



Continuing Education Course



Help Make Your Employees Successful

BY ALAN STOCKER

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Help Make Your Employees Successful

Educational Objectives

On completion of this course, students will:

- Gain an understanding of the career path “maze”
- Identify the roadblocks to career advancement
- Describe the role of the supervisor “guide”
- Describe the elements of successful counseling

BY ALAN STOCKER

OVER THE COURSE OF MY CAREER, THERE HAVE been very few issues that I have not had to address, and there are probably even fewer mistakes that I haven't made. Hopefully, this course will spare at least some of you a bit of the blood, sweat, and beers those before you have endured. I hope this course will help you make your employees and your organization more successful.

THE “MAZE”

The term “career path” sounds like some clearly defined well-trodden path on which an employee leisurely strolls, perhaps with crickets chirping and birds singing in the background. In reality, this path would better be described as a maze that an employee must navigate, complete with numerous twists and turns and dead-ends—even pitfalls. For added excitement, the employee navigates this maze blindfolded. The employee enters this maze as a rookie firefighter and, hopefully, years down the line, will exit the maze relatively unscathed to enjoy a well-earned retirement.

The question for the organization, then, is, How do we get each employee through the maze?

One option is for the organization to erect walls to better define the path. The walls are erected with policies. To ensure that attention is paid to these walls, the walls are electrified so that if an employee tries to leave the path and break through the wall, he will get zapped.

Another option for getting employees through the maze would be to use those people who have already traveled that portion of the maze to help guide and direct those following them. Unfortunately, neither of these methods is completely effective on its own.

OPTION 1

Let's look at the case where building walls (policies) define the path. Where do we erect those walls? We can erect them on the very edge of the path with very strict and rigid policy so that as soon as the employees deviate from the path, however slightly, they get zapped. This can definitely keep the

employee on track, but is it effective?

If employees get zapped too many times or too often, the following might happen:

- They might become so cautious they will make very little progress through the maze before their time runs out.
- They may decide to just quit and leave the maze so the organization loses a valuable employee.
- They may just stop moving altogether (worst case).

What if we built these walls far apart—that is, what if the walls (policies) were relatively vague and provided lots of latitude?

Actually, in that case, the following might happen:

- The employee would have no real sense of direction or progress.
- The employee might get lost.
- The employee might get so far off the path that he may never find it again—in fact, he may not even realize he left the path.

Finding: Guiding employees through policy alone is not adequate.

OPTION 2

Forget about the walls; get rid of them. No policies! Let's take the people who have already covered that portion of the maze and put them in a position to guide the newer people. What could be better than that? There's no worry about getting zapped. We should be able to make some real progress!

But, what will happen in the following situations?

- The employee decides not to heed the advice provided and decides to seek his own way.
- The guide fails to provide guidance or even misleads with bad advice.

Finding: This isn't a stand-alone method, either!

MODIFY THE APPROACH?

Can we combine the strengths of each of these two options? How about putting the walls back up to define the path but at the same time provide enough latitude so the employees can move without getting zapped immediately? However, the path

would still be confining enough to ensure that the employee is receiving direction that will prevent him from getting lost. Although this is obviously a better choice, someone is still going to bump into the wall eventually. To try to prevent that, let's also put someone in a position to provide guidance to the employee so that he knows when he is getting close to the wall so he can avoid getting zapped. In spite of all of this effort, I can guarantee that someone is still going to bump into a wall.

What will happen then? First, we need to examine the wall by reviewing the policy. Did the policy clearly define the path? If it is found that the policy is very vague and ambiguous, we must rewrite the policy. However, this time, the limits are clearly defined in the policy. If that is the case, we must then evaluate the individual providing the guidance.

Did the guide provide adequate warning that the employee was going to bump into that wall? Did he advise the employee that he would get zapped if he touched that wall? Did he tell the employee which way he needed to turn to prevent hitting the wall?

