EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNION

Developing an Effective Relationship with the Labor Union

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

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

Signed:_____

Abstract

The problem is future federal legislation to authorize collective bargaining for public employees will pre-empt North Carolina law which prohibits the practice. Given the prohibition for collective bargaining and the inexperience among public leaders in NC, the Cary town manager instructed department directors to prepare for collective bargaining to minimize potential disruptions in service and to maintain public confidence in Town staff. The purpose of this research was to identify best practices for developing successful relationships with a bargaining unit. This project used action research to identify best practices for developing successful relationships and developed a plan to implement those practices. Research question 1 examined how unionizing impacts an organization. Research question 2 examined strategies fire chiefs have employed to mitigate negative implications of unionizing and facilitate effective labor relations. Research question 3 examined best practice relationship building strategies. Research question 4 examined roles or activities fire chiefs should undertake to facilitate effective labor relations. Results of this study included the understanding that effective relationships were a responsibility of the fire chief. The fire chief was most successful for facilitating effective labor relations when functioning in the roles of the leader, liaison and disseminator. The study identified four overarching relationship building strategies: (a) develop long-term trusting relationships, (b) union collaboration, (c) employee engagement and (d) interest-based bargaining. Recommendations included developing employee relations guidelines, creating opportunities for communicating with staff, incorporating trust-building practices into departmental processes and interactions, interviewing fire chiefs with reputations for successful labor relations to learn about their practices and success, incorporating interest-based bargaining principles into departmental management practices and should collective bargaining become a

reality, create a labor management committee and have senior department staff to participate in

Labor Management Initiative or Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services training.

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Introduction

Within the last decade, federal, state and local governments have seen a substantial increase in the number of their employees becoming union members (Sims, 2002, p.338). Where a union exists, organization leaders in government must face the reality that their strategic aspirations depend in no small part upon coming to terms with the quality of their relationships with those unions (Farazmand, 2007, p.443). Management and union leaders must recognize that confrontational philosophies are mutually self-destructive (Farazmand, 2007, p.457) and it is apparent that the power of the public-sector union is not going to go away (Buntin, 2010, p.35). So in the near future, any public leader not currently working in a union environment, just might have to do so.

The problem is that many N.C. local government leaders believe future federal legislation such as H.R. 413, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act will pre-empt North Carolina public law and grant collective bargaining rights for public employees (Hankins Testifies About Collective Bargaining, 2010, p.1). Given NC General Statute § 95-98's current prohibition for collective bargaining with labor unions or labor organizations concerning public employees (NC General Assembly, retrieved July 19, 2010) and the widespread lack of experience among local government leaders in NC, the Cary Town Manager has instructed department directors to plan and prepare for collective bargaining with Town of Cary employee groups in an effort to minimize potential disruptions of service and to maintain public confidence in the Town (B.T. Shivar, personal communication, January 11, 2010).

The purpose of this research is to identify best practices for developing successful relationships with members of a future collective bargaining unit and develop a plan to implement these practices. To that end, this study will use action research.

The research questions for this project include: (a) what aspects of organizational culture for public safety agencies does collective bargaining affect, (b) what strategies exist that mitigate or eliminate the negative implications and enhance the positive implications, (c) what labor management relation strategies are considered best practices for fostering successful relationships for these two groups, and (d) what specific role or activities do successful fire chiefs undertake to facilitate successful labor management relationships?

Background and Significance

The Town of Cary is a North Carolina municipality incorporated in 1871 and is located in the central region of the state known as the piedmont. Cary is situated in western Wake County and extends into eastern Chatham County where it abuts U.S. Army Corp of Engineer property adjacent to Jordan Lake. Cary's population is estimated at 139,110 and its jurisdiction encompasses 55.35 square miles (Town of Cary, Population Report, 2010, p.1). Cary borders the City of Raleigh to the north and east, the Towns of Apex and Holly Springs to the south and west and the Town of Morrisville and City of Durham to the northwest.

The Cary Fire and Rescue Department employs 206 uniformed personnel and three civilian support staff members (Town of Cary Fire Department Administration, n.d.). On a 24-hour basis, the department operates seven engine companies, four ladder companies, and three rescue companies from seven fire stations. The fire department provides fire protection, first responder emergency medical care, technical rescue, fire code enforcement and public fire and life safety education services (Town of Cary Fire Department Operations, n.d.). The fire department's adopted operating budget for Fiscal Year 2011 is $17,842,717. The component of the FY2010 budget attributed to personnel services is $16,528,153 (Town of Cary Budget – Fire Narrative, 2010).

This problem is important to the researcher because I do not have experience working in a unionized environment where many of the employee relations activities I perform every day may fall within the scope of a bargaining agreement or memorandum. In addition, the researcher lacks specific training that will prepare for a new set of managerial responsibilities for labor relations. Currently as fire chief, the researcher is able to develop strategic plans and make employee relations decisions without necessarily consulting a cohort. However with a collective bargaining agreement, the union group becomes an instant partner and as several interviewees noted, power-sharing becomes a major barrier the fire chief must overcome if he or she expects to be an effective and successful leader regarding labor relations (R. Browning, personal communications, July 8, 2010; Steve Westermann, personal communications, July 12, 2010; Lori Moore and Kevin Rader, personal communications, July 16, 2010).

Since 1959, NC statute has prohibited collective bargaining with public employees in NC. So, for over 51 years, public employee relations have existed in the context that an employee can unilaterally terminate the employee-employer relationship without cause, but the employer must demonstrate good cause to unilaterally terminate the relationship. Given this "for cause" relationship and prohibition to collectively bargain with public employee unions, labor relations with a union has not existed and therefore has not affected the Cary Fire and Rescue Department. However, as Kearney (2010, p. 102) notes, labor relations and collective bargaining concepts and processes are alien to most elected and appointed officials in non-bargaining jurisdictions. For the Town of Cary, officials have significant employee relations experience but because of its illegality, working with a union has not occurred. This employee relations experience represents a technical ability for which Town staff is well equipped to manage.

Recently, H.R. 413, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act, also known as the Collective Bargaining Bill, was passed by the House (IAFF, retrieved July, 25, 2010) and is currently being considered by the Senate. If the bill is enacted by Congress and signed into law by the President, it will override North Carolina's statutory prohibition on public employee collective bargaining. Once enacted and if not challenged and found unconstitutional by the courts, public safety unions will enjoy collective bargaining rights. Many local governments in NC will face new challenges working with unionized employees as this relationship did not previously exist.

This study is predicated on the future potential impact for collective bargaining with a labor union and as Heifetz and Linsky's *Leadership on the Line* conveys is an example of the perils of adaptive change. Leadership would be a safe undertaking if your organization only faced problems for which they already knew the solutions (2002, p.13). Whereas Town staff including the researcher are well-skilled and experienced for the technical aspects of employee relations, when discovering and adjusting to labor relations prescribed by bargaining agreement, staff is not experienced and may not immediately recognize the changing attitudes, values and behaviors a unionized work environment is likely to bring. It is based on these future unknowns that the Town Manager has charged department directors with the task of preparing for this adaptive challenge.

Preparing for labor union relations relates to the Executive Leadership course in several ways and these are succinctly illustrated in the Model of Executive Officer Leader found on page SM1-4 of the student manual in Unit 1. Reinforced during the literature review, skill or action areas including the ability to communicate, ability to influence, ability to negotiate, mediate and promote consensus repeatedly emerge as necessary strategies to develop effective relationships

with the labor group. Unit 5, Managing Multiple Roles presents a summary of Henry

Mintzberg's Ten Roles of Managerial Work. Hertzberg suggests the leader, who for this research

purpose directs subordinates and fosters a proper work environment for organizational

effectiveness. As a decisional role-player, the executive leader functions as the organization's

disturbance handler, responding to problems and conflict in order to keep people working

together and functions as the organization's negotiator who may serve on the organization's

bargaining team (FEMA Executive Leadership, 2005, p. SM 3).

This study further aligns with the Executive Leadership course with review and

discussion about the concept, tools and techniques for influencing as illustrated by the conceptual

model the Dynamics of Influencing Others found in the student manual on page SM8-3 and

discussed further in Unit 12, Influencing Styles, where the text presents influencing styles related

to logic, vision and participation and trust (FEMA Executive Leadership, 2005, p.SM 12-4). In

particular, styles for participation and trust appear extensively throughout current literature on

labor relations. Lastly, Unit 11 is devoted to assessing the strengths and weaknesses of

negotiation skills for executive fire service leaders. Like the previously mentioned units, Unit 11

presents a number of soft bargaining characteristics repeatedly emphasized by numerous

references as effective negotiating practices that yield productive relationships with the labor

unit. These characteristics include: agreement is the goal, make concessions to cultivate the

relationship and trust others (FEMA Executive Leadership, 2005, p.SM 11-7).

The problem of preparing for labor union relations aligns with the United States Fire

Administration's 2010-2015 Strategic Plan (United States Fire Administration, Strategic Plan,

retrieved July 19, 2010) specifically Goal 4, Improve the fire and emergency services

professional status and Objective 4.1, Enhance the professionalism of the Nation's fire and

emergency services leaders. The fire and emergency services leadership in North Carolina and Virginia where public employee collective bargaining is prohibited and hundreds of fire chiefs and municipal managers in 20 other right-to-work states (Wikipedia, Right to Know, 2010) may lack professional experience and may be ill-prepared to effectively respond to a new realm of managerial functions germane to successful labor relations.

Literature Review

Connecting to lessons learned from *Leadership on the Line*, the first research question is designed to identify technical or adaptive challenges associated with a unionized work environment. Providing leadership to facilitate successful labor relations requires the capacity to see what is happening to himself or herself and the initiative (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, p.73). For the inexperienced, understanding what is happening or what may happen brings clarity and context to the newfound challenge of labor relations. There is no shortage of literature discussing both the positive and negative impacts of unionized labor and collective bargaining. This study acknowledges the most widely recognized implications, but focuses on those that correlate most with facilitating effective labor relations.

From an operational perspective, collective bargaining and interactions with the labor union will impact organizational innovation. The presence of labor organizations in the governmental domain constrains the ability of public leaders to act unilaterally concerning strategic policy development and implementation. Usually government leaders at all levels have little option but to consult with labor organizations on strategic matters (Farazmand, 2007, p.442). Substantial legitimate power comes with bargaining authority so unions can inhibit innovation or bargaining heavily for some other benefit in order to support strategic innovation.

Like innovation, productivity is another organizational output impacted by collective bargaining. Collective bargaining is not a prerequisite for productivity enhancements (Kearney, 2009, p.170) unless an agreement for collaborative power sharing and decision making between management and labor is well established and nurtured. For the public sector, the influence of unions on quality and quantity of services is variable or uncertain (Kearney, 2009, p.208). Additionally, there is a negative relationship between unionization and employment as some union-related factor or set of factors work to hold down job levels. Perhaps unions prompt a cutback in the quality and quantity of services (Kearney, 2009, p.149) or perhaps organizational performance as it relates to productivity is attributed to a workgroup's engagement, not whether or not it is unionized. One Gallup study cites the difference in performance between union and non-union groups is minimal at approximately 6%, but employee engagement creates dramatic differences in productivity as much as 32.8% higher (Tyler, 2009).

Unionization and collective bargaining impact employee related cost structures. The conventional wisdom is that unions, through collective bargaining and various political activities, contribute to state and local fiscal difficulties by inflating payrolls and operating budgets. It is often asserted that the primary impact of public employee unions has been to inflate the cost of wages and benefits (Kearney, 2009, p.144). Of course, compensation costs rise whether unions are in the picture or not, with cost-of-living adjustments, seniority and merit pay increases (Kearney, 2009, p.148).

Whether it is the inherent behavior of those who join unions or the avenues unions provide to voice discontent, empirical evidence supports the counter intuitive thought that union members report lower levels of job satisfaction than non-union members. This negative association between union membership and job satisfaction exists in different data sets, in

different countries, and different time periods (Bryson, Cappellari, & Lucifora, 2010, p.357).

However as several interviewees noted, unions typically organize in work environments where

the employees are unsatisfied with work conditions and/or benefits (R. Browning, personal

communication , July 8, 2010; S. Westermann, personal communication, July 12, 2010; L.

Moore & K. Rader, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Communication channels within an organization will be impacted in a unionized

environment and collective bargaining provides a legitimate avenue for employee concerns

regarding terms of employment. Because public safety personnel have limited employment

opportunities, they are likely to use a collective voice to convey their points of view as opposed

to exiting the employment arrangement (Spengler, 1999, p.20). Communications between the

fire chief and the rank and file employees moves from informal to formal. The fire chief is

restricted in his or her ability to select individuals to take on non-routine tasks (R. Browning,

personal communication, July 8, 2010). From labor's perspective, successful labor-management

relations is more about opening communications and managing agreement (L. Moore & K.

Rader, personal communication, July 16, 2010) so establishing more formal channels and using

them to address each party's needs becomes a critical function of the relationship.

If left unattended or unmanaged collective bargaining with a union will negatively impact

employee and managerial relations. Negotiation, the essence of collective bargaining, is a

dispute-resolution mechanism, which means conflict inherently exists. Conflict is a perceived

divergence of interest or a perception of incompatible goals (Farazmand, 2007, p.444). Court

defined rights for labor and management inherently create adversarial positions and you cannot

help that it occurs (J. McGrath, personal communication, July 20, 2010). This understanding

helps explain why some negotiations can be so contentious (Kearney, 2009, p.137). S.

Westermann (personal communication, July 12, 2010) provides the most idealist outcome of labor management relations:

> The context of labor-management relations should be positive and held with its focus on the external positive benefits in that a smooth running organization where both parties are on the same page and with the citizen as the focus and at the forefront of all decisions.

