ATTENTION:

This is a work in progress, and not to be used as a definitive source.

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COVER PAGE

Date of draft, dedications, motto

CONTENTS

Table of contents

Future Ready Fire

Mission Statement (Normalize training in gear. Build brotherhood.)

Vision (The IMAGINE spiel, admittedly not as cool as John Lennon)

Disclaimers (department affiliation, content progress, don't sue us, etc.)

About Us & Thanks (put this at the end perhaps?)

Imagine This:

There is a firefighter, or a group of firefighters, in your department who regularly get in their fire gear, and move around in it. They may just take a walk in their bunker pants and gloves, or fully gear up while breathing off their SCBA. Or they may climb stairs with a high-rise pack or swing the sledge at a tire. They may even play basketball or dodgeball!

But they are in some level of gear when they perform these activities, because they recognize the importance of training for the fireground before the fire happens.

They understand the critical importance of heat acclimation, maintaining a high level of proficiency with their SCBA, as well as building and maintaining dexterity with their gloves.

These are the passionate among you, and they are committed to firemanship as a craft and as an Oath.

These firefighters are also enjoying the camaraderie that comes with sweating side by side at a worthy task. This effort unites them. They share fire stories, failures and successes. They learn about each other. They drive each other and mentor each other.

And they do all of this voluntarily, because that is the kind of firefighter they are. In the very best case scenario, their leadership and their department supports this endeavor!

They are allowed and encouraged to use training props, tools and the SCBA. They are given old gear to wear so their frontline gear doesn't get damaged. They're given access to anything and everything they can be given access to, in order to facilitate their growth as individual firefighters, and towards their growth as part of a cohesive organization.

And when they are done with each gearwork event, they leave the training grounds (or wherever they meet) and the equipment better than they found it. They take pride in this. They also finish every gearwork session as better firefighters, more tightly bound and understanding of each other than they were before.

This regularly scheduled, grass roots habit of gearwork is a refuge for their passion, after all. It's a place and time to hold themselves accountable and show up for each other. They play music out there while they work, and bring food or grill out. Sometimes it's just two guys, and sometimes it's 17!

Now, imagine that a person is interested in becoming a firefighter. Imagine that they are encouraged to attend one of these gearwork events, to meet these firefighters who exemplify servant-leadership, who are willing to put in the work and the time to be good at the job.

Imagine that these interested civilians are allowed to put on some gear, flow from a hydrant, learn the basics of hall life and soak up the passion. Meanwhile, the firefighters get to know this person who is one of their citizens, who could one day be one of their fellow firefighters.

Now, imagine that this citizen keeps coming back, and any barriers that prevent them from joining the department are addressed. These firefighters help prepare them for selection, for life as a firefighter, and in turn these firefighters improve upon their soft skills, their instruction skills, and continue to accrue vital reps of the basics.

The relationship begins on day one, and continues as this firefighter hopeful prepares for the academy. They continue attending events as an academy recruit, and group members attend their graduation! This newly minted firefighter then carries this habit of gearwork into the companies.

The probationary firefighter now attends these gearwork events as a sworn member of the department, perhaps even hosting their own gearwork events, and they become lifelong mentors themselves.

Imagine it's not just your department members that attend.

Imagine any firefighter is welcome, and these events occur at various departments. Imagine firefighters from all walks training together, voluntarily, organically. They are learning about each other, while various tactics and equipment are discussed and explored.

Imagine if relationships between departments were fostered this way, and were normalized. Imagine if training in gear was normalized. Imagine if mentorship was available to anyone willing to show up, put on gear and do work.

This is the backbone of the Future Ready Fire program.

Requirements:

In the simplest terms, what you need to start this today is a firefighter who regularly performs gearwork. They get in some level of firefighting gear for the sake of fireground conditioning. They should also have a servant-leadership mindset, as the point of the program isn't to haze or tear down, but to normalize training in gear and build brotherhood. They must also have a willingness to post or share their gearwork event times/locations so that others may join.

