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# The Evolving Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Government Manager

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**Strengthening the Management of  
Local Self Government  
in Slovakia**

*Produced by the Local Self Government Assistance Center, Bratislava Slovakia  
an affiliate of the International City/County Management Association (funded by  
the United States Agency for International Development) in collaboration with the  
Association of City Managers in Slovakia*



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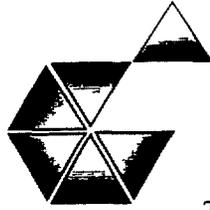


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*The future for us, too, is in our own place if we can learn to see it differently, and are strong in will to change it*

– Charles Handy

## FOREWORD

It has been said that the only certainty in management today is the certainty of change. Unquestionably, the concepts and strategies of management are among the fastest moving targets. They are rapidly changing, for a variety of reasons. First, there is competition for scarce resources, particularly in the public domain. This means that managers are constantly challenged to do more with less. Second, demands by customers (and citizens) for better service, higher quality goods, more responsive and open organizations continue to grow. From my perspective, there is little difference between the meaning of the terms *customers* and *citizens*. The adoption and implementation of the concept of *customer* by many progressive local government managers is a good example of how management concepts and strategies change with the times. Third, the increasing speed and ease of communicating new management ideas and their use in the market place have been no less than phenomenal in the past few years. For example, to engage in a bit of instant research on the latest managerial fads all you need to do is tap into the Internet and the myriad of management related web sites.

Finally, management, both private and public, has become a “legitimate” profession. This means, among other things, that the tools of the profession—management concepts and strategies—are constantly being refined, and redefined, in the hands of those who research and write about them and by those who use them. In fact, it is almost impossible in this rapidly changing discipline to know where the new ideas come from. Do they emanate from the halls of academia, research institutes and the growing ranks of management consultants who need new wares to market? Or do they originate with aggressive and innovative operating organizations, the users of management concepts, strategies and ideas?

## SLOVAK CONTEXT FOR THE TRAINING SERIES

The Local Self Government Assistance Center (LSGAC), funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has as one of its major program objectives the strengthening of in-country training capacity to serve local government's development needs. The fulfillment of this objective includes

the development of training materials training of trainers, and further improvement in the management of local government training services These activities are embodied within the larger LSGAC goal to help Slovakia's local governments be more effective, responsive and accountable in service to their citizens The *Strengthening the Management of Local Self Government in Slovakia* workbook series is, therefore, intended to help local governments achieve higher levels of performance through new and improved management principles and practices gained through on the job learning

## THE TARGET AUDIENCE

For public managers in Slovakia (among them the elected mayors and deputies as well as city managers department heads and directors of public service organizations), the task of learning new approaches to public management and putting the learning into practice, is daunting You and your organization have been thrust into the heart of a country wide paradigm shift of political, economic and social values and norms For local governments, these changes have created a host of new problems, but also the potential to pursue new opportunities Given the dynamic and changing nature of your work environment, this series focuses on concepts and strategies that can help you mold your local government organization to deal more effectively with the political, economic and social changes that are sweeping your country and region

We have picked a few core topics and competencies we believe are central to your current challenges and demands as local public managers and leaders Consequently, this series of short learning experiences is not a comprehensive course in managerial theories and strategies No effort has been made to go back to the early *basics* of management theory that have often set the stage for many contemporary management ideas and fads Nor was an attempt made to explore all the new schools of management thinking that consume meters of space in full-service book stores in London and elsewhere Rather, this series is, more modestly, an attempt to help you gain managerial insights and skills in a few targeted areas of managerial practice so you can increase the effectiveness, responsiveness and accountability of your local government organization, as assessed by the citizens you serve

To reach the goal intended for the *Strengthening the Management of Local Self Government in Slovakia* workbook series, I decided to return to the *Guide for Managing Change for Urban Managers and Trainers*, a workbook I wrote several years ago for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) The Workbook has been substantially altered and updated with the help of an able and experienced Slovak advisory team and David Tees a colleague I rely upon more and more in crafting learning materials for practitioners in the public service

## EXPECTATIONS

Here is a brief overview of what you can expect from the *Strengthening the Management of Local Self-Government in Slovakia* workbook series

Workbook #1, *The Evolving Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Government Manager* and Workbook #2, *The Manager and Organization Culture* are based on concepts from which the users of these materials might benefit 1) local government management roles and how they have evolved over the last few decades, particularly in the United States and other Western countries, and, 2) organization cultures, how they are invented and how they can be changed to better serve the changing mandates of local governments as keystone institutions in building open and democratic societies These workbooks are designed to lay the groundwork for planning and managing organization change as defined in Workbook #3

The core learning module, Workbook #3, *The Manager as Organization Change Agent*, focuses on concepts and strategies associated with the planning and management of changes within organizations and their immediate environments While much has been written about organization development and planned change, they are still relevant and important topics for discussion

This module, in a metaphorical sense, will be wrapped around another set of LSGAC supported training materials These are the skill development workshops on *Consulting Skills* which focus, in more depth, on two phases of the organization change process, contracting and data collection and analysis

Workbook #4, *The Manager as Visionary Strategist*, addresses the issues and processes associated with strategic planning To many, strategic planning is an ally of the planned change process To others, it is an overlapping intrusion Nevertheless, strategic planning is a potentially valuable tool for planning the future of your community As Tom Cannon reminds us, in his book, *Welcome to the Revolution* "Managers are craftsmen and strategy is their clay like the potter, they sit between the past of capabilities and the future of opportunities "

