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Brenda Garton

My brain simply is too small. It can't hold it all. I keep trying to shove more stuff in there.

I love going to VLGMA and ICMA Conferences. It is the shot in the arm that is absolutely essential to my professional well-being, my personal and professional growth, my job performance, and my sanity.

I always come away from conferences with a mix of three feelings:

- OH MY GOSH, this is so exciting! I can't wait to get home to apply what I learned in my community and my organization. I can see exactly how I can use all or part of what I learned to make some improvement in my organization or tweak what we do.
- WOE IS ME, I am so inadequate! How do these people have the time to DO all of this stuff? Where do I start? How could I possibly scale this down to a manageable level and implement it in my organization?
- WHEW! I'm not so bad after all! We're already doing this! I already know about it. I'm on it!

Which one of those three reactions wins out depends on the day, my mood, the topic, and any number of factors.

I've always heard that if you can come home with just one new, implementable, beneficial idea from a conference, it is time well spent. I don't think I disagree with that. Local government pretty much never reinvents the

wheel. We learn from each other, we share, we tweak programs started in other communities, we improve here and there. We are all always striving toward continual improvement. Major overhaul rarely happens.

It's often difficult to explain the impact of attending sessions at conferences. I once attended an ICMA conference session -- I'm not even sure what the topic of the session was about -- something about community engagement and the need to feed people when you create a gathering for a purpose. While I was sitting in that session and taking copious notes, the germ of an idea was forming in my brain. I got this idea to create locally branded reusable shopping bags, create a booth at an upcoming event, and give them out in exchange for folks bringing in their plastic grocery bags for recycling. The idea was to create a fun way to encourage recycling, spread the "Go Green Gloucester" message, and give them a permanent reminder (the reusable bag). When I got back, we did that. It was a fun and successful event, and everyone who participated loved having the "Go Green Gloucester" reusable bag.

The question is this: What made that idea pop in my head during a session? I mean, it had nothing to do with the topic of the session at all. Well, not being an expert on brain function, I speculate that there is something about being away from your normal work environment, in a setting with people who are there to learn and grow, where ideas are shooting around like paint during a paint-ball battle, that encourages creative thought. How often do we get the chance to do that during a normal work day? How often are we not interrupted by a person, a phone call, an email, a stack of paper demanding attention? I always come home from conferences with, in addition to the actual materials presented and my notes from the workshops and sessions, at least a half dozen usable, viable, doable ideas.

So, for me, attending conferences is like an idea-generating haven. If I have a great idea, I can bounce it off someone (often my poor husband) and give it a little better shape before I try it out on folks at home. I gain exposure to the latest best practices and to innovative thought.

I know that sometimes staff groans when you return from a conference with wonderful ideas. But, what's the opposite of that? Stagnation, no growth, no heated discussions of ideas or suggestions, no trying new things. Not good.

There were some really excellent sessions and speakers at the ICMA Conference in September. While much of his message may have felt sort of "out there" for local government, Gary Hamel mentioned having a 24 hour period when employees could work however, wherever, and on whatever they wished. There are constraints that might limit how you could do this in local government. (FLSA rules come to mind.)

But, what if you set aside a day and allowed folks who opted in to go work in another department? You're going to say, "But I don't have enough staff to cover while they are out." And, I'm going to say, "But, you'd have to cover for them if they were out sick, wouldn't you?" I can imagine that a dispatcher might want to ride with a police officer or the paramedics. Or, someone who works in parks and recreation might want to know how things work in social services.

What could result from such a program? Well, for one thing, you might give an employee who isn't quite the right fit for what she is currently doing an exposure to an area of interest she might want to pursue. Maybe that dispatcher would like

to become a paramedic! Or, you might find that the parks and recreation athletic programs manager might get some insight on the less-than-ideal home life conditions some of the young folks he has in his programs may be experiencing. As a result, he might gain some compassion and a better understanding of how to mentor those folks. Or someone in one department might observe a process or operation in another department and, looking at the situation with totally untrained and open eyes, might make a great suggestion that improves what we do. Who knows?

OK...so now my brain is on overload and is about to explode. But, information-idea-overload-explosion is WAY better than brain-dead-no-growth-atrophy - I think!

