

Values Management in Local Government

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alues in government have received much attention in recent years. Of particular interest have been the central notions that governmental organizations should *minimize ethical wrongdoing* and *increase responsiveness* to citizens, employees, and customers of government services.

Governments use a variety of strategies to further these values, including employee training, reward structures, top management exemplars, and program design. These strategies are of particular importance to personnel administrators because they often manage employee training and are partially responsible for enforcing standards of wrongdoing. Personnelists also have a broader responsibility to

Based on a survey of public personnel administrators with responsibilities for ethics training and employee development, this study examines "values management" in municipal governments as it relates to the minimization of wrongdoing and increased responsiveness to employees, citizens and customers of city services. Results show that municipalities are shifting their focus from traditional concerns of wrongdoing to those of responsiveness, and that a large "aspiration gap" exists in areas of employee career development and customer satisfaction.

ensure that public managers act in ways that inspire and increase trust in their intentions and abilities (Edwards and Bennett, 1987; West, Berman and Cava, 1993).

Personnel administrators who address these concerns must combine their more traditional "compliance officer" role with that of consultation and facilitation of organizational processes. This dual-role evolution of the personnel function is widely discussed (Nalbandian, 1981; Bowen and Greiner, 1986; Carnevale, 1992; Tsui, 1987). The facilitative role for personnelists in "values management" involves building and sustaining a shared set of beliefs among employees that is beneficial to the

organization, its members and the public. Values are formed, implicitly or explicitly, in an on-going communication and education process that supplements traditional compliance functions.¹

Notwithstanding the heightened importance of minimizing wrongdoing and increasing responsiveness in government, we know very little about progress in these areas at the local government level (Menzel, 1991). The nation's 2,711 cities are obviously highly diverse in their approaches and results (Menzel, 1991; West, Berman and Cava, 1993). While the literature contains references to "ethics management" and responsiveness to employees and customers in particular jurisdictions or agencies (Bonczek, 1991; Osborne and Gaebler, 1992; Thompson, 1990; Denhardt, 1993; Varley, 1990), and to studies of the value orientations of administrators (Bowman, 1990; Menzel, 1992; 1993a; Stewart and Sprinthall, 1991; 1993), there are no systematic studies that profile activities to promote these values across cities (see West, Berman and Cava, 1993). This study addresses this gap in the literature by providing a systematic assessment of the contemporary values management activities of cities, focusing on objectives, strategies and relationships to selected outcomes.

Framework

Values management is increasingly recognized as an important area of public administration. Both the International City and County Management Association (ICMA) and the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) have published books recently focusing on the management of values in public organizations (Kellar, 1988; Richter, Burke, and Doig, 1990). Values are defined as the ideals, beliefs and commitments which bind members of an organization and provide standards for interpersonal relations and preferred modes of conduct (Ladd, 1993; Rokeach, 1973). The task of values management is the clarification and promotion of such values. Some examples of organizational values are avoiding sexual harassment and conflict of interest, and meeting the needs of customers and constituents. Values are part of the organizational culture, which in turn is defined as the shared beliefs and the norms and practices of an organization. The latter are common or pervasive ways of acting that are found in organizations and which give meaning to values through application and specification. Most values have many norms and practices that are associated with them. For example, norms about sexual harassment often specify particular language and communications that must not occur.

This study is concerned with values, but restricts its analysis to the study of: (1) formal policies and programs that embody values; (2) organizations rather than individual actors and agents (e.g., employ-

ees); and (3) public service values that are related to wrongdoing and responsiveness. Regarding responsiveness, it should be noted that this study does not directly address the broader social values that government seeks to foster in its policies and programs – such as promoting social justice, democratic representation, or other major tenets of contemporary democratic governance.

