



THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – August 30, 2019

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Quote of the Week

“Patriotism is supporting your country all the time and your government when it deserves it.”

Mark Twain



- The Patriot Run is a fundraising event for the Central Arizona Honor Guard
- September 7th at the Prescott Valley Civic Center
- 10k & 5k check-in/registration 6am – start time 7am
- Online Registration and reasonable entry fees at www.patriotrunpv.com
- U.S. Military Vets and Active Duty run the 10k, 5k, & 1 mile for free. (Free registration only on the day of the event with any form of verification of service.)
- Central Arizona Honor Guard & Pipes and Drums perform at 9:30am
- 1 mile fun run and family fun event with fire trucks & kids obstacle course starts at 10:30am.



Follow the Patriot Run 2019 on:



Some quality roof ventilation training from last weekend

The Chief's Desk

We developed the Senior Leadership Academy based on the premise that as a profession we are lacking in regards to preparing up and coming officers for senior leadership roles. This is not just CAFMA or the Arizona Fire Chiefs that have identified this short coming, its fire departments all across the country. Being a proactive organization, we decided to develop a program to fill the void. We understood from the beginning that the program would require some modifications as we moved forward, and we have a plan in place to make those modifications.

This week I had kind of an epiphany. I started my Certified Public Manager program (CPM) through ASU on Monday. One of our first assignments was to read a study on critical thinking. My initial thought was, "are you kidding me, we do this all the time." I – was – wrong..... I will preface my next comments by saying that I had this conversation with Chief Feddema and Captain Parra, Senior Leadership Graduates, and they agreed.

It is my belief that we train fire service personnel to think critically at the task level in high stress environments. We train for, as the military terms it, rapid cognition. These skills are vitally important on emergency scenes especially in an environment that presents an immediate danger to life and health (IDLH).

However, we do not provide the same level of training related to critical thinking in our mundane day to day environment e.g. personnel issues, budget development/issues, data analysis, etc. Critical thinking is not as simple and straight forward as one might think – pun intended.

How do you teach the concept or skill of judgement to people? There is a component of self-reflection or awareness that is necessary. One has to understand logic, understand biases, and understand questioning – not just any questions, but the right questions. There is a component of critical thinking that is philosophical which requires conscious and purposeful thought and practice. Colonel Stephen J. Gerras Ph.D. U.S. Army points out two schools of thought related to critical thinking in a paper he wrote for the Army War College. First is context-free which means teaching critical thinking skills despite the subject matter. Second is context-dependent which means teaching critical thinking based solely on a field of study. I relate context-dependent to a mechanical engineer who can work through complex problems related to mechanical engineering, but can't put 2 and 2 together when it comes to budget questions. Context-free would be more relatable to senior staff in the fire department where we have to address a wide array of topics on any given day.

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Upcoming Events:

Sept 2 – Office Closed for Labor Day
Sept 3 – Labor Management, Senior Staff, Sedona New Chief Swearing-in
Sept 4 – Present at Phoenix Fire, Meeting with AFCA and AFDA, AFDA Meeting, Meeting in Mesa
Sept 5 – 8 Co-facilitate and present for New Chief's Seminar at Fire School

Board Meeting:

September 23rd Administration

CVFD – 1600-1630
CYFD – 1630-1700
CAFMA – 1700-1830



How to Build a Team That Resolves Conflict Effectively

By: Lolly Daskal

any leaders make the mistake of thinking they have to resolve every conflict—especially those that affect their team. But the best leaders know that is not the case, they learn to empower their employees by guiding them, giving them the resources they need and incentivizing them to work things out on their own.

Here are six simple techniques to foster healthy conflict resolution within your office:

Lead by example. It's one thing to tell your team what they need to do, and another to hold yourself accountable for your own actions. However you're personally dealing with conflict, those who report to you will likely follow your lead. To set a good example, pay attention to each person's perspective, practice good listening skills, accept constructive feedback, and try to create an inclusive environment where differences are respected and honored.

Coach your team. Every team has conflict—that's just the norm—but it's the leader who can coach their team through times of conflict who makes the biggest difference. The best leaders give their employees tools and techniques for mediation and conflict resolution.

LolloyDaskal.com

7 truths about fire service retirement

By: Firerecruit.com

Retirement from a life-long career can be a stressful event, regardless of the field. Research conducted in the military and law enforcement fields shows that retirement from a career in public safety can be more stressful than retirement from the civilian workforce.

Most firefighters I've ever had the pleasure to know have worked hard to get their first job. For many of us, that journey started in the volunteer ranks where we cut our teeth in the business.

Many others worked for two or three paid-on-call services or comboed a fire department job with an EMS gig before getting that one job that paid enough to make it their sole fire service endeavor.

Then once we were in, we immersed ourselves in the fire service culture. Our fellow firefighters became our second family; truth be known, we spent more time with that family than we did with our spouses and children.

THE BREAKUP

When that retirement date comes and goes, it might seem like a divorce. Suddenly, that second family will be nowhere to be found. Getting into the fire service was easy compared to what it was like to leave it.