Finally, some insights are offered on *The Manager as Staff Developer* (Workbook #5) The conceptual framework used to describe the institution building role of the manager assumes the manager should use different management styles based on the work situation Since this approach to leadership styles focuses, in large measure, on the maturity (development) of the work force to determine the appropriate management response to most situations, it offers insights into the potential for staff and organization development We will also look at the growing use of interdisciplinary and interdepartmental teams as essential to achieving high performance within complex organizations

## THANKS TO MANY WHO MADE THIS POSSIBLE

Many individuals and organizations have contributed to this effort. These training materials were originally written under the sponsorship of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the guidance of Dr. Tomasz Sudra, Chief Training and Capacity Building. This revision is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and managed by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) through its affiliate, the Local Self Government Assistance Center (LSGAC) in Bratislava, Slovakia. LSGAC, initiated and funded by USAID, is devoted to strengthening local governments in Slovakia through capacity building endeavors with local support institutions.

These Slovak support institutions include the Foundation for Training in Self Government of the Slovak Republic, the Regional (Local Self Government) Training Centers, the School of Public Administration, Academia Istropolitana, and the newly established Association for Management Training and Development. In the development of this series, special thanks go to Dr. Anastazia Kozakova, who directed the local advisory committee, and to the team of experts she assembled to provide their insights and good judgment. They included city managers Jana Blazejova, Jan Dreisig, Richard Hojer, and Maria Pfliegelova, management trainers Stefania Hrivnakova, Daniela Halasova, and Luba Vavrova, and Peter Bercik, an advisor to the Slovak Ministry of Interior. Holly Ingram provided an invaluable service as layout and design artist and computer specialist in transmitting complex documents via the Internet. And of course, thanks to my colleague, David Tees, University of Texas at Arlington, who provided valuable inputs to the development of learning exercises for the series.

In my short stay in Slovakia, I have come to appreciate the valuable contributions that mayors, city managers and other senior local government officials are making to secure an open and democratic society for their citizens. I hope this series of management materials will help you perform your roles and responsibilities in strengthening local self-governments to be more effective, responsive and accountable.

*Bratislava, Slovakia 1998*

Fred Fisher



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This workbook is designed to provide you and other readers with insights, ideas, and learning opportunities on *The Evolving Roles and Responsibilities of the Local Government Manager*. We have drawn heavily on the efforts of the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) to define the ever-changing nature of these roles and responsibilities, particularly as the pace of change accelerates for those responsible for managing local government programs and services.

We have made several assumptions in writing this particular workbook. First, we believe it is important for you to reflect on your own perceptions of the roles and responsibilities associated with this unique profession before studying the other workbooks in this series. We also believe it will be helpful for you and your professional local government colleagues to

- learn more about how your professional peers in other countries define their roles and responsibilities,
- have an opportunity to engage in a self-assessment of your own approach to local government management, based on ICMA's latest effort to define this professional role, and,
- have a choice about how you prefer to increase your professional competence through the use of these materials.

Regarding the last point, this series of workbooks is designed to be used either for self-study or to facilitate trainer-assisted workshops. This explains, in part, why each workbook is organized to include (1) concepts and strategies on the specific topic being covered, (2) reflection exercises to help you think about your own experience in relation to the written materials, and, (3) training designs for group learning. Workshops will be organized by the Foundation for Training in Self-Government in collaboration with the Slovakia City Managers Association on the topics covered by this workshop and others in the series.

These workbooks probably are organized differently than others you might have used, so a bit about what you can expect as you turn the page. Each workbook includes a series of materials and activities, including

- Trainer's Notes describing trainer-assisted learning events and the trainer's role,
- Concept materials with reflection exercises for use by participants and,
- Self-assessment questionnaires or task sheets to be used by the training participants as individual and group learning exercises.

**TRAINER'S  
NOTES****Topic**                    **Local Government Manager Effectiveness****Time**                     **1 1/2 hours**

In all of the workbooks in this series, this sequence of events is repeated several times. The intent in the layout is designed to provide the trainers and individual learners with the full set of learning materials so they can be used in whatever way seems most appropriate and effective.

The purpose of this exercise is to help participants (1) recall an occasion of their own, personal effectiveness as a manager and (2) discuss with each other the performance of local government managers in Slovakia, both effective and ineffective. The exercise is also useful as an 'icebreaker' that helps participants begin to feel comfortable interacting freely with one another about the effectiveness of local government managers in carrying out their roles and responsibilities.

**Task**

- 1 Brief the participant group on the tasks to be performed and the rationale for each of them.

Ask participants to recall one occasion during the past week when they did something as managers that they believe was effective. Hand out worksheet No 1 (below) and suggest that participants use it to record their answers. After a few minutes, ask participants one at a time briefly to describe the events and to explain what made them effective.

- 2 Divide the participant group into several small groups of about equal size. Ask half of the small groups to discuss and prepare a list of 'effective' actions or behaviors that are commonly found among Slovak local government managers. Have the other half of the small groups discuss and prepare list of 'ineffective' actions or behaviors that are commonly found among Slovak local government managers. Give the small groups about 20 minutes to complete the task. Provide each of the small groups with index cards for recording their results, one action or behavior per card. You might use different colored cards so that effective actions can be distinguished easily from ineffective ones.

