



## City of Tigard Memorandum

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**To:** Brandi Allen, Conferences & Education Director  
Alliance for Innovation

**From:** Sandy Zodrow, Human Resources Director

**Re:** Case Study Application

**Date:** August 13, 2010

Dear Ms. Allen

Attached please find our Case Study Application materials that we are submitting regarding our Values Integration Program here at the City of Tigard, Oregon.

We appreciate the opportunity to share our experiences and look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you

# City of Tigard, Oregon

## Case Study Application

August 13, 2010

### Synopsis

#### Intent of the Project:

A couple of years ago the City of Tigard embarked on a 20 year Comprehensive Plan to implement a bold vision around creating a Complete (or ideal) Community. To reach this vision, the City needed to align its resources and activities, especially the people that will make it a reality. By ensuring that the organization and culture of the City is aligned to the vision and strategies, the City determined that it would be able to move the organization toward its desired end state.

As part of this effort, the Executive Staff team got together to discuss what that Complete Community would look like – a place that had true commitment to excellence, the community and its employees. The City Council also spearheaded an effort to give Tigard its own unique identity. As a result, the City chose the tag line of “A Place to Call Home”.

The City worked with the Coraggio Group from Portland, Oregon, to identify several “reputational values” that it needed employees to embrace in order for the vision to become real and to be considered a place to call home. The objective was to bring the reputational values to life within the organization by ensuring that employees understood and operated by these values, and to incorporate them in the daily work so that they would significantly impact hiring decisions, performance management tools and recognition.

Specifically, the city identified three reputational values that they felt would leave people with the belief that we are always looking for ways to help. They are:

- Respect and Care – for each other and the residents of the City
- Do the Right Thing – look for solutions
- Get It Done – go the extra mile, help the residents and each other to succeed

In order to pave the way for the city wide launch of the reputational values, it was suggested that we identify a department within the organization to pilot an implementation program. The Public Works Department volunteered to pilot a process that would bring the values to life in their department. Their plan was to anchor the values in a way that resonated with Public Works employees. A team of Public Works employees worked for 4 months and:

- ✓ Identified ways to keep everyone focused on the values
- ✓ Developed a way to explain and define the values
- ✓ Determined specific behaviors that reflect the values
- ✓ Developed a framework to acknowledge and give recognition to employees who demonstrate the values

Based on the positive feedback on this pilot, the city launched a city wide integration of the reputational values for every remaining department. Each department spent 3-4 months determining

how to reinforce the behaviors of getting it done, doing the right thing and caring and respecting each other in a way that was meaningful to their hiring decisions, performance management and recognition activities. The final step in the process was to appoint a long term, cross department values team. Their role is to make continuous improvements to the program so that it stays fresh, current and relevant. They are also the voice for the employees to leadership regarding how well the change is taking hold.

A survey was created to measure qualitative feedback related to the impact of this program, and this will be distributed to each department periodically.

### Anticipated and Actual Outcomes

The values are serving to align expectations and performance within the organization, and to help create a culture of respect and accountability.

For example, Tigard has established 13 Neighborhood Network Sites on the City's web page. One citizen within the designated neighborhood serves as the site administrator. The city provides the site with information relevant to issues that are impacting their specific neighborhood. Because of the city values, we are more thoughtful about things that the city does that affects people in their daily life, whether that be a road closure or an upcoming parade in their neighborhood. These Neighborhood sites are another vehicle for respecting, caring and getting it done for our citizens.

Strengthening cross department collaboration and treating people with respect has helped each other succeed. When we recently completed a department reorganization that focused on performance and productivity, it was done so as to bring employees along with the process, to keep them informed and to respect their concerns. The result was that employees were supportive and the values of the city were reinforced.

### Costs/Savings

This effort spanned the course of approximately 2 years and engaged the services of a private consultant to achieve. Costs included interviews, focus groups, facilitated planning meetings with leadership, facilitated department developmental planning, employee meetings, surveys, and other related activities. Costs were approximately \$90,000 for the project.

### Identify Innovative Characteristics

We do not believe that many public sector employers are trying to change their culture as a way to bring about positive improvement to efficiency, service to citizens and productivity. We think that the consistent application of our values will be what differentiates and sustains the loyalty and support of our citizens. We also believe that our employees are more involved and the entire organization is making a strong connection to the values in the work that they do every day.

### Obstacles and Results Achieved

Engagement like this doesn't happen organically. Getting employees to truly connect to the city, its values and its goals required leadership's deliberate effort and a well laid out plan. Values are important bellwethers for organizations. They help employees understand what is important in the

workplace, but you can't perform a value. So, the city helped the employees translate the values into the core behaviors that are necessary to "live" these values.

Nonetheless, some employees viewed the Values Integration project skeptically. They felt that this was just "another flavor-of-the-month" idea, and they doubted management's commitment and follow through. The cost of the project was an issue for some, especially since the city was experiencing some budget cutbacks during part of the project timeline.