Yes, the guide did all that and also documented his actions. (Remember, if it is not documented, it did not happen.)

The employee was clearly warned in no uncertain terms. He was given more than sufficient notice that he was heading for the wall. The employee was warned that hitting the wall would be painful. The guide specifically told the employee which way he had to turn to prevent hitting the wall. Apparently, the employee chose not to trust his guide.

Consequently, we need to zap the employee hard enough so that he learns that the next time it will be in his best interest to trust his guide and heed the warnings.

THE GUIDE'S ROLE

One of the primary responsibilities of officers/supervisors is to serve as a guide for those following behind them. They are in the best position to help newer employees navigate the maze. They have already successfully accomplished that portion of the maze; they know the way and many of the pitfalls.

How do you become an effective guide? Compare it to guiding a car from point A to point B. Even if all you know is that the transmission makes the car go forward or in reverse, the steering wheel turns it left or right, and the foot pedals make it move or stop, you could probably move the car from point A to point B with various degrees of success. In a recent news story, a five-year-old demonstrated that point exactly. He was having a bad day at kindergarten when he decided he just wanted to go home, so he took a school bus that was left unattended. The story reported he made it about three blocks. The question, then, is how could a five-year-old even begin to accomplish something like this? The answer is fairly obvious: by learning through the examples of others.

To make it this far in their career, these officers have already been provided with numerous examples, good and bad. (Remember that you can learn just as much from a bad example as you can from a good example; ideally, you know the difference and never confuse the two.) If we were to compare guiding employees to guiding a car, think just how much more effectively that five-year-old could have driven that bus if he understood things like coefficients of friction, centrifugal

forces, vectors, transition responses, power curves, acceleration rates, and braking distances. Besides just following examples set for you, courses such as this and other formal training courses provide tools from which you can draw and gain insight into human behavior.

However, the most critical key to becoming a successful guide and a successful supervisor is *trust*. As an officer, you can have all of the knowledge in the world, you may have memorized every management principle, and you may even have a master's degree in human behavioral concepts, but if your personnel don't trust you, you'll never get out of the starting block. Employees need to know that you have their best interests at heart.

Having employees' best interests at heart is not the same as sheltering them at all costs regardless of what they do. No one expects that, nor do they want that. Unfortunately, some supervisors believe doing this will gain them the trust of their personnel. In actuality, those types of supervisors lose the trust of their people, because they have demonstrated that they don't care if their employees are successful. Their personal desire to avoid conflict is more important to them than the success of their employees.

You need to show your people that you are interested in their success. They don't expect, nor do they want, you to shelter them while allowing them to fail. Trust is built through honesty.

SOME BASIC AXIOMS

For those of you who haven't used this word since high school geometry class, it means a statement that is accepted as true, an established rule or principle, or a self-evident truth. Axioms abound in the fire service, and a wise company officer would do well to learn them. Remember, it is not necessary to make all of the mistakes yourself. Learn from the experiences of others. You are not in uncharted waters. Chief (Ret.) Alan Brunacini of the Phoenix (AZ) Fire Department is a great one for very insightful axioms:

- When the stick goes up, the building goes down.
- There are a given number of decisions that must be made at every fire. Either you can make them or the fire will.
- The longer you take to make a decision, the fewer options you will have to consider.

My Axioms

I'd like to offer four axioms of my own. I am not their original author, yet I believe they meet the definition of axiom as "a self-evident truth."

1. Our employees are our most important asset.

This is not some simple cliché to garner support from the troops. If you really consider it, it is a self-evident truth. First, our employees are very expensive. An engine or a ladder truck is a simple one-time cost. We keep paying for employees year after year, and those are just the simple salary costs. Now consider all of the associated costs, such as recruitment, outfitting, and training. Every organization has a great deal invested in every one of its employees.

Unlike fixed assets that start decreasing in value from the day they are purchased, our employees continually increase in value as they gain experience. Experience is not easy to

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replace. You can't just go out and hire another experienced firefighter that is versed in your organization and operations. This firefighter must be created.

