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Project code: 2021-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000029971



GUIDELINES TO BECOME A VIRTUOUS PUBLIC MANAGER

Project Result 4

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Summary

1. INTRODUCTION	4
Definition and Importance of Virtue in Public Management	4
Objectives of the Guidelines	7
2. FOUNDATIONS OF VIRTUOUS LEADERSHIP	11
2.1. PERSONAL VIRTUES.....	11
Integrity	11
Honesty	12
Humility	14
Courage	15
2.2. INTERPERSONAL VIRTUES	17
Empathy	17
Fairness	19
Respect	20
2.3. ORGANIZATIONAL VIRTUES.....	22
Accountability.....	22
Transparency	24
Justice	26
3. BASIC SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR VIRTUOUS PUBLIC MANAGERS.....	29
3.1. DIGITAL TRANSITION AND TRANSVERSAL TECHNICAL SKILLS	29
Understanding Digital Transformation	29
Adopting Tools and Platforms.....	38
Data Management and Security	45
Developing Technical Skills	50
Collaboration and Innovation.....	55
3.2. MASTERING PUBLIC SPEAKING AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT.....	60
Essentials of Effective Public Speaking.....	60
Preparing and Delivering Speeches	63
Media Relations and Public Image.....	68



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Project code: 2021-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000029971

Crisis Communication.....	73
Reputation Management	82
3.3 INTERNATIONAL LAW.....	88
Fundamentals of International Law	88
International Agreements and Treaties	92
Human Rights and Global Governance.....	96
Cross-Border Collaboration	100
Legal and Ethical Considerations	104
3.4 PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMAN RESOURCE	109
Understanding Human Behaviour	110
Motivation and Engagement.....	113
Leadership and Influence	117
Conflict Resolution.....	120
Well-being and Mental Health	122
4. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.....	125
Self-Assessment and Reflection	125
Seeking Feedback and Mentorship.....	134
Professional Development Opportunities	135
5. CONCLUSION.....	138
Summary of Key Points	138
The Impact of Virtuous Public Management.....	140
Commitment to Lifelong Learning and Virtue.....	142
6. REFERENCES.....	145
Cited Works	145
Suggested Further Reading	150



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Project code: 2021-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000029971

INTRODUCTION

Definition and Importance of Virtue in Public Management

Virtue is a cornerstone of public management, an essential element in building governance that is not only efficient, but also legitimate and equitable. For a public manager, virtue can be understood as integrity, justice and accountability; values that not only foster citizens' trust in institutions, but also allow them to respond adequately and transparently to the needs of the community. In an increasingly complex and uncertain context, where administrative decisions have a direct impact on the lives of citizens, virtue becomes an ethical guide, guiding public managers towards transparent, balanced and fair choices.

The concept of virtue has its roots in classical philosophy, in particular in the reflection of Aristotele, who defined virtue as the disposition to do good in a constant and deliberate way. His distinction between ethical virtues, related to moral behaviour and dianoethical virtues, which concern intellectual capacities, such as practical wisdom and rationality, is particularly relevant for public managers. In public management, in fact, both dimensions of virtue are important, since it is not only a matter of being morally upright, but also capable of making just and thoughtful decisions, oriented toward the common good.

The virtuous public manager is a person who stands out for his or her ability to act with loyalty, integrity, impartiality, empathy, respect, fairness, humility, courage, justice and transparency. Every decision taken must consider not only the immediate interests, but also the long-term implications for the community. This balance between opposing interests serves to ensure that public action remains faithful to ethical principles, promoting governance that respects and protects the rights of citizens.

Virtue, however, is not an abstract or theoretical concept: it manifests itself in the daily practice of the public manager through concrete and consistent behaviour. Acting with honesty, impartiality and a sense of responsibility is not just a matter of adherence to codes of ethics but requires an unwavering commitment to maintaining high standards of integrity in every aspect of



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public management. A virtuous manager, therefore, is one who manages to balance public and private interests, always with the aim of pursuing the common good.

One of the key aspects of virtue in public management is **trust**, which is essential for the proper functioning of democracy and the legitimacy of public action. Citizens' trust in institutions is directly proportional to their perception of the integrity and honesty of public officials. Citizens trust institutions when they see that their representatives act virtuously, making transparent decisions and respecting fundamental ethical principles. The civil servant is not a mere executor of tasks, but a person dedicated to the community, whose sense of vocation and service is intrinsically linked to the concept of virtue. Trust, in addition to ensuring the proper functioning of democratic institutions, also fosters consensus around administrative decisions, thus strengthening the legitimacy of public action.

Moreover, virtue serves the function of promoting **effective governance**, which is not limited to ensuring operational efficiency or the optimisation of resources, but also implies the ability to respond to citizens' expectations while maintaining a high level of democratic legitimacy. With this meaning, virtue becomes a guiding principle for administrative action, directing decisions towards the achievement of long-term goals, such as social cohesion, justice and inclusion. Virtue makes it possible to overcome a limited vision of management, centred exclusively on immediate results, to embrace a broader perspective, in which administrative effectiveness is combined with ethical responsibility and support for the community.

In the contemporary context, marked by rapid transformations and global challenges, virtue becomes a moral compass that guides the public manager towards ethically sustainable choices. The period of the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of public management that is not only efficient, but also firmly anchored in ethical principles. Faced with a global health crisis, public managers have been called upon to make difficult decisions and virtuous behaviour has made it possible to respond to the needs of society in an adequate way, balancing individual and collective interests.

From this perspective, virtue is not only a moral requirement, but also a practical necessity to ensure that public management can cope with new obligations. The **resilience** of institutions



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depends on the virtue of their managers, who through ethical and responsible decisions advocate a governance capable of adapting to changes without betraying their principles. A virtuous manager is able to stay the course even in situations of uncertainty, avoiding opportunistic behaviour and decisions dictated by short-term interests.

Finally, virtue is also a factor of innovation and **continuous improvement**. Virtuous public managers are able to recognize opportunities for change and promote reforms that improve the quality of public service and the effectiveness of policies.

Virtue is the distinctive principle that transforms a public manager into a moral leader. A leader who does not limit himself to managing resources and ensuring efficiency, but who is committed daily to promoting equity, justice and respect for the common good. Only through virtue is it possible to guarantee governance that is up to contemporary challenges, keeping citizens' trust in institutions high and creating the conditions for a just and inclusive society.



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Objectives of the Guidelines

These guidelines aim to provide a clear and articulated framework to help public managers develop the moral and professional qualities necessary to successfully address the challenges of the public sector. In the initial part, personal virtues are defined, such as integrity, honesty and courage; Subsequently, the interpersonal virtues, including empathy and justice, which are essential for a balanced and inclusive management of human resources, are explored. It then moves on to the analysis of organizational virtues, with particular emphasis on transparency and *accountability*, considered the pillars of effective and responsible public management.

The guide also provides practical tools for the continuous refinement of the skills of public managers, with a particular focus on technical issues such as digital transformation and reputation management. Finally, the legal and ethical implications of public management on an international scale are explored, offering a global perspective on the process of public management reform and specific policies on integrity.

The document is structured around three main and interconnected objectives, which represent the foundations of virtuous public management: promoting ethical behaviour, improving public service delivery and enhancing leadership qualities. Through the constant commitment of the public manager to these objectives, it is possible to create a governance capable of responding effectively to current and future needs, while ensuring compliance with fundamental ethical values.

The first objective of the guidelines is the **promotion of ethical behaviour** within the Public Administration. Ethics in public management is not only a moral imperative, but an operational necessity and an essential condition for ensuring that administrative decisions are always oriented towards the common good. In a context where every decision has a direct impact on citizens' lives, it is crucial that public managers adopt high standards of integrity, honesty and accountability. This implies not only adherence to codes of conduct and regulations, but also the ability to internalize and apply these principles in every aspect of daily management.

Promoting ethical behaviour also means creating a work environment where values such as transparency, accountability and respect are prioritized. Public managers must be able to



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establish clear rules and ensure that these are respected, but above all they must function as reference models, demonstrating the importance of these values with facts.

Another fundamental aspect related to ethics is transparency. Transparency in decision-making processes not only strengthens citizens’ trust in institutions, but also prevents opaque behaviour or behaviour conditioned by personal or political interests. A virtuous public manager must always be willing to account for his choices and justify them, promoting a climate of trust within the organization and ensuring an open dialogue with citizens.

The second objective of the guide concerns the **improvement of public service delivery**. A virtuous public administration must be able to provide services that are efficient, but also fair and accessible to all. The virtuous public manager has the task of optimizing the use of available resources, trying to reduce waste and ensure that services are distributed impartially and responsive to the needs of citizens; The focus must be on not only operational effectiveness, but also on the quality of service, which must reflect the values of equity and inclusion.

To achieve this, public managers must be able to combine technical skills with a long-term strategic vision. The adoption of innovative tools, such as the digitization of processes and the use of data to improve the planning and evaluation of public policies, can help increase efficiency and make services more accessible and transparent. However, a virtuous public manager must always balance innovation with respect for the fundamental values of public administration, avoiding that efficiency is achieved at the expense of equity. The guidelines suggest the adoption of a proactive approach to change and the use of performance management tools, which allow the effectiveness of policies to be constantly monitored and any corrections to be made during the course of the work.

To improve the quality of public services, it is also essential that managers know how to listen to the needs of citizens and respond to their expectations. Listening can be facilitated through active participation mechanisms, public consultations and continuous feedback tools. The involvement of citizens in decision-making processes raises the quality of services, strengthens the legitimacy of administrative action and consolidates trust in institutions.



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The third objective of the guidelines concerns the **development of leadership qualities**. Leadership in the public sector has specific characteristics that distinguish it from that of the private sector. A virtuous public manager must not only be able to manage and coordinate resources and people, but also to demonstrate political and social sensitivity, always maintaining a strong ethical imprint. Public leadership must balance regulatory requirements, bureaucratic constraints and political expectations with the constant pursuit of the common good.

Virtuous leadership is based on the ability to involve and inspire employees, promoting a climate of trust and participation. A virtuous public manager does not impose decisions from above, but encourages the active intervention of employees, listening to their ideas and enhancing their skills. A participatory approach not only strengthens group cohesion, but also stimulates creativity and innovation.

The guide emphasizes the importance of developing leadership qualities through continuous learning and constant critical reflection. Continuous training allows public managers to stay up to date on the latest trends and innovations in the sector, but also to strengthen their ability to make decisions in uncertain and complex contexts. In addition, the role of mentors and mutual support between colleagues is encouraged, tools that help leaders to grow and constantly improve their skills.

Another important aspect is the ability to negotiate and mediate between conflicting interests. In the public sector characterized by a plurality of actors and interests involved, a virtuous manager must know how to balance the different needs and promote solutions that are fair and sustainable. The ability to negotiate is not limited to the management of internal conflicts within the organization, but also extends to relations with external stakeholders, such as citizens, organizations and other public institutions. A virtuous leader knows how to build consensus and trust, through clear, transparent and dialogue-oriented communication.

Finally, the guidelines encourage a constant commitment to innovation. A virtuous public manager must be able to identify new solutions to emerging problems and promote changes that improve the quality of service. A proactive and forward-looking approach makes it possible to anticipate future challenges and to face them with strategic and responsible decisions. However,



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every innovation must always be oriented towards the common good and anchored in solid ethical principles, which cannot be sacrificed in the name of efficiency or technological progress.



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1. FOUNDATIONS OF VIRTUOUS LEADERSHIP

Public managers play a pivotal role in shaping the effectiveness, integrity and trustworthiness of public institutions. To navigate the complexities of public administration and serve the public effectively, certain virtues are essential. This section delves into the key virtues that underpin virtuous public management, exploring their definitions, significance and practical applications.

The key virtues for public managers—integrity, honesty, humility, courage, empathy, fairness, respect, accountability, transparency and justice—are essential for fostering an ethical, effective and trusted public administration. By embodying these virtues, public managers can lead with excellence, inspire their teams and serve the public with dedication and honour. Cultivating these virtues not only enhances individual leadership but also strengthens the integrity and efficacy of public institutions as a whole.

2.1. PERSONAL VIRTUES

Integrity

Integrity refers to the adherence to moral and ethical principles, ensuring consistency between one’s values, actions and decisions. For public managers, integrity is the cornerstone of trust, fostering confidence among stakeholders, including citizens, colleagues and policymakers.

Integrity is of profound significance in public management because it forms the foundation of trust between public managers and the people they serve. In a sector where decisions can have widespread societal impact, the presence of integrity assures citizens that their leaders act with honesty, fairness and ethical consistency. Integrity in public management strengthens accountability, as leaders are expected to uphold high moral standards and align their actions with their values. This ethical alignment promotes transparency and prevents corruption, ensuring that **decisions** are made based on the public good rather than personal gain.

Furthermore, a manager with integrity fosters a culture of ethical behaviour within their organization, inspiring colleagues and subordinates to adhere to similar values. This consistency



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builds a strong, positive **reputation** not only for the individual manager but also for the institution they represent, reinforcing public confidence in government and administrative systems. Decisions made by leaders with integrity are more likely to be respected, even when difficult, as they are rooted in principles rather than expediency. Thus, integrity plays a vital role in creating a fair, trustworthy and reliable system of governance.

In practice, integrity in public management can be applied through several key actions. Public managers should prioritize **transparency** by ensuring that their policies, decisions and processes are clear and accessible to the public. This can involve regularly sharing updates on government actions, being open about challenges and providing justifications for decisions made. Another practical application is establishing **accountability** mechanisms, where managers and their teams are held responsible for their actions through performance evaluations, reporting structures and oversight systems that track the alignment of decisions with ethical standards.

Moreover, integrity is demonstrated through consistent **ethical training** for employees, ensuring that everyone in the organization is aware of and adheres to a shared code of conduct. By encouraging a culture where mistakes are openly acknowledged and corrected, rather than hidden, managers reinforce an environment where integrity thrives. Public managers should also lead by example, acting in a way that reflects the values they promote, which in turn sets the tone for the entire organization. These practical steps ensure that integrity becomes a lived principle rather than just an abstract value.

Honesty

Honesty involves being truthful, open and sincere in all communications and actions. It is essential for maintaining transparency and fostering an environment where information is shared accurately and without deceit.

Honesty is a crucial virtue in public management because it directly influences the level of trust and **credibility** that public managers establish with the citizens they serve. When managers are honest, it fosters transparency in their communication, allowing the public and other



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stakeholders to make informed decisions based on accurate information. This openness strengthens the relationship between public institutions and the community, ensuring that actions and policies are understood and accepted, even when they are difficult or unpopular.

The significance of honesty also extends to decision-making processes within the organization. Honest managers create an environment where truthfulness is valued, leading to more candid discussions and realistic assessments of challenges. This, in turn, enables more effective problem-solving and better policy outcomes. Furthermore, honesty prevents the manipulation of facts or deception, which can erode **public confidence** and lead to distrust in government institutions. By consistently acting with honesty, public managers maintain the integrity of their position, uphold ethical governance and ensure that their leadership is perceived as legitimate and fair.

Honesty in public management is practically applied through open and **transparent communication**. Public managers should provide accurate and complete information to the public, colleagues and stakeholders, ensuring that no critical details are withheld or misrepresented. This includes offering clear explanations for decisions, even when those decisions may be controversial or difficult. In managing crises, honesty is essential in conveying the reality of the situation, acknowledging uncertainties and outlining steps being taken to resolve issues, which helps to maintain public trust.

Another way honesty is applied is in internal operations, where managers encourage a culture of transparency and truthfulness within their teams. This can be done by fostering an environment where employees feel safe to speak the truth without fear of retribution, whether it is regarding mistakes, challenges, or differing opinions. Additionally, honesty is demonstrated when **managers admit to their own mistakes** or limitations, showing accountability and a willingness to learn and improve. By consistently acting with honesty, public managers set a tone of integrity and reliability throughout their organization, reinforcing ethical behaviour at every level.



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Humility

Humility is the quality of being modest and recognizing one’s limitations. It involves valuing others’ contributions and being open to feedback and continuous learning.

Humility holds significant importance in public management as it fosters a culture of **collaboration** and openness. When public managers embody humility, they recognize their limitations and acknowledge that they do not have all the answers. This perspective allows them to seek input and feedback from others, which can lead to more informed and effective decision-making. By valuing the contributions of team members and stakeholders, humble leaders create an environment where diverse perspectives are welcomed, enhancing creativity and innovation in problem-solving.

Furthermore, humility promotes **personal growth** and resilience. Public managers who practice humility are more likely to reflect on their actions, learn from their experiences and adapt to changing circumstances. This adaptability is crucial in the dynamic field of public administration, where challenges are often unpredictable. Additionally, humility helps to **mitigate conflicts** within teams and organizations, as it encourages understanding and respect for differing viewpoints. By prioritizing collective goals over personal ego, humble managers build stronger relationships, foster teamwork and ultimately enhance the effectiveness of public service. In a broader sense, humility can also lead to greater public trust, as citizens tend to appreciate leaders who demonstrate selflessness and a genuine commitment to serving the community rather than pursuing personal ambition.

Humility can be practically applied in public management through several key actions. One effective way is by actively engaging in listening sessions with team members, stakeholders and community members. Public managers can create opportunities for dialogue, encouraging open discussions where everyone feels valued and heard. By asking questions and genuinely considering feedback, they demonstrate that they value the insights of others, regardless of their position.



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Another practical application involves leading by example, where managers openly acknowledge their mistakes and share lessons learned. This not only builds trust within the team but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement. Humble leaders often share credit for successes with their teams, highlighting collective achievements rather than personal accolades. This practice reinforces a sense of collaboration and encourages team members to contribute their best efforts without fear of overshadowing their leader.

Public managers can also prioritize ongoing learning and professional development by seeking mentorship and training opportunities. By demonstrating a commitment to personal growth, they inspire others to pursue their own learning journeys. Furthermore, involving team members in decision-making processes shows humility; it emphasizes that diverse perspectives enhance the quality of decisions. By embracing these practices, public managers not only model humility but also cultivate an organizational culture that values collaboration, learning and shared success.

Courage

Courage in public management refers to the willingness to take risks and make difficult decisions, even in the face of opposition or uncertainty. It involves standing up for what is right, despite potential personal or professional repercussions.

Courage is a vital virtue in public management because it empowers leaders to make difficult decisions and take necessary actions, even when facing uncertainty or potential backlash. In the realm of public service, managers often encounter situations where they must advocate for policies that may be unpopular or challenge established norms. Courage allows them to stand firm in their convictions and prioritize the public good over personal or political considerations.

Furthermore, courage is essential for driving change and innovation within public organizations. In an environment that can be resistant to change, courageous leaders are willing to push boundaries, challenge the status quo and advocate for new approaches that can better serve the community. This willingness to take risks can inspire others to embrace change and contribute to a culture of innovation.



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Additionally, courageous public managers are often required to address ethical dilemmas and stand against corruption or unethical practices. By demonstrating moral courage, they reinforce a culture of integrity and accountability, encouraging their teams to act ethically and transparently. This not only enhances public trust but also fosters a sense of safety and support within the organization, where employees feel empowered to speak up about concerns without fear of retribution. Overall, courage is crucial for effective leadership in public management, as it enables managers to navigate challenges, inspire their teams and uphold the values of transparency and accountability.

Courage can be practically applied in public management through various approaches that encourage decisive action and ethical leadership. One significant way is by advocating for policies or initiatives that may be unpopular but necessary for the welfare of the community. Public managers can stand firm in their convictions, presenting data and arguments to support their decisions, even when facing pushback from stakeholders or the public.

Additionally, courageous leaders often create an environment where employees feel safe to voice their opinions and concerns. By encouraging open dialogue and valuing feedback, they foster a culture of transparency and collaboration. This includes being receptive to dissenting views and using them as opportunities for growth and improvement rather than dismissing them.

Another practical application of courage involves confronting unethical behaviour within the organization. Public managers should take a strong stance against corruption or misconduct, reporting issues promptly and ensuring that accountability mechanisms are in place. By doing so, they demonstrate a commitment to integrity and encourage others to uphold similar standards.

Courage can also manifest in professional development, where managers invest in their own growth by seeking mentorship or pursuing training that challenges their existing skills and knowledge. This commitment to learning and adaptation illustrates a willingness to evolve and improve, inspiring their teams to embrace similar growth mindsets. By embodying these practices, public managers not only display courage but also cultivate an organizational culture that values ethical behaviour, accountability and continuous improvement.



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2.2. INTERPERSONAL VIRTUES

Empathy

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of others. In public management, empathy is crucial for addressing the needs and concerns of diverse populations and fostering a supportive work environment.

Empathy holds significant importance in public management as it enables leaders to connect with the diverse needs and experiences of the communities they serve. By understanding and acknowledging the feelings and perspectives of others, public managers can create policies and programs that are more responsive and relevant to the population. This deep understanding fosters a sense of belonging and trust among community members, encouraging greater engagement and cooperation with public initiatives.

Furthermore, empathy enhances communication within teams and organizations. Public managers who practice empathy are better equipped to build strong relationships with their employees, understanding their challenges and motivations. This connection can lead to increased morale, job satisfaction and productivity, as employees feel valued and supported. When public managers actively listen and respond to the needs of their teams, it cultivates an environment where individuals are motivated to contribute their best efforts.

In addition, empathy plays a crucial role in conflict resolution. By recognizing and respecting differing viewpoints, public managers can facilitate constructive dialogues that address underlying issues rather than simply treating symptoms. This ability to navigate conflicts with sensitivity not only improves team dynamics but also leads to more effective and harmonious governance.

Ultimately, empathy strengthens the fabric of public service by ensuring that decisions are made with a human-centred approach. By prioritizing understanding and compassion, public managers



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can create a more inclusive and effective governance framework that truly reflects the needs and values of the communities they serve.

Empathy can be practically applied in public management through several key actions that foster understanding and connection with both employees and the community. One effective way is by actively engaging with community members through listening sessions, town hall meetings, or surveys. These platforms allow public managers to gather insights directly from the public, demonstrating that their opinions and experiences are valued. By taking the time to listen, managers can better understand the unique needs and challenges faced by different groups within the community.

In the workplace, public managers can cultivate empathy by encouraging open communication and creating an environment where employees feel safe to express their concerns and share their perspectives. This can be achieved through regular check-ins, feedback sessions, or informal gatherings that promote dialogue. By being approachable and responsive to their team’s needs, managers can build strong relationships and foster a supportive organizational culture.

Another practical application of empathy involves incorporating diverse perspectives into decision-making processes. Public managers should actively seek input from individuals with varying backgrounds and experiences to ensure that policies and programs are inclusive and equitable. This approach not only enhances the quality of decisions but also demonstrates a commitment to understanding and addressing the needs of the entire community.

Furthermore, public managers can demonstrate empathy by recognizing and addressing the emotional and psychological well-being of their employees. This might involve implementing support programs, providing mental health resources, or encouraging work-life balance. By showing that they care about their employees’ overall well-being, public managers can enhance morale and foster a more engaged workforce. Through these practical applications, empathy becomes a guiding principle that informs actions and decisions, ultimately leading to more effective public service.



