

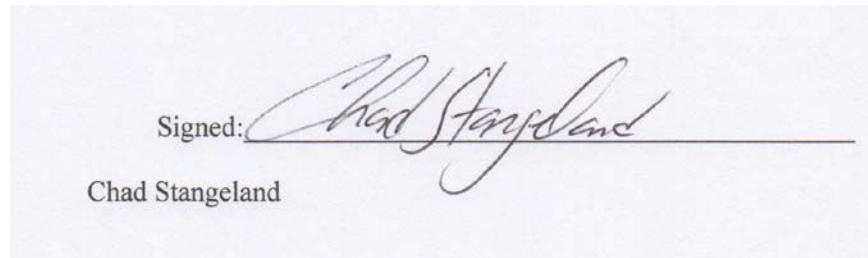
Career Pathways for the Moorhead Fire Department

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## CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

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



### **Abstract**

The Moorhead Fire Department lacked any type of policy that pertained either to professional development or how to achieve the qualifications necessary for a particular position. The purpose of this research was to resolve the problem of the department wanting a better way to provide professional development guidance for each departmental position. Considering the complexity of preparing and developing qualified people, we wanted a career pathway policy that explicitly supported employees in readiness to fill job openings. The created policy identifies a career pathway for each position within the Moorhead Fire Department, allowing both the organization and staff to reach the highest results with limited resources. Action research was used to identify answers to the following research questions: (a) is it common for fire departments to have a career pathway; (b) which career pathway requirements have been used by fire departments across the country; and (c) how does the Moorhead Fire Department leadership prioritize the determined optimal requirements for a fire-related career pathway. Procedures used to complete the research included a thorough review of the literature to identify background information. A questionnaire was then created and distributed to fire departments across the country. Fifty-six respondents from 24 different states completed the questionnaire. Those results were then used to create a second questionnaire that was distributed to Moorhead Fire Department leadership for the purpose of identifying priorities for the proposed departmental policy. Results indicated that a high percentage of fire departments do have some type of career pathway which includes certifications, training classes, and educational and experience requirements for officer positions. The final recommendation was to phase in the career pathway policy that provides explicit guidance and fair treatment for all staff members.

**Table of Contents**

Certification.....	2
Abstract .....	3
Table of Contents.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Background and Significance .....	6
Literature Review.....	9
Procedures.....	22
Results.....	25
Discussion.....	38
Recommendations.....	43
References.....	50
Appendices	
Appendix A: List of fire departments that were involved in questionnaire .....	53
Appendix B: Questionnaire of career pathway in fire departments.....	58
Appendix C: Questionnaire of prioritization of MFD leadership .....	69
Appendix D: Policy Recommendation .....	95
Appendix E: Interview with Jeff Wallin.....	107

As an organization prepares for its future, it is critical to examine what is necessary to develop its leadership. Professional development and succession planning ensure proper steps are taken to develop optimal skill sets and knowledge. Part of succession planning is creating career pathways, or plans, that define for an employee what the organization desires for any advanced position. These pathways foster employee awareness and in turn aid employee initiative. While costly, in order to retain the most talented employees it is important to develop them internally, investing in their and the organization's future.

In contrast to this advice, the Moorhead Fire Department (MFD) has not identified clear pathways for career development of its membership. This creates a problem for staff to expend the appropriate time, energy, and finances to achieve advancement goals. It also creates a challenge for department leadership to accurately evaluate candidates for advancement. There needs to be an explicit process to help develop current and future leaders.

The purpose of this research is to design a career pathway for each position within the MFD that aligns with the department's mission statement. This would allow both the organization and its staff to make the best use of limited resources. In order to create an optimal career pathway policy for the MFD, an action research method was used to answer the following questions:

1. Is it common for fire departments to have a career pathway?
2. Which career pathway requirements have been used by fire departments across the country?
3. How does the Moorhead Fire Department leadership prioritize the determined optimal requirements of a career pathway?

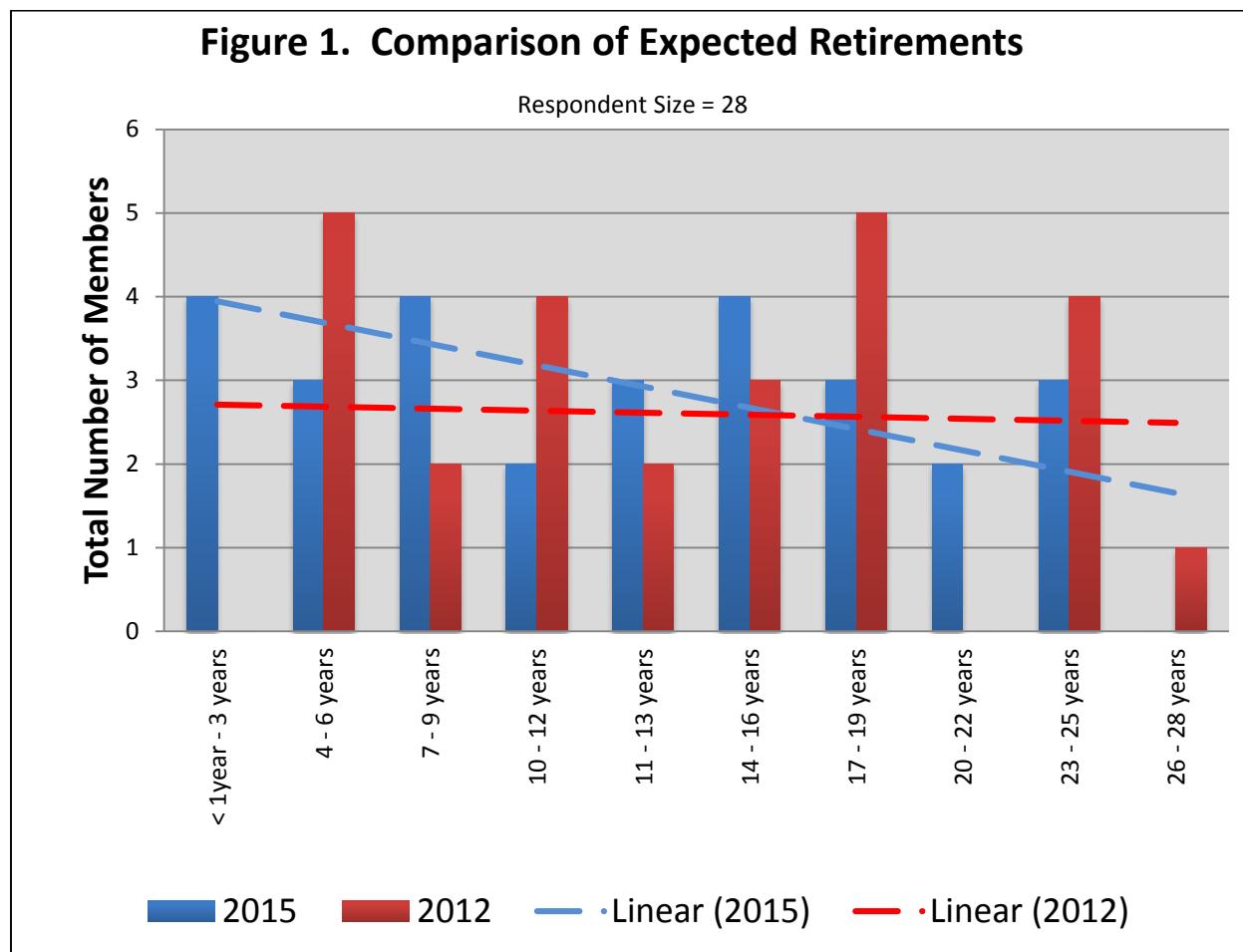
## **Background and Significance**

The MFD is a small all-career department of 37 members; three shifts, each consisting of eight firefighters, two captains, and one assistant chief. Administratively, there is an administrative assistant, an assistant chief in charge of training, an assistant chief who functions as the city's emergency manager and assistant fire marshal, and the fire chief. The fire department currently operates out of two fire stations, with a minimum daily staffing level of eight suppression personnel. In 2005, the fire department increased staffing from 31 members to 37 members for the eventual implementation of a third station. While it has not been implemented yet, when that third station is added, highly qualified personnel will immediately be needed for the expansion.

The City of Moorhead is located in Northwest Minnesota, across the Red River from Fargo, North Dakota. In 2014, the United States Census Bureau estimated the city's population at 39,857. That was up from 38,065 in 2010 (U.S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts, 2015).

Over the years, MFD has struggled with guiding and developing its members. This issue led to the Applied Research Paper, *The Potential of Succession Planning for the Moorhead Fire Department* (Stangeland, 2012). The paper discussed the potential of the organization implementing a competency based model in the future, i.e. a career pathway. Stangeland discussed the importance of first identifying departmental support for succession planning, establishing the department's value system, and then creating a competency model. In support of moving forward with succession planning, the MFD spent considerable time in 2013 identifying its organizational mission, vision, and value statements. That paved the way for the organization

being able to progress toward creating career pathways, however as of July 2015, those pathways had not yet been created. The Mission of the Moorhead Fire Department is “to provide our community with trusted and dedicated professionals who work to ensure a high level of public safety through education, cooperation, and incident response” (“Moorhead Fire Department,” n.d.).



*Figure 1. Comparison of Expected Retirements.* This graph represents the number of Moorhead Fire Department members who expect to retire in the given time period, conducted in 2015 and three years earlier in 2012.

Despite a lack of career pathways, MFD anticipates a number of upcoming retirements, many of them officers. Therefore, MFD has a need for prepared employees to succeed those officer

positions. As shown in Figure 1, there is an upward trend of employees moving toward retirement, with the window for implementing a succession plan closing. Without a plan, the organization will be left vulnerable as officers retire.

While MFD needs to implement career pathways and a succession plan, it does not have the financial means to do so completely. The 2015 MFD training budget is \$124,938, which supports professional development activities such as higher education, National Fire Academy (NFA) classes, professional certifications, training that meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) professional competencies, and departmental in-service training. This budget does not sufficiently fund all professional development requests by MFD members (Wallin, personal communications, July 15, 2015).

As an organization moves forward, having developed the proper leadership helps to ensure highly qualified, motivated, and loyal employees. According to the International Association of Fire Chiefs: Officer Development Handbook, "... Fire service managers must increase their professional standing in order to remain credible to community policy makers and the public. This professionalism should be grounded firmly in an integrated system of nationally recognized and/or certified education and training" (2003, p. 3). The objective of a career pathway is to make the organization and its employees more successful. Having an identified career pathway to follow creates a positive result for both the individual and the organization (Feldman, 1996; Gaffney, 2005; Rothwell, 2010; Tansky and Cohen, 2001). Career pathways provide greater oversight of succession planning, and employers who actively align career pathways with their organizational goals have better retention rates. Furthermore, employees start to become entrepreneurial about their careers as they take responsibility for their own futures (Gaffney, 2005). As employees have opportunities to develop new competencies, they make themselves

more valuable to their present organizations and to any future organizations (Feldman, 1996).

Each competency can be part of a blueprint for each level of the organization, a transparent guide of the necessary skills to fulfill each position. Competency models guide employees in abiding by the organization's cultural norms and they foster individual accountability (Rothwell, 2010).

One challenge of achieving the norm is balancing work and family. In a time when personal lives are stretched in multiple directions, having an organization provide clarity of the expected knowledge and skills can benefit both the individual and the organization; time and resources can be budgeted more effectively (United States Fire Administration, 2015, pp. SM-10-1). The United States Fire Administration (UFSA) acknowledges the need to address this balance, as one objective in *Executive Leadership* is to "...assess the diverse sets of roles one plays in personal and professional life, and the impact of these multiple roles on effective leadership" (United States Fire Administration, 2015, pp. SM-10-1).

Additionally career development of firefighters is consistent with the mission of the USFA, "We provide National leadership to foster a solid foundation for our fire and emergency services stakeholders in prevention, preparedness and response" (p. 13). Goal 4 toward this mission is to "Improve the local fire and emergency services' professional status" (United States Fire Administration, n.d., p. 13). The MFD has the potential to increase its professional foundation and status by creating a blueprint of the ideal attributes for each of its positions. These career pathways would foster high quality members of a consistently successful organization.

### **Literature Review**

A review of the literature examined the concept of a career pathway; what its purpose is; what its challenges can be; and what elements compose one, such as training, certification,

higher education, and experience. Information was collected from college, city and United States Fire Administration library searches. Additionally, Internet Google Scholar searches and a college database search in EBSCO, all using key words of “career development,” “professional development,” “career development path,” “individual development plans,” and “career path” were performed. Information collected was from a mix of books, professional trade journals, peer reviewed journals, and trade magazines, all centering on both public and private business, fire service, or management. The commonalities of information were analyzed and compiled.

### **What Is a Career Pathway**

The fire service has done little to prepare its upcoming leaders for the demands that come with making decisions regarding personnel. Many fire departments lack human resource training and fail to provide effective career planning guidance. Instead they rely on employees to figure it out as they go, as has been done historically (Nichols, 2012). In an effort to better prepare those making personnel decisions by those striving to meet their expectations, a fire service needs to invest in its employees by creating a road map that allows an employee to know what it takes to be a more effective member of the organization.

A career pathway is an instrument to create that road map. It provides the guidance for success within an organization. It defines a path for what the organization desires an individual to achieve to attain each position, providing clarity for employees as they develop themselves for the future. If employees understand how their career aspirations fit into the needs of the organization, a higher level of personal commitment is formed, fostering the success of the organization (Gaffney, 2005, p. 8).

There once was a time when work forces were completely loyal and committed to their organizations (Gaffney, 2005). Unfortunately this does not represent the current job market. Unpredictable job markets and job-hopping by employees have revolutionized the relationship between employees and employers (Gaffney, 2005, p. 8). According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (2014), the average employee stays with his employer for 4.6 years. The public sector employment average is higher at 7.8 years, nearly double that of the private sector average at 4.1 years. As a subgroup, those in management positions held the highest tenure at 6.9 years. These statistics indicate that employers need to understand the changing workforce and incorporate measures to retain valuable employees. Since personal investment is found through understanding how one's career aspirations match the organization's needs (Rothwell, Jackson, Knight, & Lindholm, 2005), career pathways can aid job longevity.

### **Benefits of a career pathway**

Career pathways aid the organization. The pathways are used to progress interested individuals through a predefined curriculum that is approved by the organization. Since the curriculum is approved by the organization, the organization can set its own agenda. To do so, it is vital to provide a clear expectation of the required classes and education that is needed to advance (Barakey, 2009, p. 99). Clear expectations reduce the challenge of having someone in a position for which he is not qualified to perform. They also make it easier to discern between an exemplary and average employee (Rothwell et al., 2005, p. 91).

Career pathways foster psychological satisfaction for employees. Since career pathways require self-motivation and help an individual clarify what he wants of his career and future, they provide the opportunity for an individual to take an active role in his destiny (Rothwell et al.,

2005, p. 97). “Today’s employees base their loyalty to one organization on how much intrinsic motivation or psychological reward they find in their work. For that reason, robust career development programs often help to retain employees because they enhance intrinsic motivation” (Rothwell et al., 2005, p. 145). When an employee’s aspirations correspond to the organization’s goals and desired employee qualities, the employee discovers he belongs and can develop. When employee’s aspirations and an organization’s goals are matched, organizations grow, employees develop, key people are retained, employees are happier, and mutual commitment is fostered (Gaffney, 2005, p. 10).

Career pathways also aid organizational leaders in guiding their employees. When a leader knows which skills to coach and develop, employees are better prepared for advancement. This more authentic preparation adds credibility to the succession and career planning, in turn garnishing support for the program (Rothwell et al., 2005 p. 33). Career pathways can also facilitate dialogue between different generations of employees, aiding verbal encouragement and teambuilding (Croteau & Wolk, n.d., p. 66).

### **Challenges of a career pathway**

When budgets get tight, professional development is often the first area to be cut. Implementation costs are not the only expense, as the time to develop a valid and reliable program that is legally defendable in court can also be costly, often reserved only for higher-level leadership positions (Rothwell et al., 2005). Professional development can further be perceived as excessive and unnecessary when elected officials do not understand its value for the fire service (Wallace, 2009, p. 111). Despite the challenge of cost, since succession planning is

founded on the concept of creating a road map, omitting professional development creates a system of simply nothing more than job replacement (Rothwell, 2005).

Motivation can present another challenge. Once the eligibility prerequisites are established, good candidates can become overwhelmed and lack the desire to go through the required steps. This can cause a reduction in the candidate pool, until a time when others who desire to advance accept the defined parameters and are willing to enter into the promotional process (Barakey, 2009, p. 99).

### **Elements of a Career Pathway**

Establishing the elements of a successful career pathway requires an examination of current and future job responsibilities and requirements. As examination identifies the needed competencies for each position within the organization (Rothwell, 2010), creating a blue print for each position. Once competences are identified, the organization can decide how to best reach them, whether it is through training, higher education, or experience.

### **Training and certification**

The knowledge and skills required to handle the most challenging of emergency situations do not just happen; this skillset is developed through training and professional development. A career pathway identifies training classes and certification necessary to meet such requirements (Barakey, 2009, p. 99). When an employee has been certified, it is recognized that he has met the minimum competency to fulfill a particular job assignment. This in turn enhances the credibility of both the individual and the organization (Edwards, 2010, p. 186). To uphold this credibility, it is important that each organization measures and quantifies training and certifications consistently.

National standards and mandates provide the basis for annual professional development requirements, certifications, and ongoing educational requirements for any given fire service position (Barakey, 2009). Details of the recommended qualifications for those positions is provided by NFPA. The NFPA also sets the national standards for training and certification, and many fire department training programs are designed to meet those standards (Edwards, 2010, p. 185). Additionally, "... state and federal mandates stipulate the number of hours; the subjects; the job performance requirements (JPRs); the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs); the required certification; and so forth for many positions within the fire service" (Wallace, 2009, p. 112). Training offerings should include "... leadership training, strategy and tactics, communication, buddy to boss, performance appraisals, ethics, discipline and grievances, emergency operations and disaster planning, health and safety, risk management, basic budgeting and policy expectations" (Barakey, 2009, p. 100). Some also believe that first time managers should be trained in interpersonal skills, personnel management, negotiation, conflict resolution, leadership, team building, and performance appraisals (Plakhotnik & Rocco, 2011, p. 44).

Beyond just applying national standards in order to design training, an organization needs to self-assess where it currently is in relation to those standards. Organizations must assess each employee's skills to determine if there are enough employees with the desired skills to fill current and future positions. This provides insight into critical training needs. Once current skills are identified, an organization can best plan and implement appropriate training and succession planning (Pynes, 2004, p.393).

Table 1 <i>IAFC's Recommended Training and Certifications for Fire Officer I through Fire Officer IV</i>	
Position	Training & Certification
Supervising Fire Officer	Firefighter 1*; Firefighter II*; Fire Officer I*; Incident Safety Officer; National Incident Management System; Instructor I*; Inspector I*; Hazardous Materials Operation Level*; local requirements for Emergency Medical Service level and driver's license
Managing Fire Officer	Fire Officer II*; Multi-Company Incident Management; Public Information Officer; Fire Investigator I; Public Educator I; National Fire Academy's Leadership Series
Administrative Fire Officer	Fire Officer III*; Interjurisdictional Incident Management; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning
Executive Fire Officer	Fire Officer IV*; Classes in Influencing and Presentation Skills; Meeting Facilitation, Risk Assessment/Management; Disaster Incident Management; Emergency Operations Center Management

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003. The \* denotes an IFSAC certification.