The spirit of the program is fed by the truth that every firefighter is a leader in their own right. Each has the ability, and the moral obligation, to develop themselves into the best firefighter, and arguably the best human, they can be.

Gearwork is rankless, and fluid in its conduct.

The strict oversight of a certain rank is counter to the mission of the group. The program does not require admin or chief officers to be successful. In fact, in some instances, their direct involvement may be less than ideal. The best they can do is to offer equipment and resources as requested by the firefighters.

The program does not necessarily require the rigid structure of SOPs, either.

These are the simplest requirements, though there are other concepts and equipment that help to augment the events and the program. Not everyone will have access to the same equipment. Not everyone will be able to gain the support of their department. That's to be expected.

But every firefighter can work to be the change we need to see in the fire service. They can do their best with what they have, and take ownership of the craft and exemplify what it means to serve the public and each other. This program is designed to help spread that crucial idea, to make contagious the sense of professional pride, humility and work ethic unique to the passionate firefighters among us. And also, the process can be fun as hell.

Location:

Access to restrooms and water is a plus. However, gearwork can take place basically anywhere...

- training center
- station
- park
- community center
- gym
- residence
- playground
- sports field/court
- nature trail
- in a box, with a fox

Locations for gearwork should probably be posted under a generic name, for safety's sake when out alone. This name could be something only your department members

would recognize. Something like "the park" could be used, and only those who have already been in contact with you would know exactly where you would be.

As a word of caution, if your training center does not currently have a great reputation among the firefighters, consider holding gearwork at an array of locations, in addition to the training center. The ideal would be to eventually rebrand your training center as the go-to place for gearwork and organic training, but that sort of change takes time.

Some locations may require a waiver to be on the premises (civilians, outside department members, children). Find out beforehand what the rules are, both legal requirements and rules of courtesy.

As for pneumatically powered low-air alarms in public spaces, makeshift silencers are recommended to maintain the public peace. Silencers also help reduce audio annoyance when there are multiple firefighters training past their low-air alarm.

If the SCBA that you use employs an exceedingly loud, obnoxious EOSTI (low-air alarm – eg. MSA Firehawk, G-1, etc.), you can use a small, flat, black rubber bungee cord (sliced halfway down its length at an angle – *insert picture here, future self*) between the frame of the pack and the bell. You can also use a spring-loaded wood clamp with a piece of rubber between the clamp and bell. If you can find a damaged one, the rubber boot that protects the analogue gauge on cylinders also fits around the bell. Stuffing newspaper or cloth inside the bell and using rubber bands on the outside is another method.

As long as what you do does not damage the bell, or the mechanism, or void any warranty… use it.

Time:

Gearwork doesn't have to be a two hour long event. It can be half an hour, or six hours. The point of it is to simply be in some level of gear and to move around in it.

It's best if events are held regularly, so that people may plan ahead to attend. The important part, though, is that they should be posted on an events page or calendar ahead of time. The idea is to allow people to find events that fit their schedule.

The ideal for career departments is that events should span across the shifts. If you are a lone career firefighter doing this, you're doing what you can already. Perhaps attempt

to recruit other firefighters not only from your own department, but from others as well. You can do this by social media invites or whenever you bump into them on scene or at training. Don’t forget your local volunteer departments! Volunteer firefighters seem to be, in my experience, always eager for training.

Volunteer firefighters are far more flexible in their schedules. Try not to excessively limit those who can create gearwork events. As long as they have the work ethic and the servant-leadership mindset, they too can be a change agent and help beef up the number of events held in the area.

The more events that are held, the more mutual understanding occurs between firefighters within a department and between departments. Because it's not just gearwork that's happening at these events. Conversations about training, tactics, skills, culture, and equipment are happening.

Remember this: "brotherhood" and "mutual-aide" are just words, and they are too often overused and unsupported. The ideas behind these must be actualized before they really mean anything.

If we are waiting for a large fire, or a natural disaster, or a chief-coordinated multi-company multi-agency drill to build upon these two ideas, we are not only too late, we are breaking the Oath with our inaction.

