

**6-MONTH ACADEMY**

- March - August 2026
- Thursdays: 8:30 - 11:30am PST
- Panels scheduled separately

LOCATION: Zoom Meeting**TUITION:** \$3,500**INCLUDES:**

- Leadership Assessment
- 36 hours live, expert-led sessions
- 6 executive coaching sessions
- 4 Panel discussions with Experts
- Keynote Speaker
- Academy Resource Dropbox

APPLICATION: [CLICK HERE](#)**REQUIREMENTS:**

- Reports to Senior/Executive Leader
- Managerial level position (or career track to Manager)
- Full requirements on page 3

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Transform your local government leadership journey!

Local government managers are the engine that keeps things running—balancing priorities, managing teams, and driving results. But the challenges are real and numerous in the face of constant change.

Learn skills to lead with confidence, tackle today's public service challenges, and create meaningful impact in your agency and community.

Local Government Focus: Content and components framed in local government context and examples.

Personal Growth: The tools you need build or refine your leadership skills.

Hands-On Learning: Tackle real organizational issues, capstone projects, and gather practical tools.

Networking: Connect with leadership peers across various local agencies.

Timeline/Course List

All Institute dates are Thursdays, from 8:30am-11:30am, PST, unless otherwise noted.

| Session | Date | Course/Element |
|----------------|------------------------|--|
| Pre-Institute | N/A | Leadership Assessment |
| Monthly | N/A | 6 Monthly 1-1 Executive Coaching Sessions |
| Panel Sessions | N/A | Required attendance at panel sessions outside Institute schedule. |
| 1 | 3/5/26 | Institute Kickoff (Keynote, Introductions, and Overview) |
| 2 | 3/19/26 | Creating a Learning Organization |
| 3 | 4/2/26 | Ace Your Next Board/Council Meeting |
| Panel Session | 4/9/26 1:00-2:00pm* | <i>From Automation to Transformation: Reimagining Government with AI</i> |
| 4 | 4/16/26 | From Strategy to Action: Planning the Work of Your Team |
| 5 | 4/30/26 | Applying Systems Thinking to Solve Problems & Capstone Kickoff |
| Panel Session | 5/7/26 1:00-2:00pm* | <i>Repairing Local Agency Systems that Result in Inequities</i> |
| 6 | 5/14/26 | Understanding the Impact of DEI: From Individual to Systemic |
| 7 | 5/28/26 | Navigating Difficult Conversations with Employees |
| Panel Session | 6/4/26 1:00-2:00pm* | <i>Designing Your Workforce</i> |
| 8 | 6/11/26 | Managing Remote/Hybrid and Multigenerational Teams |
| 9 | 6/25/26 | Making Better Decisions PLUS-Risk-Taking in the Public Sector |
| Panel Session | 7/9/26 1:00-2:00pm* | <i>Keeping Culture on Track</i> |
| 10 | 7/16/26 | Managing Culture and Constant Change |
| 11 | 7/30/26 | Building Influence Within the Organization and Beyond |
| 12 | 8/6/26 | CLOSING SESSION! Capstone Summit |

* Note these panel sessions are on Thursdays and run from 1:00 -2:00pm.

Attendee Requirements:

Report to Senior Level Executive (City Manager/General Manager/CEO, Assistant/Deputy CM/GM, Division/Department Director).

AND

Must directly manage a team(s) at the Managerial Level OR directly manage a high-level program that works with other agency managers.

Will consider those in a career track toward manager role described above.

Participation Requirements:

- Completion of the Leadership Assessment.
- A laptop/computer with Wi-Fi, webcam, speaker, and microphone.
- Sharing webcam/audio in an environment free from noise or disruption.
- Availability from 8:30 am -11:30 am on scheduled Institute days.
- Attendance and participation in all Institute elements.
- Blocking out calendar time for sessions; free from meetings, calls, work.
- Participation in “cameras on” interaction and discussion.
- Engaging with trainers and other participants in discussion.
- Committing to 4 hours/month of time for Capstone project/homework.
- Participation in the Capstone Project outside Institute schedule.
- Completing homework, readings, and other materials.
- Completing 6 coaching sessions within Institute timeframe.
- Scheduling coaching sessions every month of the program.

Certificates of Completion:

- All attendees will receive a certificate of completion for the Institute. Certificates will reflect only the hours attended/elements completed by the attendee for courses, panel sessions, coaching, and Capstone project.

