

Running head: SUCCESSION PLANNING FOR STAFF CHIEF'S FOR THE NEW

Succession Planning for Staff Chief's for the New York City Fire Department

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

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Abstract**

The Fire Department of New York (FDNY) faces a challenge that is a threat to the organization's stability. All twenty staff chiefs are eligible to retire today, leaving the department with no one to replace these key positions, which will result in loss of leadership, continuity and organizational stability.

The problem is that the Fire Department of New York does not have a succession plan in place to replace these staff chief officers.

The purpose of this research is to identify the issues of succession planning for the Fire Department of New York.

The descriptive research method was used to answer the following questions:

a) What is a succession plan? b) What are the components of a succession plan? c) How do other departments similar in size conduct succession planning? d) How could the Fire Department of New York benefit from having a succession plan for staff chief officers?

The procedures used to complete this research included a literature review of books, periodicals, executive fire officer (EFO) reports, three surveys, two internal and one external, and interviews were conducted.

The results of this study demonstrated that succession planning is not priority within the fire service. The results do indicate that succession planning is necessary for leadership, continuity and organizational stability. Research also indicated that departments surveyed do/do not have a formal succession plan in place. The results also indicated/revealed a need for a succession plan for the staff chiefs to provide strategic continuity.

The research project resulted in several recommendations for the development of a succession plan. The recommendations include the following: designate only deputy chiefs as

division commanders who will accept promotion to staff, have a written document that describes the functions and duties of each staff position, implement a mentor program to rotate future staff chiefs through different bureaus, and rotate staff officers through leadership positions across the organization to gain the breadth of experience necessary for promotion to increasing levels of responsibility. This would also make the organization stronger and more resilient to change.

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## **Introduction**

A challenge facing many fire departments is preparing for changes in leadership they will experience. This change may be tomorrow or in the future, but it will happen. When a tragedy occurs, corporations, government, agencies, etc. must be prepared to replace key players.

On September 11, 2001, the FDNY lost 343 members of its department, of which included 19 battalion chiefs, and 4 staff chiefs which included the chief of department. Battalion and deputy chiefs are the staff chiefs of the future. The fire service were not the only ones affected by the terrorist act on September 11, 2001, but one hundred and seventy two corporate vice presidents also lost their lives when the towers collapsed (Domingo, 2007). Countries are not always prepared for new leadership when tragedy takes the life of their leader. In February 2004, Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski died in a plane crash, in what has been called "one of the most tragic days in the history of the Republic of Macedonia (Deliso, 2004)." In April 2010, Polish president Lech Kaczynski and much of the country's military and state elite perished in a plane crash. The crash came as a stunning blow to Poland, wiping out a large portion of the country's leadership in one fiery explosion (Barry, 2010). In April 1996, Ron Brown, a US cabinet member and one of the sharpest political brains in the democratic party, was killed in a plane crash over Croatia (Washington & Tuzla, 1996).

In a world of competitiveness, constant changes and uncertain future developing and use of succession plans are accepted as standard management practice. Economic uncertainty surrounds us, and we are being asked to do more with less. Downsizing is the norm today and both the public and private agencies are being told to be more efficient with fewer resources. Furthermore, costs to provide services are being reduced.

The United States workforce born between 1946 and 1964 are or will be retiring, and with this group represents a huge labor and knowledge base (Walsh, 2006; Domingo, 2007). Karel discusses “baby boomers” retirement and the process of identifying and developing workers to replace a company’s key players; this will become more critical than ever as we will not necessarily be able to go out and get new employees (Steen, 2008). Even government has to choose their successors and future leaders from an ever shrinking talent pool (Buzzotta & Lefton, 1977; Domingo, 2007). Private and public agencies are not able to wait until an opening becomes available to begin the process of succession planning (Quint, 2009).

Preparing future leaders of an organization for the challenges ahead before the time arrives for them to fill these new positions is what succession planning needs to accomplish. Having an effective succession plan in place will provide continuity and assure the organization will continue to flourish. Succession plans identify and develop future leaders of organizations; they also ensure the continuity of the organization’s direction.

The applied research project is related to the United States Fire Administration (USFA) or National Fire Academy’s student manual Executive Leadership, Unit 7, Succession/Replacement Planning which states “succession planning is an organized and systemic way to ensure that employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to replace and succeed roles within the organization (NFA, 2005, p. SM 7-3).

The problem is that the Fire Department of New York does not have a succession plan in place to replace these staff chief officers.

The purpose of this research is to identify the issues of succession planning for the Fire Department of New York.

To that end, this research paper utilized descriptive research to answer the following questions: a) What is a succession plan? b) What are the components of a succession plan? c) How do other departments similar in size conduct succession planning? d) How could the Fire Department of New York benefit from having a succession plan for staff chief officers?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The Fire Department of New York (FDNY) is a full-service, paid department serving the five boroughs of Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island with a geographical area of approximately 322 square miles, populated by eight million people excluding visitors. There are presently 10,725 uniform firefighters and officers, 2740 emergency medical personnel, 171 fire marshals, 247 fire inspectors, 174 dispatchers and 1,101 support personnel employed by the FDNY. The Mission statement of the FDNY is: “as first responders to fires, public safety and medical emergencies, disasters and terrorist acts, FDNY protects the lives and property of New York City residents and visitors” (Fire Department of New York, 2011).

The FDNY provided New Yorkers the following services in 2010: Fire Apparatus responses to 432,969 fires, non-fire emergencies and medical calls; Extinguished 51,145 fires; EMS units responded to 1,088,378 medical emergencies; investigated 6,292 fires for potential arson; conducted 183,403 fire code regulatory inspections; sponsored 1,834 fire safety events. The approved 2011 budget for the FDNY is \$1.6 billion and of that amount 90% is earmarked towards the daily operation costs (salary, equipment, etc.). For fiscal year 2011, there are budget cuts scheduled for all city agencies, and the FDNY has taken the 5<sup>th</sup> firefighter off 71 apparatus and is looking at closing 20 companies to meet the budget gap (Fire Department of New York, 2011).

Apart from the chain of command of the uniformed personnel of the FDNY, civilian positions of Deputy Assistant Commissioners govern the areas of budget services, legal affairs, fiscal services, and payroll administration. Within the uniform personnel, Staff Chiefs (AC & DAC) govern the areas of fire prevention, communications, personnel, operations, and borough commands. Because of the scale of the municipal government of New York City, officials are precluded from involvement in the budgetary process.

In 1883, following the assigination of President James Garfield by a disgruntled job seeker, congress passed the Pendleton Act. The Pendleton Act provided the Federal Government jobs that would be awarded on basis of merit and employees would be selected through competitive exams. The act also made it unlawful to fire or demote for political reasons employees who were covered by the law. The law also further forbids requiring employees to give political service or contributions. The civil service commission was established to enforce this act (Dresang, 2009). Firefighters in the FDNY are civil service employees. The purpose of a civil service commission is to promote efficiency in government service through elimination of political patronage in employment decisions (Klinger and Nalbandian, 1985).

The mission of the New York City Civil Service Commission is to provide an orderly, fair and uniform system for the administrative of relevant provisions of the Civil Service Laws and the City of New York Rules and Regulations. Competitive exams are given for promotion to lieutenant (Lt.), captain (Cp.), battalion chief (BC), and deputy chief (DC) in the FDNY. Promotion list is derived by written exam which determines 50% of your score and seniority and department awards determine the other 50%. Candidates must achieve a passing grade of 70% in order for seniority and awards are added to determine their final ranking (New York City, 2011a). Eligible promotion list when promulgated shall not be less than 1 year or more than 4

years. If the list is in existence for 1 year or more, it shall terminate upon the establishment of an appropriate new list unless the list is extended by the Department of Civil Service (New York State, 2008).

Promotion above the rank of DC is known as “staff chief” and it is an appointed position. The rank a DC can be promoted to is deputy assistant chief (ADC); an ADC can then be promoted to assistant chief (AC). Promotion above AC is chief of operations, chief of fire prevention and chief of training. The highest ranking position in the FDNY is chief of department.

The history of the research problem is to explore what the requirements to be a staff chief are, why deputy chiefs turn down promotion to staff chief, and what can be done to make the staff chief job more appealing.

This research paper will demonstrate how succession planning works in the FDNY up to the rank of DC, and how the FDNY can develop a succession plan for the rank of staff chief.

The problem is that the Fire Department of New York does not have a succession plan in place to replace these staff chief officers.

The purpose of this research is to identify the issues of succession planning for the Fire Department of New York.

The descriptive research method was used to answer the following questions:

a) What is a succession plan? b) What are the components of a succession plan? c) How do other departments similar in size conduct succession planning? d) How could the Fire Department of New York benefit from having a succession plan for staff chief officers?

The applied research project was completed in accordance with the applied research requirements of Executive Leadership (EL) course of the National Fire Academy’s (NFA)

Executive Fire Officer Program. This applied research is directly related to EL as described in curriculum Unit 7 Succession/Replacement Planning and meets the terminal objectives covered in the course. The enabling objectives covered were “succession planning is an organized and systemic way to ensure that employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to replace and succeed roles within the organization (National Fire Academy (NFA) 2005, p. SM 7-3).

This research study is beneficial to the FDNY as it will determine if a succession plan for staff chief should be developed. The author shall submit the proposal to the chief of department for his consideration with hope that it shall be approved and implemented. A succession plan for staff chief officers will provide leadership, continuity and organizational stability within the organization.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A literature review of this research project was conducted by reviewing books, articles from journals, magazines, and EFO papers on leadership and succession planning. Interviews of staff chiefs were conducted as well as three surveys, one external and two internal. The author has researched and examined succession planning from the business, public and private sectors in addition to the fire service. The intent of the literature review was to develop a succession plan for the staff chiefs of the FDNY. The literature review will address the four questions in the introduction section.

No organization can be totally prepared for the number of losses that were incurred on September 11, 2001. The FDNY lost 343 members and 172 corporate vice presidents from various organizations perished that day (Domingo, 2007). Tragedies such as the events of September 11, 2001 and plane crashes that killed the Macedonia President Boris Trajkovski

(Deliso, 2004), Poland President Lech Kaczynski (Barry, 2010), and Ron Brown, a US cabinet member (Washington & Tuzla, 1996), are examples of why succession planning is needed.

Private and public sectors need to be prepared for the unexpected.

Succession planning as described in the Executive Leadership manual is “an organized and systemic way to ensure employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to replace and/or succeed to strategic roles within the organization (National Fire Academy, 2005, SM 7-3).” Susan Heathfield (2011) describes succession planning as a process for an organization to ensure that their employees are recruited and developed to fill key roles within the company. Through a succession plan, an organization recruits superior employees and develops their knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) to prepare them for advancement or promotion into ever more challenging roles. Having a succession plan in place ensures that employees are constantly developed to fill each needed role. As the organization expands, loses key employees, provides promotional opportunities, and increases sales the organizations’ succession planning guarantees that one has employees on hand ready and waiting to fill new roles. Effective, proactive succession planning leaves an organization well prepared for expansion, the loss of a key employee, filling a new and needed job, employee promotions, and organizational redesign for opportunities. By having a successful succession plan, an organization builds bench strength.

Organizations are figuring out what is required to keep an organization moving forward in the event of the departure of a key leader. Change in leadership is a normal event and every organization must be prepared for this. Some of the causes for a change of leadership are retirement, illness or resignation (Buzzotta & Lefton, 1997; DeIorio, 2003).

Succession planning means being prepared for change and able to manage the organization before, during and after change (Hitt, 1989). “Succession planning is nothing more than working with your subordinate staff so that, in the event that one of them succeeds you, they’ll carry the organization in the same direction that you established (Coleman, 1998).” Cochran writes that fire departments have not adequately identified and trained personnel to take over the next position above them and “by large there is a lack of institutionalized succession planning in the fire service (2006, p.84).”

Organizations are realizing their work force is aging and will be losing managers and other key people. This aging is rapidly approaching and organizations must begin to systemically replace talent as a way of sustaining their performance and a way to fill vacancies on short notice (Ibarra, 2005). Ibarra states, “the public sector, 30% of state government employees nationwide are eligible for retirement in 2006 and by 2008 more than 50% of federal government employees will be eligible for retirement (2007).” In his book titled “Effective Succession Planning,” Rothwell (2005) describes that over the next 30 years 61 million Americans will retire from their professions and the number of workers needed compared to the number of workers available will greatly increase. This may lead to a serious shortage of experience and talent in the workforce, which could lead to bidding wars for talented people (Kopp, 2004). Karel discusses “baby boomers” retirement and the process of identifying and developing workers to replace a company’s key players, which will become more critical than ever as one might not necessarily be able to go out and get new employees (Steen, 2008). Further, a 1999 Government Accounting Office study found that it takes 17 to 22 years to recruit and train an employee to assume an upper level incident management position (Borzik, 2004).

Designing and implementing a comprehensive and systematic succession plan and management process remains the most viable response to the growing trend of large numbers of employees retiring (Ibarra, 2007). Developing and replacing key people within an organization over time can ensure continued effective performance of an organization, division, department or work groups (Rothwell, 2005).

Minimizing the risk of losing leaders begins with assessing the reason people continue to work for an organization. Assessing what motivates people to keep working with their current employers can have real impact on retention and human resources budgets (Morris-Lee, 2001).