At the end of 20 minutes, bring the small groups back together. Give each group about 10 minutes to report its results by taping or tacking its cards on the wall of the training room and another 10 minutes for participants to roam around reading the results on the colored cards. Encourage a discussion among participants about the similarities and differences in the results. Were there any surprises? Help participants develop a working definition of the word "effectiveness" based on the data and discussion.





<b>Topic</b>	<b>Local Government Manager Roles Opening Presentation</b>	<b>TRAINER'S NOTES</b>
<b>Time</b>	<b>Approximately 1 hour</b>	
<p>The following information on local government management roles is intended as a conceptual basis for later self-assessment exercises on competency in the performance of local government managers in their roles. The information will be helpful to you in preparing a 20-30 minute presentation on this subject and in conducting a general discussion.</p> <p>Several reflection questions and workspace are provided in the text as additional opportunities to encourage learning. These reflection questions will be particularly beneficial to participants who are using the manual as a reader rather than an interactive learning experience.</p>		



<b>CONCEPT</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>
Local Government Manager Roles

*Lots of folks confuse bad management with destiny*  
 – Frank Hubbard

**A SHORT HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE**

There are at least two streams of thought about the universal application of management and organizational theory. One stream contends that managerial and organizational issues and solutions have become increasingly similar among public and private institutions world wide. In other words, *management is management is management*. The other argues that national, and even local, cultures still have a dominant influence on the way managers and organizations behave. The truth is probably somewhere between these two points of view. The intent, herein, is not to take a stand on either side of this ongoing debate but to draw from the writing of others to help you better understand the role of the local government manager and how it can be enhanced through training and development.

Early attempts to define the local government manager's role were both insightful and simplistic. Luther Gulick's acronym POSDCORB, coined in the 1930s, stands for *Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, and Budgeting*. Gulick saw these functions as the core responsibilities of the local government manager.

Later, theorists divided the management function by *employee and production centered* styles (Rensis Likert) and *people and task oriented management* styles (Robert Blake). These two-dimensional concepts of management dominated the 1950s and 60s, but they were seen as too simplistic as we entered the decade of the 70s. The academic community concerned with such things began to talk about 'contingency' theories of management. In other words, *it all depends on the situation*. At a minimum, one can say that management is a complex business. Local government management, with its added dimensions of community involvement and local politics, is very complex – nearly impossible at times.

As stated earlier, the intent is not to take a stand about what local government/local government management is, or should be, but to shed light on it. Peter Drucker, in a paper about public administrations' deadliest sins, said,

*In public service increasingly we start out with a position – that is with a totally untested theory – and go from it immediately to national if not international application. Unfortunately, successful application still demands adaptation: cutting, fitting, trying, balancing.<sup>1</sup>*

The application of Drucker's *'tailoring'* strategies is good advice as we try to find a set of local government management ideas to fit our own particular situation

In 1996, the Slovakia City Managers Association (SCMA) became the thirteenth country-wide professional organization of local government administrators (and the first in central and eastern Europe) to become officially affiliated with the International City/County Management Association (ICMA). One of the ICMA services is to (1) provide research and leadership in defining local government management roles and responsibilities as demanded by new challenges and opportunities, and, (2) reflect the role changes that are being 'invented' by their members in the performance of local public management. The results of these ICMA role definition efforts are included in this discussion. But first, we will look at some other well known research findings on the role of managers in general.

## THE MINTZBERG VIEW

Henry Mintzberg, an academic with considerable staying power in the field of management theorizing, carried out a comprehensive study of chief executives from a variety of organizations in the early 1980s. As a result of his research, Mintzberg concluded there were some 'organized sets of behavior' common to most management jobs. While they may be somewhat culture bound (his research was limited to Western managers and institutions), the way he defines the various managerial roles are useful in helping managers think about what they do, regardless of the cultural or organizational context.<sup>2</sup>

The managerial roles Mintzberg identified fall into three major categories: interpersonal roles, informational roles, and decisional roles. Here is a more detailed description of these roles and their subsets.

### A Interpersonal Roles

*[As related to the manager's formal authority]*

- **Figurehead** carries out representational and ceremonial duties
- **Leader** performs the role as formal head of the organization, someone who directs and motivates subordinates to achieve organizational goals
- **Liaison** works with people outside the formal chain of command in efforts to bring information into the organization and to gain favor from others

[These roles help the manager build a network of support within and outside the organization ]

### **B Informational Roles**

[Manager as the communication center of the organization In contemporary terms the network navigator ']

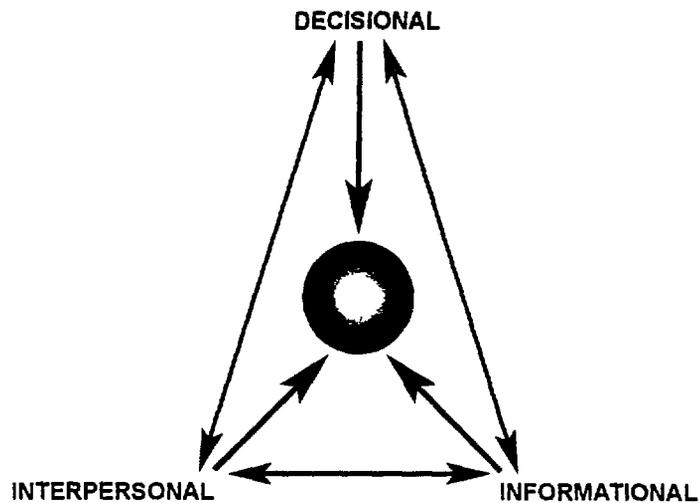
- **Monitor** The manager continually scans the environment to receive and collect information
- **Disseminator** Passes along special or privileged information that subordinates otherwise may not be able to obtain
- **Spokesperson** Speaks for the organization and repeats it to others

