CHMELIK SITKIN & DAVIS P.S.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW

Professional Development

Washington State Fire Chiefs Association
2018 Spring Leadership Seminar / Yakima, WA
March 22, 2018

Jon Sitkin & Richard Davis
Chmelik Sitkin & Davis P.S.
1500 Railroad Avenue
Bellingham, WA 98225
(360) 671-1796
jsitkin@chmelik.com
rdavis@chmelik.com
www.chmelik.com

CSD

Topics We Will Cover

- Professional Development
  - What is Professional Development?
  - Why Professional Development?
  - Who Benefits from Professional Development?
  - How to Implement Professional Development
  - Creating a Culture of Professional Development
  - Tools for Professional Development

CSD

Why Professional Development?

CSD

Why Professional Development?

- Organizations use Professional Development to **strengthen their organization** over time to **meet current demands and adapt to future demands -** anticipated and unanticipated
  - Effective succession planning requires professional development plan
  - Enables younger individuals to assume greater responsibility and be a productive member of the team

CSD

Why Professional Development?

- A Strong, Cohesive Team is More Effective
  - You can't have a strong team without developing strong team members
  - Synergy

CSD

Why Professional Development?

- Enhances **Culture** of the Organization
  - Boosts job satisfaction and pride in the organization
  - Retention and recruitment
    - Satisfied employees stay put
    - Alleviates job frustration/burnout
    - Makes organization appealing to recruits
    - Can attract high quality employees

CSD

Why Should a Fire District Encourage Professional Development?

CSD

Why Professional Development?

- Enhances Agency's **Political Bank Account**
  - Public impressed with excellent, professional service
  - Public gives agency "benefit of the doubt" when it comes to levy and bond measures

---

CSD

Why Professional Development?

"Success is largely dependent upon the caliber of leadership of the individual fire chiefs, and there is no assurance that this progress will continue . . . when there is a change of leadership . . ."

"The career of the fire executive must be systematic and deliberate."

International Association of Fire Chiefs Officer Development Handbook

CSD

Why Professional Development?

- Fire departments that have implement succession planning are the most effective
  - Continuity in filling leadership positions
  - Because a pool of talent is readily available, the department can deal with filling leadership positions rapidly rather than taking time to deal with the problem
  - Saves money and time
  - Employees who wish to rise through the ranks have a clear pathway and opportunities

CSD

What is Professional Development?

CSD

What is Professional Development?

- Systematic process that strengthens how <u>individuals</u> obtain, retain, and improve knowledge, skills, and attributes AND puts them into practice. Examples:
  - Classes/conferences – focus on acquiring skills and knowledge
  - Mentoring – provides the "experience" to put these into practice
- Consciously designed processes and activities developed to improve <u>organizational</u> practices
  - Culture, planning, systems, deliver, measurement and evaluation, follow up, and repeat
  - Team building strategies

CSD

What is Professional Development?

- Too often, organizations depend too heavily on sending employees to a seminar or workshop and calling it good!
  - Don't expect a miracle if this is the only strategy
    - How much do you remember from a conference?
      - On average, 25%
      - Forget 1/2 – 1/3 within 8 hours
  - Progressive departments rely upon <u>continuous</u> education and experiential opportunities to help their employees develop

---

CSD

What is Professional Development in a Fire District?

CSD

What is Professional Development?

- Progressive departments rely upon <u>continuous</u> education and experiential opportunities to help their employees develop through the ranks
- Each advancement in the fire service follows a common four-step progression:
  - Education: Learning the fundamental skills and knowledge for the position
  - Training
  - Experience
  - Self-Development

CSD

What is Professional Development?

- Can be informal or formal settings within the organization, independent reading, learning from others
- To be effective, it requires:
  - Planning – what are we trying to accomplish?
  - Investment – organization and individual
  - Feedback – measurement of success
  - Must cause improvement in individual and in organization

CSD

Who Benefits From Professional Development?

CSD

Who Benefits from Professional Development?

- Individual
  - Better skills, increased certification, higher pay, greater job satisfaction
- Organization
  - Increased institutional knowledge, better response, system organization and capabilities, smooth operations, and increased organizational pride
- Community served
  - Better service, more responsive – scope of response capacity, more efficient and effective response

CSD

How to Implement a Professional Development Program

CSD

Implementation of Professional Development Program

Step 1: Plan Before You Implement

- Identify Agency's Goals
  - Set reasonable timeframes and benchmarks for measuring progress
  - Determine pathways to meet goals
  - Collaborate to obtain "buy in" from affected individuals
    - Avoid the "top down" approach
- Develop a **budget** for Professional Development Program
- Draft a **Professional Development Policy** so that expectations are clearly understood
  - Distribute the policy and discuss

20

CSD

Implementation of Professional Development Program

Step 2: Plan Components – Factors to Consider

- Emphasize quality over quantity
- In addition to classes/conferences, look for opportunities for development in context of daily work
  - Cost-effective
  - Allows "hands on" experience
  - Allows for "real time" discussion of different approaches
- "Make it Easy" – the "Nudge" concept

