



President  
 Jim White  
 Town of Minturn  
 manager@minturn.org  
 970-827-5645

President-Elect/Treasurer  
 Aden Hogan  
 City of Evans  
 ahogan@ci.evans.co.us  
 970-475-1119

Past President  
 Jacque Wedding-Scott  
 jwscent107@gmail.com  
 303-916-6115

Vice President/Secretary  
 Roy Otto  
 City of Greeley  
 roy.otto@greeleygov.com  
 970-350-9750

At Large Board Members  
 Michael Penny  
 City of Littleton  
 mpenny@littletongov.org  
 303-795-3720

Shane Hale  
 City of Cortez  
 shale@cityofcortez.com  
 970-565-3402

Matthew Birnie  
 Gunnison County  
 mbirnie@gunnisoncounty.org  
 970-641-0248

Emerging Manager Representative  
 Laura Kane  
 City of Denver  
 laura.kane@denvergov.org  
 720-913-5537

Staff  
 Denise Taylor Henasey  
 Association Manager  
 denise@coloradoccmma.org  
 720-295-0786

## CCCMA President's 2012 Summer Message

**Jim White, Town Manager, Town of Minturn and 2012 CCCMA President**

As the summer of 2012 faces the fall of 2012, I start my comments with a somber reminder of precious life is and a reminder that every day, as local municipal and county managers, our work is to make life better for those residing within our respective boundaries.

Colorado has faced some painful issues this summer. With two major wild-fires along the I-25 corridor near Ft. Collins, Colorado Springs, and Woodland Park and a senseless tragedy in the movie theater in Aurora, lives were lost, or changed forever. Despite the overwhelming loss and sorrow, people responded by providing endless contributions and came to the rescue following all of these tragedies.

Local government is a worthy endeavor. We carry on despite adversity.

At the CML annual conference in Breckenridge in June, the Colorado City and County Management Association recognized three individuals who have made a difference in their communities and within their profession. Jack Ethredge, Thornton City Manager for the past 27 years, was awarded a "Lifetime Achievement Award" and we (Aden Hogan, Sam Mamet and me) visited his community to present it to him on July 24, 2012. Willy Powell, Town Manager of Eagle for the past 28 years, was also presented with a "Lifetime Achievement Award", and it will be presented to him in his home community on August 14, 2012. Greg Clifton, former CML president and current Town Manger in Telluride, was presented the "Manager of the Year Award".

Our Range Rider sub-committee has solicited and received interest from several individuals as we seek to expand our Range Rider program to three Range Riders. Mark Achen, currently Colorado's only Range Rider, continues to set the bar high for his future colleagues through his tireless efforts.

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He even helps out managers from the State of Utah as they have increased attendance and participation with the Colorado manager's group the past few years. We will discuss the expansion to three positions soon. Special thanks to Roy Otto, our vice-president, for his work on this project.

Our professional development group has also been busy at work this year and has established a link to additional education opportunities through (California) CAL-ICMA. Please visit our website for more information. Special thanks to Mike Bestor, Golden manager, Nathan Cherpeski, Alamosa manager, and Matt Le Cerf, Frederick manager and all other committee members for their contributions. In order to establish the groundwork for a speaker's bureau, the committee has established a CCCMA Skills Survey and Survey Instructions to ascertain our managers' proficiencies. The last effort was a template for our Professional Development Program, Request for Proposals; Curriculum and Trainers.

On the weekend of August 4-6, 2012, Clint Kinney and Seth Hoffman provided an excellent family and friends camping experience at Sylvan Lake State Park in Eagle County. My wife and I stopped in on Sunday and spent the better part of the day. I would highly recommend this event again for next year.

We will be convening another CCCMA Board meeting, likely by conference call and likely in the middle of September.

The Planning Committee for next February's CCCMA conference is already underway. Mark your calendar for February 14-16, 2013 in Glenwood Springs, Colorado.

All the best,

Jim White

CCCMA president



**Have you taken the Professional Development survey?** [Click Here](#)

Please let us know which topics you would like CCCMA to offer trainings, workshops or future sessions.