It has been estimated that in 2001 nearly 75% of all executives were marketing themselves which caused a bidding war to retain them. Succession planning involves getting the talented leaders to remain with the organization and develop them to be future leaders of the organization (Morris-Lee, 2001; Kopp, 2004).

Simply transplanting another agency's succession plan process into one's organization may be efficient and inexpensive, but risky as well. For a succession plan to be truly effective, it must be customized to fit one's organization's particular needs, and that cannot be simply accomplished by lifting a program from another agency and dropping into your workplace (Ibarra, 2007).

Companies that have not implemented any form of succession planning had suffered financial loss and even bankruptcies when there has been a change in top leadership (Rothwell, 2005; Torchia, 2007). Business continuity planning is about protecting a business first and foremost, and a few things can negatively impact earnings, such as lack of leadership (Vouglas, 1998).

Designing and implementing a comprehensive and systemic succession planning and management process remains the most viable response to the growing trend of large numbers of employees retiring (Ibarra, 2007). Succession planning can be difficult and in order for it to work one needs open communication and commitment from the entire organization. Succession planning is a dynamic process which requires an organizational culture to embrace change, and it requires management to be involved in the change process itself. However, too often organizations are absorbed in the day to day issues that emphasize short-term results (Johnson, 2004).

Succession plans are not always in place and updated; this creates uncertainty and results in bustling around to find the right candidate at the last minute (Baldwin, 2000; & Stallings, 2003). Baldwin (2000) lists the benefits of succession planning: 1) An ongoing supply of well trained, broadly experienced, well motivated people who are ready and able to step in key positions when needed 2) having a cadre of desirable candidates who are being integrated into the company with positive goals established for them individually 3) a flow of these capable people through various departments with the goals of educating them into the culture and process of the company 4) alignment of future needs of the company with the availability of appropriate resources within the company 5) positive goals for key personnel, which will help them with the company and will help assure the continuing supply of capable successors for each of the important positions included in the succession plan 6) definitive career paths, which will help the company recruit and retain better people 7) very likely, the continuous input of ideas to improve the internal processes and procedures of the company, as well as the opportunities to improve the offerings and services of the company in the marketplace (Syring, 2007).

Arguments for an organization to have a succession plan include that it: (Evangelista, 2003 p. 20): 1) Aligns development with corporate strategy 2) enforces disciplined talent review process led by senior management 3) aligns selection, rewards and recognition, and employee development 4) requires organization keep constantly updated talent pool assessment; 5) Creates sufficient bench strength to meet upcoming challenges 6) ensures that leadership growth keeps pace with company growth 7) ensures leadership continuity 8) eliminates transition problems. Evangelista (2003) also lists arguments to have individual succession plans to: 1) Guide key executives development process 2) ensure only prepared candidates are promoted 3) aid in overall personnel development 4) prepare employees for future growth and career advancement 5) inform employees about career path options and responsibilities 6) provide objective and subjective feedback for employees 7) help maximize individual potential.

AT&T found out by not having a succession plan in place by losing market shares and lagging behind their competitors when their CEO had left and had to search for a new CEO. Telecommunications is a fast paced, change intensive industry and without a leader to provide clear direction, AT&T was unable to move into areas created as a result of deregulation. Coca-Cola on the other hand had a successor and a succession plan in place when their CEO suddenly died, and this hardly affected the price of their stock (Vouglas, 1998, Duncan, 2000).

The needs of every organization are different, and therefore each will develop their own succession plan. Succession planning means being prepared for change, being able to manage it before it happens, and managing change during the transition and afterward. Research demonstrates that succession planning is important to ensure leadership and strategic continuity for organizations.

The National Fire Academy Executive Leadership manual (2005) states organizations can determine their strong points and areas that need to develop by benchmarking best practices. The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) identifies two important aspects of planning: The plan itself must be feasible and directed toward clear goals and the process by which the plan is developed must ensure all major goals are considered and every constituency to be affected by the plan is somewhat involved in the process or well aware of its consequences (Correira, 2008; NFPA, 2003).

Succession planning as defined by the National Academy of Public Administration is an integrated process with four components to assure an organization has the right leaders in place at the right time: 1) Projecting the executive staff requirements and reviewing job positions and descriptions for strategic leadership positions within the organization 2) identifying individuals who are prepared to move quickly into key positions 3) preparing candidates through training and career development 4) selecting executives from updated pools of qualified candidates (Wright, 2008).

Buzzotta and Lefton (1997) use a five step plan for succession: 1) Know where you are going 2) identify the competencies and skills required to get you there 3) develop those who exhibit leadership potential 4) keep candidate development on track 5) nurture a trusting environment.

To have a successful succession plan, common components that should be implemented are: 1) Monitor future talent needs of the company 2) assess available talent and potential candidates 3) create development plans for candidate employment 4) analyze the success of the plan. These components can be built upon depending on the organization's specific needs (Torchia, 2007).

Paton (2002) identifies five elements for a succession plan to be successful for an organization: 1) Work out where you are going 2) decide what skills you need to deliver them 3) work out how to measure your current skills against those you will need in the future 4) address gaps 5) maintain skills.

Six essential elements needed for succession planning are (Ibarra, 2005; Sweeney 2006): 1) Development of a replacement chart 2) critical position profile listing key responsibilities, duties and activities for critical positions within the organization 3) high potential profile of employee(s) who has the potential to become a successor in an advancing position within an organization 4) employee performance appraisal 5) individual potential assessment of an employee potential for advancement to a critical position or to a higher level of responsibility or technical proficiency 6) individual development plan to determine an employee's current knowledge of a position and the knowledge they will need for advancement to a higher position and develop a strategy to provide the employee with the necessary knowledge.

Edwin Winning (1997) in his article Succession Planning lists 6 steps for a successful succession plan: 1) identification of key positions 2) job descriptions and identification of specifications 3) replacement plan for each position 4) forecast who are promotable 5) evaluate training/development needs 6) develop strategy for furthering the process (Moody, 2001).

Avsec (2000) in his research paper Succession planning in the Chesterfield Fire and Emergency Medical Services outlined seven critical components of a good succession plan: 1) It must be supported from the top leadership and line management 2) it must be based on a top to bottom assessment of the organization's leadership needs and must be part of a larger business plan for the organization 3) the plan needs to identify the positions within the organization that are part of the succession planning process 4) selection of participants must be based on an

objective process 5) the plan must be balanced with employee input 6) the organization must put people into assignment that make them grow 7) a good participant evaluation process must be part of the plan (Clack, 2003).

Jack Welch (Welch & Daly 2001), former CEO of General Electric used the following steps to find his successor, 1) Develop a short list of people who could take over in a emergency 2) develop a list of the ideal skills and characteristics you want 3) develop a long list of all possible candidates 4) map out a development plan for each candidate 5) watch them like hawks 6) do formal reviews of the candidates twice per year 7) make sure the candidates all get face time with the decision-makers 8) try to lessen the influence of politics on the process. Strategic planning and organizational strategy need to be tied together and be responsive to changes in organizational settings. Several trends drive the future workplace, and consequently the workforce. The trends below are representative of the businesses and the fire service (Rothwell, 2005; Stallings, 2003): 1) Change technology 2) increasing globalization 3) continuing cost containment 4) increasing speed in market change 5) the growing importance of knowledge capital 6) an increasing rate and magnitude of change.

“To plan for consistent succession, you must assess the potential for vacancies; assess the readiness of the current staff; develop strategies to address the needs of employees and the organization; and mentor, train and develop leadership and management skills (Johnson, 2004 p.136).” Johnson (2004) describes four steps for a successful succession planning: 1) Identify existing competencies relating to leadership needs as well as to the needs of your department and the community it serves 2) evaluate members of your department and how they fit in with the mission, vision, and core values of your organization 3) implement coaching, mentoring,

recruitment and training requirements that is consistent with the department's operational needs and its mission, vision and values 4) develop a plan.

Chief Coleman, in his article on Succession Planning (1998), favors organizational environment, and within that environment opportunity and preparation are key. The opportunity should be there for one to achieve a higher level of responsibility in the fire service. The responsibility to prepare them for those positions is shared between the individual and the organization. It is up to the individual to provide the motivation and intrinsic skills, and the organization to provide the direction and standards for that achievement. Coleman also discusses five elements for a good succession plan: 1) Career development guide-an individual has the opportunity to move vertically through a highly specialized track if he/she so desires 2) adequate performance evaluation-a realistic on-target performance evaluation 3) instillation of a challenging environment-organization should have an element of challenge at all times, whether the challenge is a creation of a new program, surviving an economic crises or fighting a major fire 4) opportunity to achieve-the more open and universal an organization is regarding opportunities, the more likely skill development will occur on the part of many individuals and not just one 5) including talented people in your organization and providing them exposure to all aspects of the job.

Coleman (2000) mentions that one must adequately keep one's subordinates informed and share information to facilitate organizational transition. "Succession planning is nothing more than working with your subordinate staff so that in the event that one of them succeeds you, they'll believe that they're carrying the organization in the same direction you established."

Eastman (1995) asserts that literature points out that the clandestine of succession planning in many organizations often precludes employee involvement, and succession plans

emphasize organizational needs without regard to the needs and interests of individual employees.

Caldwell (2007) discusses how other corporations approach leadership development that meets their organizational needs: 1) General Electric moves individuals identified as future leaders through different positions and geographic locations to prepare them for eventual leadership 2) XEROX managers are not eligible for promotion unless they have recruited, trained, and developed their own replacements 3) Banata, a large digital imaging and printing company, utilizes succession planning by having current leaders identify, recruit, and develop new leaders. Other initiatives Banta uses include voluntary administrative internships or mentorship programs, or workshops and seminars 4) Eli Lilly has a bi-annual action-learning program that brings together potential leaders, selected by line managers and the HR department, to focus on a strategic business issue chosen by the CEO. They also have a “group development review” that is mandatory for employees identified through the company’s talent assessment process as having executive potential 5) Dow gives future leaders broad experience by launching small joint ventures or internal enterprises through lateral moves across functions and business units in order to gain experience in a dimension not offered within their home offices.

Rothwell (2005) explains the six basic methods to identify key positions within an organization: 1) Consequences -Not filling a position and observing any upheaval. Continuance of upheaval reveals the importance of that position 2) organization charting - is everyone on an organization chart valuable? A person’s value is confirmed if they contribute in a unique manner to the organization, but if that area is able to continue without a leader, then the value is degraded 3) questioning – ask senior executives what positions would need to be filled if they suddenly became vacant, and find out why 4) historical evidence – examine significant events within the

organization and which positions were key in handling the situation 5) network charting – When decisions are made who is included and excluded in the communication link 6) combination – compare the results and appraise the findings by combining two or more of the five approaches (Stallings, 2003).

Winn (2000) asserts that it can take a year or more before the replacement executive can fully assume the responsibilities of the lost key person and become another key person. Improperly trained or underdeveloped employees will not only require a large training expense, but may also cost the organization in lost revenues until the new key person is comfortable in their new position. A succession plan would have the replacements for key positions properly trained and ready to assume their new duties (Sweeney, 2006). The effectiveness of the organization is at risk while this process takes place: 1) Locating the right individual 2) attracting him/her to the organization 3) training the new executive.

A disadvantage of succession that Hanger (2002) identified is employees with less loyalty to their organization may use succession and career planning for employability outside of the organization. Hanger (2002) identifies five elements of a good succession plan: 1) Identification of the current level of employee training 2) identification of organizational education and development needs 3) increased opportunities for high-potential workers 4) Increased candidate pool for leadership positions 5) contributions to the accomplishment of the organization's strategic plan.

Research by the author on analyzing fire periodicals revealed numerous articles written answering the questions of who, what, when, where, and why about succession planning, but was unable to find articles that referenced fire departments that actually had succession plans.

Domingo (2007) reviewed twenty eight National Fire Academy Executive Officer Research projects that were published at the Learning Resource Center and discovered the following: 1) Ten departments supported succession planning 2) Three departments reported that formal succession plans were missing in most fire departments surveyed 3) two other authors were exploring succession for their departments. It was evident from Domingo's research that there were very few departments which had established succession planning models for senior level chief officers. Domingo had identified three departments, Martinsville Fire and EMS, Minnesota fire department and the Philadelphia fire department as having a succession plan program or planning model.

Baker (1995) in his research indicated the need for providing a formalized succession plan necessary to meet current and future fire service demands.

Research papers reviewed by the author on Succession Planning in the fire service revealed officer development plans instead of a succession plan from which they would choose future leaders. Common elements of officer development plans were education, leadership qualities and mentoring.

National Fire Protection Association 1021, *Standard for Fire Officer Professional qualifications*, designates certification levels of I-IV for fire officer. Fire Officer III and IV require college level preparation. All four levels involve aspects of human resource management, community and governmental relations, administrations, inspections and investigation, and emergency service delivery and safety (NFPA, 2003; Stallings 2003).

The most salient trait that is being sought out in leaders today is education. Fleming (2002) states that people who engage in continuous education make successful officers. Higher education degrees are required of some candidates in order to apply for a position. Education and

internal policies demonstrate the need to have a well planned and executed staff development training process (Forsman, 1997; Stallings, 2003). Requirements beyond formal education in choosing a chief fire officer include the ability to analyze a situation, be a creative thinker, exercise good judgment, and have the drive, resilience and empathy necessary to be successful (Morris-Lee, 2001).

