

# Career Advancement Seminar



# Land Acknowledgment

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As members of the Canadian Fire Services, we respectfully acknowledge that the work we do takes place on the traditional territories of Indigenous peoples across Canada.

We recognize that these lands have been inhabited by Indigenous peoples for millennia and that their deep connection to the land shapes their cultures, traditions, and identities.

We acknowledge the ongoing impact of colonization, displacement, and the loss of Indigenous lands and resources.

As firefighters, we are committed to upholding the principles of reconciliation, understanding, and respect for Indigenous peoples and their rights.

We honour the contributions of Indigenous communities to firefighting and emergency services and commit to building strong, collaborative relationships rooted in mutual respect and solidarity.





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## Our Team

- Dave Shelton, Montreal Fire
- Ryan Agard, Brampton Fire
- Chris Porter, Oakville Fire
- Michelle John, Brampton Fire
- Lachlan Aryee, Edmonton Fire
- Frank Jones, Toronto Fire
- Patty Youn, Toronto Fire

# Exploring a Career in the Fire Service



# Trying to get into the Fire Service?

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Firefighter

Wildland Firefighter

Fire Prevention Officer

Fire Education Officer

Dispatch



# Different types of firefighting in Canada?

- Municipal Firefighting
- Airport Firefighting
- Industrial Firefighting
- Wildland Firefighting
- Military Firefighting



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- Military Firefighting
- Wildland Firefighting
- Industrial Firefighting



# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## British Columbia

- Largest Cities: Vancouver, Surrey, Burnaby, Richmond
- Most need a BC Class 3 License with Air Brake
- Your Pre-Service NFPA 1001 transfers
- BC EMA License is the common First Aid requirement
  - Complete EMR and then write BC Exam.
- In House Testing, no regional certification program.





# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## Alberta

- Largest Cities: Calgary, Edmonton, Red Deer, Strathcona County
- Most need AB Class 3 License with Air Brake
- NFPA 1001 transfers but not required
- High School Diploma for most
- Varies from SFA to some wanting ACP, PCP or Nursing
- In House Testing, no regional certification program.



# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## Saskatchewan

- Largest Cities: Saskatoon and Regina
- Most need SK Class 3A or Class 5 License with Air Brake
- Saskatoon wants a Public Fire Protection Cert (NFPA 1001, 1002, 1041, 1072, 1031)
- High School Diploma for most
- First Aid Training requirement varies from ACP or PCP
- In House Testing, no regional certification program.



# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## Manitoba

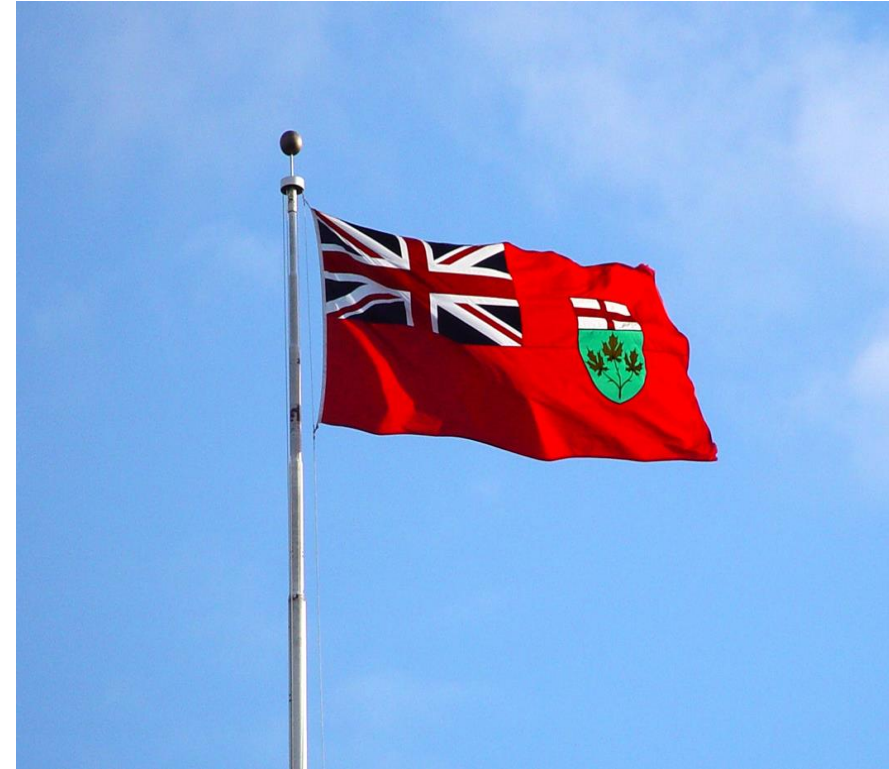
- Largest City: Winnipeg
- Needs MB Class 4 License with Air Brake
- Winnipeg wants a NFPA 1001, 1072 + 1002 + 1006 Surface Water + 1006 Vehicle Rescue + 1031
- Post Secondary is preferred
- First Aid Training requirement is PCP
- In House Testing, no regional certification program.



# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## Ontario

- Largest Cities: Toronto, Ottawa, Mississauga, Brampton, Hamilton
- Needs ON DZ License with Air Brake
- Most require NFPA 1001, 1072
- Smaller departments ask for NFPA 1002 and some NFPA 1006 Experience
- High School Diploma
- First Aid Training requirement is SFA BLS for most departments
- Many Use OFAI, some use FSO, and some perform in house testing (Vaughan, Mississauga, Richmond Hill, Windsor, London etc.)



# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## Quebec

- Largest Cities: Montreal, Quebec City, Laval, Gatineau
- Needs QC Class 4A License with Air Brake
- Most require NFPA 1001 & 1072 done through a 3-year Diploma Program at one of the Colleges in Quebec
- Must have that Fire Safety Program Diploma to apply
- First Aid Training is a component of the program.
- In House Testing, no regional certification program.



# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## Nova Scotia

- Largest Cities: Halifax and Cape Breton
- Needs NS Class 5 License with Air Brake.
- No NFPA 1001 & 1072 requirement.
- High School Diploma is sufficient.
- No First Aid Training requirement to apply.
- In House Testing, no regional certification program.



# Minimum Qualifications Across the Country

## Newfoundland

- Largest City: St. John's
- Needs NL Class 3 License with Air Brake
- Most require NFPA 1001 Level 2
- High School Diploma
- First Aid requirement: Advanced First aid from St. John's Ambulance or First Responder from Red Cross.
- In House Testing, no regional certification program.



# Employment Mobility

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How many of you are thinking about applying to a department outside of the province that you live in?





# What are fire departments looking for?



**Minimum  
Qualifications**



**Relevant Work  
Experience**



**Good Personality Fit  
and Shared Lived  
Experiences**



**Diversity and  
Representation from  
the Community**

# The Key to a Good Resume

**Format and  
Overall  
Appearance**

**No Spelling  
or Grammar  
Mistakes**

# The Key to a Good Resume

**1 Page Cover  
Letter**

**2 Page  
Resume  
(max 3 pages)**

# The Key to a Good Resume

**Get  
Someone to  
Review it**

**Application  
Tracking  
Systems**

# Firefighter Panel Interviews

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**Not about your technical skills**

**Focused on Behavioural, Situational and General Competency questions**

**They are evaluating your:**

- **Communication Skills,**
- **Poise and Confidence**
- **Whether or not they like you**



# The Key to a Good Interview

**Get GOOD Transferable experience in different realms**

**Know how to structure your answers and deliver them**

**Preparation and Practice**

**Reduce Anxiety and Nerves**



# What is recruit class like in most departments?

**Could be 8 weeks or 10 weeks or even 20-25 weeks long.**

**Focused on building base level skills and an understanding of standard operating procedures.**

**Safety is key.**

**They are watching you and evaluating your fit.**



What is  
recruit class  
like in most  
departments?

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What is  
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## How to make a good first impression?