### **Cal ICMA webinars continue**

Next - New Service Delivery Strategies, September 13, 3pm MDT

These webinars and the coaching materials are free to CCCMA members. Learn more at <http://icma.org/en/ca/programs/coaching> Previous webinars are archived, listen anytime! Details at [http://icma.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=2](http://icma.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=2)

### **2013 Winter Conference - SAVE THE DATES**

February 14-16, 2013, Hotel Colorado, Glenwood Springs

Have an idea for a session? Share your suggestions for speakers or topics and definitely let us know if you've given a presentation that you could encore at the CCCMA Conference. Contact Shane Hale at [shale@cityofcortez.com](mailto:shale@cityofcortez.com)

# CCCMA AWARDS

## Greg Clifton of Telluride the Colorado Manager of the Year

### *Jack Ethredge; William Powell Receive Lifetime Achievement Awards*

The CCCMA Awards program is intended to recognize and honor the outstanding individuals who made significant contributions to local government in Colorado.

Clifton, who has served as Telluride's Town Manager for the past two years, has made a major impact in a relatively short amount of time, and has been lauded for not just what he has accomplished, but how he has done it.

"Without relinquishing the town's position, he calmly addresses problems with clear logic and with a thorough investigation of the facts," said Telluride Council Member Ann Brady. "His determination to reach an agreed-upon outcome and move on without rancor or ill will has moved us above and beyond our belligerent reputation."

Mayor Stu Fraser agrees. "We are indeed fortunate to have Greg here. In less than two years, he has left his positive imprint upon Telluride through his daily actions and even-handed management style," Fraser said.



Greg Clifton and Stu Fraser

Willy Powell and Jack Ethredge were each recognized with Lifetime Achievement Awards. Powell has served as Eagle's Town Manager for 28 years; Etheridge has served as City Manager in Thornton for 27 years.

Since Powell took the reins in Eagle in 1984, the town has grown from a town of 1,000 people and a budget of \$950,000 to a community of more than 6,000 residents with an annual budget of \$12 million. He has



Willy Powell between his former Mayors

guided the development of the residential community, developed a very popular trail system, and overseen dozens of other major infrastructure projects over the past three decades. To do so, Powell has needed to work with a wide variety of backgrounds and political philosophies, says Ed Sands, who has served alongside Powell for the past 28 years as the Eagle Town Attorney.

"Willy has always been able to adapt to changing circumstances, a changing political environment, changing financial conditions and changing goals and desires of the community and the Town's elected officials," Sands said.

Jack Ethredge has been the City Manager of Thornton since 1985. During that time, Ethredge has guided Thornton through many challenges and devised an impressive policy planning program that aligns the strategic vision of the City Council and staff with the goals of the community at large. The program then measures itself on whether it achieved those goals.

## CCCMA AWARDS, cont.



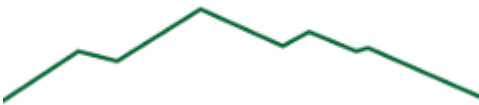
Jack Ethredge and Jim White

With his Policy Planning Program, as it's known in Thornton, Ethredge has enriched and enhanced the community over the last 27 years, said Joyce Hunt, Thornton's Assistant City Manager.

In addition to his work in Thornton, Ethredge has been a leader within the local government management profession. He is a longtime member of both the International City Management Association and the Colorado City/County Management Association, where he has served as its president.

"Jack Ethredge has been a mentor to a generation of public managers in Colorado," said Jim White, Town Manager of Minturn and President of CCCMA. "All of the 2012 award winners are certainly deserving of this significant recognition."

### Best and Brightest Award



Elizabeth Jackson is this year's recipient of the annual CCCMA Best Master's Project that meets the needs of local communities award.

Liz's project uses the City of Boulder and Boulder County, the City of Fruita and Mesa County, and the City of Durango and La Plata County as case studies to examine why La Plata County's most recent comprehensive planning proposal failed to receive final Commissioner approval, even though similar plans passed in other Colorado communities. The project seeks to understand the existence of powerful groups who hold a strong influence on the passage of planning policies and procedures-- the various regimes, or coalitions, that are at play. The project explores how these particular groups of individuals garner support in their community, why they appeal to others, and how they maintain that support overtime.

Elizabeth is a spring 2012 graduate of the University of Colorado Denver's MA in Political Science with Emphasis in Politics and Public Policy program offered through the Center for NEW DIRECTIONS in Politics and Public Policy in the Political Science Department at UCD. During her academic career, Liz also served as the Cathy Shipley Best and Brightest Intern in Bayfield, Colorado.