Informal mentoring is also common in the fire service. Many times mentoring happens without individuals being aware it is occurring. The one on one approach is a way the senior leadership teaches new or young firefighters the “tricks of the trade.” Mentoring is a way to prepare individuals for leadership positions. Mentoring is a process that allows individuals to improve by acquiring knowledge from numerous people within the organization (Coleman, 2000). Colgate Palmolive utilizes its managers to serve as mentors and provide skills improvement (Beeson, 2000). The fire service also uses mentoring as part of their fire officer development (Forsman, 1997). Pernick (2002) describes mentoring as learning by doing. Mentoring needs to be a positive experience and it is up to the mentor to be prepared to teach and fulfill the expectations of the mentee. The fire management mentoring program was implemented to prepare the next generation of fire leaders. This mentoring program takes approximately two years. At the start of the program, an individual development plan is made for each participant. This development identifies the goal to be achieved and also tracks the accomplishment of these goals (Borzik, 2004; Sweeney, 2006).

In order to plan for succession, we must understand not only the concept of succession planning, but also the FDNY. There is no substitute for experience and education. In addition, there is no substitute for character, leadership, and competence. Without organizational

character, leadership, and competence, all the succession planning efforts for the department will be in theory only.

The FDNY fills the position of lieutenant (Lt.), captain (Cp.), battalion chief (BC), and deputy chief (DC) through the civil service process guided by New York City Law. The law helps ensure that the hiring process is competitive and fair. To advance in ranks within the FDNY from lieutenant to deputy chief a candidate must pass each promotional exam. Promotion lists are derived from written exam which determines 50% of one's score and seniority and department awards determine the other 50%. Candidates must achieve a passing grade of 70% in order to receive predetermined points for seniority, along with meritorious awards that are added to determine their final ranking (New York City, 2011b). The FDNY does not need a succession plan for these ranks as it is defined within the NYC civil service law.

Promotion above the rank of DC is known as "staff chief" and it is an appointed position. A deputy chief can be appointed to a deputy assistant chief (DAC); a DAC can be promoted to assistant chief (AC). Promotion above AC is to chief in charge of a bureau, such as chief of operations, chief of fire prevention, and chief of training. The highest ranking position in the FDNY is chief of department

After September 11, 2001, the consulting firm McKinsey and Company was hired to develop a comprehensive report on the lessons learned from 9/11 and the opportunities for improving FDNY's preparedness. The report was published on lessons learned and improving FDNY's preparedness. The report was published in August 2002 titled "Increasing FDNY's Preparedness" and contains recommendations including planning and management capabilities. The department has undergone several reforms at the most senior levels aimed at enhancing the department's management capacity (McKinsey & Co, 2002).

In January 2002 the FDNY had conducted a comprehensive review of its management and organizational structure. The department modified its organizational structure to strengthen both uniform and civilian management expertise. The department had strengthened its overall command structure by increasing the number of staff chiefs from 12 to 18. In September 2002, the department implemented a borough command structure from within the Bureau of Operations consisting of an assistant chief, deputy assistant chief and staff functions to decentralize command and control operations. “The restructuring of the most senior chiefs has significantly improved the department’s management capacity (Fire Department of New York, 2004, p. 21).”

The FDNY sought to strengthen its managerial and planning capabilities by providing its most senior fire and EMS officers with additional training in management principles, knowledge and skills. Through a partnership with private and academic sectors, the department established the custom designed FDNY Officers Management Institute (FOMI). The management focused training is provided by Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs and hosted by General Electric’s Jack Welch Management Training Center in Croton on the Hudson, New York. The course is 4 days each month for 6 months (Fire Department of New York, 2004).

In the Spring of 2004 the FDNY partnered with United States Military Academy at West Point and established a four month graduate level course West Point Counter Terrorism Leadership Program at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point. The course focuses on research in the field of terrorism, counterterrorism, and weapons of mass destruction, and risks and specific threats to New York City (Fire Department of New York, 2004).

FDNY’s first strategic plan was in 2004-2005 and one of the goals was to increase managerial capabilities and expertise of fire and EMS personnel by providing enhanced opportunities for advanced leadership development (Fire Department of New York, 2004).

Strategic Plan for 2009-2010 was to establish a leadership development program for staff chiefs. The department would solicit recommendations from chief officers to identify future department leaders at the rank of captain and provide them with leadership management training and skills for promotional opportunities to reach the ultimate career rank of staff chief. The strategic plan also was to provide additional training and skill document at the command chief rank and incorporate the following topics: performance, safety, and accountability, the incident command structure and in depth overview of the technological capability of the department's state of the art operations center (Fire Department of New York, 2009).

FDNY Personnel and Information Directive 1-97 (Fire Department of New York ,1997) spells out educational requirements in order to be considered for promotion to the rank of fire marshal, lieutenant, supervising fire marshal, captain, battalion chief or deputy chief. Candidates for promotion to the rank of battalion or deputy chief after January 2007 must possess a bachelor's degree. The FDNY provides tuition reimbursement for undergraduate courses taken at John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

On March 14, 2011, the author interviewed Edward Kilduff Chief of Department (Appendix A) to discuss succession planning in the FDNY. FDNY does not have a formalized succession plan. There are 20 staff positions on the fire operation side of the FDNY which includes the chief of department. Chief Kilduff expressed that none of the staff chiefs plan on retiring any time soon.

Some of the traits that Chief Kilduff discussed that the FDNY looks for in a chief officer include:

- Proficiency in their current assignment
- Attitude

- Knowledge, skill set, and abilities (KSA)
- Engage in continuous education
- Willingness to increase their skills to apply to their job
- Good fire ground officer
- Good training officer
- Communicates well verbally and written
- Understands internal policies and has political awareness
- Skills to implement and communicate the goals of the department
- Looks at the bigger picture, not myopic
- Motivated
- Motivator
- Contributes to department, does more than work his/her tour and go home

Captains who exhibit strong leadership skills are being identified and offered opportunities to help the department move forward with certain initiatives. These captains, upon passing the battalion chief's exam, will be placed in "strong" battalions to increase KSA's.

The FDNY has eight divisions and within each division there are 4 assigned deputy chiefs and two or three "covering" chiefs to fill in for vacations and vacancies at other divisions. The senior deputy in rank at each division is usually selected as the division commander. Chief Kilduff stated a division commander is not automatically a stepping stone to becoming a staff chief. There have been division commanders who have turned down promotions to staff. The department looks to find the right match for the right position. Present staff chiefs are well rounded with the junior chief having 25 years of experience.

To replace a staff chief the Fire Commissioner, Chief of Department and Chief of Operations would select a deputy or deputies that are a good fit for the position. If there were to be a sudden exodus of staff chiefs the department would reshuffle some of the remaining staff chiefs to fill critical positions until deputy chiefs would be promoted to fill the open positions.

The fire commissioner makes the final decision on the promotion to DAC and also promotions within the staff chief rank. As a courtesy, the fire commissioner will notify the deputy mayor in charge of life safety as to who will be the next chief of department, chief of operations, chief of fire prevention and also Manhattan borough commander as these are high profile positions.

Mentoring within the staff chief rank has been done in the past and the department will be looking into mentoring when openings are known. With fiscal constraints, however, it is hard for the mayor's office to approve taking a deputy chief working in the field and putting them in headquarters to mentor and then having to backfill the deputy's position.

The Emergency Medical Service (EMS) side of the FDNY differs as staff vacancies are "posted" and interested candidates forward their resume. The candidates are contacted to and go through an interview process.

The following information was gathered from discussions with Deputy Assistant Chief Robert Maynes Chief of Planning (Appendix B) about the medical and health benefit upon being promoted to staff chief. When promoted to staff you are no longer in the union and you are considered management so certain benefits change. The salary increase of a deputy assistant chief is 4% raise above deputy chief. Presently, a deputy chief makes more than a DAC since a pay increase that unions received prior to the fiscal crises has not been approved by the mayor for the staff chiefs. When the staff chiefs eventually receive their salary increase, the DAC will

receive 4% more than deputy chief and AC will receive 2% more than a DAC. Medical benefits are the same, and eyeglass and dental plans are similar to the unions. Catastrophic insurance is paid for which amounts to approximately \$180.00 month, and a small life insurance plan is picked up by the city but expires upon retirement. A drug prescription plan must be paid into at the cost of \$107.00 a pay period. Staff chiefs do not accumulate compensation time off for working above 40 hours. Staff chiefs on average work 53 hours per week. If a staff chief works 53 hours for 3 weeks straight and one week works 35 hours, they must use vacation time or compensation time they accumulated as battalion chief or deputy chief to make up the 5 hours. Benefits could play (New York City, 2011) (New York City, 2011) an integral role in determining a deputy chief's decision to accept a promotion to staff chief.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

The public and private sectors are preparing for future by ensuring their organization has a written succession plan. Research demonstrates that succession planning is important to ensure leadership and strategic continuity for organizations. A successful succession plan is critical for an organization to move forward in the event of the departure of a key leader. Organizations need to have well trained, broadly experienced, well motivated people who are ready and able to step in key positions when needed. In the private sector businesses that have not prepared for change in top leadership by having a have suffered financial losses. Continuity planning is about protecting a business first and foremost, and a few things can negatively impact earnings, such as lack of leadership.

The literature review has indicated that a successful succession plan has several key concepts: 1) Identifying positions within the organization that need to be filled if they currently become vacant 2) list of skills and characteristics need for a position 3) identifying those in the

organization who exhibit leadership potential and evaluate how they fit in the organization 4) placing talented individual in challenging work assignments and exposing them to all aspects of the job and allowing them to grow 4) coach and mentor individuals 5) ensure key replacements are properly trained and ready to assume new duties 6) map out a development plan 7) meaningful performance evaluations 8) the process is developed and supported from top.

The literature review revealed that succession planning will better prepare the fire service to prepare for key personnel leaving the department and also meet current and future fire service demands. Research papers reviewed by the author on succession planning in the fire service revealed officer development plans instead of a succession plan from which they would choose future leaders. Common elements of officer development plans were education, leadership qualities and mentoring.

Since September 11, 2001 the FDNY has strengthened the knowledge of their chief officers through educational opportunities such as Fire Officers Management Institute, West Point Counter Terrorism Leadership Program, and allowing members of the department to obtain an undergraduate degree with tuition reimbursement.

Based on interviews, literature reviews and surveys, an organization needs have a written succession plan to be prepared for key personnel leaving, retiring or even catastrophic events September 11, 2001 and plane crashes that killed foreign presidents.

## **PROCEDURES**

The procedures employed in this Applied Research paper (APR) consisted of developing a problem statement and relevant research questions. A literature review was conducted in addition to personal interviews and topic specific surveys. Descriptive research was used to

achieve the purpose statement “to identify the issues of succession planning for the Fire Department of New York.”

On October 31, 2010, the author’s research proposal was sent to his assigned evaluator. On November 1, 2010, the author was returned the research proposal with feedback. The problem statement was redefined and the research paper started.

In March 2011, three surveys were developed on Survey Monkey. One survey was for Fire Department (Appendix F), second for FDNY staff chiefs (Appendix G), and the third for FDNY deputy chiefs (Appendix H). Each survey was accompanied by a respective cover letter (Appendix C-E). A list of the 25 largest Fire Departments by population within the United States was furnished to the author by Peter Gorman of the International Association of Fire Fighters (Appendix I). The author sought Executive Fire Officer (EFO) students from these departments to participate in the survey. Eight departments were not represented, so the author contacted the public information officer to find the appropriate person in their department to participate in the survey. All three surveys were e-mailed to all the participants.

- The first survey sent to fire departments throughout the USA was to: investigate if they had a succession plan in place and if not, do they plan to implement a succession plan in the future; compare their rank structure to the FDNY; ascertain what rank promotional exams are administered and what ranks are appointed; find if outsiders are considered for the appointed ranks; investigate educational requirements; understand the benefits of a succession plan; find which elements their departments use to develop to develop future leaders.
- The second survey sent to FDNY staff chiefs was to investigate: why they accepted the promotion to staff chief; what knowledge they had of the position they were accepting; if

the department does have a succession plan in place; writing a directive describing staff positions would this transparency attract more applicants; the mentorship program.

- The final survey was sent to FDNY deputy chiefs to investigate: what they know about staff chiefs' job duties; if they would accept a promotion to staff and if not why; if a degree should be a requirement for promotion; the burn out rate for a staff chief.

Fire departments and FDNY staff and deputy chiefs that had not answered the survey after 10 days were contacted a second time, and a third and final time a week following the second attempt at contact. The author attributes the high percentage of surveys answered to the constant reminders and follow-ups.

Personal contacts were made by setting up meetings with FDNY employees, which the author believed would benefit this research since these contacts offered information not found in the literature review. These contacts are listed below and are again shown in Appendix A-B.

- Chief of Department Edward Kilduff to discuss succession planning, and attributes of a staff chief.
- Deputy Assistant Chief Robert Maynes to discuss benefits (health/medical, salary) upon promotion to staff chief.

Throughout January, February and March, the author sorted through, examined, and selected to be used in the literature review all the information gathered from trade journals, books, APR papers, and use of the world wide web that was related to this subject.

