



# THE REVIEW

Central Arizona Fire and Medical - 8603 E. Eastridge Dr., Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 – **October 25, 2019**

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### Quote of the Week

"We are drowning in information while starving for wisdom."

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## The Chief's Desk



Are we in the fire service, or at least some in the fire service a bit too ..... rigid? In some cases, are we just overly inflexible? We probably don't like to admit it, but at some point in our lives we have all exhibited this type of behavior. Unfortunately, for many people rigidity is their default.

Have you witnessed the refusal by a company officer to listen to a junior member of the crew, that ends up getting people hurt? Or a refusal to listen that caused a close call, or additional damage, or whatever? Maybe you have not witnessed it personally, or maybe it hasn't happened in our organization – too funny, of course it has - but it happens. Honestly, I'm not just talking about on the fire ground or in operations, I'm talking about every division across the board. No matter the position, there are people that have difficulty finding the gray within the black and white.

We've stated in The Compass that we want you to make a decision. It is far worse not to decide than it is to act and be wrong. This is where I get nervous, because there are people that take things far too literally. No, I'm not saying throw caution and policies to the wind, what I'm saying is sometimes you have to make a call in the moment that doesn't completely align with a policy, a standard, or an SOG but it does align with our mission, vision, values, and our core.

Many believe policies are inflexible while standard operating guidelines (SOGs) are their more flexible cousin. In general terms, policies are definitely more inflexible than SOGs. For example, our drug policy is absolutely inflexible. However, the concept of who can ride in the engine may be somewhat flexible. For example, you're on a motor vehicle crash and no one is injured, but one driver is now late for a job interview. What do you do? Get the person to the job interview either via the BC rig, or the engine, if required. Does that align perfectly with our Policies? Nope. Does it align with our mission, vision, values and core? Yes. As a captain, I loaded an entire football team between my ladder truck, a couple other agency vehicles, and some police cars to get them the last couple miles to their camp after their bus caught on fire. Did it fit the policy? Nope. Did my assistant chief talk to me? He did. Would I do it again? Yep, without hesitation.

As we've discussed recently, culture drives our organization and decision making. Our values dictate that we act with professionalism, respect, integrity, dedication, and excellence. Based on our values, do you believe you have the ability to make a decision on the fly in the field based on the best interest of our citizens and our personnel? Yes.

Too much rigidity is a problem. In contrast, total disregard for policies and SOG's is a problem. It's a balance that we are looking for i.e. not too much one way, and not too much the other. Well, that right there should clear everything up.

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### Upcoming Events:

Oct 28 – Wage and benefit committee, board meeting day  
Oct 29 – Senate Ad Hoc Committee, AFCA Leadership Conference Training Committee  
Oct 30 – Physical, Work on Ambulance White Paper  
Oct 31 – Yavapai County Chief's Meeting  
Nov 1 – AFCA E-board Zoom meeting

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### Board Meeting:

October 28<sup>th</sup> Chino Valley Town Hall

CAFMA – 1700-1830



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## Good leadership is a campaign – It's a fight, a struggle and a daily test

By: Jocko Willink



I recently completed a day-long leadership workshop with a client. Before my closing remarks, I went around the room and asked for any good take-aways or final thoughts. Overall, people were excited. One knew she had to develop better relationships with her peers. Another mentioned that he got too emotional and made bad decisions. Yet another said he always complicated plans and needed to improve his ability to simplify.

Then one of the executives sighed loudly and mumbled, “This is like a 'Rocky' movie!”

“What do you mean by that?” I asked.

“Well, this feels when you watch a 'Rocky' movie. When it's over, you want to run, you want to train — you want to get some gloves and become a boxer, for crying out loud!” he joked, earning some laughter from the crowd.

“But a few days later, you are back in the same rut, eating cookies and sitting on the couch. That's what this feels like. Right now, everyone is all excited about leadership. Everyone is talking about what they can improve. But in a few days, once everyone is inundated with emails and conference calls and customer complaints and all the other drama that goes on here, we will all slide back to our old selves. Just like when you watch a 'Rocky' movie.”

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## What Goal-Setting Does to Your Brain and Why It's Spectacularly Effective

By: Geoffrey James



I've seldom met a successful person who didn't start out with a set of ambitious goals. However, the power of goal-setting isn't just anecdotal. It turns out that there's a wealth of scientific research into how goal-setting changes the way you brain functions. That research also provides guidance on how to make goal-setting vastly more effective.