**Good strong handshakes, smile with the eyes.**

**Retain information, take the time to study what you are weak on.**

**Learn the flow of the station/crew, work hard to be likable.**

**Own up to your mistakes, be accountable.**



## Tips and tricks to become a firefighter!

**Your diet is more than what you eat.**

**Be a humble student at all times.**

**If you're early you're on time. If you're on time you're late.**

**Be the hardest worker in the room.**

**It's an honour to wear the uniform. Treat everyone with respect and dignity.**

# Thanks for listening!!!

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Questions about:

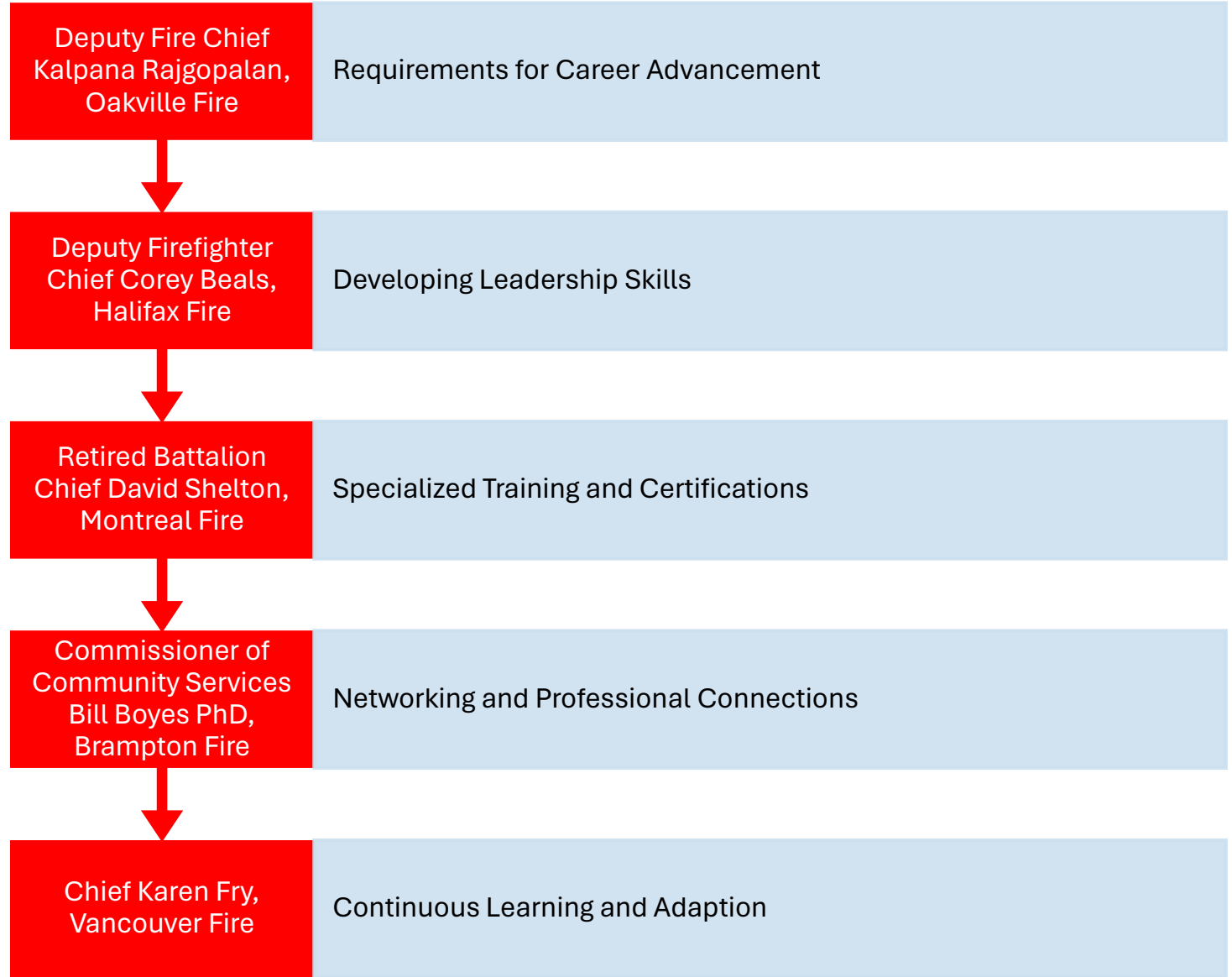
- recruiting,
- resumes, cover letters,
- studying tips,
- physical test prep,
- interview prep



