a completely different meaning in another. An example would be that OB used in business has an entirely different meaning than in the medical community (Buhler, 2001, 289). OB in business refers to organizational behavior. OB in the medical community refers to obstetrics or an obstetrician. Cultural differences can also influence word selection. Today's fire service has recognized the value of cultural differences. As we have immigrants settle in our protected areas, we must consider their influences from a cultural perspective. It is more likely that miscommunication will occur when people come from different cultures (Buhler, 288). Lack

of trust is also a barrier to clear and effective communications. Many departments must earn the trust of the different cultures that inhabit their community.

Slang is defined as language peculiar to a group (The American Heritage Dictionary, 2). Now imagine combining slang with cultural differences and miscommunication could cause barriers to effective and efficient communications. Word selection also includes phrases we use out of convenience. Stock phrases, or phrases that have an accompanied action and result, are used in various communications today (Okray & Lubnau II, 2004, 100). An example would be a phrase used like “locate the fire panel”. To a specific crew it might mean locate and interpret the panel trip, to someone from another crew it might mean reset the panel. Obviously if a stock phrase is used on someone not accustomed to the expected outcome, they would not understand and miscommunication would occur.

There are barriers to communication. Physical separation is one barrier as is the method of communication. If two people attempting to communicate are face to face, the communication is likely to be clear. The method of communication, or the mode, is more critical. We all have cellular phones and use them for communication. If you have ever had a call dropped you know this a barrier to communication. A phone call allows you to hear emotion allowing a better understanding unless the emotion perceived isn't real.

Physical separation reduces the effectiveness of communication, as many of the nonverbal and emotional elements of the process are lost (Buhler, 2001, 287). The Tulsa Fire Department has defaulted to using e-mail for most organizational communications. This reduces the understanding due to the elements lost due to physical separation. Another physical barrier is differences in gender. Gender differences really reflect stylistic differences (Buhler, 288). As the fire service sees more females enter the profession, gender differences become more and more of

an issue. In fact, women hear more of the emotional content of messages than men do (Buhler, 288). This illustrates that for most women, face to face communication is key to clearly sending a message accurately.

E-mail has become one of the communication standards. E-mail is a quick easy way to communicate today as blackberry and smart phones become more prevalent. Only ten years ago, more executives preferred face-to-face meetings to any other form of communication. Only a third, 34 percent, preferred email communication (Buhler, 2001, 285).

Clear communication is critical in all situations. Seventy five percent of a manager's time is spent communicating (Buhler, 2001, 286). This indicates the communication is an important and time consuming task for managers. Communication includes several components including: the message, the sender, the receiver, feedback and noise. The message is simply the desired communication. The sender is the originator of the message, and the receiver the recipient. Feedback is confirmation that the message was received. Noise is any factor that hinders the receipt of the intended message (Buhler, 287).

Computer mediated communication is a method of communication now being considered and used in the business world. Computer-mediated communication is a generic term that incorporates all forms of communications between individuals and among groups via networked computers (Santra & Giri, 2009, 103). This communication system is similar to pod casts that allow meetings or communications to be conducted, recorded and preserved for others to view when they have the opportunity. CMC is currently employed in many fields, including political forums, educational computer conferencing, cooperative research, organizational communication, social support communication, and interpersonal communication (Santra & Giri, 103). Two types of communication used in CMC are asynchronous or synchronous.

Asynchronous use of CMC is an excellent example as users are logged on at different times but can receive the original communications. Synchronous use is similar to a video conference. All users are present at their work station at the same time and can communicate as near to face to face as is possible with electronic media at this point.

CMC is being used by centers for higher education in online degree programs. Distance educators are now beginning to focus on a related set of notions: (a) there are different learning styles, (b) students create their own meaning when learning new things, and (c) what makes a difference in content retention and transfer is not so much what is done by teachers, but what students as learners can be encouraged to do themselves (Berge & Collins, 1995, 2). Difference in learning styles do crossover into communications and students creating their own meaning leans towards the perception they apply to situations.

The communication process is said to be comprised using the following breakdown: 60 percent by body language, 30 percent by the tone of voice, and only 10 percent by the actual words (Buhler, 2001, 289). Body language includes the gestures, postures, and facial expressions by which a person manifests various physical, mental, or emotional states and communicates nonverbally with others (The American Heritage Dictionary, 185). This confirms that body language plays a critical part of any communication. Physical behaviors have a feature to reflect the inner-self directly; therefore it is hard to control (Karadag, Caliskan, & Yesil, 2008, 397). Communications that are hard to control will be evident in the communication process. Humans provide communication and interaction primarily through the help of body language then; people use body language to support verbal language (Karadag et al., 399). If consideration is given to what the communicator is conveying with his or her nonverbal communications, a different message may be received than is being delivered verbally.

A gesture is a motion of the limbs or body made to express or help express thought or to emphasize speech (The American Heritage Dictionary, 220). Therefore, gestures can emphasize points made or can communicate a different message than the one being conveyed verbally. Much of nonverbal communication is unique to your culture and will vary from one culture to another. This, then, presents an additional barrier to an already difficult communication process (Buhler, 2001, 289). An example is the A ok sign commonly used in our society. In Japan, this is received as an insulting or offensive gesture. This example can illustrate that within the culture of fire departments body language can cause miscommunication or least the delivery of the wrong message.

The definition of posture is a frame of mind affecting one's thoughts or behavior; an overall attitude (The American Heritage Dictionary, 314). This leads to the delivery of thoughts or behaviors quickly read by the message receiver which can make or break the communication process. Sitting on the edge of your seat communicates interest and an attentive demeanor (Buhler, 2001, 290). If during a conversation the sender has their arms crossed they communicate they are either not listening or closed to new ideas or concepts. This is a significant form of posture that a communicator must consider. Slouching while seated communicates a lack of interest (Buhler, 291).

