

Charlotte County update for 5/11/16

Management University trains county leaders

By Jackie Stevens, Human Resources Generalist

Merriam-Webster defines a linchpin as “a person or thing that holds something together: the most important part of a complex situation or system.” In Charlotte County government, our managers and supervisors are the linchpins within our organization. Managers and supervisors are the link between the senior leadership team and frontline employees and enable the organization to carry out its mission of “Being the energy in making Charlotte County a beautiful and enriching place to live.” In an effort to better equip these employees with the tools and resources necessary to carry out this mission, Charlotte County Human Resources launched Management University in October 2015.

This program consists of three half-day sessions that cover a variety of topics ranging from accountability and employee engagement to the difference between leadership and management and the importance of employee recognition. Participants also attend workshops conducted by instructors from the Florida Institute of Government with topics ranging from “Establishing Performance Expectations” to “Strengthening Leadership through Emotional Intelligence.”

In addition to the content provided in the sessions, participants have the opportunity to interact and learn from each other, which is a major benefit of this program. Charlotte County offices are spread out over the approximate 693 square miles that comprise Charlotte County, and as a result county staffers may have limited interactions with employees in other departments. Management University gives managers and supervisors the opportunity to meet with management staff from other departments and share insights they may have gained as well as pick up practical ideas to implement in their own department.

Another key component of this program is the opportunity to interact with members of the senior leadership team including the deputy county administrator and the county administrator. Each session, approximately three or four department directors serve on a question-and-answer panel, and students have the opportunity to interact with the directors and learn about them and their leadership philosophy and insights. On the final day of the program, the employees have a similar session with the deputy county administrator and the county administrator.

This program is open to Charlotte County employees who supervise at least one individual. As of today, 33 managers and supervisors have participated in the program. Some participants are brand new to management and others have been in a management role for more than 20 years. Regardless of their tenure, employees report walking away with beneficial information and are appreciative of this program. When asked what they enjoyed most about the program, participants made the following comments:

“The introspection that is a byproduct of this class, and the opportunity to work with managers from other departments provided valuable insight.”

“I learned a great deal from this class. I enjoyed finding out how others recognize, encourage and motivate their employees.”

The current audience is primarily supervisors and managers who have been with the organization for at least one year. However, after the majority of our tenured managers and supervisors complete the program, the audience will most likely change and consist of newly promoted or newly hired supervisors and managers. Therefore, the program will evolve as necessary to continuously provide relevant content for its participants.

Charlotte County is committed to its employees' development and recognizes that a trained and informed workforce is a successful workforce. It is through programs such as Management University that we develop our employees and foster positive relationships that will translate into exemplary customer service.

Jackie Stevens is the Charlotte County human resources generalist. Readers may reach her at Jackie.Stevens@CharlotteCountyFL.gov.