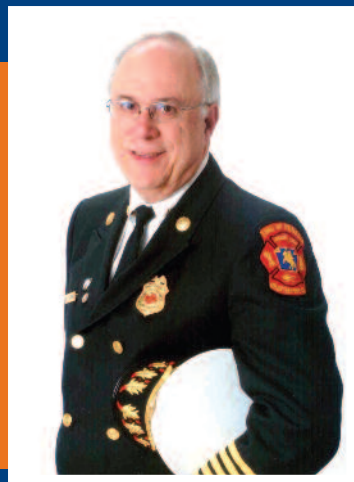


LEADERSHIP 101

A primer on **leadership issues** for
Emergency Service **leaders to consider.**



Dr. William F. Jenaway, CSP, CFO, CFPS, is Vice President of VFIS Education and Training Services and has over 30 years of experience in safety and risk management in the insurance industry. Bill is also an adjunct professor in Risk Analysis at the Graduate School of Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia. He was named "Volunteer Fire Chief of the Year" as Chief of the King of Prussia (PA) Volunteer Fire Company and is the author of the text, "Emergency Service Risk Management", Bill also serves as President of the Congressional Fire Services Institute and as a member of the Fire Chief magazine Editorial Advisory Board.



www.vfis.com

All Rights Reserved. No part of this work covered by the copyright hereon may be reproduced or used in any form by any means—graphic, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, taping or information storage and retrieval systems—without the written permission of VFIS.

Leadership, defined

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS

*We hear it every day in the fire service—
We are lacking LEADERSHIP! The chief
shows good LEADERSHIP skills! The chief
doesn't have a clue how to LEAD!*

*Leadership
won't be defined
by charts,
graphs, witty
quotes, or pats
on the back.*

However, when you ask someone to define leadership, they can't. So what is leadership in the fire service and how do you know when you have it and when you don't? Or is this just another excuse for organizations that can't seem to accomplish what they need to do?

In all probability it is a mixture of situations, but one thing is clear: If you don't know what leadership is, you can't tell whether your organization has it.

Delving into this subject warrants a trip to the old dictionary—or maybe several dictionaries.

Merriam Webster simply defines leadership as “the position of a leader”.

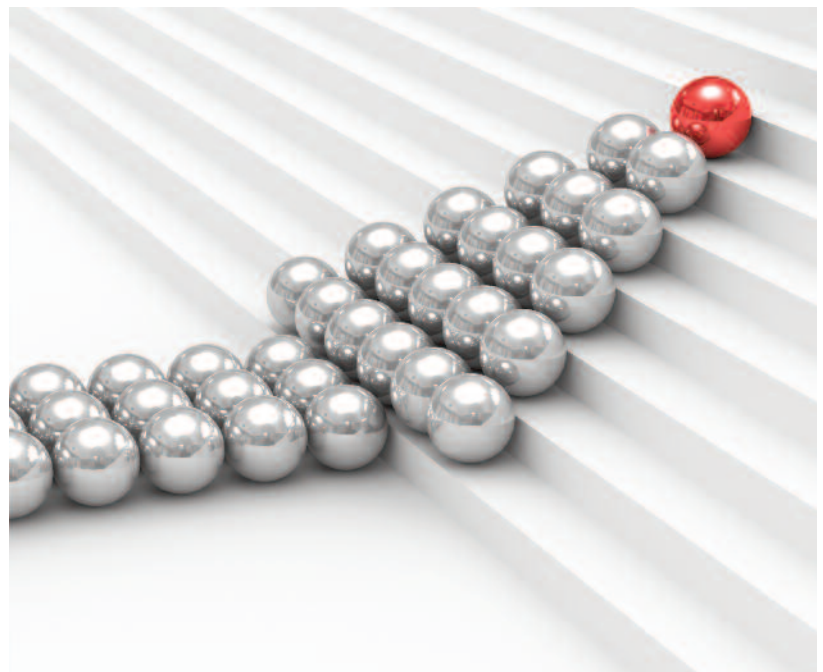
Wikipedia defines leadership as “the process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task”.

A definition more focused on those who follow leaders comes from Alan Keith of Genentech, who said, “Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen.”

