

Santa Clara County's
Center for Leadership and Transformation



Cover Letter Information

Case Study Title: Santa Clara County's Center for Leadership and Transformation

Jurisdiction Name: County of Santa Clara
California

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Synopsis

The Center for Leadership and Transformation (CLT) is a bold and innovative approach enabling employees to take the lead in organizational transformation. The CLT is a world-class leadership, innovation, and transformation program designed to give employees the opportunity and the tools to envision and implement change. The Center is helping the County achieve significant results through four primary initiatives: 1) *The Mid-Level Manager Program*, 2) *The Executive Manager Program at Stanford University*, 3) *Countywide Rapid Transformation efforts*, and 4) *A Collaborative Web Platform*.

Santa Clara County (SCC) is one the largest counties in the nation and home to some of the most innovative organizations in the world – Apple, Google, and Stanford University. Yet, faced with nearly a decade of budget deficits, perpetual funding shortfalls, and rapidly changing client demands, Santa Clara County, like many other local governments, had been unable to focus on a Countywide approach to innovation. In late 2009, facing a record \$250 million deficit, the Board and their County Executive, Dr. Jeffrey V. Smith, decided it was time to take on a new approach to addressing challenges, and create an environment that could embrace change.

The County aimed to focus on generating efficiencies and empowering SCC employees to eliminate unnecessary processes, where traditionally the focus was on fighting to save as many programs and services as possible in a deficit environment. A bold proposal for an innovative transformation program, one that would give employees the tools to adapt to changing conditions, reduce barriers to productivity, see new possibilities, and ultimately, reinvent a better future was approved by the County Board of Supervisors on March 2, 2010. The County is working in partnership with Dr. Behnam Tabrizi, Managing Director of Rapid Transformation, LLC and Stanford Consulting Professor for over 15 years. Through this collaboration, the Center for Leadership and Transformation (CLT) was born.

To begin this process, County Executive Smith invited the County Employees Management Association (CEMA), a bargaining unit representing middle managers, to solicit interest in the CLT Mid-Level Manager Program from its membership. Ultimately, two groups of thirty middle level managers – largely from Ambulatory Care, Information Technology, and the Social Services Agency – were chosen to participate in the program in May and June of 2010. These two groups completed the program on June 25, 2010, and August 3, 2010, respectively. From these two groups, ten innovative projects have emerged estimated to generate \$25 million in productivity savings for the County. These are conservative estimates; actual productivity gains could be even more dramatic once implemented.

The Mid-Level Manager Program is an action learning curriculum designed to not only introduce middle level managers to the latest thinking in innovation and transformation, but also engage the middle level managers in collaborating across organizational, departmental, and hierarchical boundaries to tackle pressing challenges faced by the County. Once a class of thirty middle managers has been chosen from interested parties, the class participates in 3 days of training about leadership, creativity, and transformation. During the 3 day period, the class divides into 5 – 6 teams to work together on an action learning project which is of benefit to either the County as a whole, or to a County Department with a specific client focus. Please see page 8 for a table of the projects. Elements of the training which make it unique are:

- Teams are working across Departmental, job class, and functional boundaries on a project of mutual interest.
- Knowledge across these boundaries is leveraged for the benefit of the action learning project. For example, employees providing medical care worked directly with hospital information technology staff on the electronic medical records and population health management projects.
- After the initial training, teams are able to use what they have learned immediately, continuing to meet as a group to prepare two presentations: one to the County Executive approximately 3 weeks following the training, and another more formal presentation 4 weeks after that to the County Executive, Department Heads, and identified stakeholders for all of the projects. In between the two presentations, class members receive a coaching session from Professor Tabrizi and the Budget Director to refine their presentation.
- Repeated access on the part of team members to the County Executive, Department Heads and other County leaders who are necessary in the envisioning and execution of innovative projects and cultural changes.

