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TOGETHER AGAIN



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Practical Supervisory and Personnel Practices in Small Communities

Patricia (Tricia) Vinchesi, ICMA Northeast Regional Director

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Session Overview

Know Your Authority

Legal Compliance

Policy Development and Implementation

Risk Management

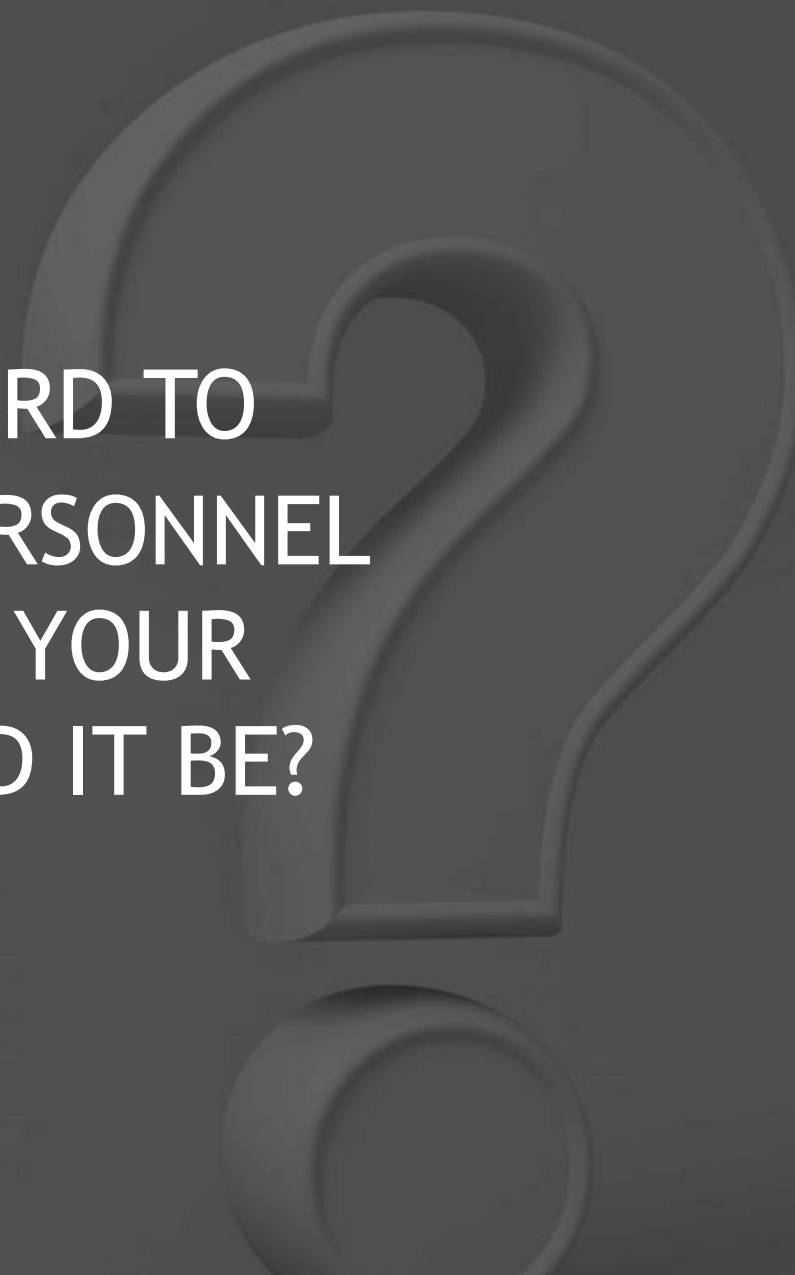
Employee Relations and Labor Management

Empowering Managers - The Reluctant Supervisor

Training, Professional Development and Networking

Employee Retention and Succession Planning, Recruitment

IF YOU HAD ONLY **ONE** WORD TO
DESCRIBE DEALING WITH PERSONNEL
AND SUPERVISORY ISSUES IN YOUR
JURISDICTION, WHAT WOULD IT BE?



Know Your Authority

Supervisory and appointing authority

- ▶ While CAO's and managers have this, the lines can sometimes get crossed with overly enthusiastic electeds particularly in smaller jurisdictions
- ▶ Is it documented and understood or implied or tacit?
- ▶ Is your job description up-to-date?
- ▶ How does your authority and use of it translate into supervising your department heads and staff? Is the chain of command clear?
- ▶ Communication requests: to and through staff, (especially public safety), dealing with press, other agencies, use of social media, public information, exchanges with residents?
- ▶ What does your management style say about how you use your authority?

