

HANDOUT 1-1
PRE-COURSE ASSIGNMENT

Name _____

Rank _____

Department _____

DIRECTIONS

This is the pre-course assignment for *Politics and the White Helmet*. This assignment is designed to prepare you for the classroom activities and discussions in the course. Several of the activities require the use of the information you develop in the assignment. By completing the assignment, the discussions in class will have more meaning to your personal situation and the skills you hope to take away from the course. In short, the time you spend will be well worth the effort. You can anticipate that the assignment will require 2 to 3 hours to complete.

You may type your answers into this document. After entering your answers, save the document. Please bring two copies with you to class: you will submit one copy at the beginning of the course and use the other copy as reference during the activities and discussions.

Thank you for your time. Good luck in the course.

1. Answer the following questions about your local government political structure. Please include an organizational chart which identifies your organization, the department head (fire chief, EMS director, etc.) and their relationship to senior appointed and elected officials

a. Who is the senior appointed official? This could be a city manager, county manager, etc.

b. Who does the department head (fire chief, EMS manager, etc.) report to within the structure?

c. Who is the leading elected official, e.g. mayor, county commissioner, board president, etc.?

d. What political organization (authority having jurisdiction) grants your organization its authority, e.g. city council, county commission, special district board, etc.?

2. What authority is provided to the department head (fire chief, EMS manager, etc.) by the local authority having jurisdiction? If available, attach a copy of the city ordinance, code, etc. which outlines that authority.

3. In your own words, define 'politics' as it applies to your position as a department head or senior officer/manager in your organization.

4. Rate your level of participation in the local public policy process when it involves fire department issues. For example, how involved are you in decisions made by the city council, district board, county commissioners, etc. pertaining to your organization? How involved are you with the organization's budget approval? Select the one which best describes your level of involvement.

- I do not participate in the local public policy process.
- I attend meetings of the local elected officials (authority having jurisdiction).
- I only provide input on public policy to my supervisor when requested.
- I periodically provide input on public policy to my supervisor.
- I regularly provide input on public policy to my supervisor.

5. Interview senior appointed or elected official about the leading concerns of citizens in the community. The goal is to get their perspective about the leading citizen concerns. The concerns do not have to involve fire protection or emergency medical service; they may be of any issue in the community. You may do the interview by phone or email if convenient. You may use the questions provided below for the interview.
- a. What general issues do you believe is the greatest concern to the citizens in our community?
 - b. Why do you believe those are the greatest concern to the citizens?
6. Describe the public's perception of your organization. How did you determine the public's perception, e.g. survey, comments from the public, comments to members of the organization, etc.?

7. Describe the three (3) most critical issues facing your local fire department or emergency services organization. Do any of the issues involve local politics? Please explain.

Issue #1:

Issue #2:

Issue #3:
