

Instructor's Dispatch

A Newsletter of the Commission on Fire Prevention & Control

Commission on Fire
Prevention & Control



2010 Introduction to the Fire Service Graduation Class # 26



On June 26th the Connecticut Fire Academy held a graduation ceremony for the Introduction to the Fire Service Summer Cadet Camp. Thirty-five Cadets from 25 Fire Departments graduated. Brittany Sjogren of the West Haven, Fire Department who served as the class Public Information Officer spoke on behalf of the Cadets. This was the twenty-sixth time that the Connecticut Fire Academy has offered this program to youths who are Juniors/Explorers or members of their local Fire Department.

The delivery was open to youth ages 16-17 and introduces them to the fire service. A special thanks goes out to Ian Tenney, Program Coordinator and to all instructors for a job well done with the Cadet program.

William Trisler, Program Manager

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2010 June Fire School

"Don't ever trust smoke—it can hide what's really going on, spread the fire, burn, blow up, go the wrong direction, and really ruin (even end) your life, sometimes all at once".

By Alan V. Brunacini



The 2010 June Fire School was an absolute success. There were 978 students registered for the 53 classes offered. The weather cooperated also for the most part especially the heat wave holding off to the following week. Student reviews were extremely positive for all the classes. One of the basic premises of June Fire School is to have short introductory classes to stimulate new ways of handling age-old problems. In addition, there were several new classes such as: Fire Service Instructor III, Rope Rescue Refresher, Street and Prescription Drug Identification and Recognition and Propane Gas Training.

Thank you to the instructors who delivered an abundant number of hours of instruction during the five day school. The 2010 June Fire School was also supported by numerous Fire Departments through assistance with classes, loan of equipment, apparatus and allowing their firefighters to attend. The staff of the Connecticut Fire Academy is looking forward to the 2011 June Fire School.

Mark Salafia , Program Manager



Oxy-what?

Italian economist Wilfredo Pareto taught us to gear our efforts (in my case my training efforts) on the twenty percent of the issues that cause a majority of the problems we encounter. Over the years I have focused on underemphasized areas like radiant heat/body fat/turnouts/heat stress; emotional and psychological stress and stress management; contaminants, those contaminated, and MacGyver-style decontamination; hometown hazards and locally prioritized hazmat safety; and realistic rural preparedness. Today I would like to push for a simple (but, I hope, far from simplistic) look at oxidation. For between the late "Billy Mays here for Oxy-Clean," unemployed actors hawking "antioxidants," and medical professionals equipping myriads of seniors with "oxygen bottles," we are in an "oxy-what?" culture. The following is an outline for a malleable model of an interactive oxidation training module. It is heads on/hands off, can be adjusted to fit any audience from volunteer fire fighters to hazmat specialists, and is based on the axiom: If you can't explain it, you don't understand it! [This could easily be made into a demo type class too, but that's not what I am talking about here.]

Module needs: Safe oxidation relevant props; blank paper or 3x5 or 5x7 cards.

Module format: Each class participant will get a prop. On one side of paper/card, she/he will write down oxidation relevant bullet statements to deliver to rest of class. Class can be broken into groups with similar properties. Group discussions will allow participants to refine their individual remarks on their prop items and write the final copy on the back side. Participants will then explain the oxidation implications of their prop item, and will take questions from the class or a panel set up by the trainer.

Module concepts to emphasize: Oxidation yields heat. Heat is energy, energy is ability to do work, or in our case, harm. Speed and amount of oxidation are key, as are particle size and surface area; oxygen, oxidation, oxidizers; ambient air oxygen and oxidizers.

Module props: Safe versions of props. Have at least ten types of oxidation props (to break class into groups). Try these: Iron rust/copper corrosion. Paper/wood. Gunpowder/fireworks. Flammable liquids. Flammable gases. Metal dusts. Organic dusts. Fuel cell. ANFO. You name it, it's your class after all.

I have used aluminum shavings from window installation, electrician's cadweld devices, fire crackers, bullets, sugar and flour, heat packs with ammonium nitrate, different types of fire extinguishers, Bic lighters, paint thinner, carbon monoxide detectors, several versions of hydrogen peroxide, etc. The choices are endless once you get into the great web of re-dox. Even mitochondria and cyanide can be included if you are clever enough.

I hope this inspires folks to make training relevant and fun. Spread the word!

Frederick J. (Fred) Cowie, Ph.D.

