

LEADING WITH INFLUENCE

Leadership That Makes a Difference

The Power of Emotional Intelligence

for Effective Public Leadership

Florida Association of City Clerks • Fall Academy

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Leave the people, the process, and the purpose clearer than you found them.

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Welcome

This workbook belongs to: _____

Municipal leadership requires more than technical expertise. It requires the ability to communicate vision, establish credibility, inspire action, regulate emotions, preserve trust, and help people move toward constructive outcomes.

Today is designed as a working session. Use these pages to assess your current habits, plan important conversations, practice new approaches, and identify the influence and emotional-intelligence behaviors you will strengthen during the next 30 days.

By noon, you will be able to

- ☐ Connect organizational vision to meaningful public-service purpose
- ☐ Build credibility and rapport across staff, councils, and communities
- ☐ Engage and motivate others toward shared goals
- ☐ Recognize and regulate your response under pressure
- ☐ Listen actively, resolve conflict, and de-escalate difficult conversations
- ☐ Name one influence behavior and one emotional-intelligence behavior to practice

My priority for today

Leadership Influence Snapshot

Rate each statement from 1 (rarely) to 5 (consistently).

STATEMENT	RATING
I connect strategic objectives to a meaningful public-service purpose.	1 2 3 4 5
Others trust my preparation, judgment, and follow-through.	1 2 3 4 5
I build rapport before asking people to change.	1 2 3 4 5
I invite participation without surrendering responsibility.	1 2 3 4 5
I align people around shared outcomes and expectations.	1 2 3 4 5
I turn agreement into clear action and accountability.	1 2 3 4 5

Reflection

My strongest leadership habit is...

The habit that would most increase my influence is...

Where Does My Influence Matter Most?

STAKEHOLDER	WHAT HELPS THEM ENGAGE
Elected officials	
City/town manager or administrator	
Department heads	
Clerk's office team	
Residents and community stakeholders	
Attorneys, vendors, or external partners	

One shared goal that requires greater clarity, trust, or participation

The CLEAR Leader

	LEADERSHIP PRACTICE
C	Connect vision to purpose
L	Lead with credibility
E	Engage people through rapport
A	Align people around shared goals
R	Reinforce action and accountability

Leadership is measured by the clarity, trust, and constructive action you create.

My first observation

Which CLEAR practice would make the greatest difference in my current role? Why?

C — Connect Vision to Purpose

Vision becomes motivating when people understand why the change matters, how it advances public service, and where their contribution fits.

The change matters because...

Translate strategy into meaning

PROMPT	MY RESPONSE
Strategic objective or change	
Public-service purpose	
What it makes possible	
Why it matters to this audience	

L — Lead With Credibility

CREDIBILITY	THE QUESTION	RATING
Character	Can people trust my intentions?	1 2 3 4 5
Competence	Can people trust my judgment and preparation?	1 2 3 4 5
Consistency	Can people trust my follow-through?	1 2 3 4 5

Credibility in practice

One behavior that strengthens trust in me is...

One behavior I will strengthen is...

E — Engage People Through Rapport

Engagement does not require universal agreement. It requires people to feel respected, heard, and able to contribute meaningfully.

RAPPORT PRACTICE	MY APPROACH
Show respect	How will I communicate the value of this person’s perspective?
Ask before assuming	What open question will I ask?
Make contribution visible	How does this person or group help the goal succeed?
Invite participation	Where is there genuine room for input?

A person or group I need to engage more effectively

A — Align People Around Shared Goals

“What outcome are we trying to create, who owns the decision, and what contribution is needed from each of us?”

Conversation planner

CLARIFY	NOTES
Shared outcome	
Decision owner	
Individual contributions	
Constraints or risks	
How progress will be measured	
Next checkpoint	

R — Reinforce Action and Accountability

TURN AGREEMENT INTO MOVEMENT	MY PLAN
First action	
Owner	
Deadline or milestone	
Support or resources needed	
Evidence of progress	
Follow-up conversation	

Leadership reminder

Inspiration creates energy. Clear ownership and follow-through create progress.

Practice Lab 1: Leading Change Without Authority

Scenario: The municipality is introducing a new agenda-management process. Some experienced employees believe the existing system works well enough and view the change as unnecessary additional work.

Roles

- Municipal clerk: connect the change to purpose, build rapport, invite input, and establish a first step
- Skeptical colleague: raise concerns about workload, timing, and practicality
- Observer/coach: score the conversation and provide specific feedback

Suggested structure

- ☐ Connect the change to a meaningful purpose
- ☐ Establish credibility without becoming defensive
- ☐ Acknowledge the colleague's experience and concern
- ☐ Identify the shared goal
- ☐ Invite useful participation
- ☐ Confirm ownership and the first action

Practice Lab 1: Observer Scorecard

OBSERVATION	RATING	NOTES
Purpose and vision were clear	1 2 3 4 5	
Speaker demonstrated credibility	1 2 3 4 5	
Concern was heard and respected	1 2 3 4 5	
Participation was genuinely invited	1 2 3 4 5	
Shared goal was made visible	1 2 3 4 5	
First action and ownership were clear	1 2 3 4 5	

One strength I observed...