Congratulations to Liz and to CCCMA for another great award winner!



Liz Jackson, Jim White, CCCMA,  
Kathryn Cheever, Center for New Directions

## A Tale of Two Cities: Easing Your Team Through Crises and Significant Change

The recent wildfires highlight the reality that the requirements of city management can instantly change from the exercise of routine duties to rapidly evolving emergency response. Tactical policies and procedures for such events are in place and are generally well executed. In contrast, a municipality's response to the emotional impact of such events can vary widely. This article focuses on how city leaders can best respond to the common emotional responses experienced by their own staff when traumatic events occur. The two stories below are fictional but based on real events.

### "River City"

The phone is vibrating on the patio table where we have just sat down for a quick lunch. The voice on the other end of the call is somber: "There has been an incident here in River City. A city employee has shot his supervisor and then himself. Can you help us?" I looked across at the table at my friend apologetically. Thirty-five minutes later, I am escorted around police tape to the human resource department where a collection of visibly shaken staff, scared and in shock, does their best to fill in the details of how the unthinkable has just happened.

### "Lake City"

Nancy, the City Manager, shakes my hand firmly. Her demeanor is pleasant, business-like and direct, all at the same time. Immediately, she lays out the challenge her municipality is facing: "As a city, we are preparing for a period of major restructuring. We anticipate very few lay offs but there may be some. The reality is that we will not be able to continue to do business as usual. We are being forced to make some big changes in the next four months. Many employees are anxious and the rumor mill is already running rampant. What can we do to communicate the seriousness of the situation but also help staff understand that, for nearly all employees, their job will be secure if they are willing to retool?"

### Employee Reactions Can Be Surprising

Employees respond to workplace crises in widely diverse ways based on their temperament, personal history and coping skills. At least 40% of those we consult with after a critical incident are surprisingly calm. Others are unexpectedly emotional. Recently we met with an employee who was on vacation at the time of a workplace suicide who experienced a much stronger emotional reaction than many who witnessed the immediate aftermath of the event.

We have observed employees at elevated risk for debilitating emotional responses fall into four categories:

Those most directly exposed to physical danger or job peril. While this is the general rule, there are exceptions.

It is not uncommon to debrief a team after a bank robbery and have tellers who were just threatened with a gun relate that they are more angry than anything else as this has happened twice before.

Those who identify with those directly impacted because of similar characteristics, status, or history may also be at higher risk. These employees may be the same age, close friends, or relate strongly in some way.

Those who are dealing with existing psychological, relational or physical challenges. For example, they may have also just heard that their spouse's job will be eliminated or recently lost a parent after a long illness.

Those who have never experienced a traumatic incident before, i.e., the death of a colleague or a lay off. This may be because they are younger or newer to the job.

## A Tale of Two Cities, cont.

### How Much Communication is Best?

Leaders are often reluctant to say too much. Typically we hear comments such as: “It will just make things worse.” “We need to stay positive.” Or, “The bottom line is that people need to get back to work.” Of course, the quickest return to normal or the “new normal” is the goal. However, inadequately communicating what is occurring or processing has just happened makes things worse, not better. First and foremost, employees need to know the facts, as far as you can tell them. This aids greatly in the healing process, rebuilds community, and squashes rumors.

It is generally wise to schedule a mandatory debrief within the first 48 hours after a crisis event. Expect resistance but be firm. A powerful doctor or manager, with years of experience, will often balk at the need to participate in a required debrief. Often they insist they are fine, need to get back to work, or have plenty of people to talk to if they have problems later. In some cases, though, even “star employees” are in shock, and may experience few emotions-- for several days, even weeks. A timely debrief can ameliorate the impact of symptoms when they do emerge.

Key leaders will typically experience a delayed reaction to a significant change, trauma or crisis event. It is not uncommon for an H.R. director, CEO or City Manager to be the one coordinating a reorganization or the emergency response. Often, when things calm down a bit we ask, “How are you doing?” It is then when emotions frequently emerge. In both U.S. organizations and among NGO health workers in developing countries we have seen outstanding leaders, who displayed great strength in a crisis, be dismissive of any type of emotional care but then suddenly resign a few weeks later. In many cases, we believe this was preventable. They did not have an adequate [mandatory] forum in which to debrief when the crisis occurred and their emotions caught up with them.