### **C Decisional Roles**

[How the manager uses available resources personal and otherwise to take action]

- **Entrepreneur** Works to improve the organization, bringing about planned, voluntary, controlled, positive changes
- **Disturbance Handler** Takes corrective action in response to pressures or changes that are beyond personal control
- **Resource Allocator** Decides who will get what resources
- **Negotiator** Discusses and bargains with other organizations, or work units, to obtain advantages for his or her own unit or organization

The overall responsibility of the manager, as seen by Mintzberg, is to use each of these roles individually, or in combination, to get things done *for* the organization and its members



## THE COMPETENT MANAGER

Another important research effort to define the manager's role was conducted by Richard Boyatzis in the early 90s. He examined, in depth, the function, responsibilities and expectations of over 2000 managers in 12 organizations representing 41 different management jobs. From these findings, Boyatzis isolated and identified 19 competencies directly related to successful managerial performance. He describes effective job performance as

*the attainment of specific results (i.e., outcomes) required by the job through specific actions while maintaining or being consistent with policies, procedures and conditions of the organizational environment*<sup>3</sup>

Boyatzis categorizes the competencies he isolated and studied into five clusters: (1) goal and action management, (2) leadership, (3) human resource management, (4) directing subordinates, and (5) focus on others. Here is a brief description of the components of each cluster:

### A The "Goal and Action Management" Cluster

- **Efficiency** a concern for doing something better
- **Taking a pro-active stance** taking action to accomplish something

- **Diagnostic use of concepts** thinking that identifies or recognizes conceptual patterns from an assortment of information
- **Concern with impact** use of symbols of power to have impact on others

#### B The "Leadership" Cluster

- **Self confidence** People with self confidence feel they know what they are doing and that they are doing well
- **Use of oral presentations** making effective verbal presentations whether in one-to-one meetings or before an audience of several hundred people
- **Logical thought** putting events in a causal (cause-effect) sequence
- **Conceptualization** the ability to identify or recognize patterns in an assortment of information

#### C The "Human Resource Management" Cluster

- **Use of socialized power** building alliances, networks, coalitions, or teams
- **Positive regard** belief in others and a positive belief that people are good
- **Managing group process** stimulating others to work together effectively in group settings
- **Accurate self assessment** seeing one's own strengths and weaknesses and to know personal limitations

#### D The "Directing Subordinates" Cluster

- **Developing others** helping someone do his or her job
- **Use of unilateral power** ability to use various forms of influence to obtain compliance
- **Spontaneity** expressing oneself freely and easily

#### E The "Focus on Others" Cluster

- **Self control** ability to inhibit personal needs or desires in service of organizational needs
- **Perceptual objectivity** to be relatively objective and not limited in view by excessive subjectivity or personal biases, prejudices, or perspectives



CONCEPT	
TOPIC	
Local Government Manager Roles	<b>HABITS OF MIND</b>

In conclusion, here are some reflections from Peter Drucker about the role of the manager. Drucker is described by the authors of *The Witch Doctors* (a recent book about management theory and practice) as the *Gurus Guru* (the expert's revered expert). Drucker has no illusions about how difficult the role of the manager is. In his collection of essays, *Managing in a Time of Great Change*, Drucker focuses on three things he believes make the manager's life hellish at this time:

- First is the sheer scale of managerial change (or in the context of Slovakia's local governments, the need for significant managerial changes)
- Second is the frequency of managerial failure (e.g., most contemporary managers fail to understand what it means to manage in revolutionary times and spend their time tinkering with the organization when they should be rethinking the whole theory on which it is based). Certainly, these are revolutionary times in the life of Slovakia's local governments. Unfortunately, the organizational templates that define the institutions still reflect pre-revolutionary notions about how local governments and community services should be managed.
- The third hellish trend managers are confronted with, according to Drucker, is the growing tension between business (read *local government*) and its environment.

If Drucker has one piece of advice for managers, it is to concentrate on *being effective*.

Whether he [she] works in a business or in a hospital, in a government agency or in a labor union, in a university or in the army, the executive is, first of all, expected to get the right things done. And this is simply that he [she] is expected to be effective.<sup>4</sup>

Drucker says *effectiveness is a habit* or a complete set of habitual practices. He recommends the following five "habits of mind" to managers who want to be effective:

- **Managing** the portion of their **time** that they can control and knowing where their time goes
- **Focusing on outward contribution**, gearing their efforts to results rather than work

- **Building on the strengths they have at their disposal**, including their own strengths as well as those of their colleagues, subordinates and the situations they face
- **Concentrating on the few major areas** that will produce the most outstanding results by setting clear priorities and sticking with them
- **Making effective decisions**, knowing that a decision is “a judgment based on dissenting opinions rather than a consensus on the facts ”

Drucker's habits” are worth reemphasizing **The effective manager**

- 1 manages his or her time and knows where it goes.
- 2 focuses on results rather than work,
- 3 builds from strengths (their own and the organization's),
- 4 concentrates their efforts on the most important issues and concerns, and,
- 5 makes effective decisions

## REFLECTION

Take these five habits that Drucker identifies with *effective managers* and prioritize them below based on how effective you believe you are in being 'habitual' about performing them 1= least effective and 5 = most effective

Habit	Level of Effectiveness
1 Time management	<input type="text"/>
2 Focusing on results	<input type="text"/>
3 Building on strengths	<input type="text"/>
4 Concentrating efforts	<input type="text"/>
5 Making effective decisions	<input type="text"/>



If you could change one of the 'habits' which you have rated low in your effectiveness to perform, which one would it be?

