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Bridging the Bureaucratic Morass: Successfully Navigating Common Obstacles to Successful Assessment and Hiring in the Public Sector


John M. Ford, Ph.D
Chris W. Hornick, Ph.D
Thomas J. Carnahan, Ph.D



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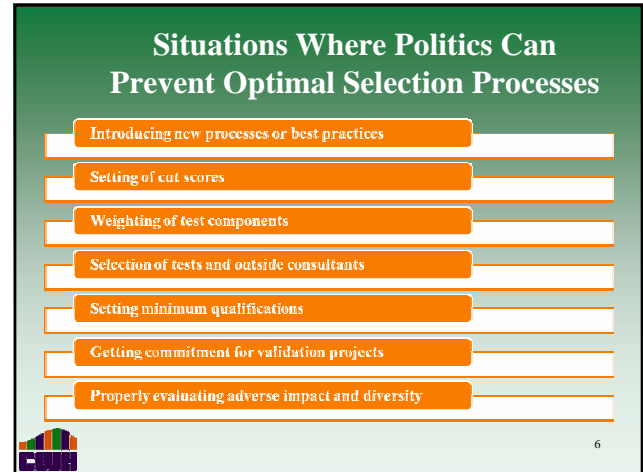
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The Politics of Public Agencies



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Proven Strategies



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Build Long-term Relationships


- Be visible
- Gain trust of client in advance of project
- Build partner relationship
- Establish your credibility
- Demonstrate fairness and lack of bias
- Show that you have their best interests at heart
- Establish rapport and communication channels



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Learn the Organization


- Organizational structure
- Key decision makers and potential advocates
- Potential resources available for project
- Culture and values
- Initiatives that may impact the project
- The lingo
- Develop institutional memory—Lessons learned



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Frame Projects in Terms of Stakeholder Motivations

- Success is determined by stakeholders' definitions of success
- Identify stakeholder values and motivations
- Find out what the stakeholders hope to achieve from project
- Frame your discussions around these motivations.
- Focus on benefits of project before discussing needed resources
- When project benefits are clear and valued:
 - Stakeholders will be more willing to participate
 - Stakeholders will be more willing to sacrifice for project



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Establish Partnership Role for Projects

Stakeholders can be proponents, opponents, or innocent bystanders

Stakeholder acceptance, investment, and support are more important to project success than methodology

Partners share successes, risks, and problems

Establish your role as a partner or peer

Clearly establish roles and responsibilities:

- You are responsible for process
- Client is responsible for content, resources, and implementation
- You are both responsible for communication, public support of the project, and responding to problems



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Establish Agreement

Conceptual agreement is critical

Areas of needed agreement:

- Scope of the project
- Definition of success
- Project schedule
- Project roles
- Format and frequency of communication
- Project tasks
- Resources

Establish and reinforce agreement after every substantial contact

When appropriate, establish agreement in writing



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Measure! Measure! Measure!

It is frightening how often vital decisions are made without any appropriate data and information

- Without data, decisions are often driven by political forces, misinformation, assumptions, rumors, or guesswork

To be useful, data must be:

- Collected
- Integrated
- Easily extractable
- Organized into easily understood analytic metrics
- Complete and accurate
- Relevant
- Tied to project goals and partner motivations



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Benefits of Good Measurement

Allows you to demonstrate your value

Allows you to conduct cost-benefit analyses of different alternatives.

Allows you to accurately evaluate and improve your processes.

Allows you to dispel misinformation.

Gives your arguments greater weight.

Can protect you from lawsuits.



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Ensure Strong Communication

Ask "Why?"

Frame communications around strategic goals, belief systems, and areas of agreement

Provide information that reduces fear of the unknown

Confront rumors and misinformation

Meet with stakeholders at the end of project to close the loop and trumpet successes



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Communication Guidelines

Avoid emotional responses

Accept blame and share credit

When confronting a roadblock, provide options and discuss benefits and drawbacks

Find a way to say "yes"

Take a stand when appropriate



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Effectively Utilize Outside Consultants

Outside consultants can be extremely helpful when:

- Prior trust has not been established
- Situations are highly political
- Situations are highly emotional
- Agreement on goals or objectives cannot be reached
- Your message is falling on deaf ears

Write targeted and detailed RFPs—
Make sure you get the right consultant



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