

**Master Municipal Clerk and Clerk of the Board Academy
September 2023 Curriculum**

Breakout Session 1 – Wednesday (1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.)

101 - 1st Year: Taking leadership to the next level: Enhancing our leadership competencies and understanding and maximizing our communication style (A) Leadership/Management

This course is required for first-time Academy participants

Successful leaders are self-reflective and self-aware. They understand the distinctions between management and leadership and are conscious of the impacts of their own behavior. Successful leaders are also fully aware of how they communicate and how to connect with others through communication. This session will explore these concepts as well as other leadership competencies such as the difference between management and leadership, how we show up and how our presence impacts others and what compels others to follow you as a leader.

In this session, we will:

- Increase our understanding of the essential competencies of true leaders;
- Enhance our knowledge of the differences between leadership and management;
- Gain insight into why others would want to follow us;
- Deepen our awareness of how we relate to and communicate with others; and
- Gain skills in more effectively relating with others.

Through group discussion, feedback from others, self-reflection and exercises, we will explore our communication style and how that style interacts with and influences others and we will enhance some of our leadership competencies in order to take our leadership abilities to the next level.

This session requires some pre-work in the form of the Success Signals Profile®

Trainers: Patrice Olds, Michelle Bigelow

102 – 2nd Year: Maximizing our potential: Understanding our values and our leadership strengths (A) Leadership/Management

This course is required for those who are attending the Academy for the second time

When the things we do and the way we behave and the way we communicate are aligned with our values, we are choosing to live authentically. This session explores how aligned our values are with the choices we make and the impact that alignment (or misalignment) has on our lives. By understanding our core values and connecting them with our behaviors and the choices we make, we gain insight into how effective we are and just how authentically we are living.

We will examine our own personal leadership strengths through an online assessment prior to the start of the session. You will take the online self-assessment, Strengths Finder 2.0™, and look at your unique talents and strengths through the lens of *Strengths Based Leadership*®. We'll look at how we've utilized our strengths up to now and spend time understanding how to leverage our strengths for maximum results. We will increase our understanding of how our

“blind spots” may impact the effective use of our strengths. And we will explore how our values are connected to and influence our strengths.

103 – Advanced: Understanding and owning the power of your presence

(B) Leadership

This course is required for those who are attending the Academy for three or more times

Presence – the way we move through the world – is the essence of our personal power. Every day we have opportunities to persuade, influence, motivate, attract or inspire others through our presence. Yet some leaders just assume that presence comes along with a job title. Our presence is actually directly related to our intentions, thoughts, and actions...how we choose to “show up”. Research shows that to be seen as trusted and credible, our actions must be in alignment with both our stated and unstated intentions.

Our goal as leaders is to understand what makes up our presence, to feel our presence at our very core – and to be able to connect with it. This powerful and provocative session is based on Kristi Hedges' *The Power of Presence: Unlock Your Potential to Influence and Engage Others*. In this session, we will:

- Gain insight into the power of our presence and its impacts;
- Determine our unique personal presence and increase our awareness of behaviors that affect how our personal presence is perceived by others;
- Uncover the messages from our inner critic, understand their influence on us, and explore ways to quiet the inner critic and even change the dialogue.

By the end of this session, our leadership style will be transformed by the acceptance of our personal power and the expression of our authenticity and presence.

Trainers: Pamela Miller, Jennifer Woodworth

Breakout Session 2 – Thursday (8:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

201 – Transformative Leadership: Leading from the heart with courage

(B) Leadership

THIS SESSION IS ONLY OPEN TO 2ND AND ADVANCED PARTICIPANTS

This session is based on Zander and Zander's book entitled *The Art of Possibility* and William Bridges' book entitled *Transitions*. Zander summarizes that leadership is about vision, people and relationships. And, the leader's job is to SPEAK POSSIBILITY in the face of on-going challenges and transitions.

