

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

Mike Van Milligen
Dubuque City Manager

As a leader, it is my responsibility to not only manage tasks and processes but also to understand and support the emotional well-being of our team members. Emotional intelligence is the cornerstone of effective leadership. Through self-awareness, managing our own emotions, and exercising empathy for ourselves and others, we create a work environment where everyone feels valued and understood. This approach not only fosters collaboration and innovation but also drives long-term success. Let us lead with empathy, nurture a culture of trust, and empower our teams to thrive both personally and professionally.



2007★2012★2013
2017★2019

ABOUT MIKE

I learned my secrets to success from my parents:

- Work hard
- Have a good attitude
- Be humble and kind
- Make good choices
- Family is all about love and respect



Dubuque is a
Five-Time
All-America
City Winner

"The conductor of an orchestra does not make a sound. He depends, for his power, on his ability to make other people powerful."

— Benjamin Zander, Conductor,
Boston Philharmonic

Guiding Principles

1. Be curious.

Curiosity leads to a culture of learning and continuous improvement for our self and our organization.

- Be approachable and open to the input of others.
- Being curious about various cultural approaches and backgrounds allows us to improve communication, navigate conflict, and helps everyone feel like they belong.
- Strive to continually improve methods, process and policies

2. Be problem solvers.

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

- Create processes that allow for creativity and innovation.
- Be willing to ask for help and create a culture that supports risk-taking.
- Adapt decision-making processes to include a variety of voices and communication styles.
- Be data-driven and focus on improving community outcomes for all.

3. Develop Partnerships

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

- Form teams that capitalize on individuals' strengths.
- Develop shared goals, objectives, and decision-making processes.
- Form partnerships that reflect the variety of backgrounds and interests in the community we serve.

4. Hold each other accountable.

Two-way accountability involves both parties taking personal responsibility for their actions and commitments in a constructive and supportive manner.

- Relationships are built at the speed of trust.
- Self-accountability involves holding ourselves to a high standard and demonstrating the behaviors and characteristics we desire.
- Mutual accountability requires consistent communication, and creates an environment where feedback is welcomed and the team works together towards common objectives.

Dubuque operates under the council-manager form of local government.

The City Council are elected by residents and hold policy-making power. They appoint a professional, non-partisan city manager to oversee the day-to-day operations of the city. The council-manager form of government was adopted by citizen referendum in 1920.