Employees are extremely versatile. There is no limit to what they can accomplish given the appropriate environment.

Their primary value, though, is that employees produce. They accomplish tasks; they provide service. The organization was not created merely to provide employment for the employees. The employees were hired to meet the needs of the organization.

2. Most employees want to do their very best.

I don't know of anyone who decided early in life to set out to become the biggest flake possible in his chosen field. To do so is against basic human nature. In our society, people spend so much time at their place of employment that, in a sense, it becomes who they are. For many, their work defines them. This characteristic is particularly true for the Baby Boomer generation, and it is becoming that way for the Millennials. Sociologists say this is not necessarily the case with Generation Xers, who generally do not feel defined by their work. The work they do is merely a stepping stone to somewhere else. Guess which group you will primarily be managing? Relax. It has been my experience and that of others that Generation Xers in the fire service do not exactly fit that mold. I have met very few firefighters who do not feel defined to some extent by what they do. Count the fire department stickers on their cars and toys.

The key word here is most. In your career, you will come across people who have no desire to do their best for the organization. Regardless of the reason, you need to recognize that there are some who make no correlation between what they do and who they are. This isn't right or wrong; it just is. They have learned that they can better satisfy their personal needs through means other than their work.

When, as a supervisor, you are confronted by these types of people, ask yourself two questions: Can I change this person? and Do I need to change this person?

The answer to both of these questions is maybe. In many cases, you can change the person by creating an environment that challenges him to excel. By recognizing his progress as he grows, you can demonstrate the satisfaction that can be received through work.

Do I need to change this person? That depends. Does the person currently "meet standards"? As much as we want all of our people to excel and receive job satisfaction, it is not reasonable to demand it. However, if they are not meeting standards, then you definitely need to do something about it.

3. Employees have a right to know exactly what is expected of them.

Our employees are held accountable for their performance. In our line of work, many people's lives depend on our employees' performance. Employees have the right to know what is expected of them. Unfortunately, anyone who has been in the fire service any time at all has seen examples of people with substandard performance who consistently receive average and even above-average performance appraisals. All too often, the

person who is repeatedly making mistakes is the last to know about them. For some unknown reason, if you make a mistake in the fire service, every one in the world will learn about it before you. This is a very poor way to treat your people, and it deals directly with the primary key to your effectiveness as a supervisor—trust. If you treat your personnel in this manner, what type of support do you think you will receive in return?

Your personnel look to you to help them be successful. If they repeatedly learn of their mistakes from others, they will quickly lose their trust in your abilities to critique. They will quickly begin to question if you really have their best interests at heart.

4. When you find yourself riding a dead horse, get off!

Sometimes, you just need to realize that no matter how hard or how frequently this person is beaten, cajoled, or coached, he is not going to change. Usually, the sooner you come to this realization, the better it is for the employee, for you, and for the organization. The critical issue, though, is to ensure that the horse is, in fact, dead.

There is some debate over whether this statement is an axiom. Apparently, it is not necessarily self-evident to everyone because numerous other approaches have been tried over the years. Often, other techniques are tried instead, including the following:

- Buy a stronger whip.
- Change riders.
- Threaten the horse with termination.
- Appoint a committee to study the horse. (This one is very popular.)
- Arrange to visit other sites to see how they ride dead horses (also quite popular).
- Lower the standards so that dead horses can be included (an old favorite).
- Reclassify the dead horse as "living-impaired" (very chic educational new-speak).
- Hire outside contractors to ride the dead horse.
- Harness several dead horses together to increase speed.
- Provide additional funding or training to increase the dead horse's performance.
- Do a productivity study to see if lighter riders would improve the dead horse's performance.
- Rewrite the expected performance requirements for all horses.
- Promote the dead horse to an administrative position (extremely popular).