The experience of preparing a presentation acts as the glue by which a project concept is more fully fleshed out, and specific actionable steps are identified. In addition, the teams continue to work together with allies they need to achieve a successful outcome and create buy-in for their project plan. The combination of well-thought-out plans, enthusiasm on the part of employees, and linkage to executives creates the synergy necessary for the creation of new initiatives which can be the foundation for a new model of government. In this model, even as clients are served, employees are valued and engaged, elected officials are satisfied, and resources are well-managed.

By early November of this year, two more Mid-Level Manager programs that will include participants who will either integrate into existing projects or generate new initiatives, are planned.

The Executive Manager Program provides 55 executives with a 4-day customized program at Stanford University to cultivate comprehensive cultural change by introducing world class tools and skills on leadership, cross boundary collaboration, innovation, empowerment, and transformation. During the program, executives will develop a plan for carrying on the success of the projects started by middle level managers and will launch a countywide *Rapid Transformation process*¹ focusing on the information technology (IT) function. *Rapid Transformation* is a process that espouses the same principles of the CLT. It fosters change through thought leaders in the organization by creating a new senior executive governance structure which oversees and directs transformative changes through cross functional rapid response teams.

Finally, a *collaborative web platform* has been designed and developed to promote transparency, communication, and collaboration. It aims to inspire future transformation efforts by showcasing inspiring County initiatives and to enable cross-boundary communication via the latest web 2.0 technologies. On July 1, 2010, 60 pilot participants were invited to join and provide feedback on the platform. In September 2010, the platform will launch internally to the County. In the future, the site will feature a digital learning environment enabling employees to

¹ For more information about the Rapid Transformation process, please visit:
<http://www.rapidtransformation.com>

gain access to the tools to create change. The goal is to provide public access to the platform once the employee platform is established.

Mid-Level Manager Program

Anticipated and Actual Outcomes

Sixty Santa Clara County Managers have completed the Mid-Level Manager Program and in an evaluation survey conducted at the closing session, the training received an impressive 4.9/5.0 rating. Upon completing the program, one Manager shared: “Being involved in CLT training is one of the best training programs I’ve ever attended. The program gives you the tools to initiate change and really opens up your creative side to improve your work area.” As shown on the table on page 8, there are many concrete outcomes that the teams are driving toward at this time.

Executive Manager Program

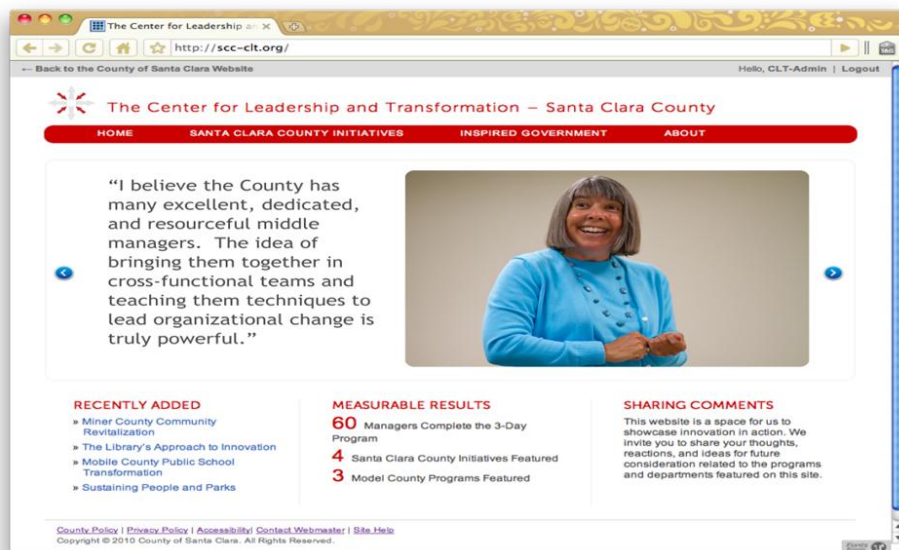
County Executive Smith envisions the role of executive managers to be that of the visionaries who enable middle managers to execute the vision for their Departments. At the Executive Manager Program, executives spend 4 days together, learning about state of the art tools on fostering innovation and planning, and executing transformation. Courses are taught by leading professors within 20 miles of the County headquarters. The opportunity for a group of executives to be together in an environment free of the day-to-day pressures of operating a Department, where they can focus on innovation, is designed to be a stimulating and refreshing experience that can reinvigorate the executive workforce.

