

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

Michael C. Van Milligen
Dubuque City Manager

1. PLAN YOUR WORK AND WORK YOUR PLAN

The plan needs to be driven by:

- *Engagement (employee, resident, customer)*
- *Data that focuses on outcomes*

2. INPUT-ORIENTED

Team members should take advantage of the valuable input that can be provided by residents and employees for department decision-making.

Themes for effective use of the guiding principles

- *Believe that people of all cultures and backgrounds provide valuable input*
- *Understand the benefits of receiving input from others*
- *Develop the processes that capitalize on the input of others, and work to remove barriers to participation*
- *Understand the benefits of empowering others*
- *Seek first to understand and then to be understood – Steven Covey*
- *Motivate staff and encourage employee initiative*

3. PROBLEM SOLVERS

Team members' approach to issues should be to focus on what can be done to solve the problem.

Themes for effective use of the guiding principles

- *Create processes that help others be more creative problem solvers*
- *Perceive problems as opportunities*
- *Look to others to help solve problems*
- *Develop an understanding of the various cultural approaches to conflict and learn skills to adapt*
- *Encourage risk-taking*
- *Practice flexibility and assume good intent from participants with whom you disagree*
- *Understand that bureaucracies function best in black and white issues, while most issues are varying shades of gray*

4. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS

Team members can be more effective by developing partnerships with other departments and outside organizations.

Themes for effective use of the guiding principles

- *Form teams around defined tasks*
- *Encourage employee involvement through problem-solving task forces*
- *Develop team processes for decision-making and setting goals and objectives*
- *Facilitate the group process and develop the ability to adapt to various communication styles*
- *Form partnerships that reflect the variety of backgrounds and interests in the community that we serve*

5. ACT WITH A SENSE OF URGENCY

In my opinion, the City Manager's job is multi-faceted in the work to create a viable, livable, and equitable community:

- 1) Most importantly, follow the policy direction of the Mayor and City Council.
- 2) Create processes and a data-driven, high-performance organization including resources that allow employees and partners to be successful.
- 3) Create an atmosphere for the successful investment of capital by private business, not-for-profits, and individuals, while not sacrificing community quality of life attributes.
- 4) By your actions let people know that you **care** with the goal of providing them **hope** that they can achieve their personal goals.

*Success is about Planning, Partnerships and People leading to desired outcomes.
Management Style: Socratic*

SPIRIT *Statement*

S *ervice*

We are responsive.

- Present a positive, friendly attitude in service
- Deal directly with problems
- Take prompt action
- Are sensitive to citizen needs
- Consider citizens valued customers
- Express a “we can do it” attitude
- Are willing to serve and be involved in the community

P *eople*

We care.

- Show concern toward people; their needs and feelings
- Have compassion for the people we serve and with whom we work
- Are dedicated to the community
- Respect self and others
- Encourage personal and professional development

I *ntegrity*

We are honest.

- Are open in our relationships with others
- Seek no favors, special privileges or patronage
- Provide fair and equal treatment to all
- Are dedicated to public service
- Do our best, strive for excellence
- Have high ethical standards

R *esponsibility*

We are accountable.

- Answer for our actions
- Establish and achieve work performance standards
- Provide the best value with available resources

I *nnovation*

We look for better ways.

- Search for creative solutions
- Evaluate current operations and systems
- Change and try new approaches
- Plan ahead, anticipate problems and issues
- Take reasonable risks
- Use common sense

T *eamwork*

We work together.

- Build partnerships
- Accomplish goals
- Encourage involvement for better results
- Support mutual goals
- Celebrate successes and overcome setbacks