PREVENTIVE MEASURES

Making a stand at the head of the fire is always a tactic of last resort. Many of you have been on Type 1 Engine Strike Teams assigned to a fast-moving vegetation fire and have often received this assignment: "Go make a stand in front of the head of the fire and save those houses!" Ninety-five percent of the time, this is a very boring assignment. The reason for this is that it is a tactic of last resort. It is a very dangerous assignment, so unless the fire is already running through the structures, this is normally just a contingency plan. We can do a much better job of structure

protection if we put the fire out before it gets to the homes, so that is where the incident commander concentrates his resources. In the words of Chief Brunacini, “If you put the fire out, most of your problems will go away.” The same principle applies to employee counseling. There are lots of tactics that can be employed to resolve issues, and even prevent issues, before you end up having to enter into a formal counseling session.

It is so easy as a supervisor to walk around and see so many things that need correction or improvement. Finding fault is a piece of cake. Nearly anyone can do it. However, you need to ask yourself, “Is this really the most effective way to spend my time?” Is walking around nagging and nitpicking the most important thing for you to do, and is it the most effective thing to do? You are a very busy person with a limited number of hours each day and a very large workload, so how do you manage and prioritize your time?

It is quite common to see supervisors who focus on correcting mistakes, and it is important that mistakes and problems be recognized. It is a necessary part of the job; not recognizing inappropriate actions or situations will cause many more problems in the long run. Do not ignore these things, but think about where you should place your emphasis.

Consider this concept: Catch your people doing something right. Rather than focus on the negative, look for opportunities to reinforce the positive. This is especially important with new employees or when you are trying to teach a new skill. Normally, when you see parents trying to teach their infant to walk, they usually don’t scream, yell, or smack the kid every time he falls. They focus instead on the success of that first half step. Adults also respond to praise and coaching. Obviously, it is necessary to let them know what they did wrong so they can make the necessary corrections. Keep the emphasis on what they did right.

Recognition is a strong motivator. Everybody prefers praise and recognition to belittling or being ignored. Understand that the need to be recognized can be such a strong need that some people prefer being chastised over being ignored. If your people are recognized for their successes, they will want to repeat being successful. If failing is the only way to get your attention, they will fail.

Ignoring a Problem Implies Consent

How many times have you heard a firefighter say, “Well, Chief Stocker saw my nose ring and he didn’t say anything”? Well, that’s doubtful, but it is possible. I guarantee you that the captain heard my opinion on the nose ring! I may not have addressed that firefighter because he doesn’t work for me; he works for that captain. If I addressed him, it would undermine the captain’s credibility.

Remember, supervisors are not evaluated on the work they do. They are evaluated on their ability to accomplish work through the actions of others. In this case, I am responsible for the captain’s actions, and I will most definitely let the captain know that allowing the firefighter to wear a nose ring on duty is not acceptable to me. The captain needs to let him know it is not up to the captain’s expectations.

However, if supervisors choose to ignore something, the perception of the employee will always be: If they obviously saw it and didn’t say anything, it must be okay. The next step then becomes, if I can get away with this, what else can I do?

I have advised you not to nitpick and, at the same time, not to ignore things. What do you do? Remember, it is a matter of emphasis. In many cases, all it takes is a raised eyebrow or a slow shake of the head to let the employee know that the behavior is not acceptable and that it needs to stop, now. You did not ignore it. You made it clear it was unacceptable. Why belabor the point?

Recognition Is a Motivator

Always keep in mind how strong of a motivator recognition is. Some may require more recognition than others, but the bottom line is that everyone appreciates recognition of one type or another. If your people are receiving recognition for things they do right instead of for what they do wrong, where do you suppose they are likely to concentrate their efforts?

Provide Challenges

Another very effective preventive measure is to provide challenges for your people. Create an environment that challenges them to think or work things through on their own. Give assignments that allow your personnel to grow and develop new skills. Create opportunities for them to demonstrate what they are capable of, and then work with them to ensure their success and make them even stronger. Set your employees up to succeed. A very simple way to begin is to share some of your authority to tackle a project for which you are responsible. (Remember, you can delegate the authority to do the project, but you cannot delegate the responsibility for its completion.) This accomplishes several things.

