



## 2023 Questions to NAEMT Board Candidates

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

**Candidate: David S. Blevins, Region 4 – Southeast Coast**

### Questions for 2023 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.***

Good leadership is a multifaceted concept, and it encompasses a range of key characteristics that are fundamental for success in any leadership role. When we think about leadership, one of the first places that come to mind for resources and insights is the business section of a bookstore like Barnes and Noble. The abundance of books dedicated to this topic is a testament to the significance of leadership and the thirst for knowledge in this area.

In my view, leadership is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor, but there are certain traits and qualities that consistently stand out as critical. These characteristics, which I believe define good leadership, are vision, decision support, and communication.

1. **Vision:** At the core of effective leadership is the ability to articulate a clear and compelling vision for the future. A visionary leader possesses the capacity to see beyond the present, to identify opportunities, and to set ambitious yet attainable goals. This vision serves as a guiding light, inspiring individuals to align their efforts towards a common purpose.

I am committed to developing and championing a clear and inspiring vision for the future of NAEMT. I will work diligently to ensure that our organization's mission and goals align with this vision, motivating our members and stakeholders to actively participate in achieving it.

2. **Decision Support:** Making informed decisions is a cornerstone of leadership. The business world is dynamic and fast-paced, and leaders are often confronted with complex challenges and choices. In this regard, I believe that providing decision support is crucial. Decision support involves a systematic approach to gathering relevant information,

analyzing data, and considering various perspectives before making a decision. It ensures that choices are well-informed, rational, and aligned with the overall vision.

In this fast-evolving field, I will leverage my expertise in gathering and analyzing data to provide the board with well-founded recommendations and options. I will encourage thorough deliberation and ensure that decisions are based on a comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand.

3. **Communication:** Effective communication is the glue that holds all other leadership qualities together. A leader may have a compelling vision and make well-informed decisions, but without the ability to communicate these ideas clearly and persuasively, they may remain unrealized. Effective communication involves not only speaking but also listening actively to others. It fosters collaboration, trust, and mutual understanding within a team or organization.

Effective communication will be a cornerstone of my approach. I will actively engage with NAEMT members, seeking their input, listening to their concerns, and fostering an open and inclusive dialogue. Transparent communication will be instrumental in building trust and unity within our organization.

***2. With additional stress on an already overburdened workforce, what steps can NAEMT take to support the health, wellbeing and resilience of our EMS practitioners?***

The well-being and resilience of EMS practitioners are of paramount importance, especially considering the additional stressors they face in their already demanding roles. As the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT), there are several proactive steps that can be taken to support the health, well-being, and resilience of our dedicated EMS professionals.

EMS practitioners often witness traumatic events and are exposed to high-stress situations, which can have a profound impact on their mental health. NAEMT can collaborate to ensure that mental health and resilient lifestyles are key topics in the development of EMS leaders, and practitioners. By developing resources that services, leaders and individuals can use, it will establish that mental health and personal care are key components to the EMS profession. Creating a culture of openness and reducing the stigma around seeking mental health support is vital. Promoting peer support programs within EMS agencies can also be highly effective.

Providing ongoing education such as the Mental Health Resilience Officer course services can provide training on stress management, resilience-building techniques, and coping strategies as a core initiative. NAEMT can collaborate and promote resources through their platforms that equip EMS practitioners with the skills and knowledge to deal with the unique challenges they face daily. This can include techniques for managing burnout, dealing with compassion fatigue, and promoting self-care.

Leadership within EMS agencies plays a crucial role in creating a supportive and resilient workforce. NAEMT can advocate for leadership training programs that emphasize empathy, understanding, and effective communication. Promoting an organizational culture that values and recognizes the contributions of EMS practitioners can boost morale and resilience.

NAEMT can use its influence to advocate for policy changes at the national and state levels that support EMS practitioners. This includes advocating for improved access to mental health services, fair compensation, and recognition of the unique challenges EMS professionals face.

NAEMT can play a pivotal role in ensuring that our EMS heroes have the resources and support they need to thrive in their challenging but vital roles.

***3. What do you believe EMS practitioners from younger generations are seeking from membership in a professional association, and how can NAEMT best respond to their needs?***

EMS practitioners from younger generations are approaching their careers and professional memberships with unique perspectives and expectations. To best respond to their needs, the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) must recognize and adapt to these evolving priorities which include consideration of value, communication, and action.

EMS practitioners have always valued networking and connections within their profession. Today, that connection seems to have grown and they seek a platform where they can engage with peers, mentors, and leaders in the field. NAEMT can respond to this by expanding and enhancing networking opportunities. This could include organizing regional events, online forums, and mentorship programs that facilitate meaningful connections between young EMS professionals and experienced colleagues.

Younger generations of EMS practitioners want their voices to be heard and their concerns to be addressed. NAEMT should advocate for the interests of EMS professionals at both the state and federal levels. Engaging younger members in advocacy efforts and providing resources for grassroots activism can empower them to have a say in shaping the future of EMS. In addition, younger generations value inclusivity and diversity within their professional associations. NAEMT should actively promote diversity and inclusivity initiatives to ensure that the organization reflects the varied backgrounds and experiences of its members. By creating an inclusive environment, NAEMT can attract and retain younger professionals from all walks of life.

Clear and transparent communication is crucial to engage EMS practitioners of all age ranges. The statement heard most is that we never hear about what is going on. NAEMT should maintain open lines of communication with its members, keeping them informed about the association's activities, initiatives, and decisions. Regular newsletters, social media updates, and feedback mechanisms can facilitate this exchange of information. In addition to using these different methods, communicate with members to ensure what methods are not being employed that members would like to see used.

**4. Explain how you communicate the value of NAEMT membership to existing and potential members.**

Communicating the value of National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT) membership to both existing and potential members is essential to fostering engagement, retention, and growth within the organization. To effectively convey this value, NAEMT should employ a multifaceted approach that highlights the benefits and opportunities membership provides.

The first step in communicating the value of NAEMT membership is to have a clear and concise message that encapsulates the benefits. This message should emphasize how membership directly enhances the professional lives of EMS practitioners. For example, "NAEMT membership empowers you to advance your career, access exclusive resources, and connect with a vibrant community of EMS professionals." Consistent and targeted communication is key to retaining and engaging members. NAEMT should send regular updates, reminders of upcoming events, and relevant news to keep members informed and engaged. An annual report summarizing the organization's achievements can also help members see the value of their investment. Sharing success stories and testimonials from current members who have benefited from NAEMT can be compelling. These real-life examples can illustrate the tangible impact of membership, whether it's advancing in one's career, gaining access to exclusive training, or making meaningful connections within the EMS community.

Emphasizing exclusive benefits that come with membership can be a powerful motivator. This might include access to specialized training courses, research reports, job boards, and discounts on conferences and merchandise. Making it clear that these opportunities are available only to NAEMT members reinforces the value proposition. Many professionals value the chance to network with peers and industry leaders. NAEMT can promote its networking events, conferences, and online forums as platforms for members to connect, collaborate, and exchange ideas. Building relationships within the EMS community can be both professionally and personally rewarding. Highlighting the association's advocacy efforts on behalf of EMS professionals is crucial. Demonstrating how NAEMT actively works to shape policy, improve working conditions, and advocate for fair compensation underscores the organization's commitment to the betterment of the EMS field. Members can see their membership to influence positive change in their profession.

Champion the benefits of membership through the dedicated member benefits page on the NAEMT website that outlines all the benefits of membership is essential. By using just one of the benefits that is offered by the collaboration of NAEMT with business and industry, the member receives their annual membership dues back, and yet the funding helps all areas discussed above.