

Fire Engineering: The Future Firefighter Podcast with Captain Justin Schorr



*"Argue for your limitations and sure enough they're yours."
– Captain Justin Schorr*

In this episode Chris Baker sits down with Rescue Captain, Justin Schorr "the Happy Medic" to talk about what he's learned over the last 25 years in the fire service and why one of the worst pieces of advice is "get your Medic." While obtaining the license will get you on a smaller list when hired, there's a catch...they want you to work as a medic when you get hired. Find out more about what EMS means to the Future Firefighter and listen to this episode.

“Should every Future Firefighter become a Paramedic? In one word, Yes. EMS is the future of the Modern Fire Service so each candidate should have a grasp on their place in the system as they get hired. Paramedicine isn't for everyone. There's a lot of stress involved in not only obtaining the license, but maintaining it and, of course, being responsible for the care of your patients.” – Captain Justin Schorr

"When you get hired as a Paramedic here's a hint...they need you as a Paramedic." - Captain Justin Schorr

Why is it important for the future firefighter to get engaged with EMS?

“The important thing to remember for your audience is that the modern fire service is an all hazards agency.

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“In most departments, 70-80% of the calls for service are medical in nature, and if you add motor vehicle calls, instead of vehicle extrications and or fires, you are approaching 90%. 90% of what firefighters are doing is helping people without even touching anything on the engine except an EMS kit.” (Schorr)

What is the best advice you ever got?

“They are going to make you jump through a lot of hoops that I can’t even imagine. The best advice I can give you, is jump through them.” (Orange County Fire Captain)

“I would encourage the future firefighters to look towards the future and the future is what are we going to do in our down time between fires?” Providing medical care for most jurisdictions is the biggest thing to do.” – (Schorr)

“I want you to want to be a paramedic. The trick about becoming a paramedic to get hired with the fire department...once you get hired, they want you to be a good paramedic. It is not just getting through that door and making that short stack of applications. They need you to be a functioning paramedic. Be honest with yourself. – (Schorr)

I didn’t want to go to EMT school until I realized when the ambulance transported, I was the only help people had and I thought people deserved better.” (Schorr)

“The future of EMS is a degreed program” (Schorr)

If you are out there in a fire academy and you are wondering, what can I do to get hired with the fire department. I need you to want to be a paramedic. Don’t just get your paramedic. Don’t get your paramedic. I want you to be a paramedic. (Schorr)

“Don’t become a paramedic just to get a job.” (Baker)

Seek employment opportunities at a private ambulance company

Work one day a week on an ambulance.

Build up your confidence and repore with patients.

“There is a skill in being able to communicate with a patient. Find out their chief complaint. Determine the proper method of treatment. Establish a differential diagnosis. Treat, reassess, retreat. Those things don’t come from studying a skills sheet.” (Schorr)

Obtain your ambulance drivers certificate

“Fail now is my best advice. I love being wrong, because if I am right, I don’t learn anything. If I am wrong, I learn something, and I can change my behavior moving forward.” (Schorr)

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- Volunteer with the local fire department
- Help with your local explorer post
- Get a part time job as an EMT on an ambulance
- Research where you want to live
- Look for a system that is doing what you want
- Don't chase a paycheck or a locale
- Be enthusiastic and eager to learn
- Earn the respect of the company
- Check your sources on information to make sure the information is reputable.
- Participate in monthly run reviews at your local trauma center
- Join a Paramedic journal club
- Attend local State EMS conference
- Network with other EMS professionals
- Establish a support group

“Getting hired with the fire department is like the affirmation that everything you have done to this point was the right thing to do.”

“There is always another hill to climb.”

“You earn your seat. You earn this position. Nothing is given out in the fire service. This is something you have to earn not just once, but every day.” (Baker)

“Luck is just unrecognized confidence.” (Schorr)

Resources:

The Happy Medic

<http://happymedic.com>

What's Your EMERGENCY? The Podcast that responds to all emergencies on, and off, the job

<http://wyeradio.com>

JEMS - Emergency Medical Services

<https://www.jems.com/index.html>

Careers: <https://jems.careers.adicio.com>

EMS TODAY The JEMS Conference & Exposition

<https://www.emstoday.com/index.html>

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NAEMT

<http://www.naemt.org>

NREMT

<https://www.nremt.org/rwd/public>

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Tom Bouthillet

Tom Bouthillet is a Fire Captain/Paramedic with Hilton Head Island Fire & Rescue, Editor-in-Chief of the EMS12Lead.com, Chief Content Architect of ECGMedicalTraining.com, host of the [Code STEMI web series](#) at First Responders Network, a member of the Editorial Advisory Board of EMS World Magazine, and developer of the [12-Lead ECG Challenge](#) smartphone app. He has taught nationally in the Critical Care Transport (CCEMT-P) program out of UMBC and his writings have been referenced in the American Heart Journal, the Journal of the American College of Cardiology: Cardiovascular Interventions and the EP Lab Digest. Contact Tom at tom.bouthillet@ems1.com.

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<http://ecgmedicaltraining.com>

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Kelly Grayson

Kelly Grayson, NRP, CCEMT-P, is a critical care paramedic in Louisiana. He has spent the past 24 years as a field paramedic, critical care transport paramedic, field supervisor and educator. He is president of the Louisiana Society of EMS Educators and a board member of the LA Association of Nationally Registered EMTs.

He is a frequent EMS conference speaker and contributor to various EMS training texts, and is the author of the popular blog [A Day In the Life of an Ambulance Driver](#). Kelly's books are available on his [author page at Amazon.com](#). You can follow him on Twitter ([@AmboDriver](#)) or Facebook, or email him at kelly@ambulancedriverfiles.com. Kelly is a member of the EMS1 Editorial Advisory Board.

<https://www.ems1.com/columnists/kelly-grayson/>

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<http://www.ambulancedriverfiles.com>

Justin Schorr, is a Rescue Captain in San Francisco California, having served as a field Paramedic and Firefighter, Field Captain, Administrative Captain (CQI) and is ARFF qualified, currently overseeing EMS response for San Francisco International Airport. He has spent 25 years in the fire service and is experienced in rural, suburban, and urban firefighting and paramedicine.

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Chris Baker, has over fifteen years of experience in volunteer, combination and career fire departments in California. He holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Anthropology and Associates of Science Degree in Fire Service Command, Company Officer. Chris is a California State Fire Training certified Fire Officer, Driver-Operator, Fire Instructor, and Lead Fire Fighter 1 Certification Evaluator. He has over nine years of teaching experience in the California Community Colleges System as an Adjunct Instructor in the EMS discipline, Fire Fighter 1 Academy Instructor and Fire Science Instructor. Chris is a member of the California Fire Technology Directors' Association and the California Training Officers Association. He served as a volunteer Peer Reviewer on the FY 2017 Staffing for Adequate Fire & Emergency Response Grants (SAFER) for both hiring and recruitment/retention. Chris also served as a Peer Reviewer on the FY 2017 Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) and the FY 2018 Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG). He is a Volunteer Advocate Regional Manager, Region IX (CA, NV, AZ, HI) for the Everyone Goes Home Program through the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. Chris also serves as a volunteer member of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Safety, Health and Survival Section serving in their staging area. He was a member of the 2018 and 2019 Safety Stand Down committees. Chris is the host of the Fire Engineering: The Future Firefighter Podcast. He writes blog articles published through Firefighter Nation and the Fire Engineering Training Community on mentoring the future generations of the fire service.

Contact: <https://www.thefuturefirefighterpodcast.com>

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