Let us take it upon ourselves to forge these alliances, and actually work together by literally working together. It's only through consistent sweat equity and meeting with each other, that we garner the vital fruits necessary to assure success on the fireground. Grass roots gearwork is how we accomplish that.

Equipment:

Bunker gear is a must. It can be issued or discarded gear, but this component cannot be removed from the program. Firefighting gear is not a costume to be worn only when the bat signal lights the sky. It greatly impacts out ability to perform physically and mentally.

We should maintain fireground conditioning well before a fire happens. And this can't happen without donning gear.

This is a constant, particularly because heat acclimation is a highly perishable biological state.

Furthermore, getting in gear as often as possible lessens the sensory novelty induced by putting on gear. The more we wear it and labor in it, the more our brains get used to it, filing the sensations under the "normal" tab. And now that it's second nature, our brains can focus more fully on important tasks like problem solving and tactics.

This psychological "normal" is perishable, too, just like heat acclimation, though admittedly not as swiftly lost. Without consistent gearwork, we end up maintaining a memory of competency and capability, as opposed to actually maintaining competency and capability.

More to the point, if the only time we get in gear is at a fire, or if the only time we labor alongside our neighboring department members is when we are forced to, or if the metric by which we measure success is that no one has failed yet, we are doing it wrong: biologically wrong (heat acclimation, cardiac health, fireground conditioning), psychologically wrong (stress immune response, cognitive processing, cross-agency understanding) and morally wrong (in accordance with the Oath, and report findings in line of duty death investigations).

With support, firefighters should have access to... Just about everything.

- SCBA
- air cylinders
- spare masks (even if not operational or compatible with the SCBA, as wearing any mask is better than not wearing one at all)
- defunct or out of date bunker gear (pants, coats, suspenders, gloves, helmets, boots)
- training props
- apparatus (pumping, loading/pulling hose, drills, etc.)
- hose
- nozzles
- hydrants
- workout equipment (sandbags, plates, etc.)
- casualty dummies

To the point of safety, a medical and trauma bag along with an AED would be great to have, though not required. If it’s warm where you are, somewhere to sit in the shade or AC is a plus as well, though not required if you educate yourself on signs of heat injury and manage your heat stress as well as those working alongside you.

It's important to note again that general events are not led, and none of them are forced. Every individual works to their own level of conditioning. These events are opportunities for the individual to continually assess their own biological and psychological response to training in gear. It should be encouraged to begin doffing equipment one piece at a time as the person sees fit (aka: the Elsa move).

Virucide distributed by, or preferred by, the mask manufacturer is a huge benefit when using masks among the group. Directions on the virucide bottles should be followed to the letter.

Lysol spray is also our friend when it comes to spraying the defunct gear down (not necessarily our issued gear, as that may not be recommended by the manufacturer).

Equipment Substitutions and Considerations

Techniques and equipment that veer from what is presented in real scenarios, or otherwise train a firefighter to discount available senses, equipment or resources, can create “training scars” (counterproductive or dangerous habits reinforced by training).

Care should be taken to mimic as closely as possible the equipment we use, as we do not need to undertrain, or create training scars that may be carried onto the fireground.

If you cannot get extra masks, a high altitude training mask works well for building strength in the diaphragm. The diaphragm is the primary muscle used in breathing, not the lungs (which are basically just gas-exchange sacks of flesh). Masks add to the workload of the diaphragm by creating resistance. Like any other muscle, the diaphragm needs resistance to build strength and endurance. This key aspect of firefighter conditioning cannot be overemphasized.

If the individual is wearing a high altitude mask to train, this could qualify as gearwork. The limitation of high altitude training masks, though, is that unlike an SCBA mask, they do not disrupt the visual field of the user. The disruption of the visual field is also a key aspect of training in the SCBA mask.

To that point, a company called BA Shields makes a product that can be attached to your SCBA mask in order to simulate a “smoked out” environment. No, we are not affiliated with them, and we don’t make money from mentioning them. As a side note, adding gradation of opacity from the top of the visor to the bottom of the shield would help more closely simulate fire conditions. [Picture example?]