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List some actions you might take to become more effective in making this a part of your managerial *habits*

1 \_\_\_\_\_

---

2 \_\_\_\_\_

---

3 \_\_\_\_\_

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### THE ICMA PERSPECTIVE

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has always been the opinion leader about what constitutes effective local government or local government management in the United States and other countries. Its voice is heard in an increasing number of countries as it defines systems and standards for improving local government performance. [As noted previously, the Slovakia City Managers Association became, in 1996, the thirteenth country organization to be affiliated with ICMA and the first in central and eastern Europe to achieve this recognition.]

The following is a summary of some of ICMA's more recent statements about effective local government. We start with a synopsis of views expressed in the Association's 1983 publication, *The Effective Local Government Manager*. The local government manager's role and responsibilities, at that time, were described as

- relating to the community,
- working with the governing body,
- managing with effectiveness (getting the right things done), efficiency (accomplishing them in the right way), and economy (limiting the use of scarce resources),

- creating conditions for excellence in the organization,
- promoting the community's future,
- representing the community with other governments (e.g., other local governments and higher levels of government when appropriate), and,
- maintaining personal effectiveness

Cutting across these management responsibilities are four themes *managing people, managing change, building and maintaining relationships and managing publicity*

When we compare this vague list of responsibilities with the practical POSDCORB of the 1930s, we can't help but wonder what has prompted the dramatic shift in definition. Is it because most local government managers in the United States and other countries have the basic knowledge and skills to carry out the POSDCORB mandate? Or do they have a depth of staff that allows them to be more "conceptual" in their approach to the role of local government manager? Or, is it in response to a growing trend to describe the manager's role in increasingly vague behavioral terms?

## IN SEARCH OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL EXCELLENCE

ICMA, a year after publishing of *The Effective Local Government Manager*, launched a research effort to define the basic elements of local government excellence. This effort was in response to the Peters and Waterman best seller, *In Search of Excellence*, that described the characteristics of successfully managed private sector organizations. ICMA's "local government excellence" criteria (as defined in 1984) included

- **Action orientation** Excellent local governments identify problems and deal with them quickly, fighting through structural, political, legal, and environmental constraints that make action more difficult than for private companies
- **Closeness to citizens** establishing and maintaining the variety of close linkages with citizens being served including those who are regulated against their will. Excellent local governments listen and are sensitive and responsive to public input
- **Autonomy and entrepreneurship** developing a climate conducive to inventing and doing new things to solve problems, having a track record of implementing creative solutions even in the face of declining resources

- **Employee orientation** For a local government to be excellent, this criterion requires more than lip service to employees and their needs. Excellent public organizations insist on intense, pervasive treatment of employees as human beings and adults.
- **Values** Excellent local governments have defined a set of values. Their thrust is toward being the best - providing superior quality and service to the public. Their values are communicated and demonstrated to employees and provide the source of enthusiasm and inspiration.
- **Mission, goals, and competence** Mission is the underlying premise of the organization. Excellent local governments have evaluated their missions based on changing resource levels and citizen demands and have used mission statements as the foundation for establishing community and/or organizational goals. Within their mission, excellent local governments provide consistent, uniform levels of service.
- **Structure** In excellent local governments, the potential negative effects of antiquated, bureaucratic structures have been minimized. These organizations have fewer management levels, fewer central and support staffs, and provide firm central direction while giving maximum autonomy to employees.
- **Political relationships** This criterion departs most radically from the Peters and Waterman model - but it is perhaps the most important of the attributes. Political relationships in excellent local governments have three characteristics: (a) they involve positive, open, respectful relationships between local elected representatives and management staff, (b) they deal openly, forthrightly, and effectively with their environments, (c) they possess environmental stability at the political level.

While the ICMA criteria for achieving local government excellence does not describe, or prescribe, the local government manager's roles in helping to achieve them, or the knowledge and skills required to do so, it is possible to imagine what they might be. Better yet, we can enter the gates of the ICMA University where an attempt has been made to define what local government managers must be able to do to achieve effective management in their organizations and communities.

## REFLECTION

Suppose you were asked to establish a set of criteria to define what you believe would represent *local government excellence* for Slovak local governments in the future (similar to the research effort ICMA undertook a few years ago). Jot down these criteria and describe in a few words what each of them mean.





could assist in their members' development. This diverse collection of organizations is committed to offering short courses based on the defined set of practices associated with the role of the local government manager.

The practices that ICMA members agree are essential to effective local government management fall into eight groups, a rather daunting list, we might add. Here is a brief description of the practices by various groups.

**Group 1 Staff Effectiveness** [*Promoting the development and performance of staff and employees throughout the organization*] Includes

- **Coaching and Mentoring** providing direction, support, and feedback to enable others to meet their full potential.
- **Team Leadership** facilitating teamwork.
- **Empowerment** creating a work environment that encourages responsibility and decision making at all organizational levels.
- **Delegating** assigning responsibility to others.