Power sharing is an intrinsic and unstable phenomenon to collective bargaining with both parties attempting to collect it and maximize its benefit. This competition to maximize power impacts the organization. Collective bargaining itself curtails sovereign authority: it is a first step in altering the nature and practice of governance (Spengler, 1999, p.108). Both the union and the employer are expected to compromise and reach a settlement, to bargain in "good faith". Employers and the union must make final decisions for terms and conditions of employment whereby the settlement is presumed to be mutually acceptable (Spengler, 1999, p.105). Collective bargaining represents a new form of power sharing between the sovereign authority and employee unions. Dr. Lori Moore and Kevin Rader provide a refined definition of labor-management relations: it [labor relations] is about power sharing, there will be a sharing of power (personal communication, July 16, 2010). This is not to say that unions have unchecked power, just that each party must understand their limits. The union president should focus on terms of employment and not project himself or herself as the fire chief. Likewise, the fire chief should focus on managing the department and terms of the agreement not debating the agreement.

Understanding the possible implications of what collective bargaining with a union might bring reduces the stress and unknowns associated with preparing for this potential transition. A review of several authoritative sources including five professionals experienced in effective labor

relations, identified the following potential implications or changes an organization might face if required to collectively bargain with a union: (a) innovation, (b) productivity, (c) employee related costs, (d) job satisfaction, (e) communication channels, (f) employee and managerial relations, and (g) power sharing. This study will focus on the last three impacts as it attempts to identify strategies, practices and roles a fire chief should employ to facilitate effective and successful relations with the labor union. In particular, the researcher is reminded of the adage, when change is needed and one feels overwhelmed, focus on the things you can change and don't worry about the rest. Of the potential implications for a unionizing a fire department, the fire chief can most influence relations with the union by communicating effectively. As the preeminent legitimate power source in the department, the fire chief can also positively impact relations by communicating effectively share power with the union. Interviews revealed two enlightened perspectives about how the labor-management focus should center on what makes the citizen the winner (S. Westermann, personal communication, July 12, 2010) and how conflict caused by role-confusion with the fire chief or union president can be easily corrected (R. Browning, personal communication, July 8, 2010; K. Rader, personal communication, July 16, 2010).

Equipped with an understanding for the impacts of unions on the workplace, the researcher has identified four common strategic themes that mitigate the negative implications of unionization and facilitate successful relationships with labor union. These strategic themes include: (a) management collaboration with the union, (b) employee engagement or participation, (c) building long-term trusting relationships, and (d) using interest-based negotiations.

Labor-Management Collaboration

Collaborative governance is a new strategy of governing that brings multiple stakeholders together in common forums with public agencies to engage in consensus decision making. Labor-union collaboration easily aligns within this overarching definition. Collaborative governance has emerged in response to previous government failures. It can replace adversarialism and serve as an alternative to managerialism or authority based rule-making. Collaborative governance has also flourished from new learning and institutional capacity to implement change (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p.544). Examples of labor-management collaboration include: (a) labor-management committees, (b) gainsharing, and (c) joint initiatives.

Labor-Management Committees. The purpose of labor-management committees (LMC) is to create a regular forum for labor and management representatives to discuss, analyze and resolve problems (Kearny, 2009, p.336). As Flint proposes in *Mending Labor Management Relationships* (2002) to maintain a healthy workplace environment for effective relations, there should be frequent, substantial and thorough communications between management and labor. The IAFC-IAFF Labor Management Initiative (LMI) recommends the creation of a labor-management committee (IAFC/IAFF Guiding Principles, 2008) and the researcher found wide agreement among interviewees for establishing and maintaining LMCs. The LMC serves as the official communication channel or forum for each side to present ideas and initiate discussions on how to work collaboratively to solve organizational challenges.

Gainsharing. Productivity bargaining involves the implementation of collective bargaining agreements resulting in changes to work rules and practices in order to achieve increased productivity and bring reciprocal worker gains. Also known as "gainsharing", productivity bargaining has been used in several industrial sectors. Its public use has been

limited to only a small number of municipalities. In gainsharing, management and labor work

together in identifying barriers to productivity and implementing changes that enhance

productivity (Kearney, 2009, p.170).

Joint Initiatives. One of the most recognized joint initiatives for labor-management

relations in the fire service is the Labor-Management Initiative (LMI) between the International

Association of Fire Chiefs and the International Association of Fire Fighters. Other widely

recognized joint initiatives include the IAFF/IAFC Fire Service Joint Labor-Management

Wellness Fitness Initiative and the Fire/EMS Safety Health and Survival Week. A core feature of

joint initiatives is participative decision-making (PDM) (Kearny, 2009, p.336) which in itself

implies that each party has input into decisions. For PDM in the local environment, management

does not simply hear what labor might say about an initiative; on the contrary labor has a voice

and input into the decision itself.

Barriers to joint initiatives that rely on participative decision-making include the concern

that some initiatives are diversionary tactics designed to eliminate jobs and an inconsistent

commitment to participative decision-making because of turnover of key players especially

elected officials (Kearny, 2009, p.340; McKersie & Cutchen-Gershenfeld, 2009, p.508). Because

collaborative efforts depend heavily on power sharing and participative decision-making, success

is realized when leadership makes a strong commitment to insure success and there is no fear of

sharing power (Flint, 2002, p. 21).

Management and labor union collaboration is recognized as a highly effective strategy to

develop and maintain effective labor-relations. Collaborative initiatives exist in many forms and

often materialize as the result of a strong commitment by leadership from both labor and

management. This commitment is built upon trust, generated by open and honest and

communications. Collaborative success is contingent upon both parties understanding of each

other's roles and limitations and the ability to share power effectively.

Employee engagement

   Workplace Improvement Initiatives. Quality Circles, Process Improvement Work-teams

and Total Quality Management are employee participative or engagement programs whose main

purposes are to make organizational improvement for safety, maximize and conserve resources

and improve work processes that result in cost savings and profitability for the organization. This

labor-management collaboration serves as a mechanism for labor management cooperation

(Kearny, 2009, p.335) and positive labor relations. Although viewed as employee participative or

engagement practices, their main purpose it to make organizational improvement for safety,

maximizing and conserving resources and improving work processes that result in cost savings

and profitability. As previously discussed by Tyler, (2009) high performance in an organization

is attributed to the level of workgroup engagement. In addition, engagement is the key to

building a following of employees who promote the organization as a great place to work (Tyler,

2009) and if employee empowerment is a shared value among labor and management this

collaborative relationship can evolve rapidly (Flint, 2002, p.18).

   Participative Decision Making. Ansell and Gash have defined collaborative governance

as an environment where public and private stakeholders engage in two-way communications,

each taking responsibility for policy outcomes, and where each participant engages directly in

decision-making (2007, p. 546). Although little empirical research on participative decision-

making (PDM) experience in public agencies exists, Kearney proposes that [collaboration

among] governments and public employee unions will probably be the playing field where most

of the future PDM action will occur (2009, p.337). Participative decision-making, power-sharing

and the general theory of collaboration share similar challenges to overcome. Like power-sharing, participative decision-making requires trust among leaders and commitment from those leaders to insure success (Flint, 2002, p. 20) but sustained commitment resulting from leadership turnover serves as a significant inhibitor of long-term PDM success (Kearny, 2009, p.340).

Engaging employees in workplace decisions that affect quality, productivity and problem solving serves as a viable strategy to facilitate effective labor relations. Workplace conditions are often a primary reason why unions emerge and healthy workplaces create opportunities for employee input and decision-making for positive organizational outcomes. With this decision-making also comes the responsibility for organizational outcomes which vests both management and labor to organizational success.

Building Trusting Relationships

Developing long-term relationships between the fire chief and union president requires a personal commitment from each individual along with interpersonal skills and personal values which one does not necessarily consider when thinking about unions and collective bargaining. Specifically, these skills and values center on power-sharing and building trust. Organization leaders in government must face the reality that their strategic aspirations on coming to terms with the quality of the relationships with their unions (Farazmand, 2007, p.443). The fire chief and union president will face a number of obstacles including: (a) leadership turnover, (b) ideological clashes, and (c) suspicion from union members that its leadership is too close to management (McKersie & Cutchen-Gershenfeld, 2009, p. 508). Each obstacle can present significant challenges to power-sharing and long-term relationship building.

Power Sharing. The future of cooperative labor-management relations is hindered by management's innate discomfort with fear of losing power (Kearny, 2009, p.340). Strategic

power-sharing or the personal confidence to share power is such a critical component to

successful labor-management relations that every interviewee cited it as absolutely essential for

success and as one of the definitive abilities that fire chiefs with national reputations for effective

labor-management relations possess (R. Browning, personal communication, July 8, 2010; S.

Westermann, personal communication, July 12, 2010; A. Pantellis, personal communication,

July 12, 2010; L. Moore & K. Rader, personal communication, July 16, 2010). However, for the

practical day-to-day working needs, managers and union leaders often work tacitly, without

mutual understanding and in different ways on the same side of a problem (Carter & Rausch,

2007, p. 384). Power imbalances between stakeholders are a commonly noted problem in

collaborative governance (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p.551). If the fire chief is involved in the

bargaining process and negotiations become contentious, the perceived commitment to the power

sharing principle may be compromised and the commitment can appear contradictory to the

strategic partnership both parties hope to achieve.

    Developing Trust. In order to develop trust, one must act and those actions must align

with one's words because actions speak louder than words; there must be no double standards

(Conger, 1998, p.156). As Edwards reports in *Fire Service Personnel Management,* the essential

trust of a labor-management relationship comes from the manner and circumstances in which

issues are dealt with over time (1998, p. 235). Healthy labor-management relationships are

based on trust, which must be earned incrementally (Flint, 2002, p. 20). The trust factor is the

foundation of the relationship and is the most critical condition to create a receptive environment

(Kearny, 2009, p.338). Again, the researcher found wide consensus among interviewees on this

characteristic and its importance in maintaining effective labor relations. It [trust] starts with the

fire chief and union president (S. Westermann, personal communication, July 12, 2010). The first

action has to be to establish trust. If something occurs differently than what is said, trust suffers

and this becomes an impediment (A. Pantellis, personal communication, July 12, 2010).

Building a confidential relationship is the same thing as trust. Sensitive issues should be

addressed in a sensitive manner and this requires trust between the fire chief and the union

president (R. Browning, personal communication, July 8, 2010; L. Moore & K. Rader, personal

communication, July 16, 2010).

Given the significant amount of attention provided by various references and repeated

emphasis on trust-building and power-sharing garnered from interviews, these practices

represent some of the most important considerations one would act upon to develop and maintain

effective labor relations.

Interest-Based Bargaining

Research has identified one sustainable innovation in labor-management relations and

that is the notion of bargaining over how to bargain (McKersie & Cutchen-Gershenfeld, 2009,

p.509). The preeminent process for negotiating between two conflicting entities is an Interest-

Based Bargaining (IBB) model which is built on an alternative dispute resolution strategy to

replace the traditional bargaining model which is based on resistance, early commitment to

overstated positions and use of coercive forms of power (Kochan & Lipsky, 2003, p.143).

Interest based bargaining is also known as win-win bargaining, integrative bargaining, interest-

based negotiation and principled negotiations. Winning, in the context of negotiations, connotes

being able to reach an agreement that both parties can live with or honor (Kearney, 2009, p.134;

Farazmand, 2007, p.447). It does not necessarily imply that each party will get everything it

wanted. Each party should take care to establish realistic expectations. One minor strategy that is

often overlooked during the bargaining process is to exclude the fire chief from the negotiating

table. Many sources suggest fire chiefs should serves as consultants to the negotiating team, but should not be included in dialogue that is likely to result in conflict. After the negotiations have occurred, it is the fire chief who is tasked with making the collective bargaining agreement work. This managerial function is complicated if the fire chief is emotionally vested in the agreement (R. Browning, personal communication, July 8, 2010).

The IBB process is a conflict resolution method which can provide utility for fostering relationships and building trust (Leventhal, 2006) outside of the collective bargaining process. The U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (2007, C-3) defines interest based negotiation as a cooperative approach that takes place between people and promotes the idea that all parties must come away having gained something. The four basic principles of IBB include: (a) separate people from the problem, (b) focus on interests, not positions, (c) invent options for mutual gains, and (d) insist on using objective criteria (Cohen-Rosenthal and Burton, 1987, p.86).

Strategies within the fire chief's purview that mitigate the negative implications of unionizing generally focus on relationship building strategies with the union. Sources repeatedly discuss employee engagement, union collaboration, building trusting relationships and the negotiation strategy known as interest based bargaining. Within these overarching strategies, a number of specific initiatives or practices have evolved. Employee engagement encompasses workplace improvement programs like total quality management teams, quality circles or any other employee center initiative which involves participative decision-making. Collaboration with labor is another strategy that includes initiatives like the LMC, gainsharing, and joint initiatives. Building trusting relationships involves practices designed to facilitate the sharing of power, develop trust among the employer, labor, and management. Lastly, negotiating within the

interest-based bargaining framework which: (a) separates people from the problem, (b) focuses on interests and (c) is designed to produce mutual gains for each party, and (d) is measured objectively, summarizes the current thought on methodologies which if properly implemented should result in effective labor relations.

Best Practices

Given the most current literature and validated by responses from interviewees, the labor relation strategies identified as best practices align with the strategies identified by the second research question. Specifically, best practice strategies include: (a) interest-based bargaining, (b) employee participation, (c) labor-management collaboration, and (d) labor-management relationship building.

Interest-Based Bargaining. For many, the focus of labor management relations is the negotiating process. So, the prevailing contemporary bargaining strategy discussed most often is Interest-Based Bargaining (IBB). Consider the bargaining opportunity as a mutually beneficial undertaking. Kearny offers the following "the union doesn't care a fig about your position…" (2009, p.123) so negotiating best practices has moved from traditional methods based on authority and position to IBB and win-win methods based on negotiating mutual benefits from each party's interests. Interest-based bargaining and the principle of mutual gains provide opportunities for creativity and collaboration for solutions. So, IBB can benefit other strategies like collaboration and employee engagement. A basic fact about negotiations, yet one not easily remembered is that in this process we are dealing with humans who have emotions, deeply held values, and different backgrounds and viewpoints (Denhardt, Denhardt & Aristigueta, 2002, p.342). Best practices IBB will not allow management or the union to ignore these personal and social aspects and the result is a more effective and successful relationship.

