1 If Everything's Important, Nothing Is

Prioritization in Emergency Services
2026 Lehigh Valley Emergency Services Conference
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2 Speaker Introduction

Brief background

Leadership experience

Personal "why"

3 Topic Introduction

The modern emergency services environment is full of competing demands

"Everything feels urgent" – but what actually matters?

Today's session goal: Equip you with frameworks and language to lead with intention

4 Defining Your Roles

Firefighter? Officer? Instructor? Mentor? Admin? Parent? Friend?

Exercise or visual: List your roles

Consider: Which role do you spend the most time in? Which one has the most impact?

5 What Makes Your Role Extraordinary

Ordinary: Doing what's required

Extraordinary: Doing what makes a difference

Reflection prompts:

What is your core purpose?

What impact do you want to leave on your team/community?

6 Importance vs. Urgency

Urgent: Demands immediate attention (calls, emails, disruptions)

Important: Contributes to long-term mission, values, and goals

In emergency services, urgency is everywhere - but importance sustains us

7 The Eisenhower Matrix

Visual: 2x2 Eisenhower Matrix (Urgent/Not Urgent vs. Important/Not Important)

Explanation of each quadrant:

Do (Important + Urgent)

Plan (Important + Not Urgent)

Delegate (Not Important + Urgent)

Eliminate (Not Important + Not Urgent)

Apply to emergency services: examples of each

8 Fostering a Culture of Importance

Leaders must model prioritization

Encourage reflection on what matters - not just what's loudest

Tips:

Reinforce "why" in briefings and trainings

Recognize long-term wins, not just immediate actions

9   Technology as a Tool, Not a Taskmaster

Use tech to manage tasks, not create more noise

Examples:

Scheduling: MS Teams, Trello

Communication: MS Teams, Slack, GroupMe

Automation: Pre-planned reminders, data dashboards

Avoid tech overload - align tech use with importance

10   Finding Work-Life Harmony

Harmony, not balance: It's not 50/50 - it's what sustains you

Tips:

Prioritize rest and recovery

Boundaries around availability

Delegate and empower others

11   Recap & Call to Action

Prioritize importance over urgency

Define your why and lead with it

Use frameworks like the Eisenhower Matrix to stay aligned

Build a culture that protects purpose and people

12   Q&A

Invite discussion

Offer contact information for follow up