

# Alberta Clarion

Society of Local Government Managers

2006 Issue 4

## Managing Change

When an organization needs to implement changes and the resultant new policies, how does it ensure everyone understands the new requirements, garner support and commitment and successfully manage the process?

Changes in processes and procedures require clear, comprehensive policies and procedure documents to ensure all employees understand and comply with them. Whether you are upgrading existing policies or creating new ones, here is a step-by-step process that can help you introduce new policies and procedures and ensure compliance.

### Prepare

As the owner/manager, you will likely oversee the entire process, from creating the required policies, communicating with staff, to ensuring compliance. It is important that you or the employee designated to lead the process be enthusiastic about the change being made and the benefits to be gained. If you do not care about or support the change, why should anybody else?

### Involve Staff

Change is difficult in any organization. A critical success factor is how well you communicate the objectives and how much you involve your employees

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## Meeting Skills

### ***Tips on keeping meetings both interesting and productive***

Hosted by the Society of Local Government Managers and Eli Mina, Meeting Mentor and Registered Parliamentarian

Love them or hate them, in government meetings are a large part of your life. When staged effectively, meetings can facilitate meaningful discussion, answer difficult questions and produce dynamic results. Having such successful meetings, however, is not the result of luck but rather, as you know, a testament to the hard work and skill of both the chair and planner.

In this one-day workshop, Registered Parliamentarian **Eli Mina** will give you will the tools to be able to stage a successful meeting. He will show you how to make your meetings more **productive, timely and inclusive**. You will see that the rules of order don't have to be scary but - if used effectively - they can actually add value to the proceedings.

Learn how to prevent and deal with typical dysfunctions and deliver quality decisions for your municipality.

Mr. Mina will show you how to plan an effective **agenda**, how to use the **rules of order** sensibly and intelligently, as well he will teach you the **ten key ingredients for conducting successful meetings**.

*"As always, you were amazing – an incredible role model, not only as a meeting chair, but also as an effective communicator."*

Whether you are new to government and need to develop your meeting skills or you are experienced and simply need to them refine them, **Meeting Skills** will give you the tools you need to keeping your meetings both interesting and productive.

### **Where and When:**

October 23, 2006 at the Trumpeter Inn, Grande Prairie,  
October 24, 2006 at the Nisku Inn, Nisku, and  
October 31, 2006 at the in Best Western Port O'Call, Calgary

For more information or to register:

Contact:

Linda Davies, CLGM

By Phone 780 796-3836; Fax at 780 796-2081,

Email at [ldavies@compusmart.ab.ca](mailto:ldavies@compusmart.ab.ca)

Or register on line at [www.clgm.net](http://www.clgm.net)

## Managing Change (continued from cover)

in developing the solution. To do this well, you must first document your objectives, the alternative courses of action considered and the process followed in making the decision.

Next, you must share this information with your employees and ask for their input, so you can respond and possibly make changes to the plan. Consider having a staff meeting to encourage them to ask questions and discuss their concerns. This will help avoid back office discussions where employees complain about what is happening, without having an informed person there to answer or respond to the points raised. Keep in mind that back office talk drains momentum and will undermine the success of any project.

For example, if your company is implementing a technology-use policy:

- . Discuss the reasons for the change, such as the need to address security threats and vulnerabilities inherent in the use of certain technologies.
- . Detail the concerns such as regulatory compliance, network congestion or demand on bandwidth resources.
- . Explain the benefits such as protecting the company's information systems or reducing the threat of viruses.
- . If the changes will have an impact on workflow processes, explain the impact on people's jobs and the training support that will be provided.
- . Explain any other changes that may be required upon implementation.
- . Ask employees to provide their input and suggestions.

The more your employees understand why the changes are needed and the impact, the more they will be willing to accept and support these changes.

### Develop

The third step is to take the input and draft the new policy and procedures. A number of questions should be asked and then documented as part of the background to the actual policy, including:

- .How will the new policy and procedures affect operations overall?
- .Will they have an impact on anyone's job description or employment contract? If so, what steps need to be taken?
- .How will the company monitor and enforce the new policy effectively? Outline the process that will be followed for noncompliance.
- .How long should the policy be in place before it is reviewed again and possibly updated?