Another popular method that attempts to create a reduced visibility environment is placing wax paper inside the mask, though this is fundamentally a black-out effect and does not resemble real fire conditions. It still allows some light to pass through, though, and is an easy enough method to employ.

DO NOT simulate low-visibility or blacked-out scenarios by closing your eyes, or having others close their eyes. These repeated attempts to (poorly) simulate a fire environment by closing the eyes will become a habit, and inevitably carry over to the fireground. [Reference: Proactive Rescue Solutions, Bassel Ibrahim, On Combat by Grossman]

If an SCBA cannot be used, a comparably weighted backpack may work as a substitute. The backpack should ideally have a rigid frame similar to the SCBA, but it's not necessary.

Getting Money Involved

If equipment cannot be secured or borrowed through your department, eBay and govdeals has gear for sale… but that takes money.

- Raising money to purchase gear or gear substitutes can be done by an individual, the group or a department

- Outside help may be enlisted [local unions (IAFF and IBPFF), religious institutions, businesses, etc.]

- Run a GoFundMe, and share it among firefighter social media groups

- Research scholarships or state and federal grants that you or the group may qualify for

- A lemonade stand, selling your old compact discs or pictures of your feet

Be sure that you don’t use your affiliation with the department to raise money without them knowing. Cover all of your legal bases, and definitely do not use this program as legal advice in any way.

Please let us know what resources or grants you find, or what methods you use (both successfully and otherwise). The information you choose to share with us can only improve the program for everyone who wants to implement these ideas in the future.

Event Types:

- general

(informal, unled, any length of time, any place)

- skills/discipline

(search, RIT, firefighter packaging, HAZMAT, EMS, etc.)

- honor-based

This could be held at a specific place, could be held on the date of the LODD, devote time to skills associated with the LODD report -- e.g. basic skills and basic puzzles while fatigued, keeping gloves on no matter what, high-rep SCBA survival skills with increasing stressors, communication drills, etc.

Gearwork can be used to honor any event, group or person that brings honor to this world.

Apart from actually getting in gear and doing work, the group should attempt to hold a scheduled visit to a Fallen Firefighters Memorial. Call your state's memorial committee beforehand, because they may have families who want to meet you, or other resources you can access.

- out of the box

(basketball, spike ball, soccer with charge hoseline, punching bag, etc.)

- retirees and guests

Identify a valuable retiree - police, fire, dispatch, ems - and brief them on the nature and mission of the group. Invite them to share their story, answer questions and openly endorse the mission of the group.

Guests can be anyone with specialized knowledge, an instructor, or a person with a unique, pertinent experience to share that would enrich the group. It can be a citizen who wants to share their story on how firefighters helped them.

These retirees and guests, if appropriate, should be invited to get in gear with us and do whatever fun stuff they want to do.

- holidays, anniversaries, charities, oh my!

(Santa Search and Rescue, Halloween Hazmat, 9/11 memorial, promotion, birthday, first fire, etc.)

- course specific preparation

(smoke divers, state RIT programs, F.L.A.M.E.S., ADO/PDO, etc.)

- The 25th Hour

The 25th Hour is a sacred time when we get off of a 24 hour shift, get in gear, and watch the sunrise while doing righteous gearwork... All done in gratitude for having the privilege to serve another shift.

We know that our days of being able to fight fires are limited, and we should take every chance we get to feel gratitude for that ability and put action to that gratitude! The 25th hour is often a more relaxed or quiet gearwork session and, in our opinion, it's the best way to end a shift. (HTG)

Extras that actually mean a lot:

- food

(grill out, potluck, order pizza to be delivered to the location, cook at kitchens for rent at public parks, cook at the station or training center, eat out afterwards)

- music

Music is another magic ingredient, with consideration for volume and content, of course. Bluetooth speakers are a cool thing, or open up someone's car and let the music play. Plug in your headphones and do your own thing. You can also build a group playlist.