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Fairness

Fairness involves treating all individuals equitably, without favouritism or discrimination. It ensures that decisions and policies are just and impartial, fostering a sense of equality and justice within the organization and the broader community.

Fairness is a fundamental virtue in public management, playing a critical role in ensuring that all individuals are treated equitably and justly within the public sphere. The significance of fairness lies in its ability to promote trust and legitimacy in public institutions. When citizens perceive that they are being treated fairly, their confidence in government and public officials increases, leading to greater civic engagement and cooperation. Fairness reinforces the notion that public services and resources are distributed without favouritism or discrimination, creating a sense of community and shared purpose.

In addition, fairness is essential for upholding the principles of justice and equality. It ensures that policies and decisions are made based on objective criteria, allowing for equal opportunities and access to services regardless of an individual's background or circumstances. This commitment to fairness not only addresses social inequalities but also fosters a more cohesive society by mitigating tensions that may arise from perceived injustices.

Fairness also enhances organizational morale and productivity. When employees perceive that they are treated justly, they are more likely to be motivated and committed to their work. This positive environment encourages collaboration and respect among team members, which is vital for effective public service delivery. Ultimately, fairness is integral to ethical governance, as it ensures that public managers act in the best interest of all citizens, reinforcing the integrity and effectiveness of public institutions.

Fairness can be practically applied in public management through several key actions that promote equity and justice within organizations and communities. One effective approach is to establish clear policies and procedures for decision-making that emphasize transparency and objectivity. By ensuring that processes are documented and accessible, public managers can help all stakeholders understand how decisions are made, which fosters trust and accountability.



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In addition, public managers should actively seek diverse perspectives when developing policies or initiatives. By engaging with various community groups and stakeholders, they can better understand the needs and concerns of different populations, ensuring that decisions consider all viewpoints. This inclusive approach not only enhances the quality of outcomes but also demonstrates a commitment to fairness by acknowledging that diverse voices are essential in shaping public policy.

Another practical application involves implementing regular assessments of programs and policies to evaluate their impact on different groups. By analysing data related to service delivery, access and outcomes, public managers can identify disparities and address any inequities that may exist. This continuous improvement process allows for adjustments to be made to ensure that all individuals receive fair treatment and access to services.

Additionally, fostering a culture of respect and collaboration within public organizations can enhance fairness. Public managers can promote this culture by encouraging open communication, recognizing individual contributions and addressing any instances of bias or discrimination. By prioritizing fairness in everyday interactions, public managers not only strengthen relationships within their teams but also create an environment where ethical behaviour and equitable practices are the norm. Through these practical applications, fairness becomes a guiding principle that shapes policies, enhances organizational culture and ultimately leads to more effective public service delivery.

Respect

Respect entails valuing others, recognizing their rights and treating them with dignity. It is fundamental for creating a positive and inclusive work environment and for fostering healthy relationships with the public.

Respect is a foundational virtue in public management, as it significantly contributes to the overall effectiveness and integrity of public service. The significance of respect lies in its ability to foster positive relationships among public managers, employees and the communities they serve.



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When respect is a core value, it creates an environment where individuals feel valued and appreciated, leading to increased morale, motivation and engagement within organizations. Employees who feel respected are more likely to contribute their best efforts, collaborate effectively and support organizational goals.

Respect also plays a crucial role in enhancing communication and reducing conflicts. Public managers who demonstrate respect in their interactions are more likely to foster open dialogue and constructive feedback. This culture of mutual respect encourages individuals to voice their opinions and concerns, leading to better problem-solving and more informed decision-making. In contrast, a lack of respect can result in misunderstandings, resentment and a toxic work environment, ultimately undermining the effectiveness of public service.

Moreover, respect is essential for promoting diversity and inclusion within public organizations. By recognizing and valuing the unique backgrounds, experiences and perspectives of all individuals, public managers can create an equitable workplace that reflects the community's diversity. This commitment to respect enhances creativity and innovation, as diverse teams bring a wealth of ideas and solutions to the table.

In a broader context, respect is fundamental to building trust between public institutions and the community. When citizens see that public officials treat each other and the public with respect, it enhances their confidence in government and promotes civic engagement. Overall, respect is not just a personal virtue but a vital element that underpins ethical governance, effective leadership and meaningful public service.

Respect can be practically applied in public management through various strategies that promote positive interactions and foster a culture of inclusivity. One effective approach is to establish clear communication channels that encourage open dialogue among employees, stakeholders and community members. Public managers can hold regular meetings, workshops, or forums where individuals feel safe to share their ideas, concerns and feedback. By actively listening and acknowledging diverse perspectives, managers demonstrate that every voice matters, which reinforces a respectful environment.



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Additionally, public managers should model respectful behaviour in their interactions with others. This can be achieved by treating all individuals, regardless of their position, with kindness and consideration. Managers who exhibit respect set a standard for their teams, promoting a workplace culture where mutual respect is expected and valued. This approach encourages employees to reciprocate that respect, creating a more collaborative and productive atmosphere.

Another practical application involves recognizing and celebrating the contributions of employees and community members. Public managers can implement recognition programs that highlight individual and team achievements, showing appreciation for hard work and dedication. Such recognition fosters a sense of belonging and motivates individuals to continue contributing positively to the organization.

Furthermore, public managers can prioritize diversity and inclusion initiatives within their organizations. This includes actively recruiting individuals from varied backgrounds, promoting training on cultural competence and ensuring that policies reflect an understanding of diverse needs. By fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels respected and valued, public managers enhance creativity and innovation, ultimately leading to better public service delivery. Through these practical applications, respect becomes an integral part of the organizational culture, enhancing collaboration, trust and effectiveness in public management.

2.3. ORGANIZATIONAL VIRTUES

Accountability

Accountability involves taking responsibility for one’s actions and decisions and being answerable to stakeholders. It ensures that public managers are held to high standards of performance and ethical conduct.

Accountability is a cornerstone virtue in organizational management, particularly in the public sector, as it ensures that individuals and organizations are responsible for their actions and decisions. The significance of accountability lies in its ability to build trust between public managers and the communities they serve. When managers hold themselves accountable, they



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demonstrate a commitment to transparency and ethical conduct, which enhances public confidence in government institutions. This trust is crucial for fostering civic engagement and cooperation, as citizens are more likely to support policies and initiatives when they believe that their leaders are acting in the public’s best interest.

Moreover, accountability encourages a culture of responsibility within organizations. When employees understand that their actions have consequences, they are more likely to take ownership of their work and strive for high performance. This sense of responsibility not only improves individual productivity but also enhances overall organizational effectiveness. In environments where accountability is prioritized, team members feel empowered to contribute ideas, provide feedback and support one another, leading to a collaborative and motivated workforce.

Additionally, accountability plays a critical role in fostering ethical behaviour and decision-making. Public managers who hold themselves and their teams accountable are more likely to adhere to ethical standards and resist the temptation to engage in corrupt practices. This commitment to accountability helps prevent misconduct and reinforces the importance of integrity in public service. Ultimately, accountability is essential for ensuring that organizations operate efficiently, transparently and ethically, which contributes to their long-term success and sustainability in serving the public good.

Accountability can be practically applied in organizations through several strategies that reinforce responsible behaviour and decision-making. One effective approach is to establish clear performance metrics and expectations for all employees. By defining specific goals and objectives, public managers create a framework within which individuals can measure their contributions and understand their responsibilities. Regular performance evaluations can help assess progress, provide constructive feedback and identify areas for improvement, ensuring that accountability is woven into the organizational culture.

Additionally, fostering a transparent reporting system is crucial for promoting accountability. Public managers can encourage employees to report their progress, challenges and successes regularly. This transparency allows for open dialogue about performance and promotes a culture



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where sharing information is valued. When individuals are held accountable for their actions, they are more likely to be proactive in addressing issues and seeking support when needed.

Another practical application involves creating mechanisms for peer accountability, where team members hold each other responsible for their contributions. This can be facilitated through collaborative projects, regular team meetings and group evaluations, where individuals discuss their roles and responsibilities openly. Such practices encourage teamwork and mutual respect, enhancing the overall accountability within the organization.

Moreover, public managers should lead by example, demonstrating accountability in their own actions and decisions. When leaders openly acknowledge their mistakes, take responsibility and commit to learning from them, they set a powerful precedent for their teams. This behaviour fosters an environment where accountability is seen as a strength rather than a burden, encouraging employees to adopt similar attitudes.

Finally, establishing clear consequences for failing to meet expectations can reinforce the importance of accountability. Public managers should ensure that there are fair and consistent repercussions for unethical behaviour or underperformance, emphasizing that accountability is an essential aspect of the organizational culture. Through these practical applications, accountability becomes a guiding principle that enhances ethical behaviour, performance and trust within public organizations.

Transparency

Transparency refers to the openness and clarity with which public managers operate, ensuring that actions, decisions and processes are visible and understandable to stakeholders.

Transparency is a crucial virtue in organizational management, particularly within public institutions, as it fosters trust and accountability. The significance of transparency lies in its ability to create an open environment where information flows freely between leaders, employees and the public. When organizations operate transparently, stakeholders are better informed about decisions, policies and practices, which enhances their understanding and engagement. This



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openness is essential for building trust, as citizens and employees are more likely to support initiatives when they perceive that they are being kept in the loop and treated with honesty.

Moreover, transparency encourages ethical behaviour within organizations. When processes and decisions are visible and open to scrutiny, individuals are less likely to engage in unethical practices or misconduct. This culture of openness promotes accountability, as leaders and employees know that their actions will be observed and evaluated by others. In this environment, ethical standards are reinforced, leading to better decision-making and enhanced organizational integrity.

Transparency also facilitates improved communication and collaboration among team members. When information is shared openly, employees are more likely to work together effectively, as they have access to the knowledge and resources necessary to contribute to collective goals. This collaborative spirit fosters innovation, as diverse perspectives are encouraged and valued.

In addition, transparency supports a culture of continuous improvement. By openly sharing successes, challenges and lessons learned, organizations can identify areas for growth and development. This willingness to share both achievements and setbacks encourages learning from experiences, ultimately leading to more effective practices and policies. Overall, transparency is a vital organizational virtue that enhances trust, accountability, ethical behaviour, collaboration and continuous improvement in public management.

Transparency can be practically applied in organizations through a variety of strategies that promote openness and accessibility of information. One effective approach is to establish clear communication channels that ensure all stakeholders are informed about decisions, policies and organizational changes. Public managers can utilize regular newsletters, updates, or town hall meetings to share important information, encouraging dialogue and providing opportunities for feedback. This proactive communication helps create a culture where individuals feel included and engaged.

Additionally, implementing transparent decision-making processes is essential for fostering trust and accountability. Public managers can involve employees and stakeholders in discussions



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around significant decisions, allowing them to contribute their insights and perspectives. This collaborative approach not only enriches the decision-making process but also enhances the sense of ownership and commitment among team members.

Another practical application involves maintaining accessible records and documentation. Organizations can create centralized repositories for policies, reports and meeting minutes, ensuring that employees and the public can easily access relevant information. By making this information readily available, public manager reinforce the importance of transparency and demonstrate their commitment to open governance.

Furthermore, public managers should encourage a culture of openness where employees feel safe to voice their concerns and share feedback without fear of retribution. This can be achieved by establishing anonymous reporting systems or regular feedback sessions, allowing individuals to express their opinions freely. When employees know that their voices are valued and heard, it fosters a more transparent and collaborative environment.

Finally, public managers should lead by example by openly sharing their own decision-making processes and outcomes, including successes and failures. By demonstrating vulnerability and accountability, they set a tone for the organization that values transparency and encourages others to adopt similar practices. Through these practical applications, transparency becomes a guiding principle that enhances trust, accountability and collaboration within organizations.

Justice

Justice in public management involves ensuring that policies and actions are fair, equitable and in accordance with legal and ethical standards. It emphasizes the fair distribution of resources and opportunities.

Justice is a fundamental virtue in organizational management, particularly in the public sector, as it ensures that individuals are treated fairly and equitably. The significance of justice lies in its ability to foster a sense of fairness and inclusivity within organizations. When employees and stakeholders perceive that decisions are made based on impartial criteria rather than favouritism



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or bias, it enhances trust in leadership and promotes a positive organizational culture. This sense of fairness is essential for maintaining employee morale and motivation, as individuals are more likely to feel valued and committed to their work when they believe that they are treated justly.

Moreover, justice plays a crucial role in upholding ethical standards within organizations. When public managers prioritize justice, they create an environment where ethical behaviour is expected and reinforced. This commitment to fairness discourages unethical practices and encourages individuals to act with integrity, knowing that their actions will be judged against a standard of justice. In this way, justice not only guides individual behaviour but also shapes the overall ethical climate of the organization.

In addition, justice is vital for promoting diversity and inclusion. Organizations that prioritize justice actively seek to ensure equal opportunities for all individuals, regardless of their background or circumstances. By addressing systemic inequalities and promoting diversity, public managers can create a more inclusive workplace that reflects the community's values and enhances creativity and innovation.

Furthermore, justice contributes to conflict resolution within organizations. When disputes arise, a just approach involves addressing the concerns of all parties involved and seeking equitable solutions. This commitment to justice not only helps to resolve conflicts effectively but also reinforces the idea that the organization values fairness and respects the dignity of all individuals. Overall, justice is a crucial organizational virtue that underpins ethical behaviour, employee engagement and effective governance, ultimately leading to a more just and equitable society.

Justice can be practically applied in organizations through various strategies that promote fairness, equity and inclusivity. One effective approach is to implement clear and transparent policies regarding hiring, promotions and performance evaluations. By establishing objective criteria for these processes, public managers can ensure that decisions are based on merit rather than favouritism or bias. This transparency not only fosters trust but also empowers employees to understand how they can advance within the organization.



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Additionally, public managers can create mechanisms for employees to voice their concerns and grievances. Establishing clear channels for reporting issues—such as anonymous hotlines or regular feedback sessions—allows individuals to express their thoughts without fear of retaliation. This commitment to listening to employees helps to ensure that all voices are heard and considered in decision-making, reinforcing a sense of justice within the organization.

Moreover, promoting diversity and inclusion is a practical application of justice that can lead to more equitable outcomes. Public managers can actively seek to recruit individuals from diverse backgrounds and ensure that organizational practices reflect an understanding of different perspectives. Providing training on cultural competence and unconscious bias can further enhance employees’ awareness of equity issues, fostering a more just and inclusive environment.

In conflict resolution, public managers can apply justice by ensuring that all parties involved in a dispute have the opportunity to present their perspectives. Facilitating open discussions and seeking mutually agreeable solutions demonstrates a commitment to fairness and respect for all individuals. This approach not only helps to resolve conflicts but also reinforces the idea that the organization values justice in all its dealings.

Finally, recognizing and rewarding ethical behaviour is another practical application of justice. Public managers can implement recognition programs that highlight individuals who demonstrate fairness and integrity in their work. By celebrating these values, organizations can cultivate a culture that prioritizes justice and encourages employees to act in ways that align with ethical standards. Through these practical applications, justice becomes a guiding principle that enhances organizational culture and promotes ethical governance.



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3. BASIC SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE FOR VIRTUOUS PUBLIC MANAGERS

3.1. DIGITAL TRANSITION AND TRANSVERSAL TECHNICAL SKILLS

Understanding Digital Transformation

Digital transformation is imperative for all businesses, from the small to the enterprise. That message comes through loud and clear from seemingly every keynote, panel discussion, article, or study related to how businesses can remain competitive and relevant as the world becomes increasingly digital. This, however, does not apply only to businesses whose aim is profit, but also to the public management sphere. In the following chapters, we will explain the significance of digital transformation for this sector.

Definition and Significance in Public Management

The goals of digital transformation in public administration can be summarised as follows: connecting citizens and reducing obstacles. New technologies and digital transformation are enhancing public administration and encouraging new forms of communication between citizens and institutions.

New technologies are being integrated into public administration through digital transformation as a way to connect the public with the government. For this to work, public administrators need to be familiar with the best practices and digital workspace tools. It involves adopting modern technologies such as cloud computing, data analytics, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT) and mobile platforms to optimize the delivery of public services and streamline government functions.

The significance of digital transformation in Public Management lies in its potential to fundamentally reshape the way governments operate, deliver services and interact with citizens.



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By leveraging digital technologies, public institutions can improve their efficiency, transparency, inclusivity and responsiveness to the needs of society.

Modern societal and commercial growth is dominated by digital transformation, bringing huge digital benefits to people and companies everywhere. New ideas of administration for the digital age are being attributed to digitalization, according to some studies or revolutionary administration supported by information and communication technologies. Whether the shift to digital creates a new paradigm for governance or just improves upon established methods of effecting change in public administration, technology’s role in the perpetual shifts in public administration is generally considered essential.

Listed below are the main reasons why digital transformation is crucial in public management.

1. Increased efficiency and productivity

- ❖ Automation of processes: by automating routine administrative tasks, digital tools reduce the time and resources required to process documents, manage services and conduct government operations.
- ❖ Optimized resource allocation: digital systems streamline operations, allowing governments to allocate resources more effectively, ensuring that public funds are used efficiently.
- ❖ Significance: this leads to faster service delivery, reduced operational costs and the ability to serve a larger population with fewer delays.

2. Enhanced transparency and accountability

- ❖ Real-Time monitoring and reporting: digital platforms enable governments to track financial transactions, public expenditures and program outcomes in real-time, making the information easily accessible to the public.
- ❖ Public engagement and open data: digital transformation promotes transparency by allowing citizens to access government data and participate in monitoring activities, such as tracking public spending or reporting issues through online platforms.
- ❖ Significance: this fosters greater trust in government institutions, reduces corruption and holds public officials accountable for their actions.

3. Improved Decision-Making through Data-Driven Governance



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- ❖ Data analytics and Artificial Intelligence: governments can use big data and analytics tools to gather insights from vast datasets, enabling more informed decision-making on policy, resource allocation and public services.
- ❖ Predictive modelling: advanced digital tools allow governments to predict future trends and prepare for challenges like public health crises, urban planning, or disaster management.
- ❖ Significance: data-driven governance improves the quality of public policies and services by ensuring decisions are based on evidence and real-time data, rather than assumptions.

4. Greater Citizen Engagement and Access to Services

- ❖ E-Government and online services: digital transformation makes public services accessible 24/7 through online portals, mobile apps and self-service platforms, reducing the need for physical visits to government offices.
- ❖ Interactive communication channels: governments can engage with citizens more directly through social media, chatbots and other digital platforms, fostering greater public participation in decision-making.
- ❖ Significance: these innovations create a more inclusive and responsive government, allowing citizens to access services more conveniently and providing a platform for public feedback and participation.

5. Cost Savings and Financial Sustainability

- ❖ Reduction of manual processes: digitizing services reduces the costs associated with paperwork, physical infrastructure and human labour, leading to significant savings for governments.
- ❖ Cloud Computing and shared infrastructure: cloud-based technologies reduce the need for expensive hardware and data centres, allowing governments to scale their services without large upfront costs.
- ❖ Significance: digital transformation leads to financial sustainability by lowering operational costs and improving the allocation of public resources.

6. Increased Resilience and Flexibility



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- ❖ Crisis management and continuity of services: digital technologies ensure that governments can continue delivering services during emergencies or crises, such as natural disasters or pandemics, through remote and online platforms.
- ❖ Adaptive public services: digital transformation enables governments to quickly adapt to changing conditions or citizen needs by rapidly deploying new services or modifying existing ones.
- ❖ Significance: governments become more resilient and better able to respond to disruptions, ensuring continuity in critical public services.

7. Enhanced Interagency Collaboration and Integration

- ❖ Interoperable systems: digital transformation facilitates better coordination and collaboration between various government agencies by integrating systems and data, allowing seamless sharing of information.
- Holistic service delivery: citizens receive more integrated services (e.g., health, education and social welfare) when different government departments can collaborate effectively.
- ❖ Significance: this reduces bureaucracy, minimizes duplication of efforts and allows for more cohesive and comprehensive public services.

8. Strengthened Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

- ❖ Data protection measures: as governments digitize more of their operations, they also implement stronger cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive data from cyber threats.
- ❖ Compliance with privacy laws: governments ensure the protection of citizens' privacy and data by adhering to regulations like GDPR and investing in secure technologies.
- ❖ Significance: these measures help build trust with citizens by ensuring that their personal information is safeguarded.

9. Fostering Innovation and Economic Growth

- ❖ Innovation in public services: digital transformation fosters a culture of innovation within the public sector by encouraging the use of emerging technologies such as blockchain, AI and IoT in governance.



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- ❖ Boosting the digital economy: by investing in digital infrastructure and services, governments can stimulate the growth of the digital economy, support startups and create a more conducive environment for innovation.
- ❖ Significance: governments that embrace digital transformation position themselves as leaders in innovation, contributing to overall economic development.

10. Reduction of the Digital Divide and Promotion of Equity

- ❖ Accessible digital services: digital transformation enables governments to reach underserved or marginalized communities through online platforms, making public services more inclusive.
- ❖ Digital literacy initiatives: governments can promote digital literacy, ensuring that all citizens can access and benefit from digital services.
- ❖ Significance: it helps reduce social and economic disparities by making government services accessible to a wider population and empowering citizens through technology.

In summary, digital transformation in public management not only enhances the efficiency and effectiveness of government operations but also strengthens democratic governance, promotes inclusivity and fosters innovation. It positions governments to meet the evolving needs of citizens in a digital era while ensuring financial sustainability and resilience.

Key Trends and Technologies

Public policy, administration and management experts have been debating the merits of incorporating innovative technologies into government and governance structures for decades. Scholars of social policy and the welfare state have also been interested in the topic of digital government, particularly in light of the recent critical focus on the consequences of the so-called “fourth industrial revolution”. As a continuation of the third industrial revolution, which started in the Seventies, aims to describe a paradigm change that is still unfolding. The current transformation is distinguished from its predecessor by the widespread availability of high-speed wireless internet, the miniaturization and decreased cost of sensing devices and the rise of AI and ML.



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For the digital transformation of public management to be really successful, some basic technologies need to be adopted:

1. Service portal and traceability.

The public sector must offer a service portal for citizens, be it municipal, state, or federal. Many issues can be resolved via smartphone or computer without the need to go to an administrative body. Of course, for this solution to be practical, a tracking function needs to be in place. Think if, during a process, the user becomes unresponsive until a process is completed – it would not work. With tracking technology, each new update will be posted to the service, keeping users informed of every step of the process in real time.

2. Document and data management and security

Data security management should be a top priority when discussing governmental structures. This is precisely why one of the most important steps in digital transformation is to implement technologies capable of guaranteeing the security and privacy of data stored in a service and its proper processing under the law.

Additionally, due to the volume of data they manage, including photos, documents, handwritten texts and more, services must have backup solutions to prevent the loss of public data – which can even be audited.