### **Higher Education**

By working with colleges and universities to incorporate appropriate curriculum into a career path, organizations can help their members gain the necessary knowledge to meet the needs of the organization (Janing & Sachs, 2003, p. 52). These institutions should be accredited through the American Council on Education (ACE). Accreditation through ACE provides multiple benefits. First, it allows college credits to be more easily transferred to other institutions. Accreditation also validates and reinforces an organization's commitment to higher education (Edwards, 2010, p. 188).

Fire departments from around the country have been increasing their educational requirements to include appropriate bachelor's and master's degrees. One of the most effective

ways to establish or increase educational requirements is to mandate them as a condition of promotion. One challenge to implementing educational requirements for the first time is in accommodating employees so they can complete the new requirements. Some organizations establish the effective date far enough in the future or they stagger the implementation over time (Edwards, 2010, p. 359). Fire service leaders can also provide support by verbally encouraging enrollment in classes, being flexible with work schedules to accommodate class attendance, and providing compensation through increased wages or tuition reimbursement (Stowell, 2004; Edward, 2010).

Table 2 <i>IAFC's Recommended Educational Achievement for Fire Officer I through Fire Officer IV</i>	
Position	Education
Supervising Fire Officer	Enrollment in a higher education program
Managing Fire Officer	Associate Degree or equivalent hours towards Baccalaureate Degree
Administrative Fire Officer	Baccalaureate Degree from locally approved college
Executive Fire Officer	Graduate Degree from locally approved college

*Note.* Adapted from *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014.

The most prominent fire service professional development program is the NFA Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). This program requires a bachelor's degree to apply and takes four years to complete. The EFOP is accredited through ACE as graduate level courses. A number of fire departments either require or give preferential treatment to candidates who have the EFOP qualification (Edwards, 2010, p. 362).

The NFA has another program named Fire and Emergency Service Higher Education (FESHE), with its goal to advance the fire service as a respected profession by facilitating higher educational degrees. The basis of the FESHE model, called “seamless education,” integrates fire service training classes and associate level coursework with baccalaureate education courses. Many firefighters have a fragmented professional development path, having obtained various training certifications and college credits from different institutions. The FESHE model provides a career path for transferring training classes and associate level college credits into a bachelor level program (United States Fire Administration, n.d.c).

Another program of the NFA, called the National Professional Development Model (NPDM), suggests career pathways for the various fire officer positions. In this sense it aligns with training, higher education, and experience with officer positions. The NPDM career pathway “... crosswalks Fire Officer I—IV competencies with "national" level courses that include National Fire Academy training courses, model associate and bachelor's courses, general education courses recommended by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) in its “Officer Development Handbook,” and personal experience” (United States Fire Administration, n.d.b).”



Figure 2. National Professional Development Model, United States Fire Administration, accessed July 23, 2015,  
<https://www.google.com/search?q=national+professional+development+model&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8>

## Experience

Experience is a reflection of an employee's ability to demonstrate skills with confidence and situational awareness (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003, p. 8). Its focus should be on an individual's growth rather than encouraging consistent benchmarks for everyone. One approach does not apply to all; some people need more time to develop (Croteau & Wolk, n.d., p. 66). Once an employee has had ample training time and has demonstrated the desired job performance, managers can add extra responsibilities to further increase an employee's experience (Croteau & Wolk, n.d., p. 66).

Challenges come with incorporating experience into a career pathway. When requiring experience in a position as a condition for advancement, the organization's intentions may be missed. While positional experience measures longevity, it may not take into account situational experience (Barakey, 2009, p. 100). This confusion may explain why experience requirements vary greatly by the organization. It may also explain why there is a lack of literature on the element of experience within career pathways. Most of the literature found was that of Applied Research Projects of Executive Fire Officers from the NFA who identified experience requirements in their organizational policies. One additional document was found, the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) *Officers Development Handbook*. In the handbook, fire officer positions from Supervising Fire Officer through Executive Fire Officer are listed, with corresponding guidelines for how much experience the person should have in the previous position prior to promotion to that title. The years of experience recommended by IAFC is as follows: Supervising Fire Officer (3-5), Managing Fire Officer (2-5), Administrative Fire Officer (3-5), and Executive Fire Officer (4) (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003, pp. 16-37).

Table 3	
IAFC's Recommended Experience for Fire Officer I through Fire Officer IV	
Position	Experience
Supervising Fire Officer	3-5 years as a Qualified Responder
Managing Fire Officer	2-4 years as a Supervising Fire Officer.
Administrative Fire Officer	3-5 years as a Managing Fire Officer
Executive Fire Officer	4 years as an Administrative Fire Officer

*Note.* Adapted from IAFC *Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003.

## Conclusion

Organizations need to constantly engage their staffs to understand their employees' career aspirations. Engaging employees in dialogues about their professional careers provides opportunities to think strategically about their advancement. This strategic thought can lead to ways to expanding employee responsibilities, which increases employee engagement in the organization (Croteau & Wolk, n.d., p. 68). Another way to increase engagement is to foster self-motivation. Career pathways provide this autonomy by laying out the steps needed for advancement, such as training, higher education, and experience requirements. It is apparent in the literature that fire service recommendations regarding training, higher education, and experience have been started, however additional guidelines are needed to best prepare our fire leaders and their organizations for today and the future.

Table 4 <i>IAFC's Recommended Preparation for Fire Officer I through Fire Officer IV</i>			
Position	Training/Certifications	Education	Experience
Supervising Fire Officer	Firefighter 1; Firefighter II; Fire Officer I; Incident Safety Officer; National Incident Management System; Instructor I; Inspector I; Hazardous Materials Operation Level; local requirements for Emergency Medical Service level and driver's license	Enrollment in a higher education program	3-5 years as a qualified responder
Managing Fire Officer	Fire Officer II; Multi-Company Incident Management; Public Information Officer; Fire Investigator I; Public Educator I; National Fire Academy's Leadership Series	Associate Degree or equivalent hours toward Baccalaureate Degree	2-4 years as a Supervising Fire Officer
Administrative Fire Officer	Fire Officer III; Interjurisdictional Incident Management; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning	Baccalaureate Degree from locally approved college	3-5 years as a Managing Fire Officer
Executive Fire Officer	Fire Officer IV; Classes in Influencing and Presentation Skills; Meeting Facilitation, Risk Assessment/Management; Disaster Incident Management; Emergency Operations Center Management	Graduate Degree from locally approved college	4 years as an Administrative Fire Officer

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003 and *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014.

## Procedures

Recommendations from an earlier succession planning research project for the Moorhead Fire Department (MFD) formed the rationale for this research. The earlier findings indicated that MFD should incorporate its department mission into a competency model. The model, such as a career pathway, would create a tool that identifies, measures, and documents what is necessary to advance within the organization (Stangeland, 2012). Research for the development of the career pathways began with identifying publications at the local library and the MFD library, then expanded to include scholarly internet searches through “goggle scholar,” Dudley Knox Library at the Naval Postgraduate School, the library at Minnesota State University Moorhead, and the United States Fire Administration Library. Library database searches included EBSCO, ProQuest, WorldCat, LexisNexis, and the Homeland Security Digital Library. The key words used during searches were “career development,” “professional development,” “career development path,” “succession planning,” “competency models,” “officer development,” “National Professional Development Model,” and “FESHE model.” The search results identified several journal articles, books, and reference materials that were used in a review of the literature.

An action research methodology was used to create a departmental policy to solve MFD’s lack of guidance for its staff members. To acquire a baseline of which job requirements are being enacted in the field, fire departments from across the country with varying organizational structures and population bases were contacted through email. The purpose was to gain respondents from various organizational demographics and community populations and identify the commonalities of their requirements. The email list was generated with current and former executive fire officers, personal contacts from Minnesota, North Dakota, and South

Dakota fire departments with similar demographics, and personal contacts from current and former graduate work. A list of the fire departments included in this research can be found in Appendix A. The email was sent to 231 fire departments throughout the country and requested prospective respondents to complete a questionnaire. Two attempts were made to collect data. Over a one month period, prospective respondents were asked twice to complete the questionnaire. Seventy-three prospective respondents agreed to participate, however seventeen questionnaires were returned incomplete and were removed to avoid corruption of the data.

The final respondent list included 56 fire departments from 24 states, including 13 respondents from Minnesota or North Dakota with a similar organizational size and structure to MFD. The range of respondents' community size was from less than 25,000 to over 1,000,000 people. Over 48% of respondents worked in a community with a population of less than 50,000, similar to the City of Moorhead which was estimated at 39,857 (U.S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts, 2015). The majority of respondents, 67 %, were from all-career fire departments, similar to MFD, with the remaining respondents from combination fire departments, some full time staff and some volunteers.

Professional development recommendations from the review of the literature were used to generate the certifications, training classes, higher education degrees, and years of experience included on the questionnaire. The internet application, Survey Monkey, was used to collect and tabulate questionnaire responses. Survey Monkey results provided the raw data that was then analyzed for commonalities and trends. The analysis showed a clear delineation of which organizations had a policy in place.

For training classes and certifications, a minimum of 20% was determined to be the lowest trend for a requirement. Those certifications and training classes that fell below 20%

were removed from further consideration at the time. Additionally, certifications of Firefighter I and II and Emergency Medical Technician were removed for consideration in a pathway policy due to MFD requiring them in the initial hiring process; however this external data was collected in order to analyze the requirements of other organizations. Likewise, the training classes of National Incident Management System (NIMS) 100 and 200 were removed for consideration in a pathway policy due to their requirement when applying for a firefighter position, provided the department receives the associated federal grant.

Results from the external questionnaire were then utilized to create a second questionnaire, an internal one that was distributed to the MFD leadership staff comprised of five assistant chiefs and the fire chief; if external results demonstrated a trend in a requirement, those requirements were included in the internal questionnaire. The MFD leadership staff was asked to prioritize requirements for future implementation. Leadership staff was given the option of selecting for each certification, training class, higher education degree, and years of experience that of “do not support,” “low priority,” “medium priority,” or “high priority.” The MFD mission statement and personal support were to be the basis for each leader’s consideration while completing the questionnaire.

Results from both the external and internal questionnaires were then utilized to create the draft career pathway policy, located in Appendix B. The policy includes a detailed career pathway for each officer position within the MFD. The policy also indicates how training, higher educational, and experience requirements should be prioritized.

Obtaining data presented two challenges. One respondent from Edina, Minnesota incorrectly interpreted how to answer the question on higher education and agreed to have the

data changed to accurately reflect his organization. Additionally as discussed, data from 17 respondents was discarded due to its incompleteness.

This research is limited by the respondent pool. While fire departments from across the country and from varying populations were represented, they were solicited based on sharing similar characteristics as the researcher. It is possible that those with similar higher education experience and goals or who are on the same professional networking systems share similar beliefs and agendas. It would stand to reason that their professional development requirements may not represent national requirements but rather correlate to MFD and reinforce the current desires of MFD. While this may provide a more comparable accommodation of recommendations, it may also limit the evaluation of professional development requirements used elsewhere. This said, it must be remembered that expert recommended professional development requirements were considered as the baseline before any questionnaires were administered.

## **Results**

### **Answering the Research Questions**

Results from one external questionnaire and one internal questionnaire were used to formulate the basis for a departmental policy recommendation. The benefits discussed in the literature review and the results of the research questionnaires created the framework of the proposed career pathway departmental policy. The proposed policy, included in Appendix D, was directed to the Fire Chief for implementation.

**Is it common for fire departments to have a career pathway?**

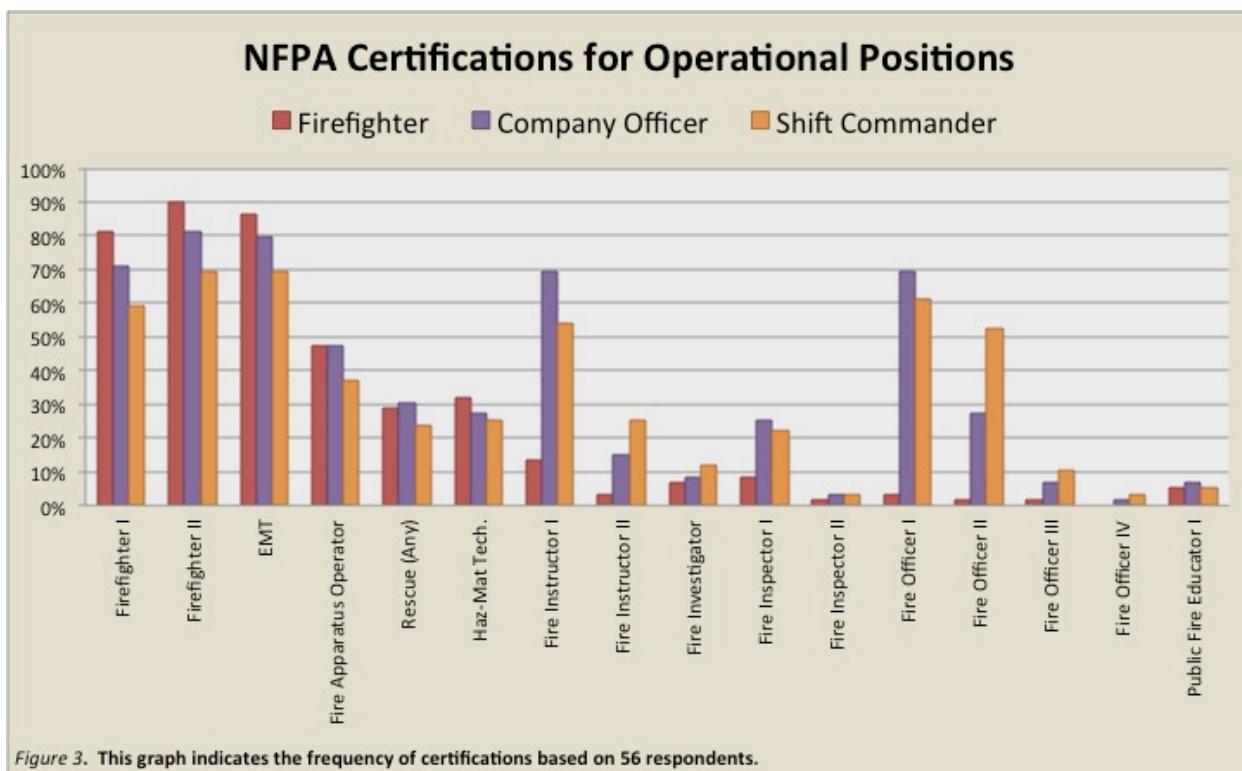
Respondents of the external questionnaire were asked if their organization had a plan, procedure, or guidelines so their firefighters knew what was required for advancement to an officer position. Data from 56 fire departments within 24 states was compiled to identify if career pathways were common within the fire service. Of those respondents, slightly over 70% (Appendix B) indicated they did have a plan, indicating that a majority of the fire departments support having some plan to prepare their individuals for advancement within their organization.

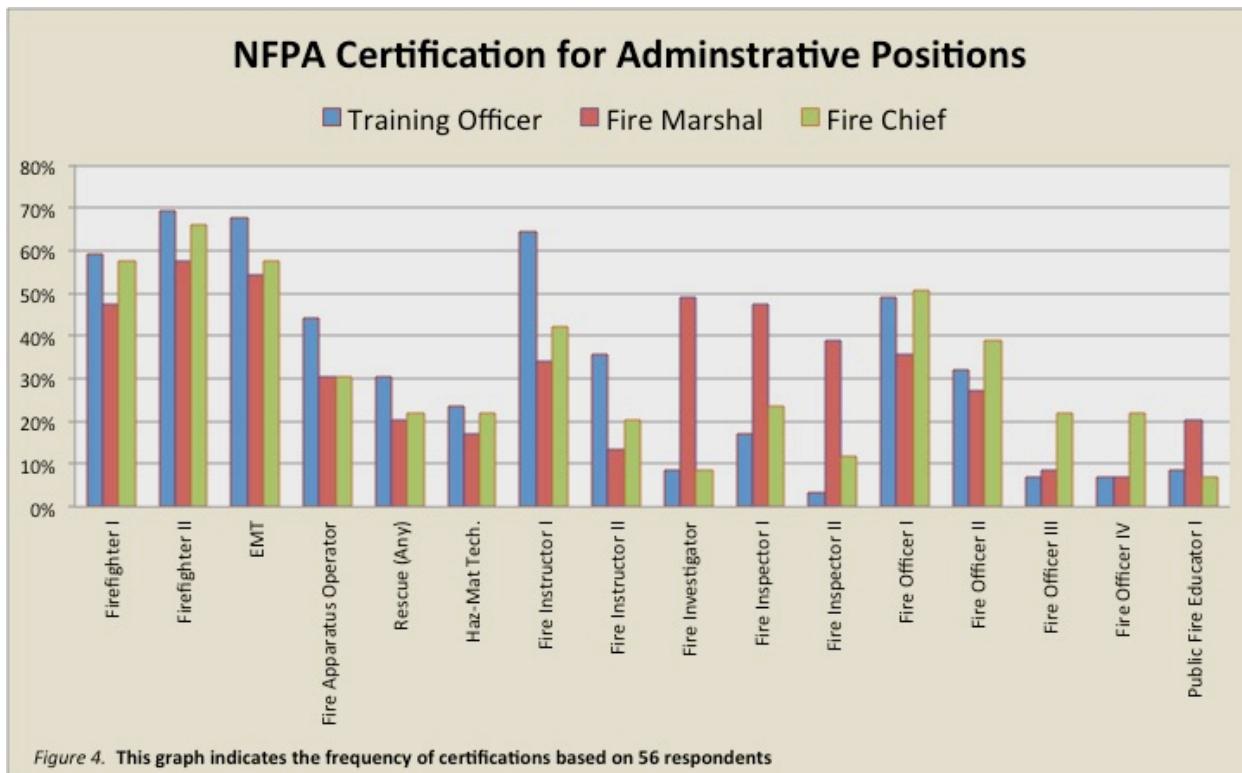
**Which career pathway requirements have been used by fire departments across the country?**

Some requirements are more instrumental for the development of personnel than others. In order to identify commonalities, respondents were asked which professional certification, training class, higher education, and experience requirements were held by their organization. Trends were identified as commonalities were analyzed and then matched to each position within the MFD. For each question, a minimum cutoff was established, based on observable data, for consideration in the proposed MFD policy. Those minimums varied for each requirement of training and certification, higher education, and experience.

Figures 3 and 4 indicate the frequency of required and/or desired professional certifications that correspond to officer positions within the MFD. A minimum cutoff of 25% of respondents was used for continued examination; any certifications below 25% were removed from consideration. The certifications of Firefighter I, Firefighter II, and Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) were highly correlated to all positions, at slightly over 50% of results. This correlation indicates these certifications are baseline job requirements for most fire fighter

positions. Of the respondents, 67.86% were from all-career fire departments and 32.14% came from combination fire departments. Since Firefighter I and II and EMT (Figure 3 and Figure 4) are typically baseline requirements for most career fire departments, it stands to reason that those would receive high percentages of the job requirements. The other correlation is that just because it is a job function doesn't necessarily mean that it would require professional certification. What this data also indicates is that over 70% of respondents' organizations value some type of professional certification, such as from the IFSAC or ProBoard.