### “Change-Speak” - What to Say in Times of Significant and Traumatic Change

So far we have focused on acute crises. What about the more slow-moving variety where staff must make huge shifts but may have days or weeks to process this change? Here are some ways you can help your team adjust:

#### 1. Tell stories.

Stories are an excellent way to address fears, highlight “best practices,” and communicate the reality of the situation, all the while speaking to the heart instead of the head. Consider a “Feel, Felt, Found” story. The components of these stories communicate the following: You may be feeling “X.” A person or group similar to you has felt “X” too. They found “Y (a positive outcome).” You will likely experience “Y” too.

Here’s what the Lake City’s City Manager might say to her employees: “You may know that Rocky City recently went through a similar transition to the one we are implementing here. The Rocky City Manager told me that initially people felt scared and confused by the new project management system but they soon learned that it was surprisingly easy to implement. Among those who did try their best none were laid off and 88% of the employees polled there prefer the new system saying that it is fairer and easier to use. I think you will find this to be true as well.”



## *2. Speak honestly and directly to all “stakeholders.”*

According to Alexander Hiam, it is essential to speak directly to all the stakeholders in any big change. Who are they? They are:

The implementers—the employees whose actions will be essential to making the change

The winners—the employees who stand to gain something from the change

The losers—the employees who stand to lose something as a result of the change

The influencers—the employees who control/influence communications, formally and informally

Many leaders, in an attempt to put a “positive spin” on a coming change, are reluctant to honestly speak to those who stand to lose something, even if temporarily. What is the result? It is more fear, resistance, and passive-aggressive behavior. Employees know when they are being “spun” and don’t appreciate it.

## *3. Explain and Normalize What Employees are Likely to Experience as they Move Through the Change Process.*

It is essential to provide employees with a good idea of what they may experience emotionally. Resistance and discontent are naturally present in the beginning stages of a big change. If they are strongly squelched and criticized, they may be expressed as passive-aggressiveness, sabotage, or morale issues later. Better to normalize and vet them early in the process. This gives employees permission to feel and work through them more rapidly.

### **A Final Observation: Not All Changes are of the Same Magnitude.**

Some changes are the metaphorical equivalent of repainting a bedroom. Other changes are far messier, disruptive and challenging and require knocking down walls. A good leader is acutely aware of the difference. Put yourself in the role of your colleagues and staff. Ask, “What is the magnitude of the change we are experiencing?” “How would someone with less experience than me typically respond?” Then, armed with this insight, help your team work through the process of change. Your reward will be greater loyalty, fewer sick days and resignations, and continued morale.

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Dr. Bill Dymont heads Dymont & Associates, Inc., a consulting firm specializing in employee wellness and change management. He was a speaker at the CCCMA 2012 Winter Conference. He has assisted teams in adjusting to traumatic events in Africa, the Caribbean, and throughout the United States.

If you have stories or articles you would like to share with CCCMA, please send to [denise@coloradocccma.org](mailto:denise@coloradocccma.org). The next newsletter will be published November 15, 2012.



## CML Update

The Latest News at the Colorado Municipal League

-Sam Mamet and Lisa White, CML

### CML Training

Timely and cost-effective training remains a very important service that CML provides. In addition to the annual conference, ongoing training opportunities are provided year-round in both traditional in-person and webinar formats. Details and registration information can be found at [www.cml.org](http://www.cml.org).

#### Remaining workshops and webinars for 2012 include:

Boot Camp for Municipal Prosecutors workshop (Aug. 17)

What's New in the World of Municipal Bonds; Lunch & Learn presented by Stifel Nicolaus (Aug. 29)

Increase Your Water Fluency Water, presented by the Colorado Foundation for Water Education Water webinar (Sept. 13)

Game-Changing Practices for Successful Leaders: Succession Planning; Lunch & Learn presented by the Mejorando Group (Sept. 25)

CML's Annual Seminar on Municipal Law, Mt. Crested Butte (Sept. 29)

Importance of understanding the local government auditing process webinar (Oct. 18)

Small Community Workshop, in partnership with DOLA, will include information on small town finances and budgeting, economic development, and land use and planning issues. (Nov. 1)

### CML Board Retreat

Last month the CML executive board held its retreat in Evans, CO. The current CML Board President is Aden Hogan, Evans City Manager, and other Board officers include Arvada Mayor Marc Williams, Vice President; Bennett Town Trustee Charles Bayley, Secretary Treasurer; and Lakewood Council Member Diana Allen, Immediate Past President.

