




Keeping your Cool: *Life in the Public Realm*

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SOLUTIONS MANAGEMENT

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Life in the Public Realm



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Who is Here?

- > Public or Private Sector
- > Level of Education?
- > AICP?
- > Years in Planning?


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Stories of "Planners Under Fire"

- > Residents have a tendency to resist change
- > Residents may demand some changes
- > Board members have a tendency to console voting constituents particularly around election time
- > Planners/Staff have a tendency to take things personally

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Main Reasons People Resist Change

- > Fear of the Unknown/Surprise
 - When change (especially what is perceived as negative change) is pushed onto people without giving them adequate warning and without helping them through the process of understanding.
- > Mistrust
 - If local government has built up trust over a period of time, the community will be more accepting of any changes.
- > Loss of Security/Control
 - When an announcement about change causes a fear that they are losing something or will be forced to behave a certain way – all without their input (i.e. control).

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Main Reasons People Resist Change

- > Bad Timing
 - As the old saying goes, "Timing is everything." Heaping too much change on a community over a short period of time can cause resistance.
 - If change is not implemented at the right time or with the right level of tact or empathy, it usually wont work.
- > An individual's Predisposition Toward Change
 - Differences
- > Feeling Controlled vs Feeling Lead

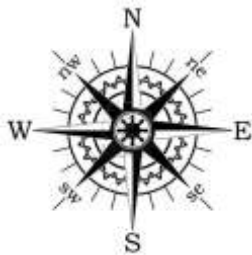
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The Planning Disconnect

- › What we learned in class. Is it a reality?
- › Group Discussion
 - What are some differences that practicing planners see now that they didn't learn in College?

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So, where do we go from here?



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LEADERSHIP & MENTORING

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What is Leadership?

- > Be a Visionary
- > Good Communicator
- > Build Partnerships



"Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results."
General George S Patton

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What is Leadership?

- > Be a Knowledgeable Decision Maker
- > Be an Agent of Change
- > Lead with Passion and Honesty
- > Be a Servant Leader



"Don't tell people how to do things, tell them what to do and let them surprise you with their results."
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Leadership: Diffusing a Bad Situation

- > Learn to Separate the Facts from Emotion
- > Understand the difference between Passion and Conflict
 - Peoples opinions have value whether you agree or not.
 - Take time to listen!
- > Avoid Absolutes and Unbending Opinions

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Leadership: Diffusing a Bad Situation

- › Be Prepared to Talk About Multiple Options
 - When Possible
- › Lead the Meeting
 - Don't allow the public to take over the meeting
- › Know When to End the Discussion
- › End the Discussion with Positive Points



Leadership: Think-It-Through

Think through the planning implications of presenting/participating in a public-oriented setting.

- › Planners Should Know:
 - What is included in the proposed?
 - Who will be impacted by the changes?
 - How it will impact them?
 - How they might react?
 - Understanding reasons why people might resist the changes
 - What is the political environment?



Leadership: Guiding Elected Officials

- › Creating Continuous Awareness of the Code
- › Interpretation of the Code
- › Decision-Making
 - Code-based Decisions
 - Opinion-based Decisions
 - Fact-based Decisions



Mentor

- > A friend of Odysseus entrusted with the education of Odysseus' son Telemachus
- > Someone who teaches or gives help and advice to a less experienced and often younger person
- > A trusted counselor or guide



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Mentoring: Why is it so important?

- > Creates the Opportunity for Collaboration
- > Sets Parameters for goal Achievement
- > Encourages Problem Solving
- > Teaches Future Leadership

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Mentoring: Why is it so important?

- > Enables Staff to Deal with and Learn from Diversity
- > Teaches "Active Listening" and Confidence
- > Opens the Lines of Communication for Older and Younger Generations
- > Most Important: Reinforces Staff Retention

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Helpful Hints: Know your Audience

- > Ethnic Background
- > Age Diversity
- > Male vs. Female
- > Knowledge of the Topic
- > Proximity to the Subject Matter
- > Be an Educator
 - Encourage Residents to Listen

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Helpful Hints: How to Run a Meeting

- > Manage the Agenda
- > Keep the Meeting Moving
- > Set up the Room for Success
- > Use Roberts Rules for Small Gatherings

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Helpful Hints: Know How to React

- > Lay Some Ground Rules
 - Two people talking at one time
 - Stating the same opinion over and over
 - Turning over the podium
 - Interruptions
- > Avoid Buzz Words
- > Slow Down your Speech Pattern

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Helpful Hints: Know How to React

- › Refrain from Pointing
- › Restate a Resident's Position
 - Let them know you heard them
- › Projection vs Talking Loud



Helpful Hints: Offer Key Phrases to Pacify

- › "I'm glad you asked that question"
- › "I can see you are upset"
- › "I respect your position on this issue"
- › "We have discussed your complaint to great length"
- › "I think I understand how you feel"
- › "I'm sorry about your inconvenience"
- › "You sure have a problem; lets see if we can find a solution together"



Helpful Hints: Keeping your Cool

- › Pause
 - Collect your thoughts
- › Turn attention
 - To someone who might be able to re-educate
- › Verify known facts
 - Reiterate big-picture benefits
- › Do not take things personally
- › Ask
 - "What do you think is fair?"
- › Reiterate what you can do
- › Remain calm
 - Keep a calm tone of voice

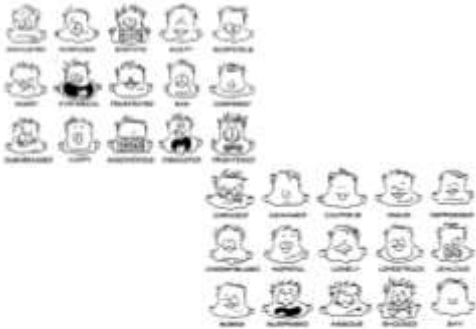



Helpful Hints: Feel, Felt, Found

- › Acknowledge a resident's feelings and offers explanation in a way they can listen.
 - I understand how you could **feel** that way
 - Others have **felt** that way
 - And then they **found**, after an explanation, that this policy protected them, so it makes sense.

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How do You Feel Today?



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- › Questions or Comments?

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