The research method employed consisted of a literature review of written materials on succession planning, elements of succession planning and how similar size departments conduct succession planning. The researcher searched the National Emergency Training Center Fire Academy (NETC) Learning Resource Center (LRC) in Emmitsburg, Maryland and New York

City Public Library for printed reference material. National Fire Protection Standards and National Institute of Standards and Technology reference and technical material were used. Other resources that were consulted were nationally known trade journals such as Firehouse, Fire Engineering, Fire Chief, Fire Engineers Journal, and Fire Protection Engineering. Online search engines such as Google and Yahoo were also used.

#### Assumptions:

Authors referenced in literature review were unbiased and objective in their research information. Responses from the respondents who answered the questioner/survey were honest in their answers. Data from the interviews was unbiased and represented the viewpoints of the department and not personal views.

Respondents provided answers to question/survey for the potential benefit of the fire service.

#### Limitation:

Most fire services that were surveyed seemed to draw a parallel between career development and formal succession planning. Although the literature review was extensive, materials related to this research project might have gone undetected which may have changed the results of the research. Non-response of the survey was experienced by fire departments, FDNY staff and deputy chiefs. Some did not respond to certain questions. The rate of return for the external survey was 88% (22 out of 25) of fire departments did not participate in the survey. The internal surveys rate of return was 90% (18 out of 20) for the FDNY staff chiefs, and 81% (34 out of 42) of the FDNY deputy chiefs participated in the survey. The rate of return by fire departments limits the findings, and may affect the legitimacy of the results. Time restraints (6 months) did not allow time to follow up with fire departments to read their succession plans and FDNY staff and deputy chiefs to discuss the survey.

## RESULTS

The results of this research project were derived from the comprehensive examination data from books, fire journal articles, periodicals, internet based reports, and EFO applied research projects, surveys and interviews. The results of this study concluded that succession planning should be part of an ongoing process that looks at what leadership and management skills are necessary for the ongoing success of an organization as it strives to meet its vision.

Interpretation of data collected included responses from survey questions which were analyzed so it could be compared to the literature review.

Succession planning is the process of finding and developing future leaders. Succession planning fosters succession of leadership and the orderly transfer of control.

Succession planning as described in the Executive Leadership manual is “an organized and systemic way to ensure employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to replace and/or succeed to strategic roles within the organization (National Fire Academy, 2005, SM 7-3).”

The private sector can provide a very well thought out succession plan that could be adapted for use in the fire service. In contrast to the private sector, strong examples and widespread use of succession planning within the fire service were hard to find. Succession plans have several approaches but in the end the results are similar. An organization puts a succession plan together to prepare its members for future leadership roles, maintain organizational continuity, and maintain and improve organizational services. Succession planning can sustain organizational success over time.

Common aspects of succession planning are the process of preparing to hand over control to someone else in a way that is least disruptive to the organization’s operations and values and

finding and developing the leaders of tomorrow. Organizations need to develop a succession plan prior to disaster or attrition becoming factors. In the business world, good succession planning can maintain company morale and direction and keep investors satisfied. Succession planning is a process where future generations of a department are cultivated to take on additional or different responsibilities as they move around or up in the organization. Successful succession planning programs employ a systemic approach to develop an employee's talent. It guides the employee and establishes a pool of candidates for staffing needs. It is important for organizations to help map an employee's development. This mapping helps ensure employees are acquiring the knowledge, education, and skills necessary for the strategic growth of the organization.

Change in leadership is a normal event and every organization must be prepared for this. Some of the causes for a change of leadership are retirement, illness or resignation (Buzzotta & Lefton, 1997; DeIorio, 2003).

Succession planning ensures the continued effective performance of your organization by establishing a process to develop and replace key staff over time. The succession plan should be part of the organization's vision and tied into their strategic plan and objectives.

The researcher found an abundance of published literature on the subject of succession planning and the components necessary for a succession planning program, but it appeared that all the writings published assumed that the reader already knew the definition of succession planning and that the readers were in the process of developing or implementing a program for their organization. Succession planning is an organized and systemic way to ensure that employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to succeed in strategic roles within the organization (NFA, 2005).

Succession planning should support the strategic plan of the department, and strategic thinking should also provide an essential starting point for management and employee development programs. Without succession planning, organizations will have difficulty maintaining leadership continuity or identifying appropriate leaders when a change in strategy is necessary. Succession planning is a critical element of an organization's strategy.

The literature provided information regarding succession planning as well as planning as a means of management to improve performance. Organizations have a responsibility to themselves and their shareholders and/or the public to ensure that they have competent people to step in and lead. The succession planning process should be ongoing and focus on identifying gaps in future service delivery. The needs of every organization are different, and therefore each will develop their own succession plan. Succession planning means being prepared for change, being able to manage it before it happens, and managing change during the transition and afterwards. Failure to ensure mechanisms to maintain continuity can lead to unnecessary delays in the decision making for mission critical initiatives. Research shows that succession planning is important to ensure leadership and strategic continuity for organizations.

The private sector provided many examples of succession plans that were reviewed for applicability to the fire service. One of the most basic plans is offered by Edwin Winning (1997) in his article *Succession Planning* where he lists 6 steps for a successful succession plan: 1) identification of key positions 2) job descriptions and identification of specifications 3) replacement plan for each position 4) a forecast of who is promotable 5) evaluation of training/development needs 6) development of a strategy for furthering the process (Moody, 2001).

The National Fire Academy Executive Leadership Manual (2005) states organizations can determine their strong points and areas that need development by benchmarking best practices.

The National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) identifies two important aspects of planning: 1) the plan itself must be feasible and directed toward clear goals 2) the process by which the plan is developed must ensure all major goals are considered and every constituency to be affected by the plan is somewhat involved in the process or well aware of its consequences (Correira, 2008: NFPA, 2003).

Succession planning, as defined by the National Academy of Public Administrations, is an integrated process with four components to assure an organization has the right leaders in place at the right time to: 1) project the executive staff requirements and review job positions and descriptions for strategic leadership positions within the organization 2) identify individuals who are prepared to move quickly into key positions 3) prepare candidates through training and career development 4) select executives from updated pools of qualified candidates (Wright, 2008).

To have a successful succession plan, common components that should be implemented are: 1) monitoring of future talent needs of the company 2) assessing available talent and potential candidates 3) creating development plans for candidate employment 4) analyzing the success of the plan. These components can be built upon depending on the organization's specific needs (Torchia, 2007).

Six essential elements of succession planning are (Ibarra, 2005; Sweeney 2006): 1) development of a replacement chart 2) critical position profile listing key responsibilities, duties and activities for critical positions within the organization 3) high potential profile of

employee(s) who has the potential to become a successor in an advancing position within an organization 4) employee performance appraisal 5) individual potential assessment of an employee potential for advancement to a critical position or to a higher level of responsibility or technical proficiency 6) individual development plan to determine an employee's current knowledge of a position and the knowledge they will need for advancement to a higher position and develop a strategy to provide the employee with the necessary knowledge

Avsec (2000) in his research paper *Succession planning in the Chesterfield Fire and Emergency Medical Services* outlined seven critical components of a good succession plan which include: 1) support from the top leadership and line management 2) it being based on a top to bottom assessment of the organization's leadership needs and must be part of a larger business plan for the organization 3) that the plan needs to identify the positions within the organization that are part of the succession planning process 4) selection of participants being based on an objective process 5) that the plan must be balanced with employee input 6) the organization put people into assignments that make them grow 7) a good participant evaluation process be part of the plan (Clack, 2003).

Jack Welch (Welch & Byrne, 2001), former CEO of General Electric, used the following steps to find his successor: 1) develop a short list of people who could take over in a emergency 2) develop a list of the ideal skills and characteristics one wants 3) develop a long list of all possible candidates 4) map out a development plan for each candidate 5) watch them like hawks 6) do formal reviews of the candidates twice per year 7) make sure the candidates all get face time with the decision-makers 8) try to lessen the influence of politics on the process.

Chief Coleman in his article on *Succession Planning* (1998) favors organizational environment and within that environment opportunity and preparation are key. The opportunity

should be there for one to achieve a higher level of responsibility in the fire service. The responsibility to prepare them for those positions is shared between the individual and the organization. It is up to the individual to provide the motivation and intrinsic skills, and it is the organization's responsibility to provide the direction and standards for that achievement.

Coleman also discusses five elements for a good succession plan: 1) career development guide-an individual has the opportunity to move vertically through a highly specialized track if he/she so desires 2) adequate performance evaluation-a realistic on-target performance evaluation 3) instillation of a challenging environment-organization should have an element of challenge at all times, whether the challenge is a creation of a new program, surviving an economic crises or fighting a major fire 4) opportunity to achieve-the more open and universal an organization is regarding opportunities, the more likely skill development will occur on the part of many individuals and not just one 5) taking talented people in one's organization and providing them exposure to all aspects of the job.

Winn (2000) asserts that it can take a year or more before the replacement executive can fully assume the responsibilities of the lost key person and become another key person. Improperly trained or underdeveloped employees will not only require a large training expense, but may also cost the organization in lost revenues until the new key person is comfortable in their new position. A succession plan would have the replacements for key positions properly trained and ready to assume their new duties (Sweeney, 2006).

In contrast to the private and business sectors, strong examples of succession planning were hard to find in the fire service. Clack (2003) reports many authors have written research reports for the EFO program discussing the need for support outside the fire department as a key

to success. Decision makers at a higher level than the fire chief, including municipal leaders and elected officials, need to actively participate in the fire department succession plan.

The literature review results report on how other departments similar in size to the FDNY conduct succession planning, yet the author found a lack of citations concerning succession planning specifically in the fire service. However, the literature review did imply there are benefits to having a succession plan.

Domingo (2007) reviewed twenty eight National Fire Academy Executive Officer Research projects that were published at the Learning Resource Center and discovered the following: 1) ten departments supported succession planning 2) three departments reported that formal succession plans were missing in most fire departments surveyed 3) two other authors were exploring succession planning for their departments. It was evident from Domingo's research that there were very few departments which had established succession planning models for senior level chief officers. Baker (1995) in his research indicated the need for providing a formalized succession plan necessary to meet current and future fire service demands.

Avesec (2000) found that Chesterfield Fire and EMS Department of Virginia had established an officer's development program in 1986 first and then developed it into a comprehensive succession plan. Four departments in the survey responded that they had a succession plan. Jacksonville Fire and Rescue had stated they had a succession plan and sent a pdf of their October 2007 "On Scene" magazine. The magazine is produced for the employees of Jacksonville Fire and Rescue. On page 7 of the magazine it listed promotional requirements for promotion to different ranks. Baltimore County Fire (MD), Orange County Fire Authority and Gwinett County Fire and EMS (GA) also responded that their departments had a succession plan.

### Survey # 1 Top 25 Fire Departments in the United States

1. Does your department have a succession plan in place?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes (If yes skip to question # 3)	18.2%	4
No	81.8%	18

Of the largest fire departments in the country, only four departments answered that they had a succession in place: 1) Jacksonville Fire and Rescue (FL) 2) Baltimore County Fire (MD), 3) Orange County Fire Authority 4) Gwinnett County Fire and EMS (GA) answered they had a succession plan in place.

2. If no, does your department plan to develop one in the near future?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	22.2%	4
No	38.9%	7
Not Sure	38.9%	7

The 18 departments that did not have a succession plan in place were San Antonio (TX), Dallas Fire and Rescue, and the San Jose Fire Department. Palm Beach County Fire Rescue responded that they were developing one in the near future. The remaining departments were not sure if a succession plan would be developed in the near future.

3. Does your department have an officer's development plan?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	63.6%	14
No	36.4%	8

The majority of departments (64%) had an officer's development plan in place. The research implied that departments are substituting an officer development plan for a succession plan. The departments that do not have a succession plan or an officer's development plan are: Honolulu Fire Department, Chicago Fire Department, Miami-Dade Fire and Rescue, Boston Fire Department, Philadelphia Fire Department, San Jose Fire Department, and the Phoenix Fire

Department. Baltimore County Fire does not have an officer's development plan but has a succession plan.

4. What ranks does your department have? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Engineer	68.2%	15
Sergeant	0.0%	0
Lieutenant	63.6%	14
Captain	100.0%	22
Battalion Chief	90.9%	20
Deputy Chief	90.9%	20
Deputy Assistant Chief	4.5%	1
Assistant Chief	81.8%	18

All the departments responded that they had a captain's rank and none surveyed had a sergeant's rank. All other ranks varied with only one department having a deputy assistant chief rank.

5. What levels in your department is your succession plan applicable for? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Department does not have a succession plan	77.3%	17
Engineer	9.1%	2
Sergeant	0.0%	0
Lieutenant	4.5%	1
Captain	13.6%	3
Battalion Chief	9.1%	2
Deputy Chief	9.1%	2
Deputy Assistant Chief	4.5%	1
Assistant Chief	18.2%	4

The majority of the departments (77%) did not have a succession plan. Four departments had a succession plan for assistant chief, three had a succession plan for captain, two departments had a succession plan for engineer, battalion and deputy chief, and one department had a succession plan for lieutenant and deputy assistant chief.

