

*Do You Have What It Takes ??*

Defining and Understanding  
Professionalism in EMS

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*Developed for the 2012  
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# Experiment



# Experiment



# Experiment



# Getting Down To It

- ◉ Who am I?
- ◉ Why is this stuff important?

# Interesting

- *Medics top list of most trusted professions*
  - > Firefighters, rescue volunteers round out top 3 in Australian Reader's Digest poll
  - > For the ninth consecutive year, paramedics were recognized as the most trusted profession, achieving first place in the poll, with firefighters securing a close second.

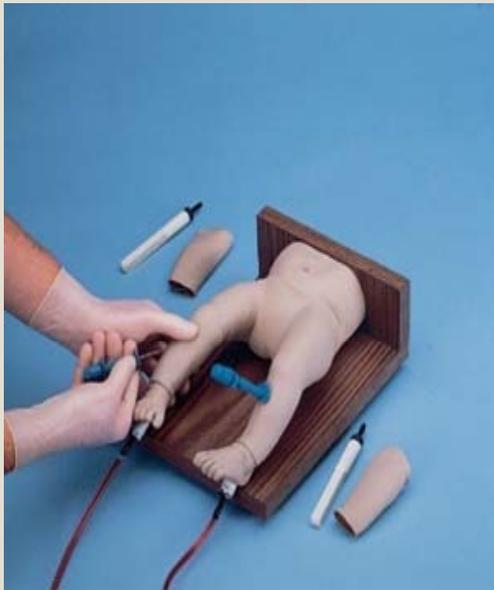
# Lets Be Honest...

Have you ever done anything as an EMS provider that you would be embarrassed to admit publicly ?



## ...I Mean *Really* Honest...

Is there equipment on your truck that you feel "*less than comfortable*" handling ?

