



2022 Questions to NAEMT Board Candidates

Please include your response below each question. Please limit each answer to 500 words or less. Thanks.

Candidate: Rommie L. Duckworth

Questions for 2022 Election Candidates

1. Define what you believe are the key characteristics of good leadership and describe the leadership qualities that you will bring to the position for which you are running.

I have a core set of principles I use when seeking to successfully navigate the turbulent waters of leadership. These four characteristics have served me well in prior roles, and having practiced and refined them and I would use them to guide me as NAEMT Director of Region I.

Like any good responder, when confronted with a problem, my first instinct is to jump to action. I have learned from experience that, in leadership when faced with difficulties, I must first understand the issue. At national and regional levels this means getting out and listening to people and not just presuming that everyone's experience is the same as what I see in my organizations. Likewise, no one is an expert in every subject. Smart leaders turn to other leaders and subject matter experts to hear what they have to say. Principal one: first, listen.

EMS is under pressure from every direction. It can be tempting to chase down every problem at the same time. However, an unfocused effort is a weak effort. Leadership must remain focused to ensure solutions receive the resources they need to overcome the challenges they are facing. Principle two: focus.

The challenges facing EMS are dynamic. Leaders cannot simply choose a solution and expect it to work without adapting it. Some problems will continue to exist long after the work to fix them is no longer exciting. True leaders follow through on their

promises to tackle complex challenges, even when the going gets tough. Principal three, follow through.

Finally, no one can be a great leader without being a good communicator. EMS providers don't always want every detail, but they want to know the nature of the problems EMS is facing and the work being done to meet these challenges. Members of NAEMT want to understand what their dues are paying for and that their voices are being heard. Principle four: follow up.

In the position of director of NAEMT Region I, I would adhere to the leadership principles of "First to listen, Focus, Follow-Through, and Follow-up."

2. What do you believe are the top issues facing the EMS profession right now, and what role should NAEMT play in addressing these issues?

The greatest crisis facing EMS providers across the nation is recruitment and retention. This is not just critical for EMS leaders working hard to keep their organizations running and meet the healthcare needs of their community. This is important for every EMT and paramedic struggling to stay engaged and considering leaving the profession. While NAEMT must continue to play a role in assisting organizations with their outreach and engagement, there can be no solution to recruitment and retention issues that doesn't include increased compensation and a functional career path for EMS providers. The fragmented structure of EMS in the United States is a tremendous barrier to realistic paths to increased compensation and long-term careers in EMS. The NAEMT is the leading unified voice for EMS providers in the United States. It is best positioned to educate and influence those in power to help restructure EMS systems to make working in EMS viable, attractive, and sustainable for the people working hard to protect their communities.

3. With additional stress on an already overburdened workforce, what steps can NAEMT take to support the health, well-being, and resilience of our EMS practitioners?

NAEMT must work to help EMS organizations across the country to develop functional health, well-being, and resilience programs. NAEMT must work to increase the awareness and implementation of the new Mental Health Resilience Officer online education program and ensure health, well-being, and resilience resources are available to every EMS provider regardless of the size and nature of their organization.

4. How would you explain the value of NAEMT membership to both prospective members and existing members?

I would explain the immediate membership benefits, including free and discounted high-quality in-person and online education programs and direct discounts on EMS apparel, gear, and publications. In addition, members get immediate discounts on electronics, travel, and entertainment services and access to personal and professional development resources. Near-term benefits of NAEMT membership include emails, newsletters, and selected communications to keep providers updated on information they need to know about national issues affecting their job and profession. Long-term benefits available to NAEMT members are the most important and include having a voice in influencing major issues across the EMS industry. Your membership helps give EMS a cohesive voice and combined resources focused on advancing leadership, education, well-being, and professional development for EMS providers everywhere.