PM
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT

BUILDING CAREER RESILIENCY
WHAT TO REACH FOR—AND WHY

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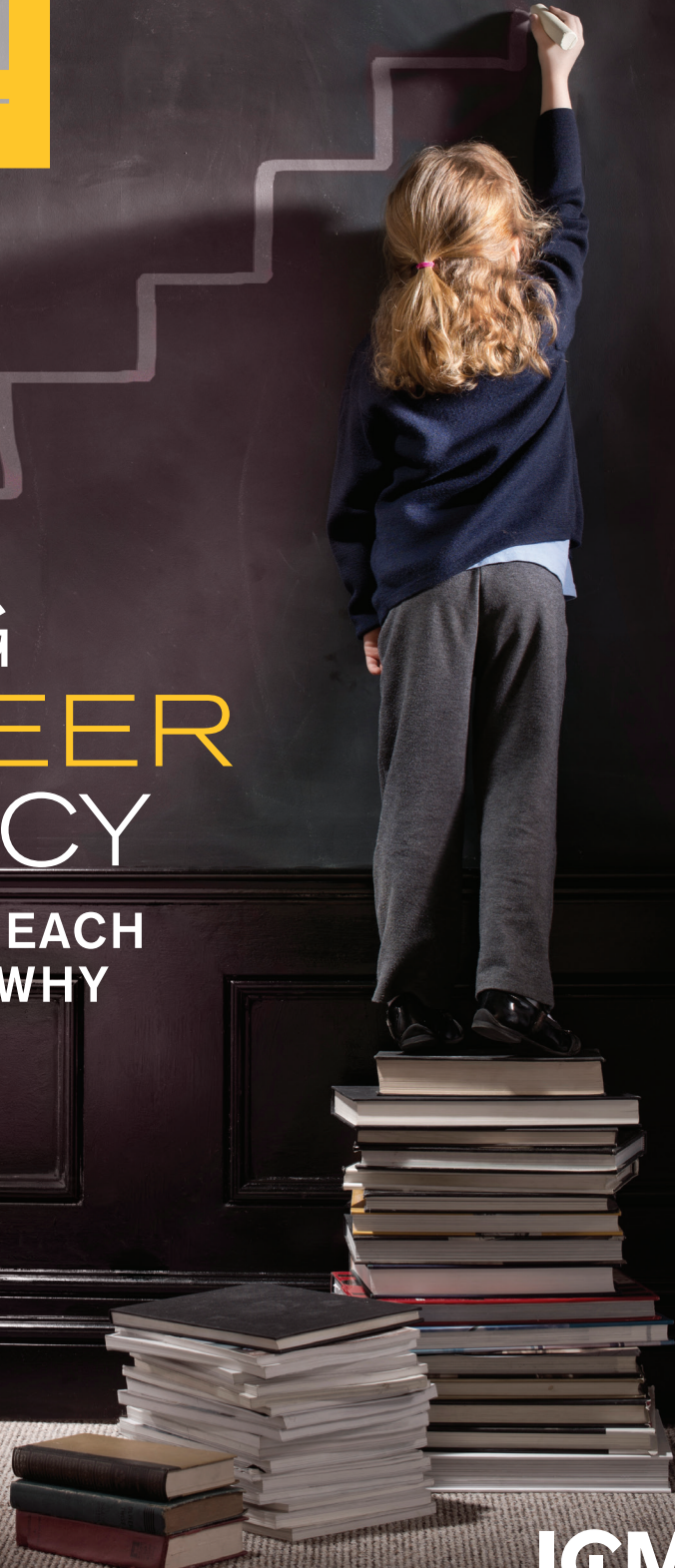
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BY MARTHA PEREGO

THE ETHICS OF COMPENSATION

Guidelines to maintain public trust

For local government organizations, compensation costs are still a significant portion of overall costs and for that reason, are constantly under public scrutiny. As managers implement strategies to reduce benefit costs, create incentives to attract and retain talent, and even negotiate their own compensation, they must do so in a way that is credible to the public.

TAKEAWAYS

› The governing body has a governance role to play. Create a compensation committee of the governing body or committee of the whole to design and implement the framework for setting the manager's compensation.

› Decisions on compensation and benefits must be made by the entire governing body in a public meeting. In the interests of transparency, the salary plan and salary ranges for local government positions, including for the manager, should be publicly accessible on the agency's website.

› Don't put your personal compensation interests before the good of the overall organization and that of the citizens.

› Local government managers have an ethical responsibility to be clear about what is being requested and to avoid excessive compensation. Greed is not good.

The Challenges

The lack of established practices for negotiating public sector executive compensation combined with the transparency threshold that must be met makes an otherwise difficult task almost daunting. Roles and responsibilities may be clear on paper but not in action.

The decision makers—that is, the governing body—are not always experienced with the process. The beneficiary—that is, the manager—sometimes is the one who is more knowledgeable, skilled, and, shall we say, savvy. That imbalance can create a conflict of interest. The result can be compensation packages or benefits negotiated in good faith that later appear to be inappropriate, unfair, and just too costly.

The Principles

The principles of the profession have long been the driver for personnel and compensation matters. The standard for establishing executive compensation is that it be fair, reasonable, and transparent. But what's "fair" is subjective and debatable.

Taking the principles, ICMA established formal guidelines for negotiating executive compensation that set standards for benchmarking using comparable public sector salaries on regional and national bases. The guidelines more clearly define roles and responsibilities, and they address issues that relate to all employees as well.

The Process

To establish fair and reasonable compensation, the governing body should either operate as a committee of the whole or designate an evaluation

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and compensation subcommittee. This group should design and implement the methodology for setting the compensation of the local government manager and any other appointees of the governing body.

Compensation benchmarks should be established on the basis of compensation in comparable local government and public sector agencies. The governing body should engage experts, whether contracted or in-house, to provide the information required to establish fair and reasonable compensation levels.

All decisions on compensation and benefits must be made by the entire governing body in a public meeting.

The Realities

The principles and guidelines provide advice to address those unusual or questionable practices.

The ICMA Model Employment Agreement recommends one-year severance. The average length of severance is six months. Is negotiating a two-year severance appropriate? Is three okay? If so, under what circumstance?

Severance provisions established in the employment agreement must be both reasonable and affordable so that the cost of the severance is not an impediment to fulfilling the governing body's right to terminate a manager's service, if desired. That said, some places are just more political and volatile than others. A history of high turnover may support larger severances.

Having negotiated severance, is it okay to negotiate and accept more in a forced departure? If so, under what circumstance?

A deal is a deal! The most ethical approach generally is to accept what was originally negotiated and not to leverage the departure to obtain more. But there are unique situations where it is fair and ethical to negotiate for

more: long-tenured managers who are terminated close to retirement and short-tenured managers who sometimes incur the cost of relocation but are terminated before being afforded the chance to show what they can do. It is rare but the settlement of legal claims may result in additional payments made at departure.

Is it okay to request an exception to the policy that caps the amount of leave that can be sold back in order to boost retirement?

Managers are in a unique class and do negotiate for benefits that other employees do not receive. But changes to benefits should be considered during agreement negotiations or renegotiations so that changes can be considered in the context of the cost of the entire package. Avoid one-offs and practices that lead to pension spiking.

In an effort to reduce payroll expenses, the manager proposes an early-retirement incentive. Can the manager participate in the program? If so, when should disclosure of intent be made?

Professionals must recognize and effectively manage conflicts of interest inherent in compensation changes. Managers should avoid taking steps regarding pension and other benefits if they will be the sole or primary beneficiary of the change.

The manager can participate in the program but only if there was full disclosure up front that the manager was both in the universe of those affected and interested in taking the option. Not to fully disclose this fact puts the validity of the proposal in question. Is this a good deal for the organization or just good for the manager? **PM**

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HOW ARE YOU ADDRESSING THE ISSUE OF SUCCESSION PLANNING?

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Acknowledging that hiring from within is very desirable, our organization has adopted a fairly traditional format for staffing succession. We provide financial support for pursuing higher education and advanced training through the city to encourage employees to expand their careers.

We have generally been successful with this approach as shown by the number of supervisors and mid-level managers who are long-tenured city employees.

The biggest challenge lies in developing upper-level management staff. One reason for this is the reluctance of employees to leave the relative "safety" of the unions to enter into the realm of the nonrepresented staff.

It is my hope that by emphasizing the intangible benefits of reaching the professional potential of each employee we can overcome this hurdle.

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This issue is becoming increasingly important in our organization as its workforce matures and retirement activity trends upward. To begin with, awareness and proactive efforts go a long way.