I choose to define leadership—emergency service leadership—as **the ability to influence others to achieve a desired outcome.**

So now you have it. All of these references define leadership as having the skills, the knowledge, and the interpersonal capabilities to make something happen that enhances the organization or process.

What does this mean in the 21st century fire service? It means that you probably can't “lead” the way you did in the 1980s and 90s, because leadership is an interpersonal skill, and people's wants, needs, etc., have changed. Today's firefighters learn differently than they did twenty years ago; they use different



technology; they have different interests. You can't expect this new breed of firefighter to be led in the same way as before or to have the same expectations of leaders. Thus, as a leader, knowing your team and what drives them to respond the way you need to have them respond becomes critical to success, each of which is a different **situation**.

As I reflect on my early days in emergency services, all of the leaders came from one branch of the military or another, and most were officers or leaders in the military. In addition, the fire company was a quasi-military organization by design. These leaders weren't necessarily skilled in how to lead; they were taught how to meet objectives or goals, be it getting a tank from point A to point B, getting a group of men out of harm's way, or effecting a positive attack on an enemy (first military objectives, then fires and rescue situations). These goals were communicated by paper and pencil, by writing in the dirt, and by showing by example how to accomplish something. In the 80s learning was done differently, in meetings and classroom sessions, followed with formal goals and objectives. Computers became the 90's way for leaders to communicate and conduct training. As we moved into the new century, apparatus operations, strategy, tactics, pre-planning, handling emergencies—all of these involve computers in some fashion and require leaders who know not only how to use them, but how to use them to get their staff to accomplish an objective, such as extinguishing a fire.

In many ways, leadership has changed, from what was a direct process of communication between an officer and his or her staff to an indirect process of setting a goal and letting the team figure out the best way to get there. In either case, while the tools to help leaders lead may have changed, the purpose of leadership has not.

There have been many theorists who have come and gone during this same 40-year period, each with his or her own idea of leadership. Steven Covey has his highly successful habits of leaders, while others like Pfeiffer, Bassi, and Northouse focus on individual attributes, competencies, outcomes, trust, coaching and the like, all valid components of what drives a person's leadership style. Few talk about the skills of Chief "Ogre," a real chief who tells me he "leads by intimidating his members". What's the old saying: "Whatever it takes...?"

In recent years, we also have heard more about **situational leadership**—the art of leading based on the situation being worked through and of those involved. This doesn't just apply to fire service, but to all types of activities, e.g., fundraising, emergency response, negotiating with elected officials, and more. This is but one leadership theory; there's also participative leadership, transactional leadership, and transformational leadership, to mention a few.

Well, maybe that's where we stand with leadership in the fire service. Since everyone defines it differently, maybe leadership differs in how it is applied, based upon what is needed to accomplish the task or objective, and based upon the resources and personnel available, their skills, knowledge, experience, and willingness and ability to perform what is needed.

Wow! We might have actually defined what leadership really is—and it's not in a book! It's not in a class! It is not something you are born with! It is not something passed on from parent to child! Leadership is getting people to do what is needed, when it is needed, with the resources at hand, and if you can't do it with those elements, you call for mutual aid.

Let's face it, we can take all the course work and fancy seminars we want, but, the goal at the end is, could the officer lead the team to solve the problem, win the game, succeed in the conflict? Or did the group perform ineffectively and lose the asset, lose the game, lose the argument, lose the money, or lose the battle? Leadership, in these cases, won't be defined by charts, graphs, witty quotes or pats on the back. Leadership is defined by RESULTS, and is driven by the situation.

What do you think? Email me at wjenaway@vfis.com. As we wrestle with the leadership performance of tomorrow's emergency service officers, you may agree, have a great idea, or disagree entirely. Let's advance leadership by challenging each other to define it and make it a station-wide word. 🌟

Leadership, researched

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS
Executive Vice President, VFIS Education and Training Services

In the opening article of this series, we discussed the definition of leadership, or at least what various sources believe it is. There was one consistent message from those sources—the true definition of leadership is in the eye of the beholder. That is why I thought it would be refreshing to look at some current research on fire service leadership to properly frame the concept, the expectation and the performance of what might be considered exemplary leadership in our field today.