We will explore different ways of “lifting off from the world of struggle” and instead soar into a “vast universe of possibility.” We will identify the characteristics and impacts of downward spiral conversations and practice ways to shift those conversations to ones that celebrate the possibilities. We'll practice new approaches to enrolling others in our vision and helping others create new possibilities for themselves. We'll assess some of the obstacles to our identifying new possibilities for ourselves and others. Through self-examination, group exercises and dialogue, we will also learn new behaviors associated with transformational leadership and opening up into the world of possibilities.

As these concepts come from the books noted, you are encouraged to read them ahead of time (but not required): *The Art of Possibility* by Zander and Zander (2000).

Trainers: *Pamela Miller, Wandzia Rose*

202 - Maximizing Generational Diversity in Your Organization & Planning for the Future (A) Management

We continue to experience a huge shift of generations in the workforce and in our country. There are a host of challenges and opportunities that are associated with several generations working alongside one another. In this session, we will examine the relative strengths and challenges associated with intergenerational relationships in the workplace. Management issues, both from the perspective of the older worker managing Generation X and Y, Millennials and perhaps even a few Generation Zs, and young managers who find themselves with employees as old as their grandparents, will be explored. We will discuss generational value systems and various motivational stimuli, and learn to be better prepared to effectively communicate and relate to others of different generations. We will learn ways to benefit from the differences and use them as organizational strengths.

We will also discuss options for building succession planning into your organization. Public agencies must plan for the challenge of replacing employees who have already begun to retire, or who will be retiring over the next few years by having solid succession plans in place. We will share and discuss options for attracting and retaining the new leaders of tomorrow.

Trainers: *Patrice Olds, Jennifer Woodworth*

203 - The ABCs of contract management (A) Professional

Contract management is a necessary component of any clerk's office involving a range of oversight from understanding multiple types of agreements, knowledge of insurance certificates, endorsements, and bond documents, the ability to demystify recording and notary requirements, and also includes relationship management both within and outside of the organization. In this session we will share a primer on understanding agreement types and their requirements, as well as explore industry best practices on auditing contract files for completeness to building an efficient tracking system - including clearly defined cross checks and processes that will help keep the contracts ready at our fingertips and our organizations out of lawsuits.

Trainers: *Stephanie Smith, Stephanie Mizuno*

Breakout Session 3 – Thursday (1:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.)

301 – Political astuteness: How perceptive are you? (B) Leadership

Like it or not, politics plays a part in government relations (and other kinds of relations too). How often do you consider the political climate of your agency? Are you even aware of the political climate? Do you ever wonder why your elected officials make the decisions they do and how much political pressure was involved? Do you sometimes wonder why they communicate with you the way they do? In this provocative session, we will use case examples, individual self-assessments and experiences, and group dialogue to explore:

- The nature of politics;
- What it means to be politically astute;
- The impact of community values on elected officials' decision-making; and
- Ways to think politically while acting non-politically.

We will leave this session with a far greater sense of awareness and understanding of what it means to be politically astute.

Trainers: Wandzia Rose, Joelle Fockler

302 – Effective Time Management: What Are Your Priorities? (B) **Management**

All of us at one time or another have wondered where the time goes, or how one person can be so busy. We have also no doubt felt overwhelmed with things to do and find there is not enough time to get them done. How do we deal with the endless emails, constant phone calls, infinite meetings, and those pesky deadlines that never go away? Perhaps it is time to take a look at what we are putting on our plate and how we are actually filling our day. In this session, we will take a close look at how we actually spend our time, discover what our priorities really are, and learn ways to fill our day with those things that really matter and make a difference.

We will also:

- Explore ways to mitigate and minimize interruptions at work;
- Learn about new tools and methods to help us better manage our time (both process and technology);
- Identify strategies to deal with concentration and focus when they become a challenge;
- Learn to identify and diminish time-wasters;
- Understand the value of a "yes" and a "No"; and
- Learn how to place a "value" on our time.

