

## Checklist

### **Your First Five Years in Local Government: Getting Started**

- ✓ Show an interest in learning about operations. Tour and ride along whenever possible.
- ✓ Take advantage of the opportunity to learn about all facets of your organization.
- ✓ Seek out a mentor—he or she may or may not be your supervisor.
- ✓ If you are in the manager's office, establish relationships outside of the office.
- ✓ If you are in a department, try to establish a connection with the city or county manager's office. Attend council meetings. If it isn't part of your job but you are interested in the managerial profession, do it for yourself!
- ✓ Go to a few planning commission meetings.
- ✓ Volunteer! Show initiative!
- ✓ Ask questions.

- ✓ Listen.
- ✓ Find a sounding board to bounce your ideas off.
- ✓ Try to understand why things are done the way they are done.
- ✓ Demonstrate to the organization that you understand the history of something, especially if you want to change it.
- ✓ Take people to lunch. Even if you have to pay, it's worth it to have access to a department head.
- ✓ Listen politely to the manager's stories—even the third time they are told to you. Find the lesson.
- ✓ Ask for feedback, and do something with it!
- ✓ Request access to as many meetings, etc., as your organizational culture will allow.

### **In the profession...**

- ✓ Begin to develop a network of peers.
- ✓ Seek out a local government management association or an American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) chapter.
- ✓ Find training opportunities.

- ✓ Read.
- ✓ Learn about the competencies ICMA has established, and develop a learning plan for your own professional development.
- ✓ Meet neighboring managers.
- ✓ Contact your ICMA Range Rider. Range Riders are a gift!

### **For yourself...**

- ✓ Establish an overall learning plan for yourself. Identify your personal development objectives a year at a time.
- ✓ Get into some healthy habits.
- ✓ Write your personal mission statement. Devise a compass for your life, and live by it.

—Julia Novak  
City Manager  
Rye, New York  
E-mail: jnovak@ci.rye.ny.us

*This list was prepared for the 2000 ICMA Annual Conference session "Your First Five Years in Local Government: Getting Started," held in Cincinnati, Ohio.*