Welcome to the NVFC’s Train Strong Webinar Series.

Today’s webinar is “Recruiting Exceptional Crew Members in Competitive Times.”
The National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC) is the leading nonprofit membership association representing the interests of the volunteer fire, EMS, and rescue services. The NVFC serves as the voice of the volunteer in the national arena and provides invaluable resources, programs, education, and advocacy for first responders across the nation.

NOT A MEMBER? Visit nvfc.org/join-nvfc today and you will be eligible for a wide range of benefits including insurance, training, special member promotions, and more!
Membership

Have a voice in advocating for volunteer fire and emergency services nationwide and locally.

Up your skills through free training, educational scholarships, and giveaways.

Grow your fire family by connecting with fire service volunteers in your area and across the country.

Look after your loved ones with a $10,000 AD&D insurance policy.

Know you’re backed by the top organization fighting for the volunteer fire and emergency services.

Become a member for only $18 a year. Join today at NVFC.org/Join
Speaker

Chief Bill Gardner
THE ESO MISSION

Make a Difference

Improve Community Health and Safety Through the Power of Data
Information That We Know

National Fire Department Registry Summary 2020

• Estimated 91% of fire departments are listed in the registry

• Department types of the 27,174 fire departments registered:
  • Nine percent are career
  • Five percent are mostly career
  • Sixteen percent are mostly volunteer
  • Seventy percent are volunteer
How does the 2020 snapshot compare to previous years?

Of the active firefighting personnel, 34% were career firefighters, 54% were volunteer firefighters, and 12% were paid per call firefighters.

- 2020 – 54.5% were volunteer firefighters (580,261)
- 2018 – 55% were volunteer firefighters (586,465)
- 2016 – 56% were volunteer firefighters (597,128)

Difference of 16,867 or 3% that is just under 1% annual net loss.
Well, no one wants to volunteer any more?

The annual Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) American Freshman study shows that 77.5% of students entering college in fall 2016 list “helping others who are in difficulty” as an “essential” or “very important” objective, the highest percentage in its 51-year history.
Other Possibilities?

“After a year of research and data collection, I determined that leadership is a critical element in the volunteer fire service retention equation.”

- Chief Harry R. Carter, Ph.D., CFO, MIFireE, The Decline and Fall of the Volunteer Fire Service? Fire House Magazine 1.31.06

“The volunteer fire service is facing declining enrollment in our departments. This is coming at the same time that demand for emergency services—but generally not firefighting—is at an all-time high and growing. Yet we, the leadership of our departments, have failed to see how our image – and the bait-and-switch we are putting out – are hindering our efforts to recruit and retain more volunteers.”

- Chief Joe Maruca, Fire Engineering, 9.20.19
But…could it be because they don’t know we need them, and we aren’t telling them that we have what they need?
So what is wanted by today’s workforce (yes that includes volunteers)

- To be understood by their employer.
- The opportunity to learn and grow.
- They want to be highly engaged.
- They want to make a difference.
- The authenticity of your company.
- Flexibility
- 90% of Generation Z workers prefer a dynamic and fast working environment, while up to 70% expect that their working hours will exceed the traditional 40-hour working week.
We as the fire service offer this, but do we tell them that?

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What is your organization’s brand value?

• Smart process to apply
• Social media presence
• Why the person is needed
• What difference they can make
What is the landscape for recruiting?

Where are the candidates?

Are you using current events to highlight your department?

Are you asking them to volunteer?

Are your members recruiting and serving as recruiting posters?
Why Volunteer with You?

- They want to have a purpose
- They want to know how they contribute to the organization
- Social impacts to the community
- They want a growth plan for them in writing for application through an officer
- Keep them involved
- Be open and honest with them

They want to make a difference in the world.

60% want their jobs to impact the world; 26% regularly volunteer in some capacity.
Why you want them........

MILLENIALS ARE PHILANTHROPIC.

75% have made a financial donation; 71% have raised money; 56% have volunteered. Alumni who reported positive experiences with university resources reported higher levels of volunteering and giving.
Items to Remember when You get Them

Gen Zers are starting their careers with higher levels of anxiety exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic. Employers can adapt existing research and best practices to create customized programs for young workers. This could include early-career affinity groups that encourage open conversation in a supportive environment. In addition, coaching interventions can boost an individual’s confidence in their ability to succeed and reduce anxiety, helping to keep minor performance challenges from becoming career-damaging incidents.
In having to cope with a shut-down of life as they knew it at such a young age, many Gen Zers have experienced a massive interruption in their ability to discover what motivates and fulfills them. Because of this, they’ll need more time in their young adult years to undertake this self-exploration. Employers can help fill this gap by offering programming that helps build emotional intelligence from the outset of their careers — not several years down the road.

One note: I would recommend eliminating the phrase “soft skills,” a term that actually denigrates the importance of training and development in these important areas.
NVFC’s Make Me A Firefighter Campaign

www.makemeafirefighter.org
https://portal.nvfc.org/portal
Q&A Session
Volunteer Voices

JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

#CANCER #FUNDING #TRAINING #RECRUITMENT #SAFETY #RETENTION

VISIT VOLUNTEERVOICES.NVFC.ORG
Thank You!

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