

A Path to Budget Analyst Success

-Randy Harrington, 2009 NCLGBA Winter Conference-

Win friends and influence people!

- 1) Analytical skills will get you in the door, interpersonal skills will get you hired and promoted
- 2) Develop effective communication skills (written, numerical, visual, and verbal)
 - a. Limit management reports/memos to 1-2 pages (be clear, concise, and free of ambiguity)
 - b. Limit narrative
 - i. Use bullet points to convey key points
 - ii. Use visuals to help tell the story
 - iii. Don't let data/graphs speak for themselves...tell reader what they mean
 - c. Limit the number of PowerPoint slides to less than 10 for Council presentations (you don't have to tell Council everything)
 - d. Don't put management and Council to sleep with details...stick to the key messages...less is more!
- 3) Develop technology skills
- 4) Mistakes: Take responsibility...learn from them...laugh about them...and move on
- 5) Champion new, innovative thought
- 6) Know your departments (for dept. budget staff, develop a strong relationship with your analyst)
 - a. Ride-alongs / tours
 - b. Attend staff meetings
 - c. Know current issues / trends
- 7) Build trust
 - a. Don't act like a know-it all; your way is not the only way; collaborate; partner; develop mutual give and take; listen; be transparent; share knowledge and information
 - b. Seek two-way relationships
 - c. Don't forget administrative assistants!
 - d. Find a way to say "yes" instead of "no"
- 8) "Politics" trumps "Data" – Take a deep breath...It's okay if Council didn't like your rec.

Your daily *modus operandi* (M.O.)

- 9) Manage your time
 - a. Don't let e-mail manage you
 - b. Focus on the priorities
 - c. Deadlines: Don't be late!
 - d. Start and end meetings on time (always have an agenda)
- 10) Add value – understand how your work advances the budget function, the dept., and the city
- 11) Develop a bias toward action (volunteer for the assignments nobody wants)
- 12) Deliver your best work plus 1%

Where to spend your “free” time!

- 13) Volunteer for “extra-curricular” efforts (special projects, philanthropic campaigns, NCLGBA, etc.)
- 14) Get involved in your community

See the World!

- 15) Chart a roadmap for your professional development
 - a. Take advantage of SOG courses and faculty resources
 - b. Attend national conferences
 - c. Read what's “hot” in public management