

Buddy to Boss Worksheet

Work through your own crew before, and during, your first 90 days in the seat

Leading the crew you came up with goes better when you've thought it through on paper first. Take this one part at a time. Some parts are for before your first shift, some are for your first few weeks, and the 90-day check-in is for day 30, 60, and 90.

Keep this private. It has names and honest notes about your crew. Keep it secure and out of sight, not on the station desk, and follow your department's policies on personnel records.

PART 1 OF 8

Map your crew

Every name on your shift, honestly. This isn't a list of good and bad people. It's a map of where friction is likely to show up.

Closest to me *who I hang out with off duty*

What will they need to hear from me first?

Also tested for my spot

What do they want next, and how can I help them get there?

Most likely to test me *not who I don't like*

What will they probably push on first? What will I say?

| Carries this shift quietly

Easy to overlook because they don't need managing.

| Everyone else on the roster

Name and one thing I know they're good at.

PART 2 OF 8**My one or two standards**

Pick one or two you'll hold every shift, starting with yourself. They can be the top one or two of the three to five day-one expectations on your Crew Expectations Worksheet. Safety, discipline, and leave already live in your department's policies and SOPs/SOGs. This is how this crew works on your shift.

| Standard 1

- ☐ I can see it. It's not a feeling.
- ☐ I'll enforce it at 0700 after a bad night.
- ☐ It applies to me first. Here's how I'll show that: _____

| Standard 2

- ☐ I can see it. It's not a feeling.
- ☐ I'll enforce it at 0700 after a bad night.
- ☐ It applies to me first. Here's how I'll show that: _____

| What I won't change yet *unless it's safety or policy*

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

| The first time a standard gets tested, I'll say:

PART 3 OF 8

My first line-up

About two minutes. Write it, then say it out loud once before you walk in.

Name it

"Yeah, this is different. For me too."

What won't change

What will change

Your role, not their routine. Example: "I make the call now. When I get it wrong, I'll own it."

My standards, in the words I'll actually use

What I owe them in return

Fairness, straight answers, backing them up the chain, training worth their time.

My one ask

Example: "If I'm getting something wrong, tell me. In the office."

What I won't say

- ☐ "Nothing's going to change."
- ☐ Sorry for getting promoted.
- ☐ A list of changes.

PART 4 OF 8

Plan the one-on-ones

Two talks come first, in your first couple of shifts: your closest friend and anyone who also tested. Then everybody gets a sit-down in your first 30 days, going down the roster (the One-on-One Conversation Guide has the questions and a notes page). Tell the crew at line-up so nobody thinks they're in trouble.

My closest friend on the crew

NAME _____ PLANNED DATE _____

WHAT I'LL SAY ABOUT FRIENDSHIP AND FAIRNESS

WHAT I'LL ASK

WHAT I'LL LISTEN FOR

Someone who also tested

NAME _____ PLANNED DATE _____

HOW I'LL ACKNOWLEDGE IT, WITHOUT APOLOGIZING OR GLOATING

REAL RESPONSIBILITY I CAN HAND THEM

HOW I CAN HELP THEM GET READY FOR THE NEXT TEST

Everyone else

Ask every one of them: "What's one thing you need from me?"

NAME _____ DATE _____ WHAT THEY NEED FROM ME _____

NAME _____ DATE _____ WHAT THEY NEED FROM ME _____

NAME _____ DATE _____ WHAT THEY NEED FROM ME _____

NAME _____ DATE _____ WHAT THEY NEED FROM ME _____

NAME _____ DATE _____ WHAT THEY NEED FROM ME _____

PART 5 OF 8

Prep for a first correction

Fill this out before you say a word. Then have the talk in the office, before the shift, not on the apparatus floor.

The facts *what happened, when, and how do I know?*

The policy *what our policy, SOP, or SOG says, and where it's written*

The behavior *one sentence, no labels*

Example: "The SCBA check didn't get done, and it got written up as done."

Why it matters *in terms they already care about*

Their side *the question I'll ask, then listen*

The expectation *what happens from here on*

Documentation

- ☐ Date, what was said, what was agreed
- ☐ Department process followed for anything formal
- ☐ Kept between us, not the crew
- ☐ Next shift, treated like everyone else

Above my pay grade?

Harassment, serious safety violations, and substance problems go up the chain. Bring the BC in early, with facts.

- ☐ Not applicable
- ☐ BC told on _____

PART 6 OF 8

What I give up, and what I keep

Some things go away when you pin on the bugles. Others stay put.

I give up

Examples: piling on in the group chat, venting about one crew member to another.

I keep

Examples: cooking, checking the rig with them, having their back up the chain.

My off-duty lines

What I won't talk about or promise when I'm off duty with crew members.

When a decision comes down that I disagree with

WHAT I'LL SAY TO THE CREW

HOW I'LL TAKE IT UP THE CHAIN

PART 7 OF 8

90-day credibility check-in

Character, competence, and influence: rate yourself 1 (not yet) to 5 (solid) at day 30, 60, and 90. Be honest. Nobody sees this but you.

Character *the intention to do the right thing*

Did I hold the same standard for everybody, including me and my friends? Did I own my mistakes out loud?

DAY 30 _____ DAY 60 _____ DAY 90 _____

PROOF, OR WHAT I'LL WORK ON

Competence *knowing how to do the right thing*

Do I know the rig, the radio, the reports, and my crew's skills? Where am I still guessing?

DAY 30 _____ DAY 60 _____ DAY 90 _____

PROOF, OR WHAT I'LL WORK ON

Influence *getting the right thing done*

When the crew needed something from up the chain, did it happen? If not, did I tell them why?

DAY 30 _____ DAY 60 _____ DAY 90 _____

PROOF, OR WHAT I'LL WORK ON

Early wins *small things the crew has asked for that I can finish*

1 _____

2 _____

☐ Asked my BC for honest feedback around day 60 to 90 on _____

PART 8 OF 8

My mentor shortlist

Seasoned officers, inside the department or out, I can call when I'm not sure. Good mentors don't hand you answers. They give you options and make you see the big picture.

Mentor 1

NAME _____ HOW TO REACH THEM _____

WHAT THEY'RE GOOD AT, AND THE FIRST THING I'LL ASK THEM

Mentor 2

NAME _____ HOW TO REACH THEM _____

WHAT THEY'RE GOOD AT, AND THE FIRST THING I'LL ASK THEM

Mentor 3

NAME _____ HOW TO REACH THEM _____

WHAT THEY'RE GOOD AT, AND THE FIRST THING I'LL ASK THEM



Lead the crew you came up with

Fill it in, then live it. The free First 90 Days as a Company Officer checklist and more free tools are at companyofficerforge.com.

Where company officers are made.

General guidance, not policy. Follow your department's policies, SOPs/SOGs, and chain of command. Not affiliated with any fire department.