Employee Engagement. Employee participation initiatives like quality circles, employee involvement programs, or labor-management participation teams, represent the greatest potential change in employer-employee work relations since the start of the industrial revolution (Begin & Beal, 1989, p.299). These models are defined as formal vehicles for exercising employee voices and represents bottom-up authority structures and meaningful employee participation in organizational decisions (Kearney, 2009, p.336). This does not assume an equal sharing of authority on every issue for which organizations make decisions, but only that there may be some degree of joint decision-making on some issues. Employee engagement, particularly in the context of participative decision-making has evolved into a best practice for effective labor relations strategy, not only for enhancing relations between management and labor, but also for enhancing the organization's profitability, quality of work and financial position.

Labor-Management Collaboration. Labor-management collaboration has emerged as a best practice because of three distinct rationales: (a) synergy from partnerships adds value to the organization, (b) collaboration transforms differing views of a partnership into a ideological consensus, and (c) financial considerations where maximizing resources is necessary to hold the partnership together (Gray, Jenkins, Leeuw & Mayne, 2003, p.9).

Uninhibited communications is a critical element of collaboration. Several sources frame the criticality and the benefits for collaborative initiatives around effective communications. Advocates and critics of partnership arrangements agree that "transparency" or information sharing either directly with workers or through representatives is an important element of a meaningful relationship (Kelly & Willman, 2004, p.121). Sharing information enhances the definition of problems and provides more open assessment of different solutions. Shared information stimulates learning (Gray, Jenkins, Leeuw & Mayne, 2003, p.14). At the local level,

the most widely recommended labor-management collaborative effort is the labor management

committee (LMC). Information sharing serves as the primary objective for this effort and is

highly touted as the best practice for communicating effectively among labor, management and

the employer.

   Relationship Building. Several sources propose that building trust is the essential

foundation for effective labor relations. Schuman (2006, p.241) notes, building trust is the

bedrock for community building, team building and effective communication. Strengthening

trust will increase the effectiveness of collaborative relationships. The most critical facilitative

conditions for creating a receptive environment for effective labor relations is the development

of trust and mutual respect between the union and management (Kearny, 2009, p.338). It is clear

that networks are held together by purpose, a reservoir of good-will and mutual respect or trust.

The process of mutual learning leads to additional trust (Kamensky & Burlin, 2004, pp.85-86).

   Schuman (2006) provides additional details about how trust may be developed within

organizational relationships:

   The basis of trust comes form two sources: first, it comes from the experience of

   complete openness and candor in working relationships and second, it comes from the

   organizational culture which is expressed through ceremonies, myths, symbols, and

   stories. Therefore, trust needs to be embedded organizationally through its values, norms

   and structures. (p.244)

   Appendix A contains leadership practices that build trust. Although they are cited as

leadership practices, they can apply to anyone and are not limited in use by only leaders.

   While this study has identified (a) interest-based bargaining, (b) employee participation,

(c) labor-management collaboration, and (d) labor-management relationship building as labor-

relations best practices, Westermann (personal communication, July 12, 2010) provides a

tempering assessment for the term and application of best practices, "in the end, it has to be what

feels right for your organization, so no one practice or program is necessarily the right one for

you."

Fire Chief's Role

The fourth research question sought to identify any specific role or action a fire chief

might take to facilitate successful labor relations. Current literature validates what is widely

known: The fire chief has a specific responsibility for labor relations and with responsibility the

fire chief should be accountable for the quality of the relationship with the union. As an

employer's representative regardless of whether the work environment is unionized or not, the

fire chief has a continuing responsibility to ensure safe working conditions, proper equipment

and training for employees (Hankins 2010: 2). To reinforce the commentary, Carter and Rausch

succinctly fix this responsibility: Management has the primary responsibility for establishing and

maintaining good relations with labor (2007, p. 372). Best practices for roles and actions include

those deeds necessary to build trust, facilitate open, honest and appropriate communication,

leading collaborative initiatives and finding ways to engage employees in the work of the

department.

When negotiating, the best practice is to avoid engaging in the bargaining process in an

effort to avoid a potentially adversarial relationship with department personnel who are

negotiating for the union. Department heads usually participate only insofar as they furnish

information to the regular management team, make relevant recommendations and in general

serve as observers and advisors (Kearney, 2009, p104). This is not always the case. In Ontario,

Canada, fire chiefs are asked to the bargaining table but police chiefs are not. Police chiefs

separate themselves from negotiations in an effort to avoid conflict because they have to lead their organizations without any distractions that may result from bargaining (personal communication, R. Browning July 8, 2010). For those who might be involved in the negotiation process, Browning recommends, Getting to Yes, by Roger Fisher and William Ury based interest-based bargaining principles (personal communication, R. Browning, July 8, 2010).

Creativity is directly and positively linked to organizational effectiveness and to improvements in quality and productivity. Creative work environments stimulate innovation and promote team performance (Denhardt, Denhardt & Aristigueta, 2002, p.64). Fire chiefs should create work environments where engagement is valued and where employees work with support for creativity and innovation. If the department's goal is to achieve the best labor relations possible, officers must be competent and possess an appreciation for the contributions of all members (Carter & Rausch 2007, p. 372).

As the lead management representative, the fire chief has a responsibility to engage the union and facilitate successful and effective labor relations. This engagement is best implemented away from the bargaining table. Regardless of the circumstances, the best action the one can take is to engage in honest, open discussions, find ways to develop creative work environments that are receptive to employee engagement and union collaboration. In the long run, if the fire chief works on these things, he or she will build a trusting relationship with the union.

<div align="center">Procedures</div>

Interviews

Rob Browning Interview. The researcher interviewed Rob Browning, the Chief Administrative Officer for the municipality of Chatham-Kent, Ontario. Rob Browning's

interview was conducted by telephone at 11:00 A.M. Eastern Standard Time on July 8, 2010. During the interview, the researcher was located at the Cary Fire Department Administration Building at 100 North Academy Street in Cary, NC and Mr. Browning was located at the Chatham-Kent Civic Center located at 315 King Street Chatham, Ontario, Canada.   Mr. Browning was selected for this interview because he currently serves as the leader of a task force charged with reviewing labor relations for emergency services for the Province of Ontario. Mr. Browning is the former fire chief for the City of Kitchner, chief fire officer for the City of Sudbury, Ontario, deputy chief for the Town of Ajax, Ontario and fire service advisor for the Province of Ontario. He has extensive labor relations experience at provincial, municipal and department levels in Canada.

The researcher asked Mr. Browning the following questions:

1. In your experience, what cultural implications or changes positive or negative occur when agencies initiate collective bargaining agreements? What happens to the people in the department?

2. From the perspective of a former fire chief and municipal administrator, describe the strategies you have used or have seen other fire chiefs use which were most productive for developing and maintaining effective labor-management relations?

3. What specific advice or direction for the following topics can you give to fire chiefs who have little or no collective bargaining experience in order to develop and maintain effective relations with the labor group: (a) to develop trust with the labor group, (b) to improve communications with the labor group, and (c) to implement collaborative or joint initiatives with the bargaining unit?

4. Have any of the organizations you've led used policies, standard operating guidelines or

policies, plans, values statements or other administrative documents to insure these strategies

are implemented and maintained?

5. Do you know of any other relevant information that I might need to know, but have not asked

about?

Steve Westermann Interview. The researcher interviewed Steve Westermann, the current fire

chief for the Central Jackson County Fire District in Missouri. The interview was conducted by

telephone at 4:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time on July 8, 2010.   During the interview, the

researcher was located at the Cary Fire Department Administration Building at 100 North

Academy Street in Cary, NC and Chief Westermann was located at Central Jackson County Fire

Protection District Headquarters at 805 Northeast Jefferson Street Blue Springs, Missouri.

Chief Westermann was selected for this interview because he is a former president of the

International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and as IAFC president he was the signatory to

the IAFC-IAFF Labor-Management Initiative Guiding Principles document. Chief Westermann

is a trained LMI facilitator and has experienced a departmental transition from a weak union

non-collective bargaining agreement work environment to a strong collaborative union work

environment.

The researcher asked Chief Westermann the following interview questions:

1. In your experience, what cultural implications or changes occur (+ or -) when agencies

initiate collective bargaining agreements? What happens to the relations ships of the people

in the department?

2. From the perspective of a Fire Chief and LMI facilitator, describe the strategies you have seen used by various Fire Chiefs as the most productive for developing and maintaining effective labor-management relations?

3. Which Fire Chiefs have been the most successful at implementing these strategies?

4. Module 4 of Part I of the IAFC/IAFF Labor Management Initiative talks about labor/management best practices (IAFC/IAFF LMI Table of Contents (2008: IG ii). Specifically, what are these practices and how have or should fire chiefs implement them in their departments?

5. What advice or direction can you give fire chiefs who have little or no collective bargaining experience to develop trust, improve communications and maintain effective relations with the bargaining group?

Andrew Pantellis Interview. The researcher interviewed Andrew Pantellis, President of IAFF Local 1619 of Prince Georges County Maryland. The interview was conducted by telephone at 1:10 P.M. Eastern Standard Time on July 12, 2010. During the interview, the researcher was located at the Cary Fire Department Administration Building at 100 North Academy Street in Cary, NC and President Pantellis was located at 13701 Old Jericho Park Road Bowie, MD.   Mr. Pantellis was selected for this interview because he represents a large union local with a membership of 1,450 fire fighters and paramedics in a complex urban environment. President Pantellis has served as a shop steward, executive representative, vice president and president of IAFF Local 1619. In the recent past, the political environment in Prince Georges County Maryland has lent itself to controversy and like many jurisdictions the recent economic downturn has forced the Prince Georges County to implement furloughs and brown-outs. President Pantellis has taken a proactive position for engaging the County and keeping the public informed

on the impacts for reduced services. President Pantellis' opinions about labor-relations are informed and relevant. The researcher believes this recent experience provided a compelling view of effective or ineffective labor relations from the union's perspective.

The researcher asked Mr. Pantellis the following interview questions:

1. In your experience, what cultural implications or changes occur (+ or -) when agencies initiate collective bargaining agreements? What happens to the relations ships of the people in the department?

2. From the perspective of an International Association of Fire Fighters Local President, describe the strategies you have seen used by various Fire Chiefs as the most productive for developing and maintaining effective labor-management relations?

3. Which Fire Chiefs have been the most successful at implementing these strategies?

4. Module 4 of Part I of the IAFC/IAFF Labor Management Initiative talks about implementing labor/management best practices in a department (IAFC/IAFF LMI Table of Contents (2008: IG ii). Specifically, what are these practices and how have or should fire chiefs implement them in their departments?

5. What advice or direction can you give fire chiefs who have little or no collective bargaining experience to develop trust, improve communications and maintain effective relations with the bargaining group?

Dr. Lori Moore and Kevin Rader Joint Interview. The researcher jointly interviewed Dr. Lori Moore, Assistant to the General President of the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) for Member Services, Technical Assistance and Information Resources and Kevin Rader, Director of Education for the IAFF. The interview was conducted by telephone at 10:15 A.M. Eastern Standard Time on July 16, 2010. During the interview, the researcher was located at the

Cary Fire Department Administration Building at 100 North Academy Street in Cary, NC and

Ms. Moore and Mr. Rader were located at the IAFC Headquarters at 1750 New York Avenue

NW Washington, DC.

Dr. Moore was selected for this interview because she serves as an assistant to the general

president of the IAFF, with responsibility for technical assistance on labor issues and collective

bargaining, fire and EMS operations, and IAFF field services.

Dr. Moore's expertise is in emergency response system design, staffing and deployment

of mobile resources, system performance measurement, and evaluation. She led the effort to

develop the IAFF/IAFC fire-based EMS system performance measures and is now staffing the

committee working to develop fire and rescue operational indicators and performance measures.

Dr. Moore has seven years of service as a fire/paramedic with the City of Memphis Fire

Department and as a member of IAFF Local 1784. After receiving her EMT-Paramedic license

in 1984, she became an instructor-coordinator for the State of Tennessee in 1991, joined IAFF

Headquarters Operations in 1993 as an EMS specialist, and was then promoted to EMS Director

in 1995. Dr. Moore has extensive labor relations experience at the local, state and international

levels.

Mr. Rader was selected for this interview because he currently serves as the Director of

Education for the IAFF and in this capacity he oversees the development of both online and

instructor curricular modules that are delivered to IAFF membership. Also as the Director of

Education, Mr. Rader organizes the annual IAFF educational conference and the biennial Ernest

A. "Buddy" Mass Human Relations Conference. Mr. Rader organizes and participates in the

annual Instructor Development Conference and serves as the IAFF staff liaison for its Elected

Human Relations Committee.

Prior to becoming the Director of Education at the IAFF, Mr. Rader was an IAFF Service Field Representative for the 8th District and a Partnership Education Program (PEP) instructor. For 30 years Mr. Rader was a fire fighter with the Lima Fire Department, Local 334, where he was a platoon chief/paramedic upon retiring in June 2003. Mr. Rader was involved with the Ohio Association of Professional Fire Fighters (OAPFF) for 17 years. At the OAPFF, Mr. Rader held several leadership positions including District Vice President for 9 years, Director of Education Research, and the Chairman of the Human Relations Committee.

At the local level Rader has served as the President, Vice President and Treasurer of Local 334. Mr. Rader also chaired and sat on various local committees including bargaining, labor-management, health and safety, constitution and by-laws, and political action. Throughout his union career, Mr. Rader has organized more than 25 IAFF locals and assisted in negotiating more than 175 labor agreements.