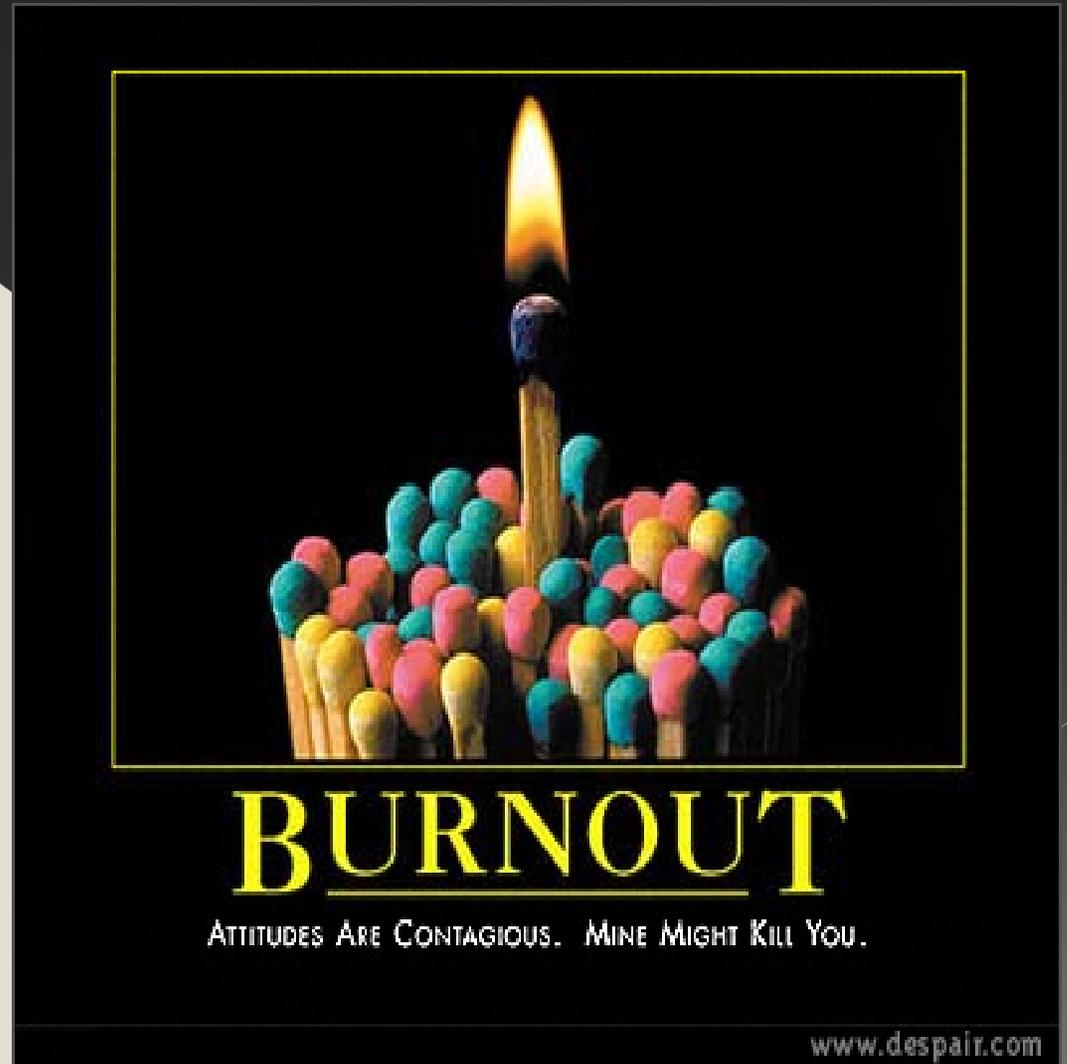


# What Will We Be Covering Today?

- ⦿ Basic terminology
- ⦿ What EMS providers say about professionalism
- ⦿ What the public expects from you
- ⦿ What your EMS agency expects from you
- ⦿ Qualities of effective EMS providers
- ⦿ Professionalism in the modern EMS operating environment
- ⦿ Concluding thoughts

# Words We Have All Heard

- Probie
- Rookie
- Burnout
- Woodchuck
- Wacker
- Slapper



# A Word We Seldom Hear

- Professional –
  - *One engaged in a profession or engaging in as a profession or means of livelihood;*
  - *Characteristic of or befitting a profession or one engaged in a profession; “professional conduct”; “professional ethics”; “a thoroughly professional performance”*

Webster's Dictionary

# What Does Professionalism Mean To You?

- ◉ This is how you defined the traits of a professional in EMS:
  - › Commitment to quality patient care and advocacy, no matter who calls upon us or why
  - › Commitment to continuing education
  - › Commitment to continuous overall improvement of the EMS system

# Another Term We Seldom Hear

- Professionalism -

- *The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a professional person.*

- Webster's Dictionary

# Elements of Professionalism

- Professionals:
  - > Put others' needs above their own
  - > Adhere to strict ethical and moral standards
  - > Respond to social needs of the community
  - > Demonstrate *core humanistic values*

# Core Humanistic Values

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Caring
- Compassion
- Altruism
- Empathy
- Respect for others
- Trustworthiness



# Additional Elements of a Profession

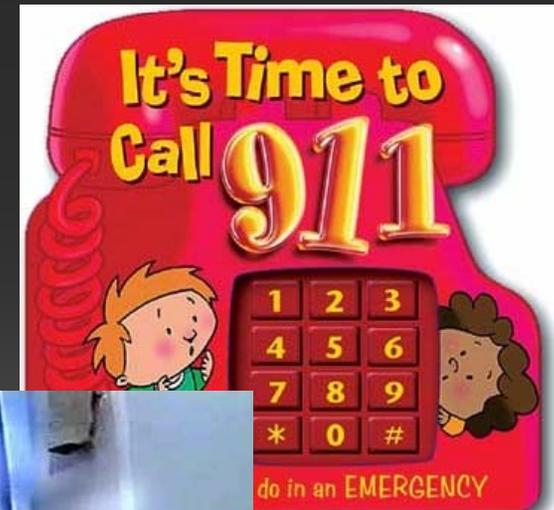
- ◉ Membership is limited to qualified individuals
- ◉ Standards for qualification are established by the members
- ◉ Standards based on competence, strive for excellence
- ◉ Behavior is self-regulated

