Aspiring Fire Officers

“Fire Officer Training”

Fire Assessment Centers

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What to Expect From This Class

• Strategies and tactics that can serve as a foundation for real-life situations
• Guidelines for actions during a fire simulator exam to improve scores
What This Class IS NOT

• Cheating – You must know your stuff to pass
• The only method to use
• You must prepare for the position, NOT the test
Why Us?

• Taken promotional exams
• Have been successful in the process
• Have functioned in the position
• Developed exams
• Have evaluated exams
• Participated as role players in exams
• Helped others be successful
The Exam Process

- Exam development is based on:
  - Input from chief officers
  - Recent incidents (good and bad)
  - Recent training
  - Local jurisdiction incidents
  - Current fire service events
The Process

Interactive
- Role players
- Companies
- Dispatchers
  - Radio feedback

Non-interactive
- Photo or video of incident without feedback
- May or may not get better or worse with actions
- Discussion format
- May include a series of “mini” scenarios
Understanding the Grading Process

• Seeks to reduce or eliminate subjectivity
• Raters will likely be from the outside
• Mixed raters (inside / outside department)
• Raters will need some tool to utilize
  – Grading sheets ("check box" concept)
  – Fail points
  – Identified qualities to be tested
  – Point or value system to be used
No “Secrets” to Success

Must know:
• Tactics and strategies
• P & P’s
• SOP’s
• SOG’s
• Terminology

Must understand:
• Fire behavior
• Building construction
• Firefighting
  – Equipment
  – Apparatus
  – Personnel
  – Tasks

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Can I Maximize My Score and Be Effective on the Fire Ground

• YES
• You must protect against failures first
• Build on that
Be the Position

• You must see yourself as already filling the role
• Speak, look, and perform as the position you aspire to
Command Presence

• Difficult to put into words
• Those that possess it are easily identified
• Usually established early (first impressions)
Don’t Second Guess the Test

• Take actions on what you see, hear and know
• Don’t try to do what you think “they want”
• Most importantly take actions you can defend
• No “cowboy” tactics
Preparation Prior to the Simulator

• Check exam materials
• Check references provided
• READ THE INSTRUCTIONS
• Look for the clues
  – Time of day
  – Alarm assignment make up
Once It Begins

• Look at the picture
• Know what you are seeing before you begin
  – Building construction & occupancy type
  – Smoke and fire conditions
• Think before you act, but act quickly
It Has Begun

• First to arrive:
  – Can evaluate and place companies
  – Easiest way (therefore not usually done)

• Companies arrive first:
  – Usually the case
  – Someone MAY be doing something wrong
  – Pay attention to initial actions and reports
Upon Arrival, Take COMMAND

• Remember it is a test of command ability
• Do it early as part of size-up/initial report
• Name it and give the location- “name and claim”
• Usually cannot pass command
  – Exception: mini-scenarios
  – Exception: when the situation clearly requires immediate action
    • Victim rescue
Transfer of Command

• Face-to-face or radio transfer
  – What’s been done
  – What needs to be done
  – What you’ll need

• Announce the transfer
  – Provide an updated size-up
  – Name
  – Location
  – Resource request
Requesting Resources

• Call them early
  – Engines, trucks, ambulances

• Call for enough
  – Single resources vs additional alarms (trigger points)
  – Don’t piece meal resources
Resources (continued)

• Provide a staging location
• Identify and request specialized resources
• Wait until emergency actions are taken to request non-essential resources
Water Supply

• You must ensure there is adequate water:
  – On arrival of 1st due engine (easy method)
  – Assign to second engine
  – Supply standpipes and sprinklers
  – Provide back-up supply (don’t come to the party without bringing water)

• Only when needed or required
  – Multiple lines
  – Multiple floors
Hose Lines – Part 1

• Initial line placement
  – What’s the strategy
  – Where to enter
  – Goes toward the fire
    • Between victims and fire
    • From the unburned to the burned
    • Protects stairwells and egress
    • Protects most valuable area
  – Confine, then extinguish
  – What about exposures?

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Hose Lines – Part 2

• Second and/or third line
  – Driven by department policy and culture
    • Floor above
    • Exposure of back-up the initial line
Hose Line – Part 3

• Which line to use?
  – What do you carry?
  – Dependent on:
    • Volume of fire
    • Available personnel
Making Assignments

- Develop a template
- Do it the same way each time
Assignment “Templates”

• “Engine 13, lay a supply line, go to the second floor. You are Division 2, perform a primary search, confine and extinguish the fire”

• “Engine 7, report to Division 2, Engine 13’s officer”

• “Truck 11, secure utilities, perform vertical ventilation, you are the Ventilation Group”

• “Rescue 9, prepare to receive multiple patients, you are the Medical Group”
Assigning and Naming Divisions and Groups

• When should I create divisions and groups?
• What should I call them?

IC

- Fire Attack
- Vent Group
- Medical Group
Assign Your Crew

• Driven by department policy, your actions and capability of personnel
  – Fire suppression (unsupervised)
  – Preparation for fire attack
  – Primary search
  – Forcible entry
  – Rescue
  – Ventilation
  – Support functions
First Due Engine

• Establish water supply
• Investigate / determine extent of the incident
• Place initial line
• Start primary search
Second Due Engine

• Follow department policy and culture
• Depends on actions of 1st due engine
• Based on your incident needs
  – Consider building construction
  – Consider occupancy type
• Same for 3rd engine
First Due Truck

• Know your department policy and culture

• Horizontal vs vertical ventilation
  – Rescue
  – Limit fire spread
  – Allow hose line advancement
  – Multi-story buildings
Rapid Intervention

• Must follow the “rules”
• Assignment must be realistic
• What if......
Now I Got Problems

• No progress on the fire
  – Add more GPM
  – Ventilate
  – Abandon interior attack
An Even Bigger Problem: Firefighter Down

- Follow department policy
- Maintain scene control
- Determine location of the victim
- Assign RIC and support
- Overhead broadcast of firefighter down?
- Assign EMS
- Request additional resources
Rapid Intervention: Part II

• What if a civilian requires rescue.............
Always Know WHY You Are Taking An Action

• Every action must support your strategy or address identified problems
• Be proactive rather than reactive
• Be prepared to discuss why
  – “I expect that.....”
  – “based on ......”
Specific Buildings

• Apartments
• Strip Malls
  – Garden style vs center hallway
• Light weight industrial
• Large commercial
• High-rise
Questions?

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