Specifically, we are working to decentralize duties in key supervisory positions that have historically operated as sole source providers. Cross-training, "understudies," and a renewed emphasis on team activities are options being considered.

At the department-head level, we make an effort to stop and pause with each vacancy to strategically review the sphere of responsibilities for the position.

We have found that a willingness to expand and divest duties and potentially restructure a position can help smooth the transition, take advantage of underused in-house talent, and minimize the adverse impacts of lost institutional knowledge and capacity.

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Doylestown Township (17,680 population) is addressing succession planning in our organization in two ways. First, we are working with next-generation employees to make sure they have the proper training and experience to be able to assume a department-head position when the opportunity presents itself.

The second way is with certain key department-head positions. We hire new employees several months prior to a staff retirement. This allows the new hire to spend time acclimating to the position prior to the departure of that department head. This strategy ensures that institutional knowledge will be passed along to the new hire.

We also work with local universities to acquire interns, mentor them, and expose them to all aspects of our organization. The interns gain experience working with volunteer boards and commissions, customer service, budgeting, and special projects. Given the right circumstances, we've promoted interns to full-time positions.

Doylestown Township recognizes that as baby boomer employees begin to retire it needs to be prepared to have well-trained and experienced staff ready to work for it. **PM**

1 CLIMATE-RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

ICMA's *CityLinks Primer on Subnational Approaches for Low Emission, Climate Resilient Development* is a tool managers can use to support work being done in the U.S. promoting a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.

▶ icma.org/CLprimer
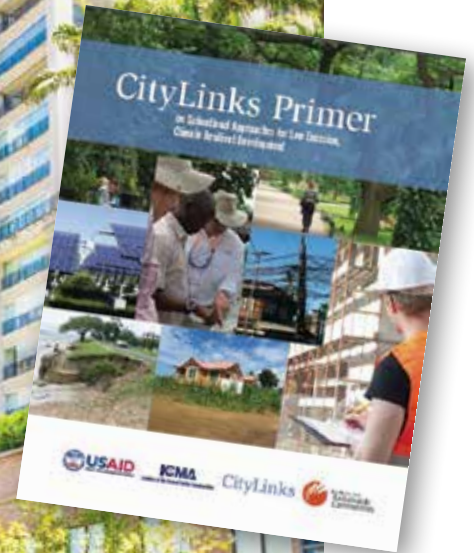
2 FOR AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

ICMA has teamed up with AARP to provide local leaders with free resources to plan for the aging population, including webinars, toolkits, and guides.

▶ icma.org/agefriendly

3 INMATE HEALTH CARE

The Center for State and Local Government Excellence has published *Local Government Strategies to Control Rising Health Care Costs* with two case studies—Buncombe County, North Carolina, and Hampden County, Massachusetts—that had success reducing costs for inmate care.

▶ icma.org/lghealthcarecoststrategies

4 SETTING THE RECORD STRAIGHT

Much has been written during the past year about the notion that only 13 percent of local government CAOs are women. But what's really behind that number? While efforts to encourage women to enter and advance through the local government management profession are definitely needed, the situation is not as dire as has been widely reported.

▶ icma.org/why13percent

BUILDING CAREER RESILIENCY

HONE YOUR ABILITY TO GROW FROM ADVERSITY

By Pat Martel, ICMA-CM and
Jan Perkins, ICMA-CM

Everyone who pursues a fulfilling career will eventually encounter challenges that will help define his or her future.

Sometimes the challenge is personal: a potentially transformative project you introduce that fails to gain traction or a clash of wills with the governing board to which you report. Sometimes the challenge is institutional: a severe recession that leads to budget cuts and layoffs or a crisis that leads to a criminal investigation in the organization you lead.

Whatever the challenge, embedded in it is an opportunity to build career resiliency. Research suggests that when it comes to effective leadership, resiliency—the ability to not only bounce back from adversity but to learn and grow from it—is a more important trait for leaders to possess than experience, education, training, or even intelligence.

TAKEAWAYS

› Resiliency—the ability to learn from a difficult situation—is a key trait of effective leadership. The good news is that resiliency can be learned and built.

› Embedded in every challenge, and even in every failure, is an opportunity to learn and grow.

› Being self-aware; articulating goals, values, and a vision; seeking feedback; and building relationships will all help build career resiliency and make us better leaders.

Business schools, human resource professionals, and psychology researchers alike are all working to figure out how to identify who can push through the kinds of difficulties that sidetrack others.

No one knows where resiliency comes from, whether it's a genetic predisposition or a decision to view life a certain way. One prominent academic study found that some people become noticeably more resilient over their lifetimes, which suggests that resiliency can be learned even in people who lack it initially.

As people build their confidence, and as they experience situations in which they have encountered something exceedingly difficult or challenging and have successfully navigated it, they gain the perspective that a crisis is not the end of the world. Local government history is filled with stories of remarkable people who faced something that seemed impossible, yet they succeeded.

An example is one of the first city managers in the country, L.P. Cookingham of Kansas City. He was hired by a reform city council to get rid of the corruption that had infected city government. When he arrived in 1940, he found the city $20 million in debt (a considerable amount for that time period) and had to eliminate 2,000 employees from the payroll.

Encouraging Resiliency

There are differences in how men and women react to adversity in the workplace, and building career resiliency in women is one important way to boost the number of female leaders in local governments.

Whether we are naturally resilient or working toward it, there are common traits and practices that seem to encourage resiliency in everyone. Cultivating them will help you personally and professionally, whether you're early in your career, at the midpoint, or in your peak years.

1 **Practice self-awareness.** It's important to know yourself well—your strengths and weaknesses—and be willing to put yourself in uncomfortable positions. When you can honestly assess yourself, own up to mistakes when you make them, and trust yourself when you're on the right track, you will build your ability to thrive.

Don't make the mistake, though, of confusing confidence and self-awareness with bravado or blind approval. A confident, self-aware leader isn't afraid to be vulnerable or admit when he or she doesn't have all the answers—but instead resolves to find the answers and continually prepare for what comes next.

Resiliency tip: Keep an informal journal of your work life with a daily record of challenges and successes. This will encourage self-reflection and uncover previously unrecognized patterns.

Put down the good, the bad, and the ugly of your experiences—what you did right, what you wish you had done differently, and what you have no clue about why something went wrong. This can help you frame questions to a trusted mentor as well.

2 **Know what you believe in and foster the right institutional values.** "Those who stand for nothing fall for anything," said Alexander Hamilton, the first U.S. secretary of the treasury.

Know what you stand for. Be explicit about the core values that guide you.

This will help you confront challenges more effectively, and your staff will appreciate it. Be able to draw a line in the sand, based on your values.

While compromise is an essential part of moving agendas forward, when we compromise our values, we undermine ourselves and our institutions. Organizations should also have an explicit set of values, each of which clearly states the expected behaviors.

When the leader walks her or his talk, and helps staff do their work in a way that is consistent with stated values, it helps when the going gets tough or there is pressure to bend the rules. When you hit a rough patch, having a strong sense of what guides you will help you realize that your career is more than just this challenge you're now facing.

Resiliency tip: Write out your own values. Put them in your informal journal. Lead a process of creating a mission statement, vision, and values for your organization. Know them well and share them with colleagues to ensure you're all operating from a shared understanding of the work you do.

3 **Articulate specific goals.**
Whether you become a local government manager by the age of 40 or eventually return to work in your hometown isn't solely up to you; chance and opportunity play a role in where you end up.

Identifying specific goals for your own career and for the organization where you work, however, makes it much more likely that you'll achieve them. Like an explicit set of values, goals provide a sense that your work is more than just the project in front of you, and that in the big picture, the setback you just experienced can eventually provide wisdom and strength.

Resiliency tip: Reflect on the goals that you want to achieve, both in your own career and for the institution. Make sure you come up with short-term, midrange,

and long-term goals and adjust them every year or so.

Refer to them often to see if your regular work is pointing you in the right direction, and don't be afraid to refresh them as priorities change.

4 **Embrace (calculated) risk.**
Especially early in our careers, risk is a scary thing. When "we don't know what we don't know," we can be unsure whether we really should step out on something. It can seem safer to keep

your head down and hope to avoid too much notice.

New and emerging leaders can be afraid to take the first step for fear of making mistakes, but it's important to manage that fear so it doesn't end up managing them. Risking failure is necessary to achieving our goals, and facing risks throughout our career builds resiliency.

As author J.K. Rowling said, "It is impossible to live without failing at something, unless you live so cautiously that you might as well not have lived at all."