6. Are firefighters in your department civil servants?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	86.4%	19
No	13.6%	3

The majority (86%) of the departments reported that their firefighters were civil servants.

7. Are competitive exams given for promotion to the following? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Sergeant	4.5%	1
Lieutenant	63.6%	14
Captain	100.0%	22
Battalion Chief	90.9%	20
Deputy Chief	27.3%	6
Deputy Assistant Chief	4.5%	1
Assistant Chief	18.2%	4

Competitive exams for promotion to different ranks varied, but all departments responded that a competitive exam is given for the rank of captain.

8. What ranks are appointed? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Engineer	0.0%	0
Sergeant	0.0%	0
Lieutenant	0.0%	0
Captain	0.0%	0
Battalion Chief	4.5%	1
Deputy Chief	63.6%	14
Deputy Assistant Chief	4.5%	1
Assistant Chief	86.4%	19

Only a few ranks are appointed with the assistant chief rank being the highest surveyed, (86%), followed by deputy chief (64%) and battalion chief and deputy assistant chief with 4.5% each.

9. Are chief officers brought in from outside your department?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	18.2%	4
No (skip to question 11)	81.8%	18

The majority (82%) reported that they do not bring chief officers from outside their department.

10. What ranks are officers brought in from outside your department? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Engineer	0.0%	0

Sergeant	0.0%	0
Lieutenant	0.0%	0
Captain	0.0%	0
Battalion Chief	0.0%	0
Deputy Chief	75.0%	3
Deputy Assistant Chief	0.0%	0
Assistant Chief	50.0%	2

Deputy Chief Rank is hired from outside of San Diego Fire, Prince Georges County Fire and EMS and Clark County Fire departments. Dallas Fire and Rescue and Clark County Fire hire their assistant chief from outside their departments.

11. What do you consider the benefits of a succession plan? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Organization stability	86.4%	19
Personnel retention	40.9%	9
Continuity within the organization	95.5%	21
Improved moral	50.0%	11
Steers the direction of the organization	86.4%	19

Ninety six percent of the departments responded that continuity within the organization is a benefit of a succession plan, followed by organization stability and the fact that it steers the direction of the organization (86% each). Improved morale and personnel retention were the least answered coming in at 50% and 41% respectively. This question had an area where they could add other information that was not contained in the check-off boxes. Five departments added the following:

Training in the direction that the department wants to go and allows those candidates to formalize their education

More effective management and leadership of the organization

Organization is better prepared for the future.

Better understanding/educated to do the next level job

Professionalism

## 12. What is the education level required for staff chief?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
No staff chief rank	36.4%	8
High School Diploma	36.4%	8
Associate degree	4.5%	1
Bachelor's degree	22.7%	5
Master's degree	0.0%	0

The literature review revealed that education is a component for a successful leader. Educational level required to become a staff chief was reported as: 36% of the departments require a high school diploma, 23% require a bachelor's degree, and 5% of the departments require an associate's degree. Thirty six percent of the departments do not have a staff chief rank.

## 13. What elements does your department use to develop future leaders/candidates (check all that apply)?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Assess and develop available talent of candidates who exhibit leadership potential	40.9%	9
Education	77.3%	17
Identify individuals prepared to move into key positions	50.0%	11
Identify and develop competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities for future leaders	36.4%	8
Prepare future leaders through training and career development	45.5%	10
Keep future leaders on a development track	27.3%	6
Use of employee evaluations/ performance appraisals to identify future leaders	31.8%	7
Provide future leaders exposure to all aspects of the job	40.9%	9
Mentoring for future leaders	31.8%	7

There are many components to develop leaders and some of the common elements found in the literature review were incorporated into this question. Fire Departments use the same elements to develop their leaders. Education as an element to develop future leaders had the highest response at 77%, followed by identifying individuals prepared to move into key positions at

50%, prepare future leaders through training and career development at 46%, assess and develop available talent of candidates who exhibit leadership potential and provide future leaders exposure to all aspects of the job both with 41%, identify and develop competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities for future leaders 36%, use of employee evaluations/ performance appraisals to identify future leaders and use of employee evaluations/ performance appraisals to identify future leaders at 32%, and keep future leaders on a development track at 27%. This question allowed departments to add elements they felt were important and not listed in the above answer.

Some additional points included:

- A limited point system is in place that rewards education with additional points on promotional tests but it is very limited.
- While many of the elements listed above are in place, it is purely informal, so there is no consistency in the application. This also leads to a process that is NOT transparent or well understood by the membership.
- Project work assignments made to those identified as future leaders.
- Leadership and management development training program and an officer training program
- Completion of requirements specified in the Professional Growth and Development Plan which are a condition of eligibility to sit for promotional exams

“Mentoring and coaching have been gaining the attention in recent years as managers realize that individual development is more influenced by on-the-job experiences rather than off the job training (Rothwell, 2005, p.58).” Rothwell (2005) writes “...an organization that has an effective program in place, and that organizational leaders should expect the time needed to fill vacancies

will be reduced, talent will be identified and prepared. The organization will be prepared to deal with sudden catastrophic losses of key people (Rothwell, 2005, p. 60).”

The critical part of this research paper was to find if a succession plan for staff chief officers is a benefit to the FDNY. The literature review and surveys provided the necessary information to answer this question.

After September 11, 2001, the consulting firm McKinsey and Company was hired to develop a comprehensive report on the lessons learned from 9/11 and the opportunities for improving FDNY’s preparedness. The report was published in August 2002 titled “Increasing FDNY’s Preparedness” and contains recommendations including planning and management capabilities. The department has undergone several reforms at the most senior levels aimed at enhancing the department’s management capacity (FDNY, 2004).

In January 2002, the FDNY had conducted a comprehensive review of its management and organizational structure. The department modified its organizational structure to strengthen both uniform and civilian management expertise. The department had strengthened its overall command structure by increasing the number of staff chiefs from 12 to 18. In September 2002, the department implemented a borough command structure from within the Bureau of Operations consisting of an assistant chief, deputy assistant chief and staff functions to decentralize command and control operations. “The restructuring of the most senior chiefs has significantly improved the department’s management capacity (Strategic Plan, 2004, p. 21).”

The FDNY sought to strengthen its managerial and planning capabilities by providing its most senior fire and EMS officers with additional training in management principles, knowledge and skills. Through a partnership with private and academic sectors, the department established the custom designed FDNY Officers Management Institute (FOMI). The management focused

training is provided by Columbia University School of International and Public Affairs and hosted by General Electric’s Jack Welch Management Training Center in Croton on the Hudson, New York. The course is 4 days each month for 6 months.

In spring of 2004, the FDNY partnered with United States Military Academy at West Point and established a four month graduate level course West Point Counter Terrorism Leadership Program at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point. The course focuses on research in the field of terrorism, counterterrorism, and weapons of mass destruction, and risks and specific threats to New York City.

FDNY’s first strategic plan was in 2004-2005 and one the goals was to increase managerial capabilities and expertise of fire and EMS personnel by providing enhanced opportunities for advanced leadership development. The Strategic Plan for 2009-2010 was to establish a leadership development program for staff chiefs. The department would solicit recommendations from chief officers to identify future department leaders at the rank of captain and provide them with leadership management training and skills for promotional opportunities to reach the ultimate career rank of staff chief. The strategic plan also was to provide additional training and skill document at the command chief rank and incorporate the following topics: performance, safety, and accountability, the incident command structure and an in-depth overview of the technological capability of the department’s state of the art operations center. Two internal surveys were sent out, one to the staff chiefs and the other to the deputy chiefs. The questions and results are shown below.

**Results of Staff Chief Survey**

1. Why did you choose to be a Staff Chief? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Was asked	94.4%	17

The right thing to do	77.8%	14
Wanted to be a staff chief	11.1%	2
To become a leader in the department	50.0%	9
To be a decision maker	50.0%	9
Good communicator (verbal and written)	16.7%	3
Ability to set policy for the department	33.3%	6
Ability to revise policy for the department	33.3%	6
Extra pay	27.8%	5
To continue my rise in the department	16.7%	3
Department vehicle	11.1%	2

This question allowed more than one choice as to why they chose to be promoted to staff chief. The majority answered (94%) that they accepted promotion to staff chief because they were asked. Seventy eight percent answered it was the right thing to do. Becoming a leader in the department and a decision maker was answered by 50%. Ability to set and/or revise policy was answered by 33%, extra pay was the answer for 28%, and 17% answered to continue their rise within the department and be a good communicator. Department vehicle and the yearning to be a staff chief were answered by 11% of the staff chiefs. This question allowed chiefs to add information not listed in the above. Additional reasons they became staff chiefs were reported as follows:

- Challenge of taking on new responsibilities
- The job has been good to me and I wanted to give back
- Was interested in the specific job that was being offered
- New Challenge

2. How many years have you been a staff chief?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
1	22.2%	4
2	22.2%	4
3	11.1%	2
4	5.6%	1
5	11.1%	2

6 or more	27.8%	5
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Twenty eight percent of the staff chiefs have been in their position for 6 or more years, while 44% have 2 years or less in rank. Eleven percent had 3 or 5 years, and 6% had only 1 year of experience in the rank.

3. How long did it take for you to feel comfortable as a staff chief?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
1 year	50.0%	9
2 year	38.9%	7
3 year	11.1%	2
4 or more years	0.0%	0

Fifty percent answered it took 1 year to become comfortable in the new position, 39% answered it took 2 years, and 11% answered it took 3 years to become comfortable as a staff chief.

4. Did you have knowledge of the job title and duties of that position when you were promoted to DAC?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes (if yes, skip to question 6)	55.6%	10
No	44.4%	8

Fifty six percent answered that they had knowledge of the job title and duties of the position they were being promoted to. Forty four percent did not have knowledge or duties for the position/rank they were being promoted to.

5. Would the transition have been easier if there was written material, and mentorship prior to being promoted?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	100.0%	8
No	0.0%	0

One hundred percent of the chiefs who answered no to question 4 answered that the transition would have been easier if there was written material and a mentor program prior to being promoted.

6. Do you feel the department has a defined succession plan in place to replace a staff chief when he/she retires?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	22.2%	4
No	77.8%	14

Seventy eight percent of present staff chiefs responded that the department does not have a defined succession plan in place when a staff chief retires. Twenty two percent felt the department has a defined succession plan in place for replacing a staff chief.

7. The current staff chiefs assigned to fire operations (not including EMS) can retire today, is the department prepared to fill these positions if this were to occur?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	55.6%	10
No	44.4%	8

Fifty six percent responded that if the current staff chiefs assigned to fire operations were to retire today the department was prepared to fill these positions. Forty four percent answered the department was not prepared to fill these positions.

8. Should the number of years working as an active staff chief be limited to a certain time frame?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	0.0%	0
No	100.0%	18

One hundred percent answered that the number of years working as a staff chief should not be limited.

9. Would rotation of the staff chiefs to different bureaus prevent burnout?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.0%	9
No	50.0%	9

Fifty percent answered rotation of staff chiefs would prevent burnout, while the other 50% answered rotation of chiefs to different bureaus would not prevent burnout.

10. Related to the previous question, do you think burnout will occur if a Staff Chief works at this level for too long?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.0%	9
No	50.0%	9

Fifty percent answered that burnout would occur, and 50% answered burnout would not occur if a staff chief remains in their current position without being rotated.

11. What is the number of years someone should remain a staff chief?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
1-3	0.0%	0
4-6	11.1%	2
As long as they can still do the job	88.9%	16

The majority answered (89%) that the number of years one works as a staff chief should not be limited, and 11% answered 4-6 years should be the limit one works in that job title.

12. Do you feel staff chiefs should be rotated through different bureaus so they are well-rounded?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.0%	9
No	50.0%	9

Fifty percent felt that there should be a rotation of staff chiefs through the different bureaus so they are well rounded, and 50% answered they should not be rotated.

13. Should the department have written information about the functional duties, job descriptions, work schedule, etc. of the various staff positions so potential candidates can view them (such as a PA/ID)?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	77.8%	14
No	22.2%	4

Seventy eight percent answered the department should have written material about the duties, work schedule, etc. of the staff chiefs so potential candidates can view it, and 22% answered the department does not need to have written information on the staff chief’s duties, schedule etc..

14. Should the pay scales for staff chiefs be readily available on the FDNY webpage, similar to charts used for all other ranks in the FDNY as well as EMS?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	66.7%	12
No	33.3%	6

Majority answered (67%) that pay scales of staff chiefs should be published on the FDNY intranet to be viewed as are the pay scales for all the other ranks in the department, and 33% answered the department should not post staff chief’s pay scale on the FDNY intranet.

15. Do you think having more transparency about the job descriptions and pay scales of Staff Chiefs would attract more possible applicants?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	5.6%	1
No	94.4%	17

The majority answered (94%) that with more transparency, written information about the job description and pay scales it would not attract more candidates for the position, and 6% answered it would attract more candidates.

16. Should a designation to Division Commander be a prelude to staff succession?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	38.9%	7
No	61.1%	11

Sixty one percent answered that a deputy chief designated as a division commander should not be a prelude to becoming a staff chief.

17. Should a DC not accept being designated Division Commander if they are not willing to accept a staff position when an opening occurs?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50%	9
No	50%	9

Fifty percent answered that a deputy chief should not accept the designation of division commander if they are not willing to become a staff chief, and 50% answered being designated division commander should not be a requirement to becoming a staff chief.