So, push your staff to attend professional conferences. Encourage open thinking. Let people try ideas that just might flop. Encourage tinkering and tweaking. Reward ideas. Find ways to give people time and space to THINK. The world and the work place are changing -- rapidly. As leaders in our organizations, we have to find ways to push these local government, slow moving, lumbering beasts into a new era, even if it's sometimes one tweak at a time!

While we are talking about professional development, please encourage your staff to join VLGMA. Remember that VLGMA membership is open for all local government employees - not just the CAO and Deputy/Assistant CAO. Think about how much more benefit you can derive from VLGMA conferences and networking if there are multiple people in your organization who belong, attend conferences, and bring back and implement new ideas and programs! Please - for the overall health of your organization, the support of your staff, and the goal of continuous improvement - actively recruit in your organization for membership in VLGMA! Part of our responsibility as managers is to help mentor and prepare our successors. And, then, my brain doesn't NEED to hold it all!

I would like to take a moment to recognize our new VLGMA members: Deborah Kendall, Gordonsville Town Manager; Randy Keaton, Hampton Roads PDC Interim Executive Director; Sunshine Torrey, Hampton Senior Budget Analyst; Susan AB Holtzman, Student/County of Louisa/VCU and Anne Seward, Isle of Wight County Administrator.

-Brenda

[Contact Brenda Garton](#)

Tedd's Take



Tedd Povav

RANGE RIDERS BECOME "SENIOR ADVISORS"

Over the past 40 years, ICMA's Range Rider Program has been implemented in many states, including Virginia. Range Riders are retired managers who want to remain actively engaged in the

A DAO in the Life

It's October 1, and so again I begin this month with a sleep deficit. The A's lost to the Royals in 12 innings last night (this morning) at 1am. I weighed the risks but chose to stay up late to watch the game.

As the month preceding the first Tuesday in November,



Brannon
Godfrey

profession, and, upon appointment by the state association and ICMA, serve a variety of important functions including, but not limited to, interim managerships, mentoring, counseling, and/or performing short term projects and analyses for localities in their respective states.

Titled by an early adopter from California, the "Range Rider" name has survived for 40 years, but, as with most things, it was time for a change, to a more descriptive title. Henceforth, Range Riders will be known as Senior Advisors.

The name change was the result of a yearlong review of the entire program, and there were some other minor tweaks. To the local government management community in Virginia, the adjustments will be totally inconsequential. The cadre of "Advisors" will be the same, and the services will not change. For VLGMA and the Senior Advisors, there will be some modifications in annual activity reporting, among other very minor refinements. A positive update is that former deputies and assistant administrators will now be eligible to become advisors. Finally, state associations will retain maximum flexibility to run the program as best suits their membership, with ICMA providing guidelines, models, and recommendations, but few requirements.

I encourage you to take advantage of our Senior Advisors for advice on difficult matters, or whenever you need a safe place to discuss a personal or professional quandary. They represent many decades of superior professional service, and are an incredibly valuable resource. The contact information for our Advisors is kept current on the VLGMA website.

[Contact Tedd Povar](#)

October typically means sleep deprivation for local government managers - and for an entirely unearned reason. As a deputy, I am grateful to be in deep right field during October. My CAO, as do most, fields positions 1 through 6 for most of the season. During silly season, he does all that and pitches in relief. There are a probably a dozen calls that John handles himself for every one that he refers to Nita or me. More often than not, it is resolved by his calm explanation to the incumbent candidate about the difference between a city employee and a campaign volunteer.

The post-election job risks are still there for DAOs, but we experience only a fraction of pressure on the Manager. I am thankful to play the support role. And sometimes, even a pinch runner helps make the difference in a do-or-die game (Jarrod Dyson, 3 stolen bases, Royals vs. A's, 9/30/14). It takes a 40-man roster (That's my last MLB reference, I promise!)

[Contact Brannon Godfrey](#)

Innovation Edge



**Customer Segmentation:
How Knowing Your Customers Can Help You Serve Them Better**

by Kate Graham, Manager - Corporate Initiatives, London, ON

As providers of public services, we tend to think that our services are for everyone. All citizens in our communities use water and garbage services. Everyone has access to libraries and parks, and an equal likelihood of requiring supports from emergency or community services.