Resilient leaders are able to take the risks of leadership because they know that they are more likely to rebound if things don't turn out as planned. Everyone wants to "get it right" in their careers, but the fear of getting it wrong

should not stand in your way of trying new things or taking calculated risks.

Remember that some of the greatest failures have led to innovation. A project might not turn out as planned and you may make other mistakes, but as long as you have learned from the mistakes, you haven't really failed.

Resiliency tip: When faced with a risk, weigh the benefits and potential fallout, and have a plan for what you'll do if you succeed and if you fail.

> WHILE COMPROMISE IS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF MOVING AGENDAS FORWARD, WHEN WE COMPROMISE OUR VALUES, WE UNDERMINE OURSELVES AND OUR INSTITUTIONS.

After you've considered the possible outcomes and decided the risk is worth it, push through.

When an initiative doesn't turn out the way you expected, step back and figure out what you'd do differently next time and what you've learned from it, then share your insights with others so they learn from it, too.

5 **Balance optimism and realism.**
Resilient leaders are optimistic, and they believe problems can be solved with creativity and hard work. But they are realistic, too: They assess situations and make judgments based on data and observation, not emotion or wishful thinking.

Resiliency, then, requires seeing things as they are and as they can be,

and being able to figure out a path from point A to point B.

Women, in particular, often pressure themselves to reach unrealistic standards of perfection and become discouraged when they inevitably fail to achieve them. We all need to remind ourselves that our best is good enough and be committed to pushing forward through our fears.

This ability to see both the current picture and a vision for the future is especially important for leaders to cultivate. A leader who refuses to see things for how they are risks losing the confidence of the people in the organization he or she leads; however, the leader who can't map out a better way and rally the troops will never be able to effect change.

Acknowledging the difficulties at hand, then offering a plan on making things better and getting through tough times together, will inspire people to accomplish more than they know is possible. Leaders often invite followers on a journey through the vision they inspire.

Resiliency tip: Practice showing enthusiasm for an established goal and confidence in your team's ability to get over the hurdle you are facing. Visualize what success would look like for you and the team.

Analyze and communicate the objective pros and cons of the decision facing you or the organization, but trust your instincts. Ask yourself: "Are you a leader that you would follow?" Identify what part of your response is "no" and change that for yourself.

6 **Seek feedback.** Our work becomes an extension of who we are, so inviting criticism after a difficult experience is scary. But feedback is a gift, and the ability to listen to it without taking criticism personally is an essential step in building career resiliency.

Remember that effective leaders are vulnerable, and they see honest feedback as a chance to get better. Especially early in a career, it's difficult to see adversity in perspective, and honest feedback will

help you gain perspective and look at situations honestly.

Part of the feedback loop is also giving honest feedback when there's an opportunity to offer it, so look for opportunities to share insights with others in a helpful way.

Resiliency tip: Ask trusted mentors or staff for feedback when something particularly difficult has occurred. If you are asking staff, be careful to set the stage and not ask them anything that they would be unable to be honest about given the authority position you represent.

Identify specific questions on which to seek feedback. Show vulnerability and openness in the feedback meeting by sharing what you thought went well, what did not, and what you could have done differently. Ask for ideas on what you could do differently next time.

For the institution, establish a way of gathering feedback after projects, whether it's a survey, one-on-one discussions, or team debriefs. Use it regularly so that you know what to do differently and what team members can do to learn from the experience.

7 **Build relationships.** In the work of local government, little is accomplished alone and that includes building resiliency. The people you form relationships with in your career will nurture you, give you confidence to take risks, tell you the facts you need to do your job effectively, offer support during difficult times, and celebrate milestones and achievements with you. Nothing is more important to your career resiliency than the relationships you build.

This means building peer networks and finding mentors who will serve as sounding boards early in your career. Navigating relationships midcareer can be tricky, as changing roles and becoming a leader can disrupt some of the relationships you've built, but mentors may become even more important as we advance.

People in their peak years are in a position to mentor younger colleagues, and they also need peers—often outside of their organization or in another industry—to keep gathering perspectives and feedback on difficult situations.

Resiliency tip: Seek people outside your organization who can help you see your challenges in a new way, provide support, and reenergize you to think differently about your situation.

Join professional networking organizations, attend industry conferences, and keep in touch with past colleagues, all of which can cultivate relationships that will build resiliency.

Learn and Move On

Research from The Hardiness Institute has identified three key behaviors displayed by resilient leaders to successfully rebound from difficult and challenging experiences:

- Commitment: Resilient people strive to be involved in events rather than feeling isolated.
- Control: They tend to control or try to shape outcomes rather than allowing passivity or powerlessness to overcome them.
- Challenge: Stressful changes—positive or negative—are viewed as opportunities for learning.

In every challenge, there is an opportunity: to hone our skills and learn from mistakes, to strengthen nurturing relationships, and to grow in self-awareness and confidence.

By looking at our careers through the lens of resiliency, we prepare ourselves to take on increasing responsibility and become more effective in the leadership roles we already have. **PM**

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UNLEASHING

HOW LAS VEGAS ATTRACTED **BIG IDEAS** FOR

TAKEAWAYS

› The SC2 competition showed the city that holding prize competitions is a new approach to solving local government problems.

› When you incentivize people with money, they come together and become passionate about an idea which, in the end, really becomes the driving force behind competing.

Every manager probably has uttered the words "Let's think out of the box" to his or her team at one time or another. Really doing so, however, requires taking risks and approaching familiar issues with a new spin and sometimes new processes that can be uncomfortable.

CREATIVITY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

By Betsy Fretwell, ICMA-CM

In local government, these issues can be even more daunting, especially when the new ideas have not been readily vetted and adopted by the public policy community, and may involve taking chances with entrusted public funds. This was the case with an incentive-based competition and the city of Las Vegas, Nevada.

During the past 20 years, Las Vegas has seen its share of highs and lows.

Up until the Great Recession, population was booming with unprecedented growth rates and a strong economy.

After the recession hit and Las Vegas's economy stalled, it had one of the highest unemployment rates in the nation and was at the top of the list when it came to home foreclosures. The community needed to focus on promoting economic and job development to help speed its recovery.

By 2011, through a variety of redevelopment efforts, the city and its business community had ignited a strong fire of recovery downtown. It needed to keep that fire lit by looking at other areas in need of economic development and taking a different approach to keep moving forward.

Our organization needed to keep pushing and exploring where the next big ideas for development were going

to come from and make sure that it was something that the entire community could support. The Strong Cities Strong Communities Visioning Challenge (SC2) grant provided a potential resource with a big idea.

Out-of-the-Box Opportunities

Incentive-based competitions award people for bringing the best ideas to the table as opposed to laying out an organization's concepts and paying someone to put ideas into action. An incentive-based competition does not guarantee any remuneration for time and effort and only the best ideas get monetary awards.

Las Vegas was introduced to this concept in 2011, when this unique grant opportunity became available for the first time through the U.S. Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration (EDA). SC2 was a pilot program whereby chosen communities would administer a grant competition to leverage ideas and approaches to create economic development plans by incentivizing participants to compete for cash prizes.

Las Vegas applied for the grant, not only because this was the type of "out-of-the-box" opportunity it needed, but because the city met the criteria of being economically distressed. The EDA awarded the $1 million SC2 grant to Las Vegas along with Greensboro, North Carolina, and Hartford, Connecticut.

Las Vegas's goal for the grant program was to procure highly innovative, creative, and transformational economic development plans from qualified multidisciplinary teams.

Since an incentive-based competition had never been done by the city, there were political concerns about awarding "unconditional" cash prizes and whether the ideas generated through the grant program would be valued at more than the match contribution from the city.

In an effort to continue to fuel development in different ways and plan for a new kind of economically

vibrant community, the city decided the potential payoffs were worth the risk. It invested in-kind resources by donating staff, office supplies, and space to administer the program.

In addition, a 20 percent match was required by EDA. A $250,000 match contribution was earmarked to fund future planning efforts for winning proposals. The next step was building the right team to make the project successful.

Team + Partnerships

The city built a core team led by internal project management staff, along with strong partnerships. Part of that team was with competition consultant Jaison Morgan, owner and CEO of The Common Pool (TCP), a consulting firm that focuses on incentivized prize competitions. Another major team contributor was Melissa Warren, managing partner of the marketing firm Faiss Foley Warren (FFW).

EDA contracted with Morgan and his team to create the prize competition and provide guidance to each of the three SC2 cities. Warren and her staff were instrumental in developing a targeted marketing approach, reaching out to organizations and individuals globally to seek the best and brightest minds to engage in the competition. FFW also aided city staff in communication with registered teams, judges, and public relations.

