LEAGUE OF CALIFORNIA CITIES
CITY MANAGERS CONFERENCE

Powerful Leadership: Effective Tips for Stellar City Managers

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PRESENTED BY:

Gage C. Dungy
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Presented by: Gage C. Dungy

You Have a Lot on Your Hands!

• Leadership/Ethics
• Goal Setting/Performance Standards
• Communication
• Performance Evaluation
• Discipline
• Laws that Impact Employment

Leadership/Ethics
(This is What It's All About)
Leadership

• Your #1 Job and it’s a 24/7 Obligation
• Requires Certain Qualities:
  – Character
  – Honesty
  – Personal Integrity

Who Will Lead If You Don’t?
Are You Up to the Task?

Leadership

• Requires **ALL** of the Following:
  – A Plan
  – Communication
  – Consistency
  – Follow-Through

Ethics

*Do You Walk the Walk?*
*or Do You Just Talk the Talk?*

You Must Demonstrate Ethics Both in Your Actions and Your Behavior
Ethics Assessment

• Do You and Your Employees:
  – Feel responsible for proper expenditure of public funds?
  – Feel responsible for proper use of equipment?
  – Accurately prepare time cards, expense reports, etc.?

Establish and Promote an Ethical Workplace

• Discuss, Promote and Enforce a Code of Ethics
• Recognize and Reward Ethical Behavior
• Make Decisions Which Embody Positive Values
• Set a Personal Example

Goal Setting and Performance Standards

(Tell Them What You Need Them To Do)
What are the Objectives?

- Identify the Objectives:
  - For the City Overall
  - For City Departments
  - For Your Staff

  **Hint:** Look to the City’s Mission and Value Statement, Service Goals and Applicable Regulatory Requirements (and Look at Other Cities as Well!)

Create Objectives for Your City

- What Do You Want to Achieve?
- How is it Supposed to Be Done?
- What Do You Want to Sustain?
  - Quality
  - Quantity
  - Service

Will Your Staff Understand AND Achieve the Objectives?

- To Have Meaning, the Objectives Must Be:
  - Understandable
  - Specific
  - Attainable and Realistic
Communication
(The Most Important Skill)

Communicate the Objectives / Performance Standards

- Every Day
- Formally and Informally
- Meetings
- Evaluations
- At the End of a Project
- When the Objective/Standard Has Been Met
- When the Objective/Standard Has **NOT** Been Met

Tip #1: Determine Plan and Purpose of the Communication

- **Have a Plan:**
  - Why Do You Want to Communicate?
  - What Do You Want to Accomplish?
    - To Build Consensus?
    - To Direct?
    - To Mentor?
- **Have a Purpose:**
  - Is the Communication Necessary?
  - Try to Limit Communications to One Purpose (DO **NOT** Allow Sidetracking)
**Tip #2: Clarify Ideas Before Communicating**

- **Prepare for the Communication**
  - Understand Problem, Idea, Message
  - Anticipate Challenges/Be Prepared to Support Your Position
  - Practice the Communication (And Practice it Again!)

- **Tips for Communicating Problems**
  - State the Facts
  - Gain Consensus that a Problem Exists
  - Explore Possible Solutions
  - Explain Consequences if the Problem or Behavior Continues

**Tip #3: Consider the Environment for Communication**

- **Timing**
- **Setting (Privacy?)**
- **Custom and Practice (As Usual or Changed?)**
- **Method**
  - Memorandum
  - Letter
  - E-Mail
  - Spoken

**Tip #4: Don’t Forget to Listen**

- Be an Active Listener
- Consider Body Language
- Encourage Dialogue
- Convey an Interest
- Seek Implicit Meanings
- Confirm What You Have Heard
- Always Maintain Eye Contact!
Performance Evaluation

(What Every Employee Deserves)

Evaluation is a Positive Process

- Solve Problems Early
- Discuss Performance and Expectations
- Reinforce Positives
- Allow for Improvement Plans
- Document Performance

Is Your City Regularly Evaluating its Employees?

Evaluation Tip #1

- Ongoing Day-to-Day Evaluation
  - Are Performance Standards Being Met?
  - Face-to-Face Discussions
  - Document as Necessary
  - Keep a Supervisor’s File
Evaluation Tip #2

• Preparation for Annual Evaluation
  – Review Last Year’s Evaluation
  – Review Performance Standards and Goals
  – Review Supervisor’s File
  – Review Employee’s Performance
  – Schedule Adequate Time to Prepare the Evaluation
  – Write the Evaluation
  – Schedule the Evaluation Meeting

Evaluation Tip #3

• Prepare Accurate and Honest Evaluation
  – Address Positives
  – **DO NOT** “Sugarcoat” or Duck Difficult Issues
  – Make Specific and Accurate Comments
  – Offer Improvement Plan and Ideas
  – Set Goals for the Next Review Period
  – Be **HONEST** Regarding the Positives AND the Negatives
  – Set Goals to Look Ahead

Evaluation Tip #4

• Conduct Evaluation Meeting
  – Schedule Sufficient Time
  – Prepare for the Meeting
  – Know What it is You Want to Communicate
    • Address Positives First
    • Maintain Respect and Courtesy
    • Avoid Global Statements (e.g., “Always”, “Never”)
    • Encourage Dialogue
    • Listen
    • Stay Cool – No Arguments or Shouting Matches
Discipline
(A Key To Employee Success And City Protection)

At-Will Employment vs. For Cause Employment

- **At-Will Employment**
  - Employment is At the Will of the Employer and Can Be Terminated With or Without Cause
  - Should Still Have a Legitimate Reason for Any Termination or Discipline of At-Will Employee

- **For Cause Employment**
  - Expectation of Continued Employment (Usually Established By Completion of Probationary Period)
  - Disciplinary Action is Rule Based (the “Cause”)
  - Due Process “Skelly” Rights Triggered by Disciplinary Action that has an Economic Consequence Require Notice of Proposed Discipline and Opportunity to Respond and Appeal Right to Final Discipline

Typical Disciplinary Problems

- Excessive Absences
- Excessive Tardiness
- Incompetence
- Insubordination
- Dishonesty/Falsification of Documents
- Conduct Outside Working Hours
- Fighting
Discipline Tip #1

- Maintain an Accurate and Timely Record of Misconduct and Poor Performance
  - Document Misconduct and Poor Performance
  - Document the Impact of the Conduct or Performance
  - Document Counseling
  - Discuss Misconduct with Employee and Follow Up

Don’t Be Complacent – Properly Document Misconduct and Poor Performance to Support Any Potential Discipline

Discipline Tip #2

- Determine Rules, Policies and Procedures Applicable to Conduct and Performance
  - Review ALL Sources of Performance Requirements and Discipline Bases
    - Job Descriptions
    - Personnel Rules
    - MOU Agreements
    - Municipal Code
    - Department Directives

Discipline Tip #3

- Investigate When Necessary
  - Conduct it with HR Assistance
  - Gather Facts to Determine if Rule(s) Violated
  - Cooperate in Investigation
  - Must be Objective and Fair
  - Investigation Should Fit Circumstances
  - Review Facts and Events as a Whole
  - “More Likely than Not” Fact Standard to Establish Wrongdoing for Disciplinary Action
Discipline Tip #4

Choose the Appropriate Discipline:

Non-Monetary
- Counseling
- Oral Reprimand
- Written Reprimand

Monetary***
- Unpaid Suspension
- Reduction in Pay
- Demotion
- Discharge

***These Types of Discipline Require Due Process Appeal Rights for For Cause Employees

Discipline Tip #4 (Cont’d)

Factors to Consider in Determining Appropriate Discipline:
- Nature of the Conduct
- Employee’s Prior Discipline (If Any)
- Discipline of Other Employees for Similar Conduct
- Notice of Rule(s) the Employee Violated
- Impact of Conduct on the Public or Organization
- Other Aggravating or Mitigating Factors

Laws That Impact Employment
(You Need to Know These)
Employment Laws

- Discrimination/Harassment/Retaliation (FEHA and Title VII)
- Disability Accommodation (ADA and FEHA)
- Leave of Absence Laws (FMLA/CFRA, PDL, Workers Comp, Paid Sick Leave Law, etc.)
- Wage and Hour (FLSA)
- Labor Relations and Union Activity (MMBA)

Final Thoughts

- Leadership is a 24/7 Job.
- Stay Focused.
- Be Mindful.
- Success Will Follow.

Thank You!

Gage C. Dungy
Partner | Sacramento
Phone: 916.584.7000 | gdungy@lcwlegal.com
www.lcwlegal.com/gage-dungy