Dr. Moore and Mr. Rader possess significant labor relations experience from the union side and the researcher asked Ms. Moore and Mr. Rader the following questions in order to get that perspective:

1. From the union's perspective, what happens to the organization in terms of operational impacts or relationship impacts when it begins a collective bargaining relationship with management?

2. From the perspective of the International Association of Fire Fighters, describe the strategies you have seen used by various Fire Chiefs as the most productive for developing and maintaining effective labor-management relations?

3. Which Fire Chiefs have been the most successful at implementing these strategies?

4. Module 4 of Part I of the IAFC/IAFF Labor Management Initiative talks about labor/management best practices (IAFC/IAFF LMI Table of Contents (2008: IG ii). Specifically, what are these practices and how do fire chiefs implement them in their departments?

5. What advice or direction can you give fire chiefs who have little or no collective bargaining experience to develop trust, improve communications and maintain effective relations with the bargaining group?

Survey details

This project included a survey of fire service officials. The purpose of the survey was to identify labor relations practices that have resulted in developing and maintaining effective relations with the bargaining group. The survey contains 7 questions and was developed using the on-line survey tool, Survey Monkey. The survey was tested by 6 independent peers on July 14, 2010 for clarity of instruction, question flow and topic relevance. The survey URL was: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/V7GPMQB

The first survey question was a forced choice question developed to establish respondent demographics relating to experience working in a union environment. The second question was a forced choice matrix question developed by using six organizational topics discovered during the literature review and asking respondents whether collective bargaining had impacted their organization positively, neutrally or negatively for these topics. The third survey question was a forced choice matrix question developed by using four management practices discerned from the literature review and asking respondents whether these practices were effective most or all of the time, sometimes effective, or not effective at all for positively impacting labor relations. The fourth survey question was a forced choice matrix question using the four management practices

from question 3 and asking respondents to rate the practices as good, better or best practices.

The fifth survey question was a forced choice matrix question developed to determine

respondent opinion whether each of Mintzberg's Ten Roles of Management was essential or not

essential for the fire chief to facilitate successful union labor relations. The sixth survey question

was an open-ended question asking respondents to briefly describe any specific action a fire

chief must take to facilitate successful union labor relations. The seventh survey question was a

forced choice question asking if the respondent's organization used any administrative document

to establish practices, roles or actions to develop or maintain effective union labor relations. If

the respondent answered yes to question 7, he or she was asked to contact the researcher to

arrange receipt of this document.

Appendix B contains all survey questions.

Survey population and sample sizes

The population of interest includes individuals who have labor union work experience.

The 2008 Fire Department Census conducted by the United States Fire Administration (2009)

reports 2,315 all career fire departments and 1,790 mostly career fire departments in the US

which equates to 4,105 fire departments comprised mostly or totally by career fire fighters. The

IAFF represents more than 3,200 affiliates in the US and Canada (International Association of

Fire Fighters, About the IAFF, 2010).

The survey population used was 3,200 based on the number of IAFF affiliates. Using

Figure 5 of the Executive Fire Officer Program (EFO) Applied Research Self-Study Course –

Student Study Guide (Federal Emergency Management Agency, 2005), the survey sample size

correlated to 343 in order to assure a 95 percent confidence level for a survey population of

interest of 3,200.

The survey was distributed to a total population of 603 recipients in two separate groups on Friday, July 16 and Monday, July 19, 2010. The first group was developed by combining two previous EFO survey request emails received by the researcher. After editing multiple addresses for the same recipient, the combined list for the 1st group consisted of 578 recipients. Based on email addresses, the researcher determined that individuals in this group represented states where collective bargaining with unions were mandated, authorized or prohibited. So responses to the survey would capture various levels of labor relations experience. The survey was distributed to group 1 at 11:47 A.M. on July 16, 2010. The second distribution group consisted of 25 fire chiefs in North Carolina who represent the 25 largest municipalities in the state. Although collective bargaining is prohibited in N.C., several chiefs within this group have labor relations experience with unions from departments in states where collective bargaining is authorized so this research project would benefit from their survey responses. The survey was distributed to group 2 at 3:30 P.M. on July 16, 2010. On Wednesday, July 21, 2010, the researcher checked the survey response rate and realized only 14 responses had been collected. Further investigation revealed a distribution failure for the first survey distribution of 578 recipients which was not reported by the email server. In addition, the researcher determined that two respondents had created a measurement error by selecting more than one choice for their collective bargaining environment for survey question 1. As a result, the researcher reconfigured another email distribution group and revised instructions for question 1 to clarify that only one response was required.

A subsequent distribution of 449 survey requests was made on Monday, July 26, 2010. This request was sent via another EFO survey distribution list received by the researcher in March 2010. This email list was edited for duplicate email addresses. The researcher received

35 delivery failure notices representing various email addresses and one snow ball sample request from a representative of the Honolulu Fire Department to send the survey to their union president. This resulted in a survey distribution of 414 recipients.

The researcher reconciled the July 26 distribution with former EFO email addresses and identified 31 additional survey respondents. On Wednesday, July 28, the researcher distributed the survey by email to this group. The total email survey distribution which included the 25 NC metro fire chiefs from the July 16 distribution plus 414 recipients from the July 26 distribution equaled 470 survey recipients.

On July 21, 2010, the researcher identified a measurement error for survey question 1 and revised the instructions for completing the question. Although question 1 solicited only 1 response, as many as 69 respondents selected more than one choice. Question 1 was developed to for three purposes:

1. The question was designed to identify which respondents possessed union work environment experience. Respondents with no experience were directed to skip the survey and select done. Intuitively, respondents with experience continued with the survey.

2. Given the 1st purpose, the question would illustrate that survey recipients with or without regard for experience could be working where collective bargaining was (a) mandated, (b) authorized but may or may not be implemented or (c) where collective bargaining with public employees is prohibited.

3. Lastly, question 1 would illustrate that this study might have value for fire departments outside of North Carolina where collective bargaining is prohibited, given the distribution of recipients who possessed no labor-relations experience.

The researcher closed the survey on July 31, 2010. One hundred forty seven survey recipients attempted the survey. Given the distribution of 470 recipients and 147 recipients returning to complete the survey, the survey return rate equaled 31.3%. Based on this return rate and realized sample size of 147, the survey failed to generate a 95% confidence level or the survey population of 3,200.

Limitations

The researcher was unable to accurately determine a precise population of interest in order to calculate the survey sample size. In lieu of determining the population, this survey assumed the greatest possible number of fire service labor-management relationships based on the number of currently reported number of IAFF affiliates which is 3,200. Therefore the population is inclusive of all potential labor-management relationships. The researcher acknowledges that this assumption significantly overstates the number of fire service labor-management relationships because many affiliates exist in NC and Virginia where collective bargaining for public employees is prohibited as well as in many other right-to-work states where collective bargaining is authorized but not practiced in many jurisdictions.

Given the large population number, the complex task for identifying departments with collective bargaining environments, and the fact that some within the target population group may work in a non-collective bargaining environment but may have unionized work environment experience, the researcher utilized a non-random convenience sampling method (Wikipedia Sampling, 2010) rather than a random sampling method for the population. The convenience method allowed for the use of a relatively large survey distribution of 470 recipients which exceeded the random sample size requirement for a 95% confidence level. In addition, the convenience method effectively accounted for stratifying recipients within the sample and

considered the dynamics of the population in that a survey recipient may work where collective bargaining is mandated, authorized or prohibited and the survey recipient may or may not possess labor-management relations experience in each of these environments. The survey excluded responses to qualitative questions if the respondent had no unionized work experience.

The researcher believes the responses of the non-random sample should and would follow the responses of a random sample. For this particular study, the process for identifying and reaching the intended sample group of a population of interest is complex and prohibitive, but the researcher believes the convenience sample effectively captures the same population of interest. The convenience method, using an existing large distribution list representative of the population one would use to generate a random selection albeit heavily weighted with a cluster of EFO program affiliates and using questions that the convenience population can adequately answer reinforces the belief that survey responses in this study would follow the responses from a randomly selected population sample. Therefore, although the population sample was not selected randomly, the researcher believes the survey results are representative of the population of interest.

<center>Results</center>

The interviews and survey research provided sufficient and concrete answers for the research questions as well as commentary the researcher did not anticipate but which added greater understanding of the breadth and importance for this research topic. This section will describe the findings provided by responses to the interviews and subsequently will describe findings generated by the survey.

Interviews Findings

Interviewees provided considerable real-life answers to the first research question which sought to identify the operational impacts and cultural implications for a unionized workplace. The most common response from interviewees was the implication of power-sharing for the fire chiefs. Bargaining with the union automatically brings a partner to the table for employee relations issues and successful fire chiefs have found ways to accept this phenomenon. Some fire chiefs and union presidents devolve into role confusion, where the union president wants to become the fire chief by obtruding in management's rights with operational issues. Similarly, if the fire chief was not involved in the negotiation process, he or she may want to debate elements of an agreement which have previously been debated and approved by respective governing boards. Relationships and communication channels move from informal modes to formal modes as a result of the bargaining agreement. This transition limits the flexibility of the fire chief to manage new initiatives and to address employee performance issues. Interviewees also indicated the positive benefits the citizens should realize when collective bargaining occurs because both parties should keep the citizen at the forefront and focus for each party's mission. Lastly, initial skepticism for each party's motives must yield to a trusting relationship. Trust-building for both leadership groups is essential for long-term labor-management relationship success. Interviewees emphasized that the fire chief must hold this principle of trust-building central to his or her actions and that early missteps are difficult to rectify.

The second research question sought to identify various strategies that might mitigate or eliminate the negative implications of unionizing the workforce. Interviewees provided many strategies for this purpose and their comments centered on three themes (a) communication, (b) collaboration and (c) trust-building. Responses for communication included: (a) communicate,

communicate, communicate, (b) talk regularly and develop the ability to have confidential

conversations with the union president, (c) it [communication] starts with the fire chief and the

union president sometimes over a cup of coffee just to learn and learn about each other, and (d)

the fire chief has to have open lines of communication even if it means parties must agree to

disagree on various matters. Communications is the springboard to labor-management

collaboration which is the second theme discovered during the interviews.

Responses for collaboration include: (a) the most recognized example of this type of

collaboration is the labor-management committee (LMC), (b) the LMC should be comprised of

an equal number of representatives from each party and Rader suggests including a

representative from the employer as well, (c) the LMC should meet regularly to discuss and

jointly sign-off of department rules and initiatives and its work environment should respectful

and not condescending, (d) no disagreement should be allowed to interfere with the labor-

management dialogue, and (e) maintaining open channels of communication is as important for

the LMC as it is for the fire chief and union president.

The third shared theme was trust-building and interviewees indicated: (a) trust-building is

a result of repeated occurrences of doing what one says he or she will do, (b) so, while trust-

building takes time, if communications and collaboration are repeated regularly, the result will

be trust and good will developing between the fire chief and union president as well as members

of the LMC, (c) trust is developed through the collaborative work of the LMC, and (d) trust is

also a product of honest interactions and information exchange among parties. So, having

frequent open and honest conversations with members of each party, even if it's over a cup of

coffee, will result in trust-building and effective relations.

For question 3, interviewees were asked to identify the best practices used to foster successful labor management relations. Interviewees indicated (a) training through the IAFC/IAFF Labor Management Initiative (LMI) or the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services (FMCS) to establish the rules including the negotiation methodology under which the parties will work and operate, (b) these rules are based in part on values like honesty, working in good-faith, and holding service to the citizen as a shared goal, (c) each party should respect each other's priorities, and (d) lines of communication should always remain open and parties should collaborate when disseminating messages to the masses to avoid misinformation and confusion.

Interviewees were asked to identify fire chiefs who have reputations for creating effective relationships with their local unions. Interviewees identified the following fire chiefs: (a) Shorty Bryson, (b) Ernie Mitchell, (c) Rick Marinucci, (d) Adam Thiel, (e) Tom Carr, (f) Kelvin Cochran, (g) William Goddard, (h) Bobby Kahn, and (i) Steve Westermann.

In an attempt to address the 4th research question, the group provided a number of suggestions for specific roles or actions a fire chief might take to facilitate successful labor-management relations. These include: (a) fire chiefs should be open, honest and forthright in their communications with the union, (b) the relationship will suffer if any party, especially the fire chief withholds information or misleads the union, (c) attending LMI or FMCS training, (d) collaborating with the union on departmental initiatives that include policy making, organizational processes like recruitment, selection and promotional processes, and (e) get to know the other person.

In summary, honest, open and forthright communications create a solid foundation for the fire chief as he or she attempts to develop effective relations with the union. The fire chief has a duty to lead this collaborative effort and it is up to him or her to get past perceptions of the union

president and learn who he or she really is. Have a cup of coffee with them regularly and begin

the process of trust-building which serves as the foundation for successful relationships.

Appendices C – F contain complete responses from the interviews.

Survey Results

Results indicate 147 respondents attempted the labor relations survey of which 138

completed the survey. This resulted in a 93.9% completion rate and corresponding 6.3% non-

response rate. Appendix G contains the complete set of survey responses.

As noted in the Procedures section, the researcher identified a measurement error for the

first question 1 of the survey. Question 1 was composed of three possible work environment

options and instructions asked respondents to select the environment that best represented where

they work. Given 147 respondents attempted the survey, the researcher expected no more than

147 choice selections to question 1 and in fact 146 respondents answered question 1 and one

survey taker skipped this question. As Table G1 illustrates, for the 146 responses, the survey

collected 223 work environment choice selections which clearly indicated some survey takers

selected more than one work environment when answering the question. The researcher believes

when respondents made multiple work environment choices, they consistently indicated the

respondent's labor union work experience which served as the premise for question 1. As a

result, the researcher believes that although a measurement error occurred for question 1,

responses to subsequent survey questions remained valid.

