

## **What do they need to know?**

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This past week my crew was asked to write down five items that our brand new rookie should know when he comes to the field. Our rookie is coming to the field with the basic Firefighter I and II, Haz Mat Operations, and EMT-I. Our academy does a good job of preparing these firefighters for the field with an extensive 32 week Recruit School. However, adapting to the field and expanding on the basic items learned in Recruit School can prove difficult if the field personnel do not set the tone on day 1. As I thought about what five items that I wanted to pass on, several items popped into my head. In order to keep the rookie from mental overload or confusing them with ten thousand rules, what are the most important?

There were no barriers to what type of items could be used. These items could be anything from equipment location to station duties. I've seen the list of items that has been published in several magazines, which generally applies to all fire departments. My major concern was to identify specifics pertaining to our crew, apparatus and territory.

The list below contains the items that I believe to be the most important. In addition, I believe that if we follow these simple rules, as they pertain to our station, it will ensure that Everyone Goes Home. As well, if we follow these rules all of the other skills and attitudes will fall in line.

1. We are a motivated crew. We train every day, including Sundays at least for an hour, accept it. Be the first to participate in the drills, train as if your life depends on it....  
Because It Does!
2. There is no "I Can't" on the incident scene, the same goes on the training grounds. There is no "I Can't," only "I Won't." If you're unable to complete the drill, do it again and then again until successful.
3. Listen before acting. Do exactly what the officer tells you to do on the incident scene and stay one step ahead of the officer. For example, if the officer has their bunker pants on, you need to have pants, coats, helmet and gloves on. Understand the difference between thinking ahead and freelancing.
4. In the station, learn your duties and do them before told too. This will earn you respect in the station and turn into respect on the incident scene as you gain experience. Crew camaraderie and integrity starts in the station.
5. Learn the equipment on the apparatus. One tool equals one compartment opened.

These items are simple in concept and should be upheld in the station. Each of these items contains one common belief of mine. As a training officer, I can help a firefighter learn and I can help them get in shape. However, if the firefighter comes with no heart or if a crew attempts to take the heart out of a firefighter they will be unsuccessful. As a crew, do not allow the motivation of the new firefighter to slip away. This also applies to the seasoned firefighters. If we will follow these same concepts, we will be better as a firefighter and a team. As always train hard, take care and be safe.

**BIO:**



**BRIAN WARD** is an engineer/acting officer with Gwinnett County (GA) Fire Department. He is a past training officer, chairman of the Metro Atlanta Training Officers and currently serves on the Honeywell Advisory Council. He is a State of Georgia Advocate for Everyone Goes Home and the Membership Task Force Co-Chair for ISFSI. Brian was recently awarded the National Seal of Excellence from the NFFF/EGH. He has an associate's degree in fire science and a Fire Safety and Technology Engineering Bachelor's Degree from the University of Cincinnati. He is the founder of FireServiceSLT.com and Georgia Smoke Diver #741.

