



## **SOUTH DAKOTA CERTIFIED FIRE OFFICER COURSE**

The final exam for the SD Certified Fire Officer Course is unique in that it requires you to provide both the question and the answer to it. So, how can you fail, right? Simple, your grade will reflect the effort you put into your paper. No effort, no grade.

You have sat through many hours of classroom presentations ranging from building codes, to media interviews, from conflict resolutions to OSHA regulations. You have seen how things work in your department, and how they could work according to the classroom materials, instructors and class discussions. The final exam is your opportunity to put some of these ideas to work for you and your department. As an officer of your department you have a responsibility to your personnel, to you chief, your political board, and the citizens you protect to make this the best department possible. As an officer you must be able to clearly identify a problem and search out a solution. Just complaining about it is not an option.

The final exam consists of a "White Paper" in which you identify a problem, any emergency service problem that is occurring within your department is acceptable, and then propose a workable solution for it. This paper must be a minimum of 750 words in length, (most run into several thousand), type written, clean, and generally professional looking. Although not required, this paper should be capable of being delivered through your chain of command to your political supervisory board. It should be that well documented, worded, and realistic that you supervisors and/or political board would seriously consider it. Further clarification includes:

1. Identify and fully describe any emergency services problem occurring in your department (i.e., manning, training, SOP'S, equipment ect.), but **NO NAMES**
2. Make several (at least three) realistic suggestions to correct/address the problem
3. Select the one you feel would best suit your situation/department, and:
  - Research your solution and provide your resources
  - Describe the complete solution you have selected providing point by point faucets for each area of the problem you have described in section 1
  - Provide a realistic cost/benefit analysis for the problem v/s solution
  - Provide a realistic time table for implementation of your solution
  - Identify by rank or title who would be or should be responsible for implementation of the individual sections of your solution
  - Identify the roadblocks that might exist to your solution and realistic methods of working through them
  - Don't plagiarize. Get permission, borrow the idea, and give credit, but don't steal it.
4. This paper should be professional, complete, typewritten not hand written. You are/or will be an officer. Your ability to effectively communicate problems and solutions to your superiors is strongly influenced by your ability to spell and utilize correct grammar correctly. It is a good idea to have someone else proof read your paper before signing off on it.
5. Of course provide all pertinent and proper identification and signatures.

Good Luck – You have thirty days from the last class date to return your "White Paper" to your instructor.