Team Project Component of the Academy

Team project component

The team project aspect of the Academy is a highly effective way for participants to learn about the power of collaborative problem-solving. We strongly believe that learning comes from doing (action), reflection on the action, changing behaviors and actions, then moving forward. This is how continuous improvement is created. The team projects allow the Academy learning community to focus on addressing real-life problems and issues facing Alameda County.

The topics for the team projects are selected by the Alameda County City Managers' Association (ACCMA). Each team will be guided by an executive sponsor (a City Manager or department head from one of the participating agencies). Learning to be a part of the solution in a collaborative and supportive environment will lay the foundation for each participant to gain confidence in their creative problem-solving abilities, strengthen their risk-taking capacities and create a sense of ownership in the delivery of the highest quality services to the community.

Each team project has an Executive Sponsor. For details on the responsibilities, refer to the document titled "*Executive Sponsor Responsibilities*". In summary, the responsibilities of the Executive Sponsor are to:
- Complete the sample project idea form
- Meet with the team to discuss initial idea and scope of work
- Meet with the team mid-course
- Attend team run-through presentation during the Academy and provide feedback
- Attend and support team during the final presentation to the CCPMA

We offer the following guidelines for team projects:
1. They be consulting projects of interest to the leaders or individual agencies participating in the Leadership Academy.
2. They be real-life current demands with insufficient staffing to address the issue.
3. There is no obvious or forgone conclusion.
4. Team members must not be subject matter experts for their project topic or issue.
5. Team members must not be placed in roles within the team in which they are comfortable. The goal is for each employee to stretch and grow by being placed in a role on the team in which they are unfamiliar.
6. The scope of the projects must be realistic and manageable given the limited time participants have to work on Academy projects.

Examples of specific projects include may include policy recommendations for issues such as:
- Creating successful hybrid work practices
- Creating diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging in the workforce
- Accessory housing units
- Cannabis regulations
- Drones
- Retooling organizational cultures
- Re-engineering recruitment processes
- Emergency preparedness and response