18. Is there a mentor program established for an upcoming deputy chief to shadow an experienced DAC/AC?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	11.1%	2
No	88.9%	16

Ninety percent answered there is no mentor program established for a deputy chief being promoted to staff chief to shadow an experienced deputy assistant or assistant staff chief, and 11% answered there is a mentorship for a DC being promoted to staff.

19. If you had to do it over would you have accepted the promotion to staff?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	94.4%	17
No	5.6%	1

Ninety four percent responded that they would accept the position as staff chief if they had to do it over again, and 6% answered they would not.

Question 20 was an open question to list ways to attract deputy chiefs to become staff. Eighty three percent of the staff chiefs gave input to this question. Answers are listed below:

- Increase in pay and regular working hours
- Give staff chiefs a raise so they make more money than their subordinate DC's. Presently a deputy chief's salary is higher as management has not received the raises the union has due to the fiscal constraints of NYC.
- Create a policy which allows a staff chief to return to the field in a DC position after 3 years in a staff position and keep the benefits entitled to staff chief upon retirement.
- Make more staff chiefs so the workload could be shared thereby reducing the number required to do the job.
- Mentor program.
- Expose deputy chiefs who are viewed as potential staff to be approached by member(s) of the staff to explain how he/she is thought of by those in senior positions. That way they know they are being considered for a staff position.
- Pay not tied into the NYC Manager title.
- Rotation in all boroughs and bureaus
- Develop a mentorship program starting when members reach the rank of captain within the FDNY so members can be easily identified as "the cream of the crop" and be recommended for a mentorship program in order to acclimate them to various units/bureaus in the department and not wait until they reach the rank of deputy chief. Incentives would be needed such as choice assignments, educational support, and enrollment in programs that many in the department seek access to, for example, the West Point course, naval post graduate, FOMI, etc.

- Division commanders are the pool for future staff chiefs. Some of the items enumerated in question 1 of the survey for staff chiefs are reasons division commanders step up and accept the position. Operations should do a better job at letting future division commanders be aware that they are the future staff chiefs of the department.
- The work schedule of a staff chief is different and a person accepting this position is aware of that fact and the hours the position requires. Division commanders earn as much as a current DAC with shorter hours. An individual accepting a staff position will usually work in Metrotech (fire department headquarters) for a year or more to "learn the ropes" and get to know how the FDNY functions. Future assignments are earned through knowledge and capability.
- The concept of rotating a staff person through every Bureau is not necessarily good management. People need different skills and experiences to work effectively in certain bureaus. Staff chiefs with engineering degrees are currently working in fire prevention and in special operations command (SOC) and similarly some have work related experiences in the Merchant Marine and US Navy who currently head our Marine Division.
- The mentoring program is not a "formal" program, and presently the department is currently rotating deputy chiefs through Metrotech on a year detail, to work on special projects. This has been an ongoing program for several years.
- Better prescription drug benefits, less rigorous work schedule
- Allow staff chief to continue to accrue compensation time while on staff
- Discuss with the Deputy Chief the desired career plan options he/she would like to pursue (through which Bureaus)

- Each position should rank specific, it now appears rank is by seniority regardless of position.
- Educate members for these positions. There seems to be a lack of interest to take a Staff position, in which case broad banding the Chief’s rank may be the only answer.
- Require DC's to work off line on specific projects to learn the fiscal process of the job.
- Require DC's to revise Department books.
- Require assigned DC's to work periodically 9-5 in their Divisions to concentrate on administration.
- Reassign the division commander to an administrative role and assign to a four 10 hour day work week to administrate.
- The line position the division commander covered would be backfilled by a deputy chief. This would prepare the division commander for promotion to a staff and also allow the department to choose a division commander who wants to be a staff chief.
- Offer a rotation at HQs for potential candidates.
- Assign a DC to work with a staff chief in a particular Bureau
- For the most part it has to be the right time and the right job when a DC is asked to come to staff.
- Additional Staff

**Deputy Chief Survey Results**

1. Does the department have a defined succession plan in place to replace staff chiefs?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	17.6%	6
No	82.4%	28

Majority of the deputy chiefs answered (82%) the department does not have a defined succession plan to replace staff chiefs, and 18% answered the department does have a defined succession plan to replace staff chiefs.

2. Are you familiar with the 2009-2010 Strategic Plan which stated that the department would solicit recommendations from chief officers to identify future department leaders at the rank of captain and provide them with leadership management training and skills for promotional opportunities to reach the ultimate career rank of staff chief?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	52.9%	18
No (Skip to question 4)	47.1%	16

Fifty three percent answered they were familiar and 47% were not familiar with the 2009-2010 strategic plan that would identify future leaders at the rank of captain and provide them with leadership management training to prepare them for promotional opportunity to staff chief.

3. If yes to question # 2 have you been asked to identify these captains?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	5.6%	1
No	94.4%	17

Ninety four percent responded that no they were not asked, and 6% answered they were asked to identify captains who may be the future leaders of the department.

4. Would you consider promotion to staff chief at this time?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	26.5%	9
No	73.4%	25

Majority answered (73%) they would not consider promotion to staff at this time, and 27% would consider promotion to staff chief at this time.

5. If no would you consider promotion in the future?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	76.4%	26
No	23.5%	8

Seventy six percent answered they would consider accepting promotion to staff chief in the future, and 24% would not consider a promotion to staff chief in the near future.

6. What staff position are you prepared to accept? (Check at least one)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Borough command	76.4%	26
Fire prevention	2.9%	1
Communications	8.8%	3
Operations	52.9%	18
Training	44.1%	15

The staff positions/bureaus that are attractive to deputy chiefs are: borough command 76%, operations 53%, training 44%, communications 9% and fire prevention at 3%.

7. What would be the reason you would accept a position as a staff? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Want to be a leader	30.3%	10
Good communicator	24.2%	8
Want to be a staff chief	3.0%	1
The right thing to do	42.4%	14
The department has been good to me and now it is time to contribute	57.6%	19
Being a decision maker	30.3%	10
Ability to set policy for the department	36.4%	12
Ability to revise policy for the department	45.5%	15
Extra pay	21.2%	7
To continue my rise in the department	30.3%	10
Department vehicle	12.1%	4
If the right department/division was offered	42.4%	14
Because you were asked	33.3%	11
Not interested in being a DAC	15.2%	5

Fifty eight percent responded that the department has been good to them and it is time to contribute back to the department as a reason to become a staff chief, 46% responded that it was the ability to revise policy for the department, 42% answered it is the right thing to do and if the

right division/bureau was offered they would become a staff chief, 36% answered the ability to set policy for the department, 33% because if they were asked they would accept the position, and 30% want to be a leader, feel they are good communicators, and also want to continue their rise within the department. The remaining answers to become a staff chief were good communicator (24%), extra pay (21%), department vehicle (12%), and 3% wanted to be a staff chief. Fifteen percent responded that they have no interest in being a staff chief. This question allowed chiefs to add information not listed in the above. Additional reasons to become a staff chief were:

- Staff does offer the opportunity to truly make a difference and to insure the FDNY continues its run of excellence for many years to come.
- Want to make a difference and give back to the department.
- Change from current position

8. What reasons would you delay a promotion to Staff? (Check all that apply)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Loss of union benefits	29.4%	10
Long hours	47.1%	16
No compensation for long hours	29.4%	10
The lack of support staff to accomplish projects/goals	38.2%	13
Ability to handle staff position	2.9%	1
Family commitments	73.5%	25
Comfortable in my present rank	41.2%	14
Not interested in learning something new	0.0%	0
Not interested in promotion to DAC or above	20.6%	7
Retiring in the next 2-4 years	8.8%	3

Family commitments at 74% were the major reason why a deputy chief would delay a promotion to staff. Long hours at 47%, followed by being comfortable in present rank (41%), lack of support staff (38%), no compensation for long hours and loss of union benefits (29%), retiring in

2-4 years and one’s ability to handle the staff chief rank were reasons to delay promotion to staff chief. Twenty one percent of the deputy chiefs had no interest in being a staff chief. This question allowed chiefs to add information not listed in the above. Additional reasons why a deputy chief would delay promotion to staff chief were:

- Need more experience
- A deputy chief for 4 years and not assigned to a division yet and need to learn more at the division level.

9. Do you feel a deputy chief is properly prepared (training, education) to take on the rank of staff chief?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	73.5%	25
No	26.4%	9

Seventy four percent answered a deputy chief is properly prepared to be a staff chief, and 26% did not feel a deputy chief is prepared to become a staff chief.

10. Should education be a deciding factor for a person being appointed to DAC?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	18.2%	6
No	81.8%	27

Eighty two percent answered education should not be a deciding factor in being appointed to DAC, and 18% answered education should be a deciding factor.

11. What education level should a DAC possess? (For the present DC’s promotion list, a bachelor’s degree is required to be promoted)

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
High School diploma	23.5%	8
Associates Degree	8.9%	3
Bachelor's degree	67.6%	23

Majority answered (68%) a DAC should possess a bachelor’s degree, 24% answered a high school diploma, and 9% answered an associate’s degree should be the educational requirement for promotion to DAC

12. Do you have a bachelor’s degree?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	61.8%	21
No	38.2%	13

Sixty two percent of deputy chief’s answered they have a bachelors degree, and 38% answered they do not possess a bachelor’s degree.

13. Should a designation to Division Commander be a prelude to staff succession?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	47.1%	16
No	52.9%	18

Fifty three percent answered that being designated division commander should not be a prelude to staff chief, and 47% answered being designated to division commander should be a prelude to staff chief.

14. Should a DC not accept being designated Division Commander if they are not willing to accept a staff position when an opening occurs?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	26.4%	9
No	73.6%	25

Seventy four percent answered a DC should accept being designated division commander even if they would not accept a promotion to staff when an opening occurs, and 26% answered a DC should not accept being a division commander if they are not willing to be promoted to staff.

15. If no to question 14, are you presently a Division Commander?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	20.7%	6

No	79.3%	23
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Twenty one percent answered they are division commanders. There are 9 division commanders in the FDNY, so 67% of the division commanders answered this question.

Five DC’s skipped this question.

16. Have you taken the following courses the FDNY offers or grants time off to attend?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
FOMI	73.5%	25
US Military Academy Terrorist Preparedness Course	20.6%	7
Naval Post Graduate Program	2.9%	1
Executive Fire Officers Program	14.7%	5
Have not taken any of the above course	23.5%	8

Seventy four percent have taken FOMI, 21% have taken the US military academy terrorist preparedness course, 15% have been enrolled in the executive officers program, and 3% have taken the naval post graduate program. Twenty four percent have not taken any of the courses the department offers or allows time off to attend.

17. Should the department have written information about the functional duties, job descriptions, work schedule, etc. of the various staff positions so potential candidates can view them (example a PAID)?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	76.5%	26
No	23.5%	8

Majority answered (77%), that the department should have, and 24% answered the department should not have written information about the functional duties, job descriptions, work schedule, etc. of the various staff positions so potential candidates can view them.

18. Should the pay scales for Staff Chiefs be readily available on the FDNY webpage similar to charts used for all other ranks in the FDNY as well as EMS?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	64.7%	22
No	35.3%	12

Sixty five percent answered the department should and 35% answered the department should not publish the pay scales of staff chiefs on the FDNY intranet in order to be viewed as are the pay scales for all the other ranks in the department.

19. Do you think having more transparency about the job descriptions and pay scales of Staff Chiefs would attract more possible applicants?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	41.2%	14
No	58.8%	20

Fifty nine percent answered that more transparency about the staff chief position would not attract more applicants, and 41% answered transparency would attract more applicants.

20. Should the department have mentorship program for staff chief, whereby the next chief(s) rotates through the staff positions to be properly prepared?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	88.2%	30
No	11.8%	4

Eighty eight percent answered the department should have a mentorship to properly prepare future staff chiefs, and 12% answered the department should not have a mentorship program for training future staff chiefs.

21. Should the number of years working as an active Staff Chief be limited to a certain time frame?

Answers	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	8.8%	3
No	91.2%	31

Ninety percent answered the number of years one works as a staff chief should not be limited.

Question 22 was an open question on ways to attract deputy chiefs to become staff. Sixty two percent of the deputy chiefs gave input to this question. Answers are listed below:

- Provide staff with enough personnel/staff to accomplish the mission and decrease the long hours a staff chief currently works.
- Administration/Mayor should show more respect to the staff chiefs
- Staff chiefs can improve their lot by making themselves more accessible to the field units so that they can get to know them and understand their problems/concerns. In this way the staff will not be viewed as the enemy when tough decisions are made.
- Increased compensation (monetary/time off)
- More decision-making authority/responsibility.
- Flexibility of work schedule.
- Better benefits similar to the union benefits for prescription, dental, etc.
- Ability to be an acting staff chief in order to build necessary compensation time.
- Mentorship is very important. Training should be given to each officer as they progressively go up the chain of command. As a staff chief, you should get training on how to manage organizations and on how to utilize your personnel to be most effective.
- There must be transparency regarding what staff is all about, their pay and duties. Presently there is too much mystery. Better information will lead to further interest amongst all ranks to possibly aspire to someday become a staff chief.
- The most important factor is education.
- The FDNY must be open and inform the possible future candidacy pool of the Staff Chief world and what it is all about!