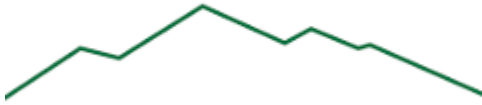
During the retreat, noted political analyst Floyd Ciruli offered his observations on the big issues facing Colorado's cities and towns. His PowerPoint is posted on the League's web site at, [www.cml.org](http://www.cml.org). The board received presentations on the upcoming 2013 legislative session from Kevin Bommer, Legislative Advocacy Manager; an update on upcoming CML training and other pertinent activity from Lisa White, Membership Services Manager; and an analysis of the current solid financial footing of CML from Sam Mamet. Finally, the Board spent the rest of the time starting to develop a 3-5 year strategic plan for the organization.

### District Meetings: Where Business Meets Fun!

Starting next month, CML staff will once again host a series of regional meetings throughout the state. Each will begin with a business meeting, where we'll discuss CML's policy process and request input as we prepare for the 2013 Legislative Session. We'll also invite attendees to share what is going on in their cities and towns. After the business meeting, the fun begins with a social hour and dinner. Details, dates, and locations are available at <http://www.cml.org/Outreach.aspx>



## CCCMA NEWS



## MANAGERS IN TRANSITION

Send an email today!

Jim Stevens, pob2066@msn.com

Jacque Wedding-Scott, jwscent107@gmail.com

Phil Cortese, pwc1007@comcast.net

Jacqueline Halburnt, jacqie@hotmail.com

Ed Green, sagebrushben@msn.com

Ronda Lancaster, lanentpv@fone.net

Laurie Kadrich, lauriemk@bresnan.net

Mike Konefal, mike.konefal@comcast.net

David Varley, davidvarley@yahoo.com

Ted Soltis, soltis2001@yahoo.com

## ASSOCIATION NEWS

is always available at [www.coloradoccma.org](http://www.coloradoccma.org)



**Website:** [icma.org/conference2012](http://icma.org/conference2012)  
**Carpooling/Shared Travel:** [icma.org/conferencegroup](http://icma.org/conferencegroup)  
**Twitter:** [twitter.com/icmaconference](https://twitter.com/icmaconference)  
(tweet using #ICMA12)  
**Facebook:** [facebook.com/localgov](https://facebook.com/localgov)

This year's ICMA Annual Conference, October 7-10, in Phoenix/Maricopa County, Arizona, combines a cost-effective, high-quality professional development opportunity; networking; and information sharing—now when you need them most—with a unique and vibrant location in the heart of the Southwest, America's sixth-largest city, and the gateway to the Grand Canyon.

### **For the Mountain Plains Region: Host Region Discount, includes COLORADO**

Any ICMA member from the host region who is attending his/her first Annual Conference is eligible to receive \$200 off the conference registration fee. Any nonmember in the host region who joins ICMA can receive the \$200 registration PLUS half-price ICMA membership for a year.

### **FYI, here are some important dates to keep in mind:**

- **September 7:** — Second registration deadline.

**ICMA**  
Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

## Career Compass #25—"I Hate Office Politics!"

### Question:

*I am a younger supervisor in the Building Department. Recently I presented a good proposal to change the way we do business, better serve the development community, and generate revenue at the same time. Some colleagues who are aligned with the Chief Building Official didn't want to see the change, lobbied against my idea behind closed doors with the Building Official, and made some deal resulting in a cosmetic change in procedures which is no change at all. So my proposal got quickly shot down.*

*Once again, organizational politics got in the way of a needed improvement. I hate politics and game-playing. I don't play favorites or trade favors. How can I be more successful and avoid these sleazy office politics?*

### Frank's Response:

I can understand your frustration but organizational politics will never disappear. They are a part of organizational life. To think otherwise is magical thinking.