Legal Compliance - Know the Landscape You Operate In

- ▶ Local bylaws and ordinances
- ▶ Federal laws
- ▶ Provincial laws, rules, regulations
- ▶ Special districts
- ▶ Policies, handbooks, guidelines
- ▶ Union contracts and employment agreements
- ▶ Independent contractor agreements



The Difference between Authority and Responsibility



- ▶ You have a responsibility to ensure a professional work environment
- ▶ You need to set expectations and create an environment where employees are competent, respected and held accountable
- ▶ You also ensure and provide safety, growth and goal attainment to move the organization forward

Policy Development and Implementation



Risk Management and Employee Safety

Don't leave things to interpretation and chance; it's easier to manage when you can point to a policy or work rule

- ▶ Reinforce importance of supervisor knowledge of union agreements and policies
- ▶ Ensure supervisors know reporting requirements when injuries occur
- ▶ Be familiar with policies that cover risks and reporting requirements to ensure you get coverage you are paying for such as use of force, auto and property
- ▶ help employees recognize unsafe or unhealthy working conditions
- ▶ Safety policies in handbooks and work rules regarding equipment use
- ▶ Review accident data, inspect facilities, trainings create awareness - share at departmental meetings
- ▶ Debrief after major events and risk mitigation
- ▶ Consistent application of policies, learn what resources are needed
- ▶ Provide regular feedback and positive reinforcement



Addressing Employee Behaviors

Personnel issues exist in every organization. If left to fester they can become a big headache and can lead to potential liabilities

- ▶ Provincial safety laws
- ▶ Investigations, documentation
- ▶ Progressive discipline
 - ▶ Use your probationary period wisely!
 1. Coaching, performance improvement plans (PIP), last chance agreements
 2. Equip staff to recognize early signs of performance changes because that starts the conversation
 3. Offer support and resources, EAP's
- ▶ Up-to-date job descriptions and performance evaluation programs
- ▶ Avoiding workplace litigation through training, setting expectations, documenting



- ▶ Employee well-being is about managing expectations so that work and processes don't affect well-being and sanity
- ▶ Not just about job performance anymore
- ▶ Supervisors and managers need to be sensitive to employees that may be stressed and recognize that everyone handles it differently - Silk Ring Theory
- ▶ 24/7 technology created new pressures
- ▶ Mental health issues hard to identify because of fear of disclosure, stigma
- ▶ We can help by normalizing mental health conversation and initiatives in the workplace, focus on priorities, not everything, allowing flex time within reason, emphasizing “unplugged” time and customizing career paths
- ▶ Programs such as wellness consulting, tobacco cessation, nutrition education, and disease prevention can help

Growing Challenge of Mental Health Awareness and Well-Being

Employee Management/Labor Relations

Effective leadership = meaningful communication = understanding roles = fulfilling expectations*

Communicating with employees - how you relate to your employees is directly related to your success. Post pandemic there is a new emotional component to management

- ▶ Meetings with department heads

 - Purposeful - information getting/giving, transparency

 - Solicitous - seeking opinions/problem solving

 - Building a collaborative team - are staff free to speak up if they disagree? To be inclusive there needs to be no fear of being criticized when sharing honest opinions

- ▶ Union negotiations

 - Preparation is key - set goals, know what your current costs are and if you are competitive

 - Be fair and consistent, keep council informed, agree to what is sustainable

 - Contract administration - are you following the contract? What has been problematic?

Huddle

You are in the process of negotiating the police contract and have met several times. You are still apart on wages but have good labor-management relations and are confident you will reach resolution

One of the newer union officers went to high school with the mayor and they are good friends. The mayor has told you that the he had “heard” that you are holding back unfairly on a fair wage and shouldn’t you agree to the increase the union wants?

How do you respond?