First, *if you do it properly*, this begins to show your employees that they can receive satisfaction through their work. It provides a sense of accomplishment when they work through a challenging issue and resolve it successfully. It is a very powerful demonstration of your trust in them. It provides them with the opportunity to demonstrate to you that they are not some mindless robots simply doing your bidding but very knowledgeable individuals, fully capable of sorting through complex issues and developing an effective solution. It is a very telling demonstration to them that you truly do have their best interests at heart and are truly interested in their growth and development. It prepares them to accept increased levels of responsibility as they grow in their career. It will develop a team that can function effectively without constant direct supervision and one that is perfectly capable of making appropriate decisions in your absence.

Remember the caveat I began with—“if you do it properly.” Done improperly, this can wreak havoc on your crew. Delegate; do not dump. When giving assignments, keep in mind that you are creating opportunities for your people to grow and succeed. This requires you to monitor their progress and keep them moving in the right direction, but don’t micromanage. If you micromanage and direct them in exactly how to do something, you might as well do it yourself. Instead, point out potential pitfalls so they don’t make serious mistakes. Be very specific when you define your expectations for the finished product. Define the “what”; allow them to determine the “how.” Don’t expect it to be perfect the first time. It is okay for them to make some mistakes; mistakes can be a learning experience (just don’t let employees be hurt by them). When they make mistakes, review their process. Getting the perfect answer is not nearly

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as important as getting the process correct. Help them identify factors they overlooked so they can improve the next time.

NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED

In spite of all of your hard work and efforts to develop and support your personnel, there will come a time when you will find it necessary to conduct a counseling session. If you do what you should, it won't be a traumatic experience, at least not for you. Remember, it is all just a matter of choices, and the employee makes those choices.

There are different levels of counseling sessions, depending on where you are in the disciplinary process. Approach these levels in pretty much the same way.

Note: Just a reminder about an employee's right to representation: Under the *Weingarten Rule*, employees have a right to a representative if they have a reasonable belief that the meeting that they are engaging in may result in a disciplinary action.

If investigating a complaint could even remotely result in a counseling memo and the employee wants and asks for a representative, never deny him this right. If you do and in the future you want to use that memo/reprimand as a basis for a further stronger disciplinary action, such as a suspension or a termination, you can be sure that any attorney worth his weight would scream foul—that you violated the employee's due process rights when you denied him a representative for the lower-level informal disciplinary action. Always err on the side of caution, and allow the employee to have a representative if you have even the slightest inkling that you may end the meeting with as little as a counseling memo. When in doubt, call Human Resources.

An employee can be denied representation if you are simply issuing a work performance evaluation, a letter/memo, or even a formal disciplinary action, as long as you are not discussing the issues involved in the action. Everyday instruction to employees is also exempt from this law.

COUNSELING SESSIONS

Do not confuse counseling with coaching. While similar, their implications are much different. Counseling sessions can focus on specific aspects of the job, but it is just as often focused on correcting a behavior or an attitude.

Obviously, a counseling session is a tool to improve a person's performance, but it is also a problem-solving process. By keeping the focus on ensuring that the session is a problem-solving process, you can minimize the trauma of the experience. Problem solving involves a standard eight-step process:

1. Define the problem. This may seem simple, but in many cases this is the most difficult step. I cannot stress enough how important it is for you to be very specific here. This is not the time for broad strokes or generic statements. It is not adequate to state, "The employee needs to improve his EMS skills." I can almost guarantee you will receive a response such as, "I have been a paramedic for 14 years and teach an EMT class at the local college. You must be on drugs." You have to be specific: "Last shift you demonstrated difficulty splinting the arm of that fall victim on the call in the morning and then again applying the leg splint on that T/C after midnight." Now you have something definitive to address.