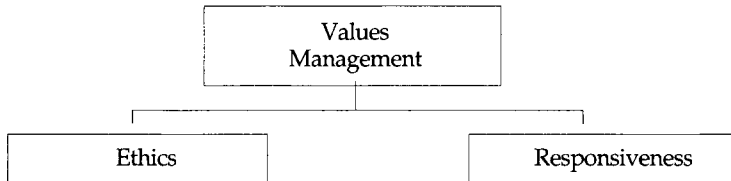
In recent years, moral wrongdoing has become associated with “ethics,” although in fact most definitions of ethics include standards of both right and wrong conduct. The ASPA and ICMA Codes of Ethics include both categories of behavior (Kellar, 1988). However, in practice, organizations often fail to agree on meaningful standards of right behavior, only specifying those standards of wrong conduct that are dictated by higher levels of government, the law or survival. Such standards are frequently stated in the negative, as proscriptions. This study adopts this commonly followed narrow interpretation of ethics as prescriptive of prohibitions, and limits its focus to those standards of conduct adopted by an organization (rather than by individuals) (Menzel and Benton, 1991; Menzel, 1993a; Truelson, 1991).

Responsiveness, as a value, is concerned with meeting the needs of members of an organization and the customers it serves. Concern about responsiveness is consistent with democratic theory and represents an important theme in quality management and workforce diversity programs (Cohen and Brand, 1993; Kanter, 1986; Copeland, 1988). Increasing responsiveness is also associated with building and maintaining trust and loyalty between government and employees, and between agencies and citizens and customers. The presumption is made that when stakeholder needs are being met, their commitment and support for the agency responsible increases as a consequence. Ethics programs alone often fail to increase levels of trust, but complementary efforts to increase responsiveness can help. The need to increase trust is evident from events such as tax revolts and other manifestations of negative public attitudes toward government (National Commission on the Public Service, 1989; Kettering Foundation, 1991; Ehrenhalt, 1993). Responsiveness is also a theme in recent popular books that emphasize the development of “community” in the workplace and “cooperation” with interests outside the organization. In a sense, efforts to increase trust and loyalty through heightened responsiveness may be regarded as attempts to balance self-interest in stakeholder relations with that of building community and commitment toward mutual objectives (Denhardt, 1993; Gurwit, 1992; Luke, 1991; Menzel, 1993b).

Minimizing wrongdoing and increasing responsiveness are reflected in many different, specific actions. Some of these actions are shown in Figure 1. Examples of traditional ethical concerns are reflected in such wrongdoings as acceptance of unauthorized gifts,

FIGURE 1

Values Management in Organizations



Minimizing Wrongdoing

Conflict of interest: Avoiding pursuit of interests or activities which conflict with the conduct of official duties.

Whistle blowing: Disclosing information by employees of government fraud, waste and abuse.

Unauthorized gifts: Avoiding solicitation or acceptance of gifts which might influence the performance of official duties.

Sexual harassment: Avoiding an offensive work environment through sexually oriented comments or actions.

Complying with code of ethics: Monitoring and enforcing compliance with a municipality's code of ethics.

Fairness in job assignments: Avoiding job assignments based on criteria other than experience or qualifications.

EEO Policy

Affirmative action: Adopting a corrective program to aid those adversely affected by discrimination based on age, race, religion, sex or handicap.

Comparable worth: Adopting a corrective policy to overcome pay inequities resulting from sex-segregated jobs and pay discrimination based on sex.

Employees

Fully using employees' skills: Increasing commitment to employees' career needs by using all of an employee's skills.

Immediate feedback: Providing immediate feedback to employees in order to increase job satisfaction and future performance.

Empowerment: Placing trust in employees to make more decisions in the workplace.

Development objectives: Setting annual development goals to ensure employee growth and conformance with future organizational goals.

Reducing work-related stress: Improving job satisfaction and lowering health risks by reducing on-the-job stress.

Families

Providing elder care: Increasing commitment to employees by providing elder care leave.

Providing child care: Increasing commitment to employees by providing child care leave and programs.

Customers

Quality of service: Showing commitment to stakeholders by increasing responsiveness to their needs.

Feedback from constituencies: Increasing amount of feedback from constituencies, and use of such information.

Meeting needs of customers: Ensuring that services meet the expectations and needs of customers and constituencies.

