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Snapshot Size-Up #119



Continuing Education

Most departments require that new firefighters attend the fire academy before being issued a uniform. After academy training is complete, many departments rely solely on in-house training to keep their bodies strong and minds sharp. If you are a wise firefighter, you already understand that the demands of our job are so great, that an on-the-job training program is just one component that is necessary for an individual to become a great firefighter. You also realize that academy training is not the end, but the beginning of your ongoing education.

The photo above was taken by a FireOpsOnline staff member who attended a full day Fireground Operations seminar along with 500 of our brothers & sisters. Continuing education is essential to your success as a firefighter on the fire ground. Don't rely solely on what you learn on the street. Be ambitious enough to attending lectures and seminars from fire experts that are offering their experience as well. The key to successful firefighting is anticipation. You can't anticipate things that may happen if you don't have any knowledge on that particular subject. Acquiring information from credible sources is the best way to obtain that knowledge.

Continuing education comes in many forms, such as attending seminars and conventions, reading books and other related publications, and associating with others who share your passion for knowledge. Charlie Tremendous Jones said it best with his quote, "Five years from today, you will be the same person that you are today, except for the books you read and the people you meet." Re-read and take a moment to think about that last sentence, it is 100% true. Don't ever stop striving to become a more educated and professional firefighter. The bottom line is that a complacent firefighter, who is out of touch, is a dangerous firefighter.

Share your thoughts about Continuing Education on our Blog at FireOpsOnline.com



Deputy Chief Frank Viscuso is a twenty-year veteran of the fire service. He is a regular contributor to Fire Engineering Magazine & FireOpsOnline.com. He is also co-author of the book Fireground Operational Guides (PennWell 2011). The book features universal tactical worksheets and operational guides for more than 70 incidents that range from water, gas and electrical emergencies to multiple-alarm structure fires.