Active listening also enters the communication process related to posture. Active listening is a technique for improving understanding of what is being said by taking into account how something is said and the nonverbal signs and body language that accompany it (BNet Business Dictionary, 2007, 1). This technique requires receptive awareness and response on the part of the receiver. Six principles form the core of active listening: encourage people to express opinions; clarify perceptions of what is said; restate essential points and ideas; reflect the

speaker's feeling and opinions; summarize the content of the message to check validity; acknowledge the opinion and contribution of the speaker (BNet Business Dictionary, 1). This acknowledges that listening is a part of body language. If a receiver is not using active listening skills the message will not be received and the sender will quickly recognize disinterest. This disinterest can have a profound affect on the senders' message, effort to deliver the message, and the receipt of the intended message.

Facial expressions are another element of body language. During a communication, the rolling of the receivers' eyes can communicate disbelief, disinterest, or disagreement to name one element of body language. Conversely direct eye contact communicates honesty in the American culture (Buhler, 2001, 290). Facial expressions can communicate agreement and happiness through a smile or disagreement with a frown. We have all had communications in which the sender communicated without speaking a word.

Proximetrics is the study of how space is used (Buhler, 2001, 289). This includes an individuals' personal space and even the dynamics of a seating arrangement for a business meeting. A study was conducted by the Japanese Psychological Research Group. Their study was a reinvestigation of a study conducted in 1981 by two Japanese researchers named Yaezawa and Yoshida. The intent of the new and previous study was to examine increases in heart rate and blood pressure when there is an intrusion to a subjects' personal. The original study findings that included an increase in heart rate when personal space was violated were confirmed. In fact, the results indicated that when an individuals' personal space is intruded into it may make them vigilant or even freeze (Sawada, 2003, 116).

Four different types of organizational culture exist and are represented as adhocracy, clan, hierarchy, and market (Masood, Dani, Burns, & Backhouse, 2006, 943). Adhocracy culture

includes visionary leadership although it typically sees rule breakers. This does not lend itself to use in the fire service as the policy requirements typically dominate accountability. In the Hierarchy culture the leadership style shown is that of organizing, controlling, monitoring, administering, coordinating, and maintaining efficiency (Masood et al., 2006, 943). This style could be useful in the fire service and likely would exist in the administration of most departments. The clan culture sees the most effective leaders as parent figures, team builders, facilitators, nurturers, mentors, and supporters (Masood et al., 944). The clan culture can be used in the modern fire service as most field personnel are a part of a team and build upon the abilities of its members. Finally, the market culture sees the managers are good at directing, producing results, negotiating, and motivating others (Masood et al., 943). The market culture also could be useful in the fire service as departments today are beginning to need to produce results to its city leaders.

Leadership style is an important dimension to be examined. The focus in this writing will be on command and control, transactional, and transformational leadership. The fire service sees a variety of leadership styles employed. The leadership at incidents typically sees a command and control style due to the danger involved. The military has used command and control leadership in the past but discovered its inefficiencies. Command-and-control leaders dramatically increase worker disengagement, solve fewer problems, and scapegoat and fire some of the best people (Wheatley, 2005, 11).

Transactional leadership is recognized as a newer leadership style as compared to the command and control leadership style. Transactional leadership behaviors are aimed at monitoring and controlling employees through rational or economic means (Bono & Judge, 2004, 904). This leadership style includes rewards in exchange for other things. Management by

exception, a dimension of transactional leadership, refers to monitoring performance and taking corrective action as necessary. The focus of management by exception is on setting standards and monitoring deviations from these standards (Bono & Judge, 903). Also included in this leadership style is the laissez-faire. This type of leader is focused on the noninterference in the affairs of others (Bono & Judge, 903). Transactional leaders may take a casual attitude toward issues and want to trade or reward employees in exchange for something they want or need.

Transformational leadership behavior, or idealized influence, refers to leaders who have high standards of moral and ethical conduct, who are held in high personal regard, and who engender loyalty from followers (Bono & Judge, 2004, 901). Most fire department members exhibit these traits including moral and ethical conduct to serve its citizens; the TFD members are consistent with these traits. TFD members hold each other in high regard and are very loyal to one another. The second transformational leadership behavior, inspirational motivation, refers to leaders with a strong vision for the future based on values and ideals (Bono & Judge, 901). The job of a firefighter involves motivation to perform exhausting work under extreme conditions. Also, most firefighters are union members and paid on a scale depending on rank and experience. This in and of itself creates challenges for leaders to satisfy department members.

Generational differences in the fire service do exist and must be examined. Baby boomers are those who were born between 1946 and 1964. Generation X's were born from 1965 to 1980. Finally, generation Y's were born from 1980 to 2000. Baby boomers boomer's work contributes significantly to their personal identity. They are characterized as loyal to their employers, dedicated and workaholics who accept direction (Leiter, Jackson, & Shauhnessy, 2009, 101). Baby boomers are typically today's department leaders. They range in age from 45 to 53 and are normally seasoned veterans nearing retirement. They have influenced peers and subordinates

throughout their careers. They seek public personal acknowledgement from managers (Leiter et al., 101). This group wants acknowledgement from superiors and peers. Baby boomers typically live in their homes for fifteen years or longer. They typically live a very structured life with a consistent routine.

Generation Xers are the original latchkey generation and children from this generation were sent to after-school programs or returned home to an empty house (Leiter et al., 2009, 102). This group ranges in age from 29 to 44. They are children of baby boomers and were significantly influenced by their parents' generation. This group is very independent and resourceful. They tend to seek balance between work and their personal lives and are motivated by consistent work values. Having grown up in the presence of computers, Xers are comfortable with technology, synthesizing diverse information to gain knowledge and understanding. When considering all of the generations a critical fact must be considered: The failure of older generation workers to relate to the values of the younger generations creates conflict within organizations (Leiter et al., 101). Interactions between boomers and X's in the nursing field can be described quite simply by saying baby boomer nurses value loyalty, professionalism and independent practice while Generation X nurses value marketability, expertise and credentials that would support them in uncertain labor markets (Leiter et al., 104).