Source: See text references.

fraud, waste and abuse uncovered by whistleblowers, and conflicts of interest; the more recent concerns of sexual harassment and noncompliance with municipal codes of ethics are also among the actions covered in values management efforts. Included as ethics, but not as wrongdoing, are EEO policies of comparable worth and affirmative action. The absence of such corrective policies typically does not imply legal wrongdoing, but rather failure to address the problems of gender-based pay inequity and other forms of discrimination may be considered unethical. The right column is labelled "responsiveness" and is subdivided into three stakeholder groups. Concerns about employees focus on: (1) ensuring a positive job experience through stress reduction and increased empowerment; and (2) helping employees to acquire new skills that ensure their competitiveness in the job market. Concerns about employees' families focus on the balance of family/work relations through assistance with child and elder care. By addressing these issues, employers may hope to increase the commitment and loyalty of their workforce.² Concerns about clients and constituents focus on the quality of service, and whether services meet needs.

Progress and compliance are also important issues in values management. Statements of principles and conduct alone do not ensure progress in the above areas: indeed, the idea of ethics in particular is often ridiculed for this reason. To the extent that values are managed through programs, progress can and should be measured. Compliance involving minimizing wrongdoing is often mandated by law, which requires specific fact finding, reporting and training activities. Progress is frequently measured by the number of reported violations. Compliance pertaining to responsiveness is seldom legally mandated, though a few cities have adopted policies that require agencies to provide service through quality management. Progress is frequently measured by the availability of such programs. But even in the case of minimizing wrongdoing, where compliance is legally mandated, progress in training and enforcement (two important concerns of personnelists) typically requires substantive commitment by city administrators and other senior managers to ensure success. Consequently, progress and compliance are a matter of policy (see e.g., Balk, 1985; Burke and Black, 1990).

What range of strategies do organizations use to enhance value management? Historically, U.S. values have emphasized the importance of upbringing as a determinant of character, often to the exclusion of values management by institutions (Thompson, 1988). At times, the moral view of key executives influences the moral character of institutions (Cooper and Wright, 1992). This tendency has been reflected in the selection of important government officials and judges. However, institutions are beginning to take seriously the possibility of

deliberate and systematic management of values (Andrews, 1989). In this regard, however, an important distinction needs to be made between formal and informal approaches. Formal approaches to values management involve legal documents, training requirements, and personnel actions relating to recruitment and promotion. Informal approaches involve the public praising of role models and frequent use of positive reinforcement, and they are behaviorally-based in their conceptualization. Regular communication and feedback about standards and ethics, preferably from the top executives as role models, as well as voluntary training programs for the promotion of new ethical activities are typical examples of an informal system in action. Both formal and informal approaches help to improve the organizational culture in institutions (Brumback, 1991; Menzel, 1992; Murphy, 1988).

Previous studies in the human resource management field (Dresang, 1978; 1982; Mushkin and Sandifer, 1979; O'R. Hayes, 1977; Layden, 1980; Greiner, 1980; and West, 1984; 1986) suggest that jurisdictional characteristics (city size, geographic region, form of government) may affect the development of and progress in the above value management areas. Based on the available literature, it is suggested that progress is furthered by the availability of a larger resource base in bigger cities; by the heightened professionalism that is associated with the council-manager form of government; and by the innovative tendencies which characterize Western cities (McGowan and Poister, 1983; Saltzstein, 1990; Cayer, 1991). The literature also suggests that values management is associated with efforts to increase quality and productivity. Denhardt (1993) writes that total quality management (TQM) assumes values of increased responsiveness and trust in employee decision-making abilities. Such an assumption suggests that the absence of many forms of ethical wrongdoing is a prerequisite to effective implementation of TQM because trust and wrongdoing are largely mutually exclusive constructs.

The survey

In the spring of 1992, a detailed survey was sent to human resource directors in all municipalities with a population over 25,000.³ The questions, based on a review of the literature, were initially pre-tested on a sample of 40 municipal managers. Following modifications, the nationwide survey was administered. The individuals contacted in each city were identified through the International City/ County Management Association (ICMA), the professional association of administrators serving cities, counties, regional councils and other local governments. ICMA provided its most current list of human resource

directors of such cities. A total of 1,171 surveys were mailed to all persons on the list. After follow-up mailings and telephone calls, 427 were returned for a 36 percent response rate. The response group closely matches the population as a whole, and no significant non-response bias is present.⁴

Both the literature and our pilot survey show that nearly all organizations use various approaches to attain the values management objectives stated in Figure 1. Thus, of interest is adequacy of results rather than policy per se.⁵ Other focal concerns are future needs and formal or informal strategies for implementing value management.

