

# Leadership Development

## Alderwood Water & Wastewater District





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## Today's Agenda

- ◆ Introduction to AWWD
- ◆ A Culture of Leadership
- ◆ Current Leadership Initiatives
- ◆ Future Goals and Strategies
- ◆ Conclusions
- ◆ Questions

# ALDERWOOD WATER & WASTEWATER DISTRICT

- 💧 Lynnwood, WA
- 💧 Largest water and wastewater special purpose district in the state
- 💧 Regional growth



# OUR WORK, BY THE NUMBERS: 2017



135 employees (and growing!)



186,000 retail water customers  
158,000 retail sewer customers



44 square miles of retail service



1491 new commercial and residential units added through development



640 miles of water main  
420 miles of sewer main



7.7 miles of water pipe added through development  
7.6 miles of sewer pipe added through development



7 wholesale customers

# Leadership is in our roots



AWWD has committed to being a leader for our environment, our community and our industry.

# Our Organizational Values Reinforce our Commitment to Leadership at all Levels

- ◆ **INTEGRITY** means we do the right thing.
- ◆ **LEARNING** drives our people and our culture.
- ◆ **STEWARDSHIP** because water is essential to life.
- ◆ **SAFETY** as our employees and our community deserve care.
- ◆ **EFFICIENCY** enables us to deliver excellent value to our customers.

# A Culture of Leadership

- ◆ Innovation & creativity
- ◆ Improve communication
- ◆ Clarifying mission & vision
- ◆ Strengths & weaknesses
- ◆ Efficiency & productivity
- ◆ Employee development
- ◆ Manage change
- ◆ Prepare for the future



# Goals for our Leadership Programs



- ◆ Be a **COMPETITIVE EMPLOYER** in the marketplace
- ◆ **ENGAGE AND RETAIN** employees
- ◆ **PREPARE** for vacancies
- ◆ Break down **COMMUNICATION BARRIERS**
- ◆ Support better **DECISION MAKING** across the organization



# Specific Objectives

- ◆ Increase internship opportunities
- ◆ Market and utilize existing tuition reimbursement program
- ◆ Create management development program
- ◆ Build a Leadership Academy
- ◆ Implement Individual Development Plans (IDPs)
- ◆ Prepare employees for interviews
- ◆ Create team competitions
- ◆ Develop formal succession planning strategy

TODAY

# CURRENT LEADERSHIP INITIATIVES

# Leadership Characteristics

## Customer Service Orientation

- ◆ Responsive

## Commitment to Public Service

- ◆ Attitude
- ◆ Accountability
- ◆ Safety
- ◆ Wellness
- ◆ Respect

## Empathetic

- ◆ Fair treatment
- ◆ Team player
- ◆ Honest and open
- ◆ Good communication
- ◆ Listening skills
- ◆ Interpersonal skills

## Tact

- ◆ Decision making ability
- ◆ Team building
- ◆ Staffing

## Motivation

- ◆ Good judgment
- ◆ Forward-thinker

## Respect of Diversity

- ◆ Confidence
- ◆ Visionary leadership
- ◆ Strategic planning

# Internship Program

- ◆ 4-5 interns this summer
- ◆ \$15/hour
- ◆ College credits available
- ◆ Goals:
  - Increase general knowledge of water sector
  - Fill gaps that can't be filled by FTEs
  - Develop well-trained future employees
  - Serve the community through a learning program



# Tuition Reimbursement

- When positions unreachable by current employees
- Challenge: increasing visibility/utilization of program
- Five employees currently participating
  - \$5,250 tax exempt for educational assistance plan
  - Previous graduates have advanced within and at other utilities

# In-House Training

- 💧 At least quarterly
- 💧 Leadership topics
- 💧 Attendees include:
  - District supervisors
  - District employees
  - Outside attendees
- 💧 Guest speakers



# Individual Development Plans (IDPs)

- ◆ Encourage all employees to:
  - Improve in their current positions
  - Aspire to other positions at the District
- ◆ Specific development activity and timeframe:
  - On-the-job training
  - Classroom training
- ◆ Help them see their future here



# Promotional Checklists



- ◆ Identify criteria to move to next classification
- ◆ Utility Worker I, II, Sr., Lead, e.g.
- ◆ Prepared with certifications, technical proficiencies in advance of vacancy
- ◆ Provide leadership opportunities to backfill



# Interview Prep



- Employee involvement in District interview panels
- Mock interviews
- “Do’s and Don’t” resources

# Teamwork, Teamwork, Teamwork

- ◆ Committees and task forces
  - Employee Advisory Committee
  - Wellness Committee
- ◆ Team of the Quarter, Team of the Year awards
- ◆ Business process improvement teams
- ◆ Problem-solving builds the team!



TOMORROW

**FUTURE GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

# Management Development Program

## Program Design Decisions:

- ◆ Selection criteria
- ◆ Annual or bi-annual graduation classes
- ◆ Activities:
  - Training
  - Mentorship
  - Job shadowing
  - Group project



# Succession Planning



- Create lines of succession plans
- Identify and notify potential employees
- Knowledge, skills, and abilities gap analysis
- Fill gaps with development

# Mentorship and Job Shadowing

- ◆ Identify specific employees as mentors
- ◆ Interested employees paired with mentors
- ◆ Job shadowing helps form the path for long-term development, IDPs
- ◆ Job shadowing can lead to cross-training opportunities

# Conclusions



- ◆ Internal promotions and individual growth rely on retention strategy
- ◆ Readiness for jobs is key to redundancy and succession planning
- ◆ Plan early, and know that the unexpected will always happen
- ◆ Help your employees see their future at your organization
- ◆ Leadership must be your culture – it comes from all levels

# QUESTIONS?

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