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**"There aren't any
"time outs" on the
fireground...the only
way the IC can put
the fire in the
penalty box is to put
it out."**

By Alan V. Brunacini



Company Officer Academy

"Don't ever think a fire will react to your intentions—it will only react to the right amount of action (water/support) applied in the correct place at an opportune time."

By Alan V. Brunacini



Chief Michael Barakey

The Seminar Series program *Company Officer Academy* was held on June 11, 2010. The seminar was presented by Battalion Chief Michael Barakey. Forty-eight students attended this seminar. This program included discussions on career paths versus defined courses for officer training. This program also taught them how to establish an officer academy from scratch and provided resources to implement one in their department.

Recognizing Members of our Staff

Ramon Pagan, North Windham VFD

Ramon Pagan, North Windham VFD, a June Fire School attendee wrote "...I had the opportunity of taking Engine Company Ops: Advancing the Initial Handline from which I gained new knowledge. I would like to thank instructors Al Bassett and Pete Morotto for putting on a TOP NOTCH class. Please let them know of the great job they did. I will definitely recommend this class to other firefighters."

Letter from Jerry Hickman, Security/Color Guard Southern New England District of the Royal Rangers

A letter was received from Jerry Hickman, Security/Color Guard Southern New England District of the Royal Rangers thanking the entire Connecticut Fire Academy Staff for the overwhelming support and hospitality provided during their recent three-day weekend event. "Your entire staff...was excellent and they are all a superior asset to your department."

Jeffrey Morrissette, State Fire Administrator



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Recognizing Members of our Staff

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Letter to Steven Coulon, FSI from Fire Chief Peter J. Siecienski, Greenwich, FD

I would like to thank you for your benevolence in working with several members of our department and the FDNY Counseling Service Unit. The intervention you coordinated was both professional and accommodating to our men.

The firefighters from Greenwich that participated had been participating in other counseling programs both uniformed and civilian since 2003. All three found the time spent extremely helpful.

We will continue to support our personnel in whatever manner they need, but let me say that I am personally grateful for the resources and time you extended. It is with continued pride that I serve within the fire service, individuals of your caliber reinforce that decision.

Email from Program Manager Eric Munsell

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize one of our instructors who was recently acknowledged by Chief Peter J. Siecienski of Greenwich.

Instructor Stephen Coulon, while lead instructor for a Fire Officer I class in Bridgeport, had the opportunity to identify a need outside the classroom to assist some firefighters. Instructor Coulon made several phone calls and was able to set up "Top Rate" assistance for all responders involved.

As Steve himself put it when he notified the program manager "I consider this success to be one of the high points of my career. In my view our role as Instructors encompasses much more than just "teaching". I am proud to be working for the Connecticut Fire Academy for many reasons, one of which is the opportunity to help students in many different ways. If I was not working for the Connecticut Fire Academy I would not have been able to accomplish what we did with the Greenwich Firefighters."

I personally want to acknowledge Instructor Coulon's accomplishment and thank him for being there when it counted. As in my favorite old movie "It's a Wonderful Life". You never know the impact you have on life and history, and all instructors for the Connecticut Fire Academy should be proud of what you do, the obvious and the not so obvious.

Eric B. Munsell, Program Manager



"Be careful of kamikaze pilots who have gone on 65 missions".

By Alan V. Brunacini



Teaching in the Affective Domain



"Effective communications equal one part talking and ten parts listening (beware of the guy whose hearing is affected by promotion".

By Alan V. Brunacini



The Affective Domain is probably the most misunderstood and, unfortunately, most ignored of the three recognized learning domains. Even in the texts used by the CFA it is given little attention. One text attempts to sum it up in three paragraphs; the other attempts to cover in eight paragraphs. Neither text is diligent in covering the subject to the extent that a new instructor would be able to properly identify what is being taught or how it is being taught. Whether it is the neophyte firefighter beginning a career or the experienced firefighter expanding or upgrading knowledge and skill sets, proper instruction in the affective domain cannot be overlooked either due to frustration, boredom, or for the sake of expediency.

Instructors must remember that they are always instructing, in the classroom or on break. Copycatting by students is a very real occurrence and I believe that most of us can remember a teacher in our past that we have desired to emulate as our perception of that particular instructor was one of admiration of skills or personal behavior. With that in mind, the instructor must be continuously aware of student perception regardless of what the instructor thinks is being taught. How we dress, how we prepare, how we address students, and how we "sell" the importance of the lesson play directly to the Affective Domain.