3. Analytics

To help manage data and interpret the results obtained, an Analytics tool can capture, manage and analyse large volumes of structured information and generate graphs and tables. The main benefit of this kind of tool is how easy it is to interpret data using time intervals and data types selected by the user. The result is that managers find it easier to understand data and deal with different situations.

4. Software as a Service (SaaS)

The need to update software licenses represents one of the greatest difficulties in investment in technology. Even text or image editors suffer from this kind of clerical issue.



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A noteworthy solution is Software as a Service (SaaS), which works as a kind of subscription. Software, updates and even digital space for storing data in the type of service are included in the contract. In the public sector, especially, opting for SaaS can be more cost-effective and efficient than building an entire infrastructure to implement software and buy licenses.

5. Cloud computing

A public body has to deal with a large volume of data daily and naturally, digital data needs to be stored somewhere.

For local storage, investing in infrastructure is needed to add more servers in to support the information load. This problem is easily resolved with cloud computing.

Cloud computing offers users virtual space, meaning, you can store a great volume of information without needing physical structure for it.

Digital transformation in public management has been accelerating globally, driven by advancements in technology and evolving citizen expectations.

Here are **key trends shaping this transformation**:

1. Citizen-Centric Services

Focus on User Experience (UX): governments are adopting a more customer-centric approach, redesigning services around citizen needs and improving accessibility through mobile apps and responsive websites.

Personalization: leveraging data analytics and AI to tailor services, offer recommendations and deliver more relevant information based on individual needs.

2. Data-Driven Decision Making



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Big Data & Analytics: public sector organizations are increasingly using data to inform policy decisions, allocate resources and measure the impact of programs. Advanced analytics help in predictive modelling, risk assessment and optimizing operations.

Open Data Initiatives: governments are sharing data publicly to increase transparency, enable innovation and empower citizens and businesses to develop solutions using government-provided datasets.

3. AI and Automation

Artificial Intelligence (AI): AI is being integrated into public services for tasks such as predictive policing, healthcare diagnostics and fraud detection. It helps enhance efficiency and provide better services with reduced human intervention.

Robotic Process Automation (RPA): automating routine and repetitive tasks, like processing forms, administrative approvals and data entry, frees up public employees for higher-value work.

Chatbots and Virtual Assistants: governments are using AI-powered bots to offer 24/7 customer service, provide real-time information and guide users through various processes.

4. Cloud Adoption

Scalability and Efficiency: governments are shifting to cloud-based infrastructure to reduce IT costs, improve scalability and ensure better disaster recovery capabilities.

Multi-Cloud and Hybrid Solutions: many public agencies adopt a hybrid approach, using both private and public clouds, to balance security and flexibility.

5. Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

Stronger Cybersecurity Frameworks: as digital services expand; governments are investing in cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive citizen data and critical infrastructure from cyber threats.

Data Privacy Regulations: compliance with international and local privacy laws (e.g., GDPR, CCPA) is becoming more important. Governments must secure data while ensuring transparency in how personal information is handled.



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6. Blockchain for Transparency and Efficiency

Secure Transactions and Record Keeping: blockchain is being assessed for secure voting systems, land registries and supply chain management. Its decentralized nature enhances trust in government systems by preventing fraud and tampering.

Smart Contracts: these self-executing contracts are being explored to streamline public procurement, welfare distribution and other administrative processes.

7. Digital Identity and e-Government Platforms

Unified Digital IDs: digital identity systems are enabling seamless access to public services across different platforms. Estonia’s e-Residency and India’s Aadhaar system are examples of how digital identities are transforming public service delivery.

Integrated e-Government Platforms: governments are consolidating services into single digital portals, enabling citizens to interact with various government agencies through a unified platform.

8. Collaboration through Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)

Governments are increasingly partnering with tech companies to drive innovation, fund digital projects and develop innovative solutions. This collaboration accelerates digital adoption while leveraging private sector expertise.

9. Agile and Adaptive Governance Models

Agile methodologies: public sector organizations are adopting agile project management techniques to ensure flexibility, rapid prototyping and quicker service delivery.

Innovation labs and sandboxes: governments are setting up innovation labs to experiment with new technologies and frameworks in a controlled environment before scaling up.

10. Sustainability and Green IT

Governments are adopting green technologies, optimizing energy use in data centres and promoting sustainable IT practices. Digital transformation is being aligned with broader sustainability goals.



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These trends reflect a push toward more efficient, transparent and citizen-oriented public services, enabled by emerging technologies.

Adopting Tools and Platforms

Essential Digital Tools for Public Managers

Modernising public administrations using digital tools and upskilling the civil servants is part of the European Union eGovernment Action Plan. Like most professionals, civil servants require a foundational level of ICT skills to perform daily tasks, deliver services and interact with external stakeholders. Additionally, some need advanced expertise in data analysis, policy modelling and data mining to inform policy decisions, improve service delivery and assess impacts. Moreover, civil servants should develop project management skills and learn how to effectively engage with the public through participatory processes.

Public managers increasingly rely on digital tools to streamline operations, improve decision-making and enhance service delivery.

Below are some concrete **useful tools that every public manager might benefit from:**

1. Collaboration and Communication Tools

Microsoft Teams / Slack / Zoom: these tools facilitate real-time communication, file sharing and collaboration among teams, especially in remote or hybrid working environments.

Asana / Trello / Monday.com: project management platforms help public managers track progress, assign tasks, set deadlines and collaborate across departments.

2. Document Management and Sharing

Google Workspace / Microsoft 365: these platforms offer cloud-based document creation, storage and collaboration tools (e.g., Google Docs, Sheets, OneDrive, SharePoint) for seamless teamwork.



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Dropbox / Box: secure cloud-based storage solutions for sharing files and maintaining version control on important documents.

3. Data Analytics and Visualization

Tableau / Power BI: public managers can use these tools to visualize data, create reports and conduct data-driven decision-making by transforming raw data into insightful dashboards and visualizations.

R / Python: for more advanced users, these programming languages help with data analysis, policy modelling and impact evaluation.

4. Customer Relationship Management (CRM) Systems

Salesforce / Microsoft Dynamics 365: CRM systems help manage interactions with citizens, track case management and improve the delivery of public services by keeping detailed records of citizen queries and actions taken.

5. Financial and Resource Management Tools

SAP / Oracle ERP: enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems help public managers oversee budgets, financial reporting, procurement and asset management in an integrated manner.

QuickBooks / Xero (for smaller departments): Cloud-based accounting tools for managing budgets and keeping financial operations transparent and compliant.

6. e-Government Platforms

GovTech Solutions / Accenture Government Services: these platforms offer integrated solutions for managing digital services, such as e-forms, public records and citizen portals.

e-Participation Platforms (e.g., Citizen Lab, Bang the Table): tools to engage citizens in policy consultations, participatory budgeting and decision-making processes.

7. Cybersecurity and Data Privacy Tools

Norton / McAfee / Microsoft Defender: antivirus and cybersecurity solutions are essential for protecting public institutions from data breaches and cyberattacks.



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GDPR Compliance Tools (e.g., OneTrust, TrustArc): these platforms help ensure compliance with data protection laws by managing personal data securely and transparently.

8. Project and Performance Management Tools

Smartsheet / ClickUp: tools that support project tracking, performance evaluation and cross-functional coordination, ensuring transparency and accountability in public sector projects.

KPI Dashboards (e.g., Klipfolio): dashboards for tracking key performance indicators (KPIs) across government departments to ensure strategic goals are met.

9. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Automation Tools

UiPath / Blue Prism: Robotic Process Automation (RPA) tools that automate repetitive tasks like data entry, document processing and routine reporting.

Chatbots and Virtual Assistants: AI-powered tools like IBM Watson or custom-built chatbots to handle citizen queries, provide information and improve service delivery.

10. Public Procurement and Supply Chain Management

Coupa / SAP Ariba: tools for managing public procurement processes, contracts and supplier relationships, ensuring transparency and compliance.

Blockchain Solutions (e.g., IBM Blockchain): some public administrations are experimenting with blockchain for secure, tamper-proof procurement and record-keeping.

11. Citizen Engagement and Feedback

SurveyMonkey / Google Forms: public managers can use these platforms to collect citizen feedback on services, initiatives, or public consultations.

Social Media Management (e.g., Hootsuite, Buffer): managing social media presence, engaging with the public and monitoring feedback through multiple channels.

12. Learning and Development Tools



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Coursera / LinkedIn Learning: platforms that provide courses for public managers and civil servants to upskill in digital transformation, data analysis and leadership.

Learning Management Systems (LMS) (e.g., Moodle, TalentLMS): for internal training and capacity-building among public sector employees.

These tools help public managers optimize resource use, foster collaboration and improve citizen engagement, ensuring more efficient and transparent governance.

Best Practices for Implementation and Use

Implementing and effectively using digital tools in public management requires careful planning, change management and ongoing support. Here are best practices for successful adoption and use of these tools:

1. Align tools with organizational goals

Assess needs and priorities: before selecting tools, conduct a thorough needs assessment to ensure the tools align with the organization’s strategic goals, operational requirements and service delivery objectives.

Customizable solutions: choose tools that can be tailored to specific public sector requirements, such as compliance, transparency and accessibility, while remaining adaptable as needs evolve.

2. Involve Stakeholders Early

Collaborative planning: engage key stakeholders (employees, managers, IT teams and citizens) in the planning and implementation process to ensure the tools meet user needs and gain buy-in.

Citizen-Centric design: for public-facing tools, incorporate citizen feedback into the design process to ensure the tools improve service delivery and user experience.

3. Provide Comprehensive Training

Training programs: implement structured training sessions for all staff members, tailored to different user levels, from basic ICT skills to advanced data analytics and project management.



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Ongoing Learning: encourage continuous learning by offering access to online courses and workshops, keeping public employees up to date with new features, best practices and advancements.

4. Ensure Data Security and Privacy

Compliance with regulations: prioritize compliance with data protection laws (e.g., GDPR) when implementing digital tools, particularly those handling sensitive citizen data.

Cybersecurity protocols: implement robust cybersecurity measures, such as data encryption, access control and regular security audits, to protect digital systems from threats.

Regular training: ensure that employees are trained on data privacy, cybersecurity best practices and how to safeguard sensitive information.

5. Foster Cross-Department Collaboration

Integrated platforms: choose tools that promote collaboration across departments, allowing seamless sharing of information, data and resources. This can reduce silos and improve service delivery.

Standardized processes: implement standardized processes and workflows using collaboration tools to ensure clarity and consistency across different teams and projects.

6. Start Small and Scale Gradually

Pilot projects: begin with small-scale pilot implementations to test the tool’s functionality, identify potential challenges and gather feedback from users.

Iterative rollout: after refining the tool through pilots, gradually scale it across departments or public agencies, ensuring that each phase builds on the lessons learned.

7. Monitor and Evaluate Performance

Set KPIs and metrics: establish clear performance indicators (KPIs) to track the effectiveness of the tools in improving service delivery, operational efficiency and user satisfaction.



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Feedback loops: regularly gather feedback from employees and citizens to assess how well the tools are working, identify pain points and make necessary adjustments.

8. Promote User Adoption

Change management: develop a change management strategy to address resistance, communicate the benefits of the new tools and provide clear guidance on how they will improve work processes.

Incentives and recognition: recognize and reward staff who adopt and champion the use of digital tools, creating a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

9. Prioritize Usability and Accessibility

User-Friendly design: ensure that tools are intuitive, with simple user interfaces that require minimal training for day-to-day use. Focus on accessibility to ensure that all staff and citizens can benefit, including those with disabilities.

Mobile-Friendly solutions: as public sector employees often work in the field, choose tools that are mobile-responsive and accessible on multiple devices to ensure productivity on the go.

10. Leverage Data Analytics for Decision-Making

Data-Driven culture: encourage a culture where decisions are informed by data. Train employees to use data analytics tools for real-time insights, reporting and policy evaluation.

Automate data collection: implement automated data collection and reporting processes to reduce manual tasks and provide up-to-date information for decision-makers.

11. Establish Clear Governance and Accountability

Governance frameworks: develop a governance framework that outlines who is responsible for managing the tools, maintaining data quality and ensuring compliance with regulations.

Leadership involvement: ensure top-level leadership supports and actively participates in the implementation, setting a positive example for the rest of the organization.

12. Focus on Interoperability



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System integration: ensure that the digital tools can integrate with existing systems (e.g., CRM, ERP) and other tools across departments to create a seamless digital ecosystem.

APIs and open standards: use tools that support APIs and open standards to enhance compatibility and future-proof the system as new technologies emerge.

13. Regularly Update and Maintain Tools

Software updates: schedule regular updates to the tools to ensure they are operating optimally and have the latest security patches.

Vendor support: establish strong relationships with software vendors to access customer support, training resources and help with troubleshooting when issues arise.

14. Promote Transparency and Accountability

Public dashboards and reports: use digital tools to provide transparent, real-time reporting to the public, such as project progress, financial spending, or service delivery metrics.

Citizen feedback: engage the public by creating digital platforms that allow citizens to provide feedback, report issues and participate in decision-making processes.

By following these best practices, public managers can ensure successful implementation and maximize the benefits of digital tools in public administration, ultimately enhancing efficiency, accountability and citizen satisfaction.



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Data Management and Security

In the realm of public management, data has become an indispensable resource for driving policy decisions, improving service delivery and enhancing governance. Government agencies collect vast amounts of data, ranging from citizen records to financial transactions, social services and infrastructure operations. The ability to efficiently manage and secure this data is critical for delivering public services, ensuring transparency and fostering trust between governments and citizens.

However, the rise of digital government and the increasing reliance on data-driven decision-making also bring significant challenges. As public institutions digitize operations and adopt technologies like cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics, they face growing risks related to data breaches, cyberattacks and privacy violations. The need for robust data management systems that ensure data accuracy, availability and compliance with regulations such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and local data privacy laws has never been more pressing.

In this context, public managers must not only focus on efficient data collection, storage and analysis but also prioritize data security to safeguard sensitive information and maintain public confidence. Implementing strong data governance frameworks, ensuring secure access controls and fostering a culture of cybersecurity within public institutions are essential components of this process.

Importance of Data Integrity and Privacy

Data integrity refers to the accuracy and consistency of data throughout its lifecycle; it ensures that information is not altered in an unauthorized way and that it remains reliable and accurate, regardless of when it is consulted or used. This encompasses not only the prevention of accidental errors, but also protection against intentional manipulation.

Types of data integrity:

Physical Integrity



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Physical integrity ensures data is stored without corruption. This includes:

- Redundancy: using systems like RAID to prevent data loss during disk failures.
- Non-erasable media: storing data on WORM disks to prevent accidental deletion.
- Regular backups: periodic backups for data recovery in case of loss or corruption.
- Disaster protection: measures like remote data centres to protect against fires or floods.
- Environmental controls: maintaining optimal conditions in data centres to prevent damage.

Logical Integrity

Logical integrity ensures data correctness and consistency within a logical model:

- Database constraints: includes primary and foreign keys, uniqueness and validation rules to maintain data correctness.

Referential Integrity

This ensures consistency between database tables:

- Table relationships: for example, an order must refer to an existing customer.
- Update and delete operations: Ensures that updates or deletions in one table are reflected in related tables.

User Data Integrity

Ensures data entered by users is valid and accurate through:

- Validation checks: for formats (e.g., emails) and value ranges (e.g., age limits).
- Consistency checks: cross-checking data for logical accuracy (e.g., start and end dates).
- Code injection protection: prevents malicious code from being entered into input fields.

Together, these forms of data integrity safeguard databases from corruption and ensure reliable, consistent information for users.



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Risks to Data Integrity:

Data integrity is crucial for maintaining the reliability and accuracy of information in IT systems. However, several risks can compromise this integrity, leading to data loss, inconsistencies and errors. Key risks include:

Human Error

Mistakes by users can cause significant data issues, such as:

- Typing errors: incorrect data entry that skews results.
- Accidental deletions: unintentionally removing important records.
- Incorrect modifications: poor data changes due to lack of training or oversight.

Hardware Failures

Physical failures can severely impact data integrity:

- Hard drive crashes: leading to data loss.
- Power outages: abrupt shutdowns corrupt files.
- Other hardware issues: motherboard or power supply failures can also damage data.

Malicious Attacks

Cyber threats pose serious risks:

- Ransomware: encrypts and holds data hostage.
- Hacking: unauthorized access and alteration or deletion of data.
- Viruses/Malware: corrupts systems and damages data.

Software Issues

Faulty software can lead to data corruption:

- Bugs: application errors that result in incorrect or lost data.
- Faulty updates: updates causing new bugs or system incompatibilities.

Natural Disasters



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Disasters can physically destroy data infrastructure:

- Fires and floods: damage IT equipment and storage devices, leading to irretrievable data loss.
- Other events: earthquakes and storms also threaten physical data security.

Managing these risks is essential for protecting the integrity of critical data.

Data Integrity and GDPR Compliance:

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) mandates strict standards for handling personal data, emphasizing protection, confidentiality and integrity. Data integrity is essential for GDPR compliance, which requires that personal data be accurate and up to date. Businesses can meet these requirements by:

Maintaining accuracy: ensure personal data is regularly reviewed and updated, with processes to promptly correct inaccuracies.

Protecting against unauthorized access: implement security measures like firewalls and access controls to safeguard data.

Preventing tampering: use integrity checks such as digital signatures and checksums to verify data has not been altered.

Strategies for Effective Data Management

Over the past few years, many organizations have undergone some form of digital transformation. However, while technology-driven solutions largely drive the digital revolution, public administrations find that these advanced solutions alone are inadequate to address their specific needs. The public sector stands to benefit significantly from readily available cognitive solutions, which could save time and resources across various areas, including health and education.



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To enhance their capabilities in artificial intelligence (AI), several governments have developed national AI strategies that outline a pathway for innovation. The use of technologies like AI and big data enables more straightforward and productive data analysis and decision-making. This transition can relieve public servants of repetitive tasks, improve their decision-making abilities, enhance citizen engagement and support the development of evidence-based public services and policies. According to Gartner, by 2024, 60% of government investments in AI and data analytics will focus on directly influencing real-time operational decisions and outcomes.

Therefore, public administrations require a comprehensive solution that encompasses the entire data process, which is a critical feature that makes certain data-driven services highly competitive. An end-to-end platform that manages the complete data lifecycle (from collection to consumption) while providing tailored AI solutions can help address the unique challenges of the public sector and streamline complex procedures. Furthermore, this platform should integrate new data with existing information seamlessly, offering administrations a cohesive and comprehensive service.

The data collected from the public necessitates tools designed specifically for the public sector, where security, ethics and transparency are paramount. These solutions not only benefit the administration but also offer user-friendly services that facilitate the public sector’s shift toward full digitalization. Ultimately, an advanced set of services aims to redefine the relationship between the government and citizens while proactively addressing emerging challenges.

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Effective data management process is demonstrated in the following figure:



Developing Technical Skills

Identifying and Acquiring Necessary Technical Skills

In an era of rapid digital transformation, public managers must develop essential technical skills to effectively navigate the complexities of modern governance. As public administrations increasingly leverage technology to enhance service delivery and engage with citizens, identifying and acquiring these skills is crucial for effective leadership and operational success.

Here is a guide to help public managers in this process:

Assess Current Skills and Identify Gaps



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- Conduct a skills assessment: evaluate existing technical competencies within the public management team. Identify strengths and weaknesses related to data management, cybersecurity, digital communication and analytics.
- Identify key skill areas: determine the critical technical skills required for effective public management, such as data analysis, project management software proficiency and understanding of e-governance tools.

Research Relevant Technologies and Trends

- Stay updated: keep informed about emerging technologies relevant to public administration, such as artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics and cloud computing.
- Understand policy implications: recognize how these technologies impact policy development, service delivery and citizen engagement.

Develop a Targeted Learning Plan

- Select learning resources: explore various training options tailored for public managers, such as online courses, workshops and seminars that focus on public sector applications of technology.
- Create a timeline: establish a timeline for skill acquisition, including milestones for completing courses or certifications.

Engage in Practical Application

- Participate in relevant projects: seek opportunities to apply new skills in real-world public sector projects, whether through cross-department collaborations or community initiatives.
- Use simulation tools: leverage simulation platforms to practice technical skills in a safe environment, allowing for experimentation and learning without real-world consequences.

Network and Seek Mentorship

- Connect with experts: build a network of professionals in public management and technology. Attend conferences, webinars and workshops to learn from industry leaders.



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- Find a Mentor: identify a mentor with experience in public sector technology who can provide guidance, share insights and offer practical advice.

Foster a Culture of Continuous Learning

- Encourage ongoing education: promote continuous professional development within the organization. This can include regular training sessions, knowledge-sharing forums and encouraging attendance at relevant conferences.
- Monitor progress: regularly assess the effectiveness of skill acquisition efforts and adapt learning plans as needed to stay current with evolving technologies.

By effectively identifying and acquiring the necessary technical skills, public managers can enhance their capacity to lead in a digital age, ultimately improving governance and service delivery to citizens. This proactive approach to skill development fosters innovation, efficiency and responsiveness in public administration.

Continuous Learning and Adaptation in a Digital Age

Continuous learning involves the ongoing enhancement of skills and knowledge throughout one's career. In the context of digital transformation, it entails keeping up with the latest digital trends, understanding the impact of new technologies and knowing how to leverage them to meet business goals. This learning can occur through various methods, including formal training courses, certifications and self-directed exploration via online resources, podcasts, webinars and more.

Cultivating a culture of continuous learning is vital for organizations seeking to achieve successful digital transformation. This includes not only providing employees with access to training and development opportunities but also fostering a mindset of curiosity, innovation and adaptability.



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Here's **how public managers can foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptation:**

Embrace a Growth Mindset

- Cultivate curiosity: encourage a culture where questions and exploration are valued. Public managers should model a growth mindset, viewing challenges as opportunities for learning and development.
- Encourage experimentation: promote an environment where team members feel comfortable trying new approaches and technologies, even if they may fail. Learning from failures can lead to innovative solutions.

Leverage Technology for Learning

- Utilize online learning platforms: take advantage of e-learning resources, such as Coursera, edX, or LinkedIn Learning, which offer courses on relevant topics such as data analytics, AI and digital communication tailored for public management.
- Implement knowledge management systems: establish systems for sharing best practices, lessons learned and new insights across the organization. This facilitates continuous knowledge exchange and collaboration.

Encourage Professional Development

- Invest in training programs: provide access to regular training and development opportunities, such as workshops, seminars and conferences focused on digital skills and innovations in public administration.
- Support certification programs: encourage public managers to pursue certifications in relevant fields, such as project management, data analysis, or cybersecurity, to enhance their expertise.

Foster Collaboration and Networking

- Create learning communities: establish networks or communities of practice where public managers can share experiences, challenges and solutions related to digital transformation.



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- Engage with external experts: collaborate with technology providers, academic institutions and think tanks to stay informed about emerging trends and best practices in digital governance.