Keep in mind that when employees are involved in

preparing or at least reviewing the proposed wording or intent of a new policy, they are more likely to take some ownership. They may also be able to identify missing or unworkable elements.

### Document

Once all these factors are considered, finalize the policy. Documentation of the policy is fundamental for a successful implementation. Guidelines for a good policy include:

- .Keep it simple and clear.
- .Write in clear, concise and easy-to-understand language.
- .Address staff's needs and concerns.
- .Keep it consistent with other company policies.

### Communicate

The company should use one or more ways to ensure all employees know about the new policies. To ensure it is available and easily accessible to everyone:

- .Display copies in key locations within the office.
- .Post it on the company's Intranet.
- .Insert it into the company's policy manual.
- .Include it in the manual for new employees.
- .Send an e-mail to staff.
- .Roll it out at a staff meeting.

### Monitor Compliance

The company must be willing to monitor compliance and enforce it at all levels. If employees realize that another person is not adhering to the policy and there are no consequences, they will feel the policy cannot be important so they will also not comply. For this reason, it is important to take prompt action to deal with complaints or breaches.

### Schedule a Review

The most neglected part of implementing a new policy is ensuring it remains current. When a company creates a new policy, it should also create a review schedule indicating the review date, the person responsible for the review and how changes will be approved and communicated.

### Acknowledge

The last step in the successful implementation of new policies is to acknowledge when objectives are reached and celebrate the achievement. For example, invite everyone to lunch to show the company's appreciation for a job well done. Employees will remember the rewards and recognition and, most importantly, their resistance will be reduced the next time changes are required.

## Building a Better TEAM

I was at a meeting once, a meeting like many so others where time expanded to fit the so-called leader's goal of lecturing us on why we needed to get "up" about the company. Ours was a very large multinational with aspirations of getting much larger, with profits to match.

The leader of the meeting, the president of the company, kept referring to our "group" as a "team" and vice-versa. My education and experience have taught me that these two words are not nearly as similar as some people, like this misguided president, would have you believe.

A group can be described as a number of people who join together because they have something in common. What they share could be as mundane as a desire to wait in line for food at a fast food restaurant. A team, however, is a group of people who share a common set of objectives and goals, and are willing to work together to achieve them. The people at the aforementioned meeting were a group - they had to be there. We were a long way off from being a team.

The strategy that can help groups develop into real teams is called teambuilding. But the process to create and develop all aspects of a team so it performs as a cohesive unit is tricky business.

For example, the team may have objectives, but individuals do as well. The hockey team wants to win, but perhaps the star center wants to score 50 goals. It is possible that the star player will subordinate the team goals for his own - this is not uncommon.

So the question is, how can we get people to achieve and feel good about themselves while achieving the team goals at the same time?

### So what exactly is teambuilding?

First, it should be pointed out that teambuilding will not fix dysfunctional teams. For a variety of reasons, some people do not work well together. Cohesiveness is the attractiveness of group membership - are all the members positively valued? Arizona State University researchers Darwyn Linder and Susan Ledlow break this into two categories: social cohesiveness (interpersonal attraction) and task cohesiveness (the way the skills and abilities of the group members mesh) to allow optimal performance.

Team building exercises that are fun help develop social cohesiveness. Examples include: activities to discover characteristics that team members have in common, designing a team logo and sharing information about achievements.

For task cohesiveness, activities that allow team members to assess one another's talents, strengths and weaknesses are useful, according to the researchers

### Teams need good communication

Another important part of any team is the set of roles and norms they possess. These may or may not be explicitly discussed. Each team should develop ground rules and select the roles that are needed to accomplish the task at hand, and assign those roles to team members.

Common goals are crucial for any team, and communicating early about individual goals is helpful to engage everyone on the team. A great teambuilding exercise is to have a group work together to produce a mission statement.

In his wonderfully illuminating book *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People*, Stephen Covey cites interdependence as a crowning achievement. In terms of a team, each team member should derive success from the success of the others. Functioning independently or fostering competition between group members will lead to poor performance by the group.

