Build a Collaborative Leadership Team........ Then
Enhance Collaborative Partnerships

February 12, 2018

Morning Session: 9:45 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.
Afternoon Session: 2:30 p.m. -3:30 p.m.

Presented by:

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<tr>
<th>Hon. Robert Colombo, Jr.</th>
<th>Ms. Zenell Brown,</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chief Judge, 3rd Circuit Court</td>
<td>Exec. Court Administrator, 3rd Circuit Court</td>
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<tr>
<th>Ms. Dawn McCarty</th>
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Workshop Description, Agenda, and Learning Objectives:

**Description:** This session will introduce court management teams to resources and a process for defining or clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the chief judge and the court administrator. It will also offer tips for enhancing collaboration with and among external partners and stakeholders.

**Agenda**

1. Workshop Overview (~2 minutes)

2. Leading Your Court – Building a Strong Leadership Team (~35 minutes)
   - The Essentials: Becoming a Strong Leadership Team
   - Tips for Success: Enhancing Collaboration and Trust Between Chief Judge/Court Administrator
   - Case Scenario - Discussion

3. Fostering Collaborative Relations with Partners/Stakeholders (~25 minutes)
   - The Essentials: Collaborative Leadership Among Peers/Partners
   - Case Scenario -- Discussion
   - Debrief Scenario: Tips for Success/Proven Strategies

4. Wrap-Up and ADJOURN (~2-3 minutes)

**Learning Objectives:** By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

1. Use strategies for enhancing internal collaboration within the Judicial and Court Administrator Leadership Team; and

2. Implement proven practices for enhancing and expanding collaborative relationships with justice system and community partners.
The Essentials: Building a Strong Leadership Team (Part 1)

Leadership vs. Management:

- **Leadership** is “a process of influencing others to excel and achieve common goals.”
- A leader is “anyone who inspires and influences others to do their best and achieve goals and extraordinary results.” Leaders cause things to happen and move into the future.
- **Managers** handle day-to-day matters; they manage people and operations, and get things done.
- It’s not either / or; it’s both!
- Avoid “over-managing and under-leading”, a common Leadership Team Syndrome.

Balancing Position and Personal Power

Position Power = The authority you receive from the office or position to which you are appointed or elected.

Personal Power = The authority you command because of who you are as a person.

Becoming a High Performing Executive Leadership Team – Challenges of “Teams at the Top”

1. Establish clear roles, responsibilities, and expectations of Executive Team Members – avoid role confusion/conflict.

2. Learn to shift in/out of various roles (individual leader vs. executive team) at appropriate times.

3. Develop and demonstrate mutual trust and respect.

4. Establish and remain focused on agreed upon long-term/strategic goals and priorities.

5. Achieve “openness” – the willingness and ability to: deal directly with problems, raise and address issues, create an environment where team members can say what is on their minds, and promote an open exchange of ideas. **Openness is the single most important feature of successful teamwork and collaboration (according to research findings by Dr. Carl E. Larson and Frank LaFasto – When Teams Work Best).**
Enhancing Communication Effectiveness

- Leaders cannot command commitment, they can only inspire it. Leaders must be effective communicators and develop a broad range of strategies for listening to, and speaking with, followers as well as people with whom they are attempting to influence.

Consider the statements below: assess your Executive Leadership Team on the various collaborative communication skills. Select a number that represents your level of agreement to the statements.

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<th>Statements: We = Chief Judge/Court Administrator</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Agree Somewhat</th>
<th>Disagree Somewhat</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Don’t Know/Not Sure</th>
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<td>1. We communicate and inspire others to achieve common goals.</td>
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<td>2. We speak candidly and openly with each other.</td>
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<td>3. We address differences/disagreements before they become destructive conflict.</td>
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<td>4. We build on each other’s ideas during discussions (e.g., when problem solving, developing new approaches/strategies, etc.).</td>
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<td>5. We listen to and incorporate diverse perspectives into decision-making.</td>
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<td>6. We recognize others’ contributions.</td>
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- What are your Executive Leadership Team’s strengths? Most significant challenge/area for improvement?