Also, not everyone has the same taste in music. In fact, some people have horrible tastes in music. And if you don't think this is true, you might be that guy. But everyone should get a chance to add their favorites to the group playlist. How else are we going to get to know each other if we don't make it a practice to make room for each other? And who knows? That terrible song may end up ear-worming its way into your own playlist... Or not.

- a sense of fun
- fire stories, failures and successes
- let’s not eat our own

To that last point, the overall mindset of our culture should be a problem-solving one. How do we engage those who don't see the value in gearwork? The opposite of solving this problem is alienating and degrading them, because these are our fellow firefighters. So let's continuously and willfully discard and combat the disease of gossip and complaining.

The fact is that any firefighter's lack of gear proficiency could get themselves and others killed, and everyone should be welcomed as long as they get in gear and move around.

This is not a popularity club, or an excuse to ostracize people we may not personally get along with. This is an opportunity to rise to the highest ideals of the Oath, to actualize what it means to serve not only our citizens but our fellow firefighters as well. Brotherhood runs deeper than simply liking someone, after all.

Our main focus must transcend personal preferences and be guided by principle. The mission behind gearwork is to make a less killable firefighter, and one less likely to kill through lack of conditioning, competency or cross-agency understanding.

And to the other points brought forth in this section, it's strange and wonderful how just adding food to the mix elevates the gearwork experience. We meet up, work shoulder to shoulder and eat chow.

Everything else falls into place naturally: organic mentorship, fire stories, organic/unplanned skills instruction, "what if we try this"/skill experiments, better understanding of how our department members think, better understanding of how our neighboring agency members think and operate.

So, that's it! Those magic little extras of food, fun, music, and some genuine desire for understanding and inclusion.

You don't always need to have food or tunes going. You don't always need to inject shenanigans or silliness. These are simply aspects that can be sprinkled in as you go.

Coordinating/Communicating:

You can start a private Facebook group just for your events. You can also create a group chat on Whatsapp for firefighter hopefuls and incumbent cadets to share and ask questions, and also for sworn members to answer questions and share resources. Sworn members can become advocates, mentors and liaisons for those who wish to earn the title of firefighter.

We are also attempting to streamline notifications for events as they are added and as they approach. Google Calendar has notification options for those emails added to the calendar, but we would like to find a more user friendly method. A dedicated WhatsApp group was suggested, which uses people’s phone numbers and each user may decide how often they get notifications.

Fire Service Relevance

The following are aspects of the fire service that can be addressed by the Future Ready Fire program.

Mentorship Initiative

This is not a business model that forces or assigns mentorship roles. It happens naturally through gearwork events.

Maybe you don't get along with your crew. It happens. Maybe no one else you work with wants to train. That happens, too. Maybe you're hungry for more! That's a great thing that should be acknowledged and fostered.

Gearwork events can be the answer. It's what each firefighter wants to get out of it.

Combined Forces Initiative

By inviting other agencies to attend, or even taking events -- and a little food -- to them, we begin laying the groundwork for cross-agency relationships, training and understanding. Yes, law enforcement, EMS, and dispatch are a part of this initiative.

Recruiting

What better way to get someone excited about becoming a firefighter than getting gear and flowing water from a firehose?! Have recruiting refer interested parties to the group. Have some extra, washed gear on hand. Crack a hydrant with them and share what fire life is like. Answer their questions and let them take pictures for their Instagram. This is a chance for firefighters to work on their soft skills, learn about a fellow citizen and show pride in their profession.

Have incumbent cadets who are a part of the program show up to recruiting events wearing special shirts that identify them as a future firefighter. Members of the public may be more likely to engage someone who is closer to their age, or who look less formal. The incumbent cadet can share why they are there, why they want to be a firefighter and what it's been like preparing for the profession. Their enthusiasm is a contagious and precious thing that should be rewarded and used for the benefit of our future. This particular idea is a tactic taken directly from the Marine Corps Recruiting

handbook, by the way. Plus, you should make sure the shirt you give them is cool enough, too. Who wants to wear a dorky looking shirt?