A great teambuilding exercise for interdependence is "Survival." In this exercise, teammates individually rank the importance of items they will need to survive after a plane crash in the desert. The team then comes to a consensus on the ranking of the items. Team ranking, almost invariably, is more accurate than most individuals' ranking.

Finally, fostering communication is vital to an effective team. Building an environment where people can ask questions and support one another is crucial to the team concept. Exercises like active listening, giving and receiving feedback, and testing comprehension of verbal messages are all good ways to foster superior communication. ☐

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## in a Lighter Vein

*If at first you don't succeed, then skydiving is  
NOT FOR YOU*

You need only two tools in life- WD-40 and Duct Tape:  
If it doesn't move and it should, **use WD-40**  
If it moves and shouldn't, use the **duct tape**.

**Only Robinson Crusoe had everything done by Friday.**

*Happiness sometimes comes through doors you didn't even know you left open.*

**What impressed you the most about the opposing team?" a reporter asked the losing football coach. The Coach shook his head sadly. "The fact," he said, "that when they ran out onto the field, it tilted in their direction."**

## Changes in your Career?

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### Waiver Policy

#### Membership Fee Waiver Policy

In case of ill health, misfortune or such other circumstances as the Board considers appropriate, the Board may extend the time for payment of, or waive in whole or in part and for any period of time the payment of, any fees, dues and levies, and any arrears thereof, otherwise payable or to become payable under these by-laws (*Section 5.4 (a) Society of Local Government Mangers By-laws*)

The Society realizes from time to time members may find themselves between jobs with their professional fees unpaid and as that may prove to be a financial hardship to the member, the Board will invoke its power to waive in part for a period of time the member's fees.

Over the number of years the Board has reduced fees members who have found themselves "in transition". In transition means: out of work and actively looking for work in local government management.

The Society of Local Government Managers recognizes two categories of certified membership: *active* and *retired*.

A retired certified member who has left the practice in the local government field and is eligible to be the recipient of the Local Authorities Pension Plan benefit or another pension benefit and elects to be pensionable will pay no dues.

A number of guidelines and procedures have been developed by the Board to assist active members in making application for a reduction of their membership fees while in transition

A member must make application to the Board requesting to be considered for "in transition" status stating they are not employed or working in practice of local government management and are actively looking for work in that field.

If the member becomes employed in the practice of local government management during the year the waiver was granted, the member will pay the balance of outstanding fees for that year.

Active certified members pay full dues with the following waiver provisions:

- Unemployed for six months or more: *one-quarter of full dues*.
- Family leave, interruption (minimum six months) of career due to parental considerations: *one-quarter of full dues for maximum of five years, consecutively of in total*.
- Long-term illness or disability (medically unable to work): *full dues waived upon receipt of a medical certificate*.

- Engaged in full-time study at a post-secondary institution: *one-quarter of full dues*.
- Employment income less than \$20,000 per year, not eligible for any other waiver and not engaged in exclusive local government management practice *one quarter of full dues*.

Members meeting these requirements should contact the Registrar requesting an application form from the Society specifying which waiver provision you wish to apply for. The member must complete and return the waiver application promptly to the Registrar at the Society's Office. Payment of reduced dues, if applicable, must accompany all applications.

Contact:

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These requests will be presented to the Board for ratification.

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### **Certified Local Government Manager**

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*Society of Local Government Managers of Alberta*

Registered under the Professional and Occupational Associations Registration Act the Society is a legislative regulated body that issues the professional designation "Certified Local Government Manager" (CLGM).

There are many professional associations out there who are registered under the Society's Act.

For more information go to: [www.clgm.net](http://www.clgm.net)

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### **The Last Word .....**

#### **Congratulations to:**

Retiring members: Deryl Kloster, CLGM (City of Edmonton) and Wayne Horner, CLGM (Town of St. Paul)

#### **Reminders:**

If you have not forwarded your Professional Education Affidavit for 2005, please do so.

If you are retiring, please let us know to avoid billing you for next year's membership fees.

When you are through reading this newsletter, why not pass it on to another colleague to enjoy?

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P.O. Box 308, Bruderheim, AB T0B 0S0 [www.clgm.net](http://www.clgm.net)