

Civility in the Chambers: Impacts on Employee Attraction & Retention

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Meet Your Panel



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Audience Question

- ▶ Who has consistently wild meetings?
- ▶ Wild Moments?
- ▶ Fairly mellow?



Why Civility Matters

- ▶ Prospective employees may hesitate to join an organization knowing that there is a lack of civility
- ▶ Employees want to feel respected and cared about
- ▶ They want to make a positive impact and identify with the organization's values



Why Civility Matters (cont'd)

- ▶ When leaders behave disrespectfully employees become less committed to their work
- ▶ Such an environment erodes trust
- ▶ Employees start looking elsewhere for employment opportunities



Cal-ICMA Talent Initiative

- ▶ Three goals:
 - ▶ Strengthen ability to compete for employees
 - ▶ Increase the pool of talent for top jobs
 - ▶ Engage local government in a conversation about talent acquisition and retention



Why Should You Care?



If You Don't Have
the Right People,
You Can't
Get Stuff Done!



We Asked: What is Your
Employee Value Proposition?

- ▶ Why Would A Talented Professional **Want** to Join and Stay With your Organization?
- ▶ Why Would A Talented Professional **Be Reluctant** to Join and Stay with Your Organization?



Cal-ICMA Talent Initiative

Download Talent 2.0 Report:

cal-icma.org/talentinitiative

Cal-ICMA
California Consortium
A State Affiliate of ICMA

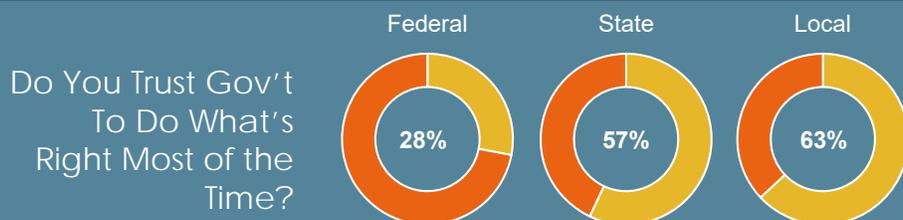
Key Findings

- ▶ Organizational culture (incl. political culture) is key to attracting & retaining talent
 - ▶ Culture > Money
- ▶ We can no longer rely on “stealing” talent; we need to grow our own
- ▶ Local gov’t has competitive advantage regarding meaning & purpose



Key Findings (cont'd)

- ▶ We aren't telling our story
 - ▶ The story we tell accidentally often matters more
- ▶ Talent retention is about learning, challenge, & engagement
- ▶ Emerging leaders need to develop "soft" leadership skills
- ▶ **Elected officials have key role to play**



All Eyes Are On You!

- ▶ Be mindful of how civility on the dais impacts an agency's reputation
- ▶ Your employees are likely the most frequent viewers of your Council Meetings
- ▶ If you watched your Council meetings on video, would you want to work for your agency?



Stand Up For Staff

- ▶ Focus on policy, not people, when debating issues
- ▶ When speakers belittle the City team, communicate that personal attacks will not be tolerated
- ▶ It's fine to disagree with and critique staff's work
 - ▶ Stick to the content, not the person



Help Staff Prioritize

- ▶ If everything is a Number One Priority, nothing is a priority
- ▶ Be clear on where new projects fall among current priorities
 - ▶ Be prepared to temporarily suspend other missions if a key project needs focus
- ▶ Be clear and consistent in your directives
 - ▶ Changing directives and uncertainty cause anxiety, delays, and turnover



Manage Evening Commitments

- ▶ Night and weekend meetings are a given
 - ▶ But they aren't always necessary
- ▶ Supplement public meetings with online engagement tools that can gather feedback 24/7
- ▶ Look for ways to allow staff, policymakers, and residents to spend more time with their families
- ▶ Show appreciation when they stay for late night and weekend events



Create a Culture of Appreciation

- ▶ Preparing a staff report takes more time and brain power than you might think
- ▶ Delivering a presentation to the city council is a big deal to new employees
- ▶ People perform better when they are comfortable
- ▶ When they look good, everyone looks good
- ▶ Participate in employee recognition events and other celebrations



Welcome New Faces

- ▶ Provide opportunities for staff at all levels to hone their public speaking skills
- ▶ Provides a chance to learn and develop skills
 - ▶ More interesting than the same few people every week
- ▶ Meet future leaders
- ▶ A simple acknowledgement can significantly boost morale
 - ▶ E.g., a special pin after employee's first presentation



Fund Employee Development

- ▶ Employee training is a business imperative
- ▶ Instead of asking, "What if we train employees and they leave?"
- ▶ The question is, "What if we don't train employees and they stay?"
- ▶ To serve the public, employees need the training and tools to be effective and efficient
- ▶ Training is especially important when employees are being asked to do more with less

Be Flexible

- ▶ Adapt to the changing needs of your workforce without compromising service to your community
- ▶ Some positions must have a set work schedule; others do not
 - ▶ Focus on attaining goals vs. set hours in the office
- ▶ Adaptable schedules can boost morale and allow for longer counter coverage
- ▶ Flextime can save costs and accommodate working parents
- ▶ Employees often put in extra hours at home
- ▶ Norm in the private sector



Panelist Discussion



Tell Us About Your Civility Moments



- ▶ Examples of tough moments at the dais
 - ▶ Problems and how they affected everyone
 - ▶ The solutions that followed

Tell Us About Impediments

What are the things **preventing you** from promoting civility in your community?





Tips For Elected Officials

1. Conduct a conversation about your local government's Employee Value Proposition
2. Ensure business-like Council meetings
3. Do not allow personal attacks on anyone
4. Encourage staff to take "smart risks"
5. Create a culture of appreciation



Tips For Elected Officials

6. Provide policy direction...and then let them implement it
7. Support and fund training – demand it!
8. Encourage internships and fellowships to attract new talent
9. Make meetings "safe" for staff
10. Encourage flexibility & wellness programs

Ending Quote

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader."

John Quincy Adams

One Commitment

Starting tomorrow, what is **just one thing** I can immediately put into practice to promote civility in my community?



Resources

- ▶ Cal-ICMA Talent Initiative Website:

cal-icma.org/talentinitiative

- ▶ Talent 2.0 Report
- ▶ Examples of Exemplary Programs
- ▶ Stay Interview Questions
- ▶ Best Practices Articles
- ▶ (Coming Soon!) “Best Places for Talent Development” Recognition

What Questions Do You Have?



What Would You Like To Add?