Generation Yers, also known as the MTV generation, are the last generation in the fire service today. As a result of a number of sociological factors including the precedence of single parent households many in this generation are independent and often seen as being resourceful and peer dependant (Arphin, PhD, RN, 2009, 17). This group is typically made up of inventive and self sufficient personalities. They are problem solvers and accommodating multi-taskers. Accustomed to immediate gratification, youth in this generation are responsive (Arphin, PhD,

RN, 18). Money seems to be the main motivator for this group; generation Xers typically seek job satisfaction, not necessarily monetary compensation. Intrinsic to the proliferation of technology, modern tools of communications such as the internet and cell phones are social lifelines for youth in this generation (Arphin, PhD, RN, 21).

PROCEDURES

The procedures used in the research project included: personal interviews, a departmental survey, and a literature review that included research inside and outside the fire service. The literature review included internet based periodicals, hard bound books from the local library, and other trusted reference material. The main search engine I used, EBSCO Host, is an academic research tool used by Rogers State University which is my alma mater. This search engine provides trusted and timely resources for projects such as this ARP.

Limitations do exist in the literature review process. I used only collegiately and peer reviewed articles in an attempt to provide accurate research. This does limit the volume of research but was intended provide clear information. I also used books from the local library along with my personal library. I attempted to steer clear of fire service references feeling that communication problems are universally experienced in the business world. Limitations do exist in my ability to perform research. I am a college graduate and have performed research many times however; I am not a professional in this field.

The two interviews performed were conducted via telephone. Both of the individuals interviewed attended the Executive Fire Officer Program Executive Development class with me three years ago. I have not spoken to them, until the time of the interview, since that class. At the time of our class, both were attempting to change the communication in their departments and both were taking a very different approach. I selected these two individuals knowing they would

have the ability to provide good and essential information related to my topic. I conducted the interviews on January 27, 2010.

I conducted an interview via telephone with Chief Scott Frietag who is the Assistant Chief of Cottleville Fire Department in Colorado. Chief Frietag was employed by the Cottleville Fire Department on July 5, 2005. He came into a department that was experiencing a \$1.5 million general revenue shortfall. I asked him to describe the departmental culture to which he replied it was a free for all. His department had been the subject of a media investigation related departmental issues. In short, it was a mess. I asked him what he did in response to his findings of the culture of his new department. He said he began to partner with a local community college to establish a values survey. He said he was interested in not only changing the culture but improving communications within and without the department. The new fire chief hired at the time wanted to explore a values based culture and organization instead of a rules based model.

I asked Chief Frietag what was his first step or approach? He said he and his partners established five core values that they would base the departmental culture and decision making upon. The first core value was: We will provide service that surpasses the expectations of our customers; we will go that extra step to take care of their needs. Chief Freitag said he felt this was a way to return credibility with the community. The second core value was: We will remain socially conscious and committed to our community and to each other. Again, this core value allows deposits into the community equity account. Ethics will be brought to the forefront. The third core value was: We will provide our members with the necessary resources, support, and opportunities they need to achieve their goals today so we can ensure we have strong leaders for the district's future. This core value was intended to make departmental members feel valued. Without support and encouragement, his members believed no one would notice if they excelled

or failed. The fourth core value was: We will train all members so that we ensure the highest level of professional and technical proficiency in order to guarantee an appropriate response, regardless of the task. This core value allows departmental members to grow. It also allows peer pressure, from those who have the desire to excel, to encourage other departmental members. The fifth and final core value was: We will act as good stewards of the monies entrusted to us by the tax payers of our district. This value assisted the department members with understanding the budget and economic environment they operated in.

I asked Chief Freitag when he began to notice a change, he indicated almost immediately departmental members seemed more satisfied. They also were more motivated to perform their duties and beyond. He said the culture began to change as the silent majority felt empowered and became more aggressive. I asked him about departmental communication and how this change affected it. He indicated that as his employees felt validated through these core values. He also said that trust was developed; his employees told him trust was nonexistent before. I asked him about the atmosphere around the administrative office and how often interactions occurred. He said it was a friendly nonthreatening atmosphere in which members had easy access to make suggestions or comments. I asked if this impeded operations due to distractions. He said that although it was a distraction initially that as members recognized it as a new attitude they were not concerned that the open communication would suddenly end.

I also interviewed Chief Bruce Kroon a chief officer for Bellevue Fire Department in Washington State. I asked Chief Kroon if he believed his department could communicate better. He answered yes and explained that he set out to develop an instrument in an attempt to improve departmental communication. His instrument was the Bugle newsletter. His idea was a web based newspaper that included short articles about departmental issues. Included in the

newsletter is a column from the fire chief that quickly updates all members on current issues within the department. I asked Chief Kroon which section he felt was most effective item contained in the Bugle? He indicated it was the rumor buster section. In this article a person with responsibility in a division addressed the departmental scuttlebutt. Rumors that were being perpetuated were addressed in plain site allowing any and all to be informed of the truth.

During the interview Chief Kroon brought forward some important results from his online newsletter. These results included clarity in vision and direction for the department. He indicated that, through transparent decision making, the department members better understood where the department was going and how it would get there. In fact he said that the members of Bellevue Fire Department felt more a part of this direction and vision. Consistency and commitment were also increased throughout his department. Finally, two way feed-back became a critical element of departmental communications.

Limitations do exist in the interviews conducted. I do have a relationship with these two individuals which could have impacted their answers. I can't define whether the affect would have been negative or positive. I have to believe that they were likely more forthcoming with information due to the relationship that exists as opposed to interviewing someone I did not know. Built into these interviews is the trust the three of us share which should positively impact the answers they provided. A limitation does exist in that only two people were surveyed. I selected these two as I knew they had tackled significant communication problems. I felt they would be a great source of information related to my project.