Results

Using the categories shown in Figure 1, Table 1 reports recent progress in attainment of objectives for cities. On average, 59 percent of the respondents believe that adequate progress has been made in these areas of values. However, there are considerable differences between item groups: items of minimizing wrongdoing and client satisfaction rated, respectively, 73 and 75 percent, whereas equal employment opportunity rated 63%. Ties with families and employee development rated only 36 and 39 percent, respectively. Customer satisfaction seems exceptionally high to us, which may reflect the fact that respondents are personnel managers who function in a staff role and who may be more insulated from customer/citizen contact than their line manager counterparts. Alternatively, it may be that recent progress indeed has been adequate, but that much more needs to be done. Differences within groups are small, with the exception of "complying with a code of ethics."

Table 2 reports the value aspiration gap. The "aspiration gap" is defined as the difference between past progress on the attainment of value objectives, reported in Table 1, and the percent of organizations reporting that important improvements are required during the next five years. Where the gap is high, the issue is thus an emerging or rising concern. Table 2 shows that the gap exceeds 50 percentage points for three items: fully using employees' skills, providing immediate feedback for employees, and reducing job-related stress. For example, the adequacy of results achieved in "fully using skills" is deemed adequate in 35% of cities (Table 1), while the same item is identified as requiring future improvement by 94% of the respondents (Table 2); the difference or "aspiration gap" is 59%. As discussed, progress on these issues increases the loyalty and commitment of employees by addressing important employee concerns, and personnel administrators regard these issues as increasingly salient to value management in coming years.

TABLE 1

Recent Progress in Values Management: Evidence from a Nationwide Survey of City Personnel Directors (N=427)

Percent of organizations reporting that adequate results have been achieved in the following areas during the last five years.

Minimizing Wrongdoing (Avg. 73%)

Conflict of interest	82%
Whistle blowing	76%
Unauthorized gifts	85%
Sexual harassment	73%
Complying with code of ethics	45%
Fairness in job assignments	79%

Equal Employment Opportunity (Avg. 63%)

Comparable worth	53%
Affirmative action	72%

Ties with Families (Avg. 36%)

Providing elder care	27%
Providing child care	46%

Employee Development (Avg. 39%)

Fully using employees' skills	35%
Immediate feedback	37%
Empowerment	41%
Development objectives	43%
Reducing work-related stress	37%

Client/Customer Satisfaction (Avg. 75%)

Quality of service	79%
Feedback from constituencies	67%
Meeting needs of customers	79%

Note: Survey of cities of 25,000+ population conducted during spring 1992.

A negative gap indicates that the issue is either a mature or waning problem. Five of the eight traditional issues of ethics wrongdoing fall into this category: Accepting unauthorized gifts is clearly seen as a waning issue. While eight out of ten cities report adequate results in avoiding conflict of interest, seven out of ten indicate that further improvements are required in the future. Hence, "conflict of interest" might be interpreted as an important, mature issue, but not an emerging one. These findings suggest that the objectives of personnel administrators are likely to shift substantively from concerns of wrongdoing to those of employee development as a focus for building trust. This will require investments in employee development.

This study examines the use of various strategies in selected areas of ethics management and responsiveness.⁶ Table 3 shows that cities use a mix of formal and informal strategies for this purpose. Informal

TABLE 2

The Values Management Aspiration Gap: Evidence from a Nationwide Survey of City Personnel Directors (N=427)

The "Aspiration Gap" is defined as the difference between past progress and the percent of organizations reporting that important improvements are required during the next five years.

	Aspiration Gap	Improvements Required
Fully using employees' skills	+59	94%
Reducing work-related stress	+52	89%
Immediate feedback	+51	88%
Development objectives	+41	84%
Providing elder care	+37	64%
Empowerment	+33	74%
Complying with code of ethics	+30	75%
Feedback from constituencies	+17	84%
Providing child care	+15	61%
Quality of service	+13	92%
Sexual harassment	+11	84%
Meeting needs of customers	+11	90%
Affirmative action	+9	81%
Comparable worth	-2	51%
Whistle blowing	-10	66%
Fairness in job assignments	-10	69%
Conflict of interest	-12	70%
Unauthorized gifts	-34	51%