- The list identifies practices of effective leaders and collaborative leadership teams. Your responses identify strengths and areas for improvement.

- Modeling collaborative communication practices invites others to follow suit. Leaders can’t do it alone, but in a team atmosphere the group can accomplish much more than any individual.

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1 The Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, James M. Kouzes & Barry Posner.
TIPS: Enhancing Collaboration and Trust Between Chief Judge/Court Administrator

1. Define/clarify roles, responsibilities, and expectations. The Court Administrator should meet with the Chief Judge and go over responsibilities. If it is unclear whether a responsibility falls to the Chief Judge or Court Administrator, work together and the decision will become apparent. See Attachment A: “Roles & Responsibilities of Chief Judge and Court Administrator.” In general, the Chief Judge should be responsible for managing issues with judges and the Court Administrator should be responsible for managing the Court (e.g., operations, staff, etc.).

2. Demonstrate support and be visible. After agreeing on a direction for the Court, the Chief Judge should attend the Court Administrator’s meetings with either the entire Executive Management Team or the department managers. The Chief Judge does not have to be present for every meeting. However, it is important for the Chief Judge to support the Court Administrator’s management plan.

   • It also is important for the Court Administrator to attend meetings the Chief Judge has with the bench, demonstrating trust, confidence, and solidarity.

   • Finally, showing support, concern, and a willingness to listen are extremely important when undergoing major organizational changes (e.g., appointment of a new chief judge). When the Court Administrator, along with the Chief Judge, meet with managers/staff to learn about issues and explore responses, concerns can be alleviated and apprehension can be reduced.

3. Do what you say you will do and maintain open communication. Earn and enhance trust and respect by following-through on commitments and implementing changes/improvements as agreed upon. Communicate frequently and openly – engage in executive “straight talk.”

4. Develop/agree upon a fair and objective hiring process. The Court Administrator, with the approval of the Chief Judge, should establish a hiring process that is fair, identifies the most qualified candidates and takes the Chief Judge out of the process except for the most important employment decisions like the Court Administrator. All employment decisions should comply with state and local anti-nepotism rules.

5. Stay organized and plan ahead. The Court Administrator should work with the Chief Judge, Presiding Judges, and other Court Managers to develop an Annual Calendar of Events documenting upcoming court events, dates for issuing policy memorandums, important due dates (e.g., filing reports to State Court Administrative Office), etc.

6. Develop and Implement a Strategic Plan. The Court Administrator and the Chief Judge should work together to establish a Strategic Plan for the future. This may include bringing in an expert to lead the process. It should include surveys and focus groups that may include judges, court staff, partners, and stakeholders. It should include a review/assessment of the demographics of the community served by the Court and other relevant trends. The Court’s caseload (e.g., filings, dispositions, age of pending cases) and other internal trends information also should be reviewed. The broader the participation in the development of a Strategic Plan by the judges and court staff, the easier it is to get buy in to implement the plan.
Fostering Collaborative Relations with Partners/Stakeholders (Part 2)

The Essentials: Collaborative Leadership Among Peers/Partners

- The public expects public leaders to solve complex community and justice system problems, and address shared concerns, in collaborative ways.

- Collaboration (Latin roots) – *com and laborare* = “to work together.” It is a mutually beneficial relationship between two or more parties who work toward common goals by sharing responsibility, authority, and accountability for achieving results. True collaboration goes beyond communication, cooperation, and coordination. Collaboration is more than simply sharing knowledge and information (communication) and more than a relationship that helps each party achieve its own goals (cooperation and coordination).

- The purpose of collaboration is to create a shared vision and joint strategies to address concerns that *go beyond the purview of any particular party/organization*.

Keys to Successful Collaboration – Serving as Catalysts for Collaboration

The following must be present or deliberately built into the process from the beginning to achieve true collaboration.