# Examples of less-than-professional behavior

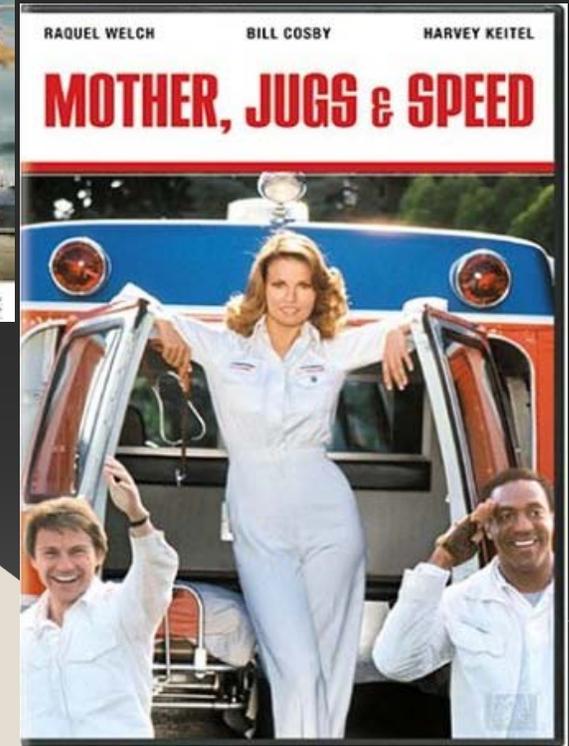
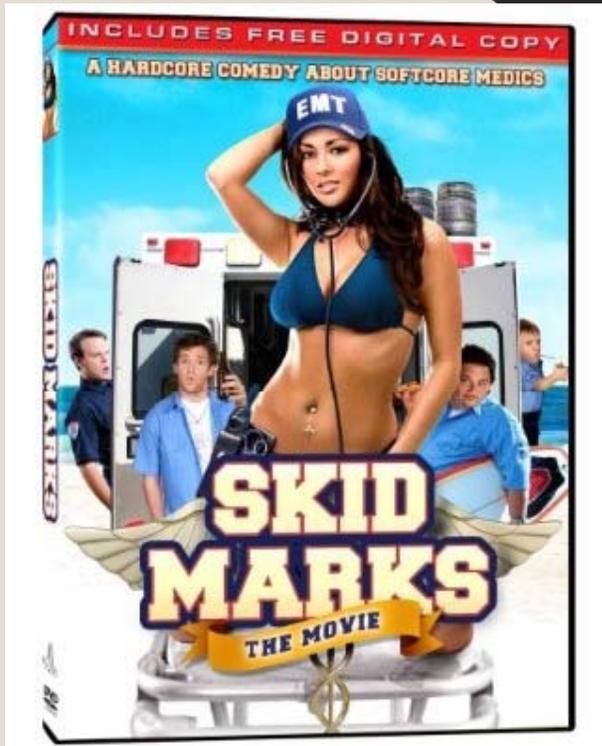
- This is what you mentioned as being less-than-professional:
  - Leaving the unit unready for the next crew
  - Driving slowly/quickly to an assignment because its near the end of your shift
  - Not knowing your way to an assignment or to the hospital
  - Not knowing how to use a piece of equipment on your truck

# Why People Call 911

- We have taught them to call since they were children
- They need help
- They don't know who else to call



# How The Public Views Us



# What The Public Expects

- ⦿ Rapid response
- ⦿ Someone to listen to them
- ⦿ A solution to their problems
- ⦿ Service
- ⦿ A trip to the hospital ?



# What The Public Expects

- Sincerity
- Kindness and courtesy
- Personal attention
- To do no harm



# What The Public Expects



# What Else The Public Expects

- ◉ Delivery of quality medical care
- ◉ Responsibility for your actions
- ◉ Trustworthy responders
- ◉ Professionalism

# Organizational Expectations

- Understanding of , and compliance with:
  - › State rules and regulations
  - › ALS and BLS protocols
  - › Regional policy
  - › Departmental or agency policies

# Organizational Expectations

- Safe operations
- High quality (patient-focused) customer service
- Others?

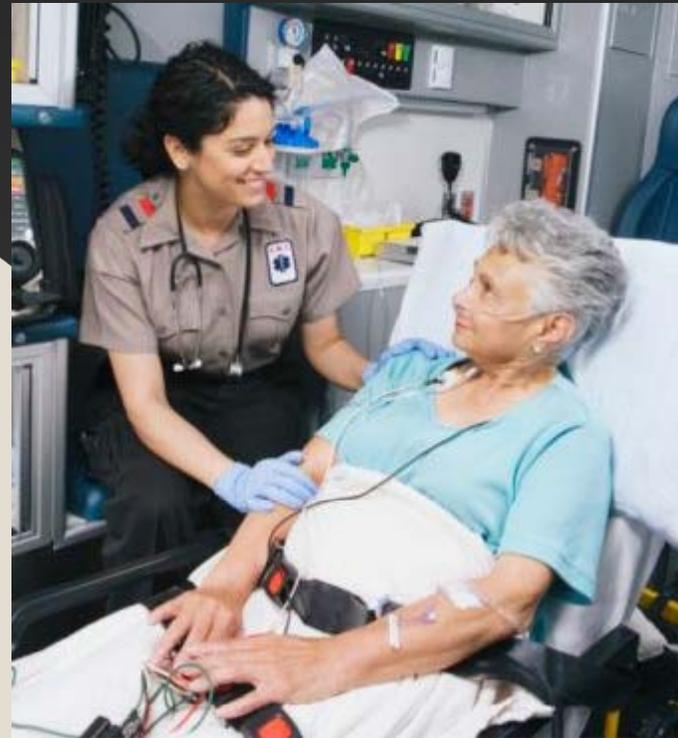
# What Else Does Your Agency Expect of You?