**Group 2 Policy Facilitation** [*Helping elected officials and other community actors identify, work toward, and achieve common goals and objectives*] Includes

- **Facilitating Leadership** building cooperation and consensus among and within diverse groups, helping them identify common goals and act effectively to achieve them, recognizing interdependent relationships and multiple causes of community issues and anticipating the consequences of policy decisions.
- **Facilitating Council Effectiveness** helping elected officials develop a policy agenda that can be implemented effectively and serves the best interests of the community.
- **Mediation/Negotiation** acting as a neutral party in the resolution of policy disputes.

**Group 3 Service Delivery Management** [*Ensuring that local government services are provided to citizens effectively, efficiently, and responsibly*] Includes

- **Functional / Operational Expertise** understanding the basic principles of service delivery in functional areas.
- **Operational Planning** anticipating future needs, organizing work operations, and establishing timetables for work units of projects.
- **Citizen Service** determining citizens' needs and providing responsive, equitable services to the community.

- **Quality Assurance** maintaining a consistently high level of quality in staff work, operational procedures, and service delivery

**Group 4 Strategic Leadership** [*Setting an example that urges the organization and the community toward experimentation, change, creative problem solving, and prompt action*] Includes

- **Initiative and Risk Taking** demonstrating a personal orientation toward action and accepting responsibility for the results, resisting the status quo and removing stumbling blocks that delay progress toward goals and objectives
- **Vision** conceptualizing an ideal future state and communicating it to the organization and community
- **Creativity and Innovation** developing new ideas or practices applying existing ideas and practices to new situations
- **Technological Literacy** demonstrating an understanding of information technology and ensuring that it is incorporated appropriately in plans to improve service delivery, information sharing, organizational communication, and citizen access

**Group 5 Democratic Responsiveness** [*Demonstrating a commitment to democratic principles by respecting elected officials community interest groups and the decision making process educating citizens about local government, and acquiring knowledge of the social economic and political history of the community*] Includes

- **Democratic Advocacy** fostering the values and integrity of representative government and local democracy through action and example, ensuring the effective participation of local government in the intergovernmental system
- **Diversity** understanding and valuing the differences among individuals and fostering these values throughout the organization and community
- **Citizen Participation** recognizing the right of citizens to influence local decisions and promoting active citizen involvement in local governance

**Group 6 Organizational Planning and Management** [*Providing for the short term and long term acquisition allocation and analysis of financial and human resources*] Includes

- **Budgeting** preparing and administering the budget

- **Financial Analysis** interpreting financial information to assess the fiscal condition of the community, determining the cost-effectiveness of programs, and preparing alternative strategies
- **Human Resources Development** ensuring that the policies and procedures for employee hiring, promotion, performance appraisal and discipline are equitable, legal, and current, ensuring that human resources are adequate to accomplish programmatic objectives
- **Strategic Planning** positioning the organization and the community for events and circumstances that are anticipated in the future

**Group 7 Communication** [*Facilitating the flow of ideas information and understanding between and among individuals advocating effectively in the community interest* ] Includes

- **Advocacy** communicating personal support for policies, programs or ideals that serve the best interests of the community
- **Presentation Skills** conveying ideas and information effectively to others
- **Media Relations** communicating information to the media in a way that increases public understanding of local government issues and activities and builds a positive relationship with the press
- **Interpersonal Communication** exchanging verbal and non-verbal messages with others in a way that demonstrates respect for the individual and furthers organizational and community objectives

**Group 8 Integrity** [*Demonstrating fairness honesty, and ethical and legal awareness in personal and professional relationships and activities* ] Includes

- **Personal Integrity** demonstrating accountability for personal actions, conducting personal relationships and activities fairly and honestly
- **Professional Integrity** conducting professional relationships and activities fairly, honestly, legally, and in conformance with the ICMA Code of Ethics
- **Organizational Integrity** fostering ethical behavior throughout the organization through personal example, management practices, and training

One would not accuse ICMA of being timid in its efforts to describe the practices" that are essential to effective local government management. As stated earlier, it is a daunting list of individual competencies to be acquired over one's professional career. And yet, it is not significantly different from the list of competencies identified by Richard Bovatzis in his examination of the functions, responsibilities and expectations of more than 2,000 managers in private sector organizations. The ICMA list tends to be stated in professional terms (what the profession expects of its members) while the Bovatzis clusters of competencies are more egocentric (what principled executives might expect from each other).

Nevertheless, both lists go far beyond an accounting of things managers must know (knowledge) and be able to do (skills) if they are to be considered competent in their professional field of endeavor. They speak of *attitudes* ("a positive belief that people are good"), *behavior* (the ability to exhibit personal needs or desires in service to organizational needs), and *values* (fostering ethical behavior throughout the organization through personal example) as essential qualities in achieving managerial excellence. The terms, *attitudes*, *behavior* and *values*, are often challenged as being inappropriate training objectives. Not so! They describe some of the most important outcomes, and results, of individual and group learning. For example,

*I have a bad attitude about working with people in another department, and consequently it affects my "behavior" towards them (demonstrated by my unwillingness to cooperate even when I know it is in our mutual best interests). As a result of interpersonal skills and team work training, I have come to value the importance of working across organizational boundaries and give it priority whenever possible.*

