

New Mayors and Council Members Academy

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Strengthening California Cities
through Advocacy and
Education

Developing an Effective City Council and City Manager Team: The Key To Good Governance and City Success

Hon. Ellen Kamei, Councilmember, Mountain View
Kimbra McCarthy, City Manager, Mountain View
Pat Martel, ICMA West Coast Regional Director

Panelists:

- Hon. Ellen Kamei, Councilmember, former Mayor and Vice-Mayor, Mountain View
- Kimbra McCarthy, City Manager, Mountain View
- Moderator: Pat Martel, ICMA West Coast Regional Director, Retired City Manager



Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.

-Henry Ford

Session Overview

- The Foundation of Effective Governance
- Elements of Successful City Council/City Manager Relationships
- Strategies and Best Practices to Strengthen Communication
- Building a Cohesive Council Manager Team

Good Governance is About...



- Effective leadership by the Mayor and City Council
- Responsive management and leadership by the City Manager
- Meaningful communication: honest, direct, respectful, proactive
- Understanding roles and expectations
- **Fostering mutual respect and building trust**
- Ethics

Attributes of High Performing Councils

- True partnership between Members, City Manager and staff.
- Clarity and respect for roles and responsibilities
- Civility and respect for all
- Conduct effective meetings
- Hold each other and City Manager accountable
- Practice continuous learning

Elements of Successful Council/Manager Relationships

- Mayor, councilmembers and city manager develop a sense of team, working together in furtherance of common purpose
- The team values diversity of leadership style and perspective
- Clear and mutual understanding of respective roles, responsibilities and stated expectations
- **Develop and sustain effective communication** between the chief executive and governing board
- Trust is a crucial characteristic in any successful relationship and **communication is essential for fostering trust**