| Session | Course/Element |
|--|--|
| Pre-Institute | Leadership Assessment The Leadership assessment will identify leadership skills and gaps to help you focus your skill development throughout the Institute and beyond. |
| Monthly | 6 Monthly 1-1 Coaching Sessions Attendees will complete six leadership coaching sessions with our trainers. These monthly coaching sessions are designed to accomplish goals set by the attendee. Potential coaching content includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Addressing leadership skill gaps that surface through the assessment or Institute content• Applying Institute concepts and skills in the workplace• Developing a long-range career development plan |
| Panel Sessions | Four Panel Sessions Attendees will be required to participate in four panel sessions as part of this Institute. The panel sessions will be attended by participants of this Institute, participants of other Academies, Institute Alumni, and other local government professionals in California and beyond. Attendance will be required as homework and integrated into discussion in specific Institute sessions. |
| Session 1 3/5/26 8:30- 11:30am | Institute Keynote, Introductions, and Overview Start your Institute experience and get prepared for the learning outcomes over the next six months. Highlights include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keynote speaker to discuss the critical role of management-level employees in local government• Introductions to trainers and other attendees• Overview of Institute content• Understand management competencies and role |
| Session 2 3/19/26 8:30- 11:30am | Creating a Learning Organization Learning organizations drive innovation, share knowledge, improve problem-solving, and encourage growth. This creates an organization that is more resilient to sudden changes and uncertainty. Learn how to articulate and apply the key elements of creating a learning |

| Session | Course/Element |
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| | <p>organization. Apply learning organization concepts in your own team and get tips on how to advocate for organization-wide application. Attendees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Foster an environment that's conducive to learning.• Create learning "forums"• Encourage experimentation• Facilitate knowledge transfer• Apply concepts to your team and the larger organization |
| Session 3 4/2/26 8:30- 11:30am | Ace Your Next Board/Council Meeting Managers often work with agency Executives and the Board/Council to get input on direction and focus. This requires communicating clearly and effectively to these parties. Learn how to write an effective Board/Council report to convey the work you have done. From there, learn how to present materials to help your Board/Council make important decisions. Attendees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the context of a Board report• Clearly identify the problem statement• Identify staff recommendation(s) and rationale• Provide the right level of detail• Anticipate questions from the policy makers and the public.• Prepare materials to deliver Board report |
| Panel 1* 4/9/26 1:00-2:00pm | From Automation to Transformation: Reimagining Government with AI As artificial intelligence accelerates across government, public-sector professionals face a pivotal moment. The transition from experimentation to widespread adoption is introducing new questions about capacity, risk, and readiness. This panel brings together local and regional leaders, to explore how AI is reshaping roles, functional work, service delivery, and the skills required to thrive in a digitally enabled future. Rather than focusing solely on tools, this panel session will examine <i>the human and organizational</i> impacts of AI, and what public agencies must now do to prepare their workforce. Attendees will gain knowledge for |

| Session | Course/Element |
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| | responsible AI implementation in their agencies and valuable insights on workforce development and change management. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Panel discussion with experts• Q&A with panel |
| Session 4 4/16/26 8:30- 11:30am | From Strategy to Action: Planning the Work of your Team Does it seem like you are putting out fires and responding to crises, rather than setting the course for your team? You may not be sure of where to start, or you may have started and realize you need to re-focus your efforts. Attendees will analyze their departments and determine their strategic goals and priorities. Attendees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct a SWOT analysis• Identify key priorities• Determine goals, action plans and time frames• Align with agency's larger strategic plan• Translate vision to day-to-day activities |
| Session 5 4/30/26 8:30- 11:30am | Applying Systems Thinking to Solve Problems Local government managers must work within a variety of systems to address challenging community issues. Learn how to use systems thinking to solve the complex problems your team and larger organization face. Develop systems to address local issues (e.g., housing, homelessness, revenue reductions) or internal organizational issues. Attendees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the complexities of resolving local issues• Identify and involve appropriate stakeholders• Build coalitions and collaborate internally and externally• Get feedback from stakeholders• Keep all parties informed on progress and effectiveness• Shift from technical expert/ analyst role to manager of process |

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Capstone Project Kickoff

| Session | Course/Element |
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| | <p>Attendees will be assigned to small groups to discuss and identify a problem to solve for your Capstone Project. Work with your small group outside the Institute to analyze and make recommendations on real problems. Then, you will meet with your small group and deliver your Capstone project at the Capstone Summit at the end of the Institute.</p> |
| Panel 2* 5/7/26 1:00-2:00pm | <p>Repairing Local Agency Systems that Result in Inequities</p> <p>Local agency systems are not always ideal. At times, they can result in inequities that impact the community and your employees. Hear from our panel of experts about how they have addressed systemic issues and worked to minimize inequities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Panel discussion with experts• Q&A with panel |
| Session 6 5/14/26 8:30- 11:30am | <p>Understanding the Impact of DEI: From Individual to Systemic</p> <p>In our increasingly diverse communities and workplaces, a true mark of effective leadership now hinges on the understanding and integration of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) principles into every aspect of a manager's role. Participants will discover how DEI influences individual workers, team composition and performance, organizational culture, decision-making, public engagement, and policy formulation. In this course, attendees will learn to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand how DEI impacts you as an individual.• Understand the benefits of DEI in interactions and responsibilities• Identify how diverse teams improve performance and innovation• Examine equity in departmental practice and preventing systemic discrimination• Illustrate how local governments that prioritize DEI can better respond to community needs• Understand the ripple effect of DEI decisions and policies and how they can strengthen or weaken broader community networks |
| Session 7 5/28/26 | <p>Navigating Difficult Conversations with Employees</p> |