Question 2 related to various aspects of the workplace and if a unionized workforce: (a)

positively impacted the workplace, (b) did not impact the workplace, or (c) negatively impacted

the workplace. Table G2 illustrates that 95 respondents answered the question and 52

respondents skipped the question likely indicating they possessed no labor union experience.

For employee job satisfaction, 49.5% of all respondents (AR) indicated job satisfaction was positively impacted by a unionized workforce; 31.6% AR indicated a unionized workforce had no impact on job satisfaction and 18.9% AR indicated a negative impact.

For workplace innovation, 29.5% AR indicated innovation was positively impacted by a unionized workforce; 45.3% AR indicated a unionized workforce had no impact on innovation and 25.3% AR indicated a negative impact.

For workplace productivity, 28.4% AR indicated productivity was positively impacted by a unionized workforce; 41.1% AR indicated a unionized workforce had no impact on productivity and 30.5% AR indicated a negative impact.

For employee and managerial relations, 52.6% AR indicated employee and managerial relations were positively impacted by a unionized workforce; 16.8% AR indicated a unionized workforce had no impact on employee and managerial relations and 30.5% AR indicated a negative impact.

For employee related cost structures, 31.9% AR indicated employee related cost structures were positively impacted by a unionized workforce; 25.5% AR indicated a unionized workforce had no impact on employee related cost structures and 42.6% AR indicated a negative impact.

For communication channels, 56.8% AR indicated communication channels were positively impacted by a unionized workforce; 25.3% AR indicated a unionized workforce had no impact on communication channels and 17.9% AR indicated a negative impact.

Survey results indicated that communication channels, employee and managerial relations and employee job satisfaction were the top three most positively impacted aspects of the workplace environment by a unionized workforce. Moreover, results indicated innovation by

and productively ranked as the two highest responses with 43 and 39 respondents respectively, for having no impact by a unionized workforce. Employee related cost structures with 40 respondents ranked as the most negatively impacted aspect of the work environment by a unionized workforce.

Question 3 related to the effectiveness of management practices that positively impact labor relations and asked respondents to indicate whether a practice was: (a) effective most or all of the time, (b) sometimes effective, or (c) not effective. Table G3 illustrates that 95 respondents answered the question and 52 respondents skipped the question likely indicating they possessed no labor union experience.

When management engaged in interest-based and win-win negotiations (IBB), 37.9% AR indicated this was effective most or all of the time; 53.7% indicated IBB was effective sometimes and 8.4% AR indicated IBB was not effective for positively impacting labor relations.

When management invited and valued collaboration with the bargaining group, 45.3% AR indicated this was effective most or all of the time, 46.3% indicated collaboration was sometimes effective and 8.4% AR indicated collaboration by management was not effective.

When management invited employee engagement or participation, 55.8% AR indicated this was effective most or all of the time, 38.9% AR indicated this was sometimes effective and 5.3% AR indicated management inviting employee engagement or participation was not effective for positively impacting labor relations.

When management engages in long-term trusting relationship building with the union, 48.4% AR indicated this was effective most or all the time, 41.1% AR indicated this was sometimes effective and 10.5% AR indicated long-term trusting relationship building by management was not effective for positively impacting labor relations.

Survey results for question 3 suggest the most effective practices management can undertake for building effective relations with the union include inviting employee engagement or participation with 53 responses and building long-term trusting relationships with 46 responses. The next two practices receiving the most responses were not viewed as effective most or all of the time, but viewed as sometimes effective. Management's use of IBB was viewed as sometimes effective by 51 survey takers and 36 survey takers viewed this as effective most or all of the time. When management invites and values bargaining group collaboration, 44 respondents view this practice as sometimes effective and 43 respondents viewed this practice as effective most or all of the time. When considered individually, only 8 respondents considered IBB as not effective for developing successful relations with the union. Inviting and valuing bargaining group collaboration, inviting employee engagement or participation and building long-term trusting relationships were considered not effective by 8, 5 and 10 survey takers respectively.

Question 4 assesses the survey takers' opinion for the management practices identified in question 3 as a best practice for developing effective labor relations and the survey asked respondents to rate practices as good, better or best. Table G4 illustrates that 93 respondents answered the question and 54 respondents skipped the question. Of the four practices considered by the question, two ranked as best practices and two ranked as better practices based on the greatest number of responses to individual practices.

For IBB, 34.4% AR indicated IBB was a good practice and 37.6% respondents indicated it was a better practice. Only 28% AR indicated IBB was a best practice.

For collaborating with the bargaining group, 25.8% AR indicated it was a good practice and 45.2% AR indicated it was a better practice. Twenty nine percent of all respondents indicated collaborating with the union was a best practice.

For employee engagement or participation, 29% AR viewed it as a good practice and 29% AR viewed it as a better practice. Forty two percent of all respondents considered employee engagement as a best practice.

Lastly, for building long-term trusting relationships, 28% AR indicated this was a good practice and 25.8% AR considered this as a better practice. Forty six percent of all respondents ranked building long-term trusting relationships as the best practice.

Survey results for question 4 indicated building long-term trusting relationships and inviting employee engagement or participation function as best practices for management to develop effective and successful relations with the union. However, based on the number of responses collected by the survey, collaborating with the bargaining unit and IBB received comparable selections, but only as a better practice. In fact, no selection for the better or best choice received fewer than 24 responses and the lowest number of selections for the best category was 24 compared to 26 selections for the better category. The greatest number of selections for better was 42 and best was 43, so many survey takers considered these practices very closely related as better and best choices for the fire chief.

Part 2 of the survey assessed survey taker views for specific roles and actions the fire chief should take to facilitate effective labor relations.

Question 1 of Part 2 of the survey asked respondents to consider whether any of the ten managerial roles identified by Henry Mintzberg were essential or not essential for facilitating

successful labor relations. Table G5 illustrates that 88 respondents completed this question and 59 respondents skipped this question.

As a figurehead, 61.4% AR indicated this role was essential and 36.6% AR viewed it as not essential.

As a leader, 90.8% AR indicated this role was essential and 9.2% AR viewed it as not essential.

When functioning as a liaison, 93.2% AR indicated this role was essential and 6.8% viewed it as not essential.

When functioning as a monitor, 81.6% AR indicated this role was essential and 18.4% viewed it as not essential.

As a disseminator, 86.4% AR indicated this role was essential and 13.6% viewed it as not essential.

As a spokesperson, 80.5% AR indicated this role was essential and 19.5% viewed it as not essential.

When functioning as an entrepreneur, 84.1% AR indicated this role was essential and 15.9% viewed it as not essential.

When functioning as a disturbance handler, 77.3% AR indicated this role was essential and 22.7% viewed it as not essential.

As a resources allocator, 76.1% AR indicated this role was essential and 23.9% viewed it as not essential.

Lastly, as a negotiator, 81.8% AR indicated this role was essential and 18.2% viewed it as not essential.

The survey results for part 2 question 1 conveyed that many respondents considered all of Mintzberg's ten roles of management as critical for this purpose. Based on the overall choices, the three most critical roles the fire chief must undertake for facilitating successful labor relations is the liaison, leader and disseminator with survey takers selecting each role 82, 79 and 76 times respectively. With the exception of the role of figurehead which was selected 54 times as an essential role, survey takers selected all other roles no less than 68 times or 77.3% for 88 survey takers.

Question 2 was designed to gather any other relevant opinion a survey taker might have about roles or actions a fire chief should take which might not have surfaced from any of the previous survey questions. Survey takers provided 65 responses. Given the large number of responses with many having multiple role or action parts described by analogous terms, the researcher identified a theme for the responses and allocated each occurrence of the role or action to the corresponding theme. For example, one response might include comments that a fire chief should be a team-builder and be a good listener. This response provided two separate actions as answers. These responses were included with other responses that conveyed similar themes for team building or being a good listener. Results summarizing the top 9 themes include the following:

1. Twenty four respondents mentioned a role or action that related to open communications. Respondents conveyed that fire chiefs should engage in open communications in a non-adversarial manner. The fire chief should not blind-side the union president and should communicate any policy changes with the union prior to implementation. Lastly this open communication theory should include the right to speak off-the-record when required thus implying a high level of trust for confidential interactions.

2. Having the fire chief include the union leadership in planning functions, changes within the organization and other activities was mentioned by 14 survey takers. Responses for this theme follow the concepts of power-sharing and collaboration for which the literature review and interviews repeatedly highlighted.

3. Maintaining a professional relationship with the union by playing fair serves as a theme for 8 respondents. Comments suggesting the fire chief should not manipulate or maneuver resources or people and should not paint the union into a corner resounded with these respondents. Instead, they recommended the fire chief should work in "good faith".

4. The next most frequent theme suggested by respondents was the fire chief must be able to give and take. The ability to take the middle of the road and be flexible was mentioned 7 times. Within this theme, respondents also mentioned the fire chief did not have to give everything whenever the union asked.

5. Understanding the fire chief's role and responsibility as well as the union's role was mentioned by 7 respondents. Other responses captured within this theme included looking at issues from both sides of the table considering both the city's interests and the union's interests. Lastly, one respondent reminded the researcher to not underestimate the power of the union.

6. The fire chief having an open-door policy and being open-minded was mentioned by 6 respondents.

7. Six respondents suggested the fire chief should be open, honest and truthful.

8. Establishing guidelines for how the parties will interact and relate was noted by 6 respondents. This included having a memorandum of agreement establish management's

rights and authority as well as shared values. Another respondent asserted that although the union existed, the employer-employee relationship existed as well and that relationship was not necessarily a democracy.

9. Five respondents suggested the fire chief should be a good listener.

The real experiences of a large number of respondents suggest the fire chief with the ability to communicate openly in a non-adversarial manner with the union, collaborate with the union on all appropriate departmental matters and work in good faith with the union by playing fair and respectful will likely create an atmosphere where labor relations are successful and effective. Many other valid and useful suggestions like understanding roles and responsibilities of each party and communicate through a labor management team and help identify lessons learned for to the labor relations environment.

One reference source this study attempted to discover was the use of administrative documents used by fire chiefs and their departments to guide the process of interacting with the bargaining unit. Table G6 illustrates that 86 respondents answered question 3 of the second part of the survey and 61 respondents skipped the question. Sixty four respondents or 74.4% AR reported their organization did not use any administrative document to establish practices, roles or actions to develop or maintain effective labor relations. Twenty two respondents or 25.5% AR reported their organization used some type of administrative document for this purpose. The survey question asked respondent who answered yes to contact the researcher to arrange receipt of these documents. Only 1 respondent of 22 that answered yes contacted the researcher to arrange receipt of their administrative document. A representative of the Goshen, IN Fire and Rescue Department provided the researcher with a copy of their values expectation statement which includes a statement that describes a collaborative relationship with the union. In

particular, the statement credits the union leadership as part of the Goshen Fire and Rescue Department's success as well as recognizes the organizational advantages associated with collaborating with the union on disciplinary actions, safety and organizational planning (Goshen Fire Department Values, n.d.).

Final Product

Appendix H contains a document titled, *An Action Plan for Developing Effective Labor Relations*. This document outlines researcher activities and potential organizational changes originating from the recommendations of this study. The plan is divided into two phases: actions to consider prior to collective bargaining and actions to consider after collective bargaining arrives. The plan exists as a simple table with column headings titled: (a) action or task, (b) tentative start date, (c) special requirements, and (d) date completed. Specific actions from the study recommendations that fit within the cultural and legal environments of the Cary Fire and Rescue Department and Town of Cary are considered as initiatives to pursue are documented in the rows under the first column heading.

<div align="center">Discussion</div>

The salient themes of the study include: (a) building long-term trusting relationships, (b) inviting employee engagement, (c) inviting union collaboration and (d) interest-based negotiation as strategies to develop effective labor relations. These concepts present classic adaptive challenges that fire chiefs must overcome if establishing effective relations is a priority for him or her. The discussion section will present the relationships of these findings to the findings of others as well as the researcher's interpretation of the study results.

Building Trusting Relationships

The interview findings underscore the impact of building long-term relationships and building a trusting relationship with the union and that it is accomplished in many ways. First, communication channels facilitate communicating which has a direct correlation for trust-building. Trust-building starts with the fire chief and the union president (S. Westermann, personal communication, July 12, 2010) and others in each organization view that relationship as the linchpin to effective and successful labor-management relations. Appendix A contains a list of leadership practices built upon actions one might take on any given day. Survey results reinforce this premise with the largest number of responses. No less than 24 survey takers, 37% of all respondents, cited communicating in open and non-adversarial ways and in confidential ways as conveying a high level of trust to the union. This trust-building is predicated on repeated occurrences of open and honest interactions and forthright in providing information to the union (R. Browning, personal communication, July 8, 2010). Also, the LMI Guiding Principles (IAFC/IAFF Guiding Principles, 2008) reinforce this issue by stating that trust is one of the bases of the labor-management relationship and for many organizations, collaborative processes are predicated on building trust among stakeholders (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p.558).

Several interviewees recommended attending LMI or FMCS training with the local union president. The current cultural environment in the Town of Cary is unlikely to support funding for overt training for union relations especially attending with the head of a labor group. However, assuming a unionized workforce materializes and town staff are required to bargain with this group, the town would support joint training. So, future LMI or FMCS training is a possibility. In addition, staff training for IBB is just as likely and is an initiative the researcher should consider recommending to the town manager.

Additional survey results point to the overall significance of the fire chief building long-term trusting relationships with the union. Forty six out of 95 or 48.4% of all survey takers indicated building trusting relationships was effective most or all of the time for positively impacting labor relations. Thirty nine or 41% additional survey takers indicated building trusting relationships was sometimes effective. Moreover, when asked to identify good, better or best management practices, building long-term trusting relationships was selected by 43 of 93 or 46% of all respondents as a best practice. This response characterized building long-term trusting relationships as the best practice among the four options presented in the survey. Clearly this practice of trust building is important to survey takers and aligns itself for importance with other sources as suggested by A. Pantellis (personal communication, July 12, 2010), "there has to be established trust, if trust suffers, that's a big impediment" and good collaborative leaders recognize they must build trust with stakeholders (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p.558). Given this overall importance given by other sources and the overall best practice rating by survey respondents, the researcher was surprised by the shortage of open-ended survey responses, 3 out of 65 or 4.6% of all respondents that related to developing trust and none for relationship building. One might assume that respondents see the development of the relationship as a secondary effect resulting from open communication, working in good faith or other practices as opposed to viewing long-term relationship building as a primary strategy.