Significant learnings reported by participants who had attended LSGAC training programs in elected leadership and infrastructure maintenance illustrate the way managers think about training outcomes:

- After training, I can deal with angry citizens and satisfy them (*attitude change*)
- After training, my colleagues say now I listen to what they say (*behavior change*)
- After training, I have started looking differently on how I am raising my children (*values change*)<sup>4</sup>

The 29 Practices that ICMA members agree are essential to effective local government management may not all be important, critical, or relevant to the management of Slovakia's local governments at this time. On the other hand,





**TRAINER'S  
NOTES**

**Topic** Managerial Competency Self Assessment

**Time** Approximately 2 hours

This exercise is intended to help participants rate (1) their personal effectiveness as Slovak local government managers in relation to the 29 ICMA management "practices" (individual competencies), and, (2) the importance of each competency to the improvement of local self government in Slovakia

**TASK**

Distribute copies of the "Management Practices Effectiveness/Importance Questionnaire" and ask each participant to complete and score Parts I and II of the instrument following instructions

Explain that Part I of the questionnaire yields information about the relationship between self assessment of personal *effectiveness* on a particular practice with the ratings of *importance* assigned to the same practice. When the participant rates the importance of a particular practice higher than their own effectiveness in performing the practice, (based on a ten point scale) it would yield a minus (-) score. The lower the differences in these scores, the more congruence between the participant's perceived level of personal effectiveness and importance to local government improvement.

On the other hand, high effectiveness scores on practices rated low in importance would yield plus (+) scores. The higher the differences, the more the manager is effective in a competency he or she believes is not important.

Explain that Part II of the questionnaire is for use by participants to identify and record their five highest plus (+) scores and their highest minus (-) scores. A series of boxes following the questionnaire are provided for recording this information.

When scoring is done, ask participants to pair off to discuss their scores, why gaps exist, and how the information from the exercise can be used in each manager's individual planning for professional development.

After about 30 minutes of discussion, ask the participant pairs to reconvene to post their five individual scores (plus and minus) in a

**Topic** Managerial Competency Self Assessment

**Time** Approximately 2 hours

**TRAINER'S  
NOTES**

format which you provide for them. This can be done by reading each of the 29 ICMA practices and asking for a show of hands to identify plus and minus scores for each practice. The intent of this procedure is to produce groupings of scores by practices so that similarities, differences and patterning of scores can be observed and discussed.

To aid the discussion, ask participants to discuss what their scores mean to them as a guide to their professional development.

- What does a practice that you rated greater in importance than your current level of effectiveness say to you? Should this be a hint that you need work in this area?
- What does a score that is lower in importance than your current level of effectiveness say to you? Should it, perhaps, be more important? Should you focus your self improvement efforts elsewhere?

At this point suggest that participants review their cards from the first exercise. Ask *How do the statements about areas of effective performance on the cards "fit" with your scores on the ICMA 29 competencies?* Suggest that participants "circle" those areas where there is a "fit."

End the exercise by asking participants to volunteer observations and insights on the value of the exercise in highlighting areas of concentration for professional development in their management roles and responsibilities.

<b>EXERCISE</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>
<b>Managerial Competency Self Assessment</b>

This questionnaire is for your use in assessing your own effectiveness in the 29 ICMA University competencies (column 2) and the importance of each competency to local self government in Slovakia (column 3). A scale of 1 to 10 is provided for the rating with a score of 10 the highest and a score of 1 the lowest. After circling the ratings on all 29 competencies for both effectiveness and importance, use column 4 to record the difference. Record a minus (-) score with the magnitude of the difference when importance is higher than effectiveness. Use a plus (+) when effectiveness is higher than importance.

Column 1 ICMA Areas of Managerial Competency	Column 2 My Effectiveness as a Manager in this Area	Column 3 Importance to the Improvement of Local Self Government	Column 4 Difference in Ratings (+ or -)
1 Coaching and mentoring providing direction support and feedback to enable others to meet their full potential	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
2 Team leadership facilitating teamwork	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Empowerment creating a work environment that encourages responsibility and decision making at all organizational levels	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
4 Delegating assigning responsibility to others	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
5 Facilitating leadership building cooperation and consensus among and within diverse groups, helping them identify common goals and act effectively to achieve them recognizing independent relationships and multiple causes of community issues and anticipating the consequences of policy decisions	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
6 Facilitating council effectiveness helping elected officials develop a policy agenda that can be implemented effectively and serves the best interests of the community	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Column 1 ICMA Areas of Managerial Competency</p>	<p>Column 2 My Effectiveness as a Manager in this Area</p>	<p>Column 3 Importance to the Improvement of Local Self Government</p>	<p>Column 4 Difference in Ratings (+ or -)</p>
<p>7 Mediation/negotiation acting as a neutral party in the resolution of policy disputes</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>8 Functional/operational expertise understanding the basic principles of service delivery in functional areas</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>9 Operational planning anticipating future needs organizing work operations and establishing timetables for work units of projects</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>10 Citizen service determining citizens needs and providing responsive services to the community</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>11 Quality assurance maintaining a consistently high level of quality in staff work operational procedures and service delivery</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>12 Initiative and risk taking demonstrating a personal orientation toward action and accepting responsibility for the results, resisting the status quo and removing stumbling blocks that delay progress toward goals and objectives</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>13 Vision conceptualizing an ideal future state and communicating it to the organization and community</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