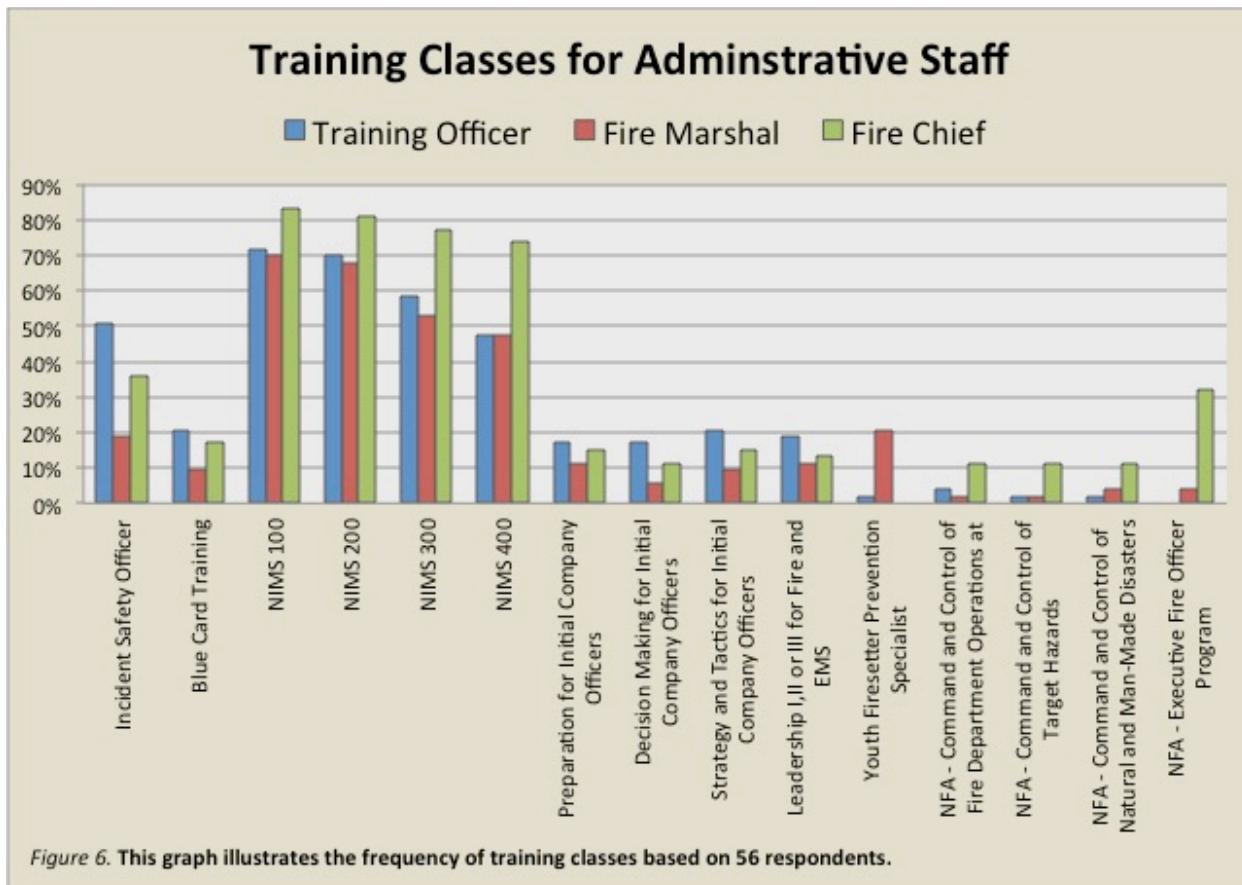
Except for that of firefighter, the next most required certification for all positions was Fire Instructor I. The frequency of this requirement could be due to the need to be certified in Fire Instructor I prior to becoming certified in Fire Officer I. There was a strong correlation between Fire Instructor I certification and Fire Officer I certification for all positions of captain and higher. Results indicate a strong sentiment that at minimum fire officers should be certified in Fire Officer I, if not Fire Officer II. The necessity for Fire Officer III and IV diminishes, only appearing to be a requirement for fire chief. Results also indicate that Fire Instructor II certification requirement which could be attributed to the fact that both ProBoard and IFSAC require Fire Instructor II prior to obtaining Fire Officer III.

Results indicate that there are also typical certifications for the operational side of the fire department. These include Fire Apparatus Operator, all Rescue certifications, Hazardous Materials Techincian (Haz-Mat Tech), and Fire Inspector I; more than 25% of respondents

certify their staff in those certifications. A possible explanation for those required certifications could be that operational functions require more technical knowledge and certifications help validate that staff have those knowledge and skill sets. As staff move into administrative positions, the need for those certifications diminishes, indicating that administrative positions may not require the same technical knowledge for job performance.

Results also indicate that some certifications correlate with particular job functions. For example, Fire Investigator and Public Fire Educator were common for fire marshals and some fire chiefs. This indicates a strong desire to have professional certifications that match competencies with job responsibilities.





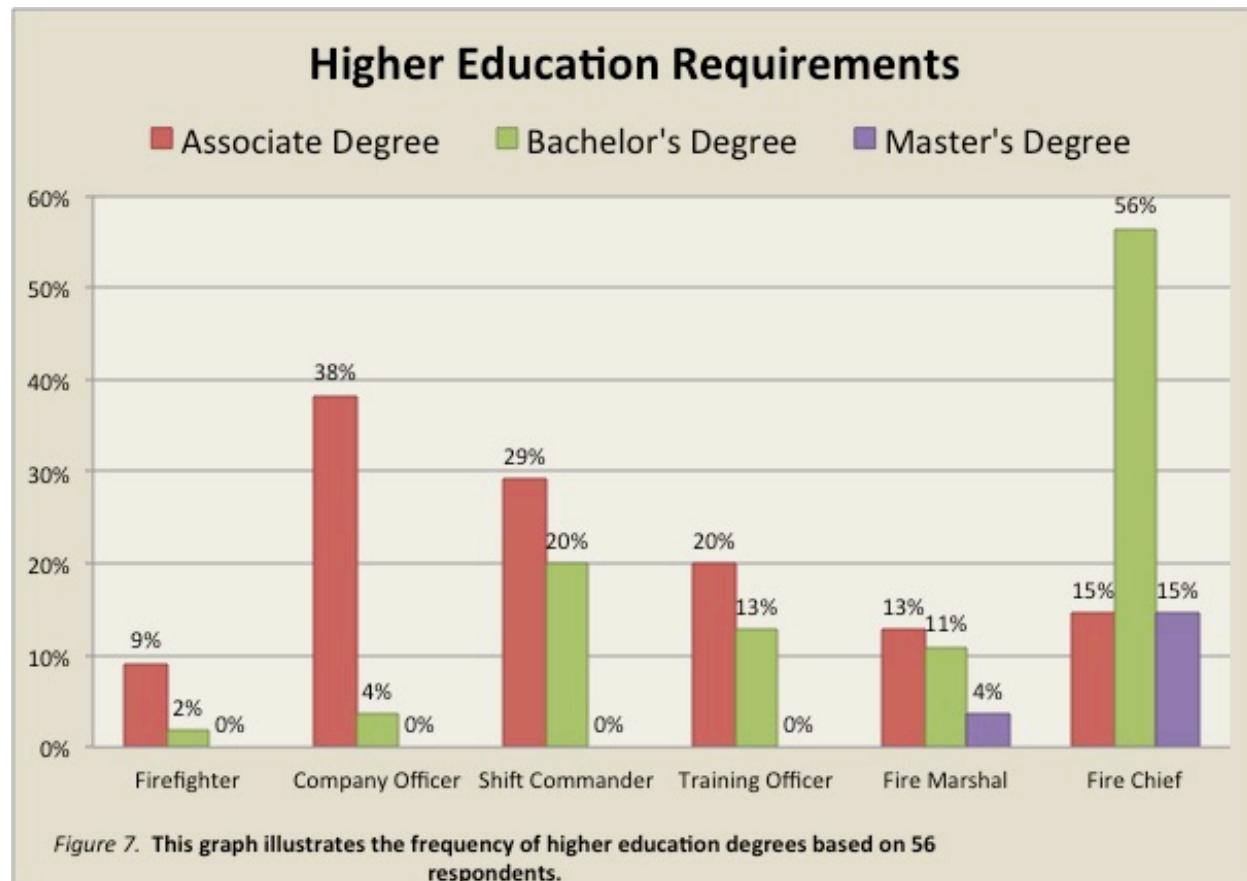
Figures 5 and 6 indicate the frequency of required and/or desired training classes that correspond to officer positions within the MFD. Respondents were asked which training classes their organizations utilize. A minimum cutoff of 20% of respondents was used for continued examination; any training classes below 20% were removed from consideration. Exception to the 20% cutoff were the classes of NFA-Preparation of Initial Company Officers, NFA-Decision Making for Initial Company Officers, NFA-Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Officers, and NFA-Leadership I, II, III for Fire and EMS. The rationale is that our training officer would be included in the delivery of those classes.

Results indicate that NIMS 100 and 200 are most frequently required, at close to 70%. For all positions other than firefighter, NIMS 300 and 400 were required at nearly 50%. These strong results reflect the emphasis that the federal government has placed on NIMS training for

all first responders since the September 11, 2001 attacks. As part of a federal grant process, the federal government required NIMS adoption, which made NIMS requirements easier to enact.

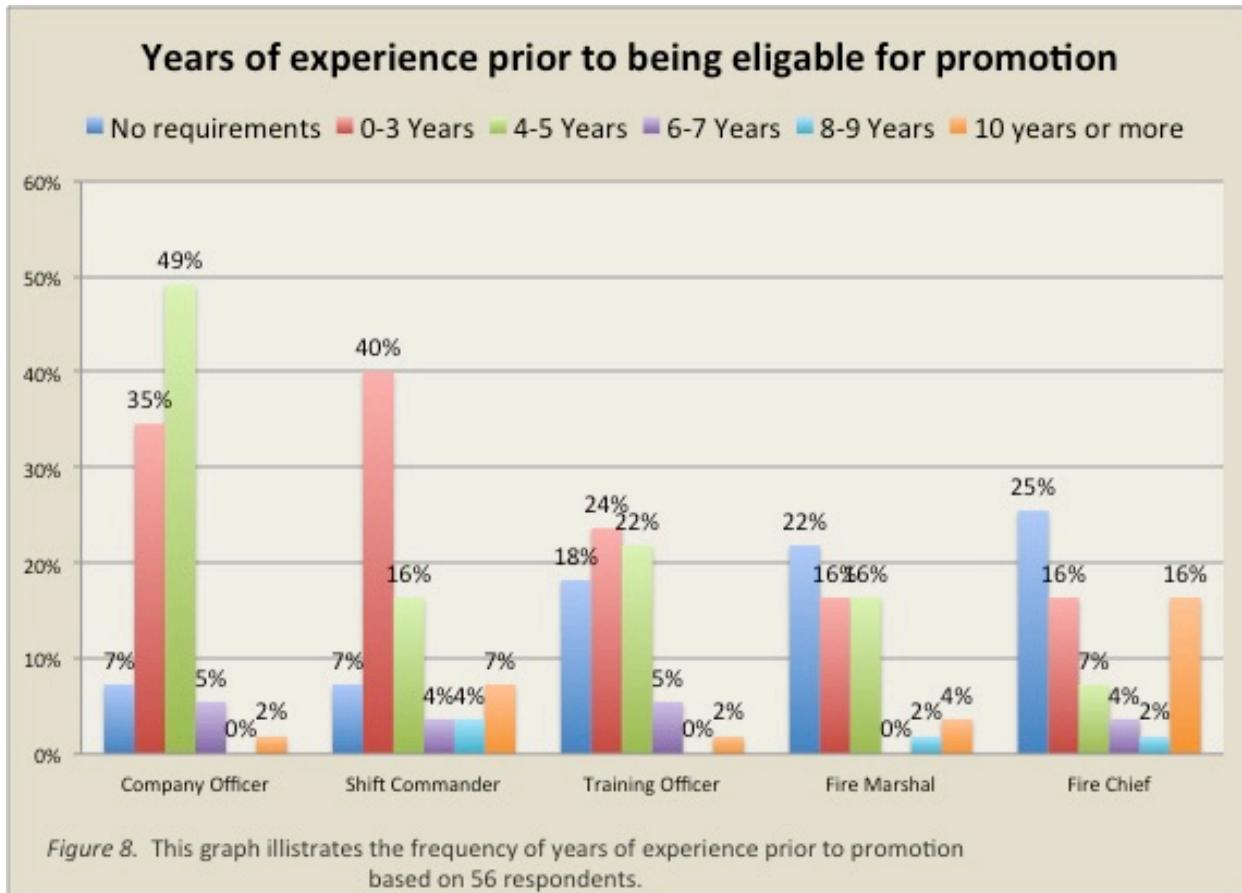
While close to the minimum cutoff, the next common training requirements for all officer positions were NFA-Incident Safety Officer and Blue Card Training. Despite the lower frequency, these training classes were utilized by all officer positions. Blue Card training is more of an emerging class. This could explain why it is consistently required for all fire officer positions, but adopted at a lower level.

While there was much commonality between the requirements for fire officer positions, requirements for fire marshal/emergency manager and fire chief positions did deviate. Responses for the fire marshal/emergency manager position indicate a training preference for youth firesetter prevention. This is likely due to the fact that for most fire departments, the lead person intervening with youth at risk for starting fires is the fire marshal. Responses also indicate that it is preferred for the fire chief to go through the NFA-Executive Fire Officer Program (EFOP). This is likely a result of the need for the fire chief to be prepared to manage and lead the fire department through the challenges of today and the future.



When respondents were asked about higher education requirements, most fire officer positions required at least an associate degree. Based on an analysis of the data, company officers should have some type of an associate degree. Respondents indicated a preference for shift commanders to have an associate or bachelor degree. Nearly 60% of respondents required either an associate or bachelor degree for shift commanders. Respondents indicated less preference for the training officer to have either an associate or bachelor degree, at a combination of 33%. This lessened preference may be attributed to the varying ranks and additional responsibilities of a training officer. The MFD training officer holds the rank of an assistant chief. Due to this fact, this position's degree requirements should match those of the other assistant chiefs. While fire marshal/emergency manager questionnaire results are similar to those of the training officer, some respondents require a master's degree. This may be explained

by different organizations requiring the fire marshal to perform functions that require them to have additional higher education. The MFD fire marshal/emergency manager also holds the rank of assistant chief and therefore this position's degree requirements should match those of the other assistant chiefs. Over 80% of respondents required some form of higher degree for the fire chief, with the most prevalent being a bachelor degree.



Respondents were asked about the number of years of experience required prior to being eligible for promotion to the next position. Data was consistent for the company officer; someone in this position should hold the previous position, typically that of firefighter, for 4-5 years. According to 40% of respondents, those applying for shift commander typically need to hold the previous role, often a company officer, for 0-3 years. No consistent experience data was

found for the training officer and fire marshal positions. Fire chief results were similar, however the range varied even more, from most having no experience requirements to that of 10 years. One possible explanation for the varying results is that the training officer, fire marshal, and fire chief positions can vary according to the complexity of their job functions, therefore the degree may correspond to the expected responsibilities.

### **How does the Moorhead Fire Department leadership prioritize the determined optimal requirements for a fire-related career pathway?**

All respondents' data that fell above the minimum cutoff was used to create an additional questionnaire that was distributed to the MFD leadership. The results of the leadership questionnaire are displayed in Appendix C. The MFD leadership team consisted of five assistant chiefs and the fire chief. Leadership respondents were asked if they supported each requirement and how much of a priority each should be for the department. Any requirement in this questionnaire receiving more than 50% was included in the proposed MFD policy (see Appendix D).

### **Results on certification requirements**

While development of officers was the focus of this research, the prioritized requirements for firefighters are discussed here for the purpose of understanding the background that officers will bring. The MFD leadership gave a high priority to certification in Fire Apparatus Operator (FAO), Instructor I, Hazardous Materials Technician, and Rescue certification (see Appendix C). While Instructor II was a priority, it was a low priority.

For their captains, the MFD leadership prioritized certification in FAO, Instructor I, Hazardous Materials Technician, Rescue, Fire Officer I and II. While there was support for certification in Instructor II and Fire Inspector I, it is unsure if that was due to Instructor II being

a requirement for Fire Officer III. The support for Fire Inspector could be contributed to the liability of conducting company inspections.

For suppression assistant chiefs, MFD certification priorities were Instructor I and II and Fire Officer I and II. The results match the job responsibilities of that position. Results for certification in FAO, Hazardous Materials Technician, Rescue, and Fire Inspector I indicate a sentiment that not all leadership supports these certifications nor views them as priorities. For planning and policy purposes, these certifications should be considered low priorities.

High priority was given to certification in FAO, Fire Instructor I and II, Rescue, Fire Officer I and II, and Instructor II for the Assistant Chief/Training Officer position. Training officers typically deliver many of the classes for individuals within the fire department. Therefore, it stands to reason that the training officer is certified in classes that he or she will deliver. While there was MFD support for the training officer to be certified in Hazardous Materials Technician, it received a lower priority than other certifications. There was almost a majority who felt no support for certifying the training officer in Fire Inspector I. This could be contributed to the expense of a certification for a position that does not typically conduct inspections.

For the assistant chief/fire marshal/emergency manager position, a high priority was given to certification in Instructor I and II, Fire Inspector I and II, Fire Officer I and II, and Fire Investigator. There was MFD support for certification in Hazardous Materials Technician and Rescue and Public Fire Educator, but secondary to the previously mentioned. Additionally, there was a sentiment of not requiring FAO, which could be attributed to a main job responsibility not including the operation of a fire apparatus.

A high priority was given to certification in Instructor I and II, Fire Inspector I, Fire Officer I and II, and Fire Instructor II for the position of fire chief. There was also MFD support for Hazardous Materials Technician, Recue, and Fire Officer III and IV, although at a lower priority. The FAO was not supported, likely for the same reason speculated for the fire marshal/emergency manager position.

### **Results on training class requirements**

The fire department leadership questionnaire was also used to rank priorities for training class requirements for each MFD officer position. Results indicate support for all classes, however priorities did exist. Receiving a high priority for captains and suppression assistant chiefs was Preparation for Initial Company Officers, Decision Making for Initial Company Officers, and Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Officers. For all officer positions, the Incident Safety Officer class was considered a priority.

While the NIMS 300 and 400 training was supported for all officer positions, it was considered a priority for the assistant chief/training officer, assistant chief/fire marshal/emergency manager and fire chief. This priority may be attributable to those positions maintaining responsibility for functioning in the community's Emergency Operating Center (EOC) for significant events.

While a secondary priority, the Leadership I, II and III series was supported for captain, suppression assistant chief, and assistant chief/training officer positions. The MFD leadership indicated a low priority for the assistant chief/fire marshal/emergency manager and the fire chief to take the Leadership Series. This finding appears to conflict with the leadership requirements of being in an assistant chief or fire chief position. While results support the assistant chief/fire marshal/emergency manager to be in the youth firesetter prevention program, a higher priority is

that of Incident Safety Officer and the NIMS 300 and 400 classes. Results also support requiring the fire chief to go through the Executive Fire Officer Program, but doing so after completing the Incident Safety Officer and NIMS 300 and 400 training.

The one consistently low priority rating was for Blue Card training. This could be attributed to the fact that it is a newer curriculum. Within the MFD, this course has not yet been internally examined.

### **Results on higher education requirements**

The fire department leadership questionnaire was also used to rank priorities for higher education requirements for each MFD officer position. As the rank increased, the priority for a higher degree also increased. Overall, priority was given to degrees ranging from an associate to master's degree.

Support ranged from medium to high for requiring a captain to hold an associate degree. While there was a small amount of support for requiring a bachelor degree, it was not significant. A high priority for either an associate or bachelor degree was given for all assistant chief positions. This may indicate a trend that those positions need a higher education degree to some level in order to perform their job functions. These results could be used to recommend requiring an associate degree, while phasing-in over a few years the requirement of a bachelor degree.

There was some MFD support for the assistant chief/training officer and the assistant chief/fire marshal/emergency manager holding a master's degree. Similar to the results for the fire chief, priority was given to the assistant chief/training officer and the assistant chief/fire marshal/emergency manager holding either a bachelor or master's degree. Results could indicate

the desire to require a four-year degree or more for administrative positions, since all three are considered such within the MFD.