strategies are more frequently used, specifically exemplary moral leadership of senior managers (73 percent of cities) and elected officials (57 percent). This strategy is followed by formal strategies of protecting whistleblowers (58 percent), approval of outside activities (56 percent) and financial disclosure (53 percent). In addition, about four in ten of the cities provide voluntary ethics training courses. Other strategies are used in only a minority of cities, including those based on adopting and implementing a written Code of Ethics. While the adoption of codes of ethics has received much discussion in business administration, the adoption of similar codes by cities is perhaps less relevant because of the long tradition of Codes of Ethics by professional organizations (for example, ICMA and ASPA), and also because many legislative bodies have formulated specific guidelines of conduct. Indeed, from the results of a separate question it can be noted that only 41 percent of cities have adopted a code of ethics, and that only 29 percent of those cities require familiarity with their code of ethics.

Which cities are experiencing the greatest progress in attaining the objectives of value management? Table 4 reports the percentage of cities indicating that adequate results have been achieved in the four

general areas during the last five years. The data are broken down by city size, form of government and geographic region. Survey results suggest that larger cities are the most likely to achieve adequate results in EEO, employee development and minimizing wrongdoing. As hypothesized above, cities in the West are more likely to adopt employee development programs, as well as child/elder care programs. However, it is also seen that cities in the Northeast are less likely than those in the South, West and North Central regions to implement employee development programs. Cities with council-manager forms of government are more likely than those with mayor-council forms to achieve progress in client satisfaction, minimizing wrongdoing, as well as implementing employee development programs.

Table 5 provides tentative evidence that progress in the several value management objectives may be related to subsequent productivity improvement and other favorable outcomes (see Balk, 1985; Burke and Black, 1990; Denhardt, 1993). Findings reported in the table suggest that the attainment of value management objectives, with the exception of child/elder programs, is positively associated with self-reported, actual cost reduction and improvement in the quality of municipal services. Table 5 reports the Wald Chi-Square estimates of logistic regressions based on respondents' assessments. The independent variables are multi-item scales based on the groupings in Table 1. The Cronbach Alpha reliabilities of the items shown are all better than 0.7 (The EEO group is omitted because of a reliability score below this threshold).

These findings are tentative, of course, in the absence of independent, objective measures of municipal productivity in our cities. Also, while the logistic regressions include intercept, city size and form of government, other potential determinants of outcomes are not considered. Thus, only evidence of association is claimed; no claim of causation is made. Carefully detailed case studies would be necessary to substantiate claims that the attainment of value management objectives leads to the enhancement of municipal productivity in a variety of settings. Our survey results also suggest that value management programs, with the exception of child/elder programs, are associated with increased constituency responsiveness and meeting employee needs.

Discussion and conclusion

This study responds to the need for systematic information about values management efforts being made in local government. Perhaps the most significant finding is that municipal personnel directors think that duplicating their cities' past efforts in values management is

inadequate to meet future challenges. Values management is shifting from minimizing wrongdoing to building trust among employees and customers of public services. Specifically, further progress is needed in responsiveness to the career management and development needs of employees. Given the technological and demographic changes in the workplace, it is perhaps not surprising that employee development activities are the items where the gap is greatest between what municipal personnel directors identify as past results and what they indicate are priority concerns for future improvements. This observation is consistent with other studies showing that seven of ten American workers are underemployed -- that is, employees feel that they are relatively unchallenged in their jobs, unrewarded for their work, and are not fully utilizing their capabilities (Coil, 1984).

Public personnel management must support organizational needs by ensuring the basic competence of employees in requisite skills, and then helping to empower employees to use these skills effectively. These are important and growing concerns in the views of human resource directors. The most salient issues in coming years are fully using employee skills, reducing work-related stress, providing timely feedback to employees, and providing individual career planning. Such issues represent the expanding frontiers of contemporary HRM. They raise important questions for personnel managers to consider. What career planning assistance programs offer the human resource function the best ways to make a strategic contribution through the motivation and retention of key managers and employees? What methods provide career development and challenge in the absence of multiple organizational layers that once offered more frequent and incremental promotion opportunities? How can public personnel managers best work with others to prevent, detect and manage stress in their work settings? What individual and organizational strategies are most helpful in stress management? Can career and developmental needs be met in ways that increase organizational effectiveness? What effect do career planning and employee developmental programs have on the likelihood and frequency of employee exit?

