

Meeting the Challenge of Working Effectively With Elected Officials

City Clerk's New Law & Elections Seminar | December 12, 2018

Panelists:

- Kelly McAdoo, City Manager, Hayward
- Melissa Stevenson-Diaz, City Manager, Redwood City
- Steve Rogers, Town Manager, Yountville
- Moderator: Kevin Duggan, West Coast Regional Director, ICMA

“Gauging the Audience”:

- Attended This Conference Before?
- How Long Have You Been a City Clerk?
- Appointed? If Appointed, Work for City Council or City Manager?
- Paperless Agenda?

Why This Topic:

- Cal-ICMA Survival Skills Project—Goal to Increase the Odds of City Manager Success
- Relationship With Elected Officials Is a Key Indicator of Success and Job Satisfaction
- Areas of Greatest Challenge:
 - Technical Issues: 31%
 - Relationship Issues: 69%
- Can't Take the Relationship for Granted—Needs Focused Attention

Have You Ever.....:

- Had to Talk to a Councilmember About Inappropriate Behavior With Staff, Other Elected Officials, Members of the Public?
- Had to Mediate Between Two Councilmembers?
- Had a Councilmember Ask to Use City Equipment, Facilities or Staff for Personal or Inappropriate Uses?

Have You Ever.....:

- Had an Elected Official Who Was Personally Supportive and Nurturing of You and the Organization's Staff?
- Experienced Harassment or Discrimination From An Elected Official Because of Your Gender or Sexual Orientation?
- Had an Elected Official Get Upset When the Electronic Voting System Failed During a Council Meeting?

Have You Ever.....:

- Asked the District Attorney to Investigate One of Your Elected Officials?
- Had a Councilmember Get Drunk at a Conference or City Event?
- Had to Quit or Leave a Job Because of the Conduct of an Elected Official or the Council as a Whole?

Table Discussion Questions:

- What Are Your Most Significant and/or Frequent Challenges In Working With Elected Officials?
- What Do You Do if a Councilmember or Mayor “Orders” You to do Something?
- What are the Key Techniques You Use to Establish and Maintain a Good Working Relationship With Elected Officials
- What Challenges Would You Like the Panel To Address? “Stump the Managers!”

“Stump the Manager”

15 Best Practices for Working With Elected Officials

1. Always Have Time for Your Elected Officials
2. Help Your Elected Officials Be Successful In Their Roles
3. Develop a Clear Understanding of Your Elected Officials Expectations
4. Effective Communication is the Key—Adjust to Their Styles and Expectations (Within Reason!) While Communicating Equally

15 Best Practices for Working With Elected Officials

5. Be Supportive, But Never Compromise Your Integrity
6. Do the “Small Stuff” Well/Timely and Faithful Follow-Up
7. Always Maintain Your Professionalism/Never Make it Personal
8. Present Facts and Information Accurately and Completely

15 Best Practices for Working With Elected Officials

9. Trust and Honesty Above All Else
- 10: Every Time Your Council Changes Your Job is a New Job—Act Accordingly
- 11: Don't Engage A Councilmember Who Wants to Complain to You About Another Councilmember
- 12: Coordinate Closely With the City Manager and City Attorney (Unless They are Bozos)

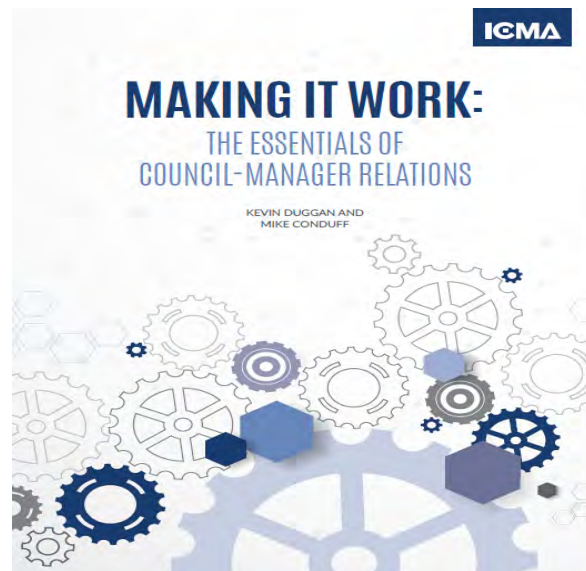
12 Best Practices for Working With Elected Officials

- 13. Assume Good Intent When Challenging Issues Arise
- 14. Ask for and Act On Constructive Feedback
- 15. Treat Councilmembers Equally, But Also as Individuals

QUESTIONS

Resources:

- ICMA (International City/County Management Association): icma.org
- ILG (Institute for Local Government): ca-ilg.org



www.icma.org/en/press