Retention

The passionate among us are likely to feel rather alone when their passion is met with indifference. What's worse is when their passion is met with derision, scorn or denial. Gearwork is their refuge and the place where they are most likely to find those who share their particular values. Someone is less likely to leave a profession if they feel like they are valued and are growing (insert reference to that study here*).

Skills Proficiency

(individual, crew, departmental)

Online Training Platform

- Track attendance thru virtual learning platform
- Track functions performed in relation to virtual assignments/learning objectives
- There was also an idea proposed that attendance somehow be tracked for promotional use, though the *weight* of such attendance should **fit appropriately within a larger scope of weighted averages.** For example, if a member works for another fire agency or picks up professional certifications on their own, these should mean ***more*** than mere gearwork attendance.

I found merit in all of these ideas, though their feasibility and application have not been fielded (as of the date of this version).

Academy Support

Gearwork events should occur throughout the academy, where cadets can reap a multitude of benefits and opportunities, some of which are listed below.

- practice new skills
- address performance concerns through study or repetitions
- continue to condition themselves physically and psychologically
- ask questions, seek counsel, engage in conversation, debrief the week/day

- emotionally decompress through unled, casual interactions without the rigidity of the academy structure
- build fellowship that can be carried into the companies
- social support, particularly for those who have moved from out of state
- visit other stations/departments/agencies, establish and reinforce mutual aide relationships
- grow their understanding of fire life (hall life, story time, conferences, leadership, education, expectations, shenanigans vs. hazing, etc.)

Endorsement

It's important to first note that this program does not add to the workload of current academy instructors. However, should academy instructors wish to support the program, some of the ways they can do this are as follows:

- Allow core member(s) of the group to speak to the class, preferably as early in the academy as possible. The level of detail is up to those who present, and the time allotted. Those in the group could provide personal testimony to the relevance or spirit of the group. This first “pitch” could include a gearwork event that matches the tone of those events held outside academy hours.

- Academy instructors can provide personal endorsement, or cadre endorsement. This could be by means of speaking to the class, candid or prepped video/audio recorded endorsement, written endorsement, etc.

- Allow access to academy educational materials, lesson plans, and scheduling.

- Allow access to the training grounds, facilities and equipment as appropriate.

- With regards to recruit performance metrics, trusted core members of the group would benefit from gaining access to recruit/class performance reports/data. From this, they could prepare future gearwork events to address needs.

- Consistent two-way communication between the instructor(s) and the core members is absolutely a benefit and can occur through scheduled or as-needed conversations/meetings.

As an aside, endorsement should never mean that these events are made to seem mandatory, or that punishment will befall those who do not attend.

Worst Case, or Enter: Lord Voldemort

The worst case scenario is not simply a lack of support by academy instructors or the department bigwigs. The worst case scenario is that, despite the backing of science and a bevy of impressively effective precedents, *gearwork itself is rejected and considered dangerous* by the upper echelon of a department.

The good news is, approval by the department is not legally required to conduct gearwork events on your own time, under your own name, with your own gear, and with whoever you please. A department does not have the legal authority to dictate – by policy, direct order, or coercion (suggestion, threat) – whether or not an employee attends gearwork events outside of work (as long as it is carried out under a name other than your agency). [insert link to federal law requirements here*]

It bears repeating that we are not lawyers. Do not use this program as legal advice. Instead, continue to empower yourself with as much knowledge as you can (department SOP's, municipal/state/federal law and precedent), and do what you know is Right. (*It might help to have a lawyer as a friend, though, if your department is somehow the Lord Voldemort of the fire service. And may the Force be with you. Nanu nanu.*)

United Front

There will always be differences in philosophies, skill sets, and experiences. The responsibility of the sworn (both instructors and core members) is to the cadets, and maintaining a high standard of training, ethics and unit cohesion. While in the academy, the recruits are under the solemn care of the main instructor cadre. Deference to this fact should be kept forefront.

> *Sworn members must never undermine skills or tactics taught in the academy.*

If there is a point of confusion or disagreement regarding skills or tactics being taught in the academy, sworn should *never* give the impression that these skills are invalid or deficient.

