

Part 2 of 2: What “Can be Done”

Written by By Deniece Cornett Candidate for Cibola County Treasurer
Friday, 02 September 2016 03:18



Pay your employees better wages and follow your own operating policies, as well as HR standards. When hiring, you should already have a value scale for education, experience, skills, and certifications. This value scale is used to determine what the position's total value is as far as base pay. The value scale is also used to determine which candidate is interviewed, and subsequently hired.

What do you pay them? Use this scale again to determine the pay to offer above base if that person had more education, experience, skills, and certifications than the job description requires.

Don't claim to be working on a "Step Increase" advancement scale, if you are not. Especially, don't mislead employment candidates with false statements regarding annual increases that "follow the step increases for that pay grade." If you are going to say you use that type of increase system, then actually use it. Basically, pay your employees for their value.

To the matter of excessively high self raises for those managers running things. In a time of high unemployment, layoffs, and high Obama Care costs, you have chosen to give yourself a 10-12 percent raise annually. If you are not the actual person doing the work, you don't deserve the raise.

A hiring and raise freeze should be across the board. It is not ethical to take advantage of the local taxpayers just "because you can." The elected officers are just as guilty to have approved your excessive raises as you are to give yourself one.

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If your community needs housing, build it. Don't farm out the project. Don't hire contractors who do not hire 80 percent of the project workers from the local unemployment pool.

We spoke about a skilled workforce in a prior paragraph. Here is where those skills will come into play for the community. Revitalization of existing properties is a novel idea. Retrofit older building to be used for housing and small business.

Japan has developed an apartment design that is very similar to the American college apartments, or a New York one-room efficiency apartment. Who says a grand-scale luxury apartment complex is required or even needed?

Look to the “basics” of life food, water, clothing, and shelter. In the United Kingdom, they do not have large kitchens or large refrigerators. They don't have large washers and dryers. They have kept things small and manageable for centuries. As each technology comes along, it must be able to scale down.

Wasteful spending. These two simple words say it all. Stop spending on Christmas List things. Does a county office really need new office furniture with every new employee or manager hired, especially when you had just purchased new office furniture only a few months before with your prior manager? The answer is “NO. You don't.”

There should be a property control policy in place that does not allow for the wasteful “Christmas List” spending for new furniture, computers, cars, trucks, televisions, recliner chairs, shelves, or other items for at least 5-10 years. For some items there will be a useful life of only five years, or as long as 20 years. But replacement in a matter of months is very unacceptable.

Another wasteful act is taking unnecessary travel to the nation's capital, destinations you would never have been able to go to on your own dime, and to a training to try and quickly obtain a certification you should have obtained closer to home years earlier. Buying in order to keep up with the neighbor has to end.

And misuse. If you have policies in place, actually follow them. If your policies state that “NO

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Government Vehicle is to be Used as a Personal Vehicle”, stick to that. Tax payers are being taken advantage of if you are using government vehicles for personal use. Tax payers pay for the purchase of the vehicle itself, maintenance to it, insurance, and fueling. No tax payer would willingly approve wasteful and unofficial use of a government vehicle. Those with annual salaries over \$40,000 who are not an on-call emergency employee should not have take-home cars, and tax payers should NEVER have to pay for their transportation.

Costs effectiveness analysis annually is necessary now more than ever to evaluate what has worked and what doesn't. Every quarter, governments should have a detailed report on the state of the particular government, a “Real Managers Report.” Yes, much like a state of the union, but for local (village, city, and county) government. All departments must provide their report to include a budget status. The problem. Always the problem.

You will also have to hire executive managers and middle managers who are truly qualified and experienced. Many of today's managers and supervisors lack the educations, skill, and experience to provide or even understand these reports, accounting basics, or effective management. Training an old dog with complacency is hard, and in some cases never going to happen.

What “Can Be Done”? Moving past the “Way Things Are”, “Business as Usual”, and “This is the way it has always been” attitudes and transitioning into the new millennium is a wonderful start.

Do something to make things better. Don't wait for someone else to do it for you. They may just be waiting to take everything from you if you are so willing to let them. Government help to keep and create jobs, and stop your excessive spending. Don't look at everything as a, “What can it do for me.” Look at it as a way to build a stronger more vibrant community that grows with the times, not dies from fighting change.

There are, of course, mountains to speak of when enacting a change to the old way for a better way. Well, to sum it all up, brainstorming is great, but we need ACTION not TALK.

Correction: In our Aug. 26 issue, the Sun made an error on D. Cornett's title. Deniece Cornett is a candidate for Cibola County treasurer. We regret the error.

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