A survey was conducted of all sworn members of the Tulsa Fire Department. The department is made up of 687 sworn members. It was distributed via email and had a response rate of approximately ten percent. I believe this is indicator of the effectiveness of current

communication and the use of e-mail. The surveys were distributed via the internet through the Survey Monkey instrument. The survey included the former TFD-TV in an attempt to confirm the perception that it was ineffective. The goal of the survey was designed to measure all members' opinions about communication in the TFD and solicit ideas and suggestions for improvement. The survey and results are included in the appendix.

The first question was: What is your rank? This question netted the following: 12.7% civilian or administrative staff, 15.9% FD04 or sworn staff members, 12.7% firefighters, 6.3% fire equipment operators or drivers, 31.7% captains or company officers, and 20.6% chief officers. This provides a cross section of all personnel of the TFD allowing a relatively complete picture of the respondents.

The second question was: What is your shift? This refers to the shift which they are assigned or if they are forty hour employees. The results were as follows: 39.7% were forty hour staff personnel, 30.2% A platoon, 15.9% B platoon, and 14.3% C platoon. This is important to identify perceptual differences between shifts and in order to establish areas or shifts operating in silos without proper communication. It is interesting to note that the increase on A platoon could be due to the fact that I served as a district chief on that shift.

Question three was: How do you currently receive TFD internal communications? This question had the following results: 11.1% from their company officer, 28.6% from their district chief, 12.7% from official department visits, 90.5% from departmental e-mails, 11.1% from memos, 11.1% from newsletters, 4.8% from TFD-TV, 14.3% from the city of Tulsa website, and 28.6% from other departmental members.

The fourth question was: How effective is the current internal department communications? Respondents were asked to rank their answers from poor to excellent using the

criteria set forth in question 3. Summing up the results, TFD-TV received the highest poor rating of 57.4%. The highest ranking average method was informal communication with other members. The City of Tulsa website received a ranking of 30% which was the highest in the good category. Department e-mail was ranked as both the most effective avenue for communication and the most excellent way to receive this communication.

Question number five was: How many times per shift do you check/read departmental e-mail at the fire station? Surprisingly 52.4% read these e-mails five or more times per shift. 20.6% referred to departmental e-mails three to five times a shift. Finally, department e-mails were accessed one to three times per shift by 27%. The survey indicated that none of the respondents failed to check e-mails during their work day.

The sixth question was: How would you like to receive TFD internal communications? The results were as follows: 6.3% from their company officer, 22.2% from their district chief, 25.4% via written memo, 46% through departmental e-mail, 58.7% from personal departmental e-mail, 9.5% through their personal e-mail, 4.8% through TFD-TV, 14.3% from the City of Tulsa website, and 3.2%, or 2 respondents, wanted to receive their communication in a different way other than specified means. It should be noted that members of the department performing a management function, other than company officers, have a personal e-mail account. This holds true unless a field member is performing a function such as a labor management committee co-chair and approved by the fire chief to receive their own account. At fire stations, the e-mails come to one communal account. To expand on this, the TFD has 687 sworn members with around 200 e-mail accounts including the 30 fire stations.

Question number seven was: Do you read the TFD weekly report to the Mayor?

The results were that 92.1% indicated they did read the weekly report while 7.9% said they did not. As mentioned previously, the weekly report is submitted by every division in the department to the mayor. The intent is to keep the mayor apprised of departmental activities that he may have questions about or input towards. This report began when a previous mayor was confronted by the media about a fire fatality over a weekend. The mayor was caught off guard and knew nothing about it. While this report is only sent at the end of each week, it opened communications lines between the department and the mayor's office.

The eighth question was: Should a report similar to the weekly report be distributed to TFD members only? The results were that 73% wanted a members' only report while 6.3% did not. Additionally, 20.6% just wanted the weekly mayor's report. From an administration standpoint security of a members' only report would be difficult. As all city employees are on the same e-mail system, the information technology department could retrieve these e-mails as they are held on a server indefinitely. I am confident of this due to a recent audit I performed which saw me requesting and receiving past e-mails for documentation purposes.

The final question was: Please provide your input or suggestions for improving internal TFD communications. Twenty two responses were received on this question. In summation the most responses received suggested, as supported in questions seven and eight, that a members only report be sent out. Some that wanted the members' only report felt it would help to control rumors that quickly circulate throughout the department. Others expressed their displeasure with TFD-TV. Many others feel strongly that every member of the department should have their own e-mail account. They went on to express that the lack of a personal e-mail account caused them to feel slighted and less important.

Limitations do exist related to the survey. There were a limited number of responses. This could inhibit the validation of the conclusions drawn from the survey. Another limitation is the issues occurring within the Tulsa Fire Department. At the time of the survey, the TFD was going through significant budget problems and tough decisions were being weighed. This fact could affect members desire to complete the survey as I know that I felt drained during this time. An additional limitation could include the fact that there is no accountability for individuals completing the survey. One individual could have actually completed the survey more than once. Another limitation is that the survey was sent out by me. This could motivate some to complete the survey while discouraging others. Finally a limitation that must be considered is the quiet majority. These individuals simply go with the flow and let others have input until they are moved to act.

RESULTS

Research question 1: What part does face to face communication play in organizational communication?

Face to face communication plays a critical part in organizational communication. The richness of communication is lost without a face to face opportunity. This is illustrated by the communications process being comprised of sixty percent body language which is lost when the communicators are separated. This emphasizes the need for face to face communication. When considering organizational impact, managers must be adept at communicating as this is the function that dominates their time since managers spend seventy five percent of their time communicating.

This research has illustrated that physical separation is detrimental to organizational communication. Face to face interactions allow emotion and emphasis to be witnessed and confirmed. Feedback is immediate when two individuals are face to face. Miscommunication is

diminished and clarity is enhanced. The richness of personal communication is also present when two individuals are together.

Face to face communications also allow immediate clarification. Unfamiliar words can be immediately questioned and clarified. This is critical due to cultural differences, slang, and acronyms. Cultural differences are becoming more of an issue as departments, including the Tulsa Fire Department, seeks to assemble departments that mirror their community. In the past, the TFD did not consider this important and only for the last twenty or so years exerted effort to diversify the department.