Trainers: Stephanie Smith, Michelle Bigelow

303 – Becoming an innovator in Records Management – A creative and advanced records session (A) Professional

Developing, implementing and managing local government records can be challenging in organizations large and small. This is not your ordinary records management session – no way! This lively, interactive session will explore best practices for records-related project management and help identify roadblocks to success. We will discover how to harness our leadership skills to promote progress and be inspired to put our insights and new knowledge into practice to advance an innovative, successful, and sustainable Records Management Program in our respective organizations. We will also examine advanced concepts in managing: Archives & Historical Records; Audits & Assessments; Document Imaging / ECMS / EDMS; Electronic records; E-mail; Records Retention; Social Media Records (always a confusing one); and Trustworthy Electronic Records. With these two trainers, you know this is not your ordinary advanced records session!

Trainers: Diane Gladwell, Gladwell Government Services, Colleen Nicol

Breakout Session 4 – Friday (8 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

401 – Parallel team thinking – What color is your hat? (B) Management

Does it seem like it takes your team forever to make a decision, and when they finally do, most are not happy? The difference between brilliant and mediocre teams isn't so much in their collective mental capacity, but in how well they can tap into their collective wisdom and how well they function together. The session will use work from "*Six Thinking Hats*®" by Dr. Edward deBono, through assessments, individual and group exercises and creativity. In this session we will:

- Explore the differences between adversarial and parallel thinking processes;
- Gain insight into this powerful technique that helps you look at important decisions from a number of different perspectives;
- Gain skills to make better decisions by pushing ourselves to move outside our habitual ways of thinking;
- Understand the full complexity of a decision, and spot issues and opportunities which we might otherwise not notice; and
- Take away new tools for our leadership toolkit.

Trainers: Patrice Olds, Dawn Abrahamson

402 - Beyond SMART® – Letting Our Values Lead the Way to Successful Goal Setting (A) Management

For decades people have been told to set SMART Goals: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time Based. But if that was all it took to achieve the life of our dreams, why do we set the same goals over and over, or make the same New Year's Resolutions time and time again? Because our goals aren't in alignment with our values. Values are like directions on a compass, they are never 'achieved' but they can influence the quality and clarify the purpose of our life journey. Values are not something that we can store in a box and put away; we live with them from moment to moment; they are active and ongoing. When goals are assessed using our core values, they are more likely to be achieved and leave us more satisfied in the accomplishment. This session will reinforce identified core values and build on them through a new lens of goal setting. We will explore strategies for applying our values to goal setting and leave feeling empowered to step out of the routine and into an exciting future based on what is most important to us in our lives now. This session is based in concepts found in the book *Values Based Goal Setting: How to Dream Big and Live the Life You Were Meant to Live*®, by Stephanie Dee Smith.

Trainers: Stephanie Smith, Britt Avrit

403 - Project Management: Gaining the Skills for Success (A) Professional

Effective project management involves meeting deadlines, staying within budget, coordinating diverse groups of people, solving problems, and achieving results. These skills are no longer just for the "elite project managers" but rather are required for any effective leader. In this session, we will explore project management practices (planning, scheduling, reporting, controlling, and managing projects) and the project planning process including the project life cycle, requirements and scope. We will look at project risk management from different points of view and learn strategies and techniques for identifying risks, quantifying the impact, and creating plans to mitigate those risks. This session will highlight classic tools of quality management for quality assurance and control of a project, as well as communication plans. Issues like the impact of organizational culture and politics to our projects will be examined.

Participants in this session are strongly encouraged to bring a work project you are leading (or are involved in) with you to the session. There will be an opportunity to apply your insights and learnings directly to your particular project and get the assistance of your peers and trainers.

Trainers: *Jennifer Woodworth, Stephanie Mizuno, Joelle Fockler*

Community Session 2 – Friday (1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

(1 hr A / 1 hr B)

All participants and all trainers.