Anticipated Outcomes

Fifty five Santa Clara County Executive Managers are scheduled to attend the first Executive Manager Program on August 17-18 and August 30-31, 2010 at Stanford University. The program will launch with a keynote by the Stanford Provost discussing recent health care and staffing transformations at Stanford University, followed by County Executive Smith presenting his vision for the CLT. The morning includes segments on why transformation efforts fail and how to successfully plan and lead transformation efforts, and the afternoon consists of a middle level manager presenting cross-boundary pain points her team discovered while working on her CLT project. This is followed by executive teams suggesting innovative ways they can collaborate to transform the County’s information technology function. The second day focuses on leadership and innovation, the third day on execution, and the fourth and final day on the direct transfer of knowledge back to the County. Executives who complete the program will receive a certificate of completion.

Collaborative Web Platform

The Center for Leadership and Transformation web initiative is aimed at creating a collaborative tool that facilitates cross-boundary communication and transparency, and inspires innovation and execution. On this site, Santa Clara County employees will be able to connect with CLT and other initiatives, read about their colleagues’ projects, engage in dialogue, and contribute ideas for future articles. The “Inspired Government” section also showcases model County programs outside of Santa Clara County to present how other counties are tackling similar issues. Below is a screenshot of the platform homepage:



Anticipated and Actual Results

The 60 middle level managers who completed the Mid-Level Manager Program have been invited to provide feedback on the platform and are offering testimonials about their experiences. In September, the platform will launch internally to Santa Clara County employees. Future plans are to make the platform available to the public.

Obstacles, Results Achieved, and Unexpected Consequences

- Following the Mid-Level Manager Program held in May, demand for the program exceeded our expectations, and plans for FY 2011 were modified to reduce the emphasis on Countywide Rapid Transformation efforts and add additional Mid-Level Manager Programs.
- The approach to inviting CEMA to solicit CLT middle managers to attend the May and June classes was met with disapproval by some executives, who might have preferred to recommend the class members. However, the goodwill generated with middle managers as a result exceeded the concerns that executives had that they had not been included in the initial class formation.
- The County's underlying information technology architecture does not allow for Countywide universal access to information. Up to this point, the County has been working around its fractured architecture, but that now stands in the way of achieving the desired results of the CLT. Improving our underlying information technology is an even higher priority than it had been prior to the start of the CLT.

The CLT principles of encouraging employees, equipping them with methods and processes to lead change, empowering them to suggest and participate in innovative, actionable solutions works as well for a Department-specific initiative as well as for Countywide transformation. The principles and lessons can be applied to both macro and micro change in the organization.

Presentation Components

1. Innovation/Creativity

How did the program/project/service, etc. improve the organization?

The Center for Leadership and Transformation is creating a workforce that is inspired, empowered, and invested in reinventing the future of Santa Clara County. One participant of the Mid-Level Manager Program shares,

“Working with colleagues and contributing meaningfully on exciting, potentially transformational County projects in such a short time has made me feel very hopeful again about the possibilities ahead in the County. I recommended others jump in and be counted. The feedback from everyone is so encouraging, and the enthusiasm is so contagious.”

This program is helping middle level managers build a network of colleagues across the organization. Through the ten innovative projects, middle level managers are showcasing their talents and capabilities to Department Heads and the County Executive, raising awareness of the dedication and creativity of the organization. By collaborating on tangible projects that are targeted toward organizational improvement, employees get a renewed sense of what a difference their efforts can make. The teams act as a resource pool for “injection” into project implementation, leveraging existing employees within the organization for projects that might have previously taken longer to implement or required the hiring of a consultant. Thus far, the ten teams have identified potential expenditure savings and productivity/efficiency savings that exceed \$20 million.

Over the next few weeks, the Executive Manager Program will lead to similar outcomes among executive managers. We expect the all-encompassing Information Technology Rapid Transformation effort launched by these executives to save the county millions of dollars.