Slang is also influenced by face to face communication. Different words have different meanings and slang may actually have no meaning unless immediate feedback is available. Acronyms also play a part in organizational communication. First, acronyms present impedance, depending on the communication urgency, as they require thought and reflection. You must interpret and fit an acronym into an understandable interpretation. Second, if an acronym is misunderstood, as the OB acronym contained in this research, it could in the least interrupt organizational communication and at the most be tragic. Third, if the assumption by the sender is that the acronym is understood when it's not, the communication process breaks down.

Technology does exist to allow face to face communications that don't occur at the same time. Today's computerized age offers options that range from podcasting to computer mediated communication. The ability exists to preserve meetings, conversations, statements, and other communications for viewing later or sharing in an e-mail. Efficiency is increased and individuals don't have to read into an e-mail; they can actually watch a recording when they have a chance.

Research question 2: What part does body language play in organizational communication?

This research has shown that body language does play a critical part in organizational communication. Without body language the richness of communication is lost. As mentioned above, sixty percent of communication is through body language. Our culture has become reliant on cell phones and e-mail creating a pattern for disaster regarding communication that eliminates body language. These electronic media prohibit the interpretation of body language and are impedance in the communication process.

A critical element of organizational communication is the ability to confirm communications through body language. If a communicator is expressing that an issue is no big deal and their facial expression does not tell the same story miscommunication will exist. Posture also influences organizational communication. If the receiver is intently listening to a communication the sender will read that their message is being received. A listener that is sending an e-mail on their blackberry at the same time illustrates a completely different attitude. The ability to read this situation is impossible without face to face communication.

Gestures, as a part of body language, influence and affect organizational communication. Gestures can confirm receipt, or change the interaction immediately. The rolling of one's eyes will affect the process. There are also cultural affects associated with gestures. This research illustrates the example of the a-ok gesture. While to Americans this is a positive sign, to Japanese it is an offensive gesture.

Research question 3: What part does leadership play in organizational communication?

Leadership plays a critical role in organizational communication. This research identified the need to use transformational leadership as a starting point. This leadership style focuses on

using influence to encourage and motivate others. Transformational leaders are ethically and morally sound and illicit loyalty from their subordinates.

Generational differences are related to leadership and play a part in organizational communication. Leaders must be aware of these differences as general communications are different considering the generational differences. The fire service currently has a mixture of baby boomers, generation X, and generation Y employees. These groups have very different influences and motivations. Generation Y employees are focused on money and baby boomers are focused on job satisfaction and accomplishment. This in and of itself presents challenges to organizational communication.

One of the people I interviewed faced a serious leadership issue in his department. As a new Assistant Chief, he recognized a need to establish some core values. These core values set the department on a journey that included additional buy in and commitment. His department also began to pay dividends via financial gain. The organizational communication that was born helped them heal old wounds and move forward in a positive manner. Chief Frietag's approach is one available to every department although it requires a commitment to move forward.

Chief Kroon of the Bellevue Fire Department also increased organizational communication. His improvement was through a newsletter. It is another way to show leadership to the members and allow them to receive prudent information in a timely manner. Rumors were tackled head on and transparency was prominent. The fire chief had constant influence on his department through clear and transparent communications.

Research question 4: What information can a survey of Tulsa Fire Department members provide in order to identify their communication needs?

A survey that solicited information from members of the Tulsa Fire Department was telling. It became crystal clear that they are dissatisfied with the current organizational

communications. The TFD has attempted to improve communications although I'm not sure the field personnel were consulted or included in these improvements.

One avenue used recently was a television show produced for TFD members. This show in the beginning was valuable although the former fire chief quickly lost interest. At that point, other hosts were brought in and the field lost interest. A labor/management committee was established to improve interest in the show; it became clear the confidence and interest in preserving the show was lost.

The survey also identified a need to provide timely and clear information to all members. The TFD currently provides the mayor a weekly report that the field finds useful. They did request a members only report that could go into more detail and explanation on information that the mayor may not need.

A surprising result from the survey was the number of times e-mail was accessed during a shift. Many members indicated they read departmental e-mails more than five times. I have heard several members question as to whether e-mails sent were ever even read. This is encouraging as departmental members are receiving information that is sent. A problem with e-mail is the security of this system. E-mails are held on a server indefinitely.

DISCUSSION

When I began this research project I thought it would be very simple to examine communication and what others have done to improve communications within their department. What I discovered was that it is not quite that simple. Many inputs exist into communication and unless they are examined and considered, organizational communication won't improve on a consistent basis. Organizational communication has been defined as the process by which

information is exchanged and understood by two or more people, usually with the intent to motivate or influence behavior (Santra & Giri, 2009, 101).

Consideration must be given to the need to have face to face communication. I was discussing yesterday with my coworkers what station life was like when I was on a company. At shift change everyone sat at the kitchen table and caught up about the shifts activities. We passed information to the oncoming shift to ensure they were aware of responses made the day before and any issues that remain. Walking into a fire station today you will likely see a sea of laptop computers on the kitchen table connected wirelessly to the internet. One of the greatest learning tools are the war stories told about the past. Lessons are learned from these stories and they are received with the richness of face to face communications. Physical separation reduces the effectiveness of communication, causing the loss of the nonverbal and emotional elements (Buhler, 2001, 287). These emotional elements are critical when considering the differences in gender as more women enter the fire service. In fact, women hear more of the emotional content of messages than men do (Buhler, 288).

Many other inputs exist that affect organizational communication including: tone, noise, word selection and slang. Tone, for example, affects the receipt of the message. Without emphasis and emotion entering the communication process much is lost. A communication that is received laying out a new approach for a training evolution received from a confident training officer who communicates well and is excited about the evolution will be received differently if delivered by a training officer that is less than excited about the evolution. Fire scenes are influenced by tone. Urgency is common place during firefighting operations. Again this tone is indicative and a part of the message received.