- More communication with current DC's in field. Prospective DC's can mentor with staff chief for 3-6 months to witness firsthand the various duties and responsibilities.
- Allow for compensation time accrual when performing the city wide duty

## **DISCUSSION**

This section will discuss the relationship between specific findings of others obtained during the literature review, the survey and interviews conducted. Succession planning is not a new phenomena, and its value is exponentially increasing in the public and private sectors to prepare for the retirements of the baby boomer era and the unexpected.

The literature review brought to light many components and steps characterized by authors for succession planning that were similar, but identified differently. Information on the components that provide for a good succession plan varied from simplistic to sophisticated. Succession planning is more prevalent in the private sector and is supported by the strong examples found in the literature review, yet information pertaining to succession planning within the fire service was hard to find.

Succession planning identifies key positions in an organization and takes into account strategic vision and culture of that organization. Corporations understand the need for succession planning as the workforce is about to undergo a dramatic shift as baby boomers reach retirement age and the competition for qualified talent intensifies. From the research, one can deduct that fire departments see the value of establishing a succession plan but have not put the necessary resources into establishing a plan. However, now many departments are substituting an officer's development plan in place of a written succession plan. The National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center has many abstracts on the subject of succession planning but not many departments have implemented such a program.

The research indicates that a critical first step to succession planning is actually just thinking about it. Organizations have a responsibility to ensure that competent people are prepared to assume leadership when they arise. There are several elements to prepare for this.

Succession planning means being prepared for change, being able to manage it before it happens, and managing change during the transition and afterwards. Succession planning, as described in the Executive Leadership manual, is “an organized and systemic way to ensure employees in a particular organization are capable, competent, and willing to replace and/or succeed to strategic roles within the organization (National Fire Academy, 2005, SM 7-3).”

Based upon the information gathered in conducting this research project, this author concludes that there is no formal succession plan in place for the transition of staff chiefs in the FDNY. Due to the potential of all the staff chiefs being able to retire today, the results of this research demonstrates there is a definite need for succession planning for FDNY staff chiefs and for the fire service as a whole.

Succession planning focuses on the needs of the organization as senior management ages and retires. In addition, succession planning helps an organization to prepare for an unexpected event. The sudden illness or death of a key executive can seriously effect an organization, paralyzing both management and staff thereby impeding the organization’s ability to execute its plan. Leadership succession is inevitable for any surviving fire department, but successful succession planning must be planned. In order to replace key positions and to prevent the loss of leadership continuity and organizational stability, as well as the needs for future leadership, the research supports the need for a succession plan. The research showed that organizations that had succeeded had a succession plan in place (Vouglas, 1998).

Susan Heathfield (2011) describes succession planning as a process for an organization to ensure that their employees are recruited and developed to fill key roles within the company. Through a succession plan, an organization recruits superior employees and develops their knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) to prepare them for advancement or promotion into ever more challenging roles. Having a succession plan in place ensures that employees are constantly developed to fill each needed role.

Developing a succession plan that identifies potential leaders and prepares them for the future is an essential element. “The goal of a succession plan is to build a pool of leaders (Evangelista, 2003, p. 20; Torchia, 2007).” The public and private sectors have found the value and importance of succession planning. For a company to merely have a succession plan is an excellent first step. Long term financial success has been shown by private companies who have implemented a succession plan. Anticipating the future needs of their communities and the organizational stability succession planning creates is a necessity of the public sector.

A succession plan has to be dynamic, long term, and proactive. A succession plan must also be supported by upper leadership to avoid the plan being written and then put on the shelf. The plan must be communicated throughout the organization.

Succession planning is the process that helps ensure the stability and future of tenure personnel and assure the continuity within an organization (Rothwell, 2005). Succession planning is being prepared for change and able to manage the organization before, during and after change (Hitt, 1989).

Research by the author in fire periodicals revealed numerous articles written on who, what, when, where, and why about succession planning, but was unable to find articles that referenced fire departments that actually had succession plans.

Domingo (2007) reviewed twenty eight National Fire Academy Executive Officer Research projects that were published at the Learning Resource Center and discovered the following: 1) ten departments supported succession planning 2) three departments reported that formal succession plans were missing in most fire departments surveyed 3) two other authors were exploring succession for their departments. It was evident from Domingo's research that there were very few departments which had established succession planning models for senior level chief officers. Baker (1995), in his research, indicated the need for providing a formalized succession plan necessary to meet current and future fire service demands.

The external survey reinforced the literature research even though fire departments indicated the value of a succession plan but did not have a formalized plan. Only four departments had a succession plan in place while 18 departments did not. Seven departments responded that their department did not plan to develop a succession plan in the near future and 7 were not sure if their department planned on developing a succession plan in the near future.

Fourteen departments surveyed had an officer's development plan in place, and out of the 14 departments three of them also had a succession plan. Departments appear to be using their officer's development plan in place of a succession plan to choose the future leaders of their departments.

Stallings (2003) discusses how a developmental program offered by an organization has been a proven method to assist individuals who aspire for higher positions within an organization. He further comments on those types of individuals who will take action on their own in order to improve themselves. Stallings states that there is nothing wrong with an individual who is aggressive and ambitious, since when it comes to preparing for advancement,

as long as the learning is in line with the requirements of the desired position his efforts are warranted.

Some departments in the survey had similar rank structure to the FDNY, and several hired chief's officers from outside their department. Departments responded that benefits of a succession plan include continuity within the organization, organizational stability and steering the direction of the organization. Thirty six percent of the departments responded that a high school diploma is the highest level of education needed to be a staff chief, while 77% of the departments responded that education was a component that their department uses to develop future leaders/candidates.

The FDNY has come a long way from their loss on September 11, 2001. The department has sought to strengthen its managerial and planning capabilities by providing its most senior fire and EMS officers with additional training in management principles, knowledge and skills through FDNY Officers Management Institute (FOMI) and the West Point Counter Terrorism Leadership Program at the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point.

Staff chiefs responded overwhelmingly on the internal survey that they chose to become staff because they were asked to do so and it was the right thing to do. Staff chiefs have recognized that their positions are not perfect and need refinement. Many did not have knowledge of what their new position required and the transition would have been easier if written material and mentoring would have been provided. The survey revealed that there should be more transparency about staff positions and the department should produce a written document about the functional duties, job description, and work schedule of the various staff chief positions, but that the increased transparency would not attract more candidates.

The chiefs responded that the department does not have a defined succession plan in place to replace a staff chief when they retire, but 56% answered that the department was prepared to fill positions if staff chiefs were to retire tomorrow. The number of years a staff chief works in a bureau should not be limited, but they were split 50 / 50 when asked 1) if rotation would prevent burnout 2) if they continued to work at this level too long 3) if a rotation to other bureaus would make them well rounded.

Majority responded that after being designated as a division commander one should not automatically be considered a future staff chief, but half answered that a deputy should not accept the designation as a division commander if they are not willing to become a staff chief. Establishing a mentorship prior to being promoted to staff was a popular response with 89% of the staff chiefs. Ways to attract deputy chiefs to become staff chiefs were listed in the results section and several of them are part of the recommendation section.

The deputy chief's survey had some similar questions as the staff chief's survey but also included questions to ascertain why a deputy chief would or would not want to be promoted to staff.

Chief Kilduff spoke in his March 14, 2011 interview (Appendix A) that the FDNY does not have a formalized succession plan and the majority of deputies responded the same. Seventy four percent of the deputy chiefs would not consider promotion to staff at the time of the survey but 77% would consider promotion to staff in the future. Reasons to become a staff varied and the most popular response was that the department has been good to them and it was time to contribute back to the department. Family commitments were reported by 71% of the deputies as the reason one would delay accepting promotion to staff. Long working hours was another response by 47% of the deputies.

Deputy chiefs felt they were properly prepared to be a staff chief, and that education should not be a deciding factor in promotion to staff, but 67% felt a DAC should have a bachelor's degree. Sixty two percent of the deputies responding to the survey had a bachelor's degree.

Fifty three percent responded that being designated as division commander should not be a prelude to staff. Seventy four percent responded that it is okay to accept being the division commander even if they do not want to become a staff chief when an opening occurs. In comparison to the deputy chiefs surveyed on these two questions 1) staff chiefs responded (61%) that being a division commander should not be a stepping stone to staff 2) fifty percent answered a deputy should not be designated a division commander if they are not willing to become staff.

The majority of deputies responded that the department should establish a mentorship program to rotate deputies through the different staff chief positions to properly prepare for promotion.

Continuing one through education was evident with 74% of the deputies having taken the FDNY's FOMI course, and 21% having taken West Point Counter Terrorism Leadership Program.

Seventy seven percent of the deputies responded that the department should have written material on the duties of the various staff positions for potential candidates to review, 65% responded the department should post staff chiefs pay scale on the intranet, and 59% felt transparency would not attract more candidates. In comparison, the staff chiefs responded to these 3 questions as follows: 1) Seventy eight percent responded that the department should have written information on the duties of various staff positions 2) Sixty seven percent responded the

department should post staff chief's pay scale on the intranet 3) Ninety four percent responded transparency would not attract more candidates.

Benefits could play an integral role in determining a deputy chief's decision to accept a promotion to staff chief as the literature review revealed. Medical, dental, prescription, annuity, holiday pay, night differential, not able to accrue compensation time for additional hours worked are a few things that change when one is promoted to staff chief. Though the NYC managers' fund and the uniform fire officers' fund have many similarities overall the staff chief's pay additional money towards their benefits, plus the loss of additional salary and ability to earn compensation time are things a deputy must also consider prior to accepting promotion to staff.

Staff chiefs work an average of 53 hours a week and are not compensated for the additional work. When they work as the city wide tour commander (16 or 24 hours) they receive no additional compensation or an additional day off. Fiscal restraints have lead to layoffs of non uniform personnel and the number of uniform positions that are off line not working in the firehouse leaving the staff chief's without sufficient personnel to accomplish the work required of them leading to an increase in the number of hours a staff chief has to work without additional compensation. Though a contract issue the city needs to provide the staff chiefs with a raise so there is that a DAC makes more than a deputy chief which will make a DAC position more attractive.

The FDNY needs to identify and inform future staff chiefs about what each staff position entails and what is required of them regarding education and professional development, personal development, knowledge, skill sets and abilities, leadership abilities, and community involvement before they get there.

Succession planning is needed in both the public and private organizations in order to prepare and ensure that the future leaders have the skill sets and commitment needed for the long term success of the organization. The fire service as a whole needs to do a better job of informing future chief officers about what is required of them, and therefore each fire department clearly needs to implement a succession plan

It is clear from this analysis of the importance of succession planning that the fire department of NY needs to implement succession planning in order to ensure leadership and strategic continuity for the organization.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Solid and well prepared succession plans achieve continuity which is important for the private sector and fire service organization. When an organization properly prepares itself for if and when a problem arises, succession planning will allow the organization to move forward. Instituting an effective succession plan will ensure an organization is prepared to meet future needs and create stability.

Succession planning is needed in both the public and private organizations in order to prepare and ensure the future leaders have the skill sets and commitment necessary for the long term success of the organization.

Successors of the fire department are not developed overnight and have been part of the culture for some time. Succession planning requires a variety of components to be successful.

Research on succession planning indicated that organizations must prepare individuals to assume essential leadership roles. A structured method for development must be created and adhered to in order for credibility to be part of the program. Leadership development includes proper qualifications, different job responsibilities, and challenging job assignments, all key

issues in preparing future organizational leaders. Leadership positions must not be left vacant. The role must be filled ASAP in order to provide some sense of continuity and validity of the position. The value of the job may be degraded if the job function is able to survive without a person in the position (Rothwell, 2005; Stallings, 2003).

The important point is that a succession plan is not a static document to be retrieved in case of an emergency, but a dynamic, continually evolving process (Morris-Lee, 2001). For a succession plan to be truly effective, it must be customized to fit one's organization's particular needs, and that can not be accomplished by lifting a program from another agency and dropping into one's workplace (Ibarra, 2007).

The literature review and survey results have defined succession planning, what others are doing with succession planning, benefits of succession planning and its importance to the long term success of an organization, as well as what the FDNY can do to address succession planning which includes the following:

- Adopt an effective succession plan for the transition from deputy chief to staff
- Form a committee to draft the elements of a succession plan
- Once the succession plan is written, the plan needs to be reevaluated and changes made as necessary
- Provide a written document that describes the duties of each staff position, and post salary on the FDNY intranet
- Implement a mentor program to rotate future staff chiefs through different bureaus
- Designate only deputy chiefs as division commanders who will accept promotion to staff and reassign the division commander to an administrative role and a four 10 hour work

week to administrate. This would prepare the division commander for promotion to a staff

- A managerial issue that would have to be negotiated with the City of New York: allow staff chiefs to accrue time when they work as city wide tour commander
- Staff officers should be rotated through leadership positions across the organization to gain the breadth of experience necessary for promotion to increasing levels of responsibility. This would also make the organization stronger and more resilient to change

The results of this research conclude that succession planning is important to the long term success of any organization as it is necessary to maintain the continuity of leadership and organizational stability. Not having a formalized succession plan in place for staff chiefs can negatively impact the department through loss of institutional knowledge. The key to maintaining organizational efficiency and effectiveness is to have qualified individuals ready to fill key positions now and be able to grow with the department.