1. Good timing and clear need – urgency and purpose
2. Well-organized and credible stakeholder groups – can speak credibly for the organizations/groups they represent
3. Broad-based involvement – all key partners/stakeholders are represented/involved
4. Credible and open process
5. Involvement/engagement (or commitment) of high level, visible leaders
6. Support or acquiescence of “established” authorities or powers (e.g., city council, county administration, Judicial Council)
7. Overcoming mistrust and skepticism
8. Strong leadership of the process – keeping stakeholders at the table, acknowledging successes along the way, helping stakeholders negotiate difficult points, enforcing/reinforcing positive group norms and ground rules, etc.
9. Acknowledge interim successes – interim successes help sustain credibility and momentum
10. A shift toward broader concerns – a profound shift occurs to concerns of the greater good and away from narrow parochial interests

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2 *Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Can Make a Difference.* David D. Chrislip and Carl. E. Larson, Ph.D.

3 Ibid. Chrislip and Larson.
Tips for Success/Proven Strategies: Enhancing Collaboration with Partners/Stakeholders

1. **Identify external partners** [local and national government agencies, national professional organizations, elected officials, nonprofits, libraries, community groups, affiliations (unions, fraternities, and bar associations), civil rights organizations, workforce development, radio/television, universities, faith-based institutions, etc.]

2. **Build relationships.** Introduce self to partners and schedule meetings that will allow you to get them abreast of court issues that impact them and then to get you abreast of their issues that will impact the Court (Note: Michigan State University hosts graduations, created evidence-based parent education programs, offers summer jobs and music lessons to foster care youths.) *The more dependent you are on the partner, the more often you want to meet in person.*

   Additional examples include:
   a. Look for opportunities to meet informally to get to know the people who work with the Court.
   b. Attend fundraisers or programs put on by partners, stakeholders, and funding unit member.

3. **Be easily accessible and transparent.** Examples include:
   a. Designate points of contacts when possible for partners. This increases access and helps them navigate the court more easily.
   b. Publish your email address and phone numbers, and create a user-friendly website.

4. **Share information and educate partners about the Court. Invite them to court events.** Examples follow.
   a. Share the Court’s mission and how it benefits the community. Point out the role partners can play. Acknowledge them for their help. (e.g., The Public Library offers free auditorium space for Court graduations.)
   b. Send the Court’s annual report, newsletters, and other social media to partners, stakeholders, and funding unit. Mention their positive acts in your communications. (We list court partners in our annual report.)
   c. Invite partners to court events and acknowledge partners in press releases. (We have a standing list of invitees for new lawyer admission ceremonies and other court events. Chief Judge will acknowledge those who attend.)

5. **Demonstrate an interest in/learn about partner organizations** – challenges, priorities, services, etc.
   a. Ask to receive reports about their organizations and their upcoming calendars. Share with judges and staff. (We email Legal Community Updates.)
6. **Meet regularly with, and solicit input from, partners.**

   a. Regularly scheduled meetings provide an opportunity to timely address issues as they arise. The Chief Judge does not have to be in attendance if the top elected official from a stakeholder, partner or funding unit is not present.
   
   b. Solicit partners’ input and feedback at least annually. (The Friend of the Court meeting is held each year.)

7. **Build justice system and community networks.**

   a. Host events where external partners with similar interests have an opportunity to interact. This network may benefit the participating partners and the Court.
   
   b. Introduce partners when appropriate.

8. **Find creative ways to collaborate with partners.**

   a. Find projects of mutual interest and benefit for collaboration. (We established a summer internship with the local law schools and are working on a program with a local bar association.)

9. **When working on challenging issues, find areas where you can agree with and support partners.**

   a. Look for common ground. Support partners on agreed upon issues. Advocate but do not fight when there are disagreements.
   
   b. Talk through differences. Explore creative and acceptable options. Compromise where needed.
   
   c. Always value the relationship. Be respectful, open, and honest. Admit mistakes.
   
   d. Celebrate success with partners.