### **Results on experience requirements**

The fire department leadership questionnaire was also used to rank priorities for experience requirements for each MFD officer position. Results consistently supported requiring 3-5 years of experience in the previous position to be eligible for promotion to captain, assistant chief/training officer, or assistant chief/fire marshal/emergency manager. Results indicate a lack of consensus for previous experience to become a suppression assistant chief, however a minimum of 3-5 years was supported. A clear priority, 80% of MFD leadership, desired the fire chief to have 10 years or more of experience in the previous position.

All of these recommendations were utilized in the development of the internal policy recommendation to the Fire Chief. A draft policy of this recommendation can be located in Appendix D. As of October 2015, the recommendation was being considered for future implementation.

### **Discussion**

This research was designed to provide both quantitative and qualitative data for analysis in the development of a career pathway policy. Quantitatively, data was collected and analyzed for common professional development requirements for fire department officers. Qualitatively, data was collected to provide insight to the MFD leadership perspective of which training, higher education, and experience requirements deserve priority. Prioritizing was necessary due to MFD not being able to implement all professional development recommendations at once.

### **Should MFD move forward with creating a career pathway**

Slightly over 70% of respondents from 24 states indicated they have plans in place for the development and advancement preparation of their staff. The MFD has only limited plans and provides only minimal guidance. According to Nichols (2012), this is not an unfamiliar problem as fire departments tend to fail to provide guidance for career planning, relying instead on their own experience to prepare their people. Since the majority of 56 respondents from across the country indicated they have career develop plans, there is justification that MFD should move forward with having a career pathway. That career pathway should follow guidelines provided by experts in the field and the firefighter professional standards of NFPA, the IAFC Fire Officers Handbook, and the National Professional Development Model (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003; National Fire Protection Association, 2014; Rothwell, 2010; United States Fire Administration, n.d.c). The professional guidelines and the results of the questionnaire administered to the 56 respondents and the internal questionnaire formed the basis for recommendations within the MFD career pathway policy (Appendix D).

### **What should be included in the career pathway**

The professional guidelines and the results of the external and internal questionnaires provided enough qualified data to create a recommended career pathway detailing the required certifications, training classes, higher education and experience for each position. According to Wallace (2009), many local, state, and federal requirements stipulate fire department competencies and certifications for various positions (p. 112). Questionnaire results indicated that many fire departments incorporate a number of these requirements as part of their professional development process.

### **Training and Certifications**

Neither the external or internal respondents support implementation of all professional development recommendations by the IAFC, the *Fire Officers Development Handbook* (2003), and the NFPA, *Standard for Professional Development* (2014). In fact, many of the suggested knowledge levels and skills of the NFPA standard, which was the basis for the IAFC recommendations for training, education and experience, had not been fully implemented by the fire departments of external respondents at the time of the questionnaire. The consequence of not following all recommendations could mean that if a department desires to achieve full implementation, adaptation could be overwhelming. That overwhelming sense may explain why MFD leadership supported only some of the professional development recommendations that were identified as being used by the 54 external respondents.

Recognition by a certifying agency indicates that a person has met the minimum job performance standards and increases his or her credibility (Edwards, 2010). Results from both the internal and external questionnaires point to understanding this benefit as certifications that match the job description were supported. There may be the realization that you cannot certify everyone in everything; certifications often need to be prioritized as to how they fit the job. Training and certifications that meet both the NFPA, *Standard for Professional Development* (2014) and IAFC, *Officer Development Handbook* are included in the results section, with those that are supported internally included in the draft policy (Appendix D).

### **Higher Education**

The demand for higher education has increased within the fire service (Edwards, 2010; Janning and Sachs, 2003; NFPA, 2014; and Stowell, 2004). This is illustrated in the external respondent results, in which many of them required at least an Associate degree. For a company officer, 38% of external respondents required an Associate degree. Within the MFD, the

company officer would be a captain. While requiring a degree can be a challenge for an organization, internal respondents prioritized an Associate degree for a captain as medium to high. To more easily establish the requirement, it is recommended to stagger implementation (Edwards, 2010).

Professional recommendations are to have a first line supervisor enrolled in a higher education process, continuing on to complete an Associate degree. Supervisors at an assistant chief level should obtain a Bachelor's degree and a fire chief should have a Master's degree (NFA, 2015; NFPA, 2014). Both internal and external respondents supported these recommendations.

### **Experience**

Professional recommendations are that a first line supervisor have 3-5 years of experience as a firefighter prior to promotion (Officer Development Handbook, 2003). Since that recommendation was supported by the questionnaire results, it was incorporated into the policy. As an officer moves up from that first line supervisor, it is recommended that he or she spends between 2 and 5 years in a position prior to being eligible to promote to the assistant chief level (Officer Development Handbook, 2003). Again, that recommendation was supported by the questionnaire results and incorporated into the policy.

For fire chief, the professional recommendation is 4 years of experience as an Administrative Fire Officer (Officer Development Handbook, 2003). In contrast to this, both external and internal questionnaire results indicated it was more common to require 10 or more years of experience. This difference could be attributed to the fact that many departments seek both internal and external Fire Chief candidates. The IAFC (2003) recommendation is more applicable if all the candidates are internal and have thus progressed through the recommended

stages. As an alternative, since internal candidates are not always chosen, a standard 10 years as a supervising officer should indicate enough experience to possess the necessary knowledge.

### **Benefits for the MFD**

MFD is a small organization with limited resources. Career pathways can provide the opportunity to guide employees to meet the future needs of the organization while reducing any developmental gaps. They provide an opportunity to align the future of the MFD organization with national professional standards and competencies, such as the NPDM and NFPA (National Fire Protection Association, 2014; United States Fire Administration, n.d.c).

A policy that includes career pathways can provide guidelines of what is expected for advancement within the MFD (Appendix D). Those guidelines provide for individual control of professional development and can thus increase morale, job retention, and longevity with the MFD (Rothwell, 2010). As guidelines help prepare our future leaders, they serve in a justifiable process for selecting staff for training opportunities and college reimbursement (International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003; Rothwell, 2010; United States Fire Administration (b); and Wallace, 2009). Explicit guidelines that are adhered to can also help promotional candidates cope with the selection of a more qualified candidate. Phasing in the career pathway policy will allow the MFD to create a justifiable budget while employees are given time to prepare mentally and physically for any new demands.

When both the professional literature and research results indicate the same recommendations, a justification is found to invest in specific professional development of the firefighter. Credibility of a program helps to create support for that program (Rothwell et. al, 2005). Support for a program's implementation also comes from buy-in (Rothwell et. al, 2005).

Results from the internal questionnaire indicate the MFD leadership believes in most of the recommendations. As the policy is implemented, that support will be crucial.

### **Recommendations**

Recommendations moving forward are to implement career pathways based on the *IAFC Officer Development Handbook* and the National Professional Development Model (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003; United States Fire Administration, n.d.c). This recommendation also incorporates some historical norms of the MFD promotional process. Without an explicit policy to guide advancement efforts, some of our fire fighters and captains have unproductively channeled their attempt at promotion. In turn, they have needlessly spent money, time, and energy. This not only has decreased their morale, but when these wasted efforts have been communicated within the department, low morale has become contagious. In the last seven years, two long-time fire fighters have left the department, through either career change or early retirement, due to not having the skill set to be successful in a promotional position.

Table 5 identifies the recommended training and certification requirements for each officer position. Table 6 identifies the recommendations for higher education and Table 7 identifies the recommendations for years of experience for each position. Employees will be responsible to coordinate their professional development efforts with their direct supervisor and the training officer.

It is recommended that MFD continue to support the funding of training and tuition reimbursement as Edwards (2010) suggested. To alleviate our recent problem of not having enough funding to support training and reimbursement requests, priorities will be explicit, request deadlines will be imposed, and separate line items in the budget for training versus

higher education will be created. The separate line items will demonstrate support of both training and higher education, without one monopolizing the professional development budget.

Priority of approval of training requests will be based on need, equality, and request date, in order of the following:

- those who are currently in a position that requires such certification attainment or renewal
- those following a career pathway that requires such certification
- all employees will be allowed to request one training class per calendar year, as long as the request is made by September 1 of that year
- should funds exist in the training budget after the September 1 deadline, requests will be honored for training that takes place by December 31 of that year, on a first come, first served basis.

Priority of approval of higher education requests will be based on need, equality, and request date, in order of the following:

- those who are currently enrolled in a program and whose course is within the approved Program of Studies
- those seeking to apply to a program and begin taking courses, pending preapproval of the program by the Fire Chief
- should funds be unallocated within the higher education budget after September 1, a budget adjustment will occur to transfer those funds to the training budget to be used on a first come, first served basis until December 31

## **Training and Certification**

Table 5 provides training guidance for those wishing to advance. Prior to attending any outside training, an employee must complete the Outside Training Form for approval (Moorhead Fire Department, n.d.). When training or certification testing requires time off and is part of a career path of the employee, MFD will allow attendance without requiring vacation time usage and will reimburse lodging and food expenses as suggested by Stowell (2004). Employees who are required to attend training or achieve certification as part of their career path will be paid overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act and the city policy of travel and training (City of Moorhead, n.d., pp. 25-26; United States Department of Labor, 2014). At the discretion of the Fire Chief, work schedules may be modified and work hours flexed within the payroll period in lieu of paying overtime.

Table 5

*Recommended Training and Certifications for MFD Positions*

Position	Training & Certifications
Captain	Firefighter 1*; Firefighter II*; Fire Apparatus Operator*; Fire Officer I*; Incident Safety Officer; National Incident Management System (NIMS) 700, 800, 100 & 200 courses; Instructor I*; Inspector I*; Hazardous Materials Technician*; Hazardous Material Team Leader/Safety Officer; Basic and Advanced Fire Investigation; National Fire Academy's Initial Company Officer Series; National Registry Emergency Medical Technician; Class "D" driver's license
Senior Captain	Fire Officer II*; Instructor II*; Fire Investigator*; National Fire Academy's Leadership Series; Multi-Alarm; Target Hazard Courses
Shift Commander/ Assistant Chief	Fire Officer III*; NIMS 300 course; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning
Fire Marshal/ Assistant Chief/ Emergency Manager	Fire Officer I*, II*, & III*; Inspector I* & II*; Juvenile Fire Setter; Public Educator I*; Certified Minnesota Emergency Manager; NIMS 300 & 400 courses; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning; Risk Assessment/Management; Disaster Incident Management; Emergency Operations Center Management
Training Officer/ Assistant Chief/PIO	Fire Officer I*, II*, & III*; Instructor I* & II*; Public Information Officer; NIMS 300 course; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning
Fire Chief	Fire Officer I*, II*, III*, & IV*; NIMS 300 & 400 courses; Classes in Influencing and Presentation Skills; Meeting Facilitation

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003; *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014; *Administrative Policy Manual*, Moorhead Fire Department and the results from the questionnaire that the MFD leadership completed. \* Indicates IFSAC Certification.

## **Higher Education**

Table 6 indicates the educational requirements for each MFD position. For tuition reimbursement of approved higher education courses, MFD will follow the contractual agreement between the City of Moorhead and Moorhead Firefighters, Local 1323. However, recommendation will be made to negotiate with the union that an annual tuition reimbursement cap be in effect per employee. The rationale behind this will be to provide equity amongst employees. The employee must pass the course with a letter grade of “B” or greater to be entitled to reimbursement (*City of Moorhead Policy*, n.d.). Fire chief approval of a higher education program prior to the application process will be required of those who desire reimbursement (*City of Moorhead Policy*, n.d.). Once the employee has been accepted into the program, it will be his/her responsibility to submit a copy of the acceptance letter to the fire chief. During the second semester, it will be the employee’s responsibility to submit a Program of Studies to the fire chief so the department can verify requested courses are necessary for the degree. Prior to each semester/quarter it will be the employee’s responsibility to communicate the expected costs to the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief will reserve the right to decline reimbursement if preapproval has not been sought. Approval and support of higher education will continue provided MFD has adequate funding.

Table 6 <i>Recommended Higher Education for MFD Positions</i>	
Position	Education
Captain	Enrollment in a higher education program that is approved by the Fire Chief
Senior Captain	Associate degree or equivalent hours toward Baccalaureate Degree approved by the Fire Chief
Shift Commander/ Assistant Chief	Baccalaureate degree approved by the Fire Chief
Fire Marshal/ Assistant Chief/ Emergency Manager	Baccalaureate degree approved by the Fire Chief
Training Officer/ Assistant Chief/PIO	Baccalaureate degree approved by the Fire Chief
Fire Chief	Graduate Degree approved by the City Manager; attendance in or a graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003; *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014; *Administrative Policy Manual*, Moorhead Fire Department; and the results from the questionnaire that the MFD leadership completed.

## Experience

My recommended experience requirements for each position are mostly consistent with our current experience requirements for promotions and closely follow the recommendations of IAFC and NFPA (*Officer Development Handbook*, 2003; National Fire Protection Association, 2014). The major change for our members will be that the employee must meet the requirements prior to being eligible for promotion.

Table 7 <i>Recommended Experience for MFD Positions</i>	
Position	Experience
Captain	5 years as a Firefighter
Senior Captain	2-4 years as a Captain
Shift Commander/ Assistant Chief	3-5 years as a Senior Captain
Fire Marshal/ Assistant Chief/ Emergency Manager	10 years with the Moorhead Fire Department
Training Officer/ Assistant Chief/PIO	10 years with the Moorhead Fire Department
Fire Chief	4 years as a Chief Officer

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003; *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014; *Administrative Policy Manual*, Moorhead Fire Department; and the results from the questionnaire that the MFD leadership completed.

### **Recommended Implementation**

This policy should be phased in over an initial two-year period so that employees can become familiar with the expectations. It is recommended that any additional changes also be phased in over another two years. For those in current officer positions, it is recommended but not required that they obtain the requirements for their position, unless they choose to advance. If choosing to advance, they will need to meet the entire requirement for the advanced position.

### **Future Research**

Future research in this area should focus on quantifying the successes and challenges of established career pathways. While the IAFC and NFPA provide good professional development guidance, the research has identified that there are many departments that haven't utilized all the recommendations. It is possible that as time goes by, more fire departments will adopt additional recommendations, increasing the validity of pathway data.

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Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts website:

<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

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## Appendix A

Fire Department Career Pathway	SurveyMonkey																																																																								
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Answered: 56 Skipped: 0																																																																									
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## Appendix A

Fire Department Career Pathway		SurveyMonkey
22	Colorado Springs	8/4/2015 10:58 PM
23	Evesham Fire-rescue	8/4/2015 9:39 AM
24	City of Albemarle	8/4/2015 7:03 AM
25	Pleasantview FPD	8/3/2015 8:32 PM
26	Miami Valley Fire District	8/3/2015 7:26 PM
27	Castle Rock Fire and Rescue	8/3/2015 3:31 PM
28	Oldsmar Fire Rescue	8/3/2015 1:32 PM
29	Richland Fire & Emergency Services	8/3/2015 1:18 PM
30	Nashua Fire Dept	8/3/2015 1:18 PM
31	Marin County Fire Department	8/3/2015 12:47 PM
32	Clark County FD	8/3/2015 12:38 PM
33	DC Fire & EMS	8/3/2015 11:47 AM
34	Dunedin Fire Rescue	8/3/2015 10:56 AM
35	Delhi Township Fire Department	8/3/2015 10:23 AM
36	Brevard County Fire Rescue	8/3/2015 10:20 AM
37	Ridgefield FD	8/3/2015 10:13 AM
38	Cedar Hill Fire Department	8/3/2015 10:04 AM
39	Watauga	8/3/2015 10:02 AM
40	Cedar Park Fire Department	8/3/2015 9:46 AM
41	Bemidji	8/3/2015 9:36 AM
42	Burlington	8/3/2015 9:19 AM
43	St. George Fire Protection District	8/3/2015 9:16 AM
44	Orange County Fire Rescue	8/3/2015 9:08 AM
45	St. Petersburg Fire & Rescue	8/3/2015 9:06 AM
46	Moorhead Fire Department	8/3/2015 9:03 AM
47	Sandoval County Fire Department	8/3/2015 9:00 AM
48	Lake County Fire Rescue	8/3/2015 8:34 AM
49	St. Cloud	8/3/2015 8:33 AM
50	Coon Rapids Fire	8/3/2015 8:29 AM
51	Orange County Fire Rescue	8/3/2015 8:26 AM
52	Conway Fire	8/3/2015 8:07 AM
53	Monroe Fire	8/3/2015 8:06 AM
54	Fargo Fire Department	8/3/2015 8:02 AM
55	Willoughby Fire Department	8/3/2015 8:02 AM
#	Address	Date
	There are no responses.	
#	Address 2	Date
	There are no responses.	
#	City/Town	Date
1	Edina	8/31/2015 11:39 AM
2	Fort Mojave	8/26/2015 12:17 PM

## Appendix A

Fire Department Career Pathway		SurveyMonkey
3	Rochester	8/26/2015 7:26 AM
4	Manhattan	8/25/2015 9:09 AM
5	Hopkins	8/25/2015 7:25 AM
6	Dekalb	8/25/2015 7:24 AM
7	Oldsmar	8/25/2015 7:01 AM
8	Cleveland	8/25/2015 6:16 AM
9	ROCHESTER	8/24/2015 11:05 PM
10	Little Falls	8/24/2015 9:53 PM
11	Virginia Beach	8/24/2015 9:25 PM
12	Sterling	8/24/2015 9:23 PM
13	Novato	8/19/2015 11:21 PM
14	Minneapolis St Paul	8/16/2015 7:44 AM
15	Sandusky	8/14/2015 2:24 PM
16	Shorewood	8/10/2015 5:30 PM
17	Spartanburg	8/8/2015 10:37 AM
18	Mankato	8/7/2015 11:20 AM
19	Larkspur	8/7/2015 9:47 AM
20	Garland	8/7/2015 7:31 AM
21	Gainesville	8/6/2015 8:39 PM
22	Colo. Springs	8/4/2015 10:58 PM
23	Evesham	8/4/2015 9:39 AM
24	Albemarle	8/4/2015 7:03 AM
25	LaGrange	8/3/2015 8:32 PM
26	Miamisburg	8/3/2015 7:26 PM
27	Castle Rock	8/3/2015 3:31 PM
28	Oldsmar	8/3/2015 1:32 PM
29	Richland	8/3/2015 1:18 PM
30	Nashua	8/3/2015 1:18 PM
31	N/A	8/3/2015 12:47 PM
32	Las Vegas	8/3/2015 12:38 PM
33	Washington	8/3/2015 11:47 AM
34	Dunedin	8/3/2015 10:56 AM
35	Cincinnati	8/3/2015 10:23 AM
36	Brevard County	8/3/2015 10:20 AM
37	Ridgefield	8/3/2015 10:13 AM
38	Cedar Hill	8/3/2015 10:04 AM
39	Watauga	8/3/2015 10:02 AM
40	Cedar Park	8/3/2015 9:46 AM
41	Bemidji	8/3/2015 9:36 AM
42	TRF	8/3/2015 9:32 AM
43	Town	8/3/2015 9:19 AM