I also raised the issue of situational leadership and its relationship to how our predecessors developed as leaders versus how leadership is developed today. It can be argued that “leaders are born not made,” “leaders are made, not taught,” or “leadership is taught.” But one thing is certain: leadership is learned on the job, and the opportunity to learn skill sets or how others have dealt with similar scenarios is a powerful developmental tool. I would argue that all of these are “situation-based”. In 40 years in the fire service, with over 30 of those years as an officer, I have observed the following: while leadership may be fundamentally similar in all situations, actual leadership techniques that are implemented vary from situation to situation, whether they regard administrative or operational issues. Since there is little empirical or anecdotal research on leadership in the fire service, it makes sense to capitalize on research when it is completed.

A few years ago, a doctoral student at Colorado State University, Warren Jones, contacted me to discuss his approach to a doctoral dissertation entitled, “The Role of Developmental Experience in the Career Development of Fire Chiefs”. He indicated a desire to focus upon experience that produced change in the leadership style and management behavior of chiefs, thus analyzing the impact of developmental experiences.

Dr. Jones defines “developmental experiences” as an experiential learning strategy that improves a leader’s ability to adapt to and positively influence organizational success under conditions of change. In his treatise of the topic, he stressed that positive changes in leadership and management behavior are derived from challenging on-the-job experiences.

In reviewing his work, I find Dr. Jones provides many sobering points about



the structured system(s) the fire service uses to develop its leaders. Whereas the business world and even municipal executives may have studied management and leadership strategies a decade or more earlier, these tools are just now being introduced to the fire service. (Has our rich heritage and tradition actually stymied our development as true leaders?) In addition, leadership techniques that would be effective may very well differ in a large city vs. a small city, in a suburban vs. a rural fire district, or in a combination or totally volunteer fire company. Each type of agency has different rules, regulations, and situations that affect leadership decision-making. However, we tend to develop leaders as “fire chiefs,” not focusing the necessary resources that drive what Jones called the developmental experience model (see list below) of creating leaders for tomorrow. We only need to look at the recently published fire service training and development hierarchy to see that leadership issues are not addressed until well into a fire chief’s career.

Dr. Jones’ research found nine common themes that met the definition of developmental experiences, in association with the Center for Creative Leadership’s model. These included:

- *the experience as a fire chief/chief executive officer*
- *early experience in leading*
- *relationship development*
- *political involvement*
- *hardship*
- *observation of leaders*
- *experience as an assistant chief/manager*
- *new program involvement*
- *experience working without authority*

This led to findings that defined 26 examples of personal learning in seven developmental experiences and 23 examples of changes in leadership and management behavior,¹ —too much to discuss in this article.

However, looking deeper into Dr. Jones’ findings and conclusion, I can’t help but focus on what I have seen as real-world success stories in leadership development. Leadership, in my view, is driven by:

- *experiencing various scenarios (including making mistakes and figuring out how to correct them)*

- *being educated in the fundamentals of leadership skills, knowledge, and techniques*
- *following a decision-making process*
- *negotiating when needed*

Each of these must be balanced by reacting to the situation at hand.

Dr. Jones’ findings further challenge the status quo of leadership development in our industry by stating that, for chiefs to be truly effective, more opportunities must be provided for them to learn political skills outside the confines of the internally focused world of fire service.²

What do you think? Send me an email at wjenaway@vfis.com. As we wrestle with the leadership performance of tomorrow’s emergency service officers, you may agree, have a great idea, or disagree entirely. Let’s advance leadership by challenging each other to define it and make it a “station-wide word”. 🌟

¹ Jones, page 112; ² Ibid, page iv



Sign up for the distance learning online Leadership course offered by VFIS and St. Joseph’s

University. Designed for future or current leaders, this course was added to assist emergency service officers in developing knowledge and skill sets to enhance their ability to lead their organizations.

Visit <http://vfis.sju.edu> and complete a profile to begin accessing your course of interest. First, you need to create a profile on this website and confirm your account before you will be able to access any course materials. Add the course(s) you wish to purchase to your cart and complete the checkout process. You can add as many courses as you want to in a single checkout process. Download the materials (videos, documents, etc.) and review them. When you are comfortable with the material, proceed to take the assessment for the course (if available).

If you are a current VFIS insurance customer, the risk management on-line courses are available to you **at no cost**. You will need a code during the checkout process to receive the no cost rate.

Please note that a separate code will be required for each course. Please contact VFIS Client Services at **1.800.233.1957, extension 7964** for further information.

