

**Training Foundation by Mike France**

As in any line of work there is a foundation from where we build. In the Fire Service that foundation from which we are building is training. Foundations are the core of what we do, whether it is new or old, it's the nature of the beast to make it better and safer for us.

Training is the most important, as we know. You are never too old to learn. As of late we have seen new training popping up all over. From the Art of reading Smoke, to rapid intervention, to self-rescue. Every day wherever you look there are concepts in all of this being built on the concepts of old. Back in my day, 25 years ago, we learned the basics in Essentials of Firemanship, back then there really was not a lot of training offered to us other than state fire training being taught by some outstanding Instructors.

Today though, we are offered so many opportunities for training that it is mind boggling. And it comes from so many instructors who were the founders of today's training and up and coming instructors on the local and national level. What we see is the training of the past being built upon and improved. Sometimes in this business we need to think outside the box now and then.

As builders do by each having a specialty area, we as firefighters are becoming more specialized in areas of firefighting i.e. Rehab, RIT, Rope Rescue, Truck Company Ops, Engine Company Ops, and many other areas. Our new instructors are building on the old foundations and core values to make our training more exciting and giving us safer ways of doing our job.

Until 8 years ago when I became a Chief Officer, I based my training on state training. After attending my first State fire chiefs conference, I realized there is more out there. I started reading the books by Lasky, Brennan, and many others. I attended seminars with the likes of Goldfeder and Lasky and listened to what they had to say. And today with the rise in social media we are being introduced to the likes of Ray McCormack [Keep Fire In Your Life], Chris Huston and John Shafer, Jason Hovelmann, Marty Mayes and The Fire Asylum just to name a few. These are just some of the core group of trainers out there.

To sum this up, the foundation of training is not being torn down at all. It's being built upon to improve our training and chances of going home after our tour or fire calls. Because what it comes down to is that without any of these instructors who built the foundation, we would not stand a chance of doing our job.

To continue this, I wanted to bring to light another area of the Training Foundation, Discipline..... Now you are saying to yourself what is he talking about, all that means is that we are going to get punished for breaking the rules, well in a sense you are right, we do get punished for breaking the rules, but where I'm going with this is about Training is simply this as a Firefighter we need to self-discipline ourselves in a manner to make sure we Train properly and Safely and that we have the confidence in ourselves and our partners when we are doing the Job.

“Discipline is the bridge between goals and accomplishments”

Training is a daily thing we need to do , whether it's hands on , going over our equipment , to taking a class or just reading an article , or just sitting with the people we work with and discuss what we are doing. There are those of us who will balk at this idea, but the more it happens, the better we become at we do as Firefighters.

“Confidence comes from discipline and training”

Now on the other hand Discipline does play the role of punishment, As a Past Chief , there comes that time you must enforce Discipline among the ranks , and you will find that it's a lonely place at that top , which I found out very early in my career as a Chief officer , your only friend is yourself or other Chiefs . We need to keep in mind that Rules and regulation, SOP'S, SOG' are there for a reason. Is there frustration yes , but if you ask for it you will get it , No one is saint , we all have our downfalls , But if we learn from those mistakes and downfalls we become better at what we are doing.

“Effective Leadership is putting first things first, Effective Management is Discipline carrying it out “

Stay Safe out there , Train Hard and Safely.