| Session | Course/Element |
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| 8:30-11:30am | <p>Part of every manager's job is to give employees feedback about their performance, expectations, and other sensitive topics. These discussions can be complex and challenging due to a variety of reasons. Learn how to effectively manage difficult conversations so that your team functions as effectively as possible.</p> <p>Attendees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set clear expectations• Understand what's motivating the employee• Stay focused on the issue• Use effective listening skills• Give meaningful feedback• Successfully resolve conflict• Identify when to contact HR |
| Panel 3* 6/4/26 1:00-2:00pm | <p>Designing Your Workforce</p> <p>Building a capable and adaptable workforce is essential for local governments to meet evolving community needs. As Jim Collins, the author of bestsellers including <i>Good to Great</i>, said "Great vision without great people is irrelevant." Join local government leaders as they share their experiences in identifying workforce challenges/needs, crafting effective strategies to address them, and creating workplace structures that attract and retain top talent in local government. Discover how to design a workforce that meets current demands and aligns to agency vision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Panel discussion with experienced leaders• Q&A session with the panel |
| Session 8 6/11/26 8:30-11:30am | <p>Managing Remote/Hybrid Teams and Multigenerational Teams</p> <p>Agencies have implemented a variety of shifts in the workforce including remote work, remote team collaboration, and hybrid work in the post-pandemic workforce. Intersecting this variety of how we work, workforces are also composed of multigenerational workers with varying levels of experience with technology and adaptive work environments. Learn to effectively manage the dynamics of these changes in the workplace.</p> <p>Attendees will be able to:</p> |

| Session | Course/Element |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the pros and cons of a variety of remote/hybrid and multigenerational situations• Lead with inclusion and compassion• Establish parameters, expectations, and accountability• Conduct effective remote meetings that include a variety of generational attendees• Get people working together, no matter where they are at or who they are working with• Anticipate and resolve predictable conflict |

Session 9
6/25/26
8:30-
11:30am

Making Better Decisions

Do you find yourself making decisions on the fly? Not getting the outcomes you thought you would? This class helps attendees solve problems through rational processes and evidence-based knowledge. Learn techniques for making educated and innovative decisions.

Attendees will be able to:

- Understand consequences of gut-based decision-making
- Clarify the problem to be solved
- Gather information for problem-solving (laws, policies, research, past practice, stakeholder input, strategic plan)
- Understand the role of values in decision-making
- Use a people-centric approach
- Reflect on decisions you have made to determine results

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Risk-Taking in the Public Sector

Managers must make decisions and take action on a variety of complex issues, exposing them to potential risks to projects, teams, and professional and career development. Learn how to navigate risks in public agencies.

Attendees will be able to:

- Understand the concept of risk
- Evaluate the risks in local government scenarios
- Learn a variety of perspectives about risk

| Session | Course/Element |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Build up your risk tolerance |
| Panel 4* 7/9/26 1:00-2:00pm | Keeping Culture on Track Organizational culture requires constant attention and alignment to navigate the complexities of today's local government environment. As Peter Drucker famously stated, "Culture eats strategy for breakfast," highlighting the profound impact culture has on organizational success. Join our panel of seasoned local government leaders as they share how they've assessed their cultures, identified areas for improvement, and implemented changes to improve culture amidst continual change. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Panel discussion with experienced leaders• Attendee Q&A session with the panel |
| Session 10 7/16/26 8:30- 11:30am | Managing Culture and Constant Change Following our organizational culture panel session, take a deeper dive into culture and change. Pandemics, climate change, social justice, and other complex issues create shifts in what communities expect from public sector agencies and how we conduct work. These shifts require an organizational culture that can be responsive and adaptive to change and deliver services that will have an impact in the community. Learn how to effectively lead your employees through change and create a culture that supports adaptability and impact. Attendees will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand why change is a constant factor• Recognize the phases of the change process• Clearly communicate the need and rationale for change• Act as an advocate for change• Create an adaptive culture in your team and organization• Lead change with empathy |
| Session 11 7/30/26 8:30- 11:30am | Building Influence Within the Organization and Beyond Local government managers operate within a complex environment to accomplish goals and objectives. Influence from organizational politics, community residents, stakeholders, and elected officials can create competing interests. This session helps you get results in this system. |

| Session | Course/Element |
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| | <p>Attendees will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the unwritten rules in your agency• Persuade others to act when you have no formal authority• Resolve inter-organizational issues with political elements• Understand City/General Manager and Board/Council roles• Adapt to your boss' preferences, interests, and work style |
| Session 12 8/6/26 8:30- 11:30am | Capstone Summit Join us for the final course of the Institute! Attendees are encouraged to invite a key leader from their organization <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small groups present their Capstone Projects and take feedback and questions from the larger group• Discuss key learning takeaways from the Institute and plans for applying concepts to their teams and organizations• An Institute graduation speech to get you motivated for your path ahead in local government leadership |

**Note: All panel sessions are on alternating weeks from training sessions on Thursday afternoons from 1:00-2:00pm.*