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FIRE OFFICER TRAINING

IN-BASKET EXERCISE – BATTALION CHIEF

FIRE DEPARTMENT IN-BASKET EXERCISE #1

ASSIGNMENT

FIRE DEPARTMENT BATTALION CHIEF IN-BASKET EXERCISE #1 - ASSIGNMENT

The In-Basket exercise is used to determine your ability to prioritize and accomplish multiple tasks simultaneously. You are expected to create a clear plan of how to manage the workload that has been presented to you. You are expected to use the fire department memo format, forms, and email system when available.

It is Monday, a little before 0600. It is the first day of the month.

You command a battalion that has 5 stations. The stations are numbered 1 through 5. Each station has an engine company and there is also a truck company at Station 1. For the purpose clarification, your department members work 24-hour shifts. There are three different shifts – A, B, C. You are the Battalion Chief assigned to B-shift or BC-1B. They work a Kelly schedule – three shifts on with a day off in between shifts followed by four days off in a row. This totals 10 – 24-hour shifts per month. Official shift change is at 0800. It is customary for firefighters to relieve one another at 0730.

You arrived early because the on-duty BC, Chief Charly Moore, has asked for you to relieve her at 0600 because she's going on vacation and has to catch an early flight this morning.

When you arrive though she is out on a roll-over vehicle accident with Engine 4. At 0630 she pulls in to the station. She grabs her stuff, throws you the keys to the BC rig and tells you there's a note on the desk for you. That's all that she says as she runs for her personal vehicle and drives away on vacation.

Attached are various documents: emails, letters, memos, and her note.

You have one hour to review and prioritize the communications and decide on a course of action, if any.

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When the time has expired, you will explain to the panel how you prioritized each item and present any memo(s) or documentation that is consistent with what would be expected in the course of your duties as a Battalion Chief. The priority categories that you will rate each topic provided for this assignment will be the following: High, Medium Low.

CATEGORY		
HIGH	**MEDIUM**	**LOW**

Department Information
Anytown Fire Department

Fire Chief: Mitch Fergus

Deputy Fire Chief: Bernie Langer

Assistant to the Fire Chief: Barbara Wells

Admin. Captain: Mark Perez

Station Location and Units:

1. 2410 South 1st Street: Engine 1, Truck 1, Battalion 1
2. 1201 Johnson Ave: Engine 2
3. 5200 North 1st Street: Engine 3
4. 120 Douglas Road: Engine 4
5. 334 Elk Lane: Engine 5

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TOPIC #1 (Note)

Hi Chief Candidate,

Thanks a lot for coming in early for me. I really need this vacation!

Only a couple of items for you to be aware of:

- Our vehicle is low on fuel (The pumps were being worked on yesterday so I couldn't fuel in the morning)
- I think our SCBA in the vehicle might be leaking air. It was low yesterday morning when I checked it.....
- There is some amazing key lime pie in the fridge. Better grab a slice before it's all gone!

Thanks again. Have a great shift.....

Charly

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TOPIC #2 (E-Mail)

To: Chief Candidate

From: Captain Smith, Eng. 3B

Subject: Multi-Company Drill

Hi Boss,

I'm glad to have you as our new BC. Finally, a BC with some common sense and work ethic, I'm certain things are going to be different now! Just a reminder that we are getting together at Station 3 today at 1330 to go over the final plans for this month's multi-company drill. We only have two weeks to get it finished and there's still a lot to do. I'm interested in your ideas about managing mass casualties. See you after lunch.

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TOPIC #3 (E-Mail)

To: Chief Candidate

From: Chief Kean, BC-1 'C' Shift

Subject: Poor Performance

As you know I have been a BC on ‘C’ shift for a while now. I like to run a tight ship and am glad we are finally getting some quality leadership on ‘B’ shift.

I was filling in the last ‘B’ shift set and had a fire in Station 4’s area. Engine 2 was on the alarm. I gave them an assignment to ladder a balcony and stretch a line to the 2nd floor. There’s no other way to say it: It was a total mess. It didn’t look like the FF had ever seen an extension ladder before (Maybe he is one of the newer guys?) and the captain just stood by and watched him fumble around and occasionally yelled at him. Needless to say their behavior slowed my operations. This would never happen on ‘C’ shift.