The cities that lead in making progress on values management also tend to be those municipalities that emphasize addressing the needs of their employees and meeting their customers' expectations. This study finds positive evidence of the mutually reinforcing influences of quality improvement and values management. Such a finding would seem to connect with efforts underway to "reinvent government," and suggests that these efforts may succeed best in cities where trust exists between government and its employees, and among government and citizens and constituencies.

What are the implications of this study for academic research? This study provides a snapshot of the current value management

TABLE 3

Strategies for Ensuring Progress Toward Selected Traditional Values Management Objectives: Evidence from a Nationwide Survey of City Personnel Directors (N=427)

Percent of cities using the following strategies for ensuring progress toward traditional values management objectives (i.e. minimizing wrongdoing).

	<u>Cities</u>
<u>Formal Approaches</u>	
Protecting whistleblowers for valid disclosures	59%
Requiring approval of outside activities	56%
Requiring financial disclosures	53%
Use of proportionate penalties in ethical matters	41%
Required familiarity with the code of ethics	29%
Mandatory ethics training courses for all employees	29%
Making ethics a criterion in hiring and promotion	27%
Lengthening budgeting cycles to avoid short-time horizons	13%
Raise employee pay to reduce temptations	11%
Mandatory ethics training courses for violators	6%
<u>Informal Approaches</u>	
Exemplary moral leadership by senior management	73%
Exemplary moral leadership by elected officials	57%
Voluntary ethics training courses	41%
Regular communication to employees about ethics	29%
Monitoring adherence to the code of ethics	28%
Making counselors available for ethical issues	22%
Periodic re-reading of the code of ethics	15%
Surveying employees' opinions about ethics	7%

Mean items¹=4.6

¹Mean number of items in the above list reported by organizations.
See Footnote 6.

objectives in American local governments. Future research needs to establish the extent to which values are successfully implemented, and the extent to which personnelists are adding the strategic, support-oriented role to their longstanding compliance officer role. A better understanding is needed of the most effective mix of formal and informal strategies in actually minimizing wrongdoing and maximizing governmental responsiveness. Additional research is also needed to determine the impact of the various trust-building employee development innovations and family-sensitive policies on individual workers and on organizational performance. Career-related concerns are compounded for many organizational members by the increased demands of child and elder care, as the growth in dual income families and families with single heads-of-households continues. Although the above are "off-the-job" concerns, to what extent do these pressures contribute to reduced performance? Absenteeism? Employee exit?

TABLE 4

The Values Management Objectives of Municipal Governments: Results of a Nationwide Survey of Municipal Personnel Directors

Percent of organizations reporting that adequate results have been achieved in the following areas during the last five years.

<u>Size</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>EEO</u>	<u>Minimizing Wrongdoing</u>	<u>Ties with Families</u>	<u>Employee Develop</u>	<u>Client Satisf</u>
Over 500,000	15	75	73	39	54	75
250,000-500,000	15	87**	83**	35	45	76
100,000-250,000	53	63	71	36	29	73
50,000 -100,000	124	61	74	34	39	77
25,000-50,000	220	62	74	38	39	75
<u>Government</u>						
Mayor-Council	121	65	70	38	34*	70**
Council-Manager	288	63	76	36	41*	79***
Commission	12	54	57	32	31	67
Other	6	58	73	33	46	50
<u>Region</u>						
North East	56	60	73	33	31*	74
North Central	112	60	72	38	36	68***
South	131	65	74	30**	39	80
West	128	65	76	43**	44**	77
Total	427	63	74	36	39	75

***1 percent significance (compared to group mean); **5 percent significance (compared to group mean); *10 percent significance (compared to group mean)

TABLE 5

Association of Values Management Efforts with Productivity and Other Favorable Outcomes: Evidence from a Nationwide Survey of Municipal Personnel Directors (N=427)

	Productivity Outcomes ¹		Other Outcomes ¹	
	Cost Reduction	Quality Improvement	Constit Respons.	Employee Needs
	Wald Sign Chi-Sq	Wald Sign Chi-Sq	Wald Sign Chi-Sq	Wald Sign Chi-Sq
Values Management²				
Objectives				
Minimizing wrongdoing	29.** +	41.** +	25.** +	38.** +
Ties with families	0. +	0. +	0. +	11.** +
Employee development	33.** +	31.** +	25.** +	66.** +
Client ³ satisfaction	46.** +	57.** +	43.** +	34.** +

¹Logistic regression results. See text for explanation of this statistical procedure. Sign is the interpreted parameter estimate.

