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## CORNERSTONE

MANAGEMENT STUDIES • PERFORMANCE AUDITS • ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT • TRAINING

*July 2007****What Do Your Citizens, Customers, or Employees Really Want?***

Do you need a handle on what your citizens or customers think about your agency's services and the manner in which they are provided?

Do you need a way to accurately measure the opinions of your community without going through the process of lengthy public hearings where only the most vocal perspectives (positive or negative) are brought forth by a few passionate citizens?

Or maybe you're just looking for ways to better understand your employees' perspectives in order to improve morale and communication and decrease turnover?

Whatever the situation, there is a common solution to address each of these issues that – and here's the best part – won't "break the bank!"

**The Power of the Online Survey**

An online survey is the easiest, most accessible and most reliable (did I mention affordable?) way to get the input you're seeking.

Online surveys can be quickly assembled and distributed via email or through a simple web



Citygate's headquarter office in Folsom, CA.

link to as few or as many people as desired. Because these surveys are so easy to take, response rates are higher than direct mail or phone surveys. Useful data is instantly captured and can be analyzed and shared immediately.

Paper copies may also be used as needed to appeal to those who don't have access to the internet.

So, you ask, why is this so valuable? Two reasons...

**#1: Good Government is Focused on Serving Citizens and Customers**

How can you fully know the quality of your service delivery without asking your citizens about their perceptions and their level of satisfaction? Understanding citizens' perspectives and perceptions about governmental service delivery is essential to good government.

Citygate often performs management studies as a way to help local government agencies im-

prove the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery through many analytical approaches, including input from citizens to measure performance. We have found the use of online surveys in this process to be helpful and valuable.

Local government exists to serve the community, and feedback from the public is a must if you plan on continuously improving your service delivery. Although citizens may voice their opinions at public venues such as meetings and hearings, the views of only a small fraction of the community will be represented in these venues.

Citizen and customer surveys provide a way to appeal to a broader demographic of the public and more accurately represent the views of the entire community. These surveys offer a way to obtain input on a variety of issues such as: the provision of services, quality of life, general city/ county-wide issues such as

policy options and needs assessment. Citygate has even used surveys to assess voter support for tax overrides.

## #2: Excellent Customer Service is Built through Satisfied Employees

Employee satisfaction is essential in a service-oriented industry like local government. Imagine trying to run a strong department that excels in customer service while at the same time wrestling with high turnover, low morale, poor communication, insufficient technology, etc.

You want your department thriving with teamwork, camaraderie, and a high level of commitment to productivity and to each other. You need this to keep your staff motivated, and in turn, the general community – the citizens you serve – satisfied. You need a way to accurately measure employee perceptions regarding workload, staffing, morale, pay, communication, management and supervision, equipment and technology. Without this information, you may be unable to identify and address the true concerns of staff.

### The Goal: Useful Results and Recommendations

By now you're probably thinking, 'so why should we hire a local government consulting firm to conduct an online survey?'

The truth is, because you want results! You have needs to be met and you need clear priorities and recommendations to follow. You need survey results that are benchmarked against other communities so you know exactly where you stand.

This is where Citygate comes in. Citygate has 20 years of local government consulting experience with an extensive background in conducting citizen, customer and employee surveys within the context of local government. Citygate is experienced with creating surveys that are relevant to the needs of our clients, and knows how to both design and draw out the most relevant findings and recommendations from the survey data.

For example, Citygate conducted a customer survey for a community development department as part of a study focused on developing recommendations to improve customer service by process streamlining, assessing performance measurement, fee methodologies, and staff development.

Two years later, Citygate was commissioned to re-administer the survey to determine if customer service and perspectives had improved since the implementation of our recommendations. The results indicated that customer satisfaction had significantly increased!

If you are wondering whether Citygate Associates can help you in this area, please call David DeRoos at (916) 458-5100. ext. 101 or Chad Jackson at ext. 205. We can perform independent surveys as well as surveys within the context of larger management and operations studies. If we can be of assistance to you, we would like to help.

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Citygate Associates, LLC is a management consulting firm providing services to local and state governments across the Western United States. Headquartered in Folsom, CA, Citygate specializes in:

- Management Studies
- Process Improvements
- Performance Audits
- Strategic Planning
- Organizational Development
- Community Development
- Animal Care and Control
- Budget and Financial Analysis
- Character Training
- Employee Training

Citygate's clients benefit due to their ability to provide more effective and cost-efficient services through improved management approaches and systems, clarified focus, and upgraded skills.

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