## Appendix A

Fire Department Career Pathway		SurveyMonkey
44	Baton Rouge	8/3/2015 9:16 AM
45	Orlando	8/3/2015 9:08 AM
46	St. Petersburg	8/3/2015 9:06 AM
47	Moorhead	8/3/2015 9:03 AM
48	Bernalillo	8/3/2015 9:00 AM
49	Tavares	8/3/2015 8:34 AM
50	St. Cloud	8/3/2015 8:33 AM
51	Coon Rapids	8/3/2015 8:29 AM
52	Winter Park	8/3/2015 8:26 AM
53	Conway	8/3/2015 8:07 AM
54	Monroe	8/3/2015 8:06 AM
55	Fargo	8/3/2015 8:02 AM
56	Willoughby	8/3/2015 8:02 AM
#	<b>State/Province</b>	<b>Date</b>
1	MN	8/31/2015 11:39 AM
2	AZ	8/26/2015 12:17 PM
3	MN	8/26/2015 7:26 AM
4	KS	8/25/2015 9:09 AM
5	MN	8/25/2015 7:25 AM
6	IL	8/25/2015 7:24 AM
7	FL	8/25/2015 7:01 AM
8	OH	8/25/2015 6:16 AM
9	NY	8/24/2015 11:05 PM
10	MN	8/24/2015 9:53 PM
11	VA	8/24/2015 9:25 PM
12	CO	8/24/2015 9:23 PM
13	CA	8/19/2015 11:21 PM
14	MN	8/16/2015 7:44 AM
15	OH	8/14/2015 2:24 PM
16	MN	8/10/2015 5:30 PM
17	SC	8/8/2015 10:37 AM
18	MN	8/7/2015 11:20 AM
19	CO	8/7/2015 9:47 AM
20	TX	8/7/2015 7:31 AM
21	FL	8/6/2015 8:39 PM
22	CO	8/4/2015 10:58 PM
23	NJ	8/4/2015 9:39 AM
24	NC	8/4/2015 7:03 AM
25	IL	8/3/2015 8:32 PM
26	OH	8/3/2015 7:26 PM
27	CO	8/3/2015 3:31 PM

## Appendix A

Fire Department Career Pathway		SurveyMonkey
28	FL	8/3/2015 1:32 PM
29	WA	8/3/2015 1:18 PM
30	NH	8/3/2015 1:18 PM
31	CA	8/3/2015 12:47 PM
32	NV	8/3/2015 12:38 PM
33	DC	8/3/2015 11:47 AM
34	FL	8/3/2015 10:56 AM
35	OH	8/3/2015 10:23 AM
36	FL	8/3/2015 10:20 AM
37	CT	8/3/2015 10:13 AM
38	TX	8/3/2015 10:04 AM
39	TX	8/3/2015 10:02 AM
40	TX	8/3/2015 9:46 AM
41	MN	8/3/2015 9:36 AM
42	MN	8/3/2015 9:32 AM
43	MA	8/3/2015 9:19 AM
44	LA	8/3/2015 9:16 AM
45	FL	8/3/2015 9:08 AM
46	FL	8/3/2015 9:06 AM
47	MN	8/3/2015 9:03 AM
48	NM	8/3/2015 9:00 AM
49	FL	8/3/2015 8:34 AM
50	MN	8/3/2015 8:33 AM
51	MN	8/3/2015 8:29 AM
52	FL	8/3/2015 8:26 AM
53	AR	8/3/2015 8:07 AM
54	GA	8/3/2015 8:06 AM
55	ND	8/3/2015 8:02 AM
56	OH	8/3/2015 8:02 AM
#	ZIP/Postal Code	Date
	There are no responses.	
#	Country	Date
	There are no responses.	
#	Email Address	Date
	There are no responses.	
#	Phone Number	Date
	There are no responses.	

## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway	SurveyMonkey
<b>Q1 Community Information</b>	
Answered: 56 Skipped: 0	
Answer Choices	Responses
Name	0.00% 0
Fire Department	98.21% 55
Address	0.00% 0
Address 2	0.00% 0
City/Town	100.00% 56
State/Province	100.00% 56
ZIP/Postal Code	0.00% 0
Country	0.00% 0
Email Address	0.00% 0
Phone Number	0.00% 0

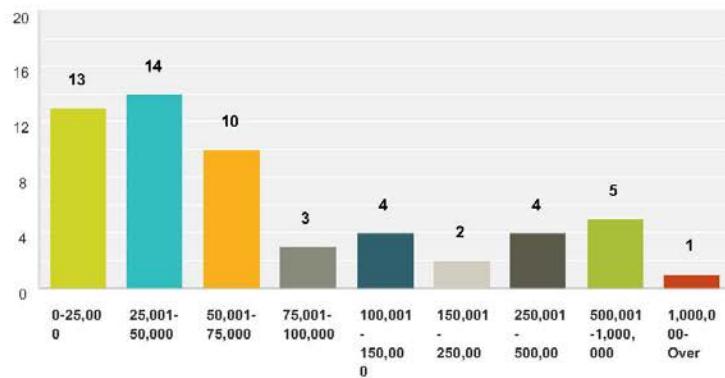
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q2 What is the size of your community?

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



Answer Choices	Responses
0-25,000	23.21% 13
25,001-50,000	25.00% 14
50,001-75,000	17.86% 10
75,001-100,000	5.36% 3
100,001-150,000	7.14% 4
150,001-250,000	3.57% 2
250,001-500,000	7.14% 4
500,001-1,000,000	8.93% 5
1,000,000-Over	1.79% 1
<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>

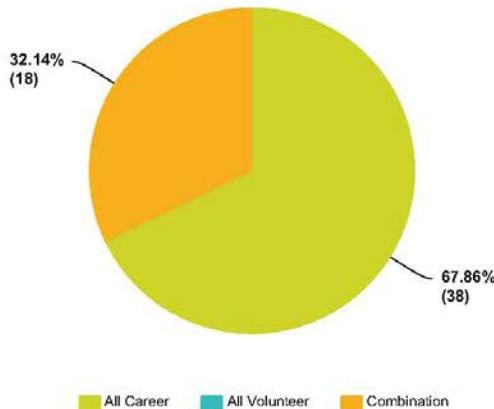
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q3 Organization

Answered: 56 Skipped: 0



All Career    All Volunteer    Combination

Answer Choices	Responses	
All Career	67.86%	38
All Volunteer	0.00%	0
Combination	32.14%	18
<b>Total</b>		<b>56</b>

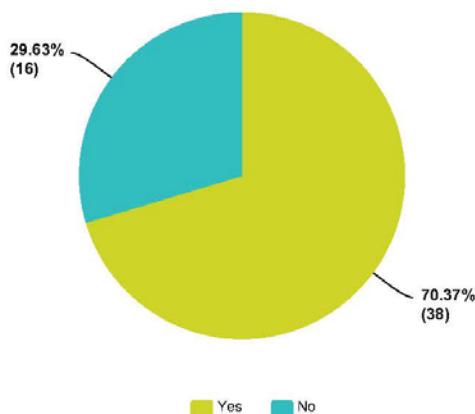
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

**Q4 Does your organization have a defined pathway/guide/SOG/policy/etc. for informing firefighter what is required to become an officer in your organization?**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	70.37%	38
No	29.63%	16
Total		54

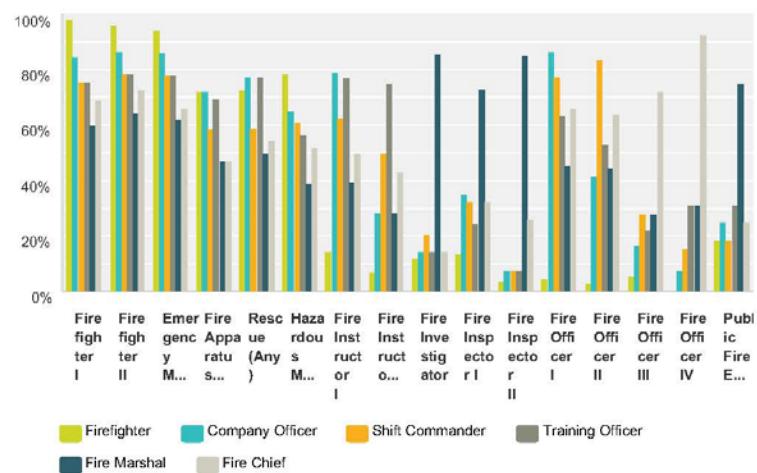
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

**Q5 Please check any required and/or desired certification (IFSAC, Pro Board, or any state certification) for each position in your organization. You may select more than one certification for each position.**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1



	Firefighter	Company Officer	Shift Commander	Training Officer	Fire Marshal	Fire Chief	Total Respondents
Firefighter I	97.78% 44	84.44% 38	75.56% 34	75.56% 34	60.00% 27	68.89% 31	45
Firefighter II	96.08% 49	86.27% 44	78.43% 40	78.43% 40	64.71% 33	72.55% 37	51
Emergency Medical Technician	94.00% 47	86.00% 43	78.00% 39	78.00% 39	62.00% 31	66.00% 33	50
Fire Apparatus Operator	72.22% 26	72.22% 26	58.33% 21	69.44% 25	47.22% 17	47.22% 17	36
Rescue (Any)	72.73% 16	77.27% 17	59.09% 13	77.27% 17	50.00% 11	54.55% 12	22
Hazardous Materials Technician	78.26% 18	65.22% 15	60.87% 14	56.52% 13	39.13% 9	52.17% 12	23
Fire Instructor I	14.58% 7	79.17% 38	62.50% 30	77.08% 37	39.58% 19	50.00% 24	48
Fire Instructor II	7.14% 2	28.57% 8	50.00% 14	75.00% 21	28.57% 8	42.86% 12	28
Fire Investigator	11.76% 4	14.71% 5	20.59% 7	14.71% 5	85.29% 29	14.71% 5	34
Fire Inspector I	13.51% 5	35.14% 13	32.43% 12	24.32% 9	72.97% 27	32.43% 12	37

## Appendix B

### Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

Fire Inspector II	3.70% 1	7.41% 2	7.41% 2	7.41% 2	85.19% 23	25.93% 7	27
Fire Officer I	4.55% 2	86.36% 38	77.27% 34	63.64% 28	45.45% 20	65.91% 29	44
Fire Officer II	2.78% 1	41.67% 15	83.33% 30	52.78% 19	44.44% 16	63.89% 23	36
Fire Officer III	5.56% 1	16.67% 3	27.78% 5	22.22% 4	27.78% 5	72.22% 13	18
Fire Officer IV	0.00% 0	7.69% 1	15.38% 2	30.77% 4	30.77% 4	92.31% 12	13
Public Fire Educator I	18.75% 3	25.00% 4	18.75% 3	31.25% 5	75.00% 12	25.00% 4	16

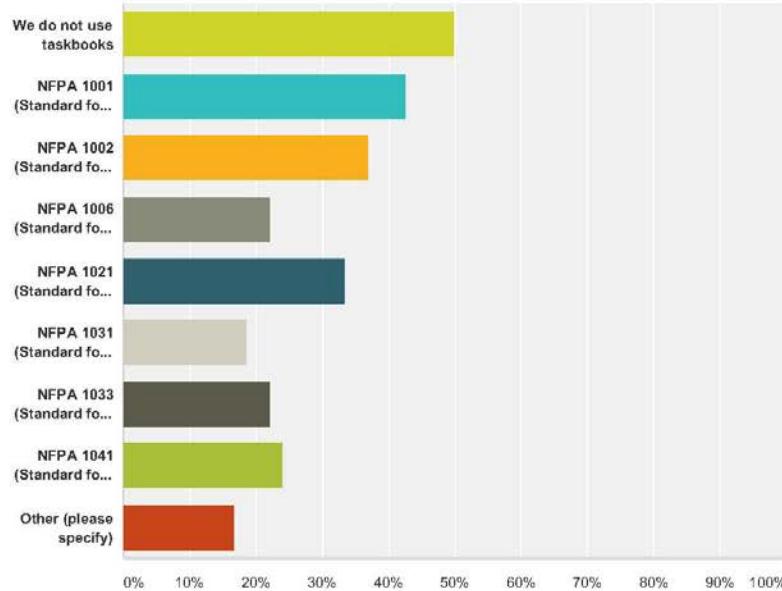
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

**Q6 Please select any NFPA skill verification taskbook that you utilize.**

Answered: 54 Skipped: 2



Answer Choices	Responses
We do not use taskbooks	50.00% 27
NFPA 1001 (Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications)	42.59% 23
NFPA 1002 (Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications)	37.04% 20
NFPA 1006 (Standard for Technical Rescuer Professional Qualifications)	22.22% 12
NFPA 1021 (Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualifications)	33.33% 18
NFPA 1031 (Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Inspector and Plan Examiner)	18.52% 10
NFPA 1033 (Standard for Professional Qualifications for Fire Investigator)	22.22% 12
NFPA 1041 (Standard for Fire Service Instructor Professional Qualifications)	24.07% 13
Other (please specify)	16.57% 9
<b>Total Respondents: 54</b>	

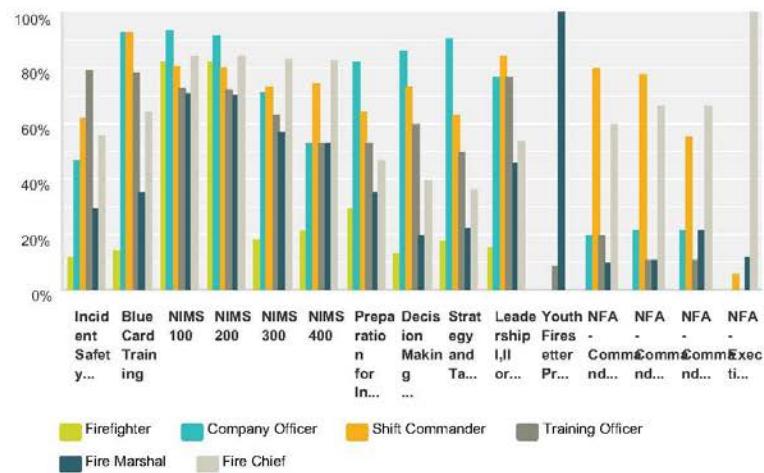
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

**Q7 Please check any training classes that you require for each position in your organization. You may select more than one training class for each position.**

Answered: 53 Skipped: 3



	Firefighter	Company Officer	Shift Commander	Training Officer	Fire Marshal	Fire Chief	Total Respondents
Incident Safety Officer	11.76% 4	47.06% 16	61.76% 21	79.41% 27	29.41% 10	55.88% 19	34
Blue Card Training	14.29% 2	92.86% 13	92.86% 13	78.57% 11	35.71% 5	64.29% 9	14
NIMS 100	82.69% 43	94.23% 49	80.77% 42	73.08% 38	71.15% 37	84.62% 44	52
NIMS 200	82.35% 42	92.16% 47	80.39% 41	72.55% 37	70.59% 36	84.31% 43	51
NIMS 300	18.37% 9	71.43% 35	73.47% 36	63.27% 31	57.14% 28	83.67% 41	49
NIMS 400	21.28% 10	53.19% 25	74.47% 35	53.19% 25	53.19% 25	82.98% 39	47
Preparation for Initial Company Officers	29.41% 5	82.35% 14	64.71% 11	52.94% 9	35.29% 6	47.06% 8	17
Decision Making for Initial Company Officers	13.33% 2	86.67% 13	73.33% 11	60.00% 9	20.00% 3	40.00% 6	15
Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Officers	18.18% 4	90.91% 20	63.64% 14	50.00% 11	22.73% 5	36.36% 8	22
Leadership I, II or III for Fire and EMS	15.38% 2	76.92% 10	84.62% 11	76.92% 10	46.15% 6	53.85% 7	13
Youth Firesetter Prevention Specialist	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	9.09% 1	100.00% 11	0.00% 0	11

## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway	SurveyMonkey						
NFA - Command and Control of Fire Department Operations at Multi Alarm Incidents	0.00% 0	20.00% 2	80.00% 8	20.00% 2	10.00% 1	60.00% 6	10
NFA - Command and Control of Target Hazards	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	77.78% 7	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	66.67% 6	9
NFA - Command and Control of Natural and Man-Made Disasters	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	55.56% 5	11.11% 1	22.22% 2	66.67% 6	9
NFA - Executive Fire Officer Program	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5.88% 1	0.00% 0	11.76% 2	100.00% 17	17

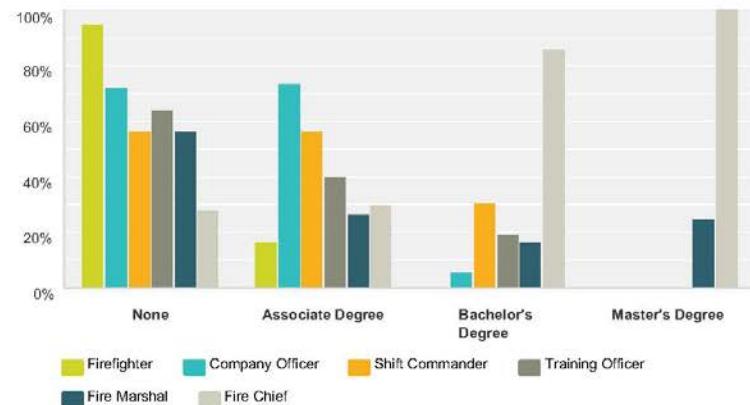
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q8 What are your formal education requirements for each position?

