

Somebody's "Kingdom" is Killing 911 Recruitment & Retention in your PSAP

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911 Directors must be aware of the "Kingdom" scenario in their PSAP. In other words, who is in control of something that only THEY know how to do? Leadership needs to realize that this is probably on purpose and creates many problems. If you don't know who has their own kingdom, ask the SILENT MAJORITY (AKA the people who keep quitting) who are yearning for change, fairness, and opportunity. Hopefully they'll tell you. This will be another step you can take to increase 911 dispatcher/operator recruitment & retention.

When only one person knows how to do something, they might need some assistance, but in the "Kingdom" scenario, they are holding onto power, control, status, and their

own personal benefits. Also consider that while the director might always have a pleasant experience with their "go-to" person who they heavily rely on, dispatchers and operators might be having a totally different experience. This person most likely gets all those extra perks too which equals more resentment. The "gatekeeper" could be a factor in why people are quitting, and they represent one of many reasons why someone would not want to work at your 911 agency.

When you identify the owner of this kingdom, your next move is to have them share their knowledge by building a team around them. Some people may welcome help while others will be truculent and defensive. To mitigate the situation and get their buy-in, I would explain to the "gatekeeper" why you are making this decision (yes, this is CHANGE).

You must explain how valued they are and how they are appreciated, but a team is needed for the overall health of the 911 agency. If something should suddenly happen and they become debilitated, the organization wouldn't know how to sustain itself in their area of expertise. See what happens next, you will see the gatekeeper's true motives as time progresses.

If this person is working on technological matters, they should have several back-ups (people) as well as a manual or run-book. In public safety communications, my favorite word is redundancy. If they are involved in personnel matters or operations, you and other people should know their methods and what they are doing. Their decisions should be based on facts, evidence, and data, and there should be proper documentation too. "It's all in my head" doesn't work...notice the word "my" in this phrase, a red flag.

When you bring new people into the mix, you are accomplishing several things: Increasing employee engagement, fairness, innovation, and opportunities for career growth, all of which adds-up to increased employee retention. Overall, you're enhancing the PERCEPTION of your PSAP, and you're making it more appealing for recruitment purposes too. Not to mention you're improving the organizational structure and efficiency of your 911 Agency.

This is a very touchy topic in every 911 ECC or any other organization, easier said than done! Be prepared for conflict, but the silent majority in your PSAP are waiting for your move!!!

Do you need help finding the KINGDOMS in your 911 ECC, I will help you find it. I will give you the blueprint for a new dynamic, and I will give you the confidence to move your PSAP forward. I help 911 agencies increase staffing levels by implementing new

hiring and recruitment processes, as well as changing internal policies and 911/radio procedures within your agency to increase Dispatcher/Operator Retention. Message or email me, CG@TEN-4Consulting.com if you would like to have a conversation to get started.

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