

# Empowering Leaders in Local Government

Essential Skills, Strategies, and  
Self-Awareness to Inspire Others



“Leadership is not about being in charge.  
It is about taking care of those in your charge.” – Simon Sinek

# Purpose:

- Understand why leadership is vital in local government.
- Explore the link between leadership development and organizational success.

Leadership  
(Clarity, Empathy, Vision)

Employee Engagement  
(Trust, Motivation, Voice)

Organizational Outcomes  
(Productivity, Innovation,  
Public Trust)

1



Understanding  
Leadership Styles

2



Effective  
Communication Skills

3



Encouraging and  
Managing Employee

4



Emotional  
Intelligence

5



Strategic Planning,  
Decision Making

6



Ethical Leadership

7



Change  
Management

8



Innovation  
and Creativity

9



Performance  
Management

10



Public Speaking  
and Presentation Skills

11



Crisis Leadership  
and Resilience

12



Leadership  
Development

# Leadership Foundations – Self-Awareness & Styles

- **Discussion Points:**
  - Common leadership styles in government.
  - How self-awareness uncovers strengths, weaknesses, and blind spots.







# Leadership Foundations: Self-awareness and Styles

- **Activity:** Brief self-assessment to identify leadership styles.
- **Discussion:**
  - Common leadership styles in local government.
  - The role of self-awareness in recognizing strengths, weaknesses, and blind spots.



# Key Leadership Skills and Strategies

- **Overview of Skills:**
  - Effective Communication
  - Encouraging Employee Voice
  - Emotional Intelligence
  - Change Management



## Effective Communication

- Conveying clear, transparent messages to align and inform teams

## Encouraging Employee Voice

- Fostering a safe space for sharing ideas, feedback and concerns

## Emotional Intelligence

- Recognizing and managing emotions to build trust and collaboration

## Change Management

- Leading through uncertainty with adaptability and resilience

# Words Matter – Effective Communication





# Effective Communication

- The importance of clear, transparent communication in government.
- Strategies for active listening and ensuring team alignment.
- "Speak to inform, inspire, and empower."



# Encouraging Employee Voice

- Creating an environment where employees feel heard.
- Tactics for encouraging feedback and innovation.
  - Town hall-style meetings or
  - Anonymous suggestion boxes
  - Listening tours



# Emotional Intelligence in Leadership

- Managing emotions in high-pressure scenarios.
- Empathy as a tool for building trust and fostering collaboration.
- Example: Real-life case studies of emotionally intelligent leadership in local government.



# Change Management and Adaptability

- Navigating rapid changes in public administration.
- Techniques for building team resilience and adaptability.

## Timeline of Organizational Change





# Reflection and Action Planning

- **Prompt:** What are three ways you can apply today's lessons to your role as a leader?
- Encourage participants to write a personal action plan focusing on:
  - Enhancing self-awareness.
  - Improving communication within their teams.  
(How to Manual) -> Leading change effectively.

## Leadership Reflection Worksheet

### Self-Awareness Goals

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Communication Improvements

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Leading Change Strategies

---



# Summary of Key Points

- Self-awareness is foundational.
- Skills and strategies drive results.
- Practical steps begins today.

# Call to Action:

## Encourage ongoing development:

- Enroll in leadership programs
- Join a peer mentorship circle
- Use daily reflection tools
- Build this program in your organization



# Lessons Learned

## Leadership Programs Don't Have To Be Expensive

- Utilize Your Own People to Teach Program
- Partner With Others in the Community

## Learning is a Two-Way Street

- Our Department Managers Learned New Skills By Volunteering to Teach a Class

## Feed Their Mind & Their Belly

- Classes Included Lunch, Which Became a Leadership Lesson

# Lessons Learned Cont.

## To Reward or Not Reward?

- We made the active decision to not financially reward the participants with automatic raises.
- Instead, the rewards offered included a graduation event with the City Council, presentation of a Thomasville Challenge Coin, and the equivalent of a 10-year service award/gift (~\$300 value), and a Cohort T-Shirt.

Feedback from Cohort has led to a slightly shorter program (11 months instead of 12).

Some of the Classes have been tweaked.





Leadership Thomasville Cohort #1  
Cohort Motto:  
"Inspire. Impact. Innovate."

# Thank You!!

Michael Brandt

[Michael.Brandt@Thomasville-NC.gov](mailto:Michael.Brandt@Thomasville-NC.gov)

(336) 475-5599

Eddie Bowling

[Eddie.Bowling@Thomasville-nc.gov](mailto:Eddie.Bowling@Thomasville-nc.gov)

(336) 475-4222