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1



	Firefighter	Company Officer	Shift Commander	Training Officer	Fire Marshal	Fire Chief	Total Respondents
None	94.87% 37	71.79% 28	56.41% 22	64.10% 25	56.41% 22	28.21% 11	39
Associate Degree	16.67% 5	73.33% 22	56.67% 17	40.00% 12	26.67% 8	30.00% 9	30
Bachelor's Degree	0.00% 0	5.56% 2	30.56% 11	19.44% 7	16.67% 6	86.11% 31	36
Master's Degree	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 2	100.00% 8	8

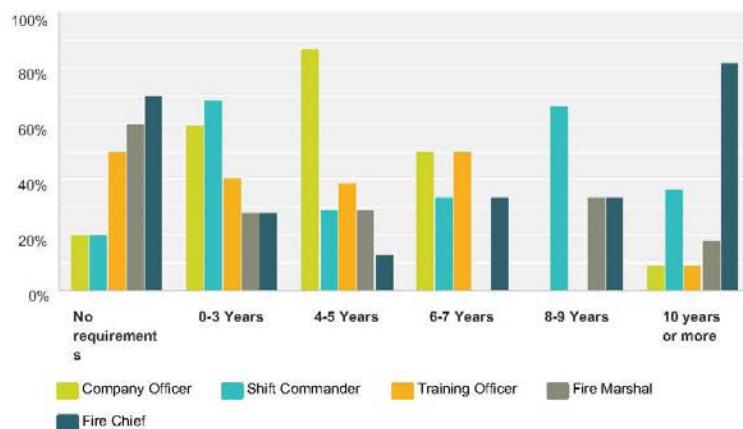
## Appendix B

Fire Department Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

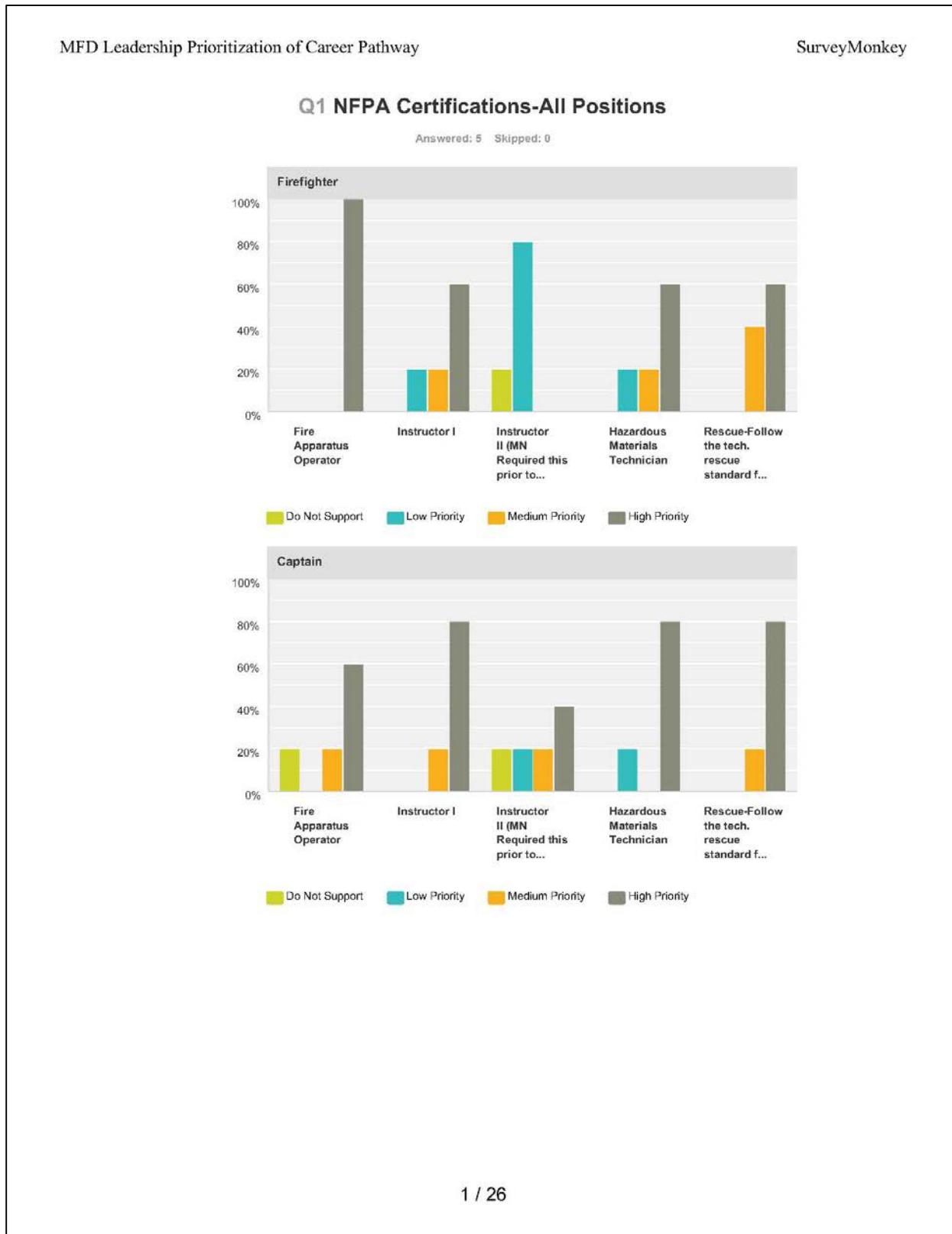
**Q10 How long must the employee hold the previous position before being eligible for that position?**

Answered: 55 Skipped: 1

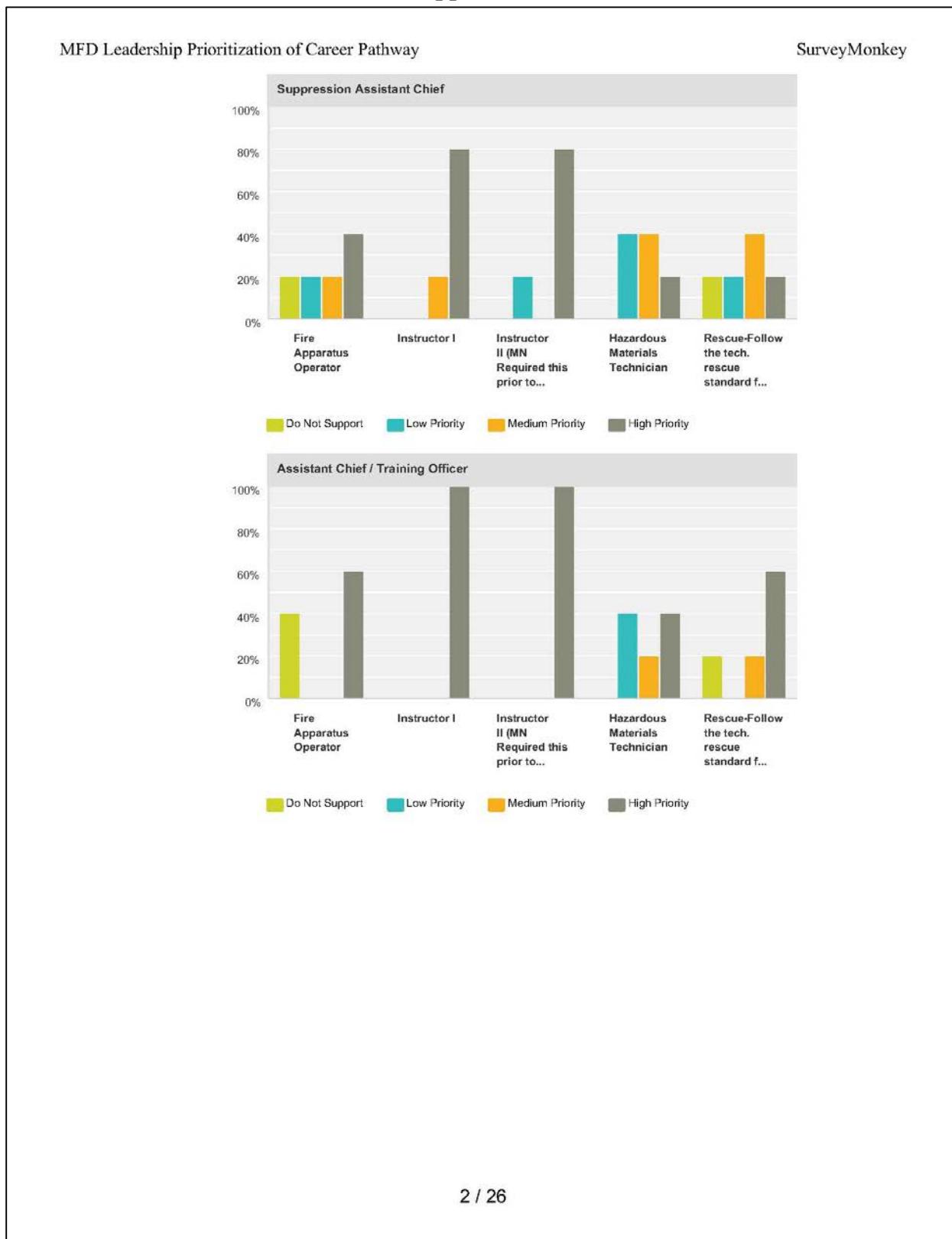


	Company Officer	Shift Commander	Training Officer	Fire Marshal	Fire Chief	Total Respondents
No requirements	20.00% 4	20.00% 4	50.00% 10	60.00% 12	70.00% 14	20
0-3 Years	59.38% 19	68.75% 22	40.63% 13	28.13% 9	28.13% 9	32
4-5 Years	87.10% 27	29.03% 9	38.71% 12	29.03% 9	12.90% 4	31
6-7 Years	50.00% 3	33.33% 2	50.00% 3	0.00% 0	33.33% 2	6
8-9 Years	0.00% 0	66.67% 2	0.00% 0	33.33% 1	33.33% 1	3
10 years or more	9.09% 1	36.36% 4	9.09% 1	18.18% 2	81.82% 9	11

## Appendix C



## Appendix C



## Appendix C



## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway						SurveyMonkey
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Apparatus Operator	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	5	
Instructor I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	5	
Instructor II (MN Required this prior to testing for Officer III)	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	5	
Hazardous Materials Technician	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	80.00% 4	5	
Rescue-Follow the tech. rescue standard for implementation	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	5	
<b>Suppression Assistant Chief</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Apparatus Operator	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	5	
Instructor I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	5	
Instructor II (MN Required this prior to testing for Officer III)	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	80.00% 4	5	
Hazardous Materials Technician	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	5	
Rescue-Follow the tech. rescue standard for implementation	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	5	
<b>Assistant Chief / Training Officer</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Apparatus Operator	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	60.00% 3	5	
Instructor I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5	
Instructor II (MN Required this prior to testing for Officer III)	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5	
Hazardous Materials Technician	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	5	
Rescue-Follow the tech. rescue standard for implementation	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	5	
<b>Assistant Chief / Fire Marshal / Emergency Manager</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Apparatus Operator	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	5	
Instructor I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	5	
Instructor II (MN Required this prior to testing for Officer III)	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	60.00% 3	5	
Hazardous Materials Technician	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	5	
Rescue-Follow the tech. rescue standard for implementation	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5	
<b>Fire Chief</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	

## Appendix C

### MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

	60.00% 3	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	5
Instructor I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	5
Instructor II (MN Required this prior to testing for Officer III)	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	60.00% 3	5
Hazardous Materials Technician	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	5
Rescue-Follow the tech. rescue standard for implementation	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5

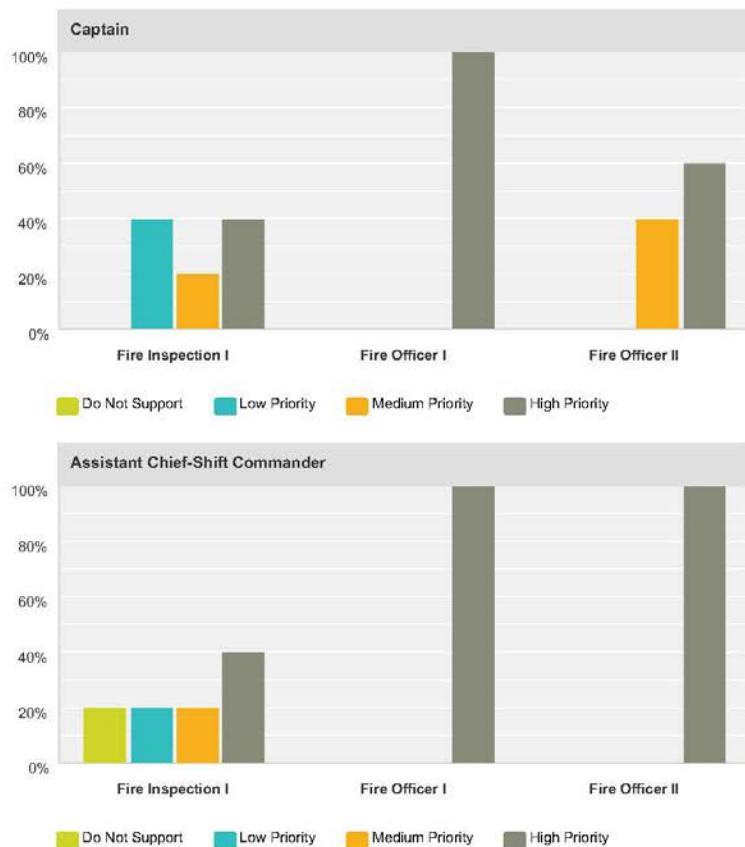
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

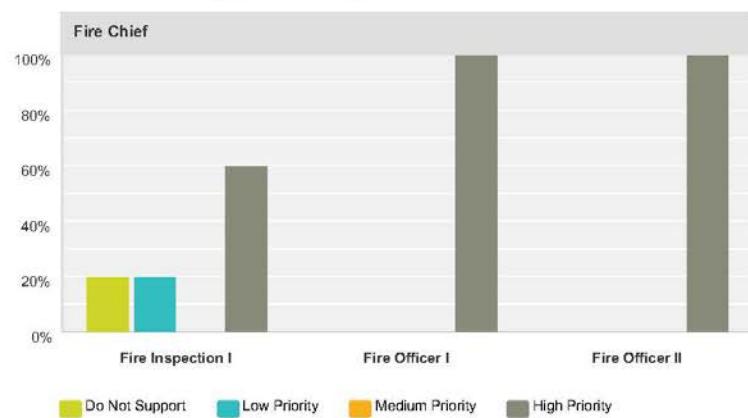
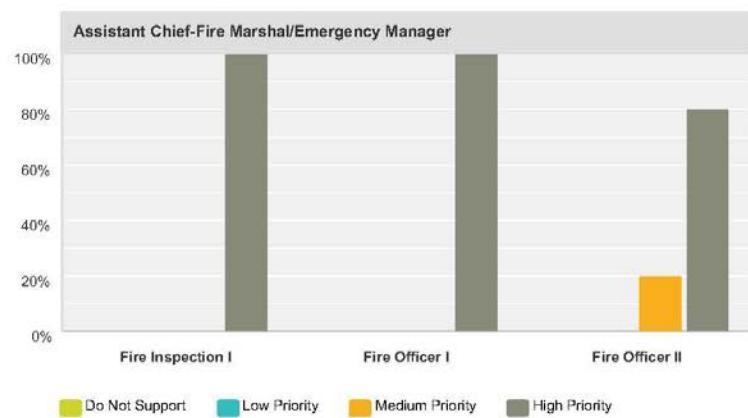
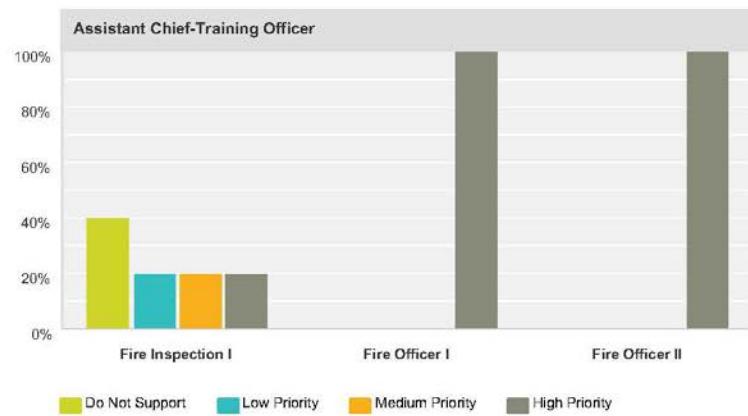
### Q2 NFPA Certifications-For Captain and Above

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway SurveyMonkey



Captain	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total

## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway						SurveyMonkey
Fire Inspection I	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	40.00% 2		5
Fire Officer I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
Fire Officer II	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3		5
<b>Assistant Chief-Shift Commander</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Inspection I	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	40.00% 2		5
Fire Officer I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
Fire Officer II	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
<b>Assistant Chief-Training Officer</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Inspection I	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1		5
Fire Officer I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
Fire Officer II	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
<b>Assistant Chief-Fire Marshal/Emergency Manager</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Inspection I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
Fire Officer I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
Fire Officer II	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4		5
<b>Fire Chief</b>						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Fire Inspection I	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	60.00% 3		5
Fire Officer I	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5
Fire Officer II	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5		5

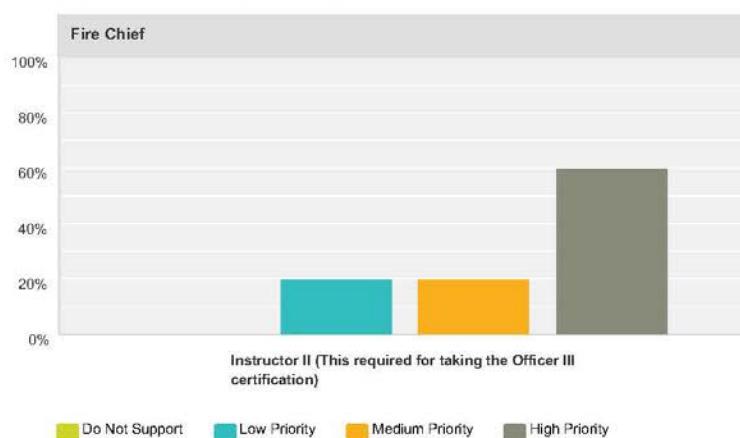
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q3 NFPA Certification-Assistant Chief's and Fire Chief

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



Assistant Chief-Training Officer					
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Instructor II (This required for taking the Officer III certification)	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	5
Fire Chief					
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Instructor II (This required for taking the Officer III certification)	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	5

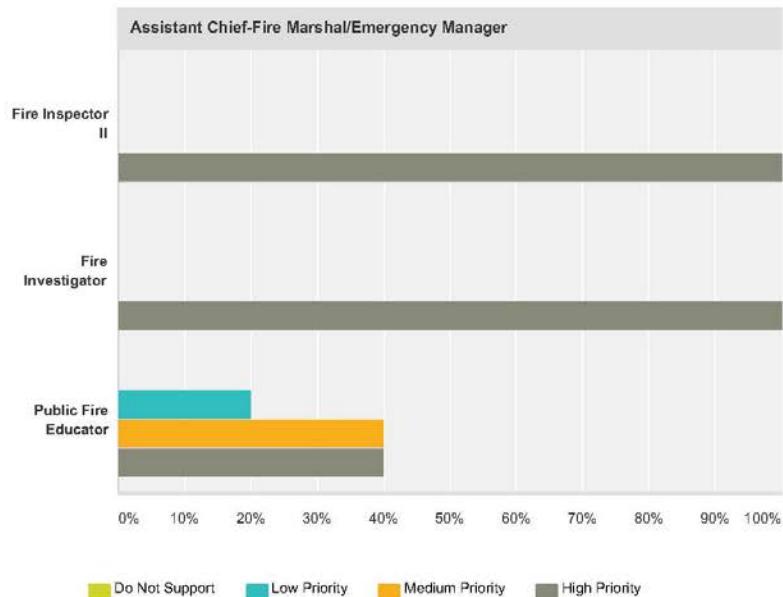
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q4 NFPA Certifications- Fire Marshal/Emergency Manager

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



Assistant Chief-Fire Marshal/Emergency Manager					
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Fire Inspector II	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5
Fire Investigator	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5
Public Fire Educator	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	40.00% 2	5

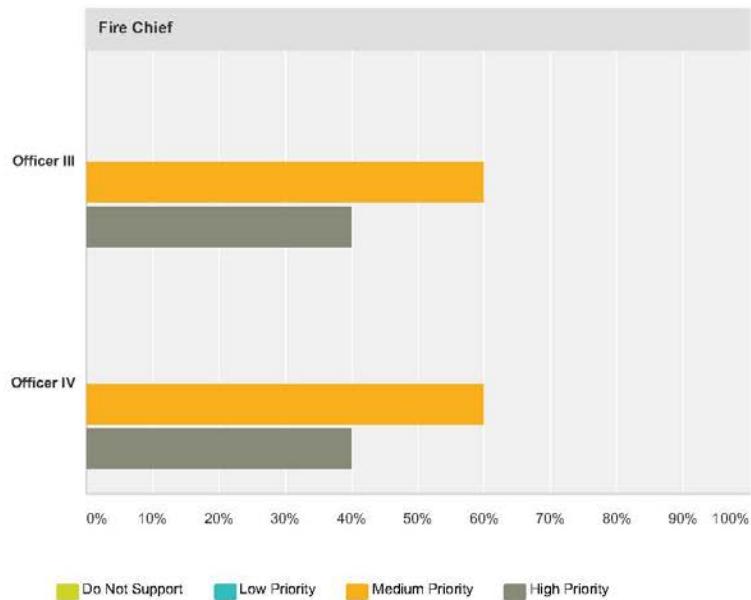
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q5 NFPA Certifications-Fire Chief

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



Fire Chief		Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Officer	Category	0.00%	0.00%	60.00%	40.00%	5
Officer III	Do Not Support	0.00%	0	60.00%	3	5
Officer IV	Do Not Support	0.00%	0	60.00%	3	5