21

CSD

Implementation of Professional Development Program

- **Step 3: Determine Which Modes of Professional Development Will be Used**
  - Certification classes
  - Individual reading/study/research
  - Mentoring
  - Team meetings
  - Online courses
  - College courses
  - Workshops

22

CSD

How to Implement a Professional Development Program in a Fire District

---

CSD

Understanding the Mutual Obligations of Employee and Department for Successful Professional Development Program

- The Mutual Obligations of Employee and the Department
  - **Motivation** and **Opportunity**
    - Employee must have the motivation to learn and accept additional responsibility
    - Department must contribute to an environment that fosters employee motivation, self-discipline, and improvement

24

CSD

Creating a Culture of Professional Development

CSD

Creating a Culture of Professional Development

- "Culture" is the shared body of traditions, language, behaviors, beliefs, characteristics, and ethics of a particular group
- All organizations have a culture
  - By design or by default
  - What is yours? Can you define it? Would everyone in your organization say the same thing? What would they say?

Culture is the way you think, act, and interact.

26

CSD

Culture of Professional Development

- Role of Leadership
  - Establish philosophy and expectations
  - Communicate philosophy
  - Written policies
  - All members of organization should participate – Commissioners, Chiefs, Administrative Staff, Firefighters . . . all members
  - Annual reviews – individual, teams, and organization

27

CSD

Culture of Professional Development

- Mentoring
- Not always supervisor – maybe best to not be the direct supervisor
- Allows or cross-training and inter team integration
- Not everyone can be a mentor

CSD

Culture of Professional Development

- **Communication**
- How we communicate is key
- All communication is strategic
- How do you engage with others?
- When seeking a change in others:
  – How do you communicate?
  – How do you establish a receptive mind in another?

CSD

Culture of Professional Development

- Teaching is much more than simply explaining how to do something. The most effective and successful teachers make a point of:
  – Developing a trusting relationship
  – Understanding students and how they learn
  – Being an active and effective listener
  – Creating a safe learning environment

CSD

Culture of Professional Development

- *Teaching Styles*
  - **Command**
  - **Task**
  - **Reciprocal**
  - **Guided Discovery**
  - **Problem Solving**

CSD

Culture of Professional Development

- *Learning Styles*
- **Innovative -** They ask "Why?"
- **Analytic -** They ask "What?"
- **Active Experimenter -** They ask "How?"
- **Dynamic -** They ask "What if?"

CSD

Creating a Culture of Professional Development in a Fire District

CSD

Creating a Culture of Professional Development

- Professional Development must be a component of an organization's culture to be effective
  - The Fire Chief must embrace this as a priority for the Department, AND
  - The Commission must embrace this as a priority for the Department
- You have to start somewhere
  - Don't follow the "that's the way they've always done it here"
  - Note: An organization that has historically done poor succession planning may have a difficult time initiating a culture of professional development with current personnel
    - A change in leadership is sometimes required to jump start the culture revolution

34

CSD

Evaluating Success of Professional Development

CSD

Evaluating Success of Professional Development

- Typical Results
  - New individual knowledge
  - Improved leadership and team operations
  - Staff achievement increased
- Methods of Assessment
  - Surveys, tests, observations
  - Performance evaluation – upstream and downstream

35

CSD

Concept for Tools for Professional Development

CSD

A Concept for Tools for Professional Development

- An individual, team, and organization professional development business plan
- Integrate with organization business plan
- Invest in development of individual and team business plans
- An iterative process with all staff . . . level of detail and investment is up to each unit and individual, but expectations and outcome performance standards set culturally

---

CSD

Outline for Individual Professional Development Plan

- Goals for individual and/or team
- Outcomes necessary for goal
  - What are the outcomes desired and anticipated?
  - What are the known elements necessary to achieve goal?
- What existing systems and/or issues facilitate or limit achievement of goal?
  - What is likely to have a direct impact on the implementation of the plan?
  - Can be individual or institutional
- Look at 1 year, 3 year, and 5 year periods

CSD

Outline for individual Professional Development Plan

- Individual and team SWOT analysis
  - Develop and implement strategies (Professional Development) to take advantage of strengths and opportunities, and minimize impacts of weaknesses and threats
  - Strength/Weakness are internal to the individual or team
  - Opportunities/Threats are external to the individual or team

40

CSD

Outline for individual Professional Development Plan

- Set objective for organization, team, and individuals
- Identify anticipated results
- Identify strategies/Implementation actions
  - Short-term (within the year)
  - Mid-term (1-3 years)
  - Long-term (3+ years)

41

CSD

Outline for individual Professional Development Plan

- Develop and implement method of measurement of success – Benchmarks
  - Skills, individual, and organization success
  - Qualitative and quantitative
  - Internal (matters in your control)
  - External (matters outside of your control) consideration
  - Review regularly

42

Summary

Summary

- Focus on organizational culture
- Focus on team and individual development plans
- Use mentorship

QUESTIONS?

CHMELIK SITKIN & DAVIS P.S.
ATTORNEYS AT LAW