For the benefit of everyone involved, further investigation is warranted when skills or tactics are called into question. If presented with confusing or conflicting information by cadets, sworn members of the gearwork group should attempt to ascertain the source of the material, and address any differences as appropriate, including a response such as, “Let me talk to the instructors about it and get some clarity."

It cannot be stressed enough that **willfully and maliciously undermining training staff ADDS to the problems we should aim to eradicate and prevent**. It does nothing but hinder crucial opportunities for training, unit cohesion and mutual understanding. Where differences of philosophies or mindsets exist, as opposed to hard skills, techniques and tactics, a good working relationship can still be maintained through aforementioned communication and due deference, along with reliance on facts, evidence and core principles.

If a sworn member consistently refuses to conform to these standards, after being duly warned and/or counseled, their removal from the program should be considered.

Extras

Cadet Survey

Optionally, every week, an anonymous internet survey (such as Survey Monkey) can be sent to the cadets (via WhatsApp or whatever academy group chat they have) asking what worked for them that week/their favorite part, and what didn't work for them/what they're confused about. From this survey, gearwork events can be tailored to meet those needs. The information from this survey would ideally be made available to the academy instructors, and they can use it as they see fit.

QR Code Tracking

There is also a system developed by Cobb County Fire Department (Georgia, USA) for tracking real time instructor/adjunct instructor feedback. A QR code is posted at skill stations during a skills day at the academy. When an instructor wants to make a note of something that a specific recruit did or said on that date and at that skill station, they simply scan the QR code with their smart phone and it opens a Google Sheets, which already has the date and skill station listed, as well as the names of each recruit.

A note may then be made next to that recruit (performance, attitude, leadership qualities, remediation, concerns, strange smell, etc.), and this information can be used to track trends in performance and behavior so that issues can be identified and addressed before they become a problem. This also allows for documentation of those cadets who consistently perform well or show continued improvement.

Mental Health

It would unquestionably help some people to hang around motivated individuals who care about their evolution as a firefighter and as a person... more to come on this rather important point.

Cardiac Health

(increased plasma volume reduces clotting, cardiac muscle strength, arterial plasticity, increased longevity study, etc.)

Fireground Conditioning

(heat acclimation*, stress immune response, stress inoculation, gear proficiency, improved physical fireground performance, improved cognitive fireground performance)

* There are ways to train for the heat if it's cold where you are. More to come!

Delayed Entry Program

This is an SOP that provides educational support and physical conditioning for incumbent cadets. For some departments, it could also provide full or part-time, paid positions for exceptional individuals who are waiting to attend the next academy. It also utilizes these members in recruiting efforts, through various means controlled and coordinated by the gearwork group itself.

Selection/Hiring Aide

Address barriers that hopefuls may have to being hired. Are they too young or unable to commit full time? Help them join a volunteer department, and keep them coming to gearwork. EMS certifications? Get them with a civilian ambulance service that can get them EMT certified. Help them prepare for EMS testing. Conditioning? That's easy.

Those who show exceptional attitude and intrinsic work ethic, who consistently show up and show improvement may warrant a recommendation letter by those sworn who have been working with them. Or your group may develop some other set of selection criteria that could be gained by attending.

It's important to note that these criteria should not eclipse other valuable candidates who may not have had access to the group, but a certain amount of proven investment over a certain amount of time should carry at least a little weight in the process.

PPE Committee/Defined PPE Testers

Succession

Training Companies

Guest Instructors

Mobile Training Unit

Conferences

(Insert links/references to science articles, health articles, military training articles, military recruiting handbooks and tactics, Behave: human biology book, Project Mayday, Fire Rescue Survey, National Fallen Firefighters Foundation, Fire articles, and LODD reports, Georgia Smoke Divers, Oklahoma Smoke Divers, Indiana Smoke Divers, Florida Smoke Divers, F.L.A.M.E.S., On

Combat, Deep Survival, Carpe Fuego Facebook group, Train or Die Facebook discussion group, Firehouse Vigilance Weekly Scrap interviews)