

Showcasing Yourself

Eric Norenberg, ICMA-CM
City Manager, Milford, DE
2018 Conference Planning Committee

#ICMA2018

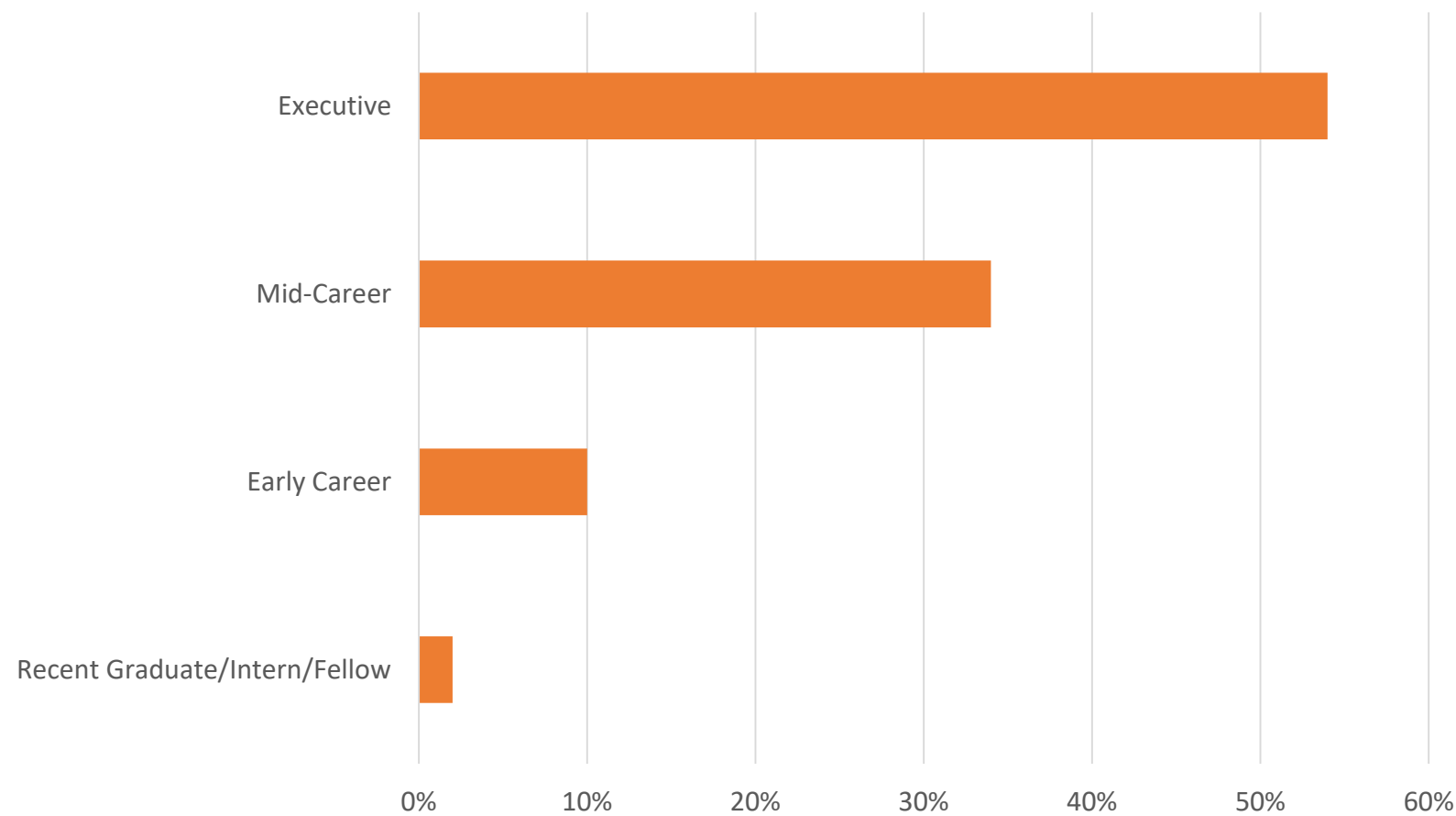
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Survey Results

What is your career stage?