Implement Feedback Mechanisms

- Solicit regular feedback: encourage team members and stakeholders to provide feedback on processes, technologies and learning initiatives. This input can help identify areas for improvement and inform future learning strategies.
- Conduct performance reviews: integrate learning objectives into performance evaluations, ensuring that continuous learning is recognized and rewarded within the organization.

Stay Agile and Adaptable

- Monitor technological trends: keep an eye on technological advancements and their implications for public administration. This proactive approach allows public managers to anticipate changes and adapt strategies accordingly.
- Develop resilience: encourage teams to be adaptable in the face of change, emphasizing the importance of flexibility and resilience in navigating digital transformations.

By fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation, public managers can enhance their leadership capabilities, improve service delivery and respond effectively to the dynamic needs of citizens in a digital age. This commitment to lifelong learning not only benefits individual career growth but also contributes to the overall effectiveness and innovation of public administration.



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Collaboration and Innovation

Fostering Innovation through Technology

Collaboration is vital for innovation as it brings together diverse perspectives, skills and experiences, resulting in outcomes that exceed individual contributions. Through collaboration, we expose ourselves to new ideas and methods we might not have considered independently. We challenge each other’s assumptions and biases while leveraging one another’s strengths. This collective effort enables us to tackle complex problems, uncover new opportunities and develop groundbreaking solutions.

A notable example of successful collaboration in technology is the creation of the first Macintosh computer by Apple in the 1980s. Led by Steve Jobs, the project assembled a team of engineers, designers and artists who worked closely together to produce a computer that was both functional and aesthetically pleasing. They shared ideas, reviewed designs and iterated on the product until it aligned with Jobs’ vision. The outcome was a revolutionary computer that transformed the industry and set the stage for Apple’s future successes.

Some of the [examples of how to foster innovation through technology](#) are:

Invest in Training and Development

- Upskill employees: provide training programs that equip employees with the latest technological skills and knowledge. Continuous learning helps organizations stay competitive and innovative.
- Foster digital literacy: promote digital literacy across the organization, ensuring that all employees can effectively utilize technology to enhance their work.

Utilize Collaborative Tools

- Digital collaboration platforms: adopt tools that facilitate communication and collaboration among team members, regardless of location. Platforms like Slack, Microsoft Teams and project management software enable real-time collaboration and idea sharing.



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- Crowdsourcing ideas: engage with external stakeholders and customers through crowdsourcing platforms. This approach can generate fresh ideas and insights from a broader audience.

Develop an Agile Mindset

- Adaptability: encourage an agile approach to project management that allows teams to respond quickly to changes and new information. This flexibility supports innovation by enabling rapid iterations and adjustments.
- Embrace change: foster a mindset that views change as an opportunity rather than a threat. Being open to change encourages exploration and experimentation.

By integrating these strategies, organizations can effectively harness technology to foster innovation. This proactive approach not only enhances operational efficiency but also positions organizations to respond dynamically to market shifts and emerging opportunities, ultimately driving long-term success and growth.

Collaborative Tools and Techniques for Effective Teamwork

Effective teamwork is essential for achieving organizational goals and leveraging the right collaborative tools and techniques can significantly enhance productivity and communication among team members.

Here are some [key tools and techniques to foster collaboration](#):

Project Management Tools

- Trello: a visual tool that uses boards, lists and cards to help teams organize tasks and track project progress. It allows for easy assignment of responsibilities and deadlines.
- Asana: a project management platform that enables teams to create tasks, assign them to team members, set due dates and monitor project timelines and dependencies.
- Jira: ideal for software development teams, Jira supports agile project management, allowing teams to plan, track and manage software development projects.



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Communication Platforms

- Slack: a messaging platform that facilitates real-time communication through channels, direct messages and integrations with other tools, making collaboration seamless and efficient.
- Microsoft Teams: a collaboration hub that combines workplace chat, video meetings, file storage and application integration, enabling teams to work together effectively.
- Zoom: a video conferencing tool that allows for virtual meetings and webinars, helping remote teams stay connected and engaged.

Document Collaboration

- Google Workspace: a suite of productivity tools that includes Google Docs, Sheets and Slides, allowing multiple users to collaborate on documents in real-time, leaving comments and making edits simultaneously.
- Microsoft 365: offers cloud-based versions of Word, Excel and PowerPoint, enabling teams to collaborate on documents while maintaining version control and access from any device.

File Sharing and Storage

- Dropbox: a cloud storage service that allows teams to store, share and collaborate on files securely. It provides easy access to documents from any device.
- Box: similar to Dropbox, Box offers secure file sharing and collaboration with enhanced features for enterprise-level security and compliance.

Brainstorming and Idea Generation Tools

- Miro: an online collaborative whiteboard platform that allows teams to brainstorm, plan and visualize ideas in a shared space, fostering creativity and engagement.
- MindMeister: a mind mapping tool that enables teams to create, share and collaborate on mind maps, facilitating structured brainstorming sessions.

Time Management and Scheduling



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- Togggl: a time tracking tool that helps teams manage their time effectively, allowing them to see how much time is spent on various tasks and projects.
- Calendly: a scheduling tool that simplifies the process of setting up meetings by allowing team members to share their availability and book appointments without back-and-forth emails.

Feedback and Survey Tools

- SurveyMonkey: a platform for creating surveys and polls to gather feedback from team members, helping organizations understand team dynamics and areas for improvement.
- Microsoft Forms: a tool for creating surveys and quizzes that enables teams to collect feedback easily and analyse responses in real-time.

Besides the concrete tools, here are some **techniques for effective collaboration** that every employer or manager should know about and use:

- Regular check-ins: schedule regular team meetings to discuss progress, address challenges and realign goals. These meetings can be brief but should provide an opportunity for open communication.
- Defined roles and responsibilities: clearly outline each team member's roles and responsibilities to ensure accountability and reduce confusion about who is responsible for what.
- Establish clear goals: set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) goals to give the team a clear direction and focus.
- Encourage open communication: foster an environment where team members feel comfortable sharing ideas, feedback and concerns. Active listening and constructive feedback are crucial for effective collaboration.
- Celebrate successes: recognize and celebrate team achievements to boost morale and motivation. Acknowledging individual and collective efforts fosters a sense of camaraderie and reinforces teamwork.



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By incorporating these collaborative tools and techniques, teams can enhance their effectiveness, improve communication and foster a culture of collaboration that drives innovation and success.



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3.2. MASTERING PUBLIC SPEAKING AND REPUTATION MANAGEMENT

Essentials of Effective Public Speaking

Public speaking is a pivotal skill in the business world, whether you are pitching an idea to investors, leading a team meeting, or presenting at a conference. The ability to communicate effectively and persuasively can distinguish you as a leader, enhance your professional image and unlock doors to new opportunities. We will explore the art of public speaking, offering advanced strategies, tips and insights to help you master this indispensable skill.

Importance of Communication Skills in Public Management

Communication within the system of public institutions is considered a crucial factor for achieving effective and economical functioning of the whole system of public administration as a specific institutional tool for the implementation of public policies. The quality of information relationships between individual subjects of public institutions is determined by a number of factors and it influences the overall systematic structure of the whole public organization. Further, it also affects the quality of information flows carried out within the whole system of public authority of the state, as well as the characteristics of external relationships of public administration. The quality of communication can be (however it not necessarily must be) significantly influenced by utilization of modern information and communication technologies.

The word ‘communication’ comes from the Latin word ‘communication’ meaning “making common or imparting”. There are a lot of definitions of “communication” in literature. For instance, Udall and Udall (1979) characterize communication as “*a process by which a person (or a group) shares and reports information to another person or group so that people (or groups) clearly understand one another*”. Eyre (1983) also defines communication as “the transferring of a message to another party so that it can be understood and acted upon”. Communication says Hybels and Weaver (2001, p .12) is “any process in which people share information, ideas and feelings”. To summarize, James, Ode and Soola (1999) consider that the essence of



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communication consists in the fact that *“it helps us to understand ourselves, to keep in touch with other people, to understand them and to predict their response to situations, also as the medium through which relationships are established, extended and maintained, provides a means by which people act and interact; exchange information and ideas; develop plans, proposals and policies, make decisions and manage men and materials”*. The above definitions can be summarized as a process of sharing ideas, information and messages with others in a particular time and place. It is also important to state that communication is not just giving of information. It is the giving of understandable information and receiving and understanding the message. Continuously conveying information, ideas, attitudes and feelings among individuals and among groups of individuals is an important communication tool.

Techniques for Clear and Persuasive Speaking

Effective communication can leave an impression, whether you are speaking to hundreds of people, pitching a business idea, or just chatting at a party. While some people may be naturally talented at public speaking, it is a skill that can be learned and improved with practice. This chapter will talk about ten vital public speaking techniques that every speaker should aim to master.

1. **Confidence:** confidence is the bedrock of successful public speaking. It is the belief in your abilities and the conviction that you have something valuable to share. Cultivating confidence involves preparation, knowing your material and rehearsing your speech. With confidence, you can captivate your audience and effectively convey your message.
2. **Clarity:** clarity is vital in public speaking to ensure your audience understands your message. Articulate your ideas clearly, use concise language and organize your thoughts logically. Avoid jargon and unnecessary complexities, aiming to express your thoughts in a manner that resonates with a diverse audience.



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3. **Body Language:** non-verbal communication plays a significant role in public speaking. Your body language, including gestures, facial expressions and posture, can convey confidence, enthusiasm and sincerity. Maintain eye contact with your audience, use open and engaging gestures and stand tall to project a confident presence.
4. **Voice Modulation:** how you use your voice can significantly impact your audience’s engagement and comprehension. Practice voice modulation by varying your tone, volume and pace. Use pauses effectively to emphasize key points and allow your audience to digest the information. A well-modulated voice adds depth and expression to your speech, making it more captivating.
5. **Active Listening:** public speaking is not just about speaking; it also involves listening and responding. Engage with your audience by actively listening to their questions or comments. Acknowledge their input, show empathy and adapt your speech accordingly. You build a connection with your audience by being attentive, making your address more impactful.
6. **Storytelling:** stories have a unique power to captivate and inspire. Incorporating storytelling into your speeches can make them more relatable and memorable. Craft compelling narratives that illustrate your main points, evoke emotions and connect with your audience more deeply. A well-told story can leave an impression long after your speech concludes.
7. **Adaptability:** public speaking situations can vary greatly and adaptability is crucial for navigating these diverse scenarios. Be prepared to adjust your speech based on the audience, venue and time constraints. Adapt your content and delivery to meet the needs and expectations of your listeners, ensuring maximum impact.
8. **Visual Aids:** utilizing visual aids, such as slides or props, can enhance your presentation and make complex information more accessible. Well-designed visuals can reinforce your



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message, create visual interest and help your audience retain knowledge. However, use visual aids sparingly and ensure they complement your speech rather than distract from it.

9. **Audience Engagement:** a successful public speaker engages their audience throughout their speech. To encourage participation, incorporate interactive elements, such as questions, activities, or brief discussions. Interacting with your listeners fosters a sense of involvement and connection, making your speech more interactive and memorable.

10. **Emotional Intelligence:** emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others. In public speaking, emotional intelligence allows you to gauge your audience’s reactions, empathize with their perspectives and adapt your delivery accordingly. Connecting with your audience’s emotions can create a more meaningful and impactful speech.

Public speaking is a valuable skill that can be cultivated and refined over time. By mastering these ten essential public speaking skills (confidence, clarity, body language, voice modulation, active listening, storytelling, adaptability, visual aids, audience engagement and emotional intelligence) you can become a more effective and influential speaker.

Preparing and Delivering Speeches

At some point in your career, you will likely need to deliver a speech or a presentation in public. Depending on the public-speaking engagement, you can use several strategies to deliver a compelling presentation that keeps the audience engaged. Proper preparation is an important step that can make you feel more confident in your delivery.



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Structuring and Writing Effective Speeches

If you have an upcoming speech, preparing for it can help you feel more confident in front of your audience. One way to prepare is to write your speech ahead of time so you can memorize it and deliver it in an engaging way. Learning how to write a speech can help you convey your message effectively, allowing you to impress and inform your audience.

Speech writing is preparing a communication you plan to deliver verbally in front of an audience. Speeches may commemorate an occasion, inform your audience about a particular subject, or persuade them to complete an action, such as donating to a nonprofit. This means you may be responsible for delivering a speech in your personal life to friends and family or in your professional life to your coworkers, management team, or clients. For a speech to be effective, it is important that it engages the audience, keeping them interested in what you are saying so they understand your message.

Here are **eight steps** you can follow to write an engaging speech:

1. Choose an important topic

The first step in writing a speech is deciding what it may be about. You may already have a general topic or idea of what you want to discuss, but narrowing your topic to a few specific points or one clear purpose can help ensure that your speech stays engaging.

First, brainstorm a list of all the possible items you might include. Then, go over your list and cross out any irrelevant items. Continue doing this until you have narrowed your topic to a few important points. Before composing your speech, perform any research that might be helpful to your purpose. You may need facts like the institution or product history, usage statistics, case studies, sales figures, or demographic information. After you have gathered all of your data, you can decide how to relate the information to your audience.

2. Consider your audience

The biggest factor when deciding how to approach a topic is the audience you plan to address. Take a few moments to consider the following considerations:



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- What does the audience already know about the subject?
- What might they want to know about the subject?
- How do they feel about the subject?
- How does the subject relate to or affect the lives of those in the audience?

These points can help you determine what to include in your speech and how to present your information. For example, if the audience is largely unaware of your topic, your speech can mostly be informative. If they are familiar with your topic but may be uninterested, it is important for your speech to be persuasive to engage the audience.

3. Prepare a structure

An especially important approach to effective speech writing is to have a clear structure for your ideas. Outline a logical sequence for each point you may use to discuss your topic and have notes with you during your speech so you can adhere to this structure. Having a clear flow of ideas can help you to be persuasive, inform your audience, keep you on topic and ensure you do not forget any important details.

4. Begin with a strong point

An audience is usually most attentive when a speaker first begins talking, so try to use this time effectively. Condense the main idea or purpose of your speech into one sentence that you can use to open your presentation. Starting with a strong, clear purpose can show your audience where you intend to lead them and can help gain their interest.

5. Use concrete details and visual aids

Use concrete details to support your points. Brief stories, interesting examples, or factual data can help to engage your audience and convey the truth of your purpose. Consider using visual aids to further support your speech. Images can be powerful and engaging. You can create a digital presentation to accompany your speech or bring in some related props, such as a sample of the product you are discussing.

6. Include a personal element



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Your audience is more likely to be interested in the topic of your speech when they are also interested in you. Consider using a personal story or example in your speech. If you can present yourself to the audience as someone knowledgeable and trustworthy, they may be more likely to listen attentively and consider what you say.

7. Consider rhetorical devices

A rhetorical device is a method of using words to make them especially memorable. Consider some of the most memorable lines from famous speeches. These lines are usually enduring because they influence the audience’s emotions by repeating keywords or phrases, inverting the structure of a repeated phrase, reversing the order of words, or using an unexpected turn of phrase.

8. End memorably

The final moment of a speech is usually what an audience remembers most vividly. At the end of your speech, return to the strong purpose you began with and try to end in a meaningful way, such as creating a vision of the future or sharing a true story of success.

You can also end your speech with a clear call to action when appropriate to motivate your audience to complete a certain task. For example, if your speech was about how the institution you work for plans to become more environmentally friendly, your call to action may be to encourage others to make small changes in their own life.

Managing Stage Fright and Audience Engagement

Stage fright, or performance anxiety, is the intense fear of speaking in front of an audience. It often feels like an overwhelming, paralyzing dread that can impact your performance. It can manifest as nervousness, sweating, trembling, or a racing heart. These physical symptoms can be distracting and make the act of speaking even more challenging.



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Stage fright stems from various psychological factors, including fear of judgment, lack of confidence and high expectations. This fear is often rooted in our instinctual desire to avoid embarrassment and social rejection. Understanding the root causes can help in addressing them effectively. By recognizing that stage fright is a natural response, we can begin to manage it more effectively.

Strategies to overcome stage fright:

1. Preparation

Preparation is one of the most effective ways to combat stage fright. Knowing your material inside out builds confidence, allowing you to focus on delivery rather than content. Research your topic thoroughly to ensure you have a deep understanding of the subject matter. Practice regularly by rehearsing your speech multiple times, ideally in front of a mock audience. This practice helps you become more familiar with your presentation and reduces anxiety. Additionally, use visual aids like slides or props to support your speech and reduce the focus on you.

2. Mental Techniques

Mental techniques are powerful tools for overcoming stage fright. Visualization involves picturing yourself delivering a successful presentation. This mental rehearsal can create a sense of familiarity and reduce anxiety. Positive affirmations replace negative thoughts with positive ones, reinforcing your confidence. Remind yourself of past successes and the skills you possess. Mindfulness and meditation practices can reduce anxiety and improve focus, helping you stay calm and present during your speech.

3. Physical Techniques

Physical techniques can help manage the physiological symptoms of stage fright. Deep breathing is a simple yet effective method to calm your nerves. Inhale deeply through your nose and exhale slowly through your mouth to reduce tension and steady your breath.



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Regular exercise reduces overall anxiety and stress levels, making it easier to manage stage fright.

4. Engaging Your Audience

Engaging your audience from the start can help alleviate stage fright. Start with a strong opening to capture attention, such as a compelling story, interesting fact, or thought-provoking question. Interact with your audience by asking questions and encouraging participation. This interaction can create a dialogue, making the presentation feel more like a conversation. Use humour to break the ice and make you feel more relaxed. Light-hearted jokes can help establish rapport and ease tension.

5. Continuous Improvement and Feedback

Continuous improvement is essential for becoming a more confident speaker. Seek feedback from trusted colleagues or mentors to gain constructive criticism. This feedback can highlight areas for improvement and provide valuable insights. Record your speeches and watch them to identify strengths and weaknesses. This self-assessment helps you refine your skills and build confidence. Join a public speaking group, such as Toastmasters, to practice regularly in a supportive environment. These groups offer a safe space to hone your skills and gain confidence.

Conquering stage fright is a journey, but with the right strategies, anyone can become a confident public speaker. Embrace these techniques and over time, you will find yourself speaking with greater ease and effectiveness. Remember, the key to overcoming stage fright lies in preparation, mental and physical techniques, audience engagement and continuous improvement. By addressing both the psychological and practical aspects of this fear, you can transform your approach to public speaking and unlock your full potential.

Media Relations and Public Image

Public relations play an important role in building a positive image of the institution. A positive image will give a good impression to the institution which ultimately will also have an impact on



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increasing the number of customers. Even celebrities use official social media accounts to institution themselves and their institutions. The use of social media as a communication medium between universities and the public in an effort to improve the image of the university is one of the steps that can be taken by universities to socialize performance and other matters related to information about the university. Social media currently has multifunction, not only used to communicate with each other but also used for other activities, one of which is promotional activities as an interaction effort between universities and the public. In using social media as the spearhead for conveying information, good planning is needed so that in its implementation social media can become a way to achieve the expected goals.

Building and Maintaining a Positive Public Image

- Define the identity of the institution
Your defined identity is the cornerstone of your image. Develop a clear and authentic identity story, values and mission that resonate with your target audience. Consistency across all touchpoints reinforces your identity.
- Understand your audience
To build trust and loyalty, you must understand your audience’s needs, preferences and pain points. Tailor your messaging and offerings to address their concerns effectively.
- Deliver quality consistently
Quality is key to a positive image. Whether it’s products, services, or content, consistently deliver high-quality experiences that meet or exceed customer expectations.
- Communicate transparently
Honest and transparent communication builds trust. Address issues openly, admit mistakes when necessary and always strive for clarity in your messaging.
- Monitor your online reputation
Regularly monitor online conversations about your institution. Use tools like social media listening and Google Alerts to stay informed about what is being said.
- Engage with your audience



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Active engagement on social media and other platforms helps humanize your institution. Respond to comments, answer questions and show that you value your customers' input.

- Create valuable content

Content that educates, entertains, or solves problems can establish your institution as an authority in your industry. Share content that adds value to your audience's lives.

- Build partnerships and alliances

Collaborating with like-minded organizations or influencers can boost your credibility and extend your reach. Choose partners who align with your institution values.

- Monitor and respond to feedback

Pay attention to both positive and negative feedback. Positive feedback reinforces your efforts, while addressing negative comments shows your commitment to improvement.

- Evolve and adapt

The business landscape is ever-changing. Stay agile and be willing to adapt your strategies to meet new challenges and opportunities while staying true to your institution identity.

Building and maintaining a positive institution image is an ongoing process that requires dedication and effort. However, the benefits, including increased trust, customer loyalty and market competitiveness, are well worth it. By implementing these ten tips, encompassing institution image management, online reputation management and effective institutioning strategies, you can establish and nurture a positive institution image that stands the test of time. Remember that consistency, transparency and a customer-centric approach are the pillars of success in this endeavour.

Interacting with Media: Best Practices and Strategies

Whether you are launching a new product, promoting an event, or managing a crisis, how you interact with the media can significantly impact your reputation and success. Mastering media relations requires a strategic approach and a keen understanding of best practices.

Here are some [key strategies to help you navigate the ever-evolving media landscape with finesse](#):



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1. Build Relationships:

Building strong relationships with members of the media is crucial. Take the time to research journalists, editors and influencers who cover your industry or niche. Engage with them on social media, attend industry events and offer them valuable insights and resources. By establishing rapport and trust, you will increase the likelihood of favourable coverage when you have news to share.

2. Tailor Your Pitches:

One-size-fits-all pitches rarely yield results in media relations. Take the time to tailor your pitches to the specific interests and needs of each journalist or media outlet. Personalise your communications, demonstrating that you have done your homework and understand their audience. Provide compelling angles, exclusive information, or access to key spokespeople to make your pitch stand out from the crowd.

3. Be Responsive:

With a 24/7 news cycle, journalists work under tight deadlines and responsiveness is paramount. Whether it is a request for information, an interview opportunity, or a clarification on a story, strive to respond promptly and professionally. Make yourself available for media inquiries and ensure that designated spokespeople are accessible and prepared to engage with journalists at a moment's notice.

4. Provide Valuable Content:

Journalists are always on the lookout for compelling stories and valuable content. Position yourself as a trusted source by offering high-quality, newsworthy content that aligns with journalists' interests and their audience's needs. This could include data insights, expert commentary, case studies, or exclusive interviews. By providing valuable resources, you will increase your chances of earning media coverage and establishing thought leadership in your industry.

5. Be Transparent and Authentic:



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At a time of heightened scepticism and fake news, transparency and authenticity are non-negotiable. Be honest and forthright in your interactions with the media, even when faced with difficult questions or challenging situations. Admit mistakes, correct inaccuracies and strive to maintain credibility at all times. Building a reputation for transparency will enhance trust with journalists and audiences alike.

6. Monitor and Measure:

Effective media relations require ongoing monitoring and measurement to gauge the impact of your efforts. Use media monitoring tools to track coverage, sentiment and key messages across various media channels. Analyse metrics such as reach, engagement and share of voice to assess the effectiveness of your media relations strategies. Use these insights to refine your approach and optimise future campaigns.