One suggestion for the replay...

Session One Commitment

The CLEAR behavior I will practice is...

I will practice it with this person, group, or goal...

The movement or result I want to create is...

**Leadership makes a difference when people see the purpose, trust the leader,
and understand their part.**

Emotional Intelligence Snapshot

Rate each statement from 1 (rarely) to 5 (consistently).

STATEMENT	RATING
I notice emotional and physical signals before I react.	1 2 3 4 5
I can name what I am feeling with reasonable accuracy.	1 2 3 4 5
I check my assumptions before assigning motive.	1 2 3 4 5
I listen for both facts and underlying concerns.	1 2 3 4 5
I establish respectful boundaries without escalating conflict.	1 2 3 4 5
I move difficult conversations toward a useful next step.	1 2 3 4 5

The pressure-filled situation I most want to handle more effectively is...

Four Emotional Intelligence Capabilities

CAPABILITY	PUBLIC-LEADERSHIP PRACTICE
Self-awareness	Recognize your emotions, triggers, thoughts, and impulses.
Self-management	Choose your response under pressure.
Social awareness	Read emotion, perspective, and underlying need.
Relationship management	Move conflict toward a constructive outcome.

Emotional intelligence turns awareness into a thoughtful leadership choice.

The CALM Leadership Framework

	EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT PRACTICE
C	Catch your internal signals
A	Adjust your response
L	Listen for meaning and need
M	Move the conversation toward resolution

CALM does not mean

- ☐ Suppressing emotion
- ☐ Avoiding accountability
- ☐ Agreeing with inaccurate statements
- ☐ Allowing disrespectful behavior

CALM means

Managing emotion intelligently enough to protect judgment, trust, and the possibility of a constructive outcome.

C — Catch Your Internal Signals

INTERNAL DASHBOARD	MY OBSERVATION
Trigger	What happened?
Emotion	What am I feeling?
Body	What physical signal do I notice?
Thought	What am I telling myself?
Impulse	What do I immediately want to do?

My most common public-leadership trigger

- ☐ Being rushed
- ☐ Being interrupted
- ☐ Being blamed
- ☐ Being publicly challenged
- ☐ Feeling ignored or dismissed
- ☐ Other: _____

A — Adjust Your Response

PAUSE → BREATHE → CHECK THE STORY → CHOOSE

RESET STEP	MY RESPONSE
Fact	What actually happened?
Story	What meaning or motive did I add?
Alternative	What else might be true?
Purpose	What outcome must I protect?
Choice	What response best serves that purpose?

My deliberate first sentence

L — Listen for Meaning and Need

LISTENING STEP	PURPOSE
Ask	Use an open question.
Reflect	Name the facts and emotion you heard.
Clarify	Test whether you understood correctly.
Summarize	Confirm the shared facts before responding.

Questions that open the conversation

- What is most important to you about this?
- What impact has this situation had?
- What would you like me to understand?
- Have I understood your primary concern correctly?

M — Move Toward Resolution

FUNCTION	SAMPLE LANGUAGE
Acknowledge	I can hear how frustrating this has been.
Clarify	Let me make sure I understand your primary concern.
Separate	I want to separate what we know from what we are assuming.
Boundary	I am willing to continue, and we need to speak respectfully.
Next step	Here is what I can do, and here is what happens next.

A phrase I will personalize and practice

Practice Lab 2: De-escalating a Public Conversation

Scenario: A frustrated resident believes information was withheld, speaks loudly, interrupts, and accuses the city of being unresponsive. The clerk must use CALM to protect trust and establish a constructive next step.

OBSERVATION	RATING	NOTES
Clerk noticed and regulated personal reactions	1 2 3 4 5	
Resident was heard before facts were explained	1 2 3 4 5	
Emotion was acknowledged without accepting inaccuracies	1 2 3 4 5	
Clarifying questions reduced assumptions	1 2 3 4 5	
Boundary was clear and respectful	1 2 3 4 5	
Conversation ended with a credible next step	1 2 3 4 5	

One effective behavior I observed...

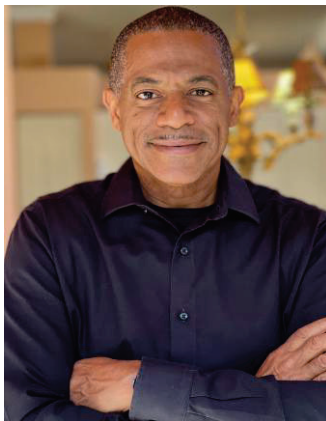
One improvement for the replay...

My 30-Day Influence and Emotional Intelligence Plan

COMMITMENT	MY PLAN
CLEAR influence behavior I will practice	
CALM emotional-intelligence behavior I will practice	
Where and with whom I will practice	
A likely trigger or obstacle	
How I will prepare for it	
Evidence that I am improving	
Person who can give me feedback	
Date I will review my progress	

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Additional notes:



You may contact us at sharon@sharongill.com for additional training and speaking events or visit our website at www.sharongill.com.