However, the fact of the matter is that not every citizen uses every public

Certificate News

As the autumn air comes rushing in, the Certificate students have been eagerly turning in their first assignments of the semester. Case studies, group presentations, and guest speakers abound as our professors transfer their decades of knowledge to the next generation. The process can be intimidating, so if you know a Certificate student this semester, be sure to offer him or her some support to push on to the end.

As has been mentioned many times, the Certificate is all about preparing the next generation of local government leaders in Virginia. This usually means that senior, experienced managers and administrators foster relationships with younger professionals and pass on hard earned knowledge to them. Every so often, however, the next generation gets the opportunity to speak back. After all, the knowledge transfer of the Certificate program is a two-way street. Such an opportunity is coming on October 6th at the VLGMA luncheon in Roanoke. Certificate alumni Cody Sexton, from Botetourt County, and India Adams and Matt Reges, both from Albemarle County, will be sharing and discussing what the "Old Guard" can learn from the "New Guard." These future leaders will surely be engaging and thought provoking as they provide insights into how young professionals see and respond to the current issues in local government.

The Certificate program is always on the lookout for the next leaders of local government. Even though this semester



Fun with the Certificate Program in Charlotte!

service; and, people do not use public services in the same ways, for the same reasons, or with the same frequency. One citizen may use a suite of public services that is almost entirely different than those used by their neighbours. Even with services that are used by almost everyone in a community, such as water or garbage, the way people use those services and their motivations for doing so can be quite dissimilar. So, how can we know our customers - who is using our services, why, and in what ways? Customer segmentation is a tool to help service providers understand who they serve. By definition, customer segmentation is the process of dividing up a customer base into smaller groups of individuals that share common consumer traits and have similar preferences.

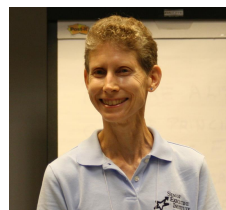
[Read more](#) in the September Alliance October Newsletter.

Questions? Comments? Please reach out to me saburnett@transformgov.org, or 800-777-2509 with any questions.

Visit the [Alliance for Innovation](#) for more information.

Mel's Poetry Corner

Daring Greatly



Mel Gillies

There are qualities we can attentively cultivate that will heal, inspire and liberate. Likewise habits that we need to weed to flourish and our best self, be.

Perfectionism needs insecticide for self-compassion to thrive. Seeds of confidence are sown as we relinquish fear of the unknown.

Anesthesia for our heart's receptiveness is the numbness of defensiveness.

The spirit of resiliency

is in full swing, the time to think about the spring semester is now. Bob Stripling, the great and benevolent leader of the next generation, is always willing to talk about the program and recruit students. He can be reached at chars08@vt.edu or 540-448-1102.

Find the Certificate online:



Certified Public Manager Program(CPM)
School of Policy, Government and
International Affairs
George Mason University



On November 7th, George Mason University's School of Policy, Government and International Affairs (SPGIA) will launch the newly-created Certified Public Manager Program (CPM). This program is designed to enhance the careers of those in public service management. The curriculum meets the criteria to be certified by the National CPM Consortium and is calibrated to provide management and leadership theory and practice to all enrollees.

The curriculum will focus on 12 critical topics including strategic management, public budgeting and finance, governance and ethics. Courses will meet in person twice per month for 12 months to enable working professionals to spend meaningful class time with a cohort of peers exploring public administration management theory and strategy. Successful participants will earn the distinction as a Certified Public Manager enabling the use of the CPM following their name.

The first class is being recruited from public safety agencies in Northern

recognizes our intrinsic,
infinite capacity.

Joy and gratitude
are healing be-attitudes.
Our growth is stagnant when anxiety
is our daily toxic mentality.

Comparison and our need for
certainty displace
creativity, trust, intuition, faith.
Play and rest are energizing.
The status symbol of exhaustion
is demoralizing.

As we prune the negative
dead wood away,
how healthy and vibrant, we stay.

We might even be willing to
greatly dare
and our love and gifts
unconditionally share.
There is no great need
for humanity.

