

Council Manager Relations – Evaluating the City Manager

Our Current Reality

- **Volatility**
- **Uncertainty**
- **Complexity**
- **Ambiguity**

Being a city manager is like being the quarterback for a team that is down by 14 points, with two minutes left in the 4th quarter. You have the ball on your own 20 yard line... and your own team is allowed to tackle you.

Systems Theory

- A plant in the window
- Electric lights in the room
- Frederick Taylor, Scientific Management and the Golden Rule

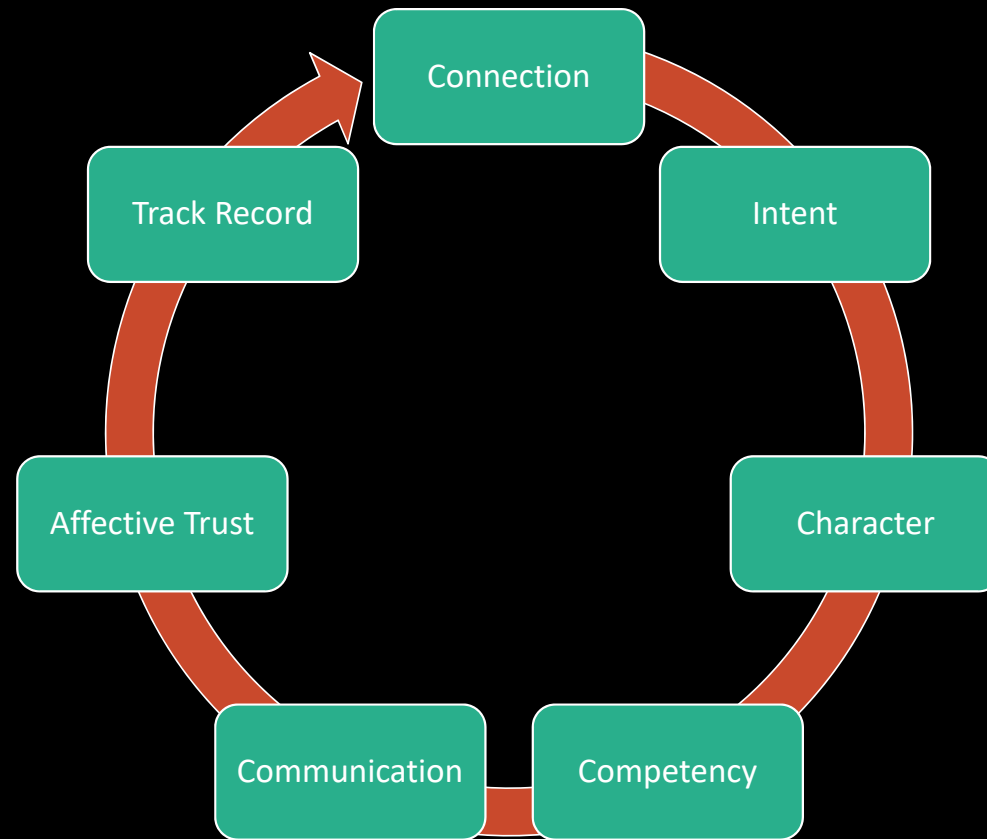
Effective City Manager Relations Requires Earned Trust

Two cars collided on a curving country road. The drivers got out and exchanged information in a gentlemanly way. Then one driver took out a flask and said “Look fellow, you seem pretty shaken up. How about a drink to steady your nerves?”

The other man took a big swig, and asked “Aren’t you going to have any?”

To which the first driver responded, “Not until after the police get here.”