²The reliabilities of the independent variables are as follows: minimizing wrongdoing=0.76; ties with families=0.85; employee development=0.76; client satisfaction=0.71. The "EEO" group is omitted because of a low reliability score.

³To avoid possible bias, this measure excludes "quality of service" in the Quality Improvement regression, and "feedback from constituents" in the Constituency Responsiveness regression.

**1 percent significance; *5 percent significance

Legend:

Cost reduction = reducing the cost of services

Quality improvement = improving the quality of services

Constituency responsiveness = improving responsiveness to constituencies

Employee needs = meeting the personal needs of employees

What responses by the human resource department are appropriate in respecting the privacy of employees? Are these approaches cost-effective in the face of intense budget pressures? Hard data is needed that addresses the tradeoffs between organizationally sponsored work/family experiments and employee needs. And, with a slower growth in the public sector workforce in the 1990s, current concerns over "rightsizing" may give way to increased attention to securing and retaining an optimal workforce. The ability of public personnel managers and others to address both these current and future pressures may be the ultimate strategic contribution.

Notes

¹Thus, it would be inaccurate to view values management as primarily or

exclusively concerned with instrumental manipulation of values to minimize wrongdoing or to change or imprint values for the benefit of particular groups, such as top management. Such an orientation views values management as a “control mechanism” with public managers and personnelists insuring compliance with prescribed values. A more contemporary view of values management has leaders and managers assuming a supportive role oriented to developing constructive stakeholder relations, to communicating a vision of the organization, and to building trust among its members and customers.

²Obviously, employers have other reasons as well for providing these programs, such as increased job complexity and health care costs. While these are important reasons, addressing these employee issues also increases loyalty and commitment, which has been widely noted. It is also noted that while investments in skills increase the “exit” option for employees, employers are likely to take this calculated risk because of increased job complexity and because of regulations stressing minority and female hiring and the need for appropriate career objectives and promotion paths.

³Surveys were sent directly to municipal personnel directors. In 92 percent of the cases the address labels provided by ICMA listed the personnel director by name and by title; in 8 percent the title of personnel director was listed along with the address but no name was provided. Our pilot study and follow-up interviews suggest in many cities personnel directors are indeed the most informed on ethics matters, in both breadth and depth, because of their responsibilities in ethics training and enforcement. We leave it to subsequent studies to survey employees, city managers, agency directors and other appropriate personnel in order to deal with issues of self-reporting bias in this target group.

⁴The following table shows that the sample closely matches the population as a whole. We find little evidence of a serious non-response bias problem. Size and form of government are relevant measures by which to compare the sample and the population (see framework).

Size	All Cities (population)	Survey (sample)	Form of Gov't	All Cities (population)	Survey (sample)
>250,000	11.6%	7.0%	Mayor- council	36.8%	28.3%
100,000- 249,999	12.2%	12.4%	Council- manager	57.0%	67.5%
50,000 - 99,999	28.3%	29.0%	Commission	3.8%	2.8%
25,000 - 49,999	47.9%	51.5%	Other	2.4%	1.4%
N =	1,171	427		1,171	427

See also Table 4, left column.

⁵Sample survey questions are the following:

A. "Please evaluate the following objectives. Please indicate whether adequate results have been accomplished in the last five years."

B. "Please indicate whether improvements are required over the next five years."

C. "Which of the following strategies are currently used for ensuring an ethical climate in your organization? Circle the particular response. If you are uncertain, please go to the next item."

Items with regard to Questions A and B are stated in Table 2. Question A is also the basis for Tables 1, 4 and 5. Items with regard to question C are stated in Table 3.

⁶The use of values management strategies in efforts to increase responsiveness are not examined because these are more varied and tied to human resource management and client/quality management. The list in Table 3 also notably excludes strategies that deal with sexual harassment, comparable worth and fairness in job assignment.

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