



Paul's Leadership Tips

Chief Paul H. Stein

paulhstein@aol.com

THE ACID TEAS OF LEADERSHIP

In last month's BLOG I discussed the concept of position power and its proper use. As a person moves up the organization, certain new powers are associated with that position. Along with the ability to control, direct, organize, evaluate, coach, counsel and discipline there are three other types of power that a supervisor can utilize. They are coercive power, reward power and legitimate power.

Coercive power is the power to punish- to create consequences for those who do not comply with what you want (conform to your demands or respond to your request.)

Reward power is the power to create favorable consequences for those who do quality work.

Legitimate power is the perception that a person in a particular role has the right to control behavior or make demands upon others who are under his/her command or supervision. This role gives the power to issue orders, control activities, and make demands and request of people.

Since the capacity to reward or punish others makes position the strongest power source, position power is most likely to be abused. In the hands of an unscrupulous leader, position power has the capacity to inflict an extraordinary amount of damage.

So, with the types of power identified, what is the "acid test of leadership?" ***The acid test of leadership is if your leaders didn't have the position power previously discussed, would they still be the leaders?***

Over the years during training workshops that I have taught, I have asked this question many times. As it turns out the majority of firefighters surveyed don't believe their chief officers could pass the acid test of leadership however, around 60% of the firefighters surveyed do believe that their company officers can pass the acid test of leadership (that still leaves 40% who can't). This survey result is a very sad commentary for our fire service leaders.

This might be a good time to identify important leadership traits that will ensure passing the acid test of leadership.

Good leaders have a high level of personal drive and enthusiasm. They demonstrate a strong work ethic before they ask others to dedicate themselves.

Effective leaders have personal aspirations to rise to leadership positions, and the desire to guide others to greater achievements. They choose to be leaders.



Fidelity, strength of character, and credibility are their hallmarks.

Leaders feel good about their past performance and future capabilities. They have the appropriate level of self-esteem, projected through self-assurance in their actions and decisions. In addition, effective leaders are competent, and demonstrate charisma, creativity, and flexibility when needed.

Well, those are my thoughts for this month. What are your thoughts' regarding the acid test of leadership?

*VIVI BENE--LIVE WELL
RIDI SPESSO--LAUGH OFTEN
E AMA MOLTO--LOVE MUCH*

