

Cal-ICMA Talent Initiative

Talent Development Survey Summary

Background

Who (sent)	PNG Sub Committee Members
When	May 2016
Where / To Whom	City Managers, Assistant City Managers, Human Resource Directors, and members of various affiliations/networks, including International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Municipal Management Association of Northern and Southern California (MMANC and MMASC), and more.
Why	<p>The purpose of the Survey was to identify the development needs of early- and mid-career managers as well as emerging leaders in local government in California; specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what talent development initiatives are of the greatest priority; • what has been effective; and • what other initiatives should be explored <p>Based on survey responses, Cal-ICMA will be funding several new programs to accelerate the development of current and up-and-coming talent.</p>

Development Needed for Advancement in Local Government

There were two audiences for the survey; 1) City/County Managers, HR Directors and Senior Leaders and 2) Mid-Managers, Emerging and Aspiring leaders. Recipients of the Survey were asked about what development was needed for succession in local government from each of their perspectives. The development needs respondents felt were **very important** for advancement of individuals in local government are:

City/County Managers, HR Directors and Senior Leaders (Senior Leaders)

Development Need	Very Important
• “Soft” or leadership skills (managing others, community building, etc.)	74%
• Strategic Planning	66%
• Communication Skills (written, verbal, and presentation)	65%

Mid-Managers, Emerging and Aspiring Leaders

Development Need	Very Important
• “Soft” or leadership skills (managing others, community building, etc.)	96%
• Communication Skills (written, verbal, and presentation)	90%
• Creativity and Innovation	75%

Participate and Engage in Training

Eighty-three percent (83%) of Mid-Managers, Emerging and Aspiring Leaders reported that they regularly participate in Training and Development Programs, taking at least 2-3 activities per year. Similarly, **80% of the Senior Leaders also indicated that they actively engage emerging leaders in training and talent development activities. Lack of time** was cited as the number one reason (**55%**) **why senior leaders don’t actively engage emerging leaders in training and development.**

Development Programs or Resources to Accelerate Development of Mid-Managers, Emerging or Aspiring Leader

When asked about programs and resources that would accelerate the development of Mid-Managers, emerging and aspiring leaders **63%** of respondents agreed that a **“human development campaign” to promote the need for local government to focus on talent development as a key business necessity** and offering **development opportunities to all employees** would be very helpful. **Sixty percent (60%)** of respondents agreed **“training and other resources for those needing coaching or those wanting to serve as coaches”** would also be very helpful.

Background

In May 2016 the PNG sub-committee sent a Preparing the Next Generation: Talent Development Survey to City Managers, Assistant City Managers, Human Resource Directors, and members of various affiliations/networks, including International City/County Management Association (ICMA), Municipal Management Association of Northern and Southern California (MMANC and MMASC), and more.

The Survey received 372 responses. The majority of responses (40% or 149) were from City or County Managers, closely followed by 34% or 126 Mid-Manager, emerging, or aspiring Leaders and 26% or 97 persons who hold HR Directors or other Senior Leaders positions. Ninety percent (90%) of the responses were from individuals in California.

The purpose of the Survey was to identify the development needs of early- and mid-career managers as well as emerging leaders in local government in California.

Development Needed for Advancement in Local Government

Mid-Managers, Emerging and Aspiring Leaders

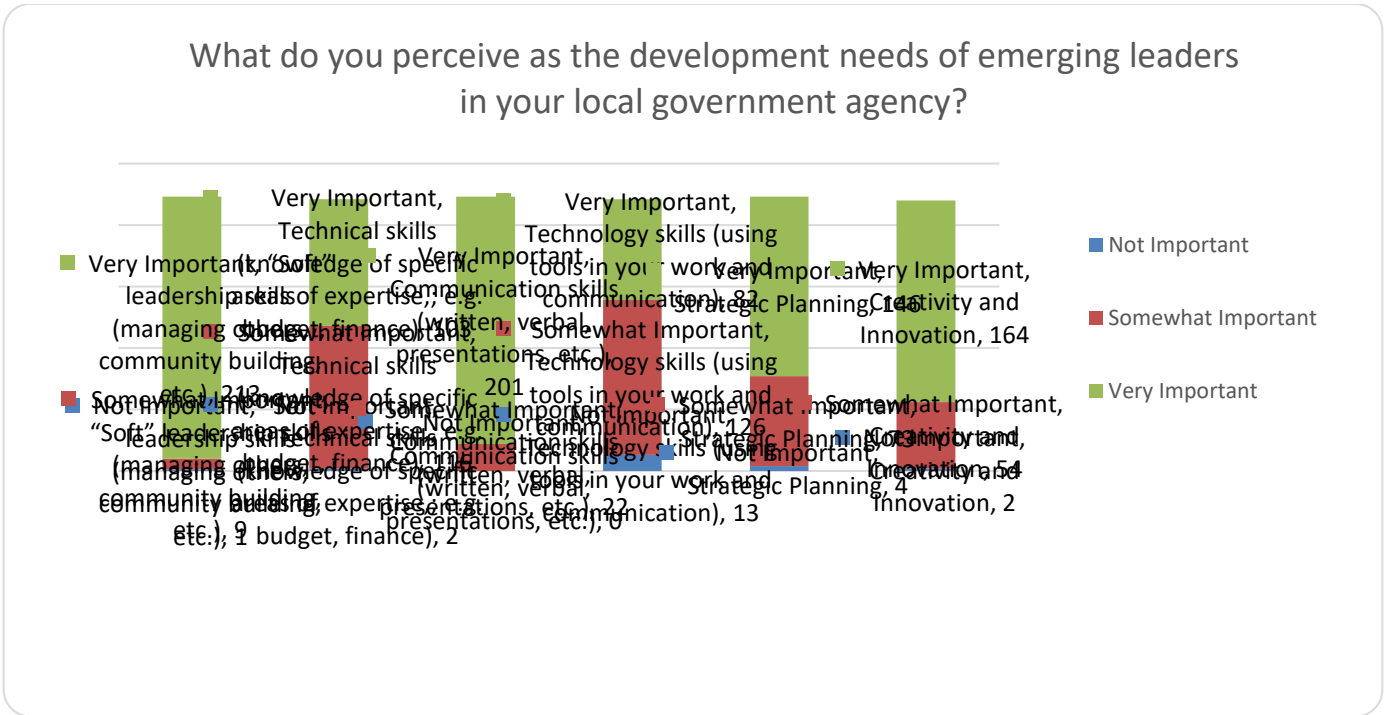
Recipients of the Survey were asked about what development was needed for their advancement in local government.