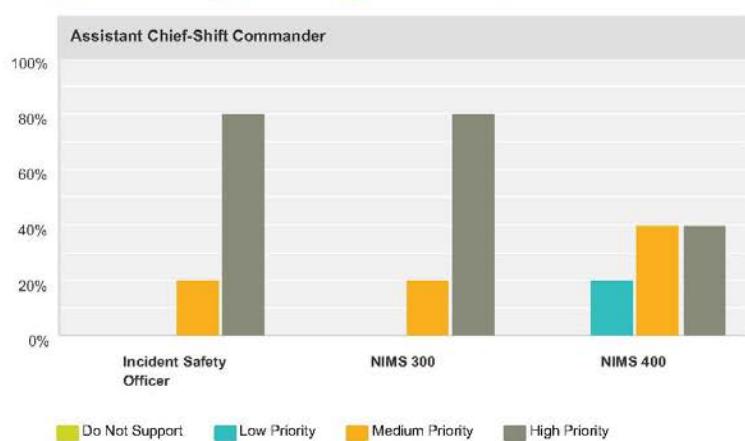
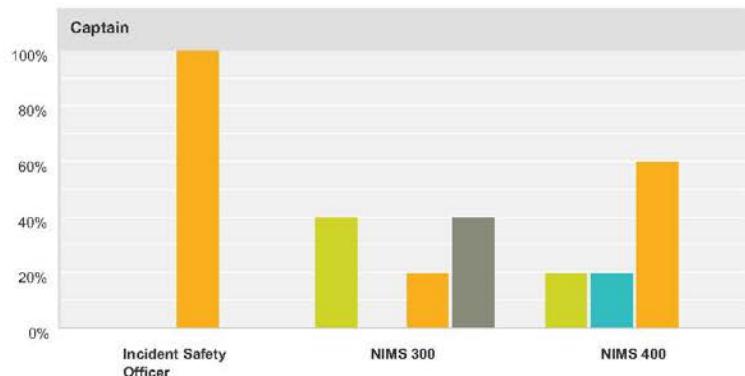
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q6 Training Classes-Captains and Above

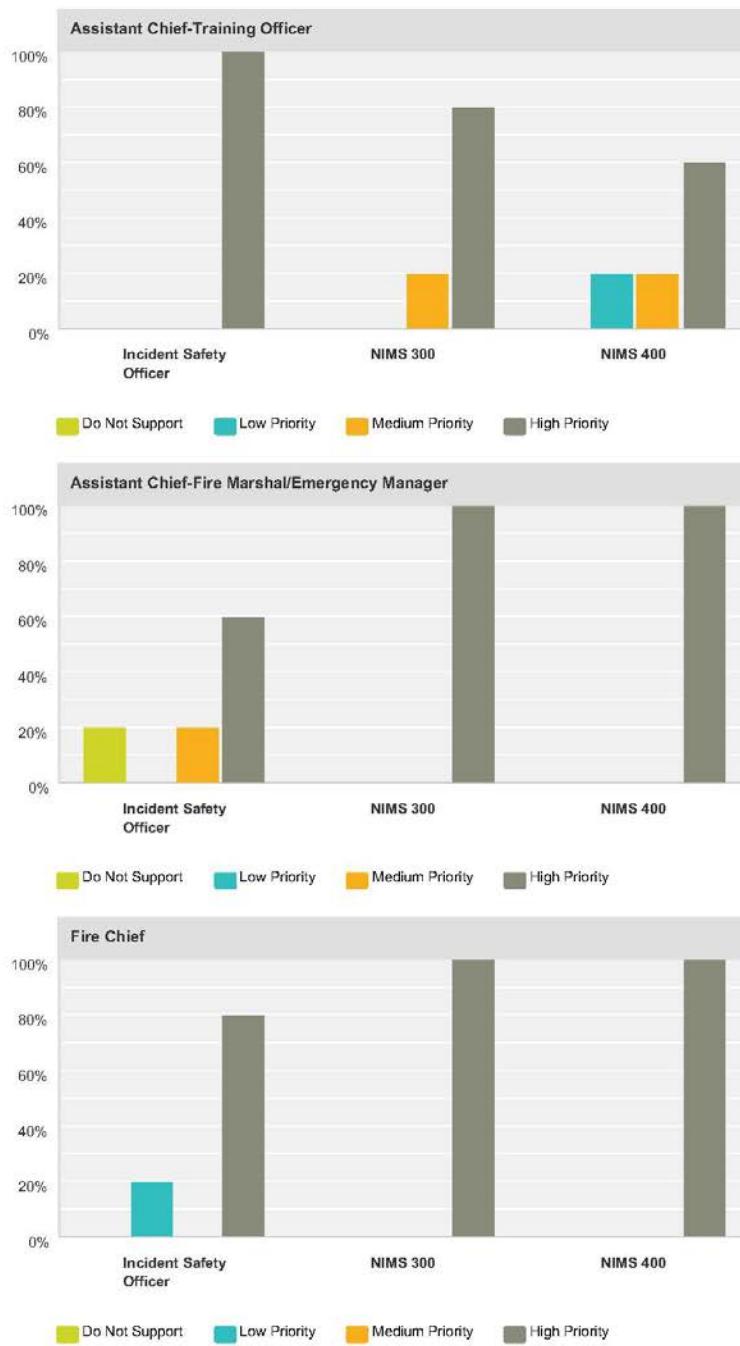
Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



## Appendix C

### MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey



## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway						SurveyMonkey
Captain						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Incident Safety Officer	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	0.00% 0	5	
NIMS 300	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	5	
NIMS 400	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	0.00% 0	5	
Assistant Chief-Shift Commander						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Incident Safety Officer	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	5	
NIMS 300	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	5	
NIMS 400	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	40.00% 2	5	
Assistant Chief-Training Officer						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Incident Safety Officer	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5	
NIMS 300	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	5	
NIMS 400	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	5	
Assistant Chief-Fire Marshal/Emergency Manager						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Incident Safety Officer	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	5	
NIMS 300	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5	
NIMS 400	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5	
Fire Chief						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Incident Safety Officer	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	80.00% 4	5	
NIMS 300	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 4	4	
NIMS 400	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	100.00% 5	5	

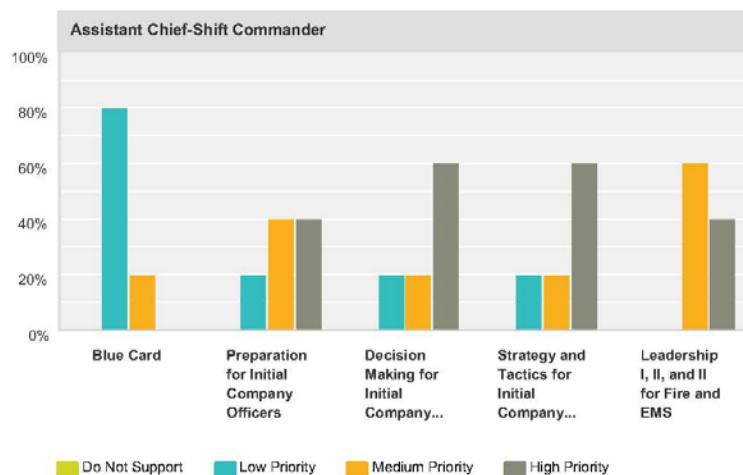
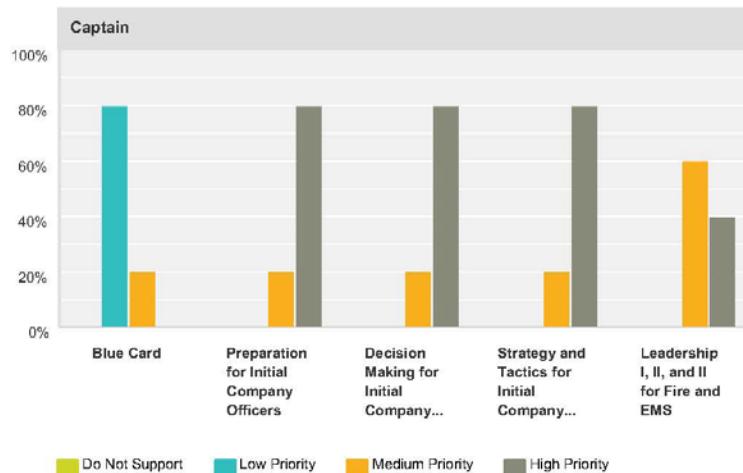
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q7 Training Classes-Captains, Shift Commander, Training Officer

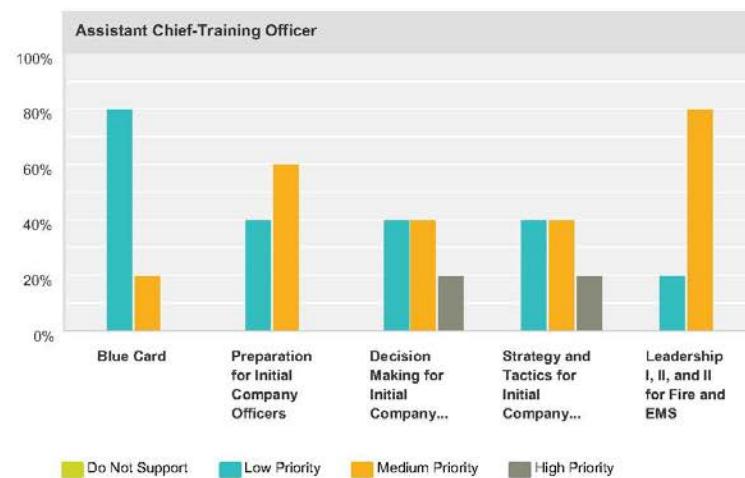
Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



## Appendix C

### MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey



### Captain

	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Blue Card	0.00%	80.00%	20.00%	0.00%	5
Preparation for Initial Company Officers	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	5
Decision Making for Initial Company Officers	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	5
Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Officers	0.00%	0.00%	20.00%	80.00%	5
Leadership I, II, and III for Fire and EMS	0.00%	0.00%	60.00%	40.00%	5

### Assistant Chief-Shift Commander

	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Blue Card	0.00%	80.00%	20.00%	0.00%	5
Preparation for Initial Company Officers	0.00%	20.00%	40.00%	40.00%	5
Decision Making for Initial Company Officers	0.00%	20.00%	20.00%	60.00%	5
Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Officers	0.00%	20.00%	20.00%	60.00%	5
Leadership I, II, and III for Fire and EMS	0.00%	0.00%	60.00%	40.00%	5

### Assistant Chief-Training Officer

	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Blue Card	0.00%	80.00%	20.00%	0.00%	5
Preparation for Initial Company Officers	0.00%	40.00%	60.00%	0.00%	5

## Appendix C

### MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway SurveyMonkey

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway	SurveyMonkey				
Decision Making for Initial Company Officers	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	5
Strategy and Tactics for Initial Company Officers	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	5
Leadership I, II, and II for Fire and EMS	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	0.00% 0	5

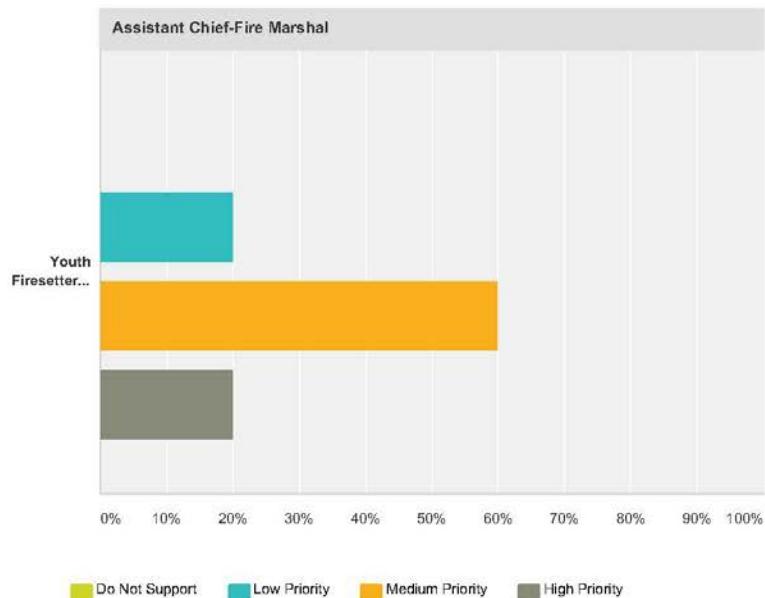
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q8 Training Classes-Fire Marshal

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



Assistant Chief-Fire Marshal					
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Youth Firesetter Prevention Specialist	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	60.00% 3	20.00% 1	5

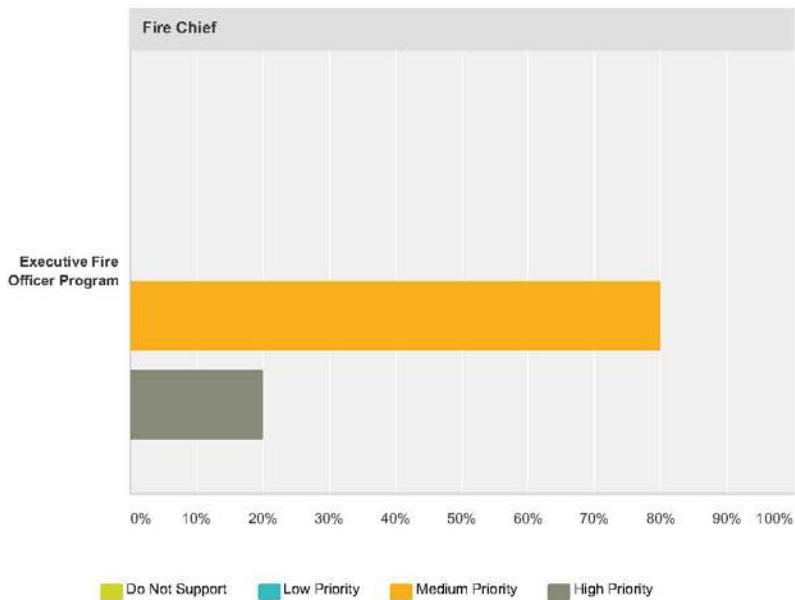
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q9 Training Classes-Fire Chief

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



Fire Chief	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total
Executive Fire Officer Program	0.00%	0.00%	80.00%	20.00%	5

## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

### Q10 Education Requirements

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



## Appendix C



## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway						SurveyMonkey
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Associate Degree	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	5	
Bachelor's Degree	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	60.00% 3	40.00% 2	5	
Masters's Degree	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	5	
Assistant Chief-Fire Marshal/Emergency Manager						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Associate Degree	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	5	
Bachelor's Degree	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	5	
Masters's Degree	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	5	
Fire Chief						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
Associate Degree	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	5	
Bachelor's Degree	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	80.00% 4	5	
Masters's Degree	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2	40.00% 2	5	

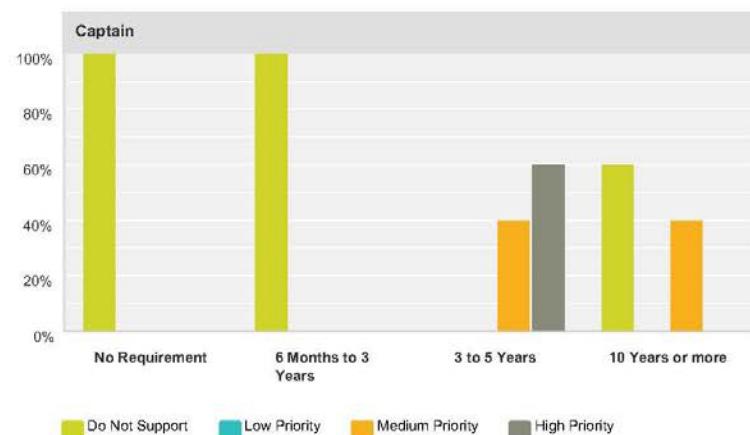
## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway

SurveyMonkey

**Q11 Experience in previous position before being eligible to promote. The four options list below were the most common selected by fire departments from across the country.**

Answered: 5 Skipped: 0



## Appendix C



## Appendix C

MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway						SurveyMonkey
Captain						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
No Requirement	100.00% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
6 Months to 3 Years	100.00% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
3 to 5 Years	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	60.00% 3		5
10 Years or more	60.00% 3	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	0.00% 0		5
Assistant Chief-Shift Commander						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
No Requirement	100.00% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
6 Months to 3 Years	60.00% 3	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
3 to 5 Years	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2		5
10 Years or more	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	40.00% 2		5
Assistant Chief-Training Officer						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
No Requirement	100.00% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
6 Months to 3 Years	40.00% 2	60.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
3 to 5 Years	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	80.00% 4		5
10 Years or more	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	40.00% 2		5
Assistant Chief-Fire Marshal/Emergency Manager						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
No Requirement	80.00% 4	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
6 Months to 3 Years	60.00% 3	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 1		5
3 to 5 Years	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	60.00% 3		5
10 Years or more	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	40.00% 2		5
Fire Chief						
	Do Not Support	Low Priority	Medium Priority	High Priority	Total	
No Requirement	100.00% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
6 Months to 3 Years	80.00% 4	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5
3 to 5 Years	60.00% 3	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	5

**Appendix C****MFD Leadership Prioritization of Career Pathway** SurveyMonkey

10 Years or more	0	0.00%	0	20.00%	1	80.00%	4	5
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## Appendix D

### MOORHEAD FIRE DEPARTMENT STANDARDS

**SUBJECT:** Career Pathway  
**DATE DRAFTED:** 7-31-2015  
**DATE EFFECTIVE:**  
**DATE REVISED:**

#### Purpose

As an organization prepares for its future, it is imperative to examine how to develop its leadership. Well-prepared fire service leaders prepare for safe communities and direct security movements within our nation. Without proper development, those future leaders cannot optimally execute that function. It is professional development and succession planning that ensures the proper steps are taken to develop optimal skillsets and knowledge. Part of succession planning is creating career pathways or plans that define for an employee what the organization desires for any advanced position. These pathways foster employee awareness and in turn aid employee initiative. While costly, in order to retain the most talented employees it is important to develop them internally, investing in their and the organization's future.

The goal of this policy is to identify and communicate a career pathway for each position within the MFD that aligns with our department's mission statement. This would allow both the organization and our staff to reach the highest results with limited resources.

#### Background and Significance

In 2005, MFD increased staffing from 31 members to 37 members for the eventual implementation of a third station. While it has not been implemented yet, when that third station is added, highly qualified personnel will immediately be needed for the expansion. This professional development need is in addition to any expected retirements.

Over the years, MFD has struggled with guiding and developing its members. This issue led to the applied research paper, *The Potential of Succession Planning for the Moorhead Fire Department*.<sup>1</sup> The paper discussed the potential of the organization implementing a competency based model in the future, i.e. a career pathway. At that time, I discussed the importance of first identifying departmental support for succession planning, establishing the department's value system, and then creating a competency model. In 2013, MFD spent considerable time identifying its organizational mission, vision, and value statements. That work paved the way for our organization being able to progress toward creating career pathways, however as of July 2015, those pathways have not yet been created. The Mission of the Moorhead Fire Department is "to provide our community with trusted and dedicated

<sup>1</sup> Chad Stangeland, *The Potential of Succession Planning for Moorhead Fire Department* (Emmitsburg, MD: National Fire Academy, 2012).

## Appendix D

professionals who work to ensure a high level of public safety through education, cooperation, and incident response.”<sup>2</sup> High levels come from high preparation.