The following video clip (3:44 min) highlights an example of court-partner collaboration.

https://vimeo.com/232472975/b85368d81c
ATTACHMENT A:
ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF CHIEF JUDGE & COURT ADMINISTRATOR

Assessment: Clarify roles and responsibilities. Check all that apply.

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<tr>
<th>Who has/should have PRIMARY responsibility for the following?</th>
<th>Chief/Leadership Judge</th>
<th>Court Administrator</th>
<th>Shared/Both—(Chief/CA)</th>
<th>Others</th>
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<td>1. Set strategic direction/priorities</td>
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<td>2. Evaluate/strengthen court governance</td>
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<td>3. Develop policies</td>
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<td>4. Approve policies</td>
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<td>5. Oversee administration</td>
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<td>6. Supervise court finances</td>
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<td>7. Prepare and present budget(s) to funding unit</td>
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<td>8. Expend money per budget</td>
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<td>9. Align budget with priorities/goals</td>
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<td>10. Manage daily court operations</td>
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<td>11. Supervise the performance of judges, and address performance problems</td>
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<td>12. Manage/supervise court employees (e.g., hire, reward, conduct performance reviews, discipline, handle other personnel matters)</td>
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<td>13. Handle/resolve complaints from the public</td>
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<td>14. Follow-through on priorities/achieve goals</td>
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<td>15. Appear at community events</td>
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<td>16. Build key relationships/coalitions – legislators, funders, etc.</td>
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<td>17. Meet with County or Municipal Administrator/Administration (e.g., IT, HR, finance)</td>
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<td>18. Meet with external state and local justice system partners – County Clerk, Attorneys, Law Enforcement, SCAO, state and local agencies, etc.</td>
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<td>19. Represent the Court in relations with the news media</td>
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<td>20. Lead the Court organization (e.g., inspire judges and court personnel)</td>
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(2017). Developed by PRAXIS Consulting, Inc., Dr. Brenda J. Wagenknecht-Ivey for use in the MJII Court Leadership Team Academy, partially funded by the State Justice Institute. 303.888.7939; bwagen@praxisconsulting.org.

Scenario #1: Strengthening the Court Leadership Team

The Court Leadership Team has been working together for 6 months. While many things are going well, the Team (Chief Judge and Court Administrator) is beginning to experience tension and resistance related to several key priorities. The Court is transitioning to a new case management (including e-filing) system. Implementation is not going as well as planned or hoped. Consequently, judges and staff are resisting the impending changes; they are complaining loudly. At the same time, you are implementing effective case management practices aimed at reducing the age of cases pending in the civil and family divisions. Judges and staff alike are pushing back on new procedures, work processes, etc. While you are concerned about the potential upheaval both will create, you understand the benefits that will be gained and the need to lead judges and staff through these changes. But, you both are very busy with your individual responsibilities, and your preferred approach(es) to handling these situations are very different.

You want to: (1) avoid increasing tension, misunderstandings, and/or conflict between you (Chief Judge and Administrator) and (2) develop an effective, unified response to addressing the resistance. How will/should each member of the Executive Leadership Team handle these situations? What actions will each/both take to lead effectively?

Scenario #2: Strengthening Collaboration with Partners/Stakeholders

You have excellent relationships with most community and justice system partners as well as stakeholders such as the other branches of government, your funding unit, and the like. You have worked hard to establish mutual respect, open communication, and a cooperative environment. However, you – the Court’s Leadership Team – are now facing a very challenging situation. You must advocate for the Court’s interests and needs related to new facilities. What is being proposed by City/County leadership is unacceptable. It will not meet the Court’s current or future needs, and will be less accessible to the people you serve. The location and layout of the new facility also will impact community and justice system partners (e.g., service providers, the bar, law enforcement, etc.).

How will each member of the Executive Leadership Team address this situation? What strategies will you use? What will you do to maintain a spirit of collaboration while advocating for the Court’s needs/interests?