[Contact Mel Gillies](#)

P3 Leadership Workshop

**P3 Leadership Workshop
Leading Successful
Public-Private
Partnerships (P3)**



Friday, November 7, 2014
at the Virginia Tech Research Center
900 N Glebe Rd, Arlington, Virginia

Please see attached flyer for more info.
For registration information, please
email Rosa Krewson at rosac@vt.edu

Calendar

Upcoming Events

PDC Meeting - Oct. 6 in Roanoke as part
of VML Conference

VLGMA Executive Committee - Oct. 6 in
Roanoke as part of VML Conference

Virginia. With the experience gained from administering the first class, GMU will look to expand the CPM Program statewide. It is anticipated that the program will be offered by region when a sufficient number of students register for the CPM Program. The VLGMA Newsletter will be one of several ways of promoting the CPM Program. There is an Advisory Board for the Program and VLGMA has appointed to the Board as its representative [Cindy Mester](#), Assistant City Manager, Falls Church. The Program is being organized by [Tony Griffin](#), Mason's Practitioner-in-Residence and former Fairfax County Executive at Mason's Centers on the Public Service: 703-993-9377 or psc@gmu.edu

Save the Date

Save the date for the VRA Infrastructure

Financing Conference December 10-12, 2014 in Roanoke.

[Contact Jean Bass](#)



2015 VLGMA Winter Conference - Feb. 11-13 at the Stonewall Jackson Hotel in Staunton

[More Dates](#)

Future Newsletter Articles

A goal of this e-newsletter is to keep you informed on activities relative to our profession. As with any membership-based organization, contributions by members are welcome and encouraged. Topics can range from a recent achievement in your locality to an upcoming event with networking potential to human interest stories about current or retired members. To contribute simply send your brief e-newsletter content (~5 sentences or less) via email to [Molly Harlow](#).



Quick Links

[VLGMA Website](#)

[ICMA Website](#)

[Alliance for Innovation](#)

[Virginia Municipal League](#)

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VLGMA | P.O. Box 400206 | Charlottesville | VA | 22904

Friday, November 7, 2014
Virginia Tech Research Center
900 N Glebe Rd, Arlington, Virginia

P3 Leadership Workshop



Leading Successful Public-Private Partnerships (P3s)

Workshop Schedule:

- 9 AM Registration and Breakfast**
- 10 AM CULTURE:** Understanding culture is a fundamental tool in the P3 toolkit. What are the characteristics of culture as understood by public and private partners and how can we better leverage the key components of culture to maximize P3 success?
- 11 AM The PUBLIC:** How do we define “the public” and what is important to them? If residents, businesses, tax and rate payers, facility users and consumers, and perhaps others are all “the public,” how can P3s create the most optimal value for our communities?
- 12 PM Lunch**
- 1 PM SHARED SPACE:** A successful P3 consists of highly functional physical and ideological shared spaces. What do these unique shared operational and deal-making spaces look like, how do they work and why are they absolutely critical to P3 success?
- 2 PM TRUST:** There is no substitute for trust. Trust sets the tone for the partnership and the project. What are the values and techniques for building and sustaining trust to ensure P3 success?
- 3 PM Conclusion and feedback**

Registration Fee: \$250

For registration information, please email Rosa Krewson at rosac@vt.edu

Virginia Tech’s School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA)

is pleased to announce its first P3 Leadership Workshop on Friday, November 7, 2014 at the Virginia Tech Research Center in Arlington, VA. This is an opportunity for professionals in various technical and leadership capacities to examine and engage in discussions surrounding the role of leadership in successful public-private partnerships (P3s).

There is no question P3s are emerging as a primary public policy choice for infrastructure, facilities and public services across the Commonwealth. But while the benefits of a P3 approach are recognized, such as increased creativity at decreased costs, so too are the challenges, such as complexities of commitments and shortened time frames. An outside observer may note several significant differences between partners – in language used to describe the deal, in financial metrics and expectations, in understanding the project and its impact on community and in the definition of transparency. Where does a leader need to concentrate? This workshop brings together practitioners from both the private and public sectors who have experienced these leadership challenges first hand to discuss the critical elements of P3 success – culture, the public, shared space and trust – to describe what works and what doesn’t.

Workshop participants will engage in group discussions, examine case studies and be challenged to consider P3s as more than just mediums for transportation and utilities projects. Rather, the workshop will describe ways in which P3s are transforming a new “social infrastructure” where the focus is to maximize public land assets with higher density mixed use development in order to provide public value in the larger context of a community.