Sorry to drop this in your lap but this isn’t the first time this sort of thing has happened.

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TOPIC #4 (Memo)

To: Candidate, BC

From: Captain Donner, Eng. 5B

Subject: Dispatch Issues

Last set we had a couple of problems with dispatch. We were at the east end of our district doing hose lays and got dispatched to a medical aid, even though I told them we would be delayed when we got out there. We had to hurry up and get the hose back on the engine, delaying our response.

Then, later in the day, we got dispatched to an odor of smoke that wasn't even in the City. Something needs to be done about those dispatchers. It's like they don't know what we do out here.

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TOPIC #5 (Memo)

Anytown Fire Department

To: Battalion Chief Candidate

From: Barbara Wells

Subject: Community Meeting

Chief,

There is a Community Meeting tonight at Sharp Elementary School on South 1st Street. Deputy Chief Langer is doing a presentation and would like to introduce you at the same time. Please confirm your attendance by 0800 so I can get the handouts printed.

Thank you!

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TOPIC #6 (E-Mail)

To: Battalion Chief Candidate

From: FF Johnson, Eng 1B

Subject: Burned out

Chief, as you are well aware I have been a firefighter here for longer than a lot of people have been on the job, all of my time has been at Sta. 1. I think I've had enough though. I really think I need to have a break and go to a slower station. What do I need to do to make this happen ASAP? The increased call volume has me at my breaking point.

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TOPIC #7 (Letter Dated Two Days Ago)

Dear Battalion Fire Chief Candidate,

My name is Sarah Garrett. I am the owner of Half Moon Sushi on Main Street. Recently I had the displeasure of meeting one of your firemen. I am a nice person, just trying to make a living running a small business. There is no reason for me to have to be treated like I was, a few days ago.

Last Wednesday, I was at work, like I always am, when the men from the fire station on Johnson Ave. came into my business. The person in-charge, Captain Long, preceded to conduct an inspection of my business. Apparently he found a few things that he didn't like and gave me a list of "violations" that I need to correct. When I started to ask questions about these "violations" he became very upset. He refused to discuss them with me, only telling me I needed to comply. Finally, in a very loud voice, in front of my customers, he promised to "shut me down" if I didn't "get my act together", threw some paperwork on the counter and walked out.

I have always been a good supporter of the Fire Department and the heroic work that you do but this encounter left me very upset and afraid for my business. If I have an emergency will this awful man be the one that comes to help me?

Can you please help me? I want to do whatever the law requires but I still don't understand what I'm supposed to do to fix these violations.

Sincerely,

Sarah Garrett 888-600-5005

1234 Main Street

Anytown, USA

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TOPIC #8 (E-Mail)

To: Chief Candidate

From: Fire Chief Fergus

Subject: Meeting

Welcome to the rank of chief officer in the Anytown Fire Department. As our newest BC I would like to meet and discuss my expectations with you. I have scheduled a meeting for us at 1400 hrs, today, in my office.

Looking forward to speaking with you.

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TOPIC #9 (Memo)

Anytown Fire Department

To: Chief Candidate

From: Captain Perez, Admin. Captain

Subject: Probationary FF

Chief Langer tasked me with completing a couple of things for a project he's working on for the Fire Chief. Probationary FF, Dan Mills, is assigned to your shift at Station 2. I need copies of his driver's license, CPR card and EMT license. I sent a note to his captain a couple of weeks back but haven't got a reply so I'm hoping you can help me.

Thx!

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TOPIC #10 (Voice Message at 0700 Hours)

Hi Chief. This is Lt. Morrison at PD. Our guys are serving a warrant over on Douglas Road and 11th this morning around 9. According to our intel the place is locked up tight. I was wondering if we could borrow some of your forcible entry tools to speed up the entry? We only have enough stuff to attack one locked door at a time and, if we can get some of your tools, we can go at several at once. Call me back……Oh, we already have one of your pry bars. You guys left it at that rollover accident this morning…….

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