Interviewees offered names for 9 fire chiefs who have national reputations for developing and maintaining effective and successful relationships with their local union affiliates. Although the researcher did not interview members of this group for this study, seeking to understand more about how they facilitate effective labor relations would benefit the Cary Fire and Rescue Department as it moves closer to a possible unionized environment. Subsequent interviews with

members of this group would likely yield additional insight for the roles and actions fire chiefs

should take as leaders within their departments.

As several sources have indicated, trust is earned incrementally over time.

Schuman's list of leadership practices as illustrated in Appendix A serves as a repository of trust-

building practices or actions to assimilate into one's personal behaviors or at least actions use

when conflict arises. The researcher recognized the importance simple reminders offer to

inexperienced employees and believes Schuman's list can serve as a valuable tool for the

development of their business and work ethic. The Cary Fire and Rescue Department would

benefit from an administrative document that outlines trust-building actions. This document

could serve as a reference or guide for all employees on the specific things one can do to build

trust in any relationship.

Employee Engagement

Interview results did not provide much insight for employee engagement as a strategy for

effective labor relations. Like long-term trusting relationship-building, the researcher believes

employee engagement is an offspring of other labor-management practices and is not necessarily

viewed as a stand-alone strategy. One reason for this possible interpretation is variability of the

term within current literature For example, Kearny (2009, p.335) cites employee involvement

programs as a mechanism for labor-management cooperation on the same level as the LMC or

other employee workgroups like quality circles or quality work-life program. Flint (2002, p.18),

refers to labor's empowerment and collaboration as a value on the same level as honesty and

respect. So, while the researcher believes employee engagement and participation function more

as a strategic consideration under which multiple initiatives might evolve, other references do not

distinguish this concept in the same manner. In fact, the LMI Guiding Principles (IAFC/IAFF,

2008) do not refer to employee engagement or participation directly, but use concepts within LMI principle definitions, like participative decision-making which typically define employee engagement.

Although not specifically mentioned by interviewees, the survey included the concept of employee engagement and its results provided some insight to how this concept is viewed. When asked about the effectiveness of certain management practices, 53 out of 95 or 55.8% of survey takers indicated employee engagement or participation was effective most or all of the time for positively impacting labor relations. Thirty seven or 38.9% additional survey takers indicated building trusting relationships was sometimes effective. Moreover, when asked to identify good, better or best management practices, employee engagement or participation was selected by 39 of 93 or 42% of all respondents as a best practice. This response characterized employee engagement or participation as the second best practice overall among the four options presented in the survey.

Participative decision-making (PDM) is a practice that influences many labor-relations strategies. While this study does not consider PDM as a strategy, its significance and breadth of influence requires some discussion particularly in the context of employee engagement and union collaboration for which PDM functions as a core feature (Kearny, 2009, p.336). Employee engagement which includes PDM does not necessarily imply shared responsibility or accountability for joint decisions. Also, the reader should not confuse PDM with the concept of power-sharing although PDM is a critical component of power-sharing. In the context of employee engagement, ultimate authority [for decisions] may lie with the public agency, but engaged employees must directly participate in the decision-making process (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p.546). This idea likely lies at the heart of one survey taker's comment that "it's always

good to invite input from members, but always remember that the chief maintains authority and consequences of making decisions."

In summary, although not widely viewed as a strategic consideration for successful labor relations, employee engagement is understood to play a vital role in this endeavor. Fire chiefs should consider opportunities for employee participation to improve safety and use of resources within the organization which will result in improved labor relations.

Union Collaboration

Collaborative governance (CG) is about collective decision-making that includes both public and private actors (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p. p545), and stresses six criteria, (a) CG is initiated by public agencies, (b) participants in CG include non-state actors, (c) participants engage directly in decision-making, (d) the forum is formally organized and meets collectively, (e) make decisions by consensus, and (f) collaboration is directed at public policy or management (Ansell & Gash, 2007, p.544).

As a labor relations strategy, collaborating with the union was cited in numerous responses by interviewees and many of their responses closely align with the Ansell and Gash definition for collaborative governance. For example, R. Browning (personal communication, July 8, 2010) offered, "include them [union] in the work, tie into staff with expertise for various processes or initiatives, float ideas by them" and S. Westermann (personal communication, July 12, 2010) stated, "involve the union in organization processes, send policy drafts to the union, and have them engaged in promotional processes and interviews." These comments directly address including non-state actors, the union, as participants in the forum and the focus of this work is on public management. A. Pantellis (personal communication, July 12, 2010) offered, "Bring all stakeholders together in a labor-management committee", collaborate on

communications aligns directly with formally organizing and meeting collectively in a forum,

the LMC. Lastly, L. Moore and K. Rader (personal communication, July 16, 2010)

recommended, "let go of turf and grasp the concept of shared-power" which aims directly at

participative decision-making by consensus. Similar to the previous discussion for participative

decision-making with employee engagement, collaboration implies that non-state stakeholders

will have real responsibility for policy outcomes and therefore must be engaged in decision-

making. However, the ultimate authority may lie with the public agency (Ansell & Gash, 2007,

p.546).

The survey included collaborating with the union and its results provided a contrasting

view from results learned in the interviews. When asked about positively impacting labor

relations, 43 out of 95 or 45.3% of survey takers indicated collaborating with the union was

effective most or all of the time. Forty four or 46.3% additional survey takers indicated

collaborating with the union was sometimes effective. This represented about an even split

between those who believed collaboration was sometimes effective compared to those who

believed collaboration was effective most or all of the time. No other strategy presented in

question 3 of the survey was split as evenly. As Westermann (personal communication, July 12,

2010) noted in a follow-up communication to his interview, "no one practice is necessarily the

right one for you. It [the strategy] has to be what feels right to you."

When asked to classify collaborating with the union as a good, better or best management

practices, 42 out of 93 or 45.2% of all respondents selected collaboration as a better practice.

Only 27 out of 93 or 29% of all respondents indicated collaborating was a best practice. This

response characterized collaborating with the union as the 3rd most highly rated practice overall

among the four options presented in the survey and differs considerably from the emphasis

interviewees placed on collaborating. One might find an explanation, at least in part, for this divergence within the IAFC/IAFF Labor-Management Guiding Principles document. The LMI Guiding Principles use the term collaboration within the principle for training for dispute resolution and problem identification (IAFC/IAFF, LMI Guiding Principles, 2008). The possibility exists that many who work in unionized environments associate collaboration mainly as a dispute resolution strategy and do not fully grasp its greater utility for developing effective labor relations. Collaboration with the union was cited only seven times out of 65 responses or 18.8% from open-ended survey comments. Given the emphasis for collaboration in many aspects of public administration as discovered in this study and corresponding comments shared by the interviewees, the researcher had anticipated survey results classifying collaboration as a best practice.

Given the many ways partners may collaborate, results from this study focuses on two overlapping practices which include communication channels via the labor-management committees and power sharing.

In terms of a tangible communication channel, this typically occurs as a result of the bargaining agreement which formalizes methods to communicate between parties. As previously mentioned, the specific practice here is the development of a labor-management committee (LMC) which provides a forum and strength of the union to voice concerns or complaints as opposed to voicing complaints during exit interviews. This is the essence of Spengler's comments (1999, p.20) and implies communication channels will open the door for management to hear more dissatisfaction from employees. Kearney (2009, p.336) contrasts this view by reporting that labor-management cooperation in the form of LMCs represents a profound transformation in how decisions are made in a union setting. Interviews and survey results

presented a similar position for this aspect of communication channels. Interviewees referred to

forming LMCs as a communication channel in very positive terms. Pantellis was emphatic in

that nothing should interfere with maintaining the LMC's open dialogue (personal

communication, July 12, 2010) which is the means to cooperation through collaboration.

Another union perspective is that successful labor relations is more about opening

communications (L. Moore & K. Rader, personal communications, July 16, 2010). The

IAFC/IAFF LMI Guiding Principles document presents a similar message: By forming LMCs

parties can work together to improve communications (IAFC/IAFF Guiding Principles, 2008).

Lastly, 54 out of 95 or 56.8% of survey-takers indicated communication channels formed by

unionizing resulted in a positive impact on an organization.

Using the LMC model, the Cary Fire and Rescue Department might benefit from a

regular meeting with select employees for the purpose of discussing current employee relations

issues. Although the department holds regular employee meetings that include an opportunity for

members to ask any question, the researcher believes this large forum is likely to cause some

questions to go unasked. Creating a smaller group of employees which is representative of all

ranks and shifts for the purpose of discussing relevant employee issues might bring some

unasked questions to the table and provide information to employees that might not otherwise be

shared.

Power sharing and trust building convey images of the work necessary for a successful

marriage rather than what is essential for effective labor relations. Browning, Westermann,

Moore and Rader specifically commented on the fire chief's need to prepare for a sharing of

power. Interestingly, when asked to describe any specific action a fire chief must take to

facilitate effective labor relations, no respondent submitted comments related to power-sharing

by the fire chief. This implication of the concept for power sharing might be hidden among the many references to communicating, collaborating, and playing give and take with the union, but no respondent directly commented on this glaring implication.

Fire Chief's Role

In determining the most essential roles and actions a fire chief can take, survey findings for the top three roles include: (a) liaison: for maintaining relationships with 82 of 88 or 93.2% of respondents, (b) leader: fosters the proper work environment with 79 of 87 or 90.8% of respondents, and (c) disseminator: for sharing information to subordinates with 76 of 88 or 86.4% of respondents. These roles and actions along with the fourth place role of entrepreneur who improves the organization and serves as a change agent with 74 of 88 or 84.1% of respondents, align closely with role descriptions inherent with strategies and practices identified by the study including: (a) long-term trusting relationship building, (b) inviting employee engagement and participation, and (c) facilitating honest and open communications identified by the study as best or better practices for developing effective labor relations. So, from a holistic perspective, this survey question reinforces many of the strategies and practices found in the literature review and in the interviews as relevant and productive for cultivating successful labor relations.

Recommendations

Results indicate the fire chief has a duty to facilitate effective labor relations. Moreover, results indicate that certain roles and actions by the fire chief are essential to facilitating effective labor relations. In addition, study results have identified four strategic themes for effective labor relations best practices. The following recommendations will focus on these roles, strategies and actions and strategies identified by the study.

1. The fire chief must always play fair, be honest, and open-minded in his or her interactions with the employees in order to build trust. Without credibility, the fire chief can accomplish nothing else. Instill the values into the person and commit to living by them every day. To that end, personal actions or practices to develop trust should be identified and shared with others in the department. This recommendation includes developing a guideline document for others to refer to that identifies these actions and creates the expectation that others follow them.

2. In an effort to foster a proper work environment for communicating about employee concerns and subsequently developing trust, the researcher shall create an employee relations committee (ERC), modeled after the labor management committee (LMC) to serve as a forum for employees to share concerns about the workplace directly with the fire chief. Should collective bargaining present itself as a management consideration for the Cary Fire and Rescue Department, the transition from meeting and discussing issues within the ERC forum to an LMC forum should require little effort for the fire chief and senior staff. Members of the LMC might change, but the processes and outcomes should be similar.

3. The researcher believes more can be learned from others who have experienced this transition and developed effective practices. Interviewing fire chiefs with national reputations for facilitating effective labor relations should follow this study. This recommendation includes the researcher creating an opportunity for department members to engage in this study by developing interview questions and conducting the interview.

4. The researcher believes the fire chief's role as a negotiator will evolve over time. However, this recommendation includes reading the book, *Getting to Yes* to better

understand how to implement IBB steps and to prepare for the future possibility for collective bargaining. For the interim, this recommendation includes evaluating current department processes and activities to identify opportunities to incorporate IBB principles into current operations.

5. Should the challenge of collective bargaining present itself, this recommendation includes attending LMI or FMCS training with senior leadership staff from the department and union.

6. One of the best practices for labor relations identified by the LMI is the use of the LMC. This recommendation includes moving from the ERC forum to the LMC forum for communicating workplace concerns held by employees.

7. In an effort not to compromise the perception of commitment and trust regarding the labor management relationship, this recommendation includes petitioning the town manager to exempt the fire chief from the collective bargaining table. The fire chief should serve as a resource to the negotiation team, but should not engage directly in the negotiating process.

8. In an effort to maintain consistent labor relations practices and to enhance the knowledge and understanding for the negotiating process, this recommendation includes having all Cary Fire and Rescue Department senior staff formally trained in interest-based bargaining techniques.

The fire chief should never lose sight of the fact that he or she is viewed as the leader who fosters the proper work environment, liaison who maintains relationships outside the organization, and disseminator who passes information to subordinates.

In retrospect, the research questions used in this study were found to be too broad. Additional research should focus on any one of the four overarching strategies like interest-based bargaining or building long-term trusting relationships. Also, this researcher believes sufficient literature exists to focus on specific initiatives or practices like how do effective LMCs function or how do fire chiefs adapt to power sharing.

If future researchers use the survey as a research method, they should give considerable thought to how social science studies are best conducted. In reviewing the survey developed for this study, the researcher believes identifying the target population, developing questions and ratings scales, and understanding better the processes used for statistical analyses would yield a better understanding and use of survey results.

