

Increasing the Odds of City/County Manager Success: Lessons From Cal-ICMA Survival Skill Project



ICMA 2016 | SEPT 25-28

KANSAS CITY

102nd ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Presenters

- Kevin Duggan: ICMA West Coast Regional Director
- Jane Brautigam: City Manager, Boulder Colorado, ICMA Board Member
- Magda Gonzalez: City Manger, Half Moon Bay, California
- Carl Swenson: City Manager, Peoria, Arizona
- Ryan Waller: City Manager, Indianola, Iowa

Have You Ever....

- Found Yourself in the Middle of a Dispute Between Members of Your Governing Board?
- Worked With Elected Officials Who Didn't Understand Your Role vs. Their Role?
- Had Difficulty Getting Your Council to Set Service and Project Priorities?



Purpose of Study

- Identify the Key Issues Impacting City/County Manager Success
- Identify Successful Strategies/Best Practices
- Determine How to Add Resources/Improve Accessibility to Resources
- Identify Short and Long Term Implementation Strategies

Methodology

- Survey Monkey Distributed to All City and County Managers in CA (Approx. 500)
- Series of 8 Focus Groups Throughout the State (75 total participants)

Major Findings

- Councilmembers Who Interfere Administratively and Micro-Manage
- Impact of Councilmember/Councilmember Conflict on CM and Staff
- City Councils/Councilmembers Who Don't Understand/Value the Council-Manager Form of Government

Major Findings

- Need for Councils to Set Priorities; Workload Impacts; Dealing With Limited Resources
- Dealing With the Demands of Individual Councilmembers
- Bullying Conduct of Elected Officials

Major Findings

- Areas of Most Frequent Challenge:
 - Councilmember/Councilmember Conflict
 - Personality Issues/Interpersonal Relationships
 - Defining and Respecting Roles (Council/CM Form of Government)

Major Findings From Survey and Focus Groups

- Types of Issues That Pose Greatest Challenges:
 - Relationship Issues: 69%
 - Technical Issues: 31%

Overarching Themes

- Technical Skills vs. People Skills
- Lack of Structured Mutual Support Within the Profession
- Focus on Policy Issues Detracting From Professional Skill Development/Support
- Need to Work on Best Practices for BOTH Elected and Appointed Officials

Strategies to Address Challenges

- Enhanced Training for Both Managers and Elected Officials
- Development of “Best Practices” and Model Protocols
- Development of Curriculum/Resources re Form of Government and Roles/Responsibilities

Strategies to Address Challenges

- Better Use of Professional Associations to Promote Governance Best Practices and Provide Support
- Promotion of Best Practices re the Selection and Evaluation of City/County Managers

Strategies to Address Challenges

- Development of Enhanced Peer-to-Peer Support for Managers
- On-line Compilation of Resources
- Development of Community Leadership Academies

Some Issues to Think About....

- What Do You Talk About at Your Meetings?
- How Do You Provide Each Other Support at Difficult Times?
- How Do You Support First Time Managers?
- How Do You Support Managers New to Your State/Region?

Keeping It In Perspective

- Keep the Challenges in Perspective
- Remember Why You Got Into This Business
- Meaningful Work Has Challenges
- Focus on How to Effectively Address the Challenges

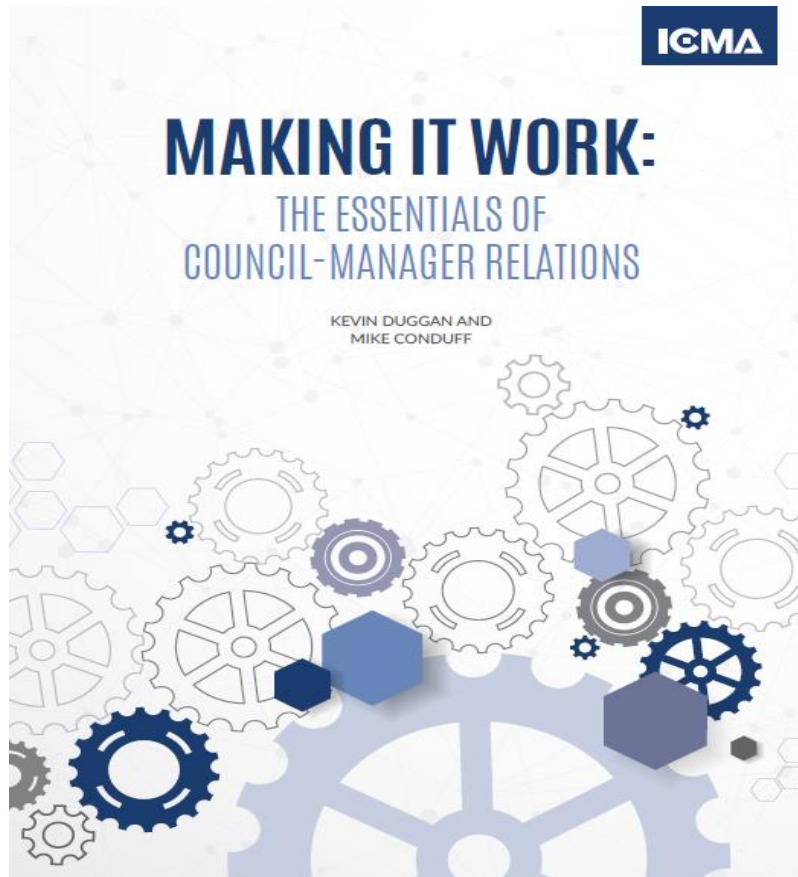
Challenges and Strategies Study:

icma.org/challenges+strategies

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Questions/Comments?

Read the Full Study at:
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