Column 1 ICMA Areas of Managerial Competency	Column 2 My Effectiveness as a Manager in this Area	Column 3 Importance to the Improvement of Local Self Government	Column 4 Difference in Ratings (+ or -)
14 Creativity and innovation developing new ideas or practices applying existing ideas and practices to new situations	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
15 Technological literacy demonstrating an understanding of information technology and ensuring that it is incorporated appropriately in plans to improve service delivery, information sharing organizational communication and citizen access	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
16 Democratic advocacy fostering the values and integrity of representative government and local democracy through action and example, ensuring the effective participation of local government in the intergovernmental system	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
17 Diversity understanding and valuing the differences among individuals and fostering these values throughout the organization and community	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
18 Citizen participation recognizing the right of citizens to influence local decisions and promoting active citizen involvement in local governance	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
19 Budgeting preparing and administering the budget	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>

<p>Column 1 ICMA Areas of Managerial Competency</p>	<p>Column 2 My Effectiveness as a Manager in this Area</p>	<p>Column 3 Importance to the Improvement of Local Self Government</p>	<p>Column 4 Difference in Rating (+ or -)</p>
<p>20 Financial analysis interpreting financial information to assess the fiscal condition of the community determine the cost effectiveness of programs and prepare alternative strategies</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>21 Human resource development ensuring that the policies and procedures for employee hiring, promotion performance appraisal and discipline are equitable legal and current, ensuring that human resources are adequate to accomplish programmatic objectives</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>22 Strategic planning positioning the organization and the community for events and circumstances that are anticipated in the future</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>23 Advocacy communicating personal support for policies programs or ideals that serve the best interests of the community</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>24 Presentation skills conveying ideas and information effectively to others</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p>1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/></p>

Column 1 ICMA Areas of Managerial Competency	Column 2 My Effectiveness as a Manager in this Area	Column 3 Importance to the Improvement of Local Self Government	Column 4 Difference in Rating (+ or -)
25 Media relations communicating information to the media in a way that increases public understanding of local government issues and activities and builds a positive relationship with the press	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
26 Interpersonal communication exchanging verbal and non verbal messages with others in a way that demonstrates respect for the individual and furthers organizational and community objectives	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
27 Personal integrity demonstrating accountability for personal actions conducting personal relationships and activities fairly and honestly	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
28 Professional integrity conducting professional relationships and activities fairly, honestly and legally	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>
29 Organizational integrity fostering ethical behavior through out the organization through personal example management practices and training	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	<input type="checkbox"/>



**EXERCISE**  
**TOPIC**  
**Managerial**  
**Competency**  
**Self**  
**Assessment**  
**Scoring**  
**Sheet**

When you have completed the questionnaire, enter your five highest plus (+) scores (by competency number) and your five highest minus (-) scores in the boxes below. Plus scores indicate your perceived personal *effectiveness* in this competency is greater than the *importance* you give the competency. The minus scores indicate a greater *importance* than your perceived personal *effectiveness* in performing the competency.

**Five Highest Plus**  
**Scores**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	

**Five Highest Minus**  
**Scores**

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	



<b>EXERCISE</b>
<b>TOPIC</b>
<b>Managerial</b>
<b>Competency</b>
<b>Self</b>
<b>Assessment</b>
<b>Talley Sheet</b>

From the show of hands, enter the number of participants who rated each of the 29 competencies ( C ) as one of their five highest plus rated (+) Do the same thing for the highest minus ratings (-)

C		
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<b>TRAINER'S NOTES</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Professional Development Planning</b>
	<b>Time</b>	<b>45 minutes</b>
<p>The purpose of this exercise is to help participants use the personal data on managerial effectiveness to assess their own most important learning needs as local government managers and to use this information to prepare a professional development plan</p> <p>Provide each participant with a worksheet containing the titles of the four remaining workshops in this series and space for participants to enter the titles of at least three other development programs that would enable them to achieve their desired level of managerial effectiveness. Tell participants that their selections may be taken from a list provided by the instructor that includes a number of training and development programs available through the Foundation for Training in Self Government, or from other sources. Encourage participants to select courses offered by other institutions provided they have sufficient practical relevance and educational rigor to serve as an appropriate management learning experiences</p>		

This worksheet is a format for a basic professional development plan for managers. The plan consists of the four workshops in the *Strengthening the Management of Local Self Government in Slovakia* series plus three optional workshops or courses selected by each manager consistent with his or her perceived needs for increased effectiveness.

Professional Development Plan for \_\_\_\_\_

Within the next \_\_\_\_\_ months, I will enroll in the following professional development workshops, courses or programs pursuant to my intent to achieve local government management excellence.

1	<i>The Manager as Organization Change Agent</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<i>The Manager and Organization Culture</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<i>The Manager as Visionary Strategist</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<i>The Manager as Staff Developer</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Other program _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Other program _____	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Other program _____	<input type="checkbox"/>



## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Drucker, Peter *Managing in a Time of Great Change* (New York Truman Talley Books, 1995)

- Mintzberg, Henry *The Nature of Managerial Work* (New York Harper and Row, 1973)

<sup>3</sup> Bovatzis, Richard *The Competent Manager* (New York John Wiley and Sons, Inc 1982)

<sup>4</sup> Drucker, *op cit*

International City/County Management Association *The Effective Local Government Manager* (Washington, DC ICMA, 1983)