What are you most interested in learning?

- Preparing for the Interview: 45%
- Preparing to negotiate after the Interview: 43%

What challenges have you faced during a recruitment process?

- Always the “bridesmaid, never the bride”
- “Never sat in the CM chair before”
- “Inside” versus “outside” candidate dilemmas
- Trying to stand out
- Knowing what the employer is looking for

How do you anticipate using what you learn during this session?

- Be a better applicant
- Be prepared for the next opportunity
- Interview techniques to assure elected officials I am ready
- Revising my strategy
- Mentoring younger professionals
- Negotiating a salary and employment contract

An aerial photograph of the Baltimore harbor and city skyline. The water is a deep blue, and the city buildings are visible in the background. A large, modern building with a glass facade is prominent in the foreground on the right. A red diagonal line runs across the image from the top left to the bottom right.

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Catherine Tuck Parrish
Executive Search Practice Leader
The Novak Consulting Group

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Recruitment process

- Develop candidate profile
 - Develop minimum and preferred qualifications
 - Identify core competencies and top priorities for position
- Conduct active recruitment and outreach
 - Place job postings, direct outreach to passive candidates
 - Initial candidate screening
- Support selection
 - Facilitate interview process
 - Negotiation and onboarding

Preparing for the interview

- Read as much as possible on website and social media
 - Goals/strategic plan
 - Budget (manager's message, performance measures, etc.)
 - Comprehensive Annual Financial Report
 - State of the City/County
 - Awards
 - Meeting minutes/agendas (read and watch)

Preparing for the Interview

- Find local media sources
 - Local and regional media
 - Blogs
 - Social media
- Visit ahead of time (spend the night if you can)
- Check out business resources (Chamber, Main Street, etc.)

Preparing for the interview

- Use your network to find out more
 - ICMA network
 - Alumni network
 - State/affiliate association network
 - Talk to someone in nearby community, someone who used to work there

Preparing for the interview

- Review the job announcement and materials you submitted
- Practice
- Know the hot topics
- Be ready with questions of your own
- Go early
- Bring a leave-behind
- Conduct your personal due diligence

How to showcase yourself

- Error-free, customized materials
- Knowledge of community issues intertwined in answers
- Comparison of how current position is same and different
- Clean personal social media
- Succinct responses that answer the questions and tell your story

How to showcase yourself

- Provide strong references who know your day-to-day work
- Bring a sample of work that is relevant to the position and to the community
- Be positive and enthusiastic in your own style
- Tell them you want the job and why
- Be human

Negotiation Tips

- Be ready
- Research what the last person made and other comparable salaries
- Do your homework on financial side
- Ask for what you want
- Make your case, explain why
- Have draft language
- Be prompt in reviewing and assessing offer and/or counteroffers
- Show willingness to compromise

Thank you!

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A Mayor's Perspective on Showcasing Yourself

Patrick Wojahn

ICMA Conference Presenter

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College Park – Undergoing Significant Change

- City of 32,000, suburb of Washington, DC (up from about 25,000 10-15 years ago)
- Home of the flagship campus of the University of Maryland system
- Heavy student population, town-gown tensions
- New day in terms of relationship with University
- New opportunities for community development and city growth

Hiring a new City Manager

- Previous City Manager retiring after 12 years
- Senior staff with long tenure
- Council indicated desire for change to reflect new atmosphere, new technologies and new approach
- Hired a headhunting firm to engage in nationwide search
- Pitched the job opportunity as an exciting opportunity to play a role in a changing city

Process

- Initial Screening – Mercer Group weeded out clearly unqualified candidates
- Second cut – narrowed down from 14 candidates to 6 based on smaller group reviews by city agency directors
- Third cut – interviews with several groups to select the final candidates, including community stakeholders, Council and staff
- Mayor and Council made final selection by majority vote

Lessons for applicants

- Do your homework – know the community, the Mayor and Council, including interest groups and factions
- Networking can be helpful, but not necessary
- Be prepared to answer tough questions about background
- Diversity may be an important consideration

An aerial photograph of Baltimore, Maryland, showing the harbor, city skyline, and waterfront buildings. The image is used as a background for the conference banner.

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