All courses will consist of a series of instructions in document and/or video format.

Please review our system requirements so that you can have the best experience possible with our course offerings.

Leadership, researched

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS
Executive Vice President, VFIS Education and Training Services

In the first two articles of this series, we discussed the definition of leadership, or at least what various sources believe it to be (the true definition of leadership is in the eye of the beholder). We also covered its relationship to the real world (leadership is driven by experiencing various scenarios, including making mistakes and figuring out how to correct them, being educated in the fundamentals of leadership skills, knowledge and techniques, following a decision-making process, and negotiating when needed).

There was one consistent message from the definitions we looked at—the **true definition of leadership is in the eye of the beholder**. That is why I thought it would be helpful to look at some current research on fire service–based leadership to properly frame the concept, the expectation and the performance of what might be considered exemplary leadership in the fire service today.

Taking this to the next level, it is important to compare these definitions and expected performance characteristics to those of the next generation of fire service personnel, the high school and college students of today.

This was discussed recently with some 40 members of a junior fire service leadership seminar in Pennsylvania where attendees ranged from 16 to 18 years of age. The results of the inquiry were both eye-opening and refreshing.

First, the attendees identified the following as qualities they wanted in leaders today and in the future. The most interesting finding was that everyone had a different perspective of a leader. How interesting is this? If you don't know what kind of leader will motivate your staff, or you don't know what will keep them or drive them away, how can you lead them? While there was no clear consensus, there were a few comments that appeared several times and are worth noting as considerations in leading the future fire service:

- be open to change
- be confident and positive



- display passion and vision
- motivate and inspire
- give credit where credit is due and be fair—no favorites
- be willing to fail
- be experienced (this is critical)
- be dependable and have a sense of humor
- discipline when needed
- communicate, communicate, communicate...

Next, the attendees were asked what they found to be challenges with leaders. There was some commonality with what they “wanted” in a leader, and this second list included the need to:

- develop teamwork (don’t or can’t)
- inspire (don’t or can’t)
- be decisive (don’t or can’t)
- handle criticism
- be open-minded and willing to accept change

The third and final discussion area focused on people-oriented skills and traits for consideration by leaders. These next-generation leaders looked for more *responsibility, better communication skills by officers, more accountability for officers’ actions, less harassment and more motivation of younger members. They also sought demanding but calm leadership that developed trust and loyalty and were confident and ethical.*

When it comes to communicating with the fire service of tomorrow (anyone under forty), the methods of communication are clearly changing. Most wanted to be communicated with first electronically and second face to face. Seminars and classes, while important, are not as important as gaining the information they need, in whatever format may be appropriate.

Websites, pagers, social networking systems, DVDs, magazines (traditional and electronic) and newspapers (traditional and electronic) were all listed as desired methods for communication. Wow—where is the 1:1 method or meetings?

The reality was that they really want to be led to do the right thing—help their community. It is also a reality that the leaders they seek are not necessarily the leaders they have today, or those who many of us had in our “upbringing” into the service.

Following the Pennsylvania session, Mike Wieder of Oklahoma State University provided a review of the event for *Pennsylvania Fireman* magazine. In his review, Mike commented *“Any type of organization or occupation, be it social, government, religious, military, corporate or anything else, sustains itself at least in part by bringing new blood into the organization on a continuing basis. Often times these new members are young and have minimal experience in the operations of the organization. It then becomes incumbent upon the organization to prepare these new members to succeed in and perhaps rise through the organization.*

Fire departments are no different than any other organization in this respect. The majority of our new members are young people with limited or no experience in the fire service. If they have fire service experience at all, it tends to be at the very basic skill and tactics level. In order for these new members to succeed in the organization we must also assist them in developing other skill sets including leadership and management abilities.”

Are these the same for you? Don’t know, do you? The answer lies in your members of tomorrow, and you don’t know what they are looking for until you ask them. Wow! Here we are again—**situational leadership**—a situation that needs to be analyzed.