7. Prepare for Crisis:

No institution is immune to crises, but how you handle them can make all the difference. Develop a comprehensive crisis communications plan that outlines roles, responsibilities and protocols for responding to crises swiftly and effectively. Establish clear lines of communication with the media and designate trained spokespeople to address inquiries and provide updates. By being prepared and proactive, you can mitigate reputational damage and maintain control of the narrative during challenging times.

Mastering media relations requires a combination of strategic thinking, relationship-building and effective communication skills. By implementing these best practices, you can cultivate positive relationships with the media, earn valuable coverage and enhance your organisation’s reputation and credibility in the eyes of the public. Remember, media relations are an ongoing process that requires dedication and adaptability, so stay vigilant, stay engaged and always strive for excellence in your communications efforts.



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Crisis Communication

Crisis communication is a strategic approach to corresponding with people and organizations during a disruptive event. When a crisis occurs, proactive, quick, detailed communication is critical; a crisis communication strategy, plan and tools can ensure such communication happens.

Communicating During Crises and Emergencies

A crisis is any unexpected event that could potentially cause harm to your business’s operations or reputation. It can be caused by any sort of disaster scenario, such as natural disasters, financial issues, or cybersecurity breach. A crisis demands immediate attention and communication to mitigate negative effects. Most often, crisis communication responsibilities fall on public relations professionals for external concerns and HR for internal, operational and customer-facing issues.

For large corporations, a crisis can easily become a very public event, such as when employees treat customers poorly in public settings.

Below are some other examples of the **types of crises** many institutions face:

- Security threats: this could involve cyber-security attacks that compromise employee or customer data, violence in the workplace that harms the well-being of employees, thefts and other similar violations of institution security policies.
- Employee accidents: this could involve employee injuries on the job, such as factory workers injured by faulty equipment, or institution truck drivers involved in serious highway product spills or accidents. Institutions with poor overall safety records and an inability to protect their employees’ well-being suffer from public scrutiny and can face sanctions from government authorities.
- Weather or environmental issues: natural disasters, such as floods, fires and tornadoes can cause major disruptions to institution operations, as can environmental-related accidents, chemical spills, or explosions. The institution reputation can be impacted for



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years following the incidents, especially in cases where institutions are found to be in violation of safety guidelines.

- Employee ethics scandals: institutions sometimes come under scrutiny because top leadership or employees demonstrate poor judgment in any number of ways. Paying bribes to earn contracts, sexually harassing employees, or violating contracts. Often institution leadership comes under fire if bad patterns of behaviour are either ignored or even encouraged, making it ever more important for top leaders to have strict codes of conduct and consistent communication on the institution’s values and ways of operating.
- Societal concerns: often major geopolitical issues can become a crisis for employees struggling to make sense of disturbing news. During the COVID-19 crisis, many employees were feeling unsettled, stressed and overworked due to family, personal and health challenges.

These types of world crises call for direct communication from leaders to ensure that employees know their leaders care about their overall emotional well-being and want to be a source of support.

- Product recalls: particularly for food and other consumer product institutions, institution leaders need to take very proactive measures to communicate when their products pose a threat of harm to consumers.
- Employee retention issues: When institutions see a large number of employees leaving for new opportunities, or when an institution institutes a wide-scale layoff of personnel, a crisis of confidence can emerge among the employees who remain. Proactive communication is required to help employees understand the context behind the issue and the path forward for the organization, which helps to regain employee confidence and trust.

Too often, leaders fail in one of two keyways:

1. They avoid communication almost completely or communicate truly little, hoping a lack of detail or clarity will downplay a crisis.



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2. They communicate poorly and without a sense of humanity and empathy for employees and their concerns.

We have identified **key reasons why communicating well really matters**, including the following:

- Employees want to hear from their leaders in times of crisis.

When employees struggle to process difficult news, they look to their leaders to respond in some way – both from the top of their organizations as well as from their own manager. It can be difficult to find the exact right words, but saying nothing communicates something as well – and can be seen as insensitive.

- Employees want to feel that their leaders care about them and understand their concerns.

Leaders need to set a tone from the top and managers should follow by demonstrating that they are concerned about the emotional well-being of those impacted by the crisis.

When institution operations are impacted and/or people are affected personally by a crisis, leaders should go even further to engage employees with critical updates and a determined focus on their well-being.

The important takeaway from this finding is that the better screen for employers to use when deciding whether to communicate is understanding the likelihood that employees are affected beyond institution operations.

Leaders who prioritize listening actively to employees during a crisis create stronger, more committed and more resilient teams.

When leaders take the time to listen and show they care, employees are more likely to feel part of an inclusive team that welcomes their unique experiences and provides a safe place to share their perspectives openly.

Part of **listening actively** can involve a number of important approaches from leaders and managers, including:



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1. Reaching out directly to employees who you think might be most impacted by a crisis. This gives the employees an important opportunity for dialogue.
2. Ask employees in crisis a simple question: “How can I be most helpful to you right now?”
3. Connect employees in crisis to the right resources for additional support by providing contacts in human resources or other helpful support systems within the institution.

Best practices for those top three components:

Concern: the communication addresses the safety and well-being of employees, either due to operational impact and/or because they are affected personally by the issue. Using this key screen is important, given the number of issues that organizations face each day.

Empathy: sets the right tone and shows empathy toward employees’ challenges. It is human in its language and approach and creates an environment where employees feel valued and respected.

Clarity: communicates the organization’s position on the crisis in a focused and purposeful way and consistently across leadership and management ranks.

Other components identified include timeliness, authenticity, unity, institution reassurance, flexibility, belonging, purpose alignment, ongoing dialogue and employee involvement.

When should leaders address a crisis internally? Beyond looking at just how concerned or impacted employees are by a particular issue as we discussed above, a key answer to the question of when to communicate is simple: crisis communication should be handled in a very timely manner. Especially given the short turnaround with social media, news of a critical challenge inside an organization can be released very quickly, particularly if it was egregious enough to impact a significant number of employees.

Organizations often stumble when they wait too long to communicate. Sometimes, it can be hard to know what to say as a situation is evolving, but saying nothing in those cases can cause an even worse situation.



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Here it is best practice rule of thumb for leaders to communicate in a timely and efficient manner even when the information is scarce: **do not wait to communicate until you have all the answers.** By then, it will be too late. If you wait, someone is going to speak on your behalf and fill the information vacuum, whether the information is right or wrong.

Leaders are advised to be timely and communicate what you know, when you know it and also tell employees what you are still working on figuring out.

Silence inside organizations hurts employee confidence and engagement and it has major implications for leaders when future issues arise.

In addition to knowing when to address crisis, it is important to follow core best practices to ensure your communications are effective.

Here are six crisis communication best practices to keep in mind:

1. Increase manager communication effectiveness.

Provide training for leaders so they understand how to approach employees, what key messages need to be delivered and where to point employees for additional support. Provide them with toolkits that include key messages, frequently asked questions with suggested answers, fact sheets about what the institution is doing, tips for having discussions with their people about a specific crisis and surfacing questions, etc.

2. Develop a comprehensive crisis communication plan.

In times of crisis, it is tempting to focus on the immediate need to get communication out quickly – and that is important. However, it is also important to have a plan in place – one that ensures you are listening and evolving your messages and tactics as necessary to effectively engage with your people.

Effective crisis communication plans include:

- Explanation of key goals for the plan and the communication.



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- List of key stakeholders you will need to communicate with (should include employees and any other outside organizations that will need to know the news, such as board of directors, contractors, or customers, when appropriate).
- Process for how the communications team will meet and align with leaders about the messages to be distributed.
- A plan for how information will be shared (outline of how and when the information will be distributed to key groups).
- A process for how communicators might prepare a list and answers to Frequently Asked Questions from employees.

3. Determine the right channels for communication.

Employees get their information in different ways. Some rely on email; others turn to social media channels and others prefer one-on-one discussions with opportunities for questions and dialogue. A best practice is to provide information through multiple channels, so you are giving employees information in the ways they want to receive it.

4. Provide needed context on the crisis or change.

It is super important for employees to have the context behind what is happening inside an organization, so they know what is going on and why.

5. Build in frequent communication follow ups.

One of the biggest mistakes organizations make is issuing statements or other forms of communication after a big change or crisis and then going silent. Regular communication about an ongoing crisis is critical for maintaining transparency and trust. Employees need to feel that leaders are not just “checking the box” by distributing a statement and never bothering to revisit the issue.

6. Emphasize self-care when employees are directly impacted by a crisis.

When employees have been personally impacted, it is important for leaders to provide options for employees to process their emotions. They may need time off or a day to rest. Encourage



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employees to request what they need and collaborate on what plans might be best to support them.

Final recommendation:

Be a Leader Communicator

We often refer to the best leaders in a crisis as “leader communicators,” change agents who realize that most problems in business today lie in the absence of real communication. They apply this approach in a crisis and every day. When done well, these courageous leaders are able to mitigate crisis, create shared meaning and move people to action.

Employees do not expect leaders to be perfect in how they handle a crisis, or to have all the answers. Mostly, they just want them to listen, be human and show true concern.

Strategies for Transparent and Reassuring Communication

Crisis communication is a vital skill for any communicator, especially in times of uncertainty and change. When a crisis hits, you need to communicate effectively with your stakeholders, such as customers, employees, investors, media and regulators. How do you write a transparent and reassuring crisis communication message that addresses the situation, shows empathy and builds trust?

Here are some **tips to help you craft a clear and confident message**:

1. Identify your audience

Before you start writing, you need to know who you are writing for and what they need to know. Different audiences may have different concerns, questions and expectations. For example, your customers may want to know how the crisis affects your products or services, while your employees may want to know how the crisis affects their jobs or safety. You should tailor your message to each audience and use the appropriate tone, language and channel. The best way to



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be truthful. Send a communication describing the fact with assurance of not worrying or panicking. Take decisions and convert that decision into practical execution.

In a crisis, transparency is key. Acknowledge the situation, share what you know and outline proactive steps. Reassure your audience of your commitment to their well-being. Clear, honest communication fosters trust.

2. Acknowledge the crisis

The first step in any crisis communication message is to acknowledge the crisis and its impact. Do not ignore, deny, or downplay the situation, as this will damage your credibility and reputation. Instead, be honest and factual about what happened, what you know and what you do not know. Avoid speculation, blame, or defensiveness. Show that you are aware of the severity and urgency of the crisis and that you are taking it seriously.

3. Express empathy and compassion

The next step in your crisis communication message is to express empathy and compassion for your stakeholders. Show that you understand how they feel and that you care about their well-being. Use words that convey sympathy, support and solidarity. For example, you can say “We are deeply sorry for any inconvenience or distress this may have caused you” or “We are here for you during this difficult time”. Avoid sounding cold, distant, or robotic. Phrases like We understand your concerns and are here to support you every step of the way are the verbal equivalent of offering a comforting embrace during a storm.

4. Explain your actions and solutions

The third step in your crisis communication message is to explain what you are doing and what you are planning to do to address the crisis and prevent it from happening again. Provide specific and realistic details about your actions and solutions, such as timelines, steps, resources and outcomes. Demonstrate that you are taking responsibility and accountability for the situation and that you are working hard to resolve it. Avoid making promises or commitments that you cannot keep or that may change.

5. Provide updates and resources



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The next step in your crisis communication message is to provide updates and resources for your stakeholders. Let them know how and when they can expect to hear from you again and what they can do to stay informed. Provide them with relevant and reliable sources of information, such as your website, social media, hotline, or email. Encourage them to contact you if they have any questions, feedback, or concerns. Avoid leaving them in the dark or confused.

6. End with a positive note

The final step in your crisis communication message is to end with a positive note that reinforces your message and your relationship with your stakeholders. Thank them for their patience, loyalty, cooperation, or understanding. Express your confidence, optimism, or hope for the future. Remind them of your values, mission, or vision. For example, you can say “We appreciate your trust and support as we work together to overcome this challenge” or “We are committed to delivering the best quality and service to you as always”.



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Reputation Management

Reputation management is the practice of influencing stakeholder perceptions and public conversations about an organization and its institutions. It includes monitoring perceptions and conversations, responding to reputation threats and proactively seizing opportunities to boost reputation.

Reputation management is part of a comprehensive organizational strategy that implicates most business functions in some capacity, including communications, marketing, legal, customer experience, sales and loyalty.

Monitoring and Managing Public Perception

Public perception plays a crucial role in shaping the success or failure of any organization, especially when it comes to managing vested interests. Vested interests refer to individuals or groups who have a stake in a particular issue and may have their own agendas or biases that can influence public opinion. Successfully managing these vested interests requires a strategic approach that considers various perspectives and employs effective communication strategies.

1. **Understanding Stakeholder Perspectives:** one key aspect of managing vested interests is gaining a deep understanding of the perspectives held by different stakeholders. This involves identifying the various groups or individuals who have a stake in the issue at hand and comprehending their motivations, concerns and expectations. By understanding these perspectives, organizations can tailor their messaging and engagement strategies to address specific concerns and build trust with stakeholders.
2. **Building Relationships:** building strong relationships with stakeholders is essential for managing vested interests effectively. This involves establishing open lines of communication, fostering trust and actively involving stakeholders in decision-making processes. By involving stakeholders early on and seeking their input throughout the process, organizations can demonstrate transparency and inclusivity, which can help mitigate potential conflicts.



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3. **Transparent Communication:** transparent communication is vital for managing vested interests successfully. Organizations should provide accurate and timely information to stakeholders, ensuring that they are well-informed about the issue at hand. This includes sharing both positive and negative aspects, potential risks and mitigation strategies. Transparent communication helps build credibility and trust, reducing the likelihood of misinformation or misunderstandings.

Handling Negative Publicity and Rebuilding Trust

In today’s digital age, a single negative review or news piece can spread like wildfire, threatening the carefully curated reputation of institutions. Understanding and managing institution reputation is crucial, especially in handling negative press. Overview of institution reputation management. Institution reputation management refers to the strategies and efforts employed to influence how the public perceives an institution. It encompasses everything from monitoring feedback to actively engaging with customers across various platforms. Importance of addressing negative publicity. Ignoring negative publicity can lead to a significant loss of customer trust and, ultimately, revenue. It is essential for institutions to address issues head-on, to reassure stakeholders of their commitment to excellence and customer satisfaction.

Dealing with Negative Publicity

Negative publicity can stem from various sources and manifest in numerous forms, ranging from a social media mishap to serious allegations in the press. Recognizing the nature and origin of such incidents is the first step in effective crisis management.

Negative publicity refers to any unfavourable information that may harm an institution’s reputation. Examples include customer complaints on social media, critical news articles, or damaging rumours.

Adverse media coverage often originates from dissatisfied customers, disgruntled employees, competitors, or even regulatory actions. Social media platforms amplify these issues, enabling them to reach a global audience rapidly.



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To safeguard an institution against the damaging effects of negative publicity, proactive strategies are essential. Establishing a robust foundation and being prepared can significantly mitigate potential harm before it escalates. Building a strong institution foundation. Building a resilient institution starts with establishing strong core values and a positive institution culture. These elements guide staff behaviour and decision-making, ensuring consistency in customer interactions and business practices. Demonstrating genuine commitment to quality and integrity helps build a loyal customer base that can withstand occasional negative incidents.

Being informed about what is being said about your institution online is crucial. Implement tools and services that continuously scan social media, news sites and other platforms for mentions of your institution. This enables you to address issues promptly and efficiently, often before they gain traction.

Ensuring your team with the right skills and knowledge is vital. Regular training sessions should focus on reinforcing institution values and providing practical advice on handling potential crises. Empowered employees are your first line of defence against negative publicity, capable of managing situations effectively and escalating them appropriately.

When negative publicity arises, the speed and manner of your response can greatly influence the outcome. Prompt, transparent and thoughtful communication is crucial in mitigating the impact on your institution’s reputation.

Responding swiftly to negative publicity helps control the narrative and shows that your institution is attentive and cares about resolving issues. Delayed responses can give the impression of indifference or incompetence, potentially exacerbating the situation.

Steps to assess the situation accurately:

Before crafting a response, it is important to thoroughly understand the situation.

This involves:

- Gathering all facts related to the incident,
- Assessing the veracity and source of the negative publicity,
- Evaluating potential impacts on the institution and stakeholders,



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- Communicating with transparency and sincerity,

Your response should be clear, honest and reflect your institution’s values. If the negative publicity is warranted, admit fault, apologize sincerely and outline the steps you are taking to remedy the situation. If the claims are unfounded, provide facts and data to clarify the situation, always maintaining a professional tone.

After addressing the immediate fallout from negative publicity, it is crucial to engage in long-term strategies to restore and enhance your institution’s reputation. These efforts focus on rebuilding trust and demonstrating your institution’s commitment to excellence and integrity.

Recovery from negative publicity requires more than just a one-time effort; it demands ongoing commitment to positive actions. Consistently demonstrate your institution’s values in every interaction and decision. This could involve enhancing customer service protocols, improving product quality, or increasing community engagement.

Active engagement with your community and stakeholders can significantly aid the recovery process. Regular updates about the steps your institution is taking, involvement in community projects and transparent communication about challenges and successes can help rebuild trust and loyalty.

In the modern digital landscape, controlling and enhancing your institution’s image involves strategic use of digital media. Effective management of online platforms is pivotal in maintaining a positive institution reputation and responding to negative publicity.

Social media platforms are powerful tools for direct and immediate communication with your audience. Use these channels to address concerns, share updates and engage positively with your customers. For example, timely responses to customer queries on platforms can demonstrate your institution’s commitment to customer service and transparency.

Regular monitoring of your online presence can alert you to potential issues before they escalate. Tools like Google Alerts, Social Mention and institution-specific monitoring software can provide real-time insights into what is being said about your institution across the web.



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Collaborating with influencers and nurturing relationships with institution advocates can amplify positive messages and mitigate the impact of negative publicity. Influencers can help reach a broader audience with authentic endorsements, while loyal customers can provide credible, positive testimonials about their experiences.

Evaluating the effectiveness of your response to negative publicity is crucial to learning and improving future strategies. This process not only helps in refining your approach but also ensures that your institution remains resilient against potential crises.

To assess the impact of your responses, employ a variety of tools and metrics. Use analytical tools to track changes in online sentiment, monitor website traffic and social media engagement rates. Key performance indicators might include changes in customer sentiment, the number of positive mentions, or recovery in sales figures after a crisis.

Gather feedback directly from customers through surveys and social media interactions to understand their perceptions of your response. Analyse this data to identify strengths and areas for improvement in your crisis management tactics.

The insights gained from evaluating your responses should inform your ongoing strategy. Implement changes based on lessons learned to enhance your crisis response plans and training. This iterative process ensures your institution is better prepared for future challenges and can respond more effectively.

Effectively managing negative publicity is an essential component of institution reputation management. The strategies discussed not only help mitigate immediate damage but also strengthen your institution’s resilience against future challenges. We have highlighted the importance of proactive monitoring, rapid response and the role of digital media in shaping public perception. Encouragement to proactively manage institution reputation. Maintaining a vigilant approach to reputation management is crucial. Institutions should continually assess their strategies, engage openly with stakeholders and adapt to changing dynamics to uphold and enhance their reputation. While negative publicity can pose significant risks, it also offers the opportunity to demonstrate your institution’s commitment to transparency, accountability and



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customer-centric values. By turning challenges into opportunities for improvement, your institution can emerge stronger and more trusted than before.



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3.3 INTERNATIONAL LAW

In the complex and interconnected world of international relations, the foundations of international law serve as the bedrock upon which the global community rests. But what are these foundations and why do they matter? Let us embark on a journey to explore the very essence of international law.

The foundations of international law refer to the fundamental principles, sources and concepts that underpin the entire framework of international legal relations. They provide the structure upon which international agreements, diplomacy and state interactions are built.

Fundamentals of International Law

International law governs the legal relationships and obligations between sovereign states, international organizations and in some cases, individuals. It covers a wide range of areas, including human rights, trade, environmental protections and the laws of war. Unlike domestic law, which is enforced within a country's borders by its government, international law depends on the consent and cooperation of states, as well as international organizations, to implement its provisions.

For public managers, a solid understanding of international law is increasingly important as globalization, cross-border interactions and international cooperation have grown. Public managers in fields like foreign policy, public health, environmental governance and economic development must regularly navigate international legal frameworks to ensure their country's compliance with global agreements and norms.

The importance of international law for public managers can be summarized in three primary dimensions:

- **Compliance with International Agreements:** public managers must ensure that their nation's domestic laws and policies align with international treaties and agreements to avoid conflicts or sanctions.



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- **Collaboration and Diplomatic Relations:** whether negotiating trade deals, environmental protocols, or human rights initiatives, public managers play key roles in fostering international cooperation.
- **Ethical Governance and Global Responsibility:** public managers must balance national interests with global responsibilities, particularly in areas such as human rights, sustainable development and climate action, ensuring that their decisions uphold both domestic and international ethical standards.

In an interconnected world, public managers frequently engage with international organizations, enforce international commitments at the domestic level and represent their governments in international forums. Therefore, understanding the role of international law in shaping domestic policy and governance is a critical skill.

The foundation of international law rests on several key principles and frameworks that guide its implementation and shape interactions between states. These principles define the rights and responsibilities of nations in areas such as sovereignty, human rights, international trade and environmental protection.

Sovereignty and Non-Intervention

Sovereignty is a fundamental principle of international law, asserting that states are free to govern themselves without outside interference. Non-intervention is a corollary of this principle, meaning that no state can impose its will on another sovereign state. However, this principle is not absolute, as international law also provides mechanisms for intervention in cases of gross human rights violations, breaches of international peace, or serious environmental threats.

For public managers, balancing respect for national sovereignty with international obligations is a key challenge, particularly when dealing with global crises such as conflicts, environmental degradation, or public health emergencies where international intervention may be necessary.

Pacta Sunt Servanda (Treaties Must Be Honored)

This principle holds that agreements between states are legally binding and must be fulfilled in good faith. Treaties and conventions are central to international law, governing areas such as



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trade, climate change and arms control. Public managers are responsible for ensuring that their governments uphold the terms of these treaties and incorporate them into domestic law.

The principle of **pacta sunt servanda** requires public managers to ensure that national policies and regulations comply with international agreements, ensuring that their countries meet their obligations in areas like trade law, environmental policy and human rights protections.

Human Rights

International human rights law has become one of the most important areas of international law. Rooted in instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and various United Nations conventions, it establishes the basic rights and freedoms that every individual is entitled to, regardless of nationality, race, or gender. Human rights law places obligations on states to protect these rights and prevent violations.

Public managers must integrate international human rights standards into national policies and ensure compliance with treaties such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) or the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This involves aligning domestic laws and practices with global norms on issues such as freedom of speech, anti-discrimination policies and rights for vulnerable groups.

International Humanitarian Law

International humanitarian law (IHL), particularly the Geneva Conventions, governs the conduct of armed conflict and protects those who are not participating in hostilities, including civilians and prisoners of war. It places obligations on states to follow specific rules of engagement, minimize harm to civilians and provide humanitarian assistance.

