High Performing Governance: Bridging the Gap between Political Acceptability and Administrative Sustainability

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Outline

• A gap exists and is growing between what is politically acceptable and administratively sustainable
  • Bridging the gap requires political astuteness

• Astuteness facilitated by a “bi-lingual” leadership team understanding that politics involves choices among conflicting values—no value profile is best

• And that politics and administration involve more than different behaviors; they are different ways of thinking

• Identify bridge building, translating and aligning roles for chief administrative officers and leadership team (electeds value added)
Have you considered whether the length and width of the line might have an effect on bridging the gap and also on leadership team member roles and responsibilities?
Governing Body

CM

Staff
Values

• **RESPONSIVENESS =**

  • Representation/Participation +
  • Efficiency/Professionalism +
  • Social Equity +
  • Individual Rights
### Characteristics of Politics and Administration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Politics</th>
<th>Administration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activity</strong></td>
<td>Game/allocation of values</td>
<td>Problem Solving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Players</strong></td>
<td>Representatives/trustees</td>
<td>Experts-trustees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Conversation</strong></td>
<td>“What do you hear?”</td>
<td>“What do you know?”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>◼ Passion&lt;br◼ Dreams&lt;br◼ Stories</td>
<td>◼ Data&lt;br◼ Plans&lt;br◼ Reports</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pieces</strong></td>
<td>Intangible: Interests and symbols</td>
<td>Tangible: Information; money, people, equipment</td>
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<td><strong>Currency</strong></td>
<td>Power (stories), loyalty, trust</td>
<td>Knowledge (deeds)</td>
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<td><strong>Dynamics</strong></td>
<td>Constructive conflict, compromise, change</td>
<td>Predictability, cooperation, continuity</td>
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*Value added*
Bi-lingual Manager

• Understands that efficiency is one of four values if community building is the goal—cups matter

• Politics and administration are more than different roles, behaviors, and responsibilities—they are mindsets

• Facilitates bridging the gap between what is politically acceptable and administratively sustainable
Summary

• Bridging the gap is essential
• Cups matter
• Good politics is about values not right answers—stories matter (convey values)
• Do not ignore any value over time
• Democratic process is “messy”
• Politics/administration=ways of thinking
• Role of translator/bridge builder is critical
• Aligning governing body/staff expectations of each other is crucial
• Difference between “representative” and “trustee“
• Leadership team concept is necessary adaptation to changing pol/admin challenges and leadership team members are “bi-lingual”