Cycle of Trust Building

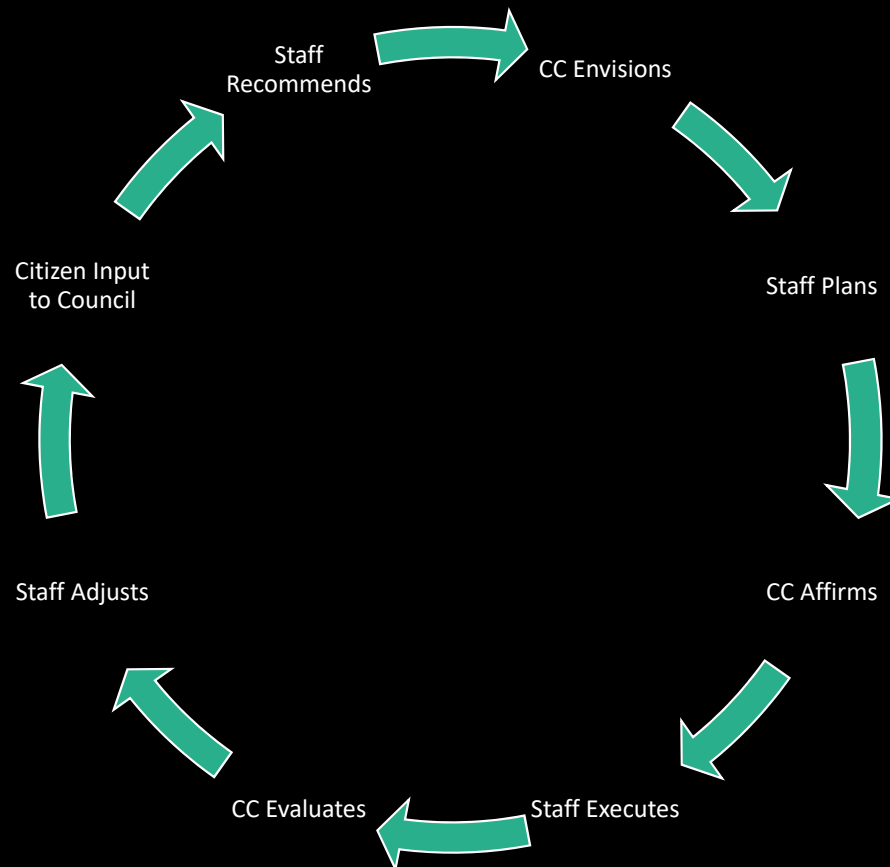


Effective City Manager Evaluations Require Excellent Communication and Clear Expectations

A man charged with murder bribed a friend on the jury to hold out for a verdict of manslaughter. The jury was out for a long time, but finally came back with a verdict of manslaughter. Upon visiting the prisoner the following week, the friend was thanked “you must have had a very hard time convincing them to vote for a charge of manslaughter.”

“Hard is right”, replied the friend, “ the other eleven wanted to acquit you.”

The Strategic Visioning Loop Provides Clear Expectations



City government is experiencing a civic revolution. We have run suddenly upon a novel age where tried formulas are nil, where old landmarks are transformed into strange beacon lights and the new anchorage is yet afar off. Revolution in municipal government is but one of our ventures into the virgin land of untried things. The seeking of the truer, cleaner and the finer, of the less wasteful and more efficient is the advertisement of our national restlessness.

The failure of the old has stung our pride into a pilgrimage to find something newer, nobler, and more satisfying than that which the old government could give, with its' incompetence, its' sloth, its' extravagance. From this genesis, the new order sprang. The City Manager plan is part of this more modern trend of thought.

from "The City Manager, a New Profession by Harry
Aubrey Tomlin, 1915

The First Statistic to Never Forget:

- Seven percent of all American adults believe that chocolate milk comes from brown cows, according to a nationally representative online survey commissioned by the Innovation Center of U.S. Dairy.

- (reported in the Washington Post, June 15, 2017)

The Second Statistic to Never Forget:

- With a population of 20,000 residents... 1,400 of them think that chocolate milk comes from brown cows.

The Third Statistic to Never Forget:

- City Council's tend to act like....
- If one citizen shows up and addresses the Council on a subject, it is an issue of grave public concern.
- If two citizens show up and address the Council on the same subject, it is a movement.
- And if three citizens show up and address the Council on the same subject it is a mandate of the people!

City Manager Expectations of City Council's

1. Base my decisions on the next generation more than the next election, committed to the ideal that my loyalty must be to the entire community (both now and in the future) and not merely to those who got me elected.

2. Focus on mission, vision and values as the benchmark for my decisions and recognize that my responsibility is the pursuit of the greatest good for the entire community and not the satisfaction of any particular group's agenda.

3. Make decisions based on fact based evidence and not allow myself to be manipulated into bad decisions for the future based on the decibel level of critics.

4. Recognize that “it takes a smart man to know where he is stupid” and have the wisdom to be smart. Accordingly, I will value those who have the courage to tell me what they really think and will listen sincerely to those who disagree with me to truly understand their perspective, recognizing that understanding other perspectives makes me a better leader.

5. Embrace my responsibility to govern rather than to manage; recognizing that if I am doing staff's job I am not doing my job, while also understanding and embracing the appropriately exercised governance role of holding staff accountable.

6. Place a greater emphasis on solutions than on problems; while refusing to offer solutions before I understand the problem.

7. Understand that mutual trust is the foundation for everything and that if I refuse to trust others they will be unable to trust me.

8. Protect the integrity of the process more than the rightness of my position; I will fight hard for my issue but then unify behind the governing body when the decision is made because the decision was made with integrity of process, even if I disagree with the outcome.

9. Understand that my deeply held beliefs, values and positions will be strengthened, not compromised by courteous, respectful and civil discourse. I will not treat someone as the enemy just because we disagree.

10. Treat everyone with dignity and respect because of who I am as a leader... not because of how they treat me or what I think about them.

11. Be a role model for civility. I will not treat my colleagues or staff in any way that I would be embarrassed if my five year old child treated someone the same way.

**12. Never Forget --- it is
not about me --- it is not
about now --- and it never
is.**

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