[Firerescue1.com](http://firerescue1.com)

Chief's Desk Continued

Colonel Gerras offered the following flow chart based on the Paul and Elder model. It starts with a stimulus that requires you to make a decision. Not all decisions require you to think critically so you have to make your first decision i.e. does this require critical thinking. If the question is what should I wear today, then it's not a question that requires critical thinking – unless you're B-shift☺ However, if the issue is related to the budget, then it likely does require critical thinking. At this juncture you have to clarify the concern, then evaluate the information, consider the implications, determine the argument analysis, and the potential impact of any biases.

This all seems straight forward except for a box in the middle that contains three clouds and a whole bunch of arrows. First, what's the point of view i.e. what is your point of view as well as the point of view of the presenter? The answer to point of view may redirect you back to another point in the process. In some cases the presenter may initially believe something is critical from their point of view, but further analysis may reveal that it's not critical. This could be a result of some sort of bias, or a lack of understanding by the presenter. Second, what are the assumptions? Does the spike in call volume demand immediate action to hire people and put new units in service? Or, based on our historical data, do we believe that the spike is just a spike and that next month we will regress to the mean i.e. numbers will be back in line with our average? Finally, what are our inferences and are they based on actual evidence and sound reasoning?

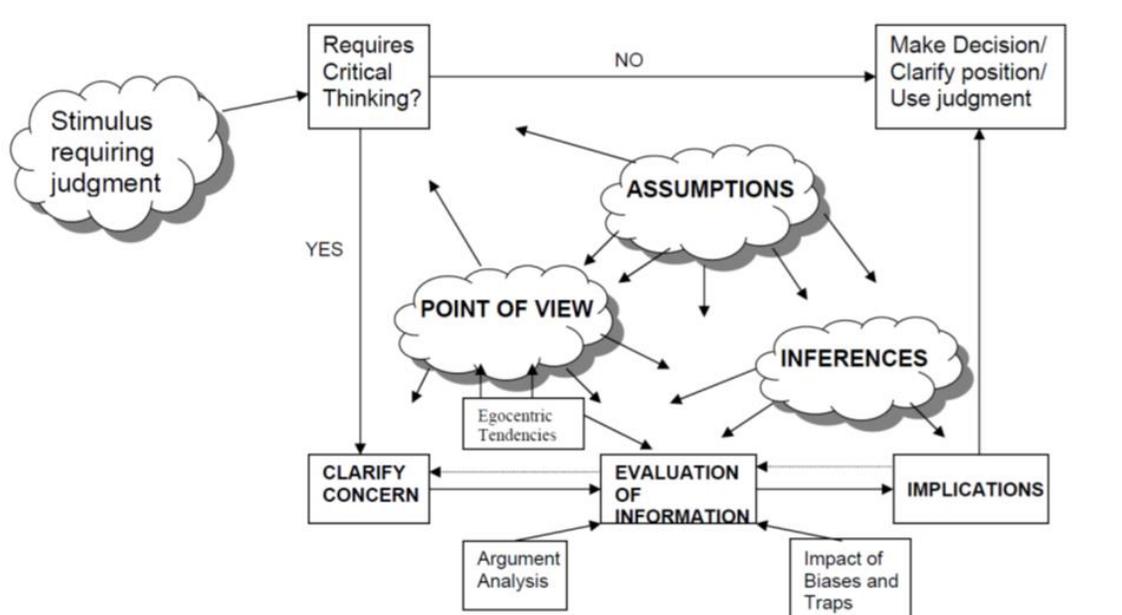


Figure 1 A Critical Thinking Model

What we have to remember is that we are trained for rapid cognition in the emergency environment. The administrative decisions we make do not require rapid cognition they require deliberate thought based on a complete set of information or data points. This means, in short, we generally have time to contemplate before acting i.e. no one will die if we take a week to consider all options and information available.

Critical thinking is not hard per se, however it does require a breadth of knowledge in a number of areas that cause you to pause, take stock, and ask thoughtful /probing questions before making a decision. Even if one understands the concept of critical thinking, there are any number of things that can keep us from exercising it properly.

In my opinion, mental fatigue plays a role in the failure to exercise critical thinking. Sometimes, we just need to take a vacation, recharge, and then reengage to be the best that we can be. There are multiple biases that one must be aware of when making decisions e.g. sample size, personal feelings, egos, politics, points of view, educational background, etc. All of these play a role in our ability to think critically about any subject.

Obviously there is a tremendous amount of information related to this topic that I could bore you with, but that would not be helpful. Here's the bottom line for us. I've come to the realization that we are not teaching day to day critical thinking skills that will help you be successful as future organizational leaders. Again, not a CAFMA centric issue, it relates to the overall concept of Senior Leadership training. This can frustrate or cause issues in a number of ways. First, not asking the correct questions can lead to poor outcomes. Second, as the presenter of information, we can be easily frustrated by questions from people who are trying to work through the situation with us. We have to become comfortable as the person asking the questions, as well as the person being asked the questions.

I have found working with Chiefs Tharp, Bliss, and Polacek that as a team we challenge each other on a daily basis to think more critically about our approach to any issues, challenges, or opportunities we are presented. Yes, we can frustrate the crap out of each other with questions, but ultimately the team approach, or more eyes on the topic, the better the decision.

We will be adding a component to the Senior Leadership Program on critical thinking, and may start adding pieces to other academies as well. For now, take this as a reminder to press pause, ask questions, consider your own personal biases, and think through things before making a decision.