Lastly where labor relations are presented in fire service literature, only a very few published sources that identify and explain the implications of collective bargaining and in particular the roles and actions the fire chief should undertake exist. Once the frame for discussion was formed, the most valuable information discovered in this study came from interviewees and survey respondents. The researcher considered this topic because of a growing concern for the unknowns associated with labor relations and the bargaining process. Sidebar interactions with several survey respondents indicate a similar concern for these unknowns. The researcher discovered only two other applied research project written on the collective bargaining process and each were not kept on file at the National Emergency Training Center's Learning Resource Center. The researcher believes a significant void for current information on this topic exists and encourages other EFO candidates and fire service publishers to consider additional research and publishing.

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Appendix A: Practices That Build Trust (Schuman 2006: 243)

- Practice what you preach.

- Say what you mean and mean what you say.

- Make decisions based on core values and principles rather than expediency.

- Treat all people with courtesy, sincerity, and respect, regardless of their status.

- Care about people and their well-being.

- Do not use people as instruments or stepping-stones for self-advancement.

- Be prepared to be vulnerable, willing to admit your own limitations and mistakes.

- Be accountable and assume responsibility for your decisions and actions.

- Confess and apologize for your mistakes.

- Have the courage to confront and take corrective actions when there is a problem.

- Don't promise anything you cannot deliver.

- Always follow through on your promises, no matter how insignificant.

- Always clarify and qualify your promises to make sure that you don't set up unrealistic or erroneous expectations.

- Take great care to maintain and nurture working relationships.

- Exercise self-control and remember that an unkind word spoken in anger can cause irreparable damage to a relationship.

- Whenever a misunderstanding occurs, clear it up as soon as possible.

- Honesty is the best policy. Always tell the truth, even if it might get you in trouble.

- Give honest but constructive feedback.

- Trust people first until they prove themselves untrustworthy.

- Empower and validate others until they disqualify themselves by betraying your trust repeatedly.

- Practice forgiveness and grace when others let you down.

- Avoid favoritism. Be impartial in working with people regardless of how you feel about them personally.

- Follow procedures and due process; cut corners only in clearly justifiable circumstances.

- Communicate openly and honestly and explain your decisions.

- Earn people's trust by building a reputation for being competent and trustworthy.

Appendix B: Survey Questions for Developing and Maintaining

Effective Relations with the Bargaining Unit

Part 1. Effective labor relations strategies and practices

1. Based on whether you work in a collective bargaining environment or non-collective

    bargaining environment, select one choice from those in the left column containing "I work

    where…" For that one choice, use the drop-down menu to indicate your experience working

    in that environment.

    I work where collective bargaining for fire fighters is mandated:

    Select union labor relations experience:

    [ ]   I am experienced working in a union labor environment.

    [ ]   I have no experience working in a union labor environment. If you select this

            choice, please skip to the end of the survey and select "Done".

    I work where collective bargaining for fire fighters is authorized but a union agreement may

    or may not exist:

    Select union labor relations experience:

    [ ]   I am experienced working in a union labor environment.

    [ ]   I have no experience working in a union labor environment. If you select this

            choice, please skip to the end of the survey and select "Done".

    I work where collective bargaining for fire fighters is not permitted:

    Select union labor relations experience:

    [ ]   I am experienced working in a union labor environment.

    [ ]   I have no experience working in a union labor environment. If you select this

            choice, please skip to the end of the survey and select "Done".

2. Research suggests that a unionized workplace may impact an organization in the following
   ways (Kearny 2009). Based on your experience, select the most appropriate choice of impact
   for each criterion.

Impact criteria	Positive impact	No impact	Negative Impact
Employee and managerial relations	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Employee job satisfaction	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Communication channels	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Innovation	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Productivity	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Employee related cost structures	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

3. A wide body of research suggests management actions can positively impact labor relations
   when management consistently adheres to the following practices. Based on your experience,
   select the most appropriate result for each practice.

Practice	Effective most or all of the time	Sometimes effective	Not effective
Builds long-term trusting relationships	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
Invites employee engagement or participation	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]

Invites and values	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
bargaining group			
collaboration			
Engages in interest-	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
based, win-win			
negotiations			

4. In an effort to determine which management practices might be considered "best" among

respondents, select the most appropriate rating for each practice.

Practice	Good	Better	Best
Interest-based win-win	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
negotiations			
Employee engagement	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
or participation			
Building long-term	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
trusting relationships			
Collaboration with	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]
bargaining group			

Part 2. Fire Chief's roles and actions

1. Using Henry Mintzberg's Ten Roles of Managerial Work (Executive Leadership student

   manual 5-3) and based on your experience, select a response for the role of the fire chief for

   facilitating successful union labor relations.

Role	Role is essential	Role is not essential
Figurehead – performs ceremonial functions	[ ]	[ ]
Leader – Fosters a proper work environment	[ ]	[ ]
Liaison – maintains relationships outside of the organization	[ ]	[ ]
Monitor – scans environment for information	[ ]	[ ]
Disseminator – passing appropriate information to subordinates	[ ]	[ ]
Spokesperson – conveys information outside the organization	[ ]	[ ]
Entrepreneur – improves organization and change agent	[ ]	[ ]

Disturbance handler – resolves	[ ]	[ ]
conflict to maintain unit		
cohesiveness		
Resource allocator – determines	[ ]	[ ]
where resources go		
Negotiator – Negotiates with	[ ]	[ ]
people inside and outside		
of the organization		

2. Briefly describe any specific action you believe a fire chief must take to facilitate successful union labor relations.

3. Does your organization use any administrative document such as a policy statement, value statement, standard operating procedure, action plan or any other document like the IAFC/IAFF Labor Management Guiding Principles to establish practices, roles or actions to develop or maintain effective union labor relations?

   No   [ ]

   Yes   [ ]   If yes, please contact allan.cain@toewnofcary.org to arrange receipt.

Appendix C: Interview Responses for Rob Browning

When asked question 1 regarding cultural implications for the organization when unionizing, R. Browning indicated that from his experience relationships between the Fire Chief and Deputy Chief and the rank-and-file members moved from informal to formal. The chief must speak through formal channels. Unionizing restricted the fire chief's ability to take on tasks and seniority became a prevalent criterion in getting work assignments.   The fire chief also has a new partner when managing employee relations because the union has a duty to represent and protect members regardless of their performance. So it becomes more difficult to manage non-performers.

When asked about strategies fire chiefs and administrators have used to develop effective union relations, Browning responded with communicate, communicate, communicate. Have regular consultations with the union group. Talk regularly with the union president and maintain confidentiality. Be careful of the perception to not get too close to each other – balance the relationship. Browning also cited interest-based bargaining and reading the book, *Getting to Yes*, by William Ury. Regarding the negotiation process, if the Fire Chief is part of the negotiating team, Browning says know your control position which is the maximum authority one has to bargain. There are important cost implications for the control position. However, Browning believes it's best the fire chief is not directly involved with negotiations. He cites the police chiefs in Ontario are specifically excluded from the process, but for fire chiefs it's exactly the opposite.

Browning had advice for fire chief with no labor relations experience. Be forthright with information you provide them. Let them know where you stand. Don't mislead on your position. Express your vision of the organization, especially your vision on issues or interests during

negotiations. Be open and honest and try to develop some comfort with the personal ability of the union leaders. Browning stresses the importance of determining what's operational which is in the fire chief's purview and what's labor relations, which is jointly managed with the union president. Don't be shy with information and work hard at developing relationships with the union leadership. Browning recommends including the union in all appropriate work. Tap into their expertise and be sure to float new ideas by the union before implementing.

When asked about documents that help guide the labor relations, Browning indicated the collective bargaining agreement becomes the formal guiding document for employee relations. There can also be letters of understanding or agreement for specific issues.

When asked to provide any other relevant information the researcher might not have asked about, Browning suggested looking at Brunacini's model [Phoenix Fire Department] and Calgary Alberta's approach to labor relations. He also recommended the organization does not want to be involved in grievance arbitration so do everything you can to avoid that by being the best employer you can be.

Appendix D: Interview Responses for Steve Westermann

Steve Westermann's responses to interview question 1 include: Relationship between labor and management should be positive. They should focus on the external positive benefits for making the citizens win by having a smooth running organization that is working on the same page. The citizen should be at the forefront and focus or all activities. The trust factor is another implication for the organization. Trust starts with the fire chief and union president and each need to recognize this and change if they need to.

When asked about various strategies used by fire chiefs to facilitate effective labor relations, Westermann replied it starts with a cup of coffee. The two leaders need to learn about each other. Also, Westermann indicated the senior department staff and union board should write and sign rules for the organization together (collaborate).

Westermann cited Shorty Bryson (retired fire chief) from Miami Dade, Ernie Mitchell, Rick Marinucci, Adam Thiel and the Phoenix Fire Department as successful fire chiefs or departments with effective labor relations models.

As an LMI facilitator, Westermann was asked about labor/management best practices cited in the LMI training program. Westermann cited the benefit of LMI training or training from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services (FMCS). As a best practice, these training programs help both parties establish rules under which you will operate. These rules are based on values like honesty and holding citizens in the forefront. Westermann cited understand the limitations each leader works with to know what you can and can't do. Parties should collaborate to have the same common goals and strategies to achieve those goals. Understand the reality of shared power and being able to manage that is a critical best practice.

When asked to provide any other relevant information the researcher might not asked about, Westermann replied it was imperative to attend LMI or FMCS training, have coffee with the union president regularly and have consistent, constant, open and honest communications with the union. It's important to be on the same page and to share power. Involve the union president in organizational processes and to take his or her input.

After the interview, Steve Westermann provided the following statement relating to best practices and IAFC/IAFF collaboration.

While there are many "best practices" of departments out there, in the end, it has to be what feels right for your organization, so no one practice or program is necessarily the right one for you. That will take time and discussion with all of your folks at the table. And even if you don't have a union today, if there is an informal leader out there now, start the conversation with him or her, just to get a feel of what's going on. 2. While I was president of the IAFC, the General President of the IAFF and I said early on, that positive labor relations was an issue that we wanted to work on together. The result was the attachment that is signed by both of us. It simply outlines the principles that should be practiced for positive relationships (S. Westermann, personal communication, July 12, 2010).
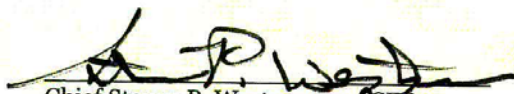
IAFC/IAFF Labor-Management Initiative
Guiding Principles

The following principles have been developed and agreed to by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) in the true spirit of cooperation for the enhancement of the fire/EMS service and the communities it serves. We recognize that mutual adherence to these values requires the constant effort of labor and management representatives.

Guiding Principles:

- To recognize that labor and management have a mutual goal of ensuring the well-being and safety of fire/EMS personnel and providing high quality service to the public.

- To work together to improve communications, enhance training, increase participative decision-making, and promote a labor-management relationship based upon mutual trust, respect, and understanding.

- To create labor-management partnerships by forming labor-management committees at appropriate levels, or adapting, as necessary, existing councils or committees if such groups exist.

- To provide systemic training to labor and management leaders on collaborative methods of dispute resolution, recognizing that this process allows management and union leaders to identify problems and craft solutions to better serve their members and the public.

- To promote these principles to our respective members at all levels of both organizations.

Signed this ___16th___ day of ___August___, 2008

Chief Steven P. Westermann, CFO
President, IAFC

Harold A. Schaitberger
General President, IAFF

Appendix E: Interview Responses for Andrew Pantellis

When asked question 1 regarding cultural implications for the organization when unionizing, A. Pantellis indicated the reluctance for establishing trust between the fire chief and union president, especially when the collective bargaining process is new to the parties and its leadership.

When asked about successful strategies to develop effective labor relations, Pantellis reiterated the need to establish trust among the parties. If something occurs differently than what is said, trust suffers and becomes a big impediment. The most effective fire chiefs are ones that are honest and have frequent communications with the union president. What you have to remember is that at the end of the day, the fire chief and municipal leaders are leaders of people. Don't lose sight o the fact that you are a leader of people and every decision made affects employees and families. Pantellis indicated the best strategy to deal with trust is collaborating through a labor-management committee (LMC) made up of equal numbers of representative from the union and management. The LMC must meet regularly and discuss all new issues, especially the hot issues. It's important to establish a dialogue.

When asked to identify fire chiefs who have been most successful at implementing these strategies, Pantellis cited Tom Carr from Montgomery County Maryland and currently fire chief for the City of Charleston, SC. Kelvin Cochran, fire chief for the City of Atlanta and William Goddard of the Howard County, MD Department of Fire and Rescue.

For question 4 regarding LMI best practices, Pantellis cited establishing a LMC to bring all stakeholders to the table for frequent dialogue. The LMC may not reach consensus on all issues. It needs to think outside the box with an objective view. The LMC cannot allow disagreement to interfere with labor-management dialogue. Members of the LMC have to discus

matters in good-faith. Pantellis also cited the need to collaborate on communications between management and labor. For agencies new to the collective bargaining process, this would likely be a change initiative regarding communications. It is important that the masses hear the same message form management that they hear from labor. Information should be clear, concise and accurate because in a fire department misinformation can be detrimental to the organization.

When asked for advice or direction for fire chiefs with no labor relations experience, Pantellis made the following four suggestions:

1. With the union president, attending the LMI workshops. This allows for networking with others in the same position and for learning what's been successful.

2. Have honest, open communications involving all stakeholders

3. Know the culture and tradition of your department to know what labor relation barriers exist that you may have to overcome.

4. Find a way to get buy-in form the department's informal leaders.

Appendix F: Interview Responses for Dr. Lori Moore and Kevin Rader

When asked about the organizational implications for unionizing from the union's perspective, Moore and Rader indicated that there was not a major impact from the operational side. The unknowns for labor relations are the major impacts. Questions relating to the state of the department when collective bargaining starts provides an insight to some of the unknowns. How have people been treated and what is driving the desire to organize. There will be a sharing of power. Some union presidents want to be the fire chief instead of focusing on the terms of employment. Some fire chiefs want to define the benefits when that is the employer's responsibility. The fire chief might not be at the bargaining table. So when labor-management issues arise for the fire chief, he or she sometimes wants to bring the agreement back into discussion. Successful labor-management relations is more about open communications and managing agreement, in the end, the definition of labor-management relations is power sharing.

