



## 20. Leadership Challenges Be Ready to Lead!

One of the most misunderstood applications of promotions is what will be required of the individual. Moving from one position to another within the fire service is a daunting task. It is not easily accomplished and will require sacrifice. Leadership is a constant hard-fought battle that will require all of the individual's abilities, a lot of time and effort, forward thinking, dedication, sleepless nights, stress, mistakes, gains, sacrifice, pride, intestinal fortitude and taking responsibility. Whether the fire officer wants to admit it or not, they are now the "BOSS", and with it comes a new mindset, abilities and the ability to avoid making critical mistakes that will affect their ability to motivate, lead and change their organization and the fire service. This presentation will identify how the practice of leadership is not easy, nor can it be frowned upon as it has its place in each organization, when leadership is not exuded, the climate, productivity and charisma of an organization remains consistent to what has become the norm. Just as the practice of leadership is not easy, finding the most appropriate way to influence personnel is just as complicated, as there are the set leadership characteristics of those in power, and the characteristics and traits of those within the organization.

### Instructor

**Tim Whitham** has served as the Fire Chief for the City of Edwardsville, Kansas since 2015. He has over three decades of fire service experience and has served in all capacities from firefighter, company officer, and fire chief. Tim is a graduate of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program and has designations as a Chief Fire Officer and Fire Marshal from the Commission on Professional Credentialing. He holds a bachelor's degree in Fire and Emergency Response Management from the University of Wisconsin - Oshkosh and a master's degree in leadership from Grand Canyon University. Chief Whitham is the Fire Science Program Director for Johnson County Community College, prior to this appointment he served many years as an instructor. He is also an instructor for the National Fire Academy, and is an instructor, evaluator and site coordinator for the Kansas University Fire Service Training Program.