**Figure 1. Comparison of Expected Retirements**

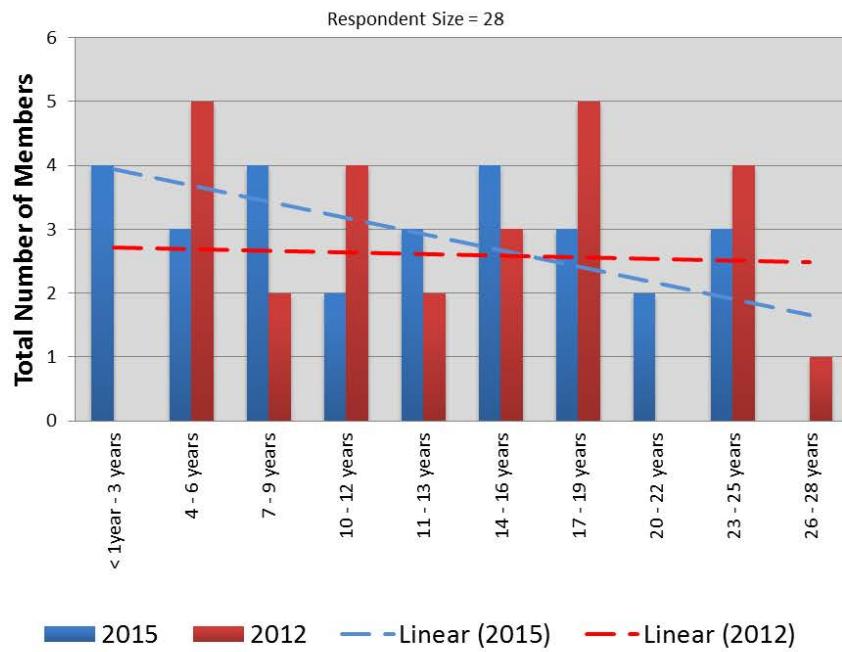


Figure 1. Comparison of Expected Retirements. This graph represents the number of Moorhead Fire Department members who expect to retire in the given time period, conducted in 2015 and three years earlier in 2012.

Despite a lack of career pathways, MFD anticipates a number of upcoming retirements, many of them officers. Therefore, we have a dire need for prepared employees to succeed those officer positions. As shown in Figure 1, there is an upward trend of employees moving toward retirement, with the window for implementing a succession plan closing. Without a plan, we will be left quite vulnerable as officers retire.

While MFD needs to implement career pathways and a succession plan, we currently do not have a financial plan to achieve full implementation. The 2015 MFD training budget is

<sup>2</sup> "Moorhead Fire Department," City of Moorhead, accessed July 24, 2015, <http://www.cityofmoorhead.com/departments/fire>.

## Appendix D

\$124,938,<sup>3</sup> which attempts to support professional development activities such as higher education, National Fire Academy (NFA) classes, professional certifications, training that meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) professional competencies, and departmental in-service training. This budget does not sufficiently fund all professional development requests by MFD members.<sup>4</sup>

### **Additional Potential Problems**

Without an explicit professional development plan and support for it, our employees with potential to develop into good leaders may become disheartened with our organization. This would lead to less people exploring advancement opportunities and those who are promoted would not have the needed skills to be successful in their positions. When educational or training opportunities are limited, who should be allowed those opportunities and how should we avoid the perception of favoritism? When an individual is denied reimbursement for higher education classes, it will become a union/management issue due to a tuition reimbursement clause in our contract.<sup>5</sup> This could result in a lawsuit or a denial of all college class reimbursements.

### **The Goal of the Policy**

It is the goal of this policy that we have a career pathway that will develop better-qualified and more motivated officer candidates. They will possess the necessary skills and experiences for success, which in turn will affect the service provided to our community. Employees will know what is required of them and use self-motivation to prepare for advancement. The money that is spent on their preparation for officer positions will result in less money spent later training the entire department in a subject matter; officers will be able to use their new knowledge and skills to train their firefighters during shift.

<sup>3</sup> City of Moorhead, 2015 *Detail Budget* (Moorhead, MN: n.p., n.d.), 32, accessed August 31, 2015, <http://www.cityofmoorhead.com/government/budget>.

<sup>4</sup> Jeff Wallin, interview by the author, Moorhead Fire Station, Moorhead, MN, July 15, 2015.

<sup>5</sup> The IAFF local 1323 union contract is only available by request through the City of Moorhead, Human Resources department.

## Appendix D

### What is a Career Pathway?

A career pathway is an instrument to create the road map. It provides the guidance for success within an organization. It defines a path for what the organization desires an individual to attain for each position, providing clarity for employees as they develop themselves for the future. In turn, as employees understand how their career aspirations fit into the needs of the organization, a higher level of personal commitment is formed, fostering the success of the organization.<sup>6</sup> The objective of the career pathway is to make the organization and its employees more successful. Career pathways provide greater oversight of succession planning, and employers who actively align career pathways with their organizational goals have better retention rates.<sup>7</sup>

### Benefits of a Career Pathway

Having an identified career pathway to follow creates positive results for both the individual and the organization.<sup>8</sup> Developing the proper leadership helps to ensure highly qualified, credible, motivated, and loyal employees.<sup>9</sup> According to the International Association of Fire Chiefs: Officer Development Handbook, "... fire service managers must increase their professional standing in order to remain credible to community policy makers and the public. This professionalism should be grounded firmly in an integrated system of nationally recognized and/or certified education and training."<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, employees start to become entrepreneurial about their careers as they take responsibility for their own futures.<sup>11</sup> As employees have opportunities to develop new competencies, they make themselves more valuable to their present organizations.<sup>12</sup> Each competency can be part of a blueprint for each level of the organization, a transparent guide of the necessary skills to fulfill each position. Competency models guide employees in abiding by the organization's cultural norms and they foster their individual accountability.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Gaffney, "Career Development as a Retention," 8.

<sup>7</sup> William J. Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession Management: Developing Your Organization's Talent--for Today and Tomorrow* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005), 37.

<sup>8</sup> D. C. Feldman, "Managing Careers in Downsizing Firms," *Human Resources Management* 35, no. 2 (1996).

<sup>9</sup> Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession*, 35-37.

<sup>10</sup> *Officer Development Handbook* (Fairfax, VA: International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003), 3.

<sup>11</sup> Sylvia Gaffney, "Career Development as a Retention and Succession Planning Tool," *Journal for Quality and Participation*, 2005, 9.

<sup>12</sup> D. C. Feldman, "Managing Careers in Downsizing Firms," *Human Resources Management* 35, no. 2 (1996).

<sup>13</sup> William J. Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent from within*, 4th ed. (New York, NY: AMACOM, 2010), 90.

## Appendix D

Career pathways aid the organization. Pathways are used to progress interested individuals through a predefined curriculum that is approved by the organization. Since the curriculum is approved by the organization, the organization can set its own agenda. To do so, it is vital to provide a clear expectation of the required classes and education needed to advance.<sup>14</sup> Clear expectations reduce the challenge of having someone in a position for which he is not qualified to perform.<sup>15</sup> They also make it easier to discern between an exemplary and average employee.<sup>16</sup>

Balancing family and work is a challenge in achieving career competency; a career development pathway can lessen that challenge.<sup>17</sup> In a time when personal lives are stretched in multiple directions, having an organization provide clarity of the expected knowledge and skills can benefit both the individual and the organization; time and resources can be budgeted more effectively.<sup>18</sup> The United States Fire Administration (USFA) acknowledges the need to address this balance, as one objective in *Executive Leadership* is to "...assess the diverse sets of roles one plays in personal and professional life, and the impact of these multiple roles on effective leadership."<sup>19</sup>

Career pathways foster psychological satisfaction for employees. Since career pathways require self-motivation and help an individual clarify what he wants of his career and future, they provide the opportunity for an individual to take an active role in his destiny.<sup>20</sup> "Today's employees base their loyalty to one organization on how much intrinsic motivation or psychological reward they find in their work. For that reason, robust career development programs often help to retain employees because they enhance intrinsic motivation."<sup>21</sup> When an employee's aspirations correspond to the organization's goals and desired employee qualities, the employee discovers he belongs and can develop. When an employee's aspirations and an organization's goals are matched, organizations grow, employees develop, key people are retained, employees are happier, and mutual commitment is fostered.<sup>22</sup>

Career pathways also aid organizational leaders in guiding their employees. When a leader knows which skills to coach and develop, employees are better prepared for advancement. This more authentic preparation adds credibility to the succession and career planning, in turn garnishing support for the program.<sup>23</sup> Career pathways can also facilitate dialogue

<sup>14</sup> Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession*, 33.

<sup>15</sup> Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession*, 31.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 91.

<sup>17</sup> Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession*, 97-100.

<sup>18</sup> United States Fire Administration, *Executive Leadership: Student Manual* (Emmitsburg, MD: United States Fire Administration, 2015), SM-10-1.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, SM-10-1.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 91.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, 145.

<sup>22</sup> Gaffney, "Career Development as a Retention," 10.

<sup>23</sup> Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession*, 33.

## Appendix D

between different generations of employees, aiding verbal encouragement and teambuilding.<sup>24</sup>

### **Challenges of a Career Pathway**

When budgets get tight, professional development is often the first area to be cut. Implementation costs are not the only expense, as the time to develop a valid and reliable program that is legally defendable in court can also be costly, often reserved only for higher-level leadership positions.<sup>25</sup> Professional development can further be perceived as excessive and unnecessary when elected officials do not understand its value for the fire service.<sup>26</sup> Despite the challenge of cost, since succession planning is founded on the concept of creating a road map, omitting professional development creates a system of simply nothing more than job replacement.<sup>27</sup>

Motivation can present another challenge. Once the eligibility prerequisites are established, good candidates can become overwhelmed and lack the desire to go through the required steps. This can cause a reduction in the candidate pool, until a time when others who desire to advance accept the defined parameters and are willing to enter into the promotional process.<sup>28</sup>

### **Elements of a Career Pathway**

Establishing the elements of a successful career pathway requires an examination of current and future job responsibilities and requirements. Examination identifies the needed competencies for each position within the organization,<sup>29</sup> creating a blue print for each position. Once competencies are identified, the organization can decide how to best reach them, whether it is through training, higher education, or experience.

### **Policy Implementation**

The implementing career pathways based on the *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*<sup>30</sup> and the National Professional Development Model.<sup>31</sup> This policy also incorporates some historical

<sup>24</sup> Jon Derek Croteau and Holly Gordon Wolk, "Defining Advancement Career Paths and Succession Plans: Critical Human Capital Retention Strategies for High-performing Advancement Divisions," *International Journal of Education Advancement* 10, no. 2: 66.

<sup>25</sup> Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession*, [Page #].

<sup>26</sup> Mark Wallace, "Strategic Planning for Training and Professional Development," *Fire Engineering*, August 2009, 111.

<sup>27</sup> Rothwell et al., *Career Planning and Succession*, [Page #].

<sup>28</sup> Barakey, "Officer Development: Career Path," 99.

<sup>29</sup> Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring*, 90.

<sup>30</sup> *Officer Development Handbook*, 16-37.

## Appendix D

norms of the MFD promotional process. Without an explicit policy to guide advancement efforts, some of our fire fighters and captains have unproductively channeled their attempt at promotion. In turn, they have needlessly spent money, time, and energy. This not only has decreased their morale, but when these wasted efforts have been communicated within the department, low morale has become contagious. In the last seven years, two long-time fire fighters have left the department, through either career change or early retirement, due to not having the skill set to be successful in a promotional position.

Table 4 identifies the training and certification requirements for each officer position. Table 5 identifies are the higher education requirements and Table 6 identifies are the years of experience requirements for each position. Employees will be responsible to coordinate their professional development efforts with their direct supervisor and the training officer.

MFD will continue to support the funding of training and tuition reimbursement as Edwards suggested.<sup>32</sup> To alleviate our recent problem of not having enough funding to support training and reimbursement requests, priorities will be explicit, request deadlines will be imposed, and separate line items in the budget for training versus higher education will be created. The separate line items will demonstrate support of both training and higher education, without one monopolizing the professional development budget.

Priority of approval of training requests will be based on need, equality, and request date, in order of the following:

- those who are currently in a position that requires such certification attainment or renewal
- those following a career pathway that requires such certification
- all employees will be allowed to request one training class per calendar year, as long as the request is made by September 1 of that year
- should funds exist in the training budget after the September 1 deadline, requests will be honored for training that takes place by December 31 of that year, on a first come, first served basis.

Priority of approval of higher education requests will be based on need, equality, and request date, in order of the following:

- those who are currently enrolled in a program and whose course is within the approved Program of Studies
- those seeking to apply to a program and begin taking courses, pending preapproval of the program by the Fire Chief
- should funds be unallocated within the higher education budget after September 1, a budget adjustment will occur to transfer those funds to the training budget to be used on a first come, first served basis until December 31

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<sup>31</sup> United States Fire Administration, "Application of the National," United States Fire Administration.

<sup>32</sup> Edwards, *Fire Service Personnel Management*, 359.

## Appendix D

### Training and Certification

Table 4 provides training guidance for those wishing to advance. Prior to attending any outside training, an employee must complete the Outside Training Form<sup>33</sup> for approval. When training or certification testing requires time off and is part of a career path of the employee, MFD will allow attendance without requiring vacation time usage and will reimburse lodging and food expenses as suggested by Stowell.<sup>34</sup> Employees who are required to attend training or achieve certification as part of their career path will be paid overtime under the Fair Labor Standards Act<sup>35</sup> and the city policy of travel and training.<sup>36</sup> At the discretion of the Fire Chief, work schedules may be modified and work hours flexed within the payroll period in lieu of paying overtime.

<sup>33</sup> Moorhead Fire Department, "Outside Training Form" (working paper, n.d.).

<sup>34</sup> Stowell, *Chief Officer*, 214.

<sup>35</sup> United States Department of Labor, "Fact Sheet #17J: First Responders and the Part 541 Exemptions under the Fair Labor Standards Act," Wage and Hour Division, accessed July 26, 2015, [http://www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/fs17j\\_first\\_responders.htm](http://www.dol.gov/whd/overtime/fs17j_first_responders.htm).

<sup>36</sup> *City of Moorhead Policy Manual* (Moorhead, MN: City of Moorhead, n.d.), 25-26.

## Appendix D

**Table 4**  
*Recommended Training and Certifications for MFD Positions*

Position	Training & Certifications
Captain	Firefighter 1*; Firefighter II*; Fire Apparatus Operator*; Fire Officer I*; Incident Safety Officer; National Incident Management System (NIMS) 700, 800, 100 & 200 courses; Instructor I*; Inspector I*; Hazardous Materials Technician*; Hazardous Material Team Leader/Safety Officer; Basic and Advanced Fire Investigation; National Fire Academy's Initial Company Officer Series; National Registry Emergency Medical Technician; Class "D" driver's license
Senior Captain	Fire Officer II*; Instructor II*; Public Information Officer; Fire Investigator*; Public Educator I*; National Fire Academy's Leadership Series; Multi-Alarm; Target Hazard Courses
Shift Commander/ Assistant Chief	Fire Officer III*; NIMS 300 course; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning
Fire Marshal/ Assistant Chief/ Emergency Manager	Fire Officer I*, II*, & III*; Inspector I*, II* & III*; Plan Reviewer I*; Juvenile Fire Setter; Public Educator I*; Certified Minnesota Emergency Manager; NIMS 300 & 400 courses; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning; Risk Assessment/Management; Disaster Incident Management; Emergency Operations Center Management
Training Officer/ Assistant Chief/PIO	Fire Officer I*, II*, & III*; Instructor I* & II*; Public Information Officer; NIMS 300 course; Using Information Technology Databases; National Fire Academy's Class Leading Change; Training in Negotiation, Mediation, Facilitation; Research and Technical Reporting; Strategic Planning; Deployment Planning
Fire Chief	Fire Officer I*, II*, III*, & IV*; NIMS 300 & 400 courses; Classes in Influencing and Presentation Skills; Meeting Facilitation

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003; *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014; and the *Administrative Policy Manual*, Moorhead Fire Department. \* Indicates IFSAC Certification.

## Appendix D

### Higher Education

Table 5 indicates the educational requirements for each MFD position. For tuition reimbursement of approved higher education courses, MFD will follow the contractual agreement between the City of Moorhead and Moorhead Firefighters, Local 1323.<sup>37</sup> However, recommendation will be made to negotiate with the union that an annual tuition reimbursement cap be in effect per employee. The rationale behind this will be to provide equity amongst employees. The employee must pass the course with a letter grade of "B" or greater to be entitled to reimbursement.<sup>38</sup> Fire Chief approval of a higher education program prior to the application process will be required of those who desire reimbursement.<sup>39</sup> Once the employee has been accepted into the program, it will be his/her responsibility to submit a copy of the acceptance letter to the Fire Chief. During the second semester, it will be the employee's responsibility to submit a Program of Studies to the Fire Chief so the department can verify requested courses are necessary for the degree. Prior to each semester/quarter it will be the employee's responsibility to communicate the expected costs to the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief will reserve the right to decline reimbursement if preapproval has not been sought. Approval and support of higher education will continue provided MFD has adequate funding.

<sup>37</sup> The IAFF local 1323 union contract is only available by request through the City of Moorhead, Human Resources department.

<sup>38</sup> *City of Moorhead Policy.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*

## Appendix D

Table 5 <i>Recommended Higher Education for MFD Positions</i>	
Position	Education
Captain	Enrollment in a higher education program that is approved by the Fire Chief
Senior Captain	Associate degree or equivalent hours toward Baccalaureate Degree approved by the Fire Chief
Shift Commander/ Assistant Chief	Baccalaureate degree approved by the Fire Chief; application to the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program
Fire Marshal/ Assistant Chief/ Emergency Manager	Baccalaureate degree approved by the Fire Chief; application to the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program
Training Officer/ Assistant Chief/PIO	Baccalaureate degree approved by the Fire Chief; application to the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program
Fire Chief	Graduate Degree approved by the City Manager; attendance in or a graduate of the National Fire Academy's Executive Fire Officer Program

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003; *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014; and the *Administrative Policy Manual*, Moorhead Fire Department.

### Experience

The experience requirements for each position are mostly consistent with our current experience requirements for promotions and closely follow the recommendations of IAFC<sup>40</sup> and NFPA<sup>41</sup>. The major change for our members will be that the employee must meet the requirements prior to being eligible for promotion.

<sup>40</sup> *Officer Development Handbook*, 16-37.

<sup>41</sup> National Fire Protection Association, "About NFPA," National Fire Protection Association.

## Appendix D

Table 6

*Recommended Experience for MFD Positions*

Position	Experience
Captain	5 years as a Firefighter
Senior Captain	2-4 years as a Captain
Shift Commander/ Assistant Chief	3-5 years as a Senior Captain
Fire Marshal/ Assistant Chief/ Emergency Manager	10 years with the Moorhead Fire Department
Training Officer/ Assistant Chief/PIO	10 years with the Moorhead Fire Department
Fire Chief	4 years as a Chief Officer

*Note.* Adapted from *IAFC Officer Development Handbook*, International Association of Fire Chiefs, 2003; *Standard for Fire Officer Professional Qualification*, National Fire Protection Association, 2014; and the *Administrative Policy Manual*, Moorhead Fire Department.

This policy should be phased in over an initial two-year period so that employees can become familiar with the expectations. Any additional changes will also be phased in over another two years. For those in current officer positions, it is recommended but not required that they obtain the requirements for their position, unless they choose to advance. If choosing to advance, they will need to meet the entire requirement for the advanced position.

## Appendix E

Interview about professional development impacts

Date: 6/15/15

Name: Jeff Wallin

Company: Moorhead Fire Department

Title: Assistant Chief/Training Officer

*What is the Moorhead Fire Department average annual training budget?*

- \$124.938 for 2014.

*What are some professional development activities that are supported by the Moorhead Fire Department?*

- Formal Education (College)
- National Fire Academy Classes (Resident Classes and Regional Delivery)
- Professional Certifications
- Meeting Professional Competencies such as NFPA 1001, 1021, 472, etc.
- In-Service Training

*Has the Moorhead Fire Department been able to support all of its current professional development goals?*

- No

*If you answered "No" then please identify the current professional development gaps that have not been able to be filled and comment why?*

- Insufficient funding to fully fund requests for formal education. Insufficient funds to meet all professional certifications. Lack of department goals and objectives and leadership to develop and support a formalized professional development program and programs to meet current professional competencies.