In order to award cash prizes, the competition required judges. Twenty-six influential community leaders who care deeply about the city's future made a commitment to be a part of the SC2 competition. These individuals graciously donated their time to learn about the competition and select the best economic development plans for Las Vegas.

The competition was crafted in two phases. The Las Vegas SC2 website was launched in January 2013, which provided program information, timeline, rules, and detailed instructions on how to submit proposals in phase one.

The website also included photos and biographies of each of the judges,

accessible to anyone participating or interested in the competition. Scoring criteria and tips for submitting a well thought-out plan were also available on the site. This transparency created a fair and open process that the participants, judges, and city leadership could all appreciate.

Phase One. In phase one, teams were asked to submit their most creative ideas to spur economic development in four focus areas. During this phase, the SC2 team hosted a question-and-answer panel discussion about the competition and provided detailed information about the four areas of focus: Cashman Center, a convention center and baseball stadium; redevelopment areas; business parks; and the medical district. A site tour of Cashman Center was also provided to all interested participants. It was unlike the other three focus areas because it was a physical location with a structure.

With the competition and registration under way, FFW continued its marketing and outreach efforts by connecting with experts in architecture, banking, planning, development, business and finance, and other areas related to economic development. The goal was to get individuals and organizations registered so they could connect and create a multi-disciplinary team.

Soon, registration numbers grew and teams formed. In September 2014, after eight months of planning, 18 teams submitted proposals to be judged in the first phase.

Two webinars were held to train the phase one judges, technically known as the Evaluation Panel, to provide a step-by-step tutorial of the scoring process. Once the plan deadline passed, the judges were able to log into their account, score their five randomly distributed proposals, and provide feedback associated with each score.

The first round of competition was successful. Evaluation panel

judges made recommendations to the city council in December 2014 to award $100,000 in cash prizes to the top three contenders: First place, $60,000; second place, $30,000; and third place, $10,000. The mayor and council also approved seven additional teams that advanced to the second phase of the competition, for a total of 10 finalists vying for $800,000 in cash awards.

Phase Two. Phase two began immediately after phase one concluded in December 2014. Finalist teams were in-

with plan documents and a 10-minute video of team concepts to view and assist in providing preliminary scores.

The selection committee convened in May 2015 to listen to finalists' presentations on their fully developed plans, and the judges made their decision to award $800,000 to six teams. Selections required the utmost confidentiality; no one outside of the committee knew the rank order of the winning teams.

On June 17, 2015, two selection committee members stood before the council, gave a presentation on

Since receiving the reward, Brandon Wiegand, a member of the winning team, says "Now the real work begins! We've been in conversations with the city and the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority to determine how to move the Cashman site forward. Concurrently, we've been developing interest among prospective tenants and investors.

"As we developed the UARRC idea for the SC2 competition, we saw that we were creating a real business, not just a proposal, and it is our intention to see that business come to fruition."

Engaged Contestants

The overwhelming feedback the city has received from the teams who participated in SC2 was that they entered into this competition process to possibly win money for an idea, but throughout the planning process they became passionate about their concepts and fully engaged in the future development of Las Vegas.

That sentiment is a true indication of why this competition was successful and how the entire city and its residents benefit from that ignited passion.

Allotting funding for prizes to contest winners contradicts all of the traditional public policy lessons government professionals have been taught over the years. Through this process, however, Las Vegas learned that the creativity and imagination shown by contestants were not stifled by an institutional system that was used to doing things as they had always been done before.

Successful economic development requires energy and new ideas, and the risks and challenges the city took to implement this new effort paid off with out-of-the-box ideas that will serve Las Vegas well into the future. **PM**

> **Through this process, Las Vegas learned that the creativity and imagination shown by contestants were not stifled by an institutional system that was used to doing things as they had always been done before.**

vited to a mandatory workshop so they could fully understand the expectations for submitting comprehensive economic development plans. Teams would be judged on three criteria: 1) how they understood and addressed local conditions; 2) project feasibility; and 3) innovation for their respective projects.

Teams were given five months to further develop their concepts into comprehensive economic development plans, seek letters of support from community leaders, and develop strategies for winning the competition.

Phase two judging involved a selection committee composed of seven judges, none of whom were judges in phase one. Each judge was provided

their SC2 experience, and presented their recommendations for the six winning teams.

The team who won first place and a cash prize of $500,000 included a researcher, a developer, an architect, a consultant, and a business owner. Their team name was Build a Better Las Vegas, and their concept was called Unmanned Aerial and Robotics Resources Center (UARRC).

The UARRC plan aims to use Cashman Center as an incubator site for start-up companies in the drone and robotics industry. The plan also includes research and development at the Cashman site and eventually manufacturing in the robotics industry.

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SPOTLIGHT ON
Police Culture

SEEING THE RED FLAGS OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURES GONE WRONG

By Mary Eleanor Wickersham

TAKEAWAYS

› Managers face more than fiscal liability when their law enforcement agencies are out of control; a broken trust with the public is even more damaging in the long term.

› Real change in policing organizations must derive from changes in the organizational culture.

› Managers must recognize and address the warning signs of a dysfunctional culture that reflects an "us vs. them" mentality.

National news coverage of alleged police misconduct has grabbed the nation's attention and had a direct impact on local government managers. The serious and long-term impact of police misconduct is the broken trust between residents and law enforcement organizations that occurs when negative perceptions of police values are reinforced by allegations of unnecessary use of force. And to this is added the potential fiscal liability of police wrongdoing.

The Wall Street Journal reported in July 2015 that the top 10 cities with the largest police departments had paid nearly $250 million in police misconduct cases in 2014 alone. Smaller cities are not exempt either.

The city manager of Inkster, Michigan, reported that his city—population less than 25,000—would have to levy additional taxes to fund a $1.4 million 2015 misconduct settlement. The long-term cost of the broken relationship between residents and law enforcement only grows as trust further erodes.

According to an April 2015 ABC News report, law enforcement agencies are seeing a decline in applicants, and recruitment is down by as much as 90 percent in some cities as policing has lost some of its allure. This tarnish is due at least in part to low pay, high stress, and heavy workloads, but negative stereotyping of officers is increasingly a factor, according to police recruiters cited by ABC News.

"The significant improvements made in police-community relations over the last 25 years seem to have eroded," says Cedric Alexander, immediate past president of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives and chief of police, DeKalb County, Georgia. "This strain—not just with minorities but now with the larger community—has grown along with the perception of overzealous policing, a phenomenon largely driven not by data but by citizen documentation of incidents by cellphone and video and sharing on social media."

All too often, police and residents find themselves in a standoff in which neither side comes out the winner.

How did those appointed to serve and protect become perceived enemies of a significant proportion of the population, specifically minorities and those of color, in so many American communities?

Part of the answer lies in the organizational culture that has developed in many policing organizations, where cultural assumptions reinforce the "them-versus-us" attitude apparent since the Los Angeles Rampart neighborhood police scandal in the late 1990s.

Eye on Organizational Culture

Just as individuals have habits of thinking called schema, organizational culture is essentially a corporate schemata. Through workplace experience, employees often develop assumptions about organizational expectations. As values are shared, employee behaviors adapt to meet those expectations and over time, the organization develops its own distinctive culture.

In policing organizations, assumptions that derive from the culture are often passed along through more experienced officers, who effectively show new hires "how it's done around here." Although discretionary decision making is an integral part of policing, the individual's behaviors and responses in discretionary action will slowly adjust to meet the expectations of the organization itself.

Policing operations can be high-risk enterprises. It is vital for public managers to look carefully at the organizational culture of their policing agencies to determine the existence of any warning signs, which may require a review of the values of the policing entity and, in some cases, the local government itself. Here are nine warning signs:

Fear of reporting wrongdoing due to lack of trust. Timely and mandatory reporting of wrongdoing must be a condi-

tion of employment in all law enforcement agencies. When there is a lack of trust in the system, when employees believe there will be retaliation, and when they think reporting has no value, they are less likely to report. Without opportunities to address problems that are identified through reporting, there is no opportunity for correction, and rule breaking may be interpreted as the norm.

The unwritten "Blue Wall of Silence" in police departments may stem from a culture of stress driven by the public, the hierarchy, and internal investigations. Having a safe route for reporting can help change this dynamic.

Failure to adequately address ethical violations. In his classic 2005 article in *The Princeton Review*, "The Cognitive and Social Psychology of Contagious Organizational Corruption," author John Darley makes two important points about where organizations go wrong. First, he subscribes to the "bad barrel" theory, not the "bad apple theory."