Here's the gist: Goal-setting restructures your brain to make it more effective. A key article in Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience Reviews explains:

First, emotional significance is evaluated pre-attentively by a subcortical circuit involving the amygdala; and second, stimuli deemed emotionally significant are given priority in the competition for access to selective attention. This process involves bottom-up inputs from the amygdala as well as top-down

influences from frontal lobe regions involved in goal setting and maintaining representations in working memory.

That's a fairly technical description, so let me break it down:

The part of your brain that creates emotion (your amygdala) evaluates the degree to which the goal is important to you.

The part of your brain that does problem solving (your frontal lobe) defines the specifics of what the goal entails.

The amygdala and frontal lobe work together to keep you focused on, and moving toward, situations and behaviors that lead to the achievement of that goal, while simultaneously causing you to ignore and avoid situations and behaviors that don't.

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## **Prescott Area Leadership Day at CARTA**



On Friday, October 18th we hosted Prescott Area Leadership (PAL) at CARTA. As a reminder, PAL is a yearlong leadership program that includes community leaders and business owners. I provided a morning session concerning leadership. For the afternoon session, Captain Kirk led a mini Fire Ops 101 for all 18 participants. He along with multiple others took them through modern fire attack including the doll house burn, an EMS station, an introduction to PPE, auto extrication station, and the car fire prop. Engine 50 and Engine 58 along with Jaron's crew for the day from 62 all came through to assist. Additionally, Leo and Valentin came in to assist.

We started the day with 18 people who hadn't heard of CARTA and ended with 18 people who left having a clear understanding and appreciation for what you all do in the field, as well as what our support staff does to ensure our operations keep running. It's these types of events that are vital to maintaining community support. What's the lesson? Your participation in events beyond our day to day operations and your regular work schedule is vital.

To all those both on and off duty that came out to assist, thank you! You all made a difference and truly helped a group of community leaders better understand our profession as well as helped them get to know CAFMA. The feedback from the PAL participants was fantastic! One team, one mission.

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## Chief's Desk Continued

Balance is a difficult thing. I watch my six-year-old granddaughter do flips and handstands on an elevated balance beam in gymnastics, yet I can't walk a balance beam a few inches off the ground. Seeking balance is good, finding the balance is not always easy. In reality, it took my granddaughter a lot of work and a lack of fear to learn balance. Seems the older we get the more fear we have and the more difficult it is to find balance. Some become more rigid, less tolerant, and exhibit far less patience as they age.

I spoke to my dad yesterday for his 70th birthday. As we were talking, he laughed at some of the situations I find myself dealing with for work. He said that at this point in his life his patience has expired with people. As an aside, I disagree, if he still worked he would exhibit a required level of patience – don't get me wrong it would be the bare minimum, but he would exercise a level of patience enough not to get fired. He's just at a point in his life where he doesn't have to. I remember talking to Jen's grandma who was around 98 at the time. My father-in-law was relaying a story about some inappropriate things she said at a recent wedding that embarrassed him. I'll never forget the look of pride coupled with a bit of a childish smile on her face when she said "I'm old, I can say whatever I want."

Funny, kids can say what they want and embarrass us as parents when they're little and don't really know any better. As we age we realize that we have to be more cognizant of what we say in an effort to be professional and not upset people. Then we get older and we are able to revert back to just saying what's on our mind. Unlike when we were kids, we know what's appropriate and what's not, we just don't care. We become – less rigid.

I may have strayed from the topic a bit, but it's amazing how our life cycle works. The bottom line is that as adults we generally know what's right, and we have the knowledge, skills, and ability to seek balance and yet, many do not. We either continue to rebel against rules, or we become so rigid that we cannot see past the rules to do what's right.

Being able to seek balance means we understand that sometimes we have to think beyond the black and white of the procedures, policies, and standards. We need to be able to apply common sense, consider our organizational values, and make a decision.

I don't think I can add more than that – seek balance. Despite the black and white of the code, policies, or SOG's there is always a shade of gray that meets the intent. Life is much easier when you're able to recognize you have choices. Just make sure you balance things and recognize our choices have consequences. Be willing to own it.