# Advancing Your Career in the Canadian Fire Service



# Speakers



# Requirements for Career Advancement



# Requirements for Career Advancement

Educational Qualifications

Professional Development

Experience



# Where are you in your career?

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Student or Aspiring Firefighter  
Volunteer Firefighter  
Junior Career Firefighter  
Senior Career Firefighter  
Captain or Battalion Chief  
Deputy Fire Chief or Fire Chief



Developing  
Leadership  
Skills



# Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency

Canada's Oldest Fire Service

1754



**From Volunteer  
Firefighter to Deputy  
Fire Chief:  
Overcoming  
Adversity; Achieving  
Success**





What is Leadership?

(Mental Exercise)

# Planning, Preparation & Opportunity

- Continuous Education
- A Mentor
- Networking
- Conferences
- Leadership Development



# Planning

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- **Everything starts with a plan**

## **Set Clear Goals**

*Personal and Career*

- Whether intentional or not, or in the subconscious, we set or make plans to accomplish most things in life.

But how often do we devise a plan to determine or dictate our career path?



# Preparation

- *Career advancement requires preparation*

**Identify Required Skills**

**Invest in Further Education**

**Seek out Training Opportunities**

**Prioritize**

**Network**

**Be Proactive**





# Opportunity

A photograph of firefighters in full gear, including helmets and oxygen tanks, working at a scene. The scene is dark and smoky, with a fire hose visible on the ground. The firefighters are wearing brown uniforms with reflective yellow stripes. One firefighter in the foreground has 'ELAISSON' written on their back. The background shows the skeletal remains of a structure, possibly a building that has been destroyed or is under construction.

**Seek out and take advantage of training opportunities**

**Volunteer for projects that stretch your capabilities and demonstrate your skills**

**Look for leadership opportunities to lead teams or initiatives.**

**Exceed expectations**

*“In order to succeed, your desire for success should be greater than your fear of failure”*

# Leadership & Impact Success in the Fire Service

- Transitioned from volunteer firefighter at Station 22 to career member with HRFE in 1997.
- Promoted through the ranks from Lieutenant to District Chief/Division Commander in 2013, making history as the first African Nova Scotian in a management role.
- Now currently serving as Deputy Fire Chief of Community Risk Reduction, Logistics and Infrastructure, one of only two Black Chief Officers nationwide.





# Overcoming Adversity

## **Cultivate a Positive Mindset**

Focus on what you can control

## **Practice gratitude**

## **Visualize Success**

View Challenges as opportunities to learn and grow and embrace mistakes as valuable lessons.

## **Persist**

Keep pushing forward, even when progress seems slow

## **Be flexible**

Adversity often requires us adjust our plans and strategies



**Questions?**



# Audience Poll

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How would you rate your story telling ability in an interview or professional setting?

Do you have a go to story displaying your leadership?



Specialized  
Training and  
Certifications





# Specialized Training and Certifications





# Specialized Training and Certifications

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Specialized  
Training and  
Certifications



# Audience Poll

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Have you ever paid for your own Firefighter certification out of your own pocket?

1006 Rescue Training, HazMat Technician, FLSE, Inspector etc...



# Networking and Professional Connections



# Networking and Professional Connections

The power of networking

Connecting through professional organizations

Benefits of going to conferences and seminars

# Have you ever gone to FDIC?

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Or any other fire conferences?

FSWO is holding a training symposium in November 2024 in Hamilton, ON

See you there!



# Continuous Learning and Adaption



# Continuous Learning and Adaption

How to stay up to date with current research and technology?

How to build a culture focused on Continuous Learning?

What are the ultimate goals of the fire service?



# Question Period

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