Policing agencies rightly spend much time looking at the backgrounds of their potential employees, but even good people placed in bad situations can do wrong, especially when such actions go unpunished or are accepted. Darley says that when organizations fail to adequately address ethical violations, others are more likely to perform the same actions.

What is tolerated is repeated, a process he describes as "entrainment." Before long, an ethical organization can turn into a corrupt one.

Too much rigidity and too little humanity. Professor Rosemary O'Leary reminded readers of her 2006 book *The Ethics of Dissent* that rule-driven organizations can tend to make employees "go around the rules." While most police organizations are hierarchal, there must be opportunities for employees to make and learn from mistakes, to explore alternative ideas for handling difficult situations, and to offer creative solutions to problems.

Getting officer feedback is essential. Law enforcement organizations where

Policing agencies rightly spend much time looking at the backgrounds of their potential employees, **but even good people placed in a bad situation can do wrong, especially when such actions go unpunished or are accepted.**

rules are perceived as unfair or prejudicial to a certain class of employees and those where rules are not justified or explained can also lead to rule bending and, ultimately, to rule breaking.

Lack of training. Training for officers often fails to address discretionary decision making, focusing more on hard skills like legal procedure, shooting guns, self-defense, and driving. The recent, large number of police shootings of unarmed victims provides an indication of the haste with which some officers draw their weapons.

Some law enforcement agencies are now using videos with changing scenarios that let officers practice discretionary action, after which they and their supervisors can critique decisions. "Ethical practice is not simply a matter of knowing and following a set of rules," explain authors Terrance Johnson and Raymond Cox in a 2004 article published in *Public Integrity*. "It also requires the use of discretion and making split-second judgments."

"Rules are not enough in such situations," the authors write. "What should be taught is a "framework for decision making that fosters ethical decisions…."

Organizations in which the end justifies the means. In 1995 in a book chapter in *The Legacy of Anomie Theory*, author Deborah Cohen explains that unethical and criminal behavior is the natural outcome of a society in which "the end justifies the means." When organizational goals are unattainable

or when performance expectations are unrealistic, employees may interpret those demands as an excuse for rule bending or breaking.

Organizational wrongdoing is often the result of a misplaced emphasis on performance measurement in lieu of the core mission of the agency. Police departments that set quotas and have competitions for arrests, convictions, or traffic stops, may, in the eyes of employees, be effectively sanctioning rule breaking to achieve goals.

Absence of leadership focus and insistence on ethical behaviors. Author Tim Hallett wrote in *Sociological Theory* in 2003 that leaders have the power to "define the situation." Defining the culture does not happen overnight, but a focus on ethical actions and public service must come from the top and be consistent.

Empowering employees, providing consistent supervision and discipline, and supporting employees through mentorship are key actions for organizations that desire to build an ethical culture. When managers complain about the cost or time away from work for ethics training, so will the employees. When leaders tacitly accept or ignore even covert prejudice, such attitudes may spread. Johnson and Cox explain that "[t]he culture of being above the law ends only when leaders enforce rules against corrupt behavior and then recognize right behavior."

When the workforce does not mirror the citizenry. A well-established principle in public management is that the

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bureaucracy should, relatively speaking, look much like the public it serves where gender and race are concerned. The theory holds that inclusion of minority groups should help ensure that their ideas, feelings, issues, and concerns are recognized in government.

There is an old saw that says that people tend to hire people who look like themselves. It's easy for local governments to get into the trap of hiring someone recommended by or related to a fellow employee or depending for recruitment on the same tired methods, thereby limiting the field of candidates.

Broad recruitment efforts with an emphasis on a diverse workforce that is similar to the constituency served can help avoid problems like those in Ferguson, Missouri, but only if the workforce is given the opportunity to share its opinions and concerns.

"Us-vs.-them" mentality. Widespread corruption in some police departments is, according to Johnson and Cox, due in part to training that creates an us-vs.-them mentality that is deeply inculcated into the organizational culture from academy through service.

The spate of well-publicized police brutality and misuse-of-force allegations and convictions has exacerbated this us-vs.-them feeling in the law enforcement community. When the public responds and police departments go on the defensive, they are more likely to shift into "protect our own" mode, which can further erode an ethical culture.

Johnson and Cox believe that leaders can change the culture by integrating the organization's ethical vision and goals into training, especially training in decision-making. They write: "As long as police see controlling the 'enemy' as the first priority, the ideals of serving the community, of saving the weak

from those who would use intimidation, and of the badge as an image of public confidence will not be adopted."

Negative outward symbols of the organizational culture. The militarization of many U.S. police departments has served as a symbol to some residents that the police have ultimate power and control. Part of this culture change has been driven by reductions in military force, leading to more surplus equipment, but in part, symbolic changes in dress and demeanor of officers have been driven internally and copied across communities.

"Imagery is important," writes Radley Balko in a May 18, 2015, *Washington Post* story. "It's an indication of how the police see themselves, how they see the community they serve, and how they perceive their relationship with that community. And all of that in turn affects how the community views the police."

Regaining footing as public servants can start with a shift toward becoming a part of the community, not just community enforcers.

Changing the Culture

Baltimore, Maryland, spent $5.7 million in police misconduct lawsuits and related costs between 2011 and September 2014. Though one might assume that the department had been properly chastened and reformed, the death of Baltimore resident Freddie Gray led in 2015 to a $6.4 million settlement with Gray's family.

Departments routinely credit this type of problem to a few rogue cops or to a situation that got out of control. The officers who chained Freddie Gray in the back of the police van were doing what other cops in Baltimore had done without critique. That sort of ingrained culture is hard to change, but it is possible, and cultural change is essential for long-lasting transformation.

As law Professor Barbara Armacost put it in a 2003 *George Washington Law Review* article: "Real reform requires police organizations to accept collective responsibility, not only for heroism, but for police brutality and corruption as well."

James Q. Wilson's and George Kelling's "Broken Windows Theory," which suggests that strictly controlling minor disorders and vandalism can reduce more serious crime, has fallen out of favor as an overly aggressive model that has resulted in some of the disconnect between police departments and those they serve. But author Kelling still has good advice for departments to help them evolve into highly ethical organizations:

- "Emphasize police adherence to a process (application of knowledge, skills, and values), rather than any predictable outcome, because outcomes of police interventions are often wildly unpredictable regardless of officers' skills, intent, and values.
- "Establish accountability standards that identify competent and excellent performance, violations of organizational rules, and incompetent or uncaring work, including performance within organizational rules."

Policing is not easy. Officers come out of their academies with a high degree of discretionary power while experiencing high stress to get it right in situations they have never before experienced. Compound this highly charged atmosphere with an altered public perception of police in their communities, and departments are likely to grow more insular. There is the potential for the "Blue Wall of Silence" to become a fortress of silence.

Local government managers have an opportunity to create and support change in police departments out of touch with their communities, changes that will ultimately benefit communities that no longer trust the police. It's time to get this right, but that means a frank assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the culture. **PM**

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BY MIKE CONDUFF, ICMA-CM

THREATS FROM WITHIN

How to avoid the dangers of a quick fix
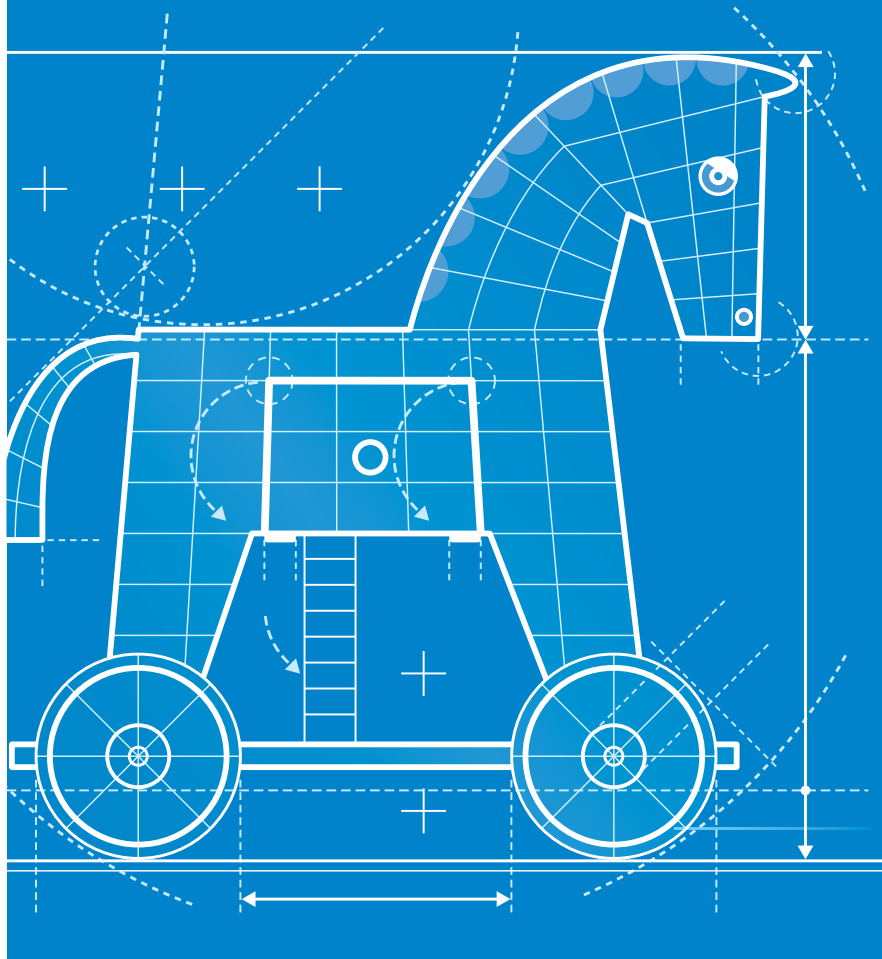
Just like Troy and the Trojan Horse, sometimes our biggest governance threats come from inside our own organizations.