Public managers, especially those involved in defense, security, or foreign policy, must ensure that their country adheres to IHL and collaborates with international bodies like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to provide assistance and ensure compliance during times of conflict.



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International Trade Law

International trade law regulates economic relations between states and is primarily governed by institutions such as the World Trade Organization (WTO). These rules govern how goods and services are exchanged, resolving disputes between nations and ensuring that trade remains fair and equitable.

Public managers in charge of economic and trade policy must ensure compliance with trade agreements, manage trade disputes and work within the frameworks established by organizations like the WTO. This requires coordinating national laws with international trade regulations and balancing national economic interests with international obligations.

Environmental Law

International environmental law addresses issues such as climate change, biodiversity conservation and pollution control. Global treaties like the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Convention on Biological Diversity require states to take action to protect the environment.

Public managers working in environmental policy must ensure that their country adheres to these international commitments by developing and implementing domestic laws and regulations that align with international environmental standards. They are responsible for managing resources sustainably, reducing carbon emissions and collaborating with international partners to address global environmental challenges.

Dispute Resolution

International law provides mechanisms for resolving disputes between states peacefully. This includes institutions like the International Court of Justice (ICJ), arbitration panels and tribunals that handle disputes related to human rights, trade and territorial issues.

Public managers involved in foreign relations or international cooperation may be called upon to participate in these processes, representing their country’s interests while ensuring compliance with international dispute resolution mechanisms. They may also need to manage the domestic



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impact of international rulings and ensure that national policies reflect the outcomes of international legal decisions.

International Agreements and Treaties

International agreements and treaties are legally binding instruments between states or international organizations that establish rights, obligations and commitments in various areas, such as trade, human rights, environmental protection and security. Public managers play a crucial role in both negotiating these agreements and ensuring their successful implementation at the national level.

International agreements come in different forms, each with varying levels of binding force. Some of the key types of agreements include:

- **Treaties:** formal agreements between states that are legally binding under international law. Once ratified, they create obligations for the signatory states to adhere to their provisions.
- **Conventions:** similar to treaties, conventions are typically multilateral agreements negotiated under the auspices of international organizations, such as the United Nations (UN) and aim to address global issues such as climate change, human rights, or public health.
- **Protocols:** protocols are supplementary agreements that amend or expand the terms of an existing treaty or convention, addressing specific concerns or enhancing the scope of the original agreement.
- **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs):** although not always legally binding, MOUs outline cooperation between states or organizations and often serve as frameworks for more formal agreements.
- **Accords and Declarations:** these are often political commitments rather than legally binding agreements. They signal intent and agreement on specific issues but may not carry the full weight of treaties.



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Public managers need to understand the nature and scope of the international agreements their countries engage in, as these instruments shape national policies, international relations and domestic laws. They must be well-versed in the provisions of the agreements, the obligations they impose and the opportunities they present for collaboration or funding.

The successful implementation of international agreements requires public managers to ensure that national policies and legal frameworks align with the provisions of these treaties.

Implementation involves several key steps as:

- **Ratification and Incorporation into Domestic Law:** once a treaty or international agreement has been signed by a government, it often needs to be ratified by the country’s legislative body. This formal process binds the country to the treaty’s terms and ensures that the commitments made at the international level are reflected in domestic law. Public managers must work closely with legislative bodies and legal experts to ensure the agreement is incorporated into national legislation.
- **Policy Development and Harmonization:** after ratification, public managers are responsible for developing policies that reflect the commitments made in the treaty. This often requires harmonizing existing national laws with the treaty’s provisions or creating new regulations to address gaps. Public managers must also coordinate with various government agencies and departments to ensure a unified approach to implementing international commitments.
- **Monitoring and Reporting Compliance:** most international agreements include mechanisms for monitoring compliance, such as periodic reporting to international bodies or oversight committees. Public managers must develop systems to track progress and ensure that their country is meeting its obligations. This involves data collection, impact assessments and regular reporting to international organizations, such as the United Nations, World Trade Organization (WTO), or the International Labour Organization (ILO).



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- **Stakeholder Engagement and Public Awareness:** effective implementation often requires the involvement of various stakeholders, including civil society, businesses and the general public. Public managers must facilitate dialogue with these groups, ensuring that they are informed about the international commitments and how they affect national policies. This is particularly important in areas like human rights, environmental protection and public health, where public support is key to the success of international agreements.
- **Capacity Building and Resource Allocation:** implementing international agreements often requires new capacities in terms of human resources, infrastructure and technology. Public managers must assess the capacity of their agencies to meet treaty obligations and allocate resources appropriately. This may involve training programs, technical assistance, or collaboration with international partners to secure funding or expertise.

To illustrate the practical aspects of implementing international agreements, this section will provide real-world examples where public managers have effectively translated international commitments into national policy and action. These case studies demonstrate the complexities of implementation and highlight the best practices that can be applied in other contexts.

a. Case Study 1: ‘The Paris Agreement on Climate Change’

The Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, is a landmark international treaty aimed at combating climate change by limiting global warming to below 2°C, with efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

In response, many countries developed **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**—their national plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. A successful example of implementation can be seen in **Germany’s Energiewende policy**, a comprehensive national program to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. Public managers in Germany played a critical role in designing policies that incentivized investment in renewable energy, set ambitious targets for carbon reduction and promoted energy efficiency. The policy not only addressed climate change but also created economic opportunities in the green energy sector.



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Public managers ensured that the legal and regulatory framework aligned with the Paris Agreement by collaborating with various ministries, private sector stakeholders and international partners to meet Germany’s climate commitments. Additionally, public outreach and education campaigns helped gain broad public support for the transition to a low-carbon economy.

b. Case Study 2: ‘The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)’

CEDAW, often referred to as the “women’s bill of rights,” is an international treaty adopted by the United Nations in 1979 to eliminate discrimination against women and promote gender equality.

In **Rwanda**, after ratifying CEDAW, the government implemented several key policies aimed at increasing gender equality. Public managers developed programs focused on increasing female participation in politics, reducing gender-based violence and promoting women’s economic empowerment. One of the most notable successes has been Rwanda’s adoption of a quota system, which reserves 30% of parliamentary seats for women. As a result, Rwanda has consistently ranked among the top countries for female representation in government.

To ensure effective implementation, public managers in Rwanda worked across sectors to revise national laws that conflicted with CEDAW’s provisions. They also partnered with civil society organizations and international donors to provide education and resources for women in rural areas, ensuring that gender equality initiatives reached all segments of society.

c. Case Study 3: ‘The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer’

The Montreal Protocol, signed in 1987, is one of the most successful international agreements, designed to phase out the production and consumption of ozone-depleting substances (ODS). Its implementation has been a global success story, with public managers from countries around the world playing critical roles in meeting the treaty’s targets.



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Australia provides an example of effective implementation, where public managers developed a comprehensive program to phase out the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), a major ODS. They worked closely with industries, especially manufacturers and retailers, to replace harmful substances with environmentally friendly alternatives. Public managers also ensured compliance through rigorous monitoring and reporting and by enforcing legal penalties for non-compliance. Australia’s efforts contributed significantly to the recovery of the ozone layer, demonstrating how coordinated action at the national level can contribute to global environmental goals.

Human Rights and Global Governance

The protection of human rights is a cornerstone of international law and a fundamental aspect of global governance. International human rights standards, enshrined in treaties, conventions and declarations, define the rights and freedoms that all individuals are entitled to. These standards are set by global bodies such as the United Nations (UN) and regional organizations like the European Union (EU) or the African Union (AU) and they require consistent national implementation and compliance.

International human rights are codified in several key documents and treaties, including the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)**, the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** and the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)**. Together, these form what is known as the **International Bill of Human Rights**. Other important treaties include the **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** and the **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**.

Ensuring compliance with these international standards requires that states ratify relevant treaties and incorporate their provisions into domestic law. These treaties impose obligations on governments to protect, promote and fulfill human rights through legislation, policies and practices.



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Compliance with international human rights standards begins with aligning national legal frameworks with global human rights treaties. This often involves incorporating human rights norms into the constitution, national laws and administrative regulations. Public managers play a crucial role in this process by overseeing the drafting of laws, ensuring that domestic policies reflect international obligations and developing enforcement mechanisms.

Key elements of compliance include:

- **Legislation:** developing or amending national laws to reflect international human rights commitments. For example, laws protecting freedom of speech, prohibiting torture, or ensuring equal treatment regardless of gender or race are required by many human rights treaties.
- **Judicial Remedies:** ensuring that victims of human rights violations have access to courts and can seek remedies, such as compensation or legal redress. Public managers must ensure that the judiciary is equipped to handle human rights cases effectively.
- **Monitoring and Reporting:** States are required to report regularly to international bodies, such as the UN Human Rights Council or regional human rights commissions, on their progress in implementing treaty obligations. Public managers are responsible for compiling these reports, monitoring progress and addressing gaps in compliance.

To further ensure compliance, many countries establish **National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs)**, such as human rights commissions or ombudsperson offices. These bodies are tasked with promoting human rights education, advising the government on human rights issues and investigating human rights violations.

Additionally, international human rights mechanisms, such as **UN Special Rapporteurs, Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Reviews (UPR)** and **regional human rights courts**, provide external oversight. Public managers must cooperate with these mechanisms by providing data, facilitating country visits and responding to recommendations or critiques from international bodies.



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While international human rights standards are well established, compliance is often uneven due to political, economic, or cultural barriers. Some states may lack the resources to fully implement human rights obligations, while others may face resistance from powerful interest groups or political elites. Public managers need to navigate these challenges by building political will, securing financial and human resources and engaging civil society to support human rights initiatives.

Public managers play an integral role in global governance, particularly in areas related to human rights, international cooperation and the implementation of global policies. In an era of increasing globalization, public managers are not only responsible for domestic governance but also for representing their countries in international forums and implementing global decisions at the national level.

Global governance is shaped by the participation of states and their representatives in international organizations like the United Nations, the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and regional bodies such as the African Union or the European Union. Public managers often serve as the interface between their government and these organizations, contributing to policy discussions, negotiations and decision-making processes.

Their responsibilities in international organizations may include:

- **Representing National Interests:** Public managers represent their government’s position on key issues such as climate change, human rights, or global health policy in international negotiations. They ensure that the country’s interests are reflected in global decisions while also working towards international consensus.
- **Contributing to Policy Development:** Public managers provide technical expertise, contribute to drafting resolutions and shape the global policy agenda. For example, they might work on policies related to global refugee crises, international trade regulations, or sustainable development goals.
- **Diplomatic Engagement:** Public managers, especially those in foreign affairs or international relations, engage in diplomatic efforts to foster international cooperation,



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build alliances and resolve disputes. They must balance national priorities with global concerns, such as human rights or environmental sustainability.

The implementation of global governance decisions often falls to public managers, who must translate international commitments into actionable national policies. This requires a deep understanding of international law, as well as the ability to coordinate with various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society and international partners.

Public managers must ensure that **international decisions or agreements are adapted to the specific needs and circumstances of their country**. For example, global health initiatives must account for the country’s healthcare infrastructure, while environmental agreements must align with national economic and environmental policies.

They also need to ensure that national **policies are consistent with international commitments**, which is essential for effective governance. Public managers must navigate the complexities of aligning domestic policies, such as labor standards or trade regulations, with global norms.

Furthermore, many international agreements, particularly in areas such as human rights or sustainable development, require significant financial and technical resources to be implemented. Public managers play a critical role in securing funding, whether from national budgets or international sources like the World Bank or the Global Fund. They must also build the necessary administrative and technical capacities to implement these initiatives effectively.

Public managers must also engage with civil society organizations, international NGOs and other stakeholders to ensure the success of global governance initiatives. Civil society often serves as a bridge between government and the public, advocating for human rights, environmental protection and social justice. By working with these groups, public managers can foster greater transparency, accountability and public support for international initiatives.

Moreover, collaboration with international organizations and development partners is essential for securing technical expertise, financial support and policy advice. Public managers often act



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as liaisons between these international entities and national governments, ensuring that global governance efforts are well-coordinated and aligned with national priorities.

Global governance presents both challenges and opportunities for public managers. One key challenge is navigating the tension between national sovereignty and international obligations. Public managers must find ways to uphold their country’s national interests while contributing to global goals. At the same time, globalization offers opportunities for collaboration on transnational issues like climate change, migration and human rights, where collective action is essential for meaningful progress.

Global governance also requires flexibility and adaptability. Public managers must stay abreast of emerging global trends, such as the rise of digital governance and be prepared to adapt policies and strategies in response to evolving international dynamics.

The protection of human rights and the effective implementation of global governance initiatives are deeply interconnected. Public managers play a crucial role in ensuring that international human rights standards are upheld through national policies and that global governance decisions are implemented efficiently. By fostering collaboration, ensuring compliance and engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, public managers serve as vital links between the national and international spheres, contributing to both domestic well-being and global progress.

Cross-Border Collaboration

Cross-border collaboration is increasingly important in an interconnected world where many challenges, such as climate change, public health and international trade, transcend national borders. Public managers must be adept at working with international organizations and agencies to ensure their country’s interests are represented and that global solutions are effectively implemented.

International organizations and agencies such as the United Nations (UN), World Health Organization (WHO), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) play critical roles in facilitating cross-border cooperation. These organizations provide platforms



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for countries to negotiate treaties, address shared challenges and develop international standards.

For public managers, understanding the functions of these organizations is essential for successful collaboration. Many international organizations establish norms and guidelines for issues such as trade, public health and labor standards. Public managers must align national policies with these guidelines and ensure compliance with international standards.

International organizations often coordinate multilateral efforts, such as peacekeeping missions, humanitarian aid and global health responses. Public managers work closely with these organizations to coordinate efforts, share data and ensure that national policies are consistent with global initiatives. International organizations provide, also, financial and technical support to help countries address development challenges, implement programs, or respond to emergencies. Public managers must navigate these organizations' funding mechanisms, prepare proposals and ensure that resources are allocated effectively to cross-border initiatives.

Public managers are key representatives of their governments in various international bodies, participating in meetings, negotiations and policy development forums. Effective engagement in these forums requires:

- **Diplomatic Skills:** Public managers must negotiate and collaborate with representatives from other countries, often balancing national interests with the broader goals of the international community.
- **Policy Expertise:** Public managers need in-depth knowledge of both domestic and international policy frameworks. This expertise allows them to negotiate effectively on issues like climate change, international trade agreements, or migration.
- **Bilateral and Multilateral Relationships:** many cross-border collaborations are facilitated through bilateral or multilateral agreements. Public managers help maintain these relationships and ensure that collaborative programs are successfully implemented.



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Working with international organizations can pose challenges, they often have complex decision-making processes and bureaucratic structures that require public managers to navigate layers of approval and coordination. There is often tension between pursuing national interests and adhering to international agreements or standards. Public managers must find ways to align these priorities. Collaboration across borders also means working with diverse political, legal and cultural frameworks. Public managers need to understand these differences to foster productive partnerships and overcome potential misunderstandings.

Successful cross-border collaboration requires public managers to implement programs and initiatives that address shared challenges while respecting the diverse needs and capabilities of each participating country. To achieve this, certain best practices should be followed.

Clear communication and coordination are foundational to any successful cross-border initiative. Cross-border programs should have well-defined goals that are agreed upon by all parties involved. Whether it is improving regional infrastructure, addressing health crises, or promoting economic cooperation, having a shared vision ensures alignment. It is also important to establish steering committees or task forces that include representatives from each participating country that can enhance coordination and decision-making. These bodies should meet regularly, share updates and address any challenges that arise during the implementation of the program. The use of digital tools for communication, data sharing and project management is essential for managing cross-border initiatives. Public managers should utilize platforms that allow for real-time communication and collaboration among international teams.

Strong relationships and trust between countries and their public managers are critical for the success of cross-border programs. Cross-border collaborations are most effective when built on long-term partnerships rather than one-time projects. Public managers should prioritize maintaining open lines of communication with international counterparts even after a project has ended. They also need to promote transparency in decision-making, resource allocation and reporting to foster trust between partner countries. Clear agreements regarding roles and responsibilities should be established at the outset, with periodic reviews to ensure accountability. Successful collaboration requires sensitivity to the cultural and political contexts



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of partner countries. Public managers should engage with local communities, be respectful of different governance styles and work to find mutually beneficial solutions that respect these differences.

One of the keys to successful cross-border initiatives is the sharing of resources and knowledge. Public managers should:

- **Share Best Practices and Expertise:** Countries involved in cross-border initiatives often bring different strengths to the table. Sharing technical expertise, regulatory knowledge and successful implementation strategies enhances the overall impact of the initiative.
- **Capacity Building for Sustainable Impact:** Public managers should prioritize capacity-building activities in partner countries, ensuring that they have the skills and infrastructure needed to sustain the initiative over the long term. This can include providing training, sharing technology, or establishing institutional frameworks.
- **Efficient Resource Allocation:** cross-border projects often require significant financial and human resources. Public managers must ensure that these resources are allocated fairly and used efficiently. This includes seeking funding from international organizations or leveraging existing partnerships for technical and financial assistance.

Successful cross-border programs require robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure that they meet their objectives and adapt to changing circumstances.

- **Setting Measurable Targets:** establishing clear and measurable targets for the initiative is essential. Public managers should use quantitative and qualitative indicators to track progress and identify areas that need improvement.
- **Regular Reporting and Accountability:** regular reporting ensures that all parties are kept informed about the program’s progress. It also allows for timely interventions if issues arise, ensuring that the project stays on track.
- **Adapting to Changing Conditions:** cross-border initiatives often face evolving circumstances, such as political changes, economic shifts, or emerging challenges like



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pandemics. Public managers should build flexibility into program design, allowing for adaptation as conditions change.

Cross-border collaboration is essential for addressing global challenges that transcend national boundaries. Public managers play a pivotal role in working with international organizations and agencies to implement global policies at the national level and in fostering best practices for cross-border initiatives. By promoting effective communication, building strong partnerships, sharing resources and ensuring accountability, public managers can contribute to successful and sustainable international cooperation. This chapter provides key insights into how public managers can navigate the complexities of cross-border collaboration to achieve common global goals.

Legal and Ethical Considerations

In an increasingly globalized world, public managers must navigate a complex legal landscape that includes both domestic laws and international legal frameworks. Managing cross-border issues often introduces legal challenges related to sovereignty, jurisdiction, compliance and enforcement, making it essential for public managers to understand the legal parameters that govern their actions in an international context.

One of the key legal challenges in international work is dealing with issues of sovereignty and jurisdiction. International law operates across national boundaries, but each country retains sovereignty over its own territory and legal system. Public managers must navigate:

- **Conflict of Laws:** legal conflicts can arise when the laws of two or more countries differ or contradict one another. Public managers need to work closely with legal experts to ensure that their decisions and actions comply with both domestic and international legal requirements.
- **Extraterritorial Application of Laws:** certain laws, such as anti-corruption or human rights statutes, have extraterritorial applications. Public managers must understand how



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these laws apply to international operations, particularly when managing foreign investments, partnerships, or personnel.

- **Sovereign Immunity:** States and their officials may claim immunity from legal proceedings in other countries under the principle of sovereign immunity. However, this principle has limitations, especially in cases involving human rights violations or international crimes. Public managers must carefully assess how sovereign immunity applies in cross-border collaborations or disputes.

Public managers are responsible for ensuring that their governments comply with international legal obligations, which arise from treaties, conventions and customary international law. Once a country ratifies an international treaty or convention, it is legally bound to comply with its terms. Public managers must oversee the domestic implementation of these obligations, ensuring that national policies and legislation align with international commitments.

The enforcement of international agreements can be challenging, particularly in cases where there are no clear mechanisms for enforcement or where enforcement depends on diplomatic or political pressure. Public managers need to work with international bodies, such as the International Court of Justice or regional courts, to ensure compliance and resolve disputes. Public managers must often work to harmonize national laws with international legal frameworks, particularly in areas like trade, environmental protection and human rights. This requires collaboration with legal experts, legislators and international organizations to ensure consistency and coherence across jurisdictions.

Disputes between states or between states and international organizations are common in cross-border collaborations. Public managers need to be familiar with various dispute resolution mechanisms. Many international disputes are resolved through diplomatic channels. Public managers must play a role in facilitating negotiations and ensuring that their country's interests are represented. In cases where diplomacy fails, disputes may be referred to arbitration or adjudication by international courts, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ) or specialized tribunals. Public managers must understand these processes and work with legal teams to prepare for litigation or arbitration. Mediation and other alternative dispute resolution (ADR)



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mechanisms are increasingly used to settle international disputes. Public managers may engage in these processes to reach mutually beneficial agreements without resorting to litigation.

Enforcing international law presents unique challenges. Unlike domestic law, there is no global “police force” to ensure compliance with international legal norms. Public managers must navigate this reality by:

- **Leveraging Diplomatic Relations:** enforcement often relies on diplomatic relationships and political pressure. Public managers may need to work with international partners, organizations, or alliances to enforce legal obligations or encourage compliance.
- **Utilizing Economic or Trade Sanctions:** in some cases, sanctions or trade restrictions may be used as a tool for enforcing international law. Public managers need to understand the legal and political ramifications of such measures and work with economic and foreign affairs ministries to implement them effectively.

Public managers are also responsible for ensuring that the policies and initiatives they implement in an international context meet high ethical standards. Global governance introduces a variety of ethical challenges, particularly when addressing issues like human rights, environmental sustainability and economic inequality. Public managers must carefully weigh the ethical implications of their actions and decisions in the international arena.

Public managers often face dilemmas when balancing national interests with global ethical standards. For example, a policy that benefits a nation’s economy may have negative consequences for the environment or for less developed countries. Ethical international policies should promote fairness and equity, particularly in areas like trade, climate change and human rights. Public managers need to ensure that their policies do not disproportionately benefit some countries or populations at the expense of others. Many international policies have long-term implications for the global community. Public managers must consider not only the immediate effects of their actions but also their broader impact on future generations and global sustainability. Another point is the cross-border initiatives that must respect the cultural values



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and norms of all participating countries. Ethical public management requires sensitivity to cultural differences and a commitment to fostering mutual respect and understanding.

Respecting and protecting human rights is a fundamental ethical responsibility for public managers working in an international context. International policies must uphold principles of non-discrimination, ensuring that individuals are not marginalized based on race, gender, religion, or nationality. Public managers must assess whether their programs or policies contribute to equitable treatment and inclusivity. They must be vigilant against policies that exploit vulnerable populations, such as migrant workers, refugees, or indigenous groups. Ethical governance means protecting these populations from harm and ensuring their rights are respected. Public managers are also tasked with ensuring that international policies promote social justice by addressing issues like poverty, inequality and access to resources. This requires a commitment to ethical principles that prioritize the well-being of all individuals, regardless of their nationality.