How do we as instructors change student behavior, attitude, and beliefs in such a way that when the student leaves our class he or she is what the fire service needs or wants? We do so by demonstrating those behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs which emulate the desired outcomes of instruction. Often referred to as the hidden curriculum, sixty six percent of what a student learns is not found in a text book or in a lesson plan. It is taught by the instructor through the instructor's behaviors and attitude.

From a fire service perspective, the new firefighter is taught to place equipment and personal gear back in service after use by watching the instructor place equipment and gear back in service at the end of class, assisting with placing equipment back in service and finally being assessed of his or her abilities to place equipment back in service, under supervision. Simply covering the importance of placing equipment back in service during a lecture does little to nothing in changing behavior. In fact, leaving equipment in an "out-of-service" condition at the end of class does teach the student that it is acceptable to leave equipment for the next firefighter or the next shift. Is that what we want to teach or do we want them to return equipment to service without a second thought?

For example, we begin teaching the proper attitudes and behaviors at the beginning of recruit class. Much like size up beginning when the call is dispatched, proper attitudes regarding the proper way to maintain equipment is begun when students are first taught to place a classroom back in service for the next class. In order to teach the importance of

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Teaching in the Affective Domain

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maintaining equipment, room inspections and maintaining certain mandatory standards of cleanliness and serviceability begin the transformation into a firefighter that understands the importance of maintaining equipment and the firehouse. Safety behaviors are taught when the instructor wears the proper safety equipment including safety glasses when required. Even the seemingly innocuous requirement of tying their training rope around their waist in a specific manner, carrying it with them always is important in teaching attention to detail and the importance of always having your tools ready. Later in their career, Fire Officer and Instructor classes maintain a business attire dress code for instructors. Why, because the students are in a leadership/executive program. The instructor is defining, by behavior and example, what is expected of leaders in the fire service, professional appearance and bearing. The military has been doing this for centuries. Beginning with the simplest of items, such as folding clothes and making bunks, attention to detail and following orders is taught and readily transferred to new learning as the recruit progresses through basic training so that by the time more advance systems or equipment is introduced the behavior and attitude has already changed. Those of us that have gone through the process will certainly remember how we thought, at first, why do I have to fold my clothes a certain way, but probably do not remember how easy training was later in the process when we transferred certain aspects of paying attention to detail and following orders to maintaining equipment. An informal term I learned was "DR" or "direct reflection" when referring to students. A student that was unable to perform properly was considered a "DR" of his instructor or conversely a student that performed flawlessly was also considered a "DR" of his instructor, only in a more positive light.

The need to address the Affective Domain cannot be overstated. Adult learners want to know what is expected of them and will readily adopt what is perceived to be acceptable in the attempt to satisfy the stated or unstated objectives of the class. Desired behaviors and attitudes must be demonstrated and expressed by instructors. Remember, students are always watching and will readily copycat what is perceived to be acceptable. What you teach will show up on the fire ground whether you meant it or not. Instructors need to constantly be aware of student perceptions and demonstrate the desired behaviors and attitudes in every class.

William Trisler, Program Manager



"Be careful of practicing (and then refining) mistakes. The smart money says that accidents happen because we did it 1000 times, had 100 close calls, and then (bingo!) one hit.

By Alan V. Brunacini



Trench Rescue Training Program

" Don't get sucker punched into a fire fight just because you won the last one and it felt good—always remember how losing feels".

By Alan v. Brunacini



**Picture by
Program Manager Jim Carroll**



**Picture by
Program Manager Jim Carroll**

During the 2010 June Fire School a two day Trench Rescue training program was delivered. This would have been just another delivery of a program that had been delivered many times over the last several years except for one fact. The hands-on portion of this program delivery was held at the New England Disaster Training Center (NEDTC) located at Camp Hartell in Windsor Locks. This was the first opportunity to use the brand new trench rescue training prop that was constructed as part of the initial design of the facility and was the first time an open enrollment training program was conducted at the NEDTC. This class preceded the official facility opening by a month. The Governor and other dignitaries are scheduled to participate in the Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies on July 8, 2010. Despite the fact that some portions of the facility are not fully in service the training prop functioned well and was a good start for a facility that holds much promise as the location for inter-agency training exercises.

Jim Carroll, Program Manager

We're on the web
at: www.ct.gov/cfpc

State of Connecticut



Agency Mission

To prevent or mitigate the effects of fire and disasters, either natural or manmade, on the citizens of the State of Connecticut. This objective shall be accomplished through the development and delivery of state-of-the-art educational programs designed to meet nationally recognized standards, certification of individuals to such standards and maintenance of up-to-date resources for use by fire service personnel, public educators and other first responders.

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