#### **Politics are Good**

As suggested by Ron Ashkenas in an *hbr.org* blog piece "Take Advantage of Office Politics," organizational politics are in fact good for the organization. First, the early indication of "politics" is a warning sign that different organizational groups or stakeholders may have concerns about your idea or proposal. You need to take heed. By sensing some internal or external opposition, you can take corrective action.



Second, politics promote dialogue and even debate which is good for an organization. Without debate, management may rubber-stamp ideas from influential or "well-connected" factions without adequately vetting the ideas.

Second, politics promote dialogue and even debate which is good for an organization. Without debate, management may rubber-stamp ideas from influential or "well-connected" factions without adequately vetting the ideas.

#### **Embracing Politics**

"Politics" are about exerting influence. Instead of trying to avoid politics, you must embrace them.

While some politics and power come from "back-room" deal-making, you can focus on the power and influence that come from connections, shared ideas and collaboration.

To achieve a more positive hearing of your ideas, you certainly want to enhance your relationship with the Chief Building Official (see Career Compass #12—"Communicating with Your Boss.") However, you need to go beyond relationship-building with the decision-maker.

Here are some strategies to become more astute in making organizational politics work for you and your ideas.

#### **Strategy #1—Commit yourself**

If you want others to commit their support, they need to see your passion and commitment to the idea. Why should others get invested in your proposal if you are not visibly enthused about the possibilities?

#### **Strategy #2--Draw a political map**

You need to understand the lines of social connections and informal influence between key players and stakeholders inside and outside the organization. Then you can engage those players based on

## Office Politics, cont.

addressing the following questions:

Who will benefit from my idea and may support it?

Who could be negatively affected by my idea or perceive it as a loss of resources, influence or status and may therefore resist the proposal?

Who is the real decision-maker and to whom does that person relate?

Who might influence the decision or outcome?

### Strategy #3—**Engage in authentic ways those who may be affected**

Once you identify the potential players who may be affected or who may perceive a positive or negative outcome, you must reach out to them. As you engage them in several conversations, you need to focus on asking questions, listening, identifying their interests, and integrating at least some of their interests into your plan. By getting their “finger prints” on the proposal, the proposal may become their proposal. Or, at the very least, they may not actively oppose the proposal.

If after several conversations, you encounter opposition, you need to accept it and then move on to conversations with other people. It is better to identify substantial opposition from some groups early on in the engagement process.

In terms of engaging these other players in conversations, you want to create an **authentic** relationship. An authentic relationship is developed when you are genuine and transparent. You need to not just describe your proposal with all the benefits, but also identify some of the potential negatives. In the process, you must also convey why the idea is important to you. This kind of authenticity deepens your connection, builds trust, and provides the foundation for some joint action.

As part of the authentic engagement effort, it is a good idea to offer someone who supports the proposal some real work to do, no matter how small. As Schlesinger, Kiefer, and Brown point out in their *hbr.org* blog piece “How to Create Raving Fans,” you need to engage supporters in some tangible task (such as reaching out to other colleagues or sending their ideas in an email to you). Immediate action cements support.

### Strategy #4—**Frame your idea or proposal in different ways**

By conducting “listening sessions” with various people or group representatives, you can discern their values, perceptions, and interests. Then, depending on their values and interests, you can develop a different “frame” for different players.

For a painting, a blue frame brings out or accentuates the blue in the painting. Likewise, by emphasizing different aspects of a project proposal, you can refocus people and tie your proposal to their interests or priorities. In your situation, your proposal to better serve the development community can be framed as a customer service enhancement, an economic development benefit, a revenue generator, or a way to better address the Council’s agenda.

### Strategy #5—**Retool the proposal**

Based on engaging others, you can retool your basic proposal to incorporate other ideas or minimize opposition. This may require some compromise, but remember that “politics is the art of the possible.”

### Strategy #6—**Build alliances**

To become a better political player, you must help others and support their reasonable ideas

## Office Politics, cont.

and efforts whenever possible. Then you can ask for their support when you need it. In other words, if your proposal to better serve the development community is important to you, it is a good time to “cash in some chips.”

### Strategy #7—**Use a sponsor**

Now that you have attracted additional support and minimized opposition, you can further campaign for the proposal and build on your initial support base.

