



PRENUP 101

WHAT IF WE DIVORCE?

How to negotiate and exit contracts successfully, and transition to that next great opportunity!

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1:15 PM - 2:30 PM



YOU HAVE FOUND THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE.



Marriage is on the horizon. The perfect City Council. The perfect Mayor. Now it is time to tie the knot. Ask yourself:

- Do I have a solid contract that protects my interests?
- What is important to me?
- What should I be asking for in this contract?
- What if things don't work out?



AGENDA

01. Introduction

02. Falling in Love

Ana Cortez



03. The Exit - Things Aren't Working Out

David Cline

04. The Transition - Now What Do I Do?

Charlie Bush

05. Small Group Work

06. Summary

INTRODUCTION

- Raise your hand if you have over 5 years of local government experience. 10 years? 15 years? 20 years? 25 years?
- Raise your hand if you have had an employment contract.
- Raise your hand if you wish you would have done a better job in negotiating that contract.
- Raise your hand if you have made a transition.



WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN

ANA CORTEZ

Beginning: Birds and the Bees

- Have you considered why these positions are well paid?
- What are the tradeoffs? Costs? Benefits?

Money is easy. What else?

Money is Money:

- What are the comps?
 - But the person you are replacing made X and you are making X plus.
- Opportunity costs:
 - If you say yes to this city, then are you saying no to another opportunity?
 - Keep in mind it is not just money.





BIG PICTURES

ANA CORTEZ

Let's talk about Contracts:

1. Do you have your own template?
2. If you have your own template, what does it say? How does it protect you?
3. Who negotiates?
4. What does it say about benefits and compensation?
5. What is the prenup bottom line if things go South?
6. Know your cards.
7. What is the best alternative to a negotiated agreement?

SMALL THINGS

ANA CORTEZ

- Terms: Open vs. Specific
- City Manager vs. City Administrator
- Salary Philosophy
- The negotiation process
- Council Approval - the fat lady sings
- You do not need to sign - *use the force*



THE EXIT: BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF

DAVID CLINE

Be honest with yourself and your relationships with Mayor/Council.

- Don't forget that the city belongs to the residents and the elected officials.
- What Mayor/Council hired you? Who are you working for now?
- What is the sentiment in the community? What big issues are out there?
- What is *not* being said?
- How is your relationship with your directors? Police Chief?

Enjoy every day that you are doing the work.

- Remember why you are doing the work.
- Stay connected to others in the profession – regionally, senior advisors.
- Find a reason to love it every day, or get out before you burn out.





THE EXIT PLAN

DAVID CLINE

Have an Exit Plan

- Finances: savings, Department of Retirement Systems
- Family
- Always be open to other opportunities

Prepare for the Possibility

- Elections are often the most likely reason for a transition
- Performance reviews, lingering community issue, after major decision

Review your Contract

- Contact an attorney early *before* it happens

Depending on your relationship, talk to the Mayor/Council about what is going on and any ideas

- Be cautious

WHEN THE EXIT HAPPENS

DAVID CLINE

Be calm and know that you prepared for this possibility – still a surprise

- Know what you need (much harder to get if not in the contract)
 - Compensation, COBRA, severance or stay on payroll,
- Contact an attorney to provide an outside review and professionalize the situation.
- Contact your network of friends, colleagues, and senior advisors

Tell your own story

- Write your own goodbye to staff and associates
- If possible, help write a press release – can be truthful
- Depending on the situation, you may need do some damage control
- Leave on your own terms – know who you are and what you did



THE TRANSITION: FINANCES

CHARLIE BUSH

Financial

- Model your finances
- Severance structure
- Reduce expenses where you can
- Unemployment
- Relocation timing and cost
- Job timing





THE TRANSITION: REALIZATION

CHARLIE BUSH

Emotional/Mental

- Hang in there – this is often the low point of the experience
- It is quiet and feels surreal - it happened, and it is normal for us
- You likely feel worse about it than people view it
- You probably will grieve the loss of your role and relationships
- Try to see it as a gift, not a curse

THE TRANSITION: FIND INSPIRATION

CHARLIE BUSH

Embrace the opportunity

- Take a break if you can - Take your time, perhaps travel
- Colleagues are likely to reach out to help
- Reach out to colleagues as well – we are here to help
- Learn and grow
- Consider your career options
- Consider consulting



THE TRANSITION: RECOVERY

CHARLIE BUSH

- Consult available resources
 - WCMA Guide for Managers in Transition – waived dues and conferences
 - ICMA Members in Transition Program – waived dues and conferences, MIT meetings
 - LinkedIn Learning, books, and other resources
 - Network - Regional manager meetings, stay connected
- Work on your resume, cover letter, and LinkedIn profile
- Define your search area and focus – talk with family
- Get on email lists, bookmark search firm and other sites





THE TRANSITION: RESTORATION

- Practice telling your story and leave the past behind
- Embrace free agency: recognize your value and the opportunity
- Do your research: use your advantage of available time
- Put your energy towards the right opportunities
- Scrutinize and tailor your materials – use a proofreader
- Practice interviewing out loud, including right before the interviews, know your stories/have some notes to remind you
- Go out and get it! Be at your best, be you, and enjoy it. Land the offer and fall in love again.

CURRENT CONTRACT RESOURCES

- ICMA template of contracts
- WCMA template/best practices
- MRSC comparables
- Managers in Transition handbook



SMALL GROUPS

Questions:

1. What are your biggest fears? Biggest questions? Concerns?
2. What are the opportunities you can see in these changes?
3. This isn't a negative, this is just a reality of the profession...
4. What are your best ideas to make this better? What do you think about:
 - A contract template?
 - Updated comparables?
 - List of attorneys? Have attorney negotiate
 - Ongoing WCMA committee to provide support and review
5. What are your ideas to keep these ideas going forward after this conference?
6. Future topics to discuss?
 - How to stay married
 - Role of evaluations
 - Role of elected officials



SMALL GROUPS CONT.

Summary:

Have a group member provide a short summary of what you discussed and ideas for going forward.

Keep the conversations going!



REMEMBER...

This is one of the most amazing jobs. You get to positively impact people's lives every day.

This can be one of the hardest jobs you will ever do

It is easier when you have a village to support you - professionally and among friends/family.

You make get thrown off the horse. Everyone Does. Get back on.