Keep your focus strictly on the performance or behavior problem.

The ultimate cause of the problem can very well be personal problems off the job. This is an area you have no right to probe and an area the employee has no responsibility to tell you about. An employee's personal life is just that, his personal life. You can address only the effect his personal life has on his performance on the job or the way his personal life reflects on the organization. Stay focused on performance and behavior at work. If he says that his personal issues are the cause of the performance/behavior issues, you can advise him on programs that may be available, such as employee assistance programs or the employee's medical health plan, but correcting the problems at home cannot be your issue. Your concern must stay focused on the performance/behavior at work.

2. Gather the information. Research. Review the laws, policies, standards, and regulations from federal, state, and local sources that may apply. Is he actually in violation of something? What are the specific problems his behavior is causing? Are there previous violations? Have these things been previously discussed with the employee? Has the employee been previously disciplined for these violations? What was the employee's previous work record? Are these old problems or new issues?

3. Analyze the information. Examine everything you have collected to ensure you have everything you are going to need. Try to be as prepared as possible; at the same time, realize you may not yet know all of the questions.

4. Develop alternative solutions. There are always multiple ways to tackle a problem. When developing solutions, consider all possible outcomes. Concentrate on the courses of action with the highest probability of success.

5. Select the best solution. Lots of factors come into play when selecting the best option. You need to match your approach to the person. Different people respond to different stimulus. What is effective for one may not work for the other. Consider your personal style as well. Not everyone can pull off the "warm and fuzzy" approach, just as everyone cannot come off as a Marine drill sergeant.

Depending on where you are in the counseling process, you may not even have to select the best solution. Keep in mind that the ultimate responsibility for making a behavioral change always rests with the employee. There is nothing wrong with letting the employee determine what he believes will have the greatest chance of success. Early in the counseling process there are actually several benefits for doing this.

Allowing the employee to select the solution accomplishes several things. First, it serves as a reminder that it is the employee's problem. You need to make it very clear that his failure to meet standards is exactly that—his failure. You can let him know that you and the crew are there to assist in any way you can but he is the one who ultimately must make the necessary corrections. Another reason for the employee's choosing the solution is that it gives him ownership in the solution. He has more reason to ensure the solution is successful, because he selected it and said it would be most effective. It does no good to dictate a solution and have the employee enter into the agreement with an attitude that says, "Well that's not going to work, but if you insist." Obviously, with this attitude it is not going to work, and he'll prove it to you.

Keep in mind, though, that this approach should be used only early in the process. Also keep in mind that your goal throughout the process is to have your employee succeed. Employees are our most important assets. If the employee comes up with a plan that you feel has little chance of success, don't hesitate to help to formulate it better. The plan must also meet your needs.

To ensure that the corrective action was successful, the results must be evaluated. The corrective action is not adequate if it consists of merely reading a chapter in a book. The plan must include an evaluation of the performance/behavioral deficiency to ensure it has been corrected.

6. Implement the solution. Keep your promises. If you agree to do something, make sure you do it. Ideally, any solution you agree to should not need action on your part to make it succeed. As previously stated, it must be made clear that correction is the sole responsibility of the employee. In the real world, this is often easier said than done. My caution here is that if you agree to do something, make sure that you do it. Do not provide opportunities for the employee to turn this around so that his problem becomes your fault.

7. Evaluate the results. Does your solution appear to be achieving the desired results? Monitor the progress toward your goal. Schedule periodic meetings with the employee to evaluate progress to ensure you are on track and you can make any warranted corrections to the plan.

8. Correct, if necessary. See Step 1.

Some Ground Rules

Some ground rules to remember when counseling employees are the following:

- Praise in public; correct in private.
- Never make it personal.
- Your goal is to correct a specific behavior or performance. Do not attack the person! The behavior, not the person, is substandard. Do not allow or make the employee feel that just because of this one problem he is worthless as a person.
- Many people have said it in many ways, but the bottom line message is always the same:
 - Never back a mountain lion into a corner.
 - Always give someone the opportunity to save face.