- To effectively and efficiently meet the public's needs and expectations
- To operate as a team
- To practice professionalism

# Qualities of Effective EMS Providers

- Good communication skills
- Integrity
- Empathy
- Respect
- Patient advocacy
- Careful delivery of service

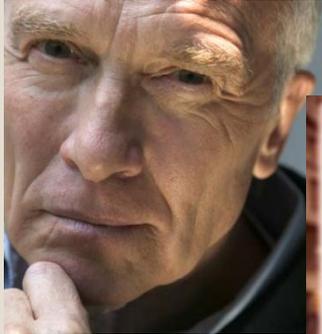


# Qualities of Effective EMS Providers

- Self-motivation
- Neat appearance/  
personal hygiene
- Self confidence
- Effective time  
management
- Exhibiting teamwork  
and diplomacy



# A Word About Teamwork & Diplomacy



*If you are doing it badly, the potential for negative impact exists on multiple levels.*

# A Positive Image

- ◎ Components of First Impressions
  - > Appearance
  - > Body language
  - > Voice
  - > Attitude



# Appearance

- Dress and grooming effect how you're judged
- Up to 93% of how you are judged is based upon non-verbal data, appearance and body language



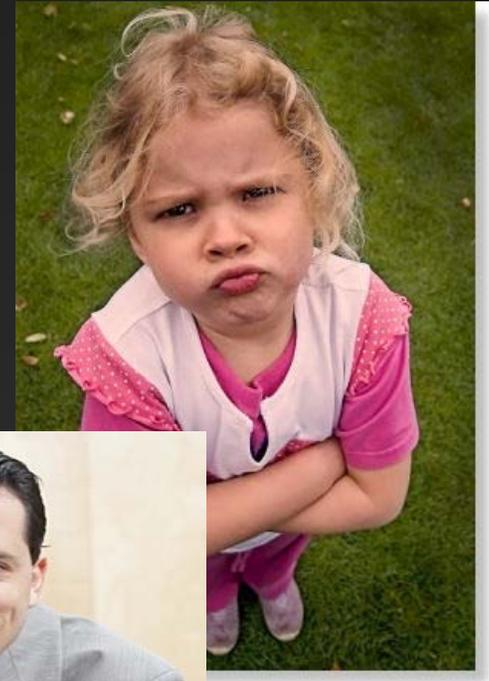
# Appearance: First Impression

- Happens fast
- Bad first impressions are hard to overcome
- Usually fairly accurate



# Body Language

- Eye contact
- Posture
- Smile
- Consistent message



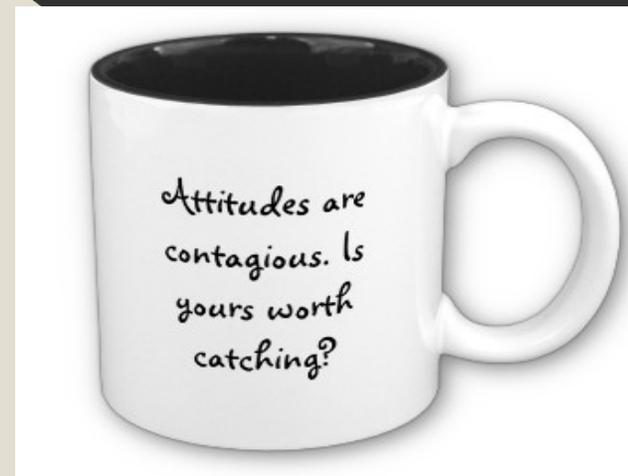
# Voice

- How we say something is as important as what we say
- Tone, pace, and volume are all critical to getting the message across



# Attitude

- Attitude reflects feelings
- Attitude influences behavior
- You choose what attitude you display
- The patient comes first



# Professionalism In The Modern EMS Operating Environment

- ◉ Every time you act as an EMS provider, your actions have the potential to be analyzed and scrutinized in real-time
  - > YouTube
  - > Facebook
  - > Twitter



# Reality



*"Detroit EMS worker  
photographed  
sleeping on the job"*

Detroit News  
July 2009

# Reality

*"UMDNJ Fires Paramedics Over Alleged KKK Hazing"*

- [www.myfoxny.com](http://www.myfoxny.com)  
7/13/08



# Reality

July 2010 –

- ◉ Departments of Health in the States of New Hampshire and Massachusetts investigate hundreds of EMS providers who “were found to have falsified training records”

# Reality

*"Fire Chief  
Suspended After  
Hazing Videos  
Released"*

www.wjz.com  
July 14, 2008



# Sullivan's Theory on Professionalism



# Conclusion

- ◉ Strive to exceed expectations
- ◉ Practice professionalism
  - › Remember our core human values
  - › Remember the core qualities of effective EMS providers

# Conclusion

- You only get one chance to make a good first impression
- Demonstrate your personal dedication and service through action













*Thanks for listening*

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