Empowering Managers - The Reluctant Supervisor

One of our important roles is to empower managers to:

- ▶ Lead
- ▶ Delegate
- ▶ Grow the skills sets of our employees - especially “soft” skills
 - ▶ team building, team leadership, conflict resolution, listening and communication

Staff is an extension of you - with attendant exposures and liabilities

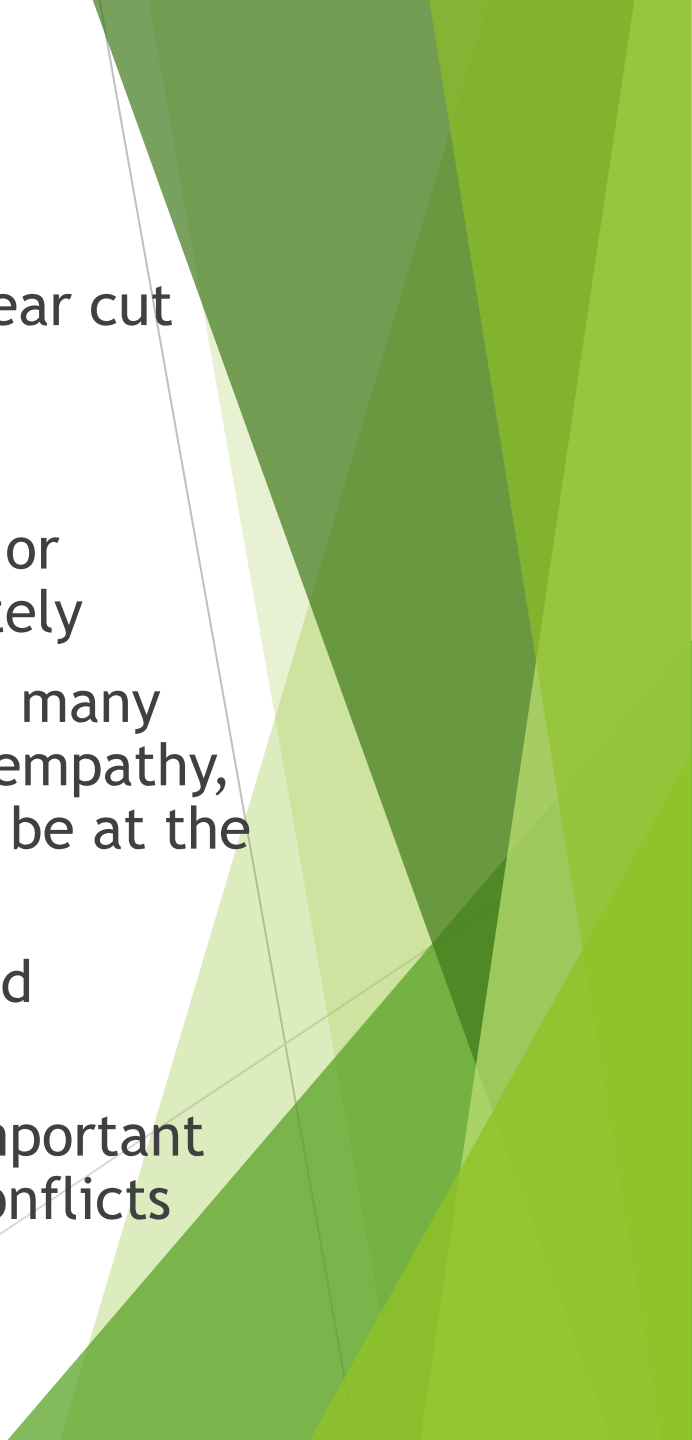
1. Establish expectations and ground rules
2. Build trust by not letting them struggle
3. Hold accountable
4. Show appreciation by recognizing good work focusing on positive not negative
5. Look for opportunities to have fun! Helps morale and improves monotony of work



- ▶ Encourage department heads and supervisors to be good leaders and take have “the conversation” when personnel issues arise
- ▶ There are consequences to looking the other way
- ▶ Help supervisors deal with performance issues and be a “coach” not just supervisor
- ▶ You can provide the tools and resources and encourage non-reporting staff to come to you as a resource in the absence of HR
- ▶ Always be fair and consistent in each application as each decision sets a precedent and everyone is watching



It's Always Cloudy in HR

- ▶ Personnel issues are thorny and rarely clear cut
 - ▶ The importance of thorough fact-based investigations is critical
 - ▶ Instances of threats, workplace violence or harassment must be dealt with immediately
 - ▶ Conversely, the pandemic has resulted in many new issues that our employees face and empathy, compassion and understanding must also be at the top of our toolbox
 - ▶ A sense of belonging, diversity, equity and inclusion are vitally important
 - ▶ Mental health resources and EAP's are important partners when dealing with workplace conflicts
- 

Huddle

Jim has been calling in sick every other Friday for the past three months. The foreman has noticed this, but since Jim has been with the community for 25 years and is a good worker otherwise says he deserves some consideration. However, the past week on payroll you noticed that three other employees were out on successive Fridays.