Whether it is a staff member telling tales to an elected official on the sly and intentionally undermining the manager, a disgruntled employee leaking information to the media, or even an outright "him or me!" showdown with a key department head, it can be exceedingly difficult to stay focused on achieving council outcomes when managers are simply trying to survive the onslaught from their own team.

These situations are equally distracting for elected officials. Even when they have a genuine desire to govern well, pressures from the public and the media make it hard to stay in their policy role.

A Political Firestorm

An accomplished and seasoned manager who only recently had been appointed in a community called me for advice on a difficult situation. After months of subtle insubordination based on a perception that the manager was not as supportive of one department as desired, the longtime and "homegrown" police chief had thrown down the gauntlet: "Either the city manager goes, or I do," was the ultimatum to the city commission.

With an agenda item posted to discuss the employment of the city manager, the chief showed up with essentially the entire force dressed in their blues to plead his case. With many tense moments in the discussion, the council ultimately voted—by a majority of just one—to keep the manager.

After the meeting, however, one of the members who had voted in support of the manager resigned, citing "the pressures" of serving.

Subsequent to the meeting, the chief had gone to the mayor to ask for a different solution: Keep the city manager, but allow the chief to report directly to the mayor. The city charter seemed to allow for the arrangement in that the mayor had approval authority for the appointment of the chief, although the rationale was a bit tortured in that all administrative powers were vested in the manager. In such a political firestorm, obviously governance had seemingly taken a backseat to survival.

Support Matters

After checking that all of the interpersonal opportunities for resolution had been explored (they had!), the first thing I counseled was moral support—for the mayor. Fortunately for managers who avail themselves of it, the ICMA and state association networks are strong ones, and the manager felt well supported by colleagues.

The mayor, on the other hand, was certainly stuck in the middle, and without the professional support from other more seasoned elected officials might not see a clear path.

To accomplish this, we arranged to have lunch with a seasoned pro-

fessional colleague and his equally seasoned mayor from a community far enough away to be clearly impartial, but close enough to be similar. The conversation really focused on thinking beyond the urgency of the moment to the long-term future of the community.

If the mayor gave in to the pressure on this situation, which certainly was enticing in that it would solve the immediate problem, what would prevent the chief from making further, perhaps more aggressive demands in the future? If the balance of the manager's organization saw the effect of ultimatums, what would keep other staff from using the same tactic when they did not appreciate a managerial decision or direction?

If the manager is responsible by charter for "administration," what happens when the chief doesn't like a benefits or internal process change that affects the department?

By helping the mayor understand the negative ramifications of a quick fix and providing counsel from an elected veteran who had "been there and done that," sufficient breathing room was created for further dialogue. Using this approach also had the added value of demonstrating the regard for the manager within the professional community, as well as raising the stature of the manager with the mayor in the process.

By the way, I also tried to make sure the manager's spouse and family were doing okay; their emotions are often the collateral damage of what managers do and while intellectually they might grasp the situation, not being able to "do" anything about it does make their role very difficult.

Your Options

In a nutshell, here's what you can do if faced with an insubordinate situation:

- Make sure you have done all you can to resolve the conflict on an individual basis. Meeting challengers on their turf demonstrates your confidence and commitment to the community. New managers in new positions sometimes need a counselor or coach to help them through this stage.
- Make sure you remain professional at all times. Author Stephen Covey's adage of "loyalty to the absent" is especially important. If we engage in disparaging our protagonist, we create worry even among our supporters about what might be being said about them when they are not present.
- Make sure you are letting your colleagues know about your stress, and use them to think through solutions. While the neighboring communities' managers may be too close to share details with, it is a sign of strength, not weakness, to seek support and guidance from fellow professionals.
- Make sure you are listening to your spouse and children's words and body language and staying attuned to their needs. While managers have the ability to impact the situation—for good or for bad—family members are largely helpless and need empathy.
- Make sure you remain optimistic and focused on organizational outcomes even while dealing with the conflict. This demonstrates your commitment to the balance of the group and keeps staff from having to take sides.
- Be willing to help others learn through the process. Challenges faced and overcome increase the governance capacity for all. **PM**

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BY PATRICK IBARRA

TALENT DEVELOPMENT

Improving personal and workplace performance

You've read the statistics. Each day, 10,000 people turn 65 years of age. According to the Pew Research Center, for the first time, millennials now outnumber baby boomers in the workplace 76 million to 75 million, and they will make up 75 percent of the workforce by 2025.

Based on a 2015 study by the Society for Human Resource Management, the top future human capital challenge is developing the next generation of organizational leaders. Needless to say, the business-as-usual approach to building the public sector workforce is no longer relevant.

Turbulence surrounds both today's workforce and workplace, especially in local government. In particular, the aging workforce is creating unprecedented impacts on how leaders attract top candidates, develop their "bench," and retain the organization's tacit knowledge before it departs, accompanied by the career management and development methods being used by individuals climbing the ladder of success. Note: Career ladders are so twentieth century! The new concept is a career lattice.

Setting Forth Goals

Welcome to the inaugural article for the new, quarterly Career Track department in *PM. Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines career as "a field for or pursuit of consecutive progressive achievement especially in public, professional, or business life." It defines track as "the course along which something moves or progresses."

The department's purpose, using these definitions, is to provide tips, tools, and techniques to individuals on navigating their careers successfully. It will also provide information to leaders and managers on how to more effectively attract, keep, and grow the talent of their local government staff—building the bench, as it were.

This article focuses on efforts relating to career development. First, here are my recommendations to individuals seeking to advance their careers:

Assemble a career board of directors. Assemble a group of your most trusted advisers to be members of your career board of directors. The people you choose should help you raise your level of self-awareness so their candor and possibly bluntness should be appreciated.

Navigating one's career can be a series of non-linear steps, but the key is that an upward trajectory is always achieved. A personal board of directors can be of great benefit to those young and even not-so-young professionals.

Strengthen your personal brand. Specifically, your brand is your reputation. A personal brand must highlight your distinctive strengths, yet must not be too self-promotional, which is an all-too-common error.

Your brand must make you a team player who unquestionably adds value to your current employer while concurrently allowing your evolution effortlessly into the next one. The focus should be on developing yourself, not promoting yourself.

So be watchful in strengthening your personal brand, while participating in focused development and learning activities that are designed to enhance your skills and capabilities.

To managers and leaders of organizations, here are a few tips:

Assess your hiring practices. According to the Center for State and Local Government Excellence, the International Public Management Association for Human Resources, and the National Association of State Personnel Executives, state and local governments are reporting an increase in hiring for the second consecutive year.

A resulting question is: How suitable are your local government processes to attract and recruit talent for your organization? An applicant-tracking system is the minimum threshold to compete for talent, as is using Facebook to post job openings. If you're not actively using social media to increase awareness of your organization as an employer of choice, you're missing out on top recruits.

Explore new leadership development strategies. It's an oversimplification to believe that current approaches for developing leaders will work for millennials because they won't.

Countless organizations are trying to improve their leadership pipelines, but for a number of reasons are coming up short. In particular, organizations are having problems finding individuals with leadership skills. Why? Millennials' development experience has sharpened their ability to form and maintain a peer network, but it hasn't necessarily honed the skills to be a boss.