When asked about the strategies they seen used by successful fire chiefs, Moore and Rader indicated open lines of communication, even when parties can agree to disagree was widely and successfully used. Sometimes elements of each party do not agree with the process used, leaders must keep that in check. Parties still must be respectful and not condescending and this goes both ways. Fire chiefs might actually learn something if they listen.   Include the union executive board on issues and have an employer represented on the LMC in addition to fire department and union representatives. Lastly, maintaining honesty. Every breach of trust is difficult to repair. The fire chief and union president can build confidential relationships to take care of sensitive things. Holding confidence is the same thing as trust.

When asked which fire chiefs have been most successful when implementing these strategies Moore and Rader indicated Shorty Bryson from Miami-Dade FL, Bobby Khan in Phoenix, Steve Westermann, Rick Marinucci and Ernie Mitchell in Pasadena CA.

When asked about the LMI best practices, Rader indicated open lines of communication, respect for each other's priorities and honesty.

Lastly, when asked about advice or direction they could give for a fire chief with no labor relations experience to develop trust and improve communications, Moore and Rader offered the following:

1. Let go a turf. Grasp the concept of power-sharing and prepare oneself to share power.

2. Dig past perceived reality to learn who people really.

3. Don't think you have to rediscover. The wheel is already out there.

4. Participate in LMI training and/or Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services.

Appendix G: Labor - Management Survey Results

Table G1

Survey Response Summary for Part 1 Question 1

Answer options	I am experienced working in a union labor environment.	I have no experience working in a union labor environment. If you select this choice, please skip to the end of the survey and select "Done".	Response count
I work where collective bargaining for fire fighters is mandated.	67	34	101
I work where collective bargaining with fire fighters is authorized but a union agreement may or may not exist.	56	11	67
I work where collective bargaining for fire fighters is not permitted.	32	23	55
Total response count			223

answered question	146
skipped question	1

Table G2

Survey Response Summary for Part 1 Question 2

Answer Options	Positive Impact	No Impact	Negative Impact	Response Count
Employee Job Satisfaction	47	30	18	95
Innovation	28	43	24	95
Productivity	27	39	29	95
Employee and Managerial Relations	50	16	29	95
Employee Related Cost Structures	30	24	40	94
Communication Channels	54	24	17	95
			answered question	95
			skipped question	52

Table G3

Survey Response Summary for Part 1 Question 3

Answer Options	Effective most or all the time	Sometimes effective	Not effective	Response Count
Engages in interest-based, win-win negotiations	36	51	8	95
Invites and values bargaining group collaboration	43	44	8	95
Invites employee engagement or participation	53	37	5	95
Builds long-term trusting relationships	46	39	10	95
		answered question		95
		skipped question		52

Table G4

Survey Response Summary for Part 1 Question 4

Answer Options	Good	Better	Best	Response Count
Interest-based, win-win negotiations	32	35	26	93
Collaboration with bargaining group	24	42	27	93
Employee engagement or participation	27	27	39	93
Building long-term trusting relationships	26	24	43	93
		answered question		93
		skipped question		54

Table G5

Survey Response Summary for Part 2 Question 1

Answer Options	Role is essential	Role is not essential	Response Count
Figurehead - Performs ceremonial functions	54	34	88
Leader - Fosters a proper work environment	79	8	87
Liaison - Maintains relationships outside the organization	82	6	88
Monitor - Scans environment for information	71	16	87
Disseminator - Passing appropriate information to subordinates	76	12	88
Spokesperson - Conveys information outside the organization	70	17	87
Entrepreneur - Improves organization and change-agent	74	14	88
Disturbance Handler - Resolves conflict to maintain unit cohesiveness	68	20	88
Resource Allocator - Determines where resources go	67	21	88
Negotiator - Negotiates with people inside and outside of the organization	72	16	88
	answered question		88
	skipped question		59

Survey Response Summary for Part 2 Question 2

1. Open minded, give and take attitude, do not give in to petty issues. Stand firm and do not sacrifice mission to satisfy an issue

2. A Fire Chief must keep the lines of communication open. A Chief must be as inclusive of the Union leadership as possible.

3. Understand the purpose and function

   Set guidelines

   Stay the course

4. Develope Trust

5. Interact with personnel, and leaders to facilitate effective communication and a non-adversarial relationship environment

6. communication with union officials is a must! one way to avoid conflict is by communication.

7. Recognize the role of the Chief, understand the memorandum of understanding, respect the role and power of the labor group.

8. Be truthful -say what you mean and mean what you say

   Take a stand - once a decision is made stick to it

9. Play fair, be open. Minimize manipulation and manuvering.

10. Keep communications open but constructive in nature. Prepare for meetings and insist on an agenda. Union requests should be specific and in writing.Planning meetings should include a member the union. Policy changes anmd changes that effect union members should be discussed and implemented in stages. Initiate dialouge that includes

organizational growth or change in a framework that allows for win/win outcomes and a common vision.

11. Perform joint labor management activities all year long not just during negotions

12. Communication, through a labor/management team

13. Must be a team-builder

14. Management and labor must collaborate and work hand in hand with each other to effectively do whats best for the end user. Both internal and external costomers. the public and the workforce. The current national trend is for labor and management to collaborate and share equal stakeholder responsibilities and benefits to allow for effectiveness and efficiency service delivery

15. Must maintain a respectful, friendly, but professional relationship w/ the Union representatives.

16. strive for inclusion, looks for collaborative initiatives, communicate early and often, praise in public, critisize in private, try to keep the union in good standing with the elected officials, keep the lines clear as possible regarding where the local has authority in operations/management, invite the local into every meeting except those that are confidential related to people/negotiation strategies, hold regular (at least) monthly meetings, don't blind side the union president even if it means bad news or uncomfortable topics, try not to paint the union into a corner, treat the union as you would want to be treated

17. Communications and keeping the union involved in the current changes and have them assist in development of future changes.

18. Communicator

19. I belief that the values and process that the Chief follows is more important to outcome than wether or not there is a contract.

20. be consistent

21. clear, open, constant and honest communications are the foundation that ALL other relationships are built upon.

22. Truly open door policy; must listen to employees; If they 'lose' so does the organization; be willing to take a middle road if that's what it takes.

23. Integrity. Consistency in actions taken, either positive or negative. Base Decisions on qualifications over relationships. Equal opportunity.

24. Communication is key. Relate the financial considerations. Allow the union to be part of the budget process. Invite them to participate. Attend Labor/Managment training together.

25. Respect why labor unions exist.

26. Constatnt and open communications where a relatinship is never sacraficed for an outcome.

27. open budgets to all members of dept for review and questions

28. To be sucessful, the FC should participate in negotiations process(s) to include I&I. Participation among interested parties is a must in order to satisfy like interests with ultimate goal of providing for organizational health and firefighter health and safety.

29. Clearly maintaining management rights provisions so the tail doesn't end up wagging the dog...

30. My expereince shows that sometimes the relationship can be handled better by people other than the chief, at arms length so that the sometimes confrontational atmosphere can be limited to that environment

31. Open and trustworthy communications and program implementation

32. Open minded; flexible; successful at predicticing long term affects of concessions for both sides; creative

33. Must have and build local City Council trust and support. Trust the union but verify everything. Don't just rely on what they tell you.

34. Go between the union and the city - someone who can look at both sides and give constructive feedback to both sides - someone that can explain both sides to an issue

35. Be open and fair. you don't have to give everything labor asks for.

36. Communicate openly and honestly with union leadership. The more communication the better. Involve them in the decision making process and do not hide information. Remember -- the union members are the men and women of your department. Do not change how you treat them now that they are part of a collective bargaining unit.

37. Must work together rather than an adversarial relationship.

38. In our organization the fire chief does not meet with labor during the actualu negotiations. 42. Our Operations Chief is the lead from the FD, we have a representative from HR and the Deputy City Manager. The Fire Chief is the liaison between the City team and the City Council.

39. Have an idea of what you want and what they want from negotiations. Try to get to the bottom of what is sometimes inflated requests from the union. Try to give and take on negotiated items. May need to bring in a person from the outside to actually negotiate the contract. Do your homework on what is going on in the industry in your area (they will).

40. Support health and safety issues.

41. Always be honest- even when it hurts. Even though you have a union- remember that it is still an employer-employee relationship not a democracy. And it is ALWAYS good to invite input from members on even non-negotiable items - but always remember that the cheif maintains the authority and consequences of making these decisions.

42. Be open to arrive at goals in a mutual way, and not in a heavy handed work environment. This way the Union believes they were successful negotiators and the Chief still gets what he wants or something close to it.

43. If you take the attitude of us against them you will fail and Dept morale will plummet. You have to maintain the team attitude and assist the union personnel as much as you can.

44. It's all about "Good-Faith", and knowledge sharing on both sides.

45. Chief, Establish your performance expectations early, hold your people accountible. Look for opportunities to collaborate in problem solving and give them all of the information they need to support their membership. Keep no secrets with union leadership will support a trusting relationship. Take nothing personal, leave no one behind.

46. Maintain a productive dialogue with Union leadership

47. Open minded, listen.

48. Inclusion and maintaining healthy dialouge in order to mitigate differences.

49. Open honest communication

50. Keep the line of communication open and the rumors to a minimum

51. Follow through with commitments and promises.

52. maintain communication channels

53. Must believe in collaborative leadership with Labor.

54. No surprises, meaning that if the fire chief knows something that will affect the union in any

way, he/she will inform the union leadership. This information sharing should work both ways.

55. Has to be open and honest in responses to inquiries.

56. Strong leadership skills that emphasize the organizational goals is paramount. When negotiating in any situation that could lead to an arbitrators decision it is important for the fire administration to be true to themselves and always ask themselves if the arguement is in the benefit of the organization. Whether you win or lose the decision you know in your mind that you did what was right by the goals you set forth.

57. Presently our city is attempting to negotiate a new contract with the fire union. This is the first time that they have excluded the fire chief on the management team. It is not going well, the fire chief must have direct involvement for all the reasons that listed in question 1.

58. In our State the Union only has as much strength as the elected officials are willing to give them. In our County nothing happens without the Union's saying it is OK. They basically resemble the Mafia. To give you an example our local teamed up with the HBA and came out against residential sprinklers, Giving them collective barganinig will be a disaster to the fire service.

59. Open channel of communications including the right to speak "off the record" when necessary.

60. You have to listen to the bargaining unit if you are going to be successful and find a way to make your goals and their goals the same.

61. Communication prior to implementation. If you take the time to communicate the goals of a new change prior to implementing, it may not always be popular or accepted by all, but it will transition easier than just railroading forward and dealing with the backlash.

62. Lead by example, maintain scrupulously, one's integrity.

63. Communicate Communicate Communicate. Listening skills, agree to disagree.

64. Willing to listen, approachable.

65. It is advisable to create a Labor Management Partnership Steering Committee. You can get more info on this by searching the IAFF and IAFC Websites. This fosters a great environment for communication to follow and sets the stage for collaboration.

66. Honesty and trust most important, A "me", "I" focus never a good thing IF you worry more about your job and keeping city leaders happiest, labor relations will suffer.

67. Must have the fire chief "buy in" on good labor/management relations environment or the tail will be wagging the dog. Fire Chief must work with employees to foster growth (personally and professionally) within the department.

Table G6

Survey Response Summary for Part 2 Question 3

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No	74.4%	64
Yes. If yes, please contact allan.cain@townofcary.org to arrange receipt.	25.6%	22
question answered		86
skipped question		61

Appendix H

An Action Plan for Developing Effective Labor Relations

for Raymond A. Cain

Actions Prior to Collective Bargaining

Action Number	Action or Task	Tentative Start Date	Special Requirements	Date Completed
1.	Develop an internal employee relations guideline document as a reminder for chief officers. Can base in part on Shuman's trust building actions presented in Appendix A.	September 1, 2010	Will begin developing draft document with regularly schedule SOG review	
			Develop problem and purpose statement. Will solicit for interested individuals during the August 2010 Quarterly Employee Meetings. During	

			these meetings the fire chief must listen only. Do not debate issues. Simply listen to what employees have to say. Follow-up using the employee suggestion management process. Will invite Town Employee Relations Manger to attend as well. Discuss with Chief Poole how this might relate or infringe upon his code of ethics initiative.	
2.	Create an employee relation committee (ERC) comprised of nonexempt employees and exempt employees including the fire chief to meet semiannually to discuss work conditions	August 14, 2010		
	Develop interview questions for fire chiefs identified by the interview group. Contact these fire chiefs for interviews and develop micro case studies for the			

3.	methods and practices used by these fire chiefs to facilitate effective and successful labor relations	January 1, 2011.	
4.	Purchase and read latest edition of Getting to Yes by Roger Fisher and William Ury	March 1, 2010	Find used copy on Internet
5.	Explore opportunities to incorporate IBB principles into daily fire department management. 1. Separate people from the problem 2. Focus on interests, not positions 3. Invent options for mutual gains 4. Insist on using objective criteria For example company officer conflict resolution method.	Immediately	

Actions after Collective Bargaining is Realized

Action Number	Action or Task	Tentative Start Date	Special Requirements	Date Completed
6.	Attend LMI or FMCS training	To be determined (TBD)	When an IAFF affiliate organizes, invite the president to attend an upcoming LMI workshop. Deputy Fire Chief to attend as well. Requires funding, therefore anticipate a budget request.	
7.	Immediately following LMI workshop begin collaborative initiative to create a LMC.	TBD	In the truest sense will require a bargaining group to fully develop. Will invite an employer representative to participate as well.	

8.	Recommend to the Town Manager to have the fire chief exempted from bargaining activities	TBD	Have exemption included in job description and specification document.	
9.	Recommend interest-based bargaining training for negotiation team	TBD	Attend training even if exempted from bargaining process.	