

“Losing Leadership”

The Losing Leadership session will examine leadership from the alternative point of view, that is from those notorious “losers” in history, their approaches to leadership and the steps they took to guarantee an unsuccessful outcome. Participant will consider these losing lessons as applied to the Arizona and National fire service.



Tom Shannon, Scottsdale Emergency Management Officer

Tom Shannon began his emergency services career in 1982 working in pre-hospital medicine as a Paramedic. He was hired as a Glendale firefighter/paramedic in 1988. His assignments included the additional skills of Hazardous Materials Technician and Toxicology Paramedic. Tom served as a Captain on A shift, a Recruit Training Officer and Incident Safety Officer. In 2001, Tom was promoted to the rank of Battalion Chief and assumed responsibility for the Office of Emergency Management (OEM), which managed the City of Glendale’s Emergency Management and preparedness efforts. Several grant programs were initiated through the OEM and brought several million dollars in federal assistance into the city, dedicated toward public safety and infrastructure protection. Tom served in this role until 2004 when the City of Glendale hired a civilian Emergency Manager.

Tom promoted to Assistant Chief in 2004. During his tenure as Assistant Fire Chief he oversaw all areas of Fire Operations, Logistics and Major Event Planning including the fire service response to Super Bowl XLII. In 2008 Chief Shannon retired from the Glendale Fire Department to become Fire Chief in Salt Lake City (SLCFD), UT where he led that organization through significant organizational and fire service changes. Renowned for his visionary and genuine management style, Chief Shannon redefined the SLCFD’s culture before returning to Arizona in 2009. Tom currently serves as the Emergency Manager for the City of Scottsdale Fire Department.

Tom has a Masters degree in Education/Leadership from Northern Arizona University and a Masters degree in Homeland Security Studies from the Center for Homeland Defense and Security at the Naval Postgraduate School.