Respondents indicated that the greatest development needs for advancement in local government are **“soft” or leadership skills (managing others, community building, etc.)**, with **74%** agreeing that these skills are “very important.” Respondents elaborated on areas (community engagement, connections, networking and building awareness of internal and external operations and opportunities, human resources, labor relations, etc.) that linked to “soft” or leadership skills which they deemed as a priority for developing current and emerging leaders. **Strategic Planning (66%) and Communication Skills (written, verbal, and presentation) (65%)** were also deemed as important and vital to advancing in local government.



City Managers, HR Directors and Senior Leaders

When Survey Respondents were asked what was needed for advancement in their organization, **“soft” or leadership skills (managing others, community building, etc.) (96%)** remained as the highest development need, and very important to an emerging leaders success. **Communication Skills (written, verbal, and presentation) (90%)** placed second, and **Creativity and Innovation (75%)** was a distant third.



In addition to the training options the survey provided, respondents indicated that emerging leaders in their local government agency would benefit from developing skills in the following areas.

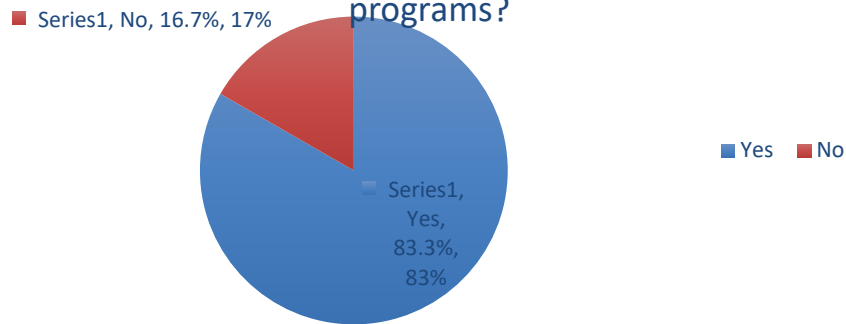
- Consensus Building
- Critical and Strategic Thinking
- Change Management and Adaptation
- Employee Engagement
- Emotional Intelligence
- Mentoring
- Process Improvement

Participate and Engage in Training

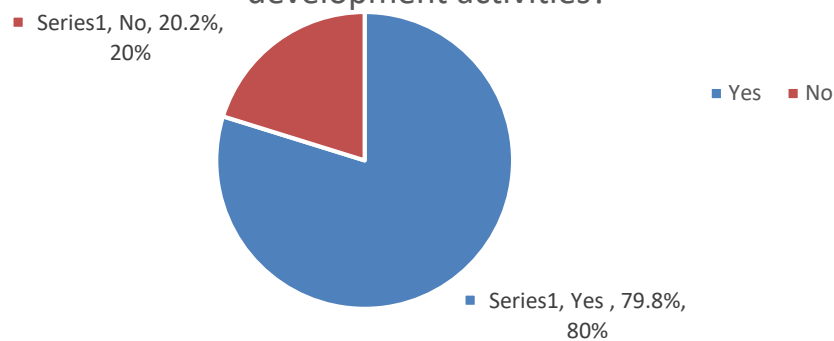
Eighty-three percent (83%) of respondents reported that they regular participate in Training and Development Programs, taking at least 2-3 activities per year. Similarly, **80% of Senior Leaders also indicated that they actively engage emerging leader in training and talent development activities.**

The 20% who answered that they were not actively engaging emerging leaders in training and talent development activities, **55% cited that a lack of time** as the primary obstacle which gets in the way of actively engaging high potential employees in Training and Development. Thirty-four percent (34%) indicated other reasons prohibit making such investments. The most frequent responses were proximity to training and lack of available resources (rooms, funds, trainers, etc.).