What do you do next?



Employee Retention and Succession Planning

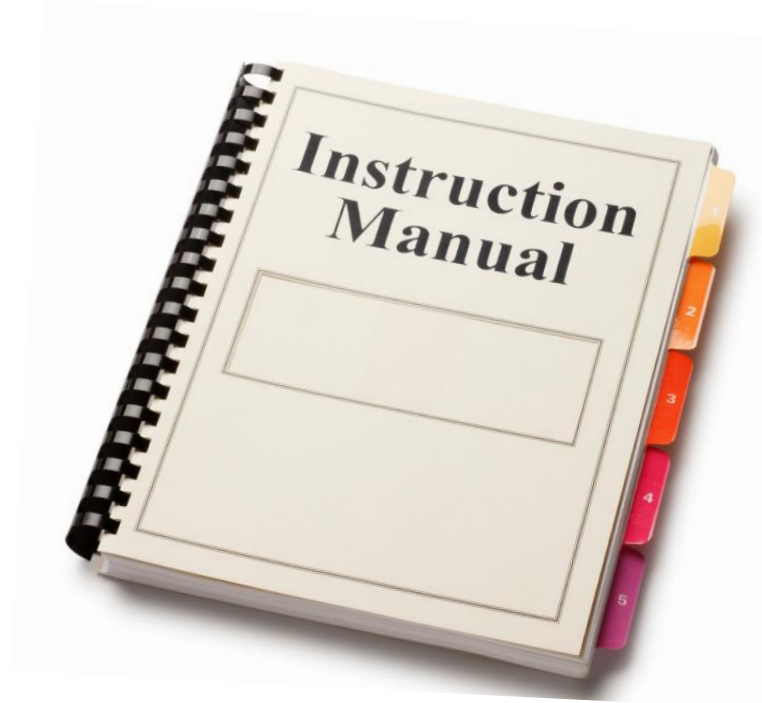
Surveys* say employees are frustrated by lack of recognition, pd, change management, work/life balance, equity, inclusion, and pay

- ▶ Establish ongoing training and professional development
- ▶ Opportunities for ALL staff - support, supervisory and you!
- ▶ Many free resources and webinars
- ▶ Conduct stay interviews, chart individual career plans
- ▶ Potential is the new degree - you know who the rising stars are!
- ▶ Shadowing and stretch assignments can help you identify successors including your own!

Training, Professional Development and Networking

Focus on your staff:

- ▶ Mandatory/essential trainings - cybersecurity, technology advances
- ▶ Developing your department heads
- ▶ Mentoring staff
- ▶ Professional associations
- ▶ Listservs
- ▶ “Sister” or comparable communities
- ▶ Regional opportunities



Recruitment

- ▶ Huge issue everywhere, tougher for smaller communities
- ▶ Requires “out-of-the-box” approaches
 - ▶ Is a degree really required? Test the skill or aptitude
- ▶ What does your “front door” look like?
- ▶ Administrator also needs to always work toward a diverse and inclusive staff
 - ▶ Part of your role just like any other duty in building organizational capacity. You must lead the conversation
 - ▶ Who is in the room and are their voices heard?
 - ▶ Does your staff look like your community?
 - ▶ Start small, educate yourself and then start the conversation

Twitter 2/15/22



“I cannot wait for a job that values in person work, collaboration and creativity. Can’t wait for the feeling of being truly engaged, in a room with other smart people, working together to solve problems and make better work...”

What Do You Offer Now?

A diverse organizational culture that:

- ▶ Provides access to the managers
- ▶ Supports work/life balance
- ▶ Engages employees in a variety of tasks not always in defined role
- ▶ Enables autonomy in the completion of work projects and assignments
- ▶ Has recognition programs for a job well done
- ▶ Conducts job review or reclassifications that allow for non-traditional paths for advancement
- ▶ Has evaluation processes to identify internal staff skills



THANK YOU!

Tricia Vinchesi

@ICMANORTHEAST

pvinchesi@icma.org until 6/16/23

pvinchesi@pavinchesi.com after 6/16/23

413-531-4358

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