Toward Improved Performance

As an author and a management adviser, I am determined to help quell the turbulence of disruptive change and convert the headwinds of change into a tailwind, enabling individuals to accelerate their career progress and organizational leaders to build an even stronger workforce, all resulting in improved performance.

Don't hesitate to e-mail your questions concerning career development and talent management to me at patrick@gettingbetterallthetime.com. **PM**

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BY CLAY PEARSON

UK DEVOLVED POWER

It's tame compared with U.S. local freedoms

I've served in professional local government management for 25 years. As the current city manager in Pearland, Texas, and previously Novi, Michigan, I constantly learn from private and public sector examples. Learning has included broad observations around the world, from Wellington to Cardiff to Sendai to Yangzhou.

I want to share what I learned while attending the United Kingdom's (UK) local government executives symposium sponsored by the *Local Government Chronicle* in October 2015.

From colleagues and my own reading, I learned the UK is more highly centralized than anywhere I have seen. Local officials have so little say in the delivery of services and the mix of revenue and expenditures. The national government is busy looking at the cells in the leaves, let alone the trees in the forest.

In each UK city, local authorities have 10 times the number of elected officials than in the United States. UK councilors are elected with party labels. We prefer in the U.S. to think that water mains and roads do not care whether their recipients are Republicans or Democrats; local elected officials here are seldom elected with party affiliations.

The more I learn about the latest UK devolution agenda, the more tame it all sounds. Devolution involves the transfer of control and administration of local government services from the national government headquartered in London to communities where the services are provided and consumed.

There are fears over a "postal lottery" developing around healthcare under devolution. In the UK, however, this phrase is used to deny local officials the freedom to match housing, transit, and public safety considerations to local people.

In Michigan, we relied on the local property tax for half of our revenue and on state transfers for a quarter. Our seven nonpartisan elected officials set the local property tax rate. They did not go mad with a rate too high or low, as they knew the community and faced their neighbors at the grocery store. There were variances between communities, but each was tuned to local needs.

Throughout most of the U.S., local jurisdictions set their own budgets and can issue their own debt. That power to enter into long-term debt is largely successful in providing for long-term capital projects.

Texas is dynamic and "can-do." Local governments there are almost entirely reliant on local resources. We see the fruits of our labors and must make up for local errors. The errors, however, are far fewer than they would be if there were strictures on us from Austin, Texas, or Washington, D.C.

We have a good mix in our local governments for the responsibilities. Child welfare, for example, is directed uniformly and professionally at the state level. Our local officials know the community and provide the policy oversight, allowing professional administrators to work with their teams of police, fire, public works, libraries, and parks.

We love the UK's people and places. The variety is something to embrace and embolden. **PM**

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BY SCOTT MITNICK

AN EDUCATION ON DEVOLUTION

Ryan Eggleston, township manager, South Fayette, Pennsylvania, and I were honored to represent ICMA at the 2015 *Local Government Chronicle* symposium held in Bournemouth, England, October 7–9. The main topic of the three-day event was devolution or the transfer of municipal services from national to local control.

What was interesting about learning of this major undertaking is how this topic has come full circle since I was a student at Bristol University more than 25 years ago. The challenge going forward will be to what extent London will provide local government access to revenues needed to provide the services that are being pushed back to local authorities.

The UK had highly decentralized local authorities decades ago, and then changed to the point where it is now— one of the most centralized government structures in all of Europe. One of the summit speakers had a great quote: "The English want the social services provided by the Scandinavian countries but are

only willing to pay taxes at the rates charged in the U.S."

Before attending the summit, I presented a guest lecture on "California Local Government" at Bristol University. The lecture concluded with a viewing of the ICMA Life, Well Run video and distribution of ICMA brochures.

The students were from different parts of the UK, Russia, and Asia. They were curious about how local government services are provided in America and asked thought-provoking questions. At first it felt strange to give a lecture at a university where I was once a student. By the end of the day, I was glad to have done so.

The politics (political science) department chair shared how most of the British public administration programs have been phased out during the past two decades. Apparently, there is a decreased appetite to teach public administration in the UK, as well as to train future leaders to manage in the strange, new world order of devolution that the British national government is promoting.

After the summit, I spent time with a former Bristol classmate who is now a London lawyer specializing in English devolution and related constitutional issues. Right before my visit, he participated in a BBC interview covering this very topic. As Clay's article points out, those of us outside of the UK are lucky we don't have to deal with these types of issues.

It will be interesting to watch the structure of British local government change and evolve over the next decade. While this is creating stress and uncertainty for our counterparts in the UK, it may end up providing unexpected opportunities for the next generation of local government managers. Time will tell. **PM**

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BY KAREN THORESON AND NIJAH FUDGE

ATTRACTING TALENT

Research recommends steps to take

Managers probably have had one of their most valued and tenured employees walk into their office to have "the talk." This conversation might have taken place due to retirement or because the employee was unhappy in his or her position, was offered higher pay elsewhere, or found a company that better fits future goals and aspirations.

Good for the staff person! Now what about you, as manager, and your local government organization? How might you recruit the next top talent who is the right fit for your organization?

What is the workforce of tomorrow looking for from an employer? Is your organization capable of recruiting and retaining the workforce of the future?

Key Organizational Changes

The Local Government Research Collaborative—a network of 20 local governments and universities from Canada and the United States—selected the Center for State and Local Government Excellence (SLGE) in Washington, D.C., to research the challenges local governments face when it comes to attracting the next generation of talent.

Known factors play into the sense of urgency on the topic, including the high rates of baby boomers retiring as well as increased competition from both nonprofit and private sectors.

The landscape, however, is complex because most local government organizations haven't changed, unlike the expectations that younger generations hold about government, workplace, and work/life balance.

Through researching the literature and surveying local government leaders, human resource experts, and the in-college potential workforce, the *Workforce of the Future* highlighted several conclusions in its executive summary:

- Reinvent human resources to become more flexible, nimble, creative, can-do, strategic, and staffed by skilled employees who champion people management issues and set the workforce agenda. The local government manager should be a key advocate for this transformation.
- Revamp such antiquated policies and practices as the old-fashioned job descriptions and titles or the process used to recruit new applicants to meet the needs and expectations of a changing workforce and to compete successfully in the talent race.
- Make government an employer of choice by building a brand that tells the great story of public service.
- Focus on talent management, leadership development, and succession planning to prepare for workforce transitions, build needed bench strength, and grow future leaders.
- Create a culture that values and engages employees in meaningful ways.
- Leverage technology data and automation to improve government operations and provide employees with the tools they need to be highly productive and successful.

Solutions in the Works

For some local government organizations, the mentioned recommendations may seem fairly difficult to implement, while others have already joined the talent race.

- **Dallas, Texas,** has begun reinventing human resources by creating a new automated employee self-service portal that has enhanced the traditional services of its HR department, including payroll and benefits.

  The new system can access policies and procedures and has the ability to update and print important personnel documents. It quickly connects staff to HR Service Center staff. Results include increased productivity and a reduction of labor cost.
- In order to improve bench strength in multilingualism, **Adams County, Colorado**, recently implemented a pilot program that included 100 licenses for the language-learning program Rosetta Stone, which sold out to employees in 45 seconds.

  With one of the largest Hispanic populations in the state, this program will inform the county about how to better support its bilingual residents while providing an employee benefit that was previously unavailable.
- With a focus on engaging employees, the **Tyler, Texas**, "After Action Team" was designed to address the seven lowest scoring topics indicated by Tyler's employee satisfaction and engagement survey. The survey recently yielded 88 percent feedback from staff, a record high for the organization.

  Once improvements recommended by the team were implemented by employee committees, the benchmark percentile mean score in several categories increased markedly: professional conduct, from 58 to 82; culture and climate, from 67 to 74; morale, from 58 to 65; management style from 63 to 69; and creativity, from 66 to 71.
- **Edmonton, Alberta**, is helping make local government an employer of choice by announcing job openings on Facebook, interacting with potential applicants through that platform, and coaching applicants on how to be competitive for a position.

  Becoming an employer of choice involves marketing government as a great place to work, along with using a branding strategy that defines the meaning and value the organization provides to potential employees. Edmonton uses its Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/CityofEdmontonJobs) to attract new

CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, THE RESEARCH REVEALED THAT THE NEXT GENERATION IS INTERESTED IN WORKING FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT DESPITE BUDGETARY CHALLENGES AND OUTDATED PRACTICES.

talent through a great branding strategy that has attracted 96,599 fans, including residents and people from across the county that now monitor the Facebook page for upcoming job opportunities.