Do you regularly participate in training and development programs?



Do you actively engage emerging leaders in training and talent development activities?



Nearly half of those who took the survey shared what was most effective for their organization in actively engaging emerging leaders in training and talent development. The majority of the responses linked to:

- Attendance or participation in traditional Training and Development activities (attending workshops, conferences, training course, etc.);
- Offering internal, external, and/or consortium Manager, Supervisor and/or Leadership Development Academies;
- Providing stretch and/or Work-Out-of-Classification opportunities which provides staff with greater exposure and awareness;
- Coaching, Mentoring and providing feedback;
- Ensuring participation in Professional Affiliations (MMANC, ELGL, ICMA, etc.);
- Promoting a career in Public Service to Youth; and,
- Communicating and preparing high-potential employees for future opportunities.

A unique and intriguing response was the formation of a "Next Generation" team, where the City Manager meets with up-and-comers on a monthly basis to discuss topics and develop skills.

And, despite being identified as one of the least effective means of providing training (see Training Modalities, Their Effectiveness and Efficacy,) Webinars were frequently touted as an effective program/resource utilized in an organizations to develop the next wave of talent.

Training Modalities, Their Effectiveness and Efficacy

When answering if they participated in training, many provided context on what training modalities were most efficient and had the greatest efficacy. The responses varied and legitimized that training is consumed in multiple ways; each with its advantages and disadvantages.

Respondents indicated that learning is commonly acquired through in-person or traditional classroom settings (workshops), as well as online (webinars), established, open discussion and forums (e.g. meetings, panels, Question and Answer sessions, conferences, etc.), continued education, and in cohorted or extended learning opportunities (e.g. certifications, academies, etc.)

The majority of the narrative feedback indicated that in-person training was preferred to online training. While online training was cited as cost effective, convenient, and relinquishes the need to leave the office, some respondents surmised that web-based learners are often distracted and diverting their attention to learning to address other pressing tasks or people who interrupt the learning. Others posited their opinions on how in-person training enhanced learning. Postulations were that in-person training provides opportunities to concentrate exclusively on learning; network with other professionals and/or organizations; participate in breakout sessions; engage in extensive and interactive dialogue, etc.

Survey respondents also shared that interactive learning opportunities which create space for the formation of new ideas, present best and/or emerging practices, provoke thoughtful questions, encourage creativity, allow for extensive questions and answers, and permit the application prior to returning to the work environment have the greatest learning efficacy.

Development Programs or Resources to Accelerate Development of Mid-Managers, Emerging or Aspiring Leader

When asked about programs and resources that would accelerate the development of Mid-Managers, emerging and aspiring leaders **63%** of respondents agreed that a ***“human development campaign” to promote the need for local government to focus on talent development as a key business necessity*** and offer ***development opportunities to all employees*** would be very helpful. **Sixty percent (60%)** of respondents agreed ***“training and other resources for those needing coaching or those wanting to serve as coaches”*** would also be very helpful.

While programs targeted at underserved individuals received one of the lowest percentages (37%) of respondents indicating it would be very helpful in accelerating development, the majority of the narrative responses circled around addressing equal opportunity for underrepresented populations, attracting younger generations to the public workforce, and gender equality.

Specific ideas or requests for ICMA – Talent Development

One third of the Survey takers provided ideas or requests for the ICMA Talent Development Committee to explore. The majority of the comments centered around ***Coaching and Mentoring***. Comments ranged from the value of Coaching programs (like ICMA’s), to revitalizing the branding of the ICMA program, and the importance of a quality and meaningful match.

Also frequently mentioned was the desire for ***Job Shadow and/or Exchange Programs***, which would provide opportunities to explore how other individuals and organizations operate.

Several respondents offered additional development needs for emerging leaders as they relate to ***“soft” leaderships skills***, including understanding and/or awareness of Transformational Leadership, Coaching, Creating High Performing Teams, Organizational Development, Giving and Receiving Feedback, Emotional Intelligence, Relationship Management, and how to work in a political climate - the strength and calmness that it takes to stay centered (even in the presence of your City Council.)

Other innovative ideas shared included:

- Creating a City Managers Hospitality Group where for new/emerging leaders meet with current Organizational Leaders (City/County Managers, Assistant City/County Managers) for coffee, conversations, and idea exchanges.
- Hosting forums for discussing the impact of proposed, current and recently enacted legislation on local government; and, sharing what others are doing about it.
- Asking the Assistant City Managers (ACM) about their role and needs, more cities are merging towards combining the ACM and Department Head (HD) role, how does this impact the work of those roles?
- Improving recruitment practices: how to hire for fit; how to attract a more diversity workforce; and how, to ensure more underrepresented populations are serving in leadership positions.
- Providing a suggested list of Ted Talks and accompanying discussion questions.