As part of the project evaluation, each department will participate in an employee survey to measure the results of the Values Integration effort. The first of these surveys was recently completed for the Public Works Department. Approximately 96% of the department employees feel that they are more aware of the City values because of this project. Eighty three percent have seen some change in the behaviors of their coworkers as a result of the program. Approximately 52% have seen some change to a significant change in their group's ability to work together since the program. And 83% of the Public Works Department employees feel that they are more likely to formally recognize individuals from other departments.

#### Any New Issues/Problems Encountered

The City really didn't encounter any problems in implementing the project. We did find a few cases where communication needed improvement, more specifically between leadership, and that was assisted through executive coaching and facilitated small group discussions.

### **Presentation Components**

#### Innovation/Creativity

The Values Integration project unleashed the creativity of a large number of the city employees. Because the teams in each department were asked to interpret how the values should come to life within their specific culture and persuade others in their organization to change their behavior, we saw many unique, employee designed ideas take shape. Some of these include:

- Tigard Innovates—a program designed by one of the employees in the risk department, allows each employee to use up to 5% of their week to work on a project that they believe will improve the city. Employees are permitted to focus on issues inside or outside their departments. This demonstrates the "get it done" value
- Plans for a community garden—this idea embraces the "respect and care" value. The garden is designed to bring all the employees from all over the city together to grow vegetables in their spare time. The food would then be donated to needy families in the city. Employees from all departments would get to know each other as they worked together on this. Moreover, the employees will reach out to the community when they donated the food.
- Public Works Kudos – the kudos program reinforces the "do the right thing" value. The design team in Public Works wanted to ensure that people were rewarded for doing the right thing without being directed to do so by their supervisors. They believed that this would

help the behavior change “stick”. They built an automated **peer** rewards program they called Kudos. Employees can go to the on-line tool and recommend a kudos for a fellow worker who they saw doing something “above and beyond”. The kudos are reviewed by the head of the department and if approved, the employee receives a notification electronically. Points can be redeemed for items as small as a 7-11 gift card and as large as payment for external classes/training.

The City of Tigard worked with the Coraggio Group, a strategy and organizational change consulting firm in Portland, Oregon. [www.coraggiogroup.com](http://www.coraggiogroup.com); 503-493-1452. Linda Lucas and Ellen Raim of the Coraggio Group worked tirelessly with the City to provide guidance and support throughout the span of the project.

### Outcomes Achieved

The three values have taken hold so well in the City of Tigard that we see marked behavior change. Not only can all the employees identify the values, they are speaking about them and acting in accordance with them daily. Here are some examples of what we see happening:

- **Ring Returned**—An employee in Public Works thought he saw a diamond engagement ring when cleaning a sewer line. Even though it meant digging through the muck, he told us that he knew he needed to “do the right thing” by retrieving it. He turned it in to his manager who let the public know the ring was found. This incident was featured on national news and the reporter remarked that the employee had gone above and beyond.
- **Finding the Paycheck**—An employee in the library, following the value of do the right thing, took extra measures to help a patron. A library patron called the front desk in a panic because he was using his paycheck as a bookmark and returned the book with the paycheck still in it. One of the library workers, rather than merely telling the man that they would call him if they found it in their regular course of work, took it upon himself to find the check as quickly as possible. He took every book that had been returned that day and went through them twice before he found the check. When he did, he called the patron who was extremely grateful.
- **Tying reviews and hiring decisions to the values**—The city has incorporated the values into every aspect of employee life. In annual reviews, managers are now asked to discuss how well the employee has demonstrated the values each year. In addition, hiring managers were taught how to do behavioral interviewing so that they can learn whether applicants have demonstrated the values in previous roles. The belief is that if someone has “done the right thing”, respected and cared, and gotten it done” in their former roles, they will show those behaviors in a new role in Tigard

In addition to the examples above, the city is surveying each department 6-12 months after their program rollout. The Public Works group survey results (the only results available at this time) show that 83% of the respondents felt that the behaviors of their coworkers toward other city employees had changed for the better. 61% said they saw a change in the way the employees were treating and interacting with the public.

We feel that the city is closer to what our Complete Community vision and concepts are and that we better understand how our work fits into the needs of our community. Our organization has made strides in getting beyond “no” and we are more approachable to our customers. Our staff are more proactive and solution oriented; we find other ways to get things done. Employees are taking the time to recognize one another through the various department recognition programs and thank you cards available throughout the workplace. And all hiring authorities have been trained in behavioral interviewing using a template of questions that are anchored to and hire to the reputational values.

#### Applicable Results and Real World Practicality

We previously talked about the surveys that will help evaluate the effectiveness of our program, and the results/outcomes that have been achieved to date. Many of our recognition programs that were developed for each department such as the Kudo’s, Shining Stars, Rave Reviews, Bright Spots, etc. are easily applicable to other organizations, public or private. Incorporating the values into the performance management tool was a simple way of reinforcing these into the annual performance review. And establishing a format of behavioral interviewing questions that seek out those qualities in job applicants which best exemplify our city values will help transform our organization into a workforce that does the right thing, gets it done, and respects and cares.

#### Case Study Presentation

If we were to make a case study presentation, it would most probably include a PowerPoint presentation.