

City Managers Department Conference

February 9, 2024

**How to Survive
Your Annual
Performance
Evaluation**



LEAGUE OF
**CALIFORNIA
CITIES**

Panelists

- **Dan Keen**, Moderator, Consultant, Daniel Keen Consulting, former City Manager

- **Linda Smith**, City Manager, Dublin

- **Harry Black**, City Manager, Stockton

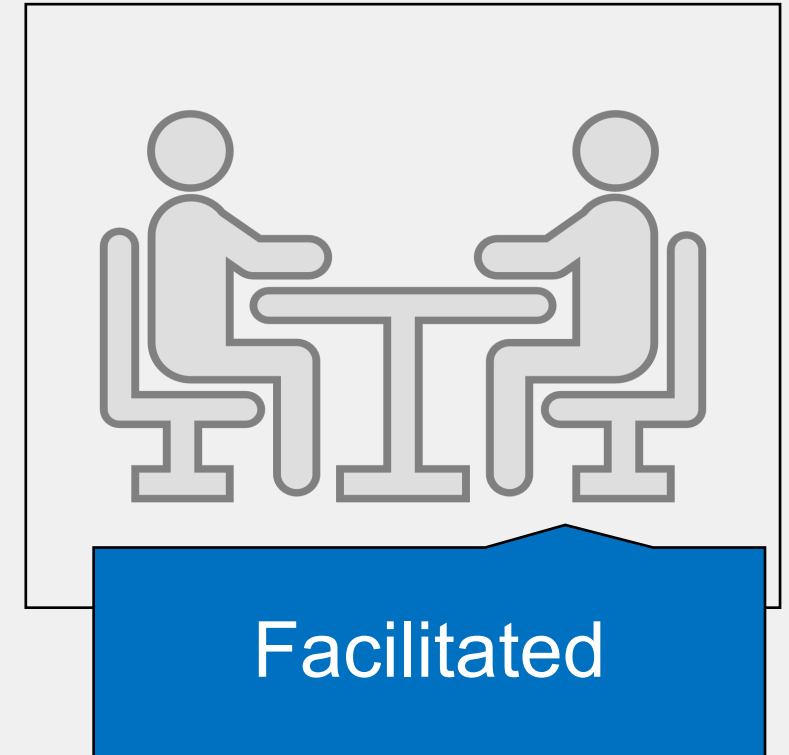
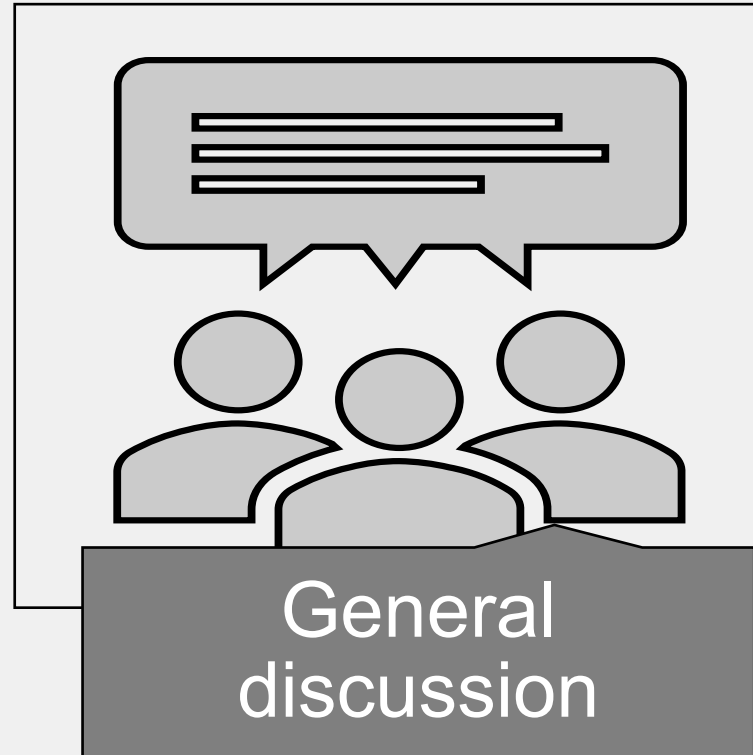
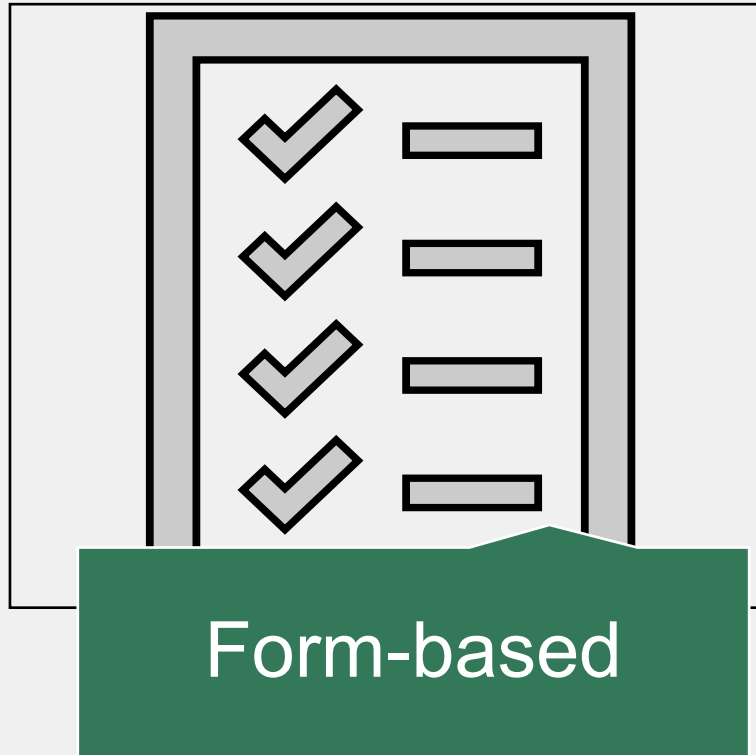
- **Jan Perkins**, Vice President, Raftelis, former City Manager

