Lessons From the Cal-ICMA
“City Manager Challenges and Strategies Report”

Strengthening the Council/Manager Team

“The difference between the game of golf and government is ... In golf, you can't improve your lie”

* Governor, George Deukmejian
Bad Government

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Strengthening the Council/Manager Team

Presenters
• Bruce Channing, City Manager, Laguna Hills, ICMA Board Member
• Martin Gonzalez, Executive Director, Institute for Local Government (ILG)
• JoAnne Mounce, Councilmember, Lodi, First Vice President, League of CA Cities
• Scott Nelson, Councilmember, Placentia, Board Member League of CA Cities
• Dan Keen, City Manager Vallejo, President--City Managers Department
Purpose of Study

• Identify the Key Issues Impacting City/County Manager Success
• Identify Successful Strategies/Best Practices
• Determine How to Add Resources/Improve Accessibility to Resources
• Identify Short and Long Term Implementation Strategies

Methodology

• Survey Monkey Distributed to All City and County Managers in CA (Approx. 500)

• Series of 8 Focus Groups Throughout the State (75 total participants)

Major Findings

• Councilmembers Who Interfere Administratively and Micro-Manage

• Impact of Councilmember/Councilmember Conflict on CM and Staff

• City Councils/Councilmembers Who Don't Understand/Value the Council-Manager Form of Government
Major Findings

- Need for Councils to Set Priorities; Workload Impacts; Dealing With Limited Resources
- Dealing With the Demands of Individual Councilmembers
- Bullying Conduct of Elected Officials

Major Findings

- Areas of Most Frequent Challenge:
  - Councilmember/Councilmember Conflict
  - Financial Issues
  - Personality Issues/Interpersonal Relationships
  - Defining and Respecting Roles (Council/CM Form of Government)
  - Policy Issues

Major Findings

- Most Significant Challenges:
  - Dealing With the Consequences of State Actions/Outside Factors
  - Budget/Financial Challenges
  - Relationships With Individual Council/Board Members
  - Conflicts Regarding Planning/Development Issues
  - Relationships With Unions/Employee Groups
**Overarching Themes**
- Need to Focus on Best Practices for BOTH Elected Officials and Appointed Managers
- Lack of Structured Mutual Support Within the Profession
- Technical Skills vs. People Skills
- Focus on Policy Issues (While Very Important) Detracting from Professional Skill Development/Professional Support

**Major Findings From Survey and Focus Groups**
- Types of Issues That Pose Greatest Challenges:
  - Relationship Issues: 69%
  - Technical Issues: 31%

**Strategies to Address Challenges**
- Enhanced Training for Both Managers and Elected Officials
- Development of “Best Practices” and Model Protocols
- Development of Curriculum/Resources re Form of Government and Roles/Responsibilities
Strategies to Address Challenges

- Better Use of Regional Manager Groups and LCC Divisions to Disseminate Resources/Promote Best Practices
- Promotion of Best Practices re the Selection and Evaluation of City/County Managers

Strategies to Address Challenges

- Development of Enhanced Peer-to-Peer Support for Managers
- On-line Compilation of Resources
- Development of Community Leadership Academies

Full Study Available at:
icma.org/challenges+strategies

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Institute for Local Government

- [www.ca-ilg.org](http://www.ca-ilg.org)
- Leadership and Governance
  - Roles, Responsibilities, Relationships
- Ethics and Transparency
- Effective Meetings
- New to Public Service

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August 2016 Western City Magazine by League President Dennis Michael:

*Navigating the Ups and Downs of the Council-Manager Relationship:*

http://www.westerncity.com/Western-City/August-2016/Navigating-the-Ups-and-Downs-of-the-Council-Manager-Relationship/