What do you think? Send me an email at wjenaway@vfis.com. As we wrestle with the leadership performance of tomorrow’s emergency service officers, you may agree, have a great idea, or disagree entirely. Let’s advance leadership by challenging each other to define it and make it a station-wide word. ❄️

Leadership, the Old Defines the New

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS
Executive Vice President, VFIS Education and Training Services

Some things, like leadership, are hard to define. You know it when you see it, though, and there are people you recognize as leaders when you first encounter them. Right or wrong, Abraham Lincoln and Attila the Hun were leaders. In the annals of history, these men were recognized for their performance in leading others.

If you research their actions—and their motivations—you will find that Lincoln and Attila both combined management techniques and people skills to achieve success. Neither had taken college courses in leadership, yet both took actions that are used as examples in today's leadership textbooks. Since it was a little too late for me to meet these men and chat with them, I did a bit of research, which led me to some interesting findings.

Lincoln was managing in the face of crisis, trying to bring the country together. He surrounded himself with talented individuals, using a circle of people who were former enemies. This made Lincoln a better leader. As I understand it, Lincoln's ability to listen, analyze, negotiate, and absorb the others' points of view before acting may have been the quality that made him one of the most acknowledged leaders in history.

In an interesting parallel, the book Leadership Secrets of Attila the Hun is used in management training for law enforcement. It focuses on Attila the Hun's ability to learn from the past, sacrifice, negotiate, delegate and reward his team. In both cases, references are made that say leaders are as they appear to their people.



PERCEPTION, indeed, may be most critical to success...or failure.

People want to follow a leader they believe can bring them value and success, whether they are firefighters, EMTs, members of the general public or, obviously, Huns. Generally, the ability to create that perception is a great part of the ability to lead.

So what in the world does the leadership success of Abraham Lincoln and Attila the Hun have to do with the fire service of the 21st century? Everything! Both worked in some of the most difficult times and situations in history. In fact, they made history through their unique leadership styles of respect, negotiation, working with others, and making things happen.

Sure, every once in a while they lost a battle or fight, but so will you. The ability to learn from each conflict and win the next one can be your legacy, just as it was theirs. Unfortunately, I have seen good officers lose a battle and fail to react appropriately or learn from the experience. They lose the respect of fellow members and officers as well as the opportunity to enhance their ability to lead.

In this article series, we saw:

1. The definition of leadership is in the eye of the beholder.
2. Leadership is often situation-driven.
3. Recent, new firefighters and the next generation of firefighters will expect leadership qualities and actions not necessarily seen in today's leaders.

Remember, just because someone gave you one, two or more bugles doesn't make you a leader. You have to earn the respect of those below you, above you, and around you. Only then will you have the ability to influence them as they respect your ability to lead.

While we can't get Abe and Attila to teach at a conference, we can try to understand their successes and failures, learning how to improve our leadership skills and knowledge.

What do you think? E-mail me at wjenaway@vfis.com. As we wrestle with the leadership performance of tomorrow's emergency service officers, you may agree, have a great idea, or disagree entirely. Let's advance leadership by challenging each other to define it and make it a "station-wide word." 🌀

Leadership — Everyone Learns from a Mentor or Two

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS
Executive Vice President, VFIS Education, Training & Consulting

Whether they admit it or not, every good leader has had at least one good mentor. According to Wikipedia, a mentor can be a trusted friend, counselor or teacher, usually a more experienced person. There have also been some professions that have instituted mentoring programs where newcomers are matched with more experienced individuals, who advise them. These mentors also serve in leading by example. In almost all cases, individuals have benefitted from a mentoring relationship.

I am sure each of you reading this article has, at one time or another, had a mentor. It may have been a relative, a co-worker, a peer, or just a friend. Whatever the relationship, if the person had an impact on you by demonstrating a leadership skill or technique, there is great opportunity for you to investigate why it works, what made it effective, when to apply it and more.

As I think back in my career, there were a number of mentors who served me well, ranging from my father, who was a chief officer in my fire department, to my first chief other than my dad, to three managers I have had in my career and two others I have worked with on committees. Each had qualities that helped mold my skill, knowledge and performance as a leader. There were significant attributes that each exemplified that made a profound impact upon me. These were distinct for me, and included the ability to:

- be “cool” under pressure, leading resources during a major emergency
- know when to compliment or reward someone and when to discipline someone, using a progressive discipline process
- recognize when training was needed and to effectively discuss that training and performance enhancement needs with the person



- sense when to engage and disengage interaction with a person, as might be appropriate in a social or professional situation
- be identified by people as an individual one turns to for counsel, guidance, or an opinion
- lead by example

Interestingly, some of these individuals had a military background, while some did not. Some of these leaders were college-educated, and one did not finish high school. What I do know is that each one of them also had someone they had looked up to as a leader who had influenced their performance. Each of these leaders knew how and when to provide constructive comments and criticism. What I also recall is that these individuals had become expert at situational leadership—recognizing what to do and how to lead, based on the circumstances being encountered.