Becoming an Employer of Choice

Contrary to popular belief, the research revealed that the next generation is interested in working for local government despite budgetary challenges and outdated practices. The study showed that the key aspirational factor in their interest to work for local government is the potential to make a difference in their communities.

Which leaves the question for local government employers: How can they create that experience for their future leaders? Will they enable flexibility as a trade-off for meeting clear goals and deadlines or purchase another time clock system to hound people about their timeliness?

Will they continue to reach out to folks who've had success in the field for 30-plus years to fill vacancies, or will they venture to trust the next 30-year-old to be the next leader? The choice needs to be made, and the clock is ticking.

Year by year, local governments will be faced with challenges of becoming an employer of choice at a time when local government services will continue to remain critical to residents.

Stafford, Virginia, after reviewing SLGE's draft report, did a simple internal study of its current workforce and found these staff demographics:

TRADITIONALISTS (born prior to 1946): 0.9%

BABY BOOMERS (born 1946 to 1964): 33%
GENERATION X (born 1965 to 1976): 28.9%
MILLENNIALS (born 1977 to1997): 37.2%

Whether your workforce matches theirs is not the point. The real point is to understand that you likely have candidates within your organization now who could help you modify outdated policies and procedures, expand opportunities for involvement on challenging projects, and spread the word that your organization is a great place to work. Getting HR leaders on board for this is critical, and if they can't, they need to get out of the way.

The Alliance for Innovation intends to walk the talk in the report with our membership. We will be sponsoring a series of "Workforce Wednesday" events during 2016 to encourage local government intergenerational conversations.

These talks, we hope, will open up a dialogue among staff on how the workplace can evolve to be more welcoming to younger employees while passing on the experiential wisdom of those who have been on the job for decades.

Read more on the recommendations and research provided at http://transformgov.org/en/research. **PM**

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BY DAVID BAUER

FUTURE ACCESS OF OLD INFORMATION

The issue of preservation

"The Digital Solution" article authored by Shaun Mulholland (November 2015 *PM*) on the use of computer records in Allenstown, New Hampshire, touches upon an important aspect of today's local government: the need to record current information for future use.

Preserving information is hardly contestable. We all need to keep information for future reference. The "how-to" answer to this age-old problem must deal with these six questions:

1. In what form shall the information be preserved?
2. Who will do the preservation?
3. Who will keep the information?

made in the earth, to notches on a stick, to pictures on cave walls, to clay tablets, to carvings on stone, to symbols on papyrus and then paper, and to microfilm. Followed by indentations on a hard disk, to electronic signals inside our own machine, and to what may be the latest development—"the cloud''—which is controlled by others. All of these forms have aspects both positive and negative, and all are subject to limits in answering the six points mentioned.

However the recordkeeping matter is settled, there may be universal agreement on the need for records since, as philosopher George Santayana

FORMS OF INFORMATION PRESERVATION TECHNOLOGY HAVE RANGED FROM MARKS MADE IN THE EARTH, TO NOTCHES ON A STICK, TO PICTURES ON CAVE WALLS, TO CLAY TABLETS, TO CARVINGS ON STONE, TO SYMBOLS ON PAPYRUS AND THEN PAPER, AND TO MICROFILM...

4. Who gets to look at the preserved information?
5. How long to keep the information?
6. How to dispose of the preserved information?

These are serious questions, bounded by custom, philosophy, law, and available technology. Each community must find answers that meet its own peculiar needs.

Forms of information preservation technology have ranged from marks

observed, "Those who do not know the past are doomed to repeat it."

With no good system of records, we will have to rely on the memory of "old timers" for the recollection of the past. The faults in that system, in my opinion, eventually led to the marks in the ground and on and on. **PM**

DAVID BAUER
Former Manager and
ICMA Life Member
New York, New York

AUTHOR'S RESPONSE

David points out a critical issue as we continue on our voyage of electronic recordkeeping. The answer to how long, in what format, and by whom public records will be retained is varied.

In some states, local government record retention is proscribed by law. In other jurisdictions, the issue is addressed in ordinances or bylaws. Yet in others, there are no regulations at all.

The question of what format will survive the test of time is a difficult one to answer. Some say the PDF format is international and recognized as the mainstay for ages to come.

I remember hearing that same sentiment about the floppy disk. Try to find a device to retrieve records from a floppy disk today. The ability to transform data from one format to another has advanced significantly since the floppy disk. Records that are needed for a relatively short period will be less susceptible to this issue.

Long-term recordkeeping for documents that must be kept forever perhaps should be kept in multiple formats to include paper. Even paper, however, does not last forever and is susceptible to destruction due to long-term deterioration or acute damage from fire or flood.

This is clearly an issue that must be addressed alongside our need to modernize and make more efficient the operations of local government. We cannot stop the hands of time. We have to embrace the need for change. Our residents will accept nothing less. **PM**

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HEALTH CARE COVERAGE ENROLLMENT FOR JUSTICE-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS

Counties spend $140 billion every year on their criminal justice and health care systems. On any given day, 731,000 people are in one of the more than 3,000 local jails, many of whom have physical and behavioral health issues and will repeatedly cycle in and out of incarceration. Jails are an opportune setting to connect eligible individuals with health care coverage, which may help stop this revolving door and save counties money while protecting public safety.

ACCESS TO TREATMENT IMPACTS PUBLIC SAFETY.

One study found that county jail inmates who received treatment for behavioral health disorders after release spent an average of 51.74 fewer days in jail per year than those who did not receive treatment.

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

	JAIL POPULATION	GENERAL POPULATION
SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER	64.2%	8.2%
MENTAL ILLNESS	64%	18.6%
SERIOUS MENTAL ILLNESS	16.6%	4.1%
CO-OCCURRING DISORDERS	48.7%	3.2%

CHRONIC HEALTH CONDITIONS

People in jail are more likely than the general population to have:

HYPERTENSION: **1.19X MORE LIKELY**

ASTHMA: **1.41X MORE LIKELY**

ARTHRITIS: **1.65X MORE LIKELY**

HEPATITIS: **2.57X MORE LIKELY**

CERVICAL CANCER: **4.16X MORE LIKELY**

60%
OF THE JAIL-INVOLVED POPULATION HAS INCOME LOW ENOUGH TO QUALIFY FOR EXPANDED MEDICAID PRIOR TO ARREST.

33%
QUALIFY FOR SUBSIDIZED HEALTH CARE INSURANCE THROUGH THE HEALTH INSURANCE MARKETPLACE.

BREAK THE CYCLE

Jails have the opportunity to break this cycle by providing health care enrollment, which greatly increases the likelihood of an individual accessing treatment and has been shown to reduce recidivism. For many individuals who are booked into jail, their experience looks something like this:

ARREST Nearly 75 percent of those in jail are detained for nonviolent traffic, property, drug or public order offenses.

BOOKED INTO JAIL The average length of stay in jail is 23 days.

RELEASE Individuals are often sent back into the community with little or no medication and no link or access to treatment they may need.

WHICH INDIVIDUALS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR MEDICAID ENROLLMENT?

How to Enroll Individuals in Jail
Eligibility determinations and enrollment in jail can occur during a person's pretrial stay or in anticipation release. Enrolling inmates pretrial may allow jails to bill Medicaid for a larger number of services provided under the inpatient exception. Jails can enlist the help of federally qualified community-based assisters or can have jail staff trained and certified as assisters.

Suspend, Don't Terminate
Suspension, rather than termination, of Medicaid coverage for detained individuals allows for quicker reinstatement of benefits when a person leaves jail and fewer challenges in obtaining mental health, addiction, or other health care services during the critical first months post-incarceration.

Use the Inpatient Exception
Generally, people become ineligible for Medicaid coverage when they are booked into jail, but the inpatient exception allows counties to seek Medicaid reimbursement for care provided to inmates who are treated for at least 24 hours in a medical institution outside of the jail.

Hudson County, New Jersey, estimates that it will save approximately $700,000 per year by taking advantage of the inpatient exception.

One county in **Minnesota** has saved $96,000 on a single inmate and a second Minnesota county has saved $500,000 since the ACA went into effect.

ICMA
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2016
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or check the January 1st edition of the ICMA Newsletter for more information.

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Thursday, March 10 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. PT

Building Civic Leadership and Community
Wednesday, April 13 | 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. PT

Ethics in Action
Thursday, May 19 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. PT

Successful Supervision and Leadership
Thursday, September 8 | 10:00 - 11:30 a.m. PT

Survival Skills for Managers
Thursday, October 20 | 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. PT

Succession Planning and Knowledge Transfer
Thursday, November 17 | 1:00 - 2:30 p.m. PT

Register now at:
icma.org/coachingwebinars