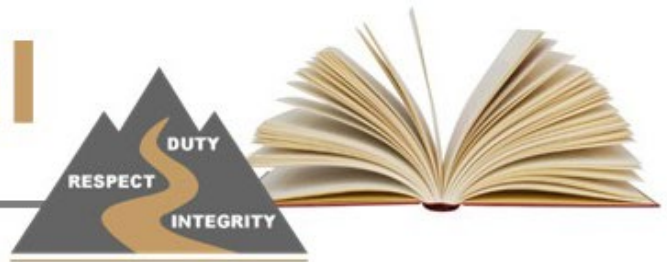


Professional Reading Program

Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program



Writing to Persuade by Trish Hall

Best Wildland Fire Leadership Level to read this book:

- All leadership levels.
- Most valuable to leaders at or near Level 4 Leader of Leaders and Level 5 Leaders of Organizations.

Why Read *Writing to Persuade*?

“So, you might ask, are there rules for argument, for persuasion, for convincing people that they should listen to you? Yes, there are. Although it’s challenging to change minds, there are fundamentals of persuasion, techniques for bringing people over to your side not only in written arguments, but in life.”

“In Writing to Persuade, I hope to pass on to you what I have learned about writing and editing. I want to help you get your point across in a persuasive way, whether you are crafting an op-ed, a paper for a professor in college, or even a note to your spouse.”

Writing to Persuade is a great book for leaders for a few reasons. First, at some point in a career, leaders will need to write – plans, proposals, reports, briefing papers, or even just regular emails – and the ability to write well enough to convey ideas simple and effectively is important. Second, all leaders will benefit from understanding some of the tools and techniques to persuade others, after all, much of leadership is about influence. Third, most leaders will eventually also be teachers, formally or informally. Being able to clearly and simple convey ideas and techniques to others is a great skill to have when teaching others in the classroom or the field.

While writing is not something most wildland fire leaders want to do, it’s a skill that’s worth taking the time to hone and refine as you travel on your leadership journey, especially if you ever plan on leaving the field and managing organizations. And even if you don’t want to leave field work, even hotshot superintendents, engine captains, fire management officers, and operations section chiefs have to communicate via email, write burn plans, or build incident action plans.

For more leadership ideas and to dig deeper, check out the Wildland Fire Leadership Development Program (WFLDP) blog, Facebook page, Professional Reading Program, and more at the links below:

Blog: <http://wildlandfireleadership.blogspot.com/>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WFLDP>

Professional Reading Program: <https://www.nwccg.gov/wfldp/toolbox/prp>

Main WFLDP page: <https://www.fireleadership.gov>

Writing to Persuade Discussion Questions

Part One: Lessons From My Story

How has your story shaped how you communicate with others? What do you think of the author's observation that bosses often learn from the people they are leading? What are some things you've learned from those you've led? Have you ever experienced a fire "celebrity" who demanded you listen to them just because of who they were? Have you ever been wrong about a person?

Part Two: What's Your Story

How can you use your story, and the things you've experienced, to make a point? What are some ways to share your experience in a professional setting? How can you avoid the trap of just telling stories with no meaning to the listener or reader? Why can sharing why something is personal to you be valuable in persuasion?

Part Three: Winning People Over

Why is it important to listen to, and understand, people around you? What are some tools for being a better listener? Why is it important to establish commonalities with people? How can you do that? What do you think about having empathy when interacting with others? How can you avoid arguing when trying to persuade someone to listen to you?

Part Four: Tips On Writing

What are some ways to focus storytelling? Have you ever been in a situation where an instructor or leader told rambling stories with no relevant point? How did that make you feel? Why aren't facts always enough? How can you use facts to help make your point when trying to persuade others? What are some ways to avoid "jargon" in writing for a fire audience? Why is short and simple better in writing?

Part Five: The Psychology of Persuasion

What are some ways that beliefs and emotions might be important to consider in the fire world? What are some examples of conflicting values in the fire service? What did you think of the things that the experts found persuasive at the end of this chapter? How many of those things do you already know about, or practice, from being a leader or follower?