Given this personal experience, and understanding the impact of this leadership upon my involvement in the fire service, I am confident that learning from leaders who perform exemplarily in your viewpoint can have an immense impact upon you. What I ask you to consider is to think back in your career and identify a couple of mentors who have had a profound impact on your performance as a leader or as you are becoming a leader. Reach out to them now and ask questions about why they do the things they do, and what their perspective of successful leadership is.

What do you think? Send me an email at wjenaway@vfis.com. As we wrestle with the leadership performance of tomorrow's emergency service officers, you may agree, have a great idea or disagree entirely. Let's advance leadership by challenging each other to define it and make it a station-wide word. 🌟

Wikipedia reference: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mentor>

Leadership — for Dummies

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS
Executive Vice President, VFIS Education, Training & Consulting

I figured that someone, sometime, had to have researched the topic of leadership before me and written about it. It was true—and the number and types of leadership books and philosophies is, to say the least, overwhelming. However, one text did catch my eye: “Leadership for Dummies”.

Broken into six topics, the text was very simplistic, discussing what it takes to be a leader, the leadership process, the art of leadership, everyday life leadership, vision, and team building.

Leadership for Dummies is a very practical, no-nonsense book. It is designed to be helpful. It is designed to be readable. It is designed to improve the performance of leaders. The simplicity of the topics as they relate to the issue makes this an excellent primer, and several overarching themes relate the book to our discussions to date of the application of leadership to emergency services.

This book is important to our discussion because it brings together three key areas, which are the relationship of:

1. mission to leadership
2. personal qualities (skills and knowledge) to leadership
3. both mission and personal qualities to situational management leadership

These three areas have formed the basis of all of our discussions to date on leadership as it is applied to the emergency service discipline.

As a leader, look at your mission and deal with achievable missions. Don't be aggressive in fighting a fire in a building where there is no life or valuable property to be saved. The risk or cost is too high. Take that risk incrementally. If you can make a valiant attempt through some interior attack, do so, but recognize the appropriate time to change objectives.

To achieve the mission, it is extremely important to

have everyone on the team working toward the same mission. For example, having a team ventilating prior to entry with a hose line represents working toward the same mission, while applying an exterior master stream to a structure while firefighters are aggressively attacking the fire on the interior is NOT working toward the same mission in a safe manner.

It also means knowing when to call “retreat.” So, if that new recruitment or retention program isn't working, pull it, don't continue with it if the ultimate mission is not being supported.

Finally, remember, you cannot do it alone. Use your junior officers or task leaders to lead teams and achieve missions. Use the Incident Command/Management system on all events. I have personally used ICS/IMS during parades, conventions, and many other non-emergency events. It supports achieving a mission successfully and helps build other leaders.

Getting back to the book, *Leadership for Dummies* identifies five critical characteristics of all good leaders: embracing responsibilities, eliciting cooperation, casting vision, planning ahead, and listening. All of these are necessary to be an effective leader. Looking back, the prior articles on leadership in this series specifically reference these key areas.

It is important to remember that your appearance, speaking technique or drive does NOT make you a great leader. Leadership comes from effective preparation, from taking the responsibility for a project, from admitting there might be a better way—and ultimately from achieving results. Having a vision (of what you want to achieve/where you want to be as an organization) and effectively communicating it is the foundation for leading.

Embracing responsibility is really an attitude and the willingness of others to accept that attitude. Gaining cooperation allows you to orchestrate resources to achieve that mission. Doing your homework and planning the necessary actions to achieve your goals (including change if needed) provides your map to success. Finally, it is important to remember to listen and pay attention to conflict issues, success stories, and your gut. These information sources all bring benefit to you as a leader.