Noise is any factor that hinders the receipt of the intended message (Buhler, 287). Noise can include distractions. In the electronic age we live in many of us try to multitask. Blackberry's have become commonplace and have actually become an addiction for some. Multitasking will get in the way of communication and cause noise. Noise can also include cultural divides. Many departments across the nation are attempting to make their fire department members mirror their community. It is more likely that miscommunication will occur when people come from different cultures (Buhler, 288). This should cause caution when communicating and stimulate care and consideration for the intended message and the receiver.

Word selection and slang are important to examine when considering organizational communications. This is particularly important when exploring the differences in generations that exist in most every department. A slang word with an accepted definition by a baby boomer may have a completely different meaning to a generation Y'er. A good example is cracker line. When I came on the job this was a pre-connected line primarily used for quick deployment used for house fires. A newer generation firefighter might not even understand what that is and could even mistake it for a prejudicial comment. The words selected and used also influence communication. Word selection is a critical component of the communication process itself and poses as a barrier as many of the words and phrases used are vague (Buhler, 283).

Body language is a very important part of organizational communication. Many fire departments use assessment centers in their testing process. All who have participated in one of these processes understands how important body language is. Posture is a critical component of body language. An example of posture is sitting on the edge of your seat which communicates interest and that the sender has your attention (Buhler, 2001, 290). Body language makes up

sixty percent of the communication process; people use body language to support verbal language (Karadag et al., 399).

After examination of the different types of organizational culture it is clear to see most fire departments, at least in their field operations, are of the clan culture; the TFD field is definitely a clan. The clan culture is typified by a friendly place to work where people share much of themselves. It is like an extended family. Leaders are thought of as mentors and, perhaps, even parent figures. The organization is held together by loyalty and tradition, and commitment is high (Masood et al., 2006, 944). TFD members will stick together through thick and thin and depend on one another on duty and off. The organization emphasizes the long-term benefit of individual development with high cohesion and morale being important (Masood et al., 2006, 945). This lends itself to the internal promotional system that exists in most fire departments. We work side by side with another person, get to know them very well, and then supervise them after a promotion.

This leads to leadership which plays a critical part in organizational communications. All influences including face to face communications, body language, and cultural influences point to the need for and ultimately the effectiveness of leadership. Different choices related to leadership style are available including command and control leaders, transactional leaders, and transformational leaders.

Command-and-control leaders dramatically increase worker disengagement, solve fewer problems, and scapegoat and fire some of the best people (Wheatley, 2005, 11). This illustrates how tenuous this leadership style can be. This is especially true when consideration is given to the differences in the generations that are employed in the fire service today. There are times when this leadership style is appropriate including dangerous situations. Danger invokes the need

to deliver communications very directly and without a lot of consideration as to how it makes the receiver feel. I don't consider dangerous situations as organizational communication per say.

Transactional leadership is a more rational style where behaviors are aimed at monitoring and controlling employees (Bono & Judge, 2004, 904). Considering the fire service, this style is more attractive than command and control as its users intend to monitor and control employees rationally instead of ordering them around through fear and power. Some transactional leaders may want to trade rewards for something followers want or need. Management by exception is a part of transactional leadership. Management by exception is focused on setting standards and monitoring deviations from these standards (Bono & Judge, 903). While this is an effective means of leading it is not the best choice. One of the dangers of transactional leadership is laissez-faire because under the transactional leadership label it can be thought of as non-leadership or the avoidance of leadership responsibilities (Bono & Judge, 2004, 902).

Transformational leadership who have high standards of moral and ethical conduct, who are held in high personal regard, and who engender loyalty from their followers (Bono & Judge, 2004, 901). These leaders are respected by their followers. These leaders also create extremely loyal followers which allow them to use influence instead of power. Transformational leaders are charismatic and stimulate enthusiasm from followers. These leaders challenge organizational norms, encourage divergent thinking, and push followers to develop innovative strategies (Bono & Judge, 901). This leadership style, in my opinion, fits the modern fire service very well. Today, the fire service is evolving. Transformational leaders are prepared to serve as the change agent in their departments. They have the ability to build bridges that will generate and enact positive changes in departments including the Tulsa Fire Department.

The interviews conducted brought to light original thinking of peers from different parts of the country. Organizational communication issues aren't a new concept and some have had significant success addressing this problem. Chief Frietag and Chief Kroon both brought forward some great ideas. Chief Frietag established core values which created a new direction for his department. He used these values to retool the organizational communication in the Cottleville Fire Department. These values cause buy in to be increased and the members of the department appreciated a written and tangible direction. Chief Kroon transformed departmental communications in the Bellevue Fire Department through a newsletter distributed throughout the department. He used this newsletter to bust rumors and share information. He indicated his departmental members indicated they felt empowered and part of the decisions made within the department.

The survey both conducted confirmed my perception of TFD organizational communication and also brought forward some surprising results. The TFD-TV show had run its course in fact it had overstayed its welcome. It was past time to go a different direction with departmental communications. The survey confirmed that most, in fact 92.1%, indicated they did read the weekly report prepared to be informational for the mayor. Many of these individuals requested more information in the form of a department only report. They are hungry for departmental communication that will explain what issues are outstanding and how they are being dealt with. I believe it is quite simple for TFD members, without feeling a part of the process through clear organizational communication; they are suspicious as to what is happening. This suspicion many times leads to rumors and forces perception to be reality. The surprising result was that departmental members, in fact 52.4%, read departmental e-mails five or more

times. To be blunt as a deputy chief I wondered if anyone read e-mails at all. I guess this was my mistaken perception as sometimes communications don't seem to be readily received.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this research project demonstrate the need to improve organizational communication within the Tulsa Fire Department. The research also shows that improvements while seemingly simple are very complicated. Many inputs occur into the communication process.

