

Case Study

FDNY Fire Cadet Academy x Cangrade



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Executive Summary

Every two years, the Fire Cadet Academy of New York graduates a class of 100 future FDNY firefighters. This highly selective program involves classroom learning, field and fitness training, leadership training, and hands-on training at FDNY bureaus. On graduation, Cadets who pass the Firefighter Promotional Exam and Candidate Physical Ability Test qualify to become an FDNY Firefighter.

To select top talent for their Cadet class and remove bias from the process, the Fire Cadet Academy leveraged the power of Cangrade, a cutting-edge Pre-Hire Assessment tool.

Leaders at The Fire Cadet Academy have credited their partnership with Cangrade with an **87% higher percentage of BIPOC Cadets than the percentage of current BIPOC firefighters** and **300% higher percentage of Cadets who identify as women** than the percentage of current firefighters who identify as women.



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Challenges and Goals

The Fire Cadet Academy receives a large number of applicants for a limited number of positions. Each Academy class only has 100 cadet spots available every few years. Before incorporating Cangrade into their hiring process, evaluating candidates was a time-consuming and challenging task that often relied on personal connections and biased decisions. Cangrade transformed its recruitment approach by streamlining operations and removing biased decision-making, resulting in a more diverse, successful Cadet class.



Decrease bias in the cadet selection process



Increase efficiency of operations



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Pinpointing Top Prospective Cadets

Cangrade's Pre-Hire Assessment utilizes predictive analytics to assess candidates objectively. By determining the soft skills that drive FNDY firefighter success, Cangrade built a bias-free success model using their patented technology to predict each applicant's potential success as a Fire Cadet. Cangrade's Pre-Hire Assessment then pinpointed the Fire Cadet Academy's top applicants, giving recruiters valuable insights into each candidate's likelihood of success. These insights enabled the Fire Cadet Academy team to quickly shortlist candidates who possess the desired traits and abilities for the Fire Cadet role. This saved the Fire Cadet Academy time and resources while ensuring that only the most qualified individuals moved forward in the selection process.

"Cangrade used information and data that came directly from FDNY firefighters and Officers to develop a solution custom the FDNY, instead of an off-the-shelf product," shares Academy Administrator Ruth Boddie. "They held our hand through the process and spoke in a language we could understand. Cangrade was always available to answer questions and was flexible during the pandemic period when the FCA was on hold. They worked closely with our other partner who was responsible for part of the process to combine candidate data, resulting in candidates who were a good fit and met our cut score."

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Reducing Bias in Cadet Selection

One of Cangrade's key advantages is its ability to remove bias in the hiring process. Traditional methods often rely on subjective judgments and personal biases, leading to potential discrimination and unfair practices. With Cangrade's bias-free AI, standardized assessments, and data-driven approach, each cadet candidate was evaluated on the same bias-free criteria, ensuring fairness and equal opportunity for all applicants.

"One of the Fire Cadet Academy's (FCA) goals was to create a program that provided us with a diverse pool of candidates who were a good fit to perform as New York City Fire Department (FDNY) firefighters. This meant diversity not only in terms of basic demographics but also diverse backgrounds and skill sets," explains Ruth Boddie. "We wanted a tool that could identify applicants who could be successful as firefighters and as future leaders (i.e. officers). We selected Cangrade because of its patented process for removing bias and its ability to predict performance accurately."

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Results

"The FCA is monitored by the Court and Cangrade provides us with a proven process that is competitive, bias-free, and fair, and can be defensible. As a result of our work together, we have exceeded the percentages of FDNY firefighters in the Women and Black demographic categories by a significant number."

Ruth Boddie

Academy Administrator

↑ **87%**

BIPOC Cadets than the percentage of current BIPOC firefighters

↑ **300%**

Cadets who identify as women than the percentage of current firefighters

Start seeing results
like FDNY's today.



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1-888-254-8394

Email us

sales@cangrade.com

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