Your ultimate goal is to correct a behavior. Never lose sight of that. Also remember that correcting behavior is nothing more than a matter of making choices, choices that only the employee makes. Your responsibility is merely to ensure that the employee is given enough information to make knowledgeable choices.

Conducting the Session

- Schedule a time when you will not be interrupted. Have one of the crew members take phone calls for you.
- Make every effort to give the employee your undivided attention. Schedule a time when other members of the crew are busy with assignments. Ensure the employee's privacy.
- Conduct the meeting in your office or other formal surroundings. The employee needs to understand the seriousness of the situation and that this is an official discussion in a formal process.

- Stay focused; address only the issues at hand. Often every effort will be made to distract you and get you to focus on anything other than the employee's performance.
- Just because you are talking does not mean you are communicating. Ensure comprehension. The rest is up to the employee. Now, he has choices to make.
- Specific items must be covered in every counseling session. Before you conclude the meeting, make sure you have done the following:
 - Identified the problem.
 - Identified the correct behavior.
 - Identified the consequences.
 - Identified a plan to correct the problem.
 - Advised the employee when he will be reevaluated.
 - Ensured that the employee has a clear understanding of the above.
- Been honest and accurate and documented everything. Every one of us expects our solution to be successful or, obviously, we wouldn't have chosen it in the first place. Yet, time after time, we as supervisors fail to document our actions. "I thought it would resolve the issue!" is the rationale most often given. Of course you did, or you wouldn't have done it. Now that it hasn't worked, what are you going to do? No one can foresee where any action may lead. The reality is that one day you may find yourself testifying in a wrongful termination, harassment, or negligence lawsuit. You will be asked if you covered all of the above items. You need to be able to prove that you did these things. It would be nice if a jury just took your word that you did all of these things; however, without documentation, it is just your word against the employee's. (Do not confuse documentation with written reprimands. Some supervisors and employees feel that writing down something that happened makes it a written reprimand. A written reprimand is a specific step in the disciplinary process. You are merely documenting what occurred. In the initial stages, this is merely a "Record of Discussion.")

WHEN THE PLAN DOESN'T WORK

You can't, and won't, win them all. Even if you are a good supervisor and take pride in doing your job well, there will come a time when you will not be able to help someone, regardless of what you do and no matter how smart you are or how hard you work.

I'm not going to say, "Don't let it get to you." It will get to you every time it happens. Just remember at these times that the employee chose every action. Your only comfort will be in knowing that you provided enough information for the employee to make a knowledgeable choice. ●

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COURSE EXAMINATION INFORMATION

To receive credit and your certificate of completion for participation in this educational activity, you must complete the program post examination and receive a score of 70% or better. You have the following options for completion.

Option One: Online Completion

Use this page to review the questions and mark your answers. Return to www.FireEngineeringUniversity.com and sign in. If you have not previously purchased the program, select it from the "Online Courses" listing and complete the online purchase process. Once purchased, the program will be added to your **User History** page where a **Take Exam** link will be provided. Click on the "Take Exam" link, complete all the program questions, and Submit your answers. An immediate grade report will be provided and on receiving a passing grade your "Certificate of Completion" will be provided immediately for viewing and/or printing. Certificates may be viewed and/or printed anytime in the future by returning to the site and signing in.

Option Two: Traditional Completion

You may fax or mail your answers with payment to *PennWell* (see Traditional Completion Information on following page). All information requested must be provided to process the program for certification and credit. Be sure to complete ALL "Payment," "Personal Certification Information," "Answers," and "Evaluation" forms. Your exam will be graded within 72 hours of receipt. On successful completion of the post test (70% or higher), a "Certificate of Completion" will be mailed to the address provided.

COURSE EXAMINATION

- The course author feels that a career oath is actually a:
 - labyrinth.
 - maze.
 - circle.
 - arrow.
- A partially effective method that employers can help employees navigate the path by defining it with:
 - walls.
 - fences.
 - barricades.
 - razor wire.
- Another partially effective method to helping employees navigate the career path is to:
 - yell to them from the end.
 - yell to them from the sides.
 - have other employees who have traveled that portion of the path guide them.
 - leave "experience" crumbs.
- Employees who hit walls will get "zapped" by:
 - reprimands
 - policies.
 - criticism.
 - critiques.
- The key to becoming a successful guide and officer is:
 - repetition.
 - clarity.
 - trust.
 - avoidance.
- An axiom is a statement that is:
 - a factoid.
 - an understanding.
 - an established rule
 - a departure from truth.
- According to Chief Bruancini, the longer you take to make a decision:
 - the fewer options you will have to consider.
 - the stick will rise.
 - the parking lot has been seeded.
 - the more confidence you will have in your decision.
- Employees are:
 - the most competent when compared to their supervisors.
 - the pavers of the career path.
 - enabled to act on their own.
 - our best assets.
- Generation X is:
 - best users of technology.
 - not defined by their job.
 - "keepers of the flame."
 - intellectually inferior to the Millennials.
- According to the author: as a guide, can you "change" people?
 - yes
 - no
 - maybe
 - none of the above
- People who remain unchanged despite the use of various techniques are considered:
 - dead horses.
 - extra baggage.
 - a walk in the park.
 - "concrete heads."
- The author advocates "catching your employees":
 - doing something wrong."
 - doing something right."
 - with their hand in the cookie jar."
 - napping."

Help Make Your Employees Successful

PROGRAM COMPLETION INFORMATION

If you wish to purchase and complete this activity traditionally (mail or fax) rather than Online, you must provide the information requested below. Please be sure to select your answers carefully and complete the evaluation information. To receive credit, you must answer at least six of the eight questions correctly.

Complete online at: www.FireEngineeringUniversity.com

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Mail or fax completed answer sheet to
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1421 S. Sheridan Road, Tulsa OK 74112
Fax: (918) 831-9804

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Examination Fee: \$25.00 Credit Hours: 4
Should you have additional questions, please contact Pete Prochilo (973) 251-5053 (Mon-Fri 9:00 am-5:00 pm EST).
 I have enclosed a check or money order.
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ANSWER FORM

Please check the correct box for each question below.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 11. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 12. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 13. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 14. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 5. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 15. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 6. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 16. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 7. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 17. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 8. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 18. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 9. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 19. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |
| 10. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D | 20. <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D |

COURSE EVALUATION

Please evaluate this course by responding to the following statements, using a scale of Excellent = 5 to Poor = 1.

- | | | | | | |
|--|----------------|---|---|-----|----|
| 1. To what extent were the course objectives accomplished overall? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. Please rate your personal mastery of the course objectives. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 3. How would you rate the objectives and educational methods? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. How do you rate the author's grasp of the topic? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 5. Please rate the instructor's effectiveness. | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Was the overall administration of the course effective? | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 7. Do you feel that the references were adequate? | | | | Yes | No |
| 8. Would you participate in a similar program on a different topic? | | | | Yes | No |
| 9. If any of the continuing education questions were unclear or ambiguous, please list them. | _____ | | | | |
| 10. Was there any subject matter you found confusing? Please describe. | _____
_____ | | | | |
| 11. What additional continuing education topics would you like to see? | _____
_____ | | | | |

PLEASE PHOTOCOPY ANSWER SHEET FOR ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS.

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INSTRUCTIONS
All questions should have only one answer. Grading of this examination is done manually. Participants will receive confirmation of passing by receipt of a verification form.

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All participants scoring at least 70% on the examination will receive a verification form verifying 4 CE credits. Participants are urged to contact their state or local authority for continuing education requirements.

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