The book references a well-known and often-quoted leader—Yogi Berra, star of the New York Yankees in the 1950s and 1960s, who said: “Leading is easy, the hard part is getting people to follow.” Leadership is all about finding a way to get a specific group to follow you to accomplish a mission. It is NOT easy. It is NOT always pretty. It IS the means to SUCCESS. 🌟

Leadership — Mistakes

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS
Executive Vice President, VFIS Education, Training & Consulting

Every leader will make mistakes. The mistakes may be small or big and may have no impact, minimal impact, or a lot of impact. For the most part, they won't know the impact until it happens.

Most leaders learn from mistakes “on-the-job,” but there is no need to do this. They can easily learn from the mistakes of others. They can observe what other leaders do, how they analyze situations and how they develop and implement their decisions.

Alternatively, how many have learned something by making the same mistake over and over? The same can be said for leadership mistakes. If someone finds that each time he or she tries to enforce a standard operating guideline, the same negative result occurs, then something is wrong, and the leadership actions need to be analyzed. A good leader will learn from these mistakes, and hopefully, not make the same mistake twice.

Similarly, some leaders try to become different people than they normally are. This is a fatal mistake, as others quickly see they are not who they are trying to be, and credibility is lost. For example, if an officer attempts to implement a new procedure or gives an order based on his opinion only (driving it) rather than gaining input first from officers or staff (leading it) success may be challenging. Failure can occur almost immediately. Good leaders will be themselves, not people they think others want them to be.



By not listening to personnel, customers, or anyone who is trying to communicate, leaders can create a negative impression, influence the wrong decision, or appear ineffective. Instead, leaders should listen, and analyze what is being said and make a calculated decision based on the information received. Other mistakes involve being too flexible—or too rigid. Before making a decision, leaders need to get the facts ... all the facts. A good leader will have an open ear, be patient and not have predetermined reactions to situations.

Leaders sometimes suffer from the “me” syndrome, thinking they are the “King”—and they are, in a way. But as leaders, chiefs, directors or bosses, they need to remember they won't be king forever. Also, once they become king, they must understand their role and how to use it to the best advantage of the organization, not to their own advantage. By not taking themselves too seriously, being proactive in their roles and not relishing their own glory, leaders can be more effective. Again, people will quickly see through leaders who focus more on themselves than on the organization as a whole. Good leaders will not focus too much on the impact of a situation on themselves.

An extension of the “me syndrome” is the lack of providing information to personnel. We have all heard the phrase: “that information is on a ‘need to know basis’ and you don't need to know.” Leaders need to know pertinent information and provide that information, when important, to anyone in the organization. For example, an officer may choose to make a decision and announce the impact of that decision without considering the response of the team,

who may have key input, questions, options, etc. There are always intermediate points between the extremes of an issue. Good leaders will realize this, extract themselves from the situation being analyzed and create a solution that will lead—as opposed to drive—action. 🌟

Leadership — summary

By Chief Bill Jenaway, PhD, CFOD, CFPS
Executive Vice President, VFIS Education, Training & Consulting

Over the past two years, we have provided an article in each issue of VFIS News that dealt with leadership from the emergency service perspective. Your comments during this time have been welcome and very appropriate. As we summarize this mini-series, we've recapped the key points.

We began discussing leadership by defining it as the ability to influence others to achieve a desired outcome. This was naturally extended to involve situational leadership based on the circumstances and of those involved. This indicates that leadership is defined by results and driven by the situation.

The research conducted by Dr. Warren Jones that was highlighted demonstrated that he defined leadership as:

- being driven by experiencing various scenarios
- being educated in the fundamentals of leadership skills, knowledge and techniques
- following a decision making process and negotiating when needed

This led to the perspective that leadership is in the eye of the beholder. As a result we must be cognizant of what our current and future staffs want in a leader, what they will respond to in a leader. Being aware of this will help drive performance in the future.

Successful leadership can be found in various types of individuals, such as Attila the Hun and Abraham Lincoln. In both cases, perception played as much a role in their success as did their actions. Their triumphs followed three rules:

- leadership is situational driven in many circumstances
- the definition of leadership is in the eye of the beholder
- the current, new and next generation firefighters will expect leadership qualities and actions not necessarily seen in today's leaders

Successful leaders have repeatedly stated that they have benefitted from a mentoring relationship. In most cases they felt that more than one mentor had an influence on them. This led us to the various relationships of leadership. Mission, personal qualities and interaction with situational leadership have formed the basis of all discussions on leadership as applied to the emergency service discipline.