The longer term expected outcomes of the CLT are a more innovative mindset Countywide, a more resilient County, improved client outcomes, and a new appreciation of the ability to work across Departments and management/employee lines.

Were new technologies used? If yes, what methods and/or applications did you implement?

Yes. The website platform is built on Wordpress, the most popular blogging software in use today, and utilizes the latest web 2.0 technologies, including RSS feeds and Slideshare. When the platform goes public, we will utilize social media tools, such as Facebook and Twitter, to broadcast web content to this larger audience and encourage wider community participation.

Was a private consultant used? If yes, describe their involvement; and identify the consultant and/or firm, including contact information.

Yes. Dr. Behnam Tabrizi and Jacqueline del Castillo of Rapid Transformation, LLC have been collaborating on all efforts with County staff. Their contact information is included in the Cover Sheet Information.

2. Outcomes Achieved

What customer/community needs and expectations were identified and fulfilled?

The primary client/customer groups that are, or will be, impacted in a positive manner by the *Case Study Application: Santa Clara County’s Center for Leadership and Transformation*

CLT team projects are shown in the table below:

Project Name – Primary Purpose	Desired Results
<u>Improve implementation of electronic medical records system (ELMR).</u>	▪ Shorten clinic wait times, aiming for a 45 minute experience from start to finish ▪ Positive interaction with MDs who will have patient information at their fingertips ▪ Increased patient revenue of between \$1 and \$2 million.
<u>Population Health Management System Team</u> , Unite previously unintegrated aspects of the outpatient clinic and hospital systems, combining direct patient care staff and information technology staff to work together on a large scale data warehouse and patient data improvement project.	▪ Provide MDs with useful information for patients ▪ Increased outreach to patients ▪ Greater incidence of preventive/ maintenance care and improvement of chronic disease conditions.
<u>“SCC 2” – Santa Clara County Squared</u> – information technology staff from a variety of departments working together for Standardization, Consolidation, and Centralization. <u>“iAccess Team”</u> - Improving Client Access to County Service on the Internet <u>“E-PEA Team”</u> – Improving the employee portal to create efficiencies and improve communication inside the County organization	▪ By leveraging buying power, over \$217,000 could be saved in software licensing costs, in 2 pilot examples. ▪ Potential consolidation of hardware servers, at a 10% savings, could save \$1.34 million. ▪ Web portal modifications could ease the search for County services ▪ Revamping both employee portal and County internet portal could result in productivity savings of over \$20 million.
<u>Rapid Assistance Program</u> - Improve Access to Food and Healthcare Benefits by providing access electronically, by modifying work processes to focus on quick benefit processing, and by offering benefits application services at community-based organizations.	▪ Deliver benefits in 24 hours, reducing current waiting time of between 1 – 3 weeks. ▪ Increase number of people who successfully receive benefits for food stamps and health care in a timely manner ▪ Increase satisfaction of employees working with clients
<u>Employee Recognition</u> – this group has surveyed all County employees and received over a 10% response rate, along with many comments amazed that their opinions were being sought.	▪ Ensure that employees are recognized for their contributions, and increase the likelihood that they feel valued ▪ Happier employees are more productive and provide improved service
<u>Streamline Process for Hiring Temporary Employees.</u> Save money by creating a process by which temporary employees who have been trained may become permanent.	▪ Reduce “churn,” training time, and increase morale. ▪ Productivity savings of \$1.4 - \$4.1 million
<u>Rapid Action Force.</u> Create a process for submission of creative ideas to the County Executive with by employees who are interested in participating in a specific change effort.	▪ Increase employee involvement ▪ Leverage the time of interested employees who want to learn new skills in the service of positive organizational change ▪ Utilize CLT web platform for idea exchange

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With clients, mandates, and funding streams constantly changing, Santa Clara County needs to build adaptability at every level of the organization, from the individual employee to the executive. Employees must have the ability to lead and manage change while continuing to meet client demands and executing on their current commitments. The Center for Leadership and Transformation, through the Mid-Level Manager and Executive Manager Programs, is giving middle level managers and executives the management tools to envision and execute on change initiatives. Going into the future, the collaborative web platform will future a digital learning environment such that every employee has access to materials on leadership, innovation, and transformation.

