



IAFF PROMOTIONAL TASK FORCE PRESENTATION

Presented by:

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Diversity in the Fire/EMS Service

A facilitated process of the IAFC and IAFF to identify ways to expand the representation of women and minorities in the fire service

The conclusion:
“We can do better...”

Report Content

- Executive Summary
- Background
- Process Methodology
 - Focus Area: Institutional
 - Focus Area: Cultural
 - Focus Area: Recruitment
 - Focus Area: Hiring
 - Focus Area: Promotional
- Key Recommendations
- Conclusion

Background

- 2003 IAFC and IAFF Human Relations Committees meet to discuss diversity in the fire service
- 2007 IAFC and IAFF commission a task force to examine diversity and promotional processes
- Participants - IAFC
 - Chief Rhoda Mae Kerr,
 - Chief Randall Talifarro, East Lansing, Mich.
 - Chief Buddy Martinette, Wilmington, NC.
- Participants – IAFF
 - Lorne West, 6th District IAFF Vice President
 - Ann Peggs, IAFF Local 141, Green Bay, Wis.
 - James Ridley, IAFF Local 124, Fort Wayne, Ind.

Task Force Objectives

- Identify how promotional practices affect the successful integration of women and minorities within the fire service
- Develop recommendations to improve fire service promotional processes

The Real Issue

- Trying to address promotional practices alone does little to address diverse representation
- Task force desired to get to the root cause issue which is diversity itself
- Task force believes that if workforce is diverse then diverse candidates will get promoted
- Report designed as benchmark for some and road map for others

Process Methodology

- Brainstorming session on why promotional processes fail to promote diverse candidate pools
- Seventy one main points captured and sorted according to prevailing theme
- Five prevailing themes (Focus Areas) were identified, named, and defined

Process Methodology

- Definition of current reality for each Focus Area
- Desired outcome written as measurable goal statement for each Focus Area
- Gap analysis conducted using a restrainers and enablers methodology

Focus Areas

- **Institutional** – Governing elements that constitute the formal framework of the organization
- **Cultural** – Experiences, tradition and values that define behavior within and organization
- **Recruitment** – Efforts to attract a diverse pool of candidates reflective of an organizations core values
- **Hiring** – Methods used to prepare, assess and select quality candidates for career employment
- **Promotional** – Professional standards that afford qualified persons an equal opportunity to achieve rank

Institutional

- Establish and empower a collective labor-management committee
- Develop organizational core values
- Create a common vision of diversity
- Conduct a baseline assessment of the region, community and organizational demographics

Institutional

- Identify and address institutional barriers that preclude the organization from hiring and retaining a diverse workforce
- Develop sustainable funding to address institutional barriers
- Implement a value-based hiring system

Cultural

- Educate the organizations members to be culturally knowledgeable and competent
- Promote the benefits of diversity in achieving the core mission of the organization
- Institutionalize policies that support tolerance and hold members accountable

Cultural

- Formalize mentoring programs
- Conduct a needs assessment to determine community expectations with regard to diversity
- Revise the stereotypical perception of an effective firefighter and firefighting

Recruitment

- Conduct focus groups to understand the priorities and goals of incumbents, new hires and potential candidates
- Raise awareness and interest about fire service careers among underrepresented groups
- Develop creative opportunities to recruit quality individuals from underrepresented groups

Recruitment

- Identify diverse role models to work as organizational recruiters
- Encourage members to participate in community activities and groups
- Develop public outreach programs that showcase the varied elements of the fire/EMS service

Hiring

- Discontinue pre-employment certification requirements and commit to postemployment training and certifications
- Establish formal mentoring and preparatory programs for all components of selection process
- Utilize pass/fail knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) selection criteria

Hiring

- Recognize and address possible impacts of residency requirements and age restrictions
- Consider creating scheduling options, such as flexible hours/shifts and job sharing

Promotional

- Create promotional processes that assess both leadership qualities and technical proficiencies
- Establish a formal mentoring and preparatory program for all promotional processes
- Conduct a job analysis for every rank/position to determine appropriate KSA's and communicate them to all members

Promotional

- Periodically review promotional process guidelines to identify disparate impact on underrepresented groups
- Provide employer supported educational advancement opportunities

Conclusion

- Organizational diversity is a complex multi-faceted issue that is not easily addressed
- If organizations recruit and hire diverse persons then diverse persons will be among those you promote
- Report can serve as benchmark or road map

Conclusion

- All of us now have an opportunity to do something profound for the fire service
- “We can do better”

Thank You

Questions and Discussion