The first recommendation is to understand generational differences and include this understanding in the development of communications plans. This understanding must include knowing the motivation for these generational groups. Another consideration must be how they prefer to receive communications. The entrants into the fire service today are often more educated and technologically savvy than department leaders. This should send the message that forcing everyone within the organization to communicate in the same manner will not be effective. Department leaders must become adept at playing to the audience intended to receive their message. This will be a short term goal and would involve an amount of research and training.

Another recommendation is to get out of the office and into the field as much as possible. Face to face communications have proven valuable. Also valuable is the ability to read body language. These dimensions are lost in an e-mail. The fire chief and administration must spend time communicating directly with the members affected by the decisions made. The executive development curriculum teaches all EFO students that change must include those affected by the proposed change. Why would we expect a different outcome? Members must see you while communicating and feel what you are saying. Trust is paramount and is enhanced by seeing

things with your own eyes. This recommendation could be carried out immediately although it will take time to build, or in some cases rebuild, trust with departmental members. This is neither a short or long term goal. If organizational communications are to be improved it must be instituted immediately.

A third recommendation is to install leadership training for every member of the TFD. This becomes a short and long term goal as this training will take time. Leadership skills must exist from the top to the bottom. Many miscommunications are caused by a lack of understanding. A leader will value these communications and take the time to understand who they are speaking to, what the intended message is, and be able to motivate followers. My recommendation is to install the National Fire Academies leadership program in the Tulsa Fire Department training curriculum. We have some experience with this program from the past. At that time we were limited by the number of students and the logistics associated with the class. These details must be worked out in order to move the department toward better organizational communications.

The final recommendation is to provide TFD members with a weekly report or newsletter with pertinent information. This would be a short term goal although could be forced to a long term goal. The City of Tulsa has an Information Technology group that supports all our computers and technology. The most expeditious way to distribute a communication of this sort would be through e-mail. This presents challenges as to privacy and security. My preference would be to communicate transparently with the membership very bluntly however; access to the information provided could cause issues. Of course the next hurdle would be to establish who would publish the report and what it would contain. I believe the report could be structured similar to our weekly report to the mayor with more details. All departments are struggling with

staffing issues right now and the TFD is a very lean organization. I will communicate with the fire chief and identify who this person will be.

I believe there will be significant benefit for the department in the area of organizational communications following the completion of these recommendations. I also believe there will be immediate buy in and support from the membership if they simply see the administration and have the opportunity to talk face to face with them. Additionally, the leadership skills will be improved aiding members with understanding how and why difficult decisions are made the way they are. Many times leaders make decisions and assume that others understand the far reaching implications. This is a pitfall that must be avoided through leadership training.

I believe that a good follow up to these improvements should include a biannual survey of its members. Another measure of success would be the morale of department members. Have things improved, stayed the same or gotten worse? These may be somewhat intangible although right now the morale of members of the TFD is at an all time low. Leadership skills will assist with morale issues through the ability to motivate and encourage members at the local level.

Replication of this research would be easy to perform. Surveying the members of the department tells a story. Following the beliefs of the EFO program, these members must be a part of the organization and feel valued. They must be included in decision making and the solutions developed.

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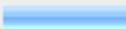
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APPENDIX

TFD Internal Communications Survey

1. What is your current rank?


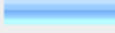

	Response Percent	Response Count
Civilian / Administrative Staff 	12.7%	8
FDO4 	15.9%	10
Firefighter 	12.7%	8
Fire Equipment Operator 	6.3%	4
Captain 	31.7%	20
Chief Officer 	20.6%	13
	answered question	63
	skipped question	0