Current web technologies are changing the way people communicate and have tremendous opportunity to break down communication barriers across a large and complex County system. Currently, County employees operate within department silos, and there is a lack of cross-departmental communication and collaboration. The CLT projects and the collaborative web platform are designed to foster communication across these departments.

Has service delivery been enhanced?

Two of the ten projects that sprung out of the Mid-Level Manager Programs are actively working on a project to streamline the application process for Food Stamps and Medi-Cal. Each of the remaining eight projects is in various stages of development, having begun in May and June 2010, respectively. The County Budget Director is meeting with each team to ensure that progress is made, and that roadblocks are addressed. Service delivery in the health, online, and employee satisfaction areas is expected to increase during the course of FY 2011 as work continues on these projects.

Did the initiative improve access to your government? If yes, how?

Yes. Access to government will increase as the various projects advance. Access to benefits, improved health care, and online delivery of service information are the primary benefits being worked on at this time. The Rapid Transformation effort planned for information technology is also anticipated to improve access to County government.

Launching the web platform to the public sphere will enable dialogue between Santa Clara County employees and residents. Residents will be able to read about current county initiatives and contribute their opinions and knowledge.

Has the health of the community improved as a result? If yes, how?

Yes. In general, a more empowered and inspired workforce leads to a healthier community. More specifically, one project that sprung out of the Mid-Level Manager Program is aiming to implement a patient registry within local clinics that would enable doctors to provide a higher level of care to patients.

Next month, nurses are among those attending the Mid-Level Manager Program. From their CLT team projects, we expect significant efficiencies, productivity improvements and reduced costs of healthcare.

3. Applicable Results and Real World Practicality

What practical applications could you share if selected?

We can share best practices for:

- Designing and implementing a world-class leadership development program for middle

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- level managers and executives of local counties
- Launching innovative change projects that cut across organizational, departmental and hierarchical boundaries
- Designing, piloting, and launching a web platform that fosters transparency and communication and inspires employees to lead change

How applicable is the project/program/service to other local governments?

The structure, process and content of our Center for Leadership and Transformation is suitable to all local governments who are interested in transformation and in unleashing the innovative power of their workforce.

What results/outcomes will you be able to share?

By next June, we will be able share the following results:

- Stories of middle level managers and executive managers utilizing the knowledge and tools presented during the Mid-Level Manager and Executive Manager programs
- The outcomes of the innovative projects started during the Mid-Level Manager Programs. Ten projects are currently underway and additional projects will begin during two additional Mid-Level Manager Programs scheduled for this fall
- The outcome of the Executive Program at Stanford and the all-encompassing Rapid Transformation in IT.
- Level of employee engagement on the collaborative web platform which is scheduled to launch internally to ~15,000 Santa Clara County employees in September of 2010

Please include any performance measures if applicable.

Performance measures include:

- Mid-Level Manager and Executive Manager Programs
 - Number of participants completing the Mid-Level Manager and Executive Manager programs
 - Post evaluation survey for mid-level managers and executives to rate their satisfaction with the CLT program on a scale of 1 to 5
 - The number of middle manager projects that gain Executive sponsorship
 - Cost savings, productivity gains, and improved quality of service across all initiatives including the Rapid Transformation effort focused on information technology.
- Collaborative Web Platform
 - Number of Santa Clara County Initiatives and Inspired Government case studies posted to the site
 - Web analytics measures, including number of site visitors per month, percentage of new visitors over time, number of pageviews per month, average time spent on the platform, number of comments contributed per month, and increase in the number of comments contributed over time.

4. Case Study Presentation

Briefly describe what your case study presentation might include.

Our case study presentation will include:

- A PowerPoint presentation overview of the CLT goals, program design, key results and outcomes, and lessons learned as well as best practices for designing and launching a collaborative, county web platform
- Video presentation of one successful initiative
- Live demonstration of the collaborative web platform