Many international policies have significant environmental implications, making environmental ethics a key consideration for public managers. Public managers must ensure that international policies promote sustainable development, balancing economic growth with environmental protection. This is particularly important in areas like climate change, where policies can have far-reaching consequences for the planet. Ethical decision-making involves considering the long-term environmental impact of international policies. Public managers must weigh the immediate benefits of a policy against its potential harm to future generations. In cases where the environmental impact of a policy is uncertain, public managers should apply the precautionary principle, opting for policies that minimize potential harm until further evidence is available.

International development and aid programs often raise ethical questions, particularly regarding the distribution of resources and the dynamics of power between donor and recipient countries. Development programs must be implemented transparently, with clear accountability mechanisms to prevent corruption or misuse of funds. Public managers should ensure that all stakeholders are aware of how resources are being allocated and that they have avenues for reporting concerns. They must design aid programs that empower recipient countries to become



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self-sufficient rather than fostering dependency on external assistance. This requires a focus on capacity building and sustainable development practices. Ethical governance in international development requires sensitivity to local customs, traditions and social structures. Public managers must ensure that development programs are culturally appropriate and do not impose external values on recipient communities.

Legal and ethical considerations form the backbone of effective international governance. As public managers, we are called to uphold the rule of law while championing the highest standards of integrity, equity and justice. Our actions must reflect a commitment to building a world where nations collaborate not only out of necessity but out of a shared vision for a fairer, more sustainable future. By navigating the legal intricacies of international relations with precision and addressing ethical challenges with compassion and foresight, we can ensure that our leadership contributes to a global order that truly benefits all.



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3.4 PSYCHOLOGY OF HUMAN RESOURCE

In the context of Public Management, the psychology of human resources plays a fundamental role in promoting virtuous management of human capital. A virtuous public manager cannot ignore the understanding of the psychological dynamics that influence the behaviour, motivation and well-being of employees. Unlike the private sector, human resource management in the public sector is oriented not towards profit, but towards the common good, reflecting the very mission of the public service.

For a virtuous public manager, the psychology of human resources concerns both the selection of personnel based on technical skills and the enhancement of those qualities that reflect the ethical and social values of the public administration. This perspective extends to continuous training, career management and the promotion of a fair and inclusive work environment, capable of increasing employees' sense of belonging and responsibility towards the community.

Special attention must be paid to the psychological well-being of employees. The virtuous public manager must combine organizational efficiency with individual well-being, creating a work environment suitable for achieving institutional objectives without sacrificing the satisfaction and psychological health of employees. This approach implies the promotion of work practices that encourage involvement, active participation and delegation of responsibility, key elements to stimulate a virtuous organizational culture oriented towards the common good.



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Understanding Human Behaviour

A virtuous public manager must possess a deep understanding of human behaviour, an essential element for effective human resource management in a public context. Public employees are often motivated by intrinsic factors, such as a sense of service and the social impact of their work, rather than economic incentives. Grasping these dynamics means promoting an organizational culture that values collaboration, inclusion and personal and professional development, in line with the public service mission.

The management of human resources in public administration, unlike in the private sector, is not limited to the pursuit of profit, but aims at the realization of the common good. Psychological theories provide the public manager with the tools to interpret and anticipate employee behaviour, promoting a healthy and productive work environment, capable of responding to the needs of the community.

Among the theories for understanding human behaviour, Abraham Maslow’s 1954 theory of needs is particularly influential. Maslow proposes a hierarchy of human needs, from the most elementary (physiological and safety) to the highest of self-realization. A virtuous public manager must recognize the importance of meeting these needs sequentially, since only through progressive satisfaction can employees express their full potential.

Closely related is Deci and Ryan’s 1985 theory of self-determination, which emphasizes the importance of satisfying three fundamental psychological needs: competence, autonomy and interpersonal relationships. In the public context, where intrinsic motivation plays a predominant role, the virtuous manager must create conditions that favour the development of these qualities. Ensuring opportunities for continuous training and professional development increases the sense of competence; promoting decision-making flexibility enhances autonomy; Encouraging a climate of collaboration and mutual support improves interpersonal relationships.

Vroom’s expectation theory adds another perspective, highlighting that employee motivation is influenced by the perception that their commitment will lead to good results, that these achievements will be recognized and that rewards will be considered valuable. In the public sector, where resources for financial rewards may be limited, the manager must build a



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recognition system that is perceived as fair and meaningful, including not only economic incentives, but also professional and public recognition.

Another relevant contribution comes from McClelland's theory, which identifies three fundamental needs: fulfilment, power and affiliation. A virtuous public manager must be able to identify which of these needs motivates individual employees, in order to be able to adapt their management approach. Some employees will be stimulated by the possibility of achieving concrete results, others by the desire to influence the context in which they operate, while others will seek positive social relationships within the work group.

In addition to motivation, organisational culture plays a decisive role in public management, as hierarchical and bureaucratic structures typical of the public sector can often discourage innovation and active participation. A virtuous manager must recognize the aspects of organizational culture that hinder efficiency and take action to promote positive change. Such change can be facilitated by leadership that encourages open communication, continuous learning and collaboration across all levels of the organization.

According to Kurt Lewin's 1936 field theory, behaviour is the result of the interaction between the individual and the environment. To change behaviour, it is necessary to intervene on the forces acting on the environment. This implies that the public manager must consider the entire organizational system, trying to remove obstacles and strengthen the forces that favour change, rather than focusing solely on individuals.

Perceived fairness is also an important factor in maintaining high levels of employee satisfaction and motivation, as pointed out by John Stacey Adams' 1963 theory of fairness. Employees compare what they get from their work (rewards) to what they invest (efforts) and evaluate this balance against that of their colleagues. If they perceive an injustice, they may become demotivated, reduce their commitment, or try to restore equity in ways that could be counterproductive to the organization. Transparency in decision-making processes and open communication are essential tools to mitigate any perceptions of inequality.

Finally, suggestion and learning are determinants of human behaviour, as described in Skinner's theory of operant conditioning, developed in the 1930s. This model highlights how behaviour can



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be modelled through positive or negative reinforcements. For a public manager, it means implementing a fair and consistent system of rewards and sanctions, to avoid demotivation and resentment.

In addition to psychological theories, a virtuous public manager must be able to adopt the principles of transformational leadership, a concept developed by James MacGregor Burns in 1978 and later expanded by Bernard Bass in 1990. This type of leadership is not limited to resource management but inspires employees to go beyond their personal interests to achieve higher common goals. In the public sphere, transformational leadership can mobilize employees towards the common good, helping to transform not only the organization, but also its impact on the community.

Another central element for a virtuous manager is the awareness of the importance of perception, i.e. the way in which individuals interpret and make sense of the information received. Perceptions can be influenced by cognitive biases that distort reality. A public manager must be aware of these mechanisms in order to make more objective decisions and prevent conflicts based on misperceptions. Promoting transparency in communications and using clear, evidence-based feedback are essential tools to reduce the impact of *cognitive biases in decision-making*.

Finally, emotional intelligence, as outlined by Daniel Goleman in 1995, is a fundamental skill for a virtuous public manager. The ability to recognize, understand and manage one’s own emotions, as well as those of others, allows you to build an empathetic and inclusive work environment, fostering positive interpersonal relationships and reducing the risk of *burnout*. A manager with emotional intelligence can effectively manage stress and conflict, promoting employee well-being, contributing to the creation of a motivating and rewarding work environment.



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Motivation and Engagement

Employee motivation and engagement are two cornerstones for the success of any public organization. A virtuous manager understands that a positive and productive work environment is based on the ability to inspire and keep staff motivated internally, while strengthening their sense of belonging to the organization. These factors, linked to job satisfaction, profoundly influence employee behaviour, determining their level of effectiveness, punctuality, availability to colleagues and general well-being. For a virtuous public manager, recognizing and enhancing the variables that identify motivation and engagement is crucial in order to improve organizational performance and reduce turnover, promoting a working environment that favours well-being and personal growth.

Motivation is a complex and multidimensional process influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic motivation comes from personal satisfaction and the pleasure of doing an activity. It is fuelled by elements such as passion for one’s work, desire for personal growth and satisfaction deriving from the achievement of significant goals. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is linked to external incentives such as pay, promotions, or recognition. While both forms of motivation are important, a virtuous manager should focus primarily on intrinsic motivation, as it tends to generate more lasting and deeper engagement.

Employee involvement, linked to motivation, is manifested through the dedication, enthusiasm and attachment they show towards their work and the organization. Engaged employees not only perform their duties more efficiently but are also more likely to actively contribute to the overall success of the public body. A virtuous manager must work to nurture a strong sense of belonging and create a corporate culture that fosters collective commitment. The key to creating this environment lies in the manager’s ability to foster a **sense of purpose**. People need to know that what they do has significant value and impact. The manager should therefore commit to clearly communicating the mission of the entity, showing how the contribution of each one fits into a broader framework of social and public objectives. When employees understand that their work has a real impact on the community, they tend to feel more motivated and engaged.



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Recognition and gratification are other powerful tools for fuelling motivation. Feeling appreciated for your work increases self-esteem and stimulates even greater commitment. A virtuous manager should ensure that recognition is not limited to bonuses or material rewards, but also includes regular positive feedback, expressions of gratitude and celebrations of achievements, both individual and collective. The ability to show empathy and genuine appreciation can make a big difference in solidifying motivation and a sense of belonging.

Another influential factor is the **opportunity for professional growth and development**. People tend to feel more motivated when they see concrete prospects for advancement. A virtuous public manager must foster an environment where continuous training is encouraged and where employees have the opportunity to explore new challenges and roles. This not only strengthens the skills of the staff, but also helps to keep them motivated and engaged.

No less important is the creation of a **positive and collaborative work environment**. A virtuous manager must promote mutual respect, transparency and cooperation between colleagues. The work environment must be a space where people can express themselves freely, without fear of being judged and where creativity and problem-solving are encouraged.

Finally, a virtuous public manager must be an example of **ethical and inspirational leadership**. When leaders demonstrate integrity, consistency between words and actions, respect and commitment, they become role models, creating a cascading effect that involves the entire organization. Participatory leadership, which encourages the sharing of ideas and empowerment of employees, is particularly effective in creating a sense of belonging and collective engagement. Employees who see their manager as a virtuous leader are more likely to actively engage and perform at their best.

To concretely improve employee engagement and well-being, a virtuous public manager must be aware of these elements and adopt a strategic and personalized approach, based on a combination of motivational theories. Among these, Taylorism, developed by Frederick Taylor in 1911, is one of the earliest managerial theories, based on the idea that workers' motivation can be increased through the standardization of tasks and the improvement of efficiency. However,



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this approach, still widespread in the public sector, tends to focus on purely economic and productive aspects, neglecting the psychological and emotional dimensions of work.

Theories of needs, such as Maslow’s pyramid, shift the focus to human needs and how they influence motivation. Maslow divides human needs into five levels: physiological, security, belonging, esteem and self-realization. Motivation, according to this theory, is driven by the attempt to satisfy these needs in a hierarchical order, with the most basic needs having to be met before the highest ones. For the manager, understanding each employee’s position on this scale can help them identify the most effective motivational levers. For example, an employee who has already met their needs for financial security and job stability might be motivated by opportunities for personal growth or recognition.

Douglas McGregor’s theory X and Y from 1960 goes a step further, suggesting that managers can take two different approaches to their employees: theory X, which assumes that workers are inherently lazy and need strict control and theory Y, which sees workers as naturally motivated and seeking job satisfaction. A virtuous manager should adopt a type Y approach, which encourages employee empowerment, creativity and intrinsic motivation, key elements in maintaining a high level of engagement.

When it comes to engagement, one of the most influential theories is that of Locke and Latham, which highlights the importance of clear and challenging goals to improve worker performance. The theory of ‘*goal setting*’, outlined and published by Locke in 1968, suggests that setting specific and difficult goals leads to greater motivation than vague or easy goals. In this context, the manager’s role is to define these goals and provide constant feedback to maintain a high level of engagement and motivation.

Finally, it is useful to consider Herzberg’s 1959 theory of hygiene factors, which distinguishes between intrinsic motivators, such as recognition and autonomy and hygiene factors, such as pay and working conditions. According to Herzberg, hygiene factors do not increase satisfaction, but their absence can cause dissatisfaction. A virtuous public manager must ensure that these factors are properly taken care of and then focus on what really motivates and engages employees: intrinsic motivation.



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By combining these approaches and recognizing the variables that determine *engagement*, a virtuous public manager is able to create a work environment that not only improves productivity, but also promotes employee happiness and personal fulfilment, which are essential for the success and sustainability of public institutions.



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Leadership and Influence

Leadership is an essential skill for a good public manager, closely tied to the ability to inspire and guide an organisation towards common goals. It is not merely about commanding, but about positively influencing colleagues and creating a work environment that fosters commitment, motivation and excellence. Virtuous leadership is grounded in values such as ethics, transparency and respect and it is demonstrated through example, which builds trust and cohesion.

Several theories help to understand leadership. One of the most well-known is Stogdill’s trait theory (1948), which highlights qualities such as integrity, self-confidence and emotional intelligence as key to being a good leader. However, leadership is not just about personal traits. A leader’s success also depends on their actions and the context in which they operate.

A public manager must go beyond individual traits and adopt a flexible, adaptable leadership style. Behavioural theory distinguishes between task-oriented and relationship-oriented leadership. Both can be effective depending on the situation. Task-oriented leadership is useful for achieving specific goals and monitoring performance, while relationship-oriented leadership focuses on team well-being. A virtuous leader knows how to switch between these styles based on the situation. For example, under high pressure, a task-oriented approach might be more suitable, while in situations where team morale is critical, focusing on relationships is more effective.

According to contingency theory (Hemphill, 1959), there is no one ideal leadership style for all situations. Effective leadership depends on the context, resources and the characteristics of the organisation. In dynamic environments like public administration, a manager must be able to quickly adapt to changes, maintaining effectiveness and integrity even in complex situations.

Transformational leadership, developed by James MacGregor Burns in 1978 and further explored by Bernard Bass, is a key model for public managers. This approach seeks to inspire and motivate colleagues by creating a shared vision that drives change and growth. A transformational leader encourages innovation and creativity, going beyond day-to-day management. In the public sector,



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this style can mobilise staff towards the common good, improving not only the organisation but also the services provided to the community.

Alongside transformational leadership is transactional leadership, which is based on a system of rewards and sanctions. While this approach can work in the short term, it is not enough to create deep engagement. A virtuous manager should integrate transactional elements within a broader framework that values employees' intrinsic motivation and commitment to the organisation's ethical goals.

Another approach is democratic leadership, which involves employees in decision-making, fostering creativity and a sense of belonging. In public administration, where decisions impact the wider community, participation and shared responsibility are crucial to promoting transparency and inclusion. The public manager must therefore balance authority with active participation from employees and stakeholders.

To be a good leader in the public sector, one needs a range of skills, such as the ability to innovate, adapt to changes and communicate effectively. **Innovation** and **creativity** help tackle complex challenges, while **quickly solving problems** minimises negative impacts on operations and team morale. Skills like **team building** and **networking** improve the working environment and increase motivation.

Delegation is another key skill. Delegating responsibilities not only lightens the leader's workload but also demonstrates trust in colleagues, providing them with opportunities for growth. A leader who delegates well promotes team autonomy and responsibility, contributing to both their development and the strengthening of the organisation.

Lastly, virtuous leadership is also rooted in **ethics**. Every decision should be guided by integrity and transparency, creating a work environment based on shared values and mutual respect. Consistency between words and actions strengthens employees' trust in both the leader and the organisation.

Effective communication is equally fundamental: it is not just about passing on information, but about listening and responding to the needs of colleagues. A leader who communicates openly



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fosters a positive work environment where employees feel free to express themselves, encouraging constructive dialogue.

In conclusion, a virtuous public manager must exercise their influence positively, promoting innovation and collaboration. Influence should not be seen as coercive power but as the ability to inspire trust and lead change. An inclusive approach creates a workplace where commitment to common goals is shared by everyone.



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Conflict Resolution

The ability to negotiate, reduce conflicts and manage tense situations is a key skill for a virtuous public manager, just like understanding human behaviour, motivating others and demonstrating leadership. Conflicts, which are inevitable in any organisation, are particularly significant in the public sector, where diverse interests (political, administrative and social) come into play and hierarchical structures can heighten tensions. A good manager must transform these differences into opportunities for growth, fostering a cohesive and collaborative work environment.

Effectively managing conflicts requires, above all, a **good understanding of relational dynamics** and the factors that can generate tension. Conflicts may arise from differing opinions, opposing interests, communication issues, or misunderstandings. If not addressed promptly, they risk creating organisational discomfort, negatively impacting productivity and morale. However, a well-managed conflict can strengthen relationships and improve cooperation.

The first step in resolving conflict is knowing how to **listen and observe** carefully. An attentive manager does not wait for the issue to escalate but recognises early signs of discontent. This requires a solid understanding of the staff and internal dynamics of the organisation. Active listening and **empathy** are essential tools for understanding not only the words but also the emotions and motivations underlying the conflicts.

Once the nature of the conflict is understood, the manager must act with targeted techniques to resolve it and prevent future recurrence. It is crucial to focus on solutions rather than assigning blame, promoting open and constructive dialogue. The manager should remain neutral, encouraging a sincere discussion where everyone feels free to express themselves without fear or judgement.

One of the most effective strategies for resolving conflicts is **negotiation**. Negotiation means finding solutions that satisfy all parties involved, thus strengthening mutual trust and group cohesion. A leader who is skilled in negotiation inspires confidence and creates a safe environment, demonstrating balance and competence in managing difficult situations.



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To negotiate effectively, a manager must know how to manage emotions, both their own and others'. This requires strong emotional intelligence, the ability to recognise, understand and control emotions constructively. An **emotionally intelligent** leader remains calm even in critical moments, addressing problems with clarity instead of reacting impulsively.

Another important skill for resolving conflicts is **assertive communication**, which allows individuals to express their ideas clearly and confidently without being either aggressive or passive. This type of communication helps create a respectful work environment where conflicts can be addressed properly without escalating. **Mental flexibility**, or the ability to consider different perspectives, is also essential for finding innovative and shared solutions.

In addition to negotiation and assertive communication, a public manager must be a good mediator. **Mediation** involves the intervention of an impartial figure who helps the parties find a common solution. A leader who is skilled at mediation promotes shared responsibility and creates a workplace built on collaboration and mutual trust.

However, conflict management should not only be a reaction to problems but an integral part of **proactive management**. Creating a work environment based on trust and transparency is the most effective way to prevent conflicts. Conflicts often arise from misunderstandings, unclear expectations, or a lack of communication. A good manager must encourage clear and consistent communication, set realistic expectations and address issues before they become serious.

Finally, creating a calm and participatory environment requires **ongoing commitment** from the manager. It is important to develop an organisational culture where mutual respect, inclusion and dialogue are shared values. A virtuous public manager does not just resolve conflicts as they arise but actively works to prevent them, creating an atmosphere where every employee feels valued and respected.



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Well-being and Mental Health

The well-being and mental health of employees are essential components that a virtuous public manager must be able to promote and protect. In the public sector, characterized by bureaucratic complexities and high responsibilities, workers can easily experience situations of stress and psychological distress. Ensuring that the work environment is healthy and sustainable from a psychological point of view is not only an ethical duty of the manager, but also a strategic choice: a serene and motivated staff is more efficient, resilient and inclined to innovation.

The concept of well-being at work is broad and complex, going far beyond simple absence due to illness. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines well-being as a state of complete physical, mental and social balance. For a virtuous public manager, this means ensuring not only physically adequate working conditions, but also psychological support that allows employees to manage stress and face daily challenges without compromising their mental health. Creating a work environment that promotes the overall well-being of employees is essential to prevent phenomena such as burnout and chronic dissatisfaction, which can have negative consequences on both the individual and the organization.

To promote well-being at work, the first aspect that a good manager must be able to ensure is the **balance between professional and personal life**. This balance is often compromised in the public sector due to high workloads, increasing responsibilities and tight response times. Burnout, one of the most common consequences of work-life imbalance, can dramatically reduce productivity and increase staff turnover. To prevent these risks, a virtuous public manager must adopt targeted policies, such as flexible working hours, the possibility of smart working and initiatives aimed at promoting the reconciliation of work and family commitments.

Stress **management** requires a systemic and preventive approach. Sources of stress can range from deadline pressures, lack of control over one's tasks, to interpersonal conflicts. If stress is not dealt with adequately, it can evolve into severe psychological distress, with harmful effects for both the individual and the public body. A virtuous public manager must be able to promptly identify signs of stress among employees and intervene with appropriate measures.



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The ISO 45001 standard, which covers occupational health and safety management, offers valuable guidance for developing an integrated system that considers not only physical but also psychological risks. The implementation of this standard allows the manager to monitor and prevent the dangers related to work stress, promoting a safe and healthy environment. Part of this effort includes designing workspaces and organizing activities in an ergonomic way, to reduce the physical and mental burden on employees.

An increasingly critical factor in employee well-being is the **management of new technologies** and digitalization, which, while they have the potential to improve efficiency, can also introduce new mental health risks. Hyper-connection, information overload and the feeling of always having to be available are increasingly widespread phenomena that can increase stress and anxiety among workers. A virtuous public manager must be aware of these risks and implement policies that regulate the use of technology in a way that protects employees from excessive and uncontrolled use. Ensuring moments of disconnection and setting clear limits on digital working hours are practices that can reduce the negative impact of technologies on mental health.

Prevention also plays a central role in promoting well-being and mental health. Organizing awareness campaigns, training sessions on the warning signs of psychological disorders and ways to deal with everyday stress can help employees recognize the signs of stress and manage them effectively. In addition, creating an internal support network, where employees feel heard and supported, helps to create a healthier and more inclusive work environment. It is crucial to foster a climate of trust, where open dialogue is encouraged and personal difficulties can be addressed with empathy and understanding.

Another element attached to organizational well-being is **equity**, in particular gender equality. The *European Union's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025* highlights the importance of ensuring equal employment and pay opportunities for all employees, regardless of gender. Inclusive and respectful workplaces tend to be more collaborative, innovative and resilient. A virtuous public manager must ensure that company policies respect the principle of equality, creating an environment in which everyone has the same opportunities for professional growth and development.



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Finally, a key aspect of promoting well-being and mental health is creating a work environment that fosters **collaboration** and **mutual support**. The virtuous public manager must promote the creation of cohesive and supportive teams, in which interpersonal relationships are positive and constructive. This collaborative climate not only improves the quality of working life, but also helps to strengthen the sense of belonging and involvement of employees, key elements for the success of the public organization.

Promoting well-being and mental health at work, therefore, requires an integrated approach that involves various areas: from the ergonomic design of spaces and activities to stress management and burnout prevention, to the promotion of gender equality and the conscious management of digital technologies. A public manager who places employee well-being at the centre of his strategies not only improves the quality of work and reduces costs related to absenteeism and turnover, but also contributes to building a work environment that values human capital and fosters excellence. Through targeted policies, a proactive approach and a strong commitment to equity and inclusion, the virtuous public manager ensures that the organization is a safe and healthy place where every employee can express their full potential, thus contributing to collective well-being.