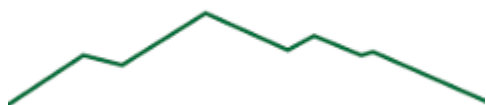
As part of your campaign, you may wish to identify and engage a sponsor for the proposal. The sponsor can be someone who is a “higher-up” or well-regarded by the decision-maker or the organization as the whole.

### **Don't Withdraw. Engage.**

Don't use politics as an excuse for losing or withdrawing. Embrace organizational politics and make good things happen.

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*Career Compass* is a bi-monthly column from ICMA focused on career issues for local government professional staff, and appears in ICMA's JOB newsletter and online. If you have a career question you would like addressed in a future *Career Compass*, e-mail [careers@icma.org](mailto:careers@icma.org) or contact Frank directly at [frank@frankbenest.com](mailto:frank@frankbenest.com).



## “What’s Your Leadership Brand?”

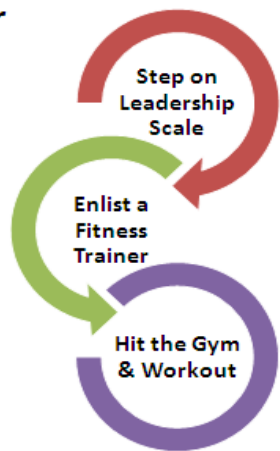
The term ‘brand’ has become ubiquitous, but typically as it applies to an organization and not as much to an individual. Your leadership brand at its core is the protagonist necessary to remain successful. The idea that simply working hard is how to get your ticket punched to remain successful has been discarded...with emphasis!

According to Norm Smallwood, noted author and consultant, “a leadership brand conveys your identity and distinctiveness as a leader. It communicates the value you offer. If you have the wrong leadership brand for the position you have, or the position you want, then your work is not having the impact it could. A strong personal leadership brand allows all that's powerful and effective about your leadership to become known to your colleagues, enabling you to generate maximum value.”

In today’s economy possessing a high level of change acumen, being fluent in people development and succeeding in an ambiguous environment have emerged as essential competencies to your leadership brand. Here’s a suggested workout routine to help you immediately strengthen your personal leadership brand:

**Step on the Leadership Scale.** Participate in a meaningful 360-degree feedback process so you can obtain a baseline of your strengths and opportunities for improvement. Not intended to be a substitute for a performance review, assessment is important because it will provide you an understanding of where you are now: what are your current strengths, the level of your current leadership effectiveness, and what are seen as pri-

## Building Your Leadership Brand



many development needs. In the context of your everyday work, you may not be aware of the degree to which your usual behaviors or actions are effective; in the face of a new challenge, you may not know what to continue doing and what to change. Even if you do realize that what you are doing is ineffective, you may believe the answer is to just work harder; it may not occur to you to try a new strategy. But when a program provides feedback on how you are doing and how you might improve, or provides other means for critical self-reflection then you are more likely to understand your situation and to capitalize on a learning opportunity.

One important function of assessment data is that it will provide you a benchmark for future development. Another is that it will stimulate you to evaluate yourself:

*What am I doing well?*

*Where do I need to improve?*

*What are others' views of me?*

*How do my behaviors impact others?*

*How am I doing relative to my goals?*

*What's important to me?*

**Enlist a Fitness Trainer.** Now that you have your Feedback Report from the 360-assessment it's time to enlist a qualified, seasoned Fitness Trainer to help you translate your feedback into a tailored Individual Development and Training Plan (IDTP). The completion of an IDTP is in alignment with brand strengthening efforts which is to prepare you for future opportunities by developing your talent; in other words, recognizing the needs first and then developing your talent and capabilities to satisfy those needs is where leadership brand building proves its value. Preparing an IDTP is a process, of planning activities that will narrow the gap between what you can already do and what you should do to meet future work requirements

**Hit the Gym.** Your IDTP identified specific development and training actions you should pursue to strengthen your brand so it's time to lace 'em up and get a good sweat going! Cautionary tale alert, don't be the guy at the gym who only works out his upper body but has legs that could crumble when a stiff breeze blows in; in other words, training alone isn't the solution. Your leadership brand grows exponentially not by doing more of what you are already doing well, but by participating in development opportunities where you're stretched into a new discomfort zone. Actively seek out new challenges and keep your mind moist by attending a webinar or reading our e-newsletter, Moving Forward, as you transition from the leadership brand you have to the leadership brand you want.