Why is an Annual Performance Evaluation Important?



- **Regular feedback** from all Council members is essential
- Can help ensure that City Manager's actions are **aligned** with the desires of the City Council
- Sometimes Council members **struggle** to be direct with their City Manager – the evaluation encourages an annual discussion of performance
- Gives the City Manager a **reading** on how they are doing
- Timely evaluations can **identify problems** before they become insurmountable

Three Types of City Manager Performance Evaluations



Form-based evaluations

- Usually **2-3 page form** with listed dimensions, followed by checkboxes and rating.
- May include space for **written** comments
- Each Council member **completes** the form and returns it to the Mayor or other designated person (sometimes the City Attorney)
- Results may be consolidated and may then be discussed **by the Council** in a closed session
- Results are **presented to** the City Manager by the Mayor, a subcommittee of the Council, or by all during a closed session



Problems with Form-based Evaluations

Cumbersome and time-consuming for Council members

Rating standards likely to differ between Council members

Forms may not be completed or only minimally

Who consolidates the feedback?

Assigning numbers oversimplifies City Manager performance

Form may miss key concerns

May result in inconsistent or incomplete view of performance

Stressful for everyone



Facilitated Evaluations



- ✓ *No forms*
- ✓ **Interview-based**
 - One-on-one
 - Open-ended questions
- ✓ **May include “360°”** feedback from department heads (optional)
- ✓ Results are reported **anonymously**
- ✓ Facilitator **consolidates and presents** results with **City Manager present**

Why is the facilitated evaluation better?

Neutral, facilitated dialogue between City Manager and City Council

All members of Council provide input

Big picture view of the City Manager's performance reflecting all Council members' feedback

Easier, faster process – Council members do not have to write

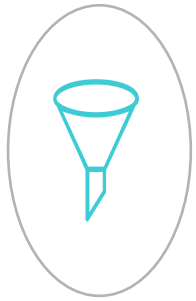
More **meaningful** results

Separates the message from the messenger

Forward-looking and **goal-oriented**

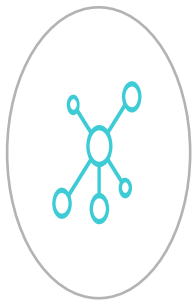
Less stress for everyone involved!

Questions and Comments from Panelists and the Audience



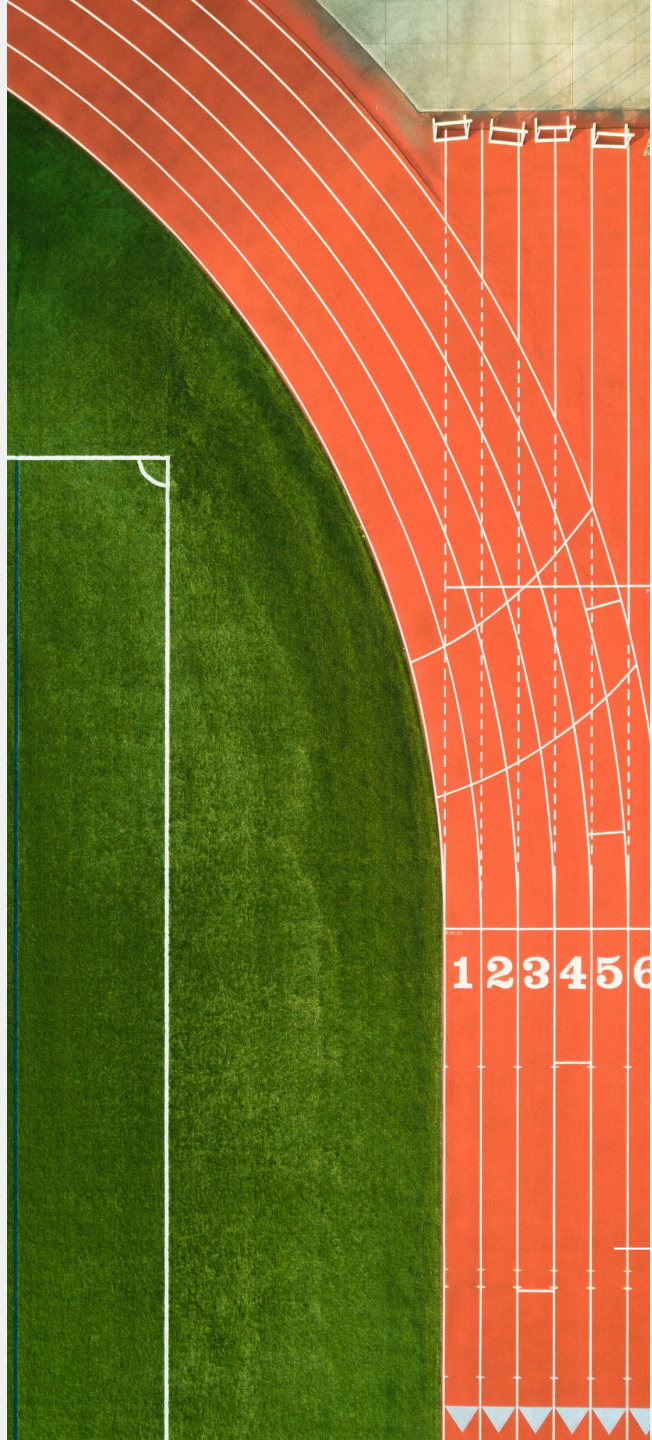
Experiences and Advice

When has an evaluation been most useful? Least useful?



Questions

What would you like to hear from panelists?



Wrap Up



Feedback is the breakfast of champions.

Ken Blanchard

*Leadership and the One Minute
Manager*