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4. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Self-Assessment and Reflection

Self-assessment is the process of measuring your own skills and competencies against a set of criteria or standards. It helps you to evaluate your current level of performance, to identify your gaps and areas for improvement and to set realistic and specific goals for your management development. Self-assessment also allows you to track your progress and achievements and to celebrate your milestones and accomplishments.

Self-reflection is the process of examining your own thoughts, feelings, actions and results in relation to your management goals and challenges. It helps you to identify your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, as well as to learn from your successes and failures. Self-reflection also enables you to align your values, beliefs and behaviours with your team vision and mission and to adjust your strategies and tactics accordingly.

Self-reflection and self-assessment are essential for managers to increase their self-awareness and self-confidence, develop a growth mindset and a continuous learning attitude, enhance their emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills, foster a culture of feedback and learning, improve decision making and problem-solving skills, boost creativity and innovation and achieve their objectives and outcomes.

Incorporating self-reflection and self-assessment into your management plan requires defining your team leadership vision, mission, values and goals, as well as identifying the key skills and competencies that need to be developed or improved. To do so, you should choose the methods and tools for reflecting and assessing yourself, such as journals, surveys, quizzes, tests, feedback, coaching, mentoring, etc. Additionally, you need to schedule regular time and space for self-reflection and self-assessment – preferably daily or weekly. During this time, you should record your insights, observations, feedback, results, actions and outcomes. You should then review your data and findings to analyse your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Afterwards you can plan your next steps and actions as well as revise your goals and strategies if needed. Finally, you should repeat the cycle and monitor your progress and achievements.



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Tools and methods for regular self-assessment and reflection on one's virtues

A self-assessment tool is a test, method or activity that can help individuals gather information for a self-evaluation. People often design these materials using psychological and sociological research on an individual's personality and social habits. There are multiple self-assessment tools available to use online or through books and each option usually targets a certain topic that may be useful for the process. Individuals can take different tests at the same time to better understand themselves from several alternative perspectives.

Here are some self-assessment tools to use during your own process:

GUIDED JOURNALING

Guided journaling is the practice of recording your thoughts using a prompt, such as a question or an interesting image. If you require some inspiration for your self-assessment, writing your thought process in a private journal can help narrow your focus and better perceive your attributes. It may be helpful to develop the prompts yourself to best serve a self-evaluation, or you can purchase a specialized journal that has a relevant purpose, like developing short-term and long-term goals or exploring your emotional reactions.

MANAGER SURVEY QUESTIONS

Questions about a manager's communication skills:

- How well does your manager communicate team goals and expectations?
- Do you feel comfortable asking questions or seeking clarification from your manager?
- How well does your manager provide constructive feedback and recognition regarding your work?
- On a scale of one to five, with one being least satisfied and five being most, how satisfied are you with the frequency and format of communication from your manager?
- How could your manager improve communication with the team or individuals?



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Project code: 2021-1-IT02-KA220-ADU-000029971

Communication is a key component of effective leadership. Gathering employee perspectives on a manager’s communication skills helps create a collaborative workplace environment that fosters growth, encourages authenticity and builds mutual trust.

Questions about managerial and leadership skills:

1. How would you rate your manager’s ability to provide clear and understandable directions and expectations for your tasks and responsibilities?
 - a) Very Poor
 - b) Poor
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Good
 - e) Excellent
2. Do you feel comfortable approaching your manager with questions, concerns, or ideas? Why or why not?
3. In your opinion, how effectively does your manager provide constructive feedback to help you improve your performance?
4. How does your manager demonstrate and promote teamwork, collaboration and a positive work atmosphere among the team?
5. To what extent does your manager lead by example and exhibit the values and behaviours that reflect the organization’s mission and culture?
 - a) Not at All
 - b) To a Small Extent
 - c) Moderately
 - d) To a Large Extent
 - e) Completely

Questions about manager and leader effectiveness:



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1. Can you describe a specific instance where your manager’s leadership positively impacted your work or the team’s performance?
2. In your opinion, what are the key strengths of your manager’s leadership style? How do these strengths contribute to the team’s success?
3. Please share any areas where you believe your manager could improve their communication with the team. What suggestions do you have to enhance this aspect?
4. Could you provide an example of a situation where your manager effectively resolved a conflict or disagreement within the team? How did their approach contribute to a resolution?
5. What actions does your manager take to foster a sense of inclusion and teamwork among team members? How do these actions impact the overall team dynamic?

The insights gained from questions about a manager’s effectiveness can drive positive change, enhance leadership practices and contribute to the overall success of the organization.

Questions about trust and respect from management:

1. To what extent do you feel that your managers genuinely listen to your opinions and value your input when making decisions? Could you provide an example that reflects this dynamic?
2. In your interactions with management, how often do you perceive a high level of transparency and openness in sharing information about company updates, changes and decisions? Can you recall a recent instance that demonstrates this transparency?
3. Do you believe your managers treat all team members fairly and without bias? Could you share an experience or observation that reinforces this belief?
4. From your perspective, how well does management acknowledge and appreciate your contributions and efforts? Can you provide an example that illustrates their recognition of your work?



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5. Can you describe a situation where management effectively addressed a concern or issue you raised, making you feel valued and respected? How did their response contribute to your overall perception of their leadership?

Creating a culture of trust and mutual respect inspires more authentic communication, reduces interpersonal conflict and ultimately improves retention rates by supporting a more positive work environment.

Questions about mentorship and support from management:

1. Have you experienced any form of mentorship or guidance from your direct manager or other leaders within the organization? If so, could you provide an example of how this mentorship positively impacted your work or professional growth?
2. On a scale of 1 to 10, how well does your manager provide you with opportunities for skill development and learning? Could you share a recent instance where your manager supported your learning journey?
3. Do you feel comfortable approaching your manager or other leaders for advice or assistance when faced with challenges or questions related to your role? Can you recall a situation where you received helpful guidance or support?
4. From your perspective, how effectively does management recognize and utilize the strengths of each team member? Can you provide an example of how your manager has leveraged your strengths to benefit the team or a project?
5. In your interactions with management, how often do you perceive a genuine interest in your career goals and aspirations? Can you share a time when a manager actively supported your professional ambitions?

Asking employees about mentorship and support from management demonstrates the organization's commitment to employee development and well-being and helps build a supportive and nurturing work environment.



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Questions about professional development support:

1. In your interactions with your manager, how often do you discuss your professional development goals and plans? Can you recall a situation where your manager actively contributed to shaping your development strategy?
2. Do you feel that your manager encourages and supports your participation in training programs, workshops, or conferences that contribute to your professional development? Can you provide an example of when your manager facilitated such participation?
3. To what extent does your manager provide opportunities for skill development and learning that align with your career path? Could you provide an example of a skill development opportunity your manager has facilitated?
4. How well does your manager provide feedback on your performance and offer guidance on areas for improvement or growth? Can you share an example of a time when your manager’s feedback positively impacted your development?
5. Does your manager actively discuss your career goals and aspirations with you during one-on-one meetings? Please share an example of a time when your manager supported your professional growth.

Employee satisfaction increases when team members feel valued and like their organization is investing in their professional development. Collecting feedback on this aspect helps ensure that managers are actively contributing to employees’ skill enhancement and long-term career success.

Questions about work-life balance:

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you with your current work-life balance? Can you provide specific reasons for your rating?
2. How often do you feel that your workload is manageable and allows you to maintain a healthy balance between work and personal life? Can you share an example of a time when you felt this balance was well-maintained?



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3. Do you feel comfortable discussing your work-life balance needs with your manager? Can you provide an instance where your manager was responsive to your concerns about work-life balance?
4. Are you provided with the necessary tools, resources, or flexibility to accommodate your personal commitments outside of work? Can you share a situation where this support was particularly beneficial to you?
5. In your opinion, how well does the organization promote a culture that values work-life balance? Can you provide an example of a policy, initiative, or practice that positively contributes to this culture?

Happy employees are less distracted, more productive and less likely to pursue professional opportunities outside of your organization, so it is important to understand how your team members feel about work-life balance.

Issuing manager feedback surveys reflects an organization’s commitment to employee well-being, development and overall success and offers valuable insights that empower leadership to make improvements tailored to their team’s needs.

COACHING ASSESSMENT TOOLS

Coaching assessment tools have become invaluable resources for organizations seeking to empower their managers and unlock their full potential. Through these assessments, managers can gain valuable insights into their strengths, areas for growth and leadership competencies.

Coaching (self)assessment tools are designed to provide an objective evaluation of a manager’s skills, competencies and behaviours. These tools often consist of questionnaires, self-assessments, or evaluations conducted by peers, subordinates and supervisors. By collecting data from multiple perspectives, coaching assessments offer a comprehensive view of a manager’s performance and capabilities.

Coaching Self-Assessment

Are you an effective coach? Answer these questions. Then see how you rate!



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	Yes	No
1. I communicate what is expected in terms of behavioural standards and job performance to every member of my team.		
2. When appropriate, I show, teach or demonstrate how to complete an assignment or task, analyse a problem or organize a project.		
3. I listen for my employee’s perspective before I suggest solutions or possible courses of action.		
4. I wait to hire the right person – rather than just any person – for an open position.		
5. When performance does not meet expectations, I clarify expectations and enforce consequences of non-performance.		
6. I am consistent in recognizing good work and specific in telling employees why their performance was good.		
7. I welcome ideas and suggestions from members of my team.		
8. I work with staff to build a development plan, asking first for their recommendations and then coach, as needed, to align professional development to developmental needs.		
9. My staff meetings occur on a scheduled calendar and follow a standardized agenda organized around our department and organizational goals.		
10. I “check in” with my employees regularly, harvesting what is working well and documenting what needs attention so I can follow up.		
11. I use a defined process for cascading communication from the organization or within our department to all of my team members.		



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12. When I ask my employees to change behaviours, I explain how this makes a difference for our team, organizational goals and direction.		
13. My staff feels that I role-model the standards of behaviour that I expect of them.		
14. I am comfortable with silence.		

Source: Adapted from the Leader as Coach Self-Test developed by the Studer Group, 2008

Self-Assessment Rating:

How did you rate?

If you answered “yes” 11 or more times: Congratulations! You are a manager who actively coaches employees towards higher performance and holds them accountable for results. Your employees understand how their performance makes a difference and aligns to organizational performance. Continue to lead by example and create opportunities for others to grow and develop.

9 or 10 times: Your role of “Manager as Coach” is emerging. Focus on clear communication, active listening and clear expectations to coach performance in your team members.

8 or fewer times: Your role of “Manager as Coach” is not well defined yet. Take the first step by stepping up communication with employees. Learn about the value and process of goal setting, action planning and giving and receiving feedback.

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Vincent on Leadership: The Hay Project, DePaul University, Online Module/Coaching/2017



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Seeking Feedback and Mentorship

One of the key aspects of mentorship programs is the ability to provide constructive feedback to mentees. Effective feedback plays a crucial role in the growth and development of individuals, helping them to identify their strengths and areas for improvement. Constructive feedback delivered through mentorship programs goes beyond pointing out areas for improvement. Mentors also play a vital role in providing encouragement and motivation to mentees. By recognizing and acknowledging their mentees’ strengths and progress, mentors can inspire mentees to continue working towards their goals. For instance, a mentor may highlight the improvement in a mentee’s public speaking skills and provide words of encouragement to boost their confidence.

Tips for providing **constructive feedback in mentorship programs**:

1. Be specific and objective in your feedback, focusing on behaviours or actions rather than personal traits.
2. Use the “sandwich” approach by starting and ending with positive feedback, while offering constructive criticism in the middle.
3. Provide actionable suggestions for improvement, outlining steps or resources that can help mentees grow.
4. Foster a growth mindset by emphasizing that feedback is an opportunity for learning and development, rather than a personal failure.

By building trust, tailoring feedback, providing encouragement and offering personalized guidance, mentors can help mentees develop their skills and reach their full potential. Constructive feedback delivered through mentorship programs is instrumental in shaping mentees’ professional journeys and fostering continuous growth and improvement. Constructive feedback is a key tool in personal and professional development. When this comes from mentors, it becomes even more relevant, as its experience and knowledge can guide others towards continuous improvement. Constructive feedback of mentors plays a crucial role in personal and professional development. Its lasting impact and its positive influence on continuous improvement make it an essential element in the search for growth and excellence. By receiving



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constructive mentoring and feedback, individuals can reach their full potential and stand out in their respective fields.

Professional Development Opportunities

Manager formation is essential for the development of the institution. It is the way towards a successful institution. While endeavouring to improve themselves, managers also raise the efficiency level of the whole institution. Nowadays, institutions depend, for their functioning and surviving, on managerial efficiency and managerial results. Yet managerial efficiency can only be obtained with a certain amount of knowledge and skills. The acquiring and mastering of this certain amount of knowledge and skills is realised through gathering information, continuous studying, lifelong learning and through gaining practical expertise.

Management is a professional function, a complex activity, carried out in a framework well-defined legislation aimed at planning, organizing, leading, guiding and controlling a group of people.

The manager's work requires multiple theoretical knowledge and practical skills. These allow the manager to understand the theoretical bases of the managerial activity, to create a fund of specialized documentation, to outline performance limits, conduct and ethical criteria. The manager's activity implies a vocation for which knowledge must be accumulated, skills and attitudes are needed to be used to organize, lead, guide the activity of the organization's employees. This work has distinct characteristics that can be acquired, formed, tracked and analysed.

The manager cannot be unilateral. He/she must know the general basics of management in the branch in which they operate, the theoretical and practical problems of the professions exercised by employees his, notions of psychology, sociology, logic, ergonomics of industrial work, or of the respective branch. He/she is also forced to master knowledge of the jurisdiction of labour and social protection, of hygiene and labour protection and others.



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Managers who prioritize their own education set a powerful example for their teams. It creates a culture of learning within the institution, where knowledge and innovation are valued and sought after. This culture not only attracts top talent but also fosters an environment where employees are motivated to climb their own learning curves.

Strategies for **Effective Continuous Learning**:

- **Structured Education:**
Enrolling in relevant national or European courses, workshops and seminars. These structured learning opportunities provide deep dives into specific topics, from technological innovations to new management theories.
- **Peer Learning:**
Joining or creating groups of like-minded professionals. This network acts as a sounding board, providing diverse perspectives that challenge and refine your thinking.
- **Self-Directed Learning:**
Keeping up with relevant books, articles and podcasts.
- **Feedback Loops:**
Actively seeking feedback and using it as a learning tool. Constructive criticism helps leaders identify blind spots in their knowledge and adjust their approach accordingly.
- **Reflective Practices:**
Taking time to reflect on past decisions and their outcomes. This practice can be transformative, turning every experience into a learning opportunity.
- **National/European Partnerships:**
Implementing partnerships can be a great opportunity to learn by sharing good practice with managers in similar branches by sharing good practice and learning from each other.

For managers aiming to excel in today’s dynamic environment, continuous learning is not optional, it is essential. By embracing a commitment to lifelong education, leaders can ensure



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they remain effective and relevant, no matter what the future holds. As they foster a culture of curiosity and knowledge-sharing, their institutions are better positioned to thrive in an ever-changing world.



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5. CONCLUSION

The “Guideline to Become a Virtuous Public Manager” provides a holistic framework for public managers to lead with integrity, accountability and innovation. By emphasizing ethical behaviour, technical skills and transformational leadership, the guidelines aim to equip public managers with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of modern governance while upholding the common good. Through continuous learning, active engagement with employees and the strategic use of technology, public managers can enhance service delivery, build public trust and foster a just and inclusive society.

Summary of Key Points

The role of virtue is an important key point of the present guideline. Virtue is foundational in public management, ensuring that governance is efficient, fair and legitimate. The document defines virtue as embodying values such as integrity, justice and accountability, which are essential for fostering trust between public institutions and citizens. Virtue is a guiding principle that helps managers make decisions aligned with the common good, balancing short-term interests with long-term community impacts. It roots in classical philosophy, particularly Aristotle’s notion of virtue as the constant pursuit of good through ethical and intellectual capabilities.

The guideline mentions the key virtues for public managers. Virtue in public management manifests through personal virtues (integrity, honesty, humility and courage guide public managers in their daily actions), interpersonal virtues (empathy, fairness and respect ensure equitable treatment of others, creating trust and cooperation) and organizational virtues (accountability, transparency and justice are critical for ethical decision-making and enhancing organizational performance).

These virtues guide managers in maintaining high standards of behaviour, promoting public trust and fulfilling their responsibilities to the community.

The guidelines emphasize the need for efficiency, accessibility and fairness in public service delivery. Public managers must balance resource optimization with fairness, ensuring that



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services meet the needs of citizens equitably. The integration of digital tools and data-driven approaches improves planning and decision-making, but managers must ensure that efficiency is not achieved at the expense of equity. Public consultations and continuous feedback mechanisms are essential for aligning services with citizen expectations.

Developing leadership qualities is among the most essential takeaways of this document as well. Leadership in the public sector involves more than managing resources. A virtuous public manager inspires, engages and motivates employees while balancing political and bureaucratic demands with the pursuit of the common good. Transformational leadership is essential, as it involves creating a shared vision, promoting creativity and fostering a culture of collaboration. The guidelines encourage leaders to engage with employees actively, ensuring participation and innovation, which improves service quality and team cohesion.

To be effective, public managers must engage in continuous learning. This includes staying updated on technological advancements and best practices. The guidelines stress the importance of self-assessment, seeking feedback and professional development to ensure managers can navigate the complexities of modern governance. Additionally, mentoring and peer support are crucial for long-term growth and improvement.

Digital transformation is reshaping public administration and public managers must understand the impact of emerging technologies such as AI, data analytics and cloud computing. Managers must acquire technical skills to leverage these technologies effectively for service delivery, policy planning and data management. Moreover, ensuring data integrity and privacy is critical in managing public data and maintaining trust. The guidelines suggest the adoption of tools and platforms that enhance efficiency without compromising ethical values.

Effective communication is central to public management. Managers need strong public speaking skills to represent their organizations, engage with the public and maintain a positive public image. The guidelines highlight the importance of preparing and delivering clear, impactful messages, managing media relations and handling crisis communications. Reputation management is also key, as it shapes public perceptions of the institution’s integrity and performance.



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Public managers operate within a global context and must understand international law, including human rights standards and cross-border agreements. The guidelines provide insights into the legal and ethical considerations public managers face when engaging in international collaborations and navigating global governance. Ensuring compliance with international treaties and agreements is essential for promoting fairness, justice and ethical governance.

The psychology of human resource management is critical for building a motivated, engaged and well-functioning workforce. Public managers must understand human behaviour, motivation and conflict resolution, fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment. Employee well-being and mental health are highlighted as essential components of organizational success. Managers should promote a work culture that values collaboration, autonomy and professional growth, ensuring that staff feel valued and motivated to contribute to the organization’s goals.

Public managers must possess the skills to manage conflicts effectively, transforming disagreements into opportunities for growth. Active listening, empathy and negotiation are essential tools for resolving tensions and building consensus within organizations. The guidelines stress the importance of creating a transparent and trusting environment where conflicts can be addressed constructively.

The Impact of Virtuous Public Management

Adopting virtuous practices in public management offers significant long-term benefits that contribute to the overall effectiveness of governance, enhance the relationship between institutions and citizens and promote sustainable development. At the core, virtuous practices emphasize integrity, transparency, accountability and fairness, all of which are essential for building and maintaining public trust. Over time, this trust forms the foundation of a stable, functioning democracy, where citizens are more likely to support and cooperate with government initiatives. When public managers act ethically, aligning their decisions with the common good, the public perceives the government as legitimate and trustworthy. This trust is invaluable, as it encourages greater civic engagement, compliance with policies and collective action in times of crisis.



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Another long-term benefit of virtuous public management is improved decision-making. Ethical managers are more likely to prioritize decisions that balance immediate needs with long-term considerations. By incorporating fairness and equity into their policies, they ensure that decisions are not only effective in the short term but also sustainable overall. This kind of decision-making, grounded in virtue, leads to the creation of policies that are both efficient and just. As a result, public resources are allocated more effectively and services are delivered equitably, ensuring that all segments of society benefit, particularly the most vulnerable.

Furthermore, the adoption of virtuous practices fosters a culture of accountability within public institutions. Over time, this culture of accountability reduces the potential for corruption and mismanagement, which are common challenges in public administration. When public managers lead by example, promoting transparency and ethical governance, they establish mechanisms that discourage corrupt practices. This leads to more responsible use of public funds, which ultimately benefits citizens by ensuring that resources are used for their intended purposes—improving public services and infrastructure rather than being lost to inefficiencies or illicit activities.

Virtuous practices also strengthen institutional resilience. In an era where public institutions face constant challenges, from economic crises to public health emergencies, the ability to respond effectively and maintain public confidence is crucial. Virtuous public managers build resilient institutions by promoting ethical frameworks that guide decision-making in times of crisis. These ethical foundations prevent panic, corruption, or rash decisions that could undermine public trust. Moreover, the emphasis on continuous learning and adaptability, which are key components of virtuous leadership, enables institutions to innovate and stay flexible in the face of evolving challenges. Over the long term, these qualities help public institutions remain effective, even in uncertain or volatile environments.

In addition, virtuous practices lead to better employee engagement and organizational culture. Public managers who embody virtues such as empathy, fairness and respect create a positive work environment where employees feel valued and motivated. When employees work in an organization that prioritizes ethical behaviour, they are more likely to be satisfied with their roles, collaborate effectively and remain committed to the organization’s mission. This, in turn, reduces



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employee turnover and boosts organizational performance. A virtuous leadership style fosters trust and loyalty within teams, leading to a more cohesive and effective workforce that can better serve the public.

Finally, virtuous public management encourages long-term policy innovation and sustainable development. Public managers who are guided by ethical principles are more likely to prioritize policies that address complex, long-term challenges such as climate change, social inequality and economic instability. By focusing on the broader implications of their decisions, they are better equipped to implement policies that promote sustainability and inclusivity. These policies not only meet the immediate needs of citizens but also ensure that future generations inherit a society that is equitable, just and environmentally sound.

In conclusion, the long-term benefits of adopting virtuous practices in public management are profound and multifaceted. By fostering public trust, improving decision-making, reducing corruption, strengthening institutional resilience, enhancing employee engagement and promoting sustainable development, virtuous public managers contribute to the creation of a more ethical, transparent and effective system of governance. These benefits not only improve the performance of public institutions but also ensure that government actions serve the best interests of the people, fostering a just and prosperous society for the long term.

Commitment to Lifelong Learning and Virtue

Encouraging a commitment to ongoing learning and development in virtue among public managers is essential for creating a culture of ethical leadership, integrity and excellence in public service. The dynamic nature of governance, with its evolving challenges and shifting societal needs, demands that public managers not only stay up to date with technical skills and best practices but also continuously reflect on their ethical responsibilities. A commitment to virtue-centred development fosters long-term accountability, public trust and sustainable, inclusive governance.

One