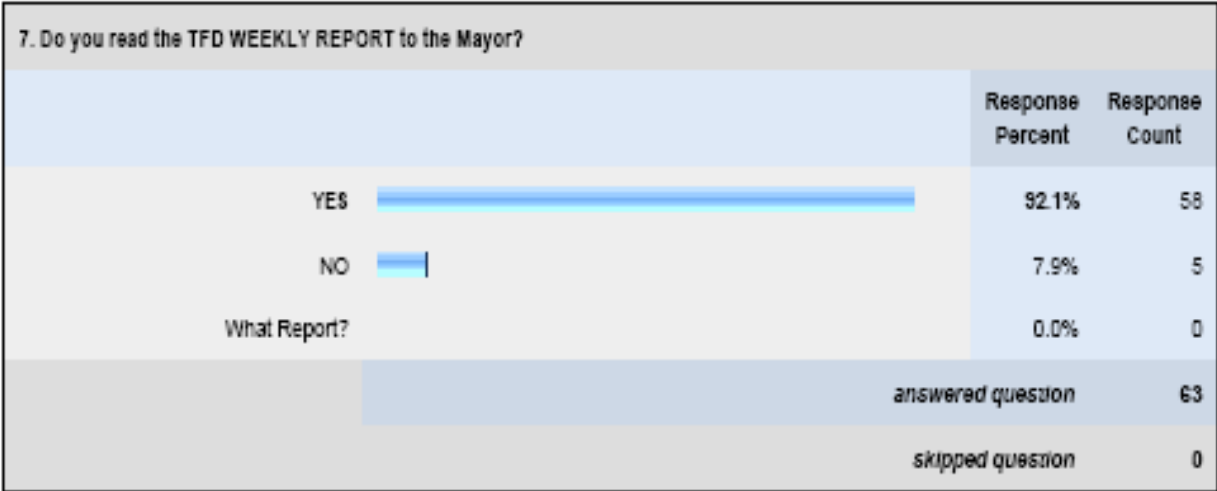
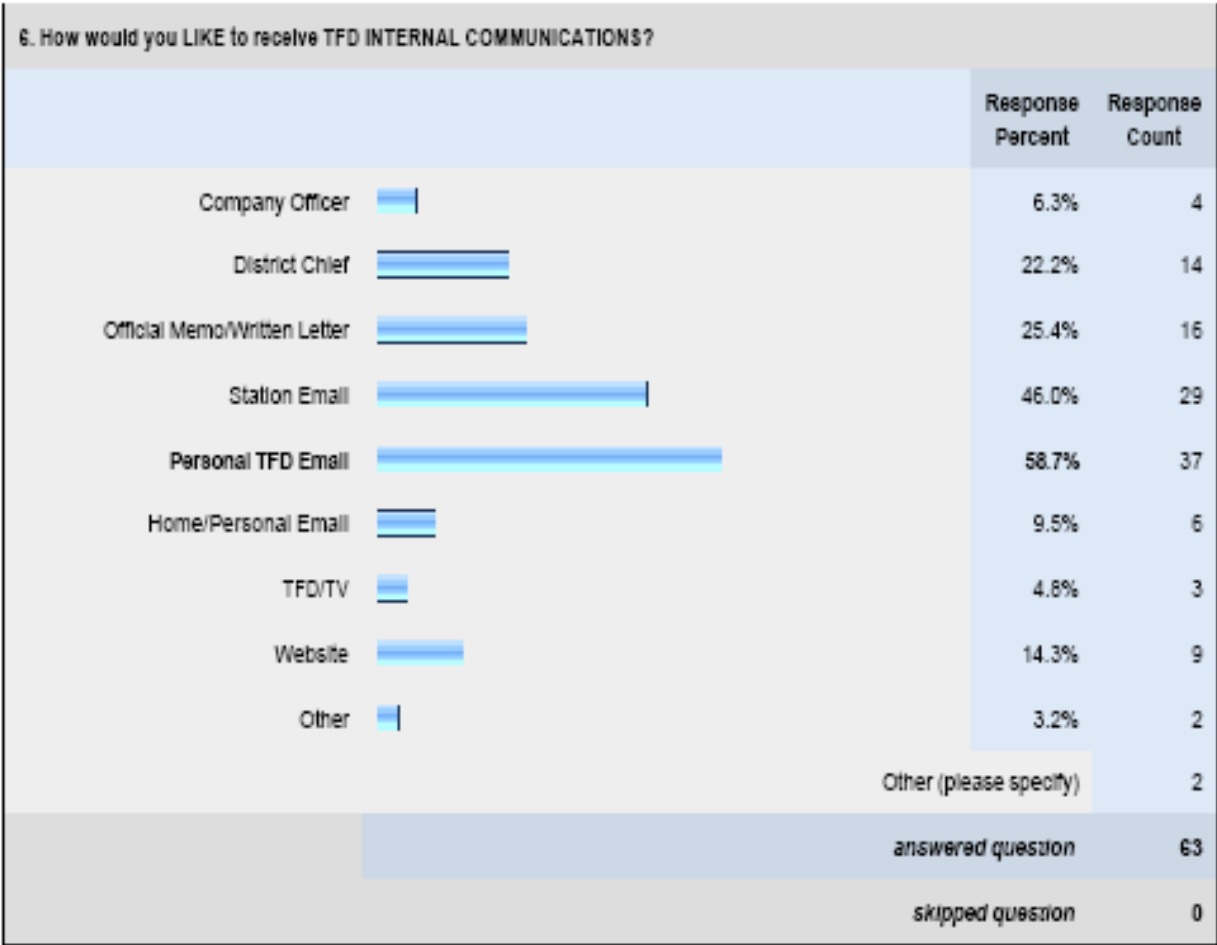
2. What is your SHIFT?

	Response Percent	Response Count
40 Hour 	39.7%	25
A - Platoon 	30.2%	19
B - Platoon 	15.9%	10
C - Platoon 	14.3%	9
	answered question	63
	skipped question	0




3. How do you CURRENTLY receive TFD INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS?		
	Response Percent	Response Count
Company Officer	11.1%	7
District Chief	28.6%	18
Verbal (Official Department Visits)	12.7%	8
Department Email	90.5%	57
Written Notes/Memos	11.1%	7
Newsletters	11.1%	7
TFD TV	4.8%	3
CityWeb	14.3%	9
Informal/Other Department Members	28.6%	18
None	0.0%	0
	Other (please specify)	3
	<i>answered question</i>	63
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

4. How effective is the CURRENT INTERNAL DEPARTMENT COMMUNICATIONS?								
	Poor	Average	Good	Effective	Excellent	N/A	Rating Average	Response Count
Formal/Verbal (Station Visits)	15.9% (10)	34.9% (22)	15.9% (10)	11.1% (7)	6.3% (4)	15.9% (10)	2.49	63
Informal/Verbal (Other Members)	17.7% (11)	40.3% (25)	24.2% (15)	9.7% (6)	6.5% (4)	1.6% (1)	2.46	62
Department Email	1.6% (1)	23.8% (15)	23.8% (15)	41.3% (26)	9.5% (6)	0.0% (0)	3.33	63
Written Notes/Memos	32.2% (19)	25.4% (15)	15.3% (9)	15.3% (9)	1.7% (1)	10.2% (6)	2.21	59
Newsletters	29.0% (18)	27.4% (17)	16.1% (10)	14.5% (9)	6.5% (4)	6.5% (4)	2.38	62
TFD TV	57.4% (35)	16.4% (10)	8.2% (5)	1.6% (1)	0.0% (0)	16.4% (10)	1.45	61
CityWeb	18.3% (11)	23.3% (14)	30.0% (18)	21.7% (13)	3.3% (2)	3.3% (2)	2.67	60
<i>answered question</i>								63
<i>skipped question</i>								0

5. How many TIMES PER SHIFT do you CHECK/READ DEPARTMENT EMAIL at the STATION?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Never		0.0%	0
1-3		27.0%	17
3-5		20.6%	13
5+		52.4%	33
<i>answered question</i>			63
<i>skipped question</i>			0



8. Should a report SIMILAR to the Weekly Report be distributed to TFD MEMBERS ONLY?

	Response Percent	Response Count
YES 	73.0%	46
NO 	6.3%	4
Just Send Mayor's Report 	20.6%	13
answered question		63
skipped question		0

9. Please provide your input or suggestions for Improving INTERNAL TFD COMMUNICATIONS.

	Response Count
	22
answered question	22
skipped question	41