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Appendix A

Interview with Chief of Department Edward Kilduff on March 14, 2011

- 1- Does the department have a defined succession plan for staff chiefs?
- 2- What are the criteria for selecting a staff chief (education/degree, experience, how long before they retire, etc.)?
- 3- PA/ID list educational requirements for all promotable ranks except staff, will a bachelors degree be requirement for future staff chiefs?
- 4- What role does Division Commander play in Staff succession? Should a designation to Division Commander be a prelude to staff succession? Should a DC not accept being designated Division Commander if they are not willing to accept a staff position when an opening occurred? (Chief Barbara felt strongly that a chief should not accept the commandership if they would not commit to being staff when asked)
- 5- The 2009-2010 Strategic Plan states the department was to establish a leadership development program for staff chiefs. The department would solicit recommendations from chief officers to identify future department leaders at the rank of captain and provide them with leadership management training and skills for promotional opportunities to reach the ultimate career rank of staff chief. Is this being done?
- 6- Have these captains been notified?
- 7- How do you identify future staff like in question 5 when they may not survive the testing procedure?
- 8- Have past captains list been looked at to see if top scorers have become staff?
- 9- There are DC's that have stated they are not interested at the time to become staff, have they been asked a second time? If they been asked a second time, have they accepted?

10- Why do you think a deputy chief would want to become a staff chief?

11- Are there ways to attract DC's to become staff chiefs?

12- All fire operation staff chiefs can retire tomorrow, is the department prepared to replace these chiefs?

13- What were your reasons for accepting a staff position?

## Appendix B

Interview with Deputy Assistant Chief Robert Maynes on March 14, 2011

- 1- Are medical benefits different for staff chiefs than a DC?
- 2- Do you have a welfare fund similar to the uniform fire officer's association union?
- 3- Are prescription plan different for staff chiefs than a DC?
- 4- What monetary benefits does a staff lose once promoted?
- 5- What is the average number of hours a staff chief works a week?

Appendix C



# FIRE DEPARTMENT

782 Eight Avenue, New York, NY 10036  
TEL. (212) 570-4309 FAX (212) 977- 3643

## BATTALION 09

### The Pride of Midtown



Hello,

My name is Greg Bierster, a 4th year EFO student completing my final research paper. I am conducting research on succession planning in the staff chief's rank. Please assist with answering the questions provided in the survey link below.

Just to give you an over view of how the Fire Department of New York promotes, it uses civil service testing for promotion to the ranks of Lt, Cp, BC and DC. Staff chief is an appointed position, and is chosen from within the deputy chief rank.

Please respond by April 5, 2011.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L6PGQQB>

Thank you for your time and assistance in completing this survey. Be Safe!

Greg Bierster

Battalion Chief

New York City Fire Department

Appendix D



# FIRE DEPARTMENT

782 Eight Avenue, New York, NY 10036  
TEL. (212) 570-4309 FAX (212) 977- 3643

## BATTALION 09

### The Pride of Midtown



Hello,

My name is Greg Bierster and I am a battalion chief assigned to Battalion 9. I am finishing up the Executive Fire Officers Program at the National Fire Academy and my final research paper is on "Succession Planning in the Staff Chief Rank."

Please assist with answering the questions provided in the survey link below.

Please respond by April 5, 2011.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/7LT8N2R>

Thank you for your time and assistance in completing this survey.

Greg Bierster

Battalion Chief

Battalion 9

Appendix E



# FIRE DEPARTMENT

782 Eight Avenue, New York, NY 10036  
TEL. (212) 570-4309 FAX (212) 977- 3643

## BATTALION 09

### The Pride of Midtown



Hello,

My name is Greg Bierster and I am a battalion chief assigned to Battalion 9. I am finishing up the Executive Fire Officers Program at the National Fire Academy and my final research paper is on "Succession Planning in the Staff Chief Rank."

Please assist with answering the questions provided in the survey link below.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L55F3NG>

Please respond by April 9, 2011.

Thank you for your time and assistance in completing this survey.

Greg Bierster

Battalion Chief

Battalion 9

## APPENDIX F

## Succession Planning in Fire Departments

**1. Does your department have a succession plan in place?**

- Yes (If yes skip to question # 3)
- No

**2. If no, does your department plan to develop one in the near future?**

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

**3. Does your department have an officer's development plan?**

- Yes
- No

**4. What ranks does your department have? (Check all that apply)**

- Engineer
- Sergeant
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Battalion Chief
- Deputy Chief
- Deputy Assistant Chief
- Assistant Chief

**5. What levels in your department is your succession plan applicable for? (Check all that apply)**

- Department does not have a succession plan
- Engineer
- Sergeant
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Battalion Chief
- Deputy Chief

- Deputy Assistant Chief
- Assistant Chief

**6. Are firefighters in your department civil servants?**

- Yes
- No

**7. Are competitive exams given for promotion to? (Check all that apply)**

- Sergeant
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Battalion Chief
- Deputy Chief
- Deputy Assistant Chief
- Assistant Chief

**8. What ranks are appointed? (Check all that apply)**

- Engineer
- Sergeant
- Lieutenant
- Captain
- Battalion Chief
- Deputy Chief
- Deputy Assistant Chief
- Assistant Chief

**9. Are chief officers brought in from outside your department?**

- Yes
- No (skip to question 11)

**10. What ranks are officers brought in from outside your department? (Check all that apply)**

- Engineer
- Sergeant
- Lieutenant
- Captain

- Battalion Chief
- Deputy Chief
- Deputy Assistant Chief
- Assistant Chief

**11. What do you consider the benefits of a succession plan? (Check all that apply)**

- Organization stability
- Personnel retention
- Continuity within the organization
- Improved moral
- Steers the direction of the organization

Other (please specify)

**12. What is the education level required for staff chief?**

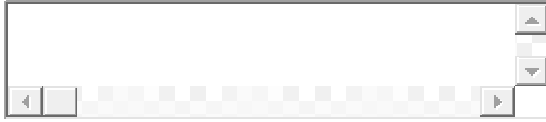
- No staff chief rank
- High School Diploma
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree

**13. What elements does your department use to develop future leaders/candidates (check all that apply)?**

- Assess and develop available talent of candidates who exhibit leadership potential
- Education
- Identify individuals prepared to move into key positions
- Identify and develop competencies, knowledge, skills and abilities for future leaders
- Prepare future leaders through training and career development
- Keep future leaders on a development track
- Use of employee evaluations/ performance appraisals to identify future leaders
- Provide future leaders exposure to all aspects of the job

Mentoring for future leaders

Other (please specify)

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**14. Please list name of your department**

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APPENDIX G

Succession Planning Survey FDNY Staff Chief's

**1. Why did you choose to be a Staff Chief? (Check all that apply)**

- Was asked
- The right thing to do
- Wanted to be a staff chief
- To become a leader in the department
- To be a decision maker
- Good communicator (verbal and written)
- Ability to set policy for the department
- Ability to revise policy for the department
- Extra pay
- To continue my rise in the department
- Department vehicle

Other (please specify)

**2. How many years have you been a staff chief?**

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6 or more

**3. How long did it take for you to feel comfortable as a staff chief?**

- 1 year
- 2 year
- 3 year
- 4 or more years

**4. Did you have knowledge of the job title and duties of that position when you were promoted to DAC?**

Yes (if yes, skip to question 6)

No

**5. Would the transition have been easier if there was written material, and mentorship prior to be promoted?**

Yes

No

**6. Do you feel the department has a defined succession plan in place to replace a staff chief when he/she retires?**

Yes

No

**7. The current staff chief's assigned to fire operations (not including EMS) can retire today, is the department prepared to fill these positions if this were to occur?**

Yes

No

**8. Should the number of years working as an active Staff Chief be limited to a certain time frame?**

Yes

No

**9. Would rotation of the staff chiefs to different bureaus prevent burnout?**

Yes

No

**10. Related to previous question, do you think burnout will occur if a Staff Chief works at this level for too long?**

Yes

No

**11. What is the number of years someone should remain a staff chief?**

1-3

4-6

As long as they can still do the job

**12. Do you feel staff chiefs should be rotated through different bureaus so they are well rounded?**

Yes

No

**13. Should the department have written information about the functional duties, job descriptions, work schedule, etc. of the various staff positions so potential candidates can view (such as a PA/ID)?**

Yes

No

**14. Should the pay scales for Staff Chiefs be readily available on the FDNY webpage similar to charts used for all other ranks in the FDNY as well as EMS?**

Yes

No

**15. Do you think having more transparency about the job descriptions and pay scales of Staff Chiefs would attract more possible applicants?**

Yes

No

**16. Should a designation to Division Commander be a prelude to staff succession?**

Yes

No

**17. Should a DC not accept being designated Division Commander if they are not willing to accept a staff position when an opening occurred?**

Yes

No

**18. Is there a mentor program established for an upcoming deputy chief to shadow an experienced DAC/AC?**

Yes

No

**19. If you had to do it over would you have accepted the promotion to staff?**

Yes

No

**20. List ways to attract deputy chiefs to become staff?**

## APPENDIX H

## Succession Planning Survey for FDNY Deputy Chief's

**1. Does the department have a defined succession plan in place to replace staff chiefs?**

- Yes  
 No

**2. Are you familiar with the 2009-2010 Strategic Plan stated that the department would solicit recommendations from chief officers to identify future department leaders at the rank of captain and provide them with leadership management training and skills for promotional opportunities to reach the ultimate career rank of staff chief?**

- Yes  
 No (Skip to question 4)

**3. If yes to question # 2 have you been asked to identify these captains?**

- Yes  
 No

**4. Would you consider promotion to staff chief at this time?**

- Yes  
 No

**5. If no would you consider promotion in the future?**

- Yes  
 No

**6. What staff position are you prepared to accept? (Check at least one)**

- Borough command  
 Fire prevention  
 Communications  
 Operations  
 Training

**7. What would be the reason to you would accept a position as a staff? (Check all that apply)**

- Want to be a leader
- Good communicator
- Want to be a staff chief
- The right thing to do
- The department has been good to me and now it is time to contribute
- Being a decision maker
- Ability to set policy for the department
- Ability to revise policy for the department
- Extra pay
- To continue my rise in the department
- Department vehicle
- If the right department/division was offered
- Because you were asked
- Not interested in being a DAC

Other (please specify)

**8. What reasons would you delay a promotion to Staff? (Check all that apply)**

- Loss of union benefits
- Long hours
- No compensation for long hours
- The lack of support staff to accomplish projects/goals
- Ability to handle staff position
- Family commitments
- Comfortable in my present rank
- Not interested in learning something new
- Not interested in promotion to DAC or above
- Retiring in the next 2-4 years

Other (please specify)

**9. Do you feel a deputy chief is properly prepared (training, education) to take on the rank of staff chief?**

Yes

No

**10. Should education be a deciding factor for a person being appointed to DAC?**

Yes

No

**11. What education level should a DAC possess? (The present DC's promotion list a bachelor's degree is required to be promoted)**

High School diploma

Associates Degree

Bachelor's degree

**12. Do you have a bachelor's degree?**

Yes

No

**13. Should a designation to Division Commander be a prelude to staff succession?**

Yes

No

**14. Should a DC not accept being designated Division Commander if they are not willing to accept a staff position when an opening occurs?**

Yes

No

**15. If no to question 14 are you presently a Division Commander?**

Yes

No

**16. Have you taken the following courses the FDNY offers or grants time off to attend?**

FOMI

US Military Academy Terrorist Preparedness Course

Naval Post Graduate Program

Executive Fire Officers Program

Have not taken any of the above course

**17. Should the department have written information about the functional duties, job descriptions, work schedule, etc. of the various staff positions so potential candidates can view (example a PAID)?**

Yes

No

**18. Should the pay scales for Staff Chiefs be readily available on the FDNY webpage similar to charts used for all other ranks in the FDNY as well as EMS?**

Yes

No

**19. Do you think having more transparency about the job descriptions and pay scales of Staff Chiefs would attract more possible applicants?**

Yes

No

**20. Should the department have mentorship program for staff chief, whereby the next chief(s) rotate through the staff positions to be properly prepared?**

Yes

No

**21. Should the number of years working as an active Staff Chief be limited to a certain time frame?**

Yes

No

**22. What can be done to attract/improve staff chief rank?**

Appendix I

**Twenty Largest Fire Departments in the United States**

Los Angeles County Fire Department

Los Angeles Fire Department

Chicago Fire Department

Houston Fire and EMS

Miami Dade Fire and Rescue

Clark County Fire Department

Phoenix Fire Department

Dallas Fire and Rescue

San Diego Fire and Rescue

Detroit Fire Department

San Antonio Fire Department

Jacksonville Fire and Rescue

Orange County Fire Authority

Philadelphia Fire Department

Fairfax Fire and Rescue

San Jose Fire Department

Honolulu Fire Department

Montgomery Fire and Rescue

Palm Beach County Fire Rescue

San Francisco Fire Department

Prince Georges County Fire and EMS

Appendix I (continued)

Gwinett County Fire and EMS

Boston Fire Department

Baltimore Fire Department

Baltimore County Fire