Five critical characteristics of all good leaders were identified, including embracing responsibilities, eliciting co-operations, vision, planning and listening. It is also important to understand common mistakes of repeating the same slip-up over and over, trying to be someone or something you are not, not listening or suffering from the "me" syndrome. Mentoring individuals to develop leaders of the future may be the most important activity to achieve. Anytime an individual comes into contact with you, they have an opportunity to form an impression about your leadership potential. That impression is up to YOU!

Remember, as noted in a previous article:

**LEADERSHIP IS ABOUT FINDING A WAY
TO GET A SPECIFIC GROUP TO FOLLOW YOU TO
ACCOMPLISH A MISSION. ✨**





CLIENT RESOURCE TOOLBOX

At VFIS, we believe our clients deserve outstanding products and services. It's important to us that we provide value-added services and the necessary tools to better serve you. If you are looking to expand your training, we have a distance learning site with 25 online courses available. Our downloadable resources include training booklets, risk control communiqués, safety forms and guides. We also offer a wide range of educational materials and seminars and workshops. Access our wealth of resources online today.

Distance Learning

Together with St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia, VFIS offers a distance learning program at vfis.sju.edu. Available programs:

- *Bloodborne Pathogens & Infectious Diseases*
- *Disaster Planning*
- *Navigating Intersections*
- *Privately-Owned Vehicle (POV) Operation*
- *Recruiting & Retaining Emergency Service Personnel*
- *Seat Belt Safety*
- *Sexual Harassment Prevention*
- *Vehicle Rollover Prevention*
- *And more*

Seminars & Workshops

Browse our offerings at vfis.com/emergency-services-seminars-workshops.asp. Listed below are some of our offerings:

- *Dynamics for Emergency Vehicle Response*
- *Emergency Service Organizational Planning and Strategic Focus Workshop*
- *Emergency Vehicle Driver Training*
- *Highway Safety for the Emergency Services*

Downloadable Resources

Find an array of downloadable resources such as checklists, safety forms, self-evaluations tools, risk communiques and best practice samples at vfis.com/additional-materials-downloads.htm. We offer:

- *7 downloadable training booklets*
- *49 downloadable risk control communiqués*
- *21 safety forms*
- *4 self audit guides*

Educational Materials

VFIS offers a wide range of valuable educational resources, including manuals, safety posters, PowerPoint and videos. Here are just a few of our offerings:

- *Driver Training*
- *ESO Disaster Planning*
- *Firefighter Safety*
- *Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Training*
- *Highway Safety*
- *Patient Handling*
- *Privately-Owned Vehicle (POV) Operations*
- *Safe Backing*
- *Trailer Safety*
- *Understanding Aerial Device Testing*
- *UTV/ATV Safety*

To order the above, visit shop.vfis.com.

Risk Control Services

Our programs and resources identify hazards and exposures that add risk to your operations. Some products and services include:

- *Sample "Best Practices" Guidelines (Communiqués)*
- *Employment Practices & Management Liability Best Practices and Assessments*
- *Mutual Aid by VFIS Self-Evaluation Booklet*
- *Technical assistance in interpreting and applying codes/standards and regulations*
- *Building Replacement Cost Estimates*
- *On-site* hazard identification risk control surveys*

* subject to meeting evaluation criteria

VFISHRhelp.com

Visit VFISHRhelp.com, a new benefit for our insureds. This website offers the following tools for your human resource (HR) needs:

- *Web-based Employment Practices Liability training that tracks employees' progress and completion*
- *Tools to evaluate your current HR policies*
- *Articles highlighting relevant workplace issues*
- *Checklists to discover areas of exposure*
- *Lawsuit and court decision summaries*
- *Free model HR policies and forms*
- *An extensive, searchable database of articles*
- *Updates on related current events and trends*

Consulting

VFIS recognizes that our clients may need support beyond our traditional Education and Training programs, so we give you access to a wide range of consulting services. Please contact us to discuss your specific needs.

- *Assessment Centers*
- *Department Evaluation*
- *Mergers & Consolidations*
- *Risk Assessments*
- *And more*



For more information visit www.vfis.com.