It's All About Communication



Make time for council/manager conversations and meetings



Clearly define communication expectations



Communicate consistently and equitably



Baseline information provided to all



Clear guidelines for council/staff communications

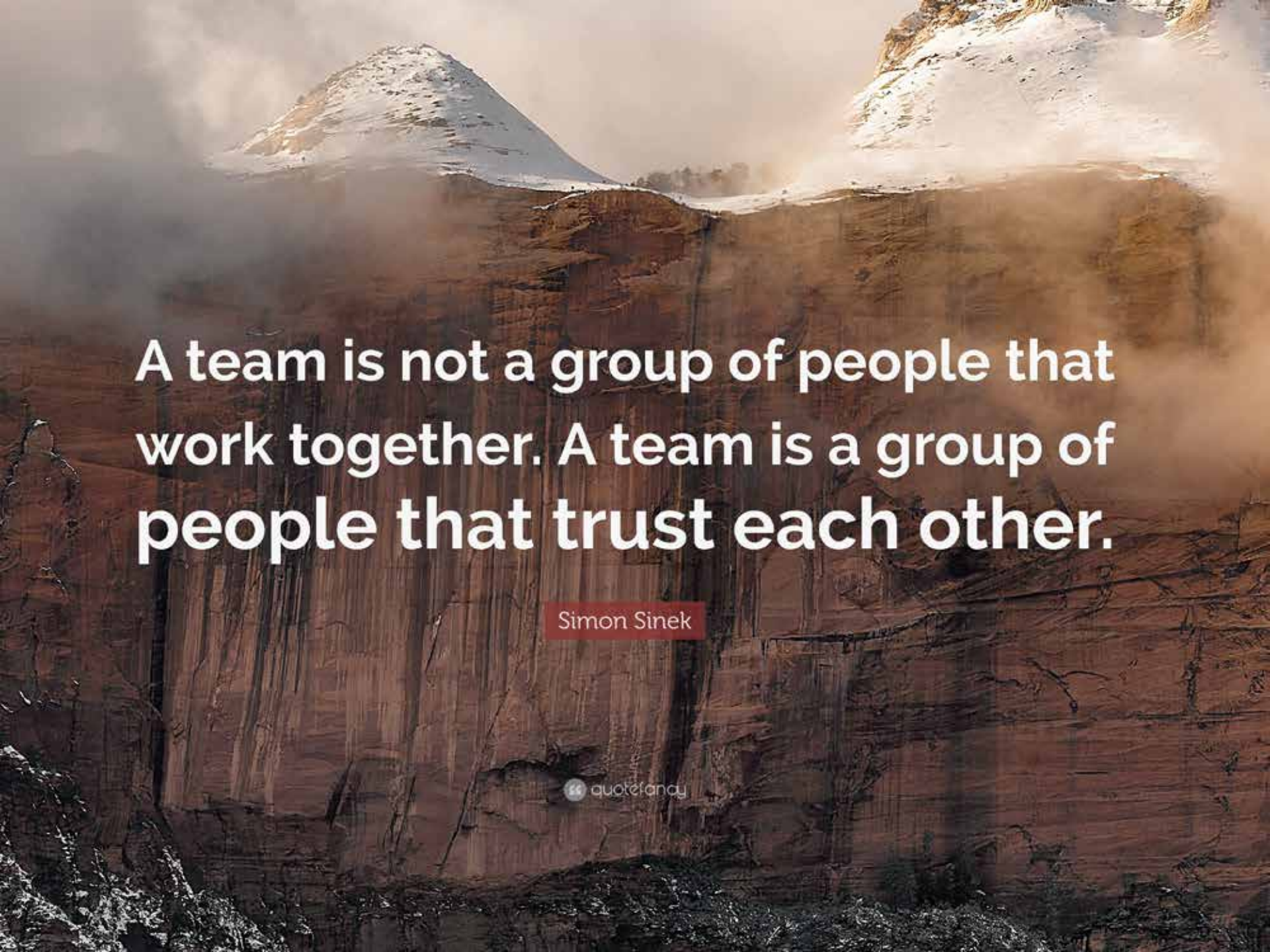
Commitments

Mayor/Council

- Hold the City Manager accountable for achieving Council goals, priorities, and implementing directives.
- Provide direction to the City Manager and s/he directs staff-chain of command.
- Avoid public criticism of the City Manager or staff- discuss concerns privately. Fix the issue not the blame.
- **Model positive behavior to demonstrate effective governance and maintain relationships.**

City Manager

- Support the entire governing board to be productive and successful.
- Help each Councilmember to succeed as an effective elected official.
- Work collaboratively to keep the council focused on priorities and making progress.
- Guide and develop staff and positive organizational culture.
- Engage the community to build trust and confidence in local government.

A dramatic landscape featuring a large, layered rock formation in the foreground, with snow-capped mountains in the background under a cloudy sky.

**A team is not a group of people that
work together. A team is a group of
people that trust each other.**

Simon Sinek

“ quote fancy ”

Leading Your Community: The Challenges

- Technology has changed the governing environment.
- Feedback is instant.
- National and local politics are closely connected.
- Resources are often scarce to meet increasing needs.
- Teamwork is essential.
- Governing is messy.
- You can't please everyone.
- There are no single right answers or perfect solutions.

Emerging Roles

- Establishing models of civility and cooperation.
- Messengers who encourage residents, businesses, the media, community organizations, and others to play an active role in community building.
- Shapers of processes to connect the community and their local government in constructive ways.
- Leaders who bring people together and build trust.

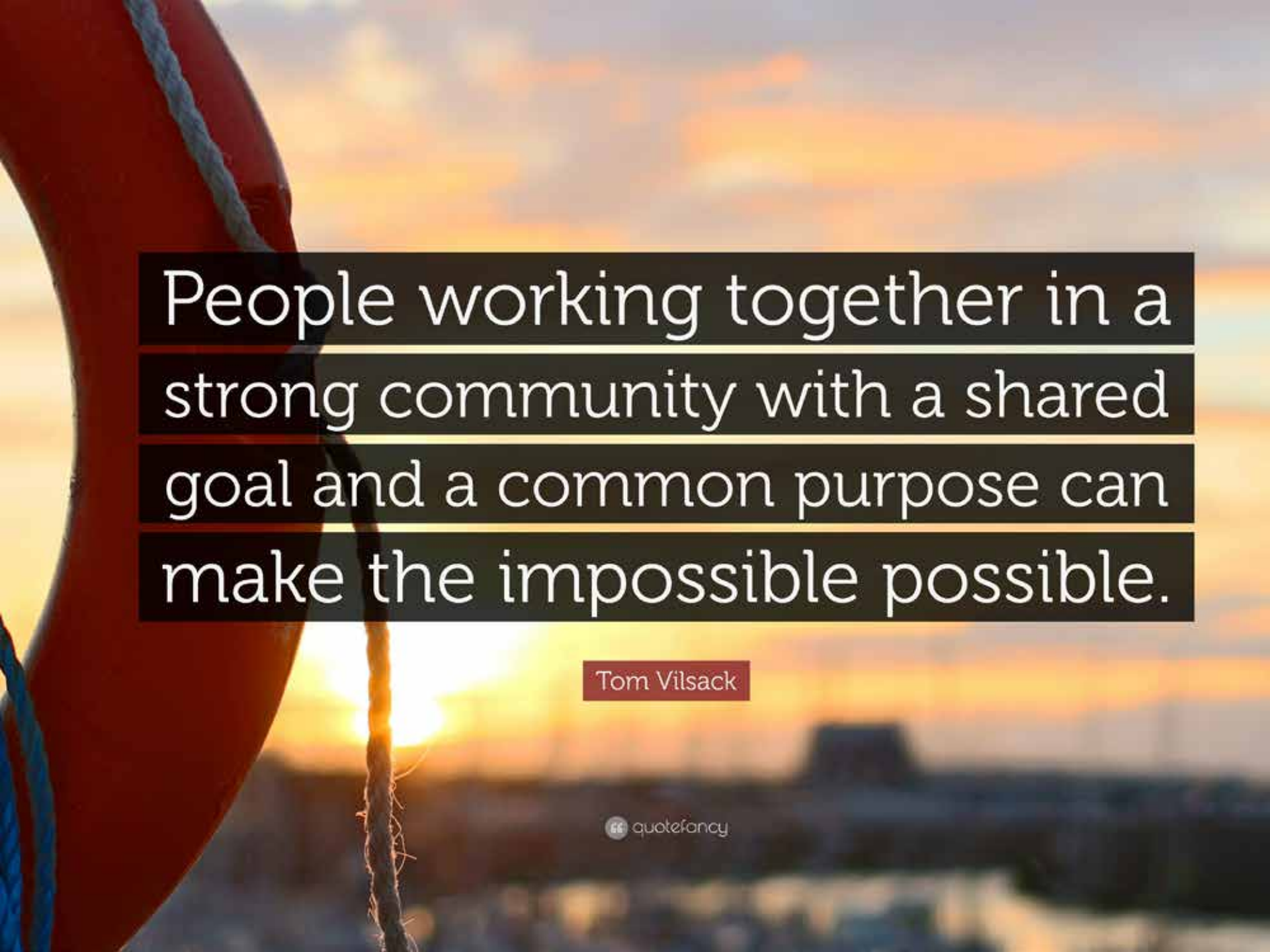
Challenges to Effective Teamwork

- ü Lack of commitment.
- ü Misunderstanding or lack of knowledge about group processes and norms of behavior.
- ü Poor communication.
- ü Personal conflicts.
- ü Political grandstanding.
- ü Lack of willingness to see or consider different perspectives or grounds for compromise.
- ü Representation of only one perspective or one group regardless of the issue.

Successful Council/Manager Relations Deliver Positive Results

- Organizational effectiveness
- Mutual success and fulfillment
- Positive staff morale
- Heightened accountability
- Enhanced community confidence in local government





People working together in a strong community with a shared goal and a common purpose can make the impossible possible.

Tom Vilsack

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Online Organizational Resources:

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

RESOURCES

- Duggan, K., Conduff, M. (2016). Making It Work: The Essentials of Council-Manager Relationships. Retrieved from URL <https://www.icma.org/council/relations>
- Institute for Local Government. (2016). Attributes of Exceptional Councils. Retrieved from URL <https://www.ca-ilg.org>
- Institute for Local Government. (2015). Board/Executive Staff Communications Strategies. Retrieved from URL <https://www.ca-ilg.org>

Additional Resources

- Institute for Local Government. (2015). Leadership & Governance: Tips for Success. Retrieved from URL <https://www.ca-ilg.org>
- Michael, D. (2016). Navigating the Ups and Downs of the Council-Manager Relationship. Retrieved from URL <https://www.westerncity.org>
- O'Connell, G. (2007). Council-Manager Relations: Finding Respectable Ground. Retrieved from URL <https://www.icma.org/councilrelations>

Leading Your Community

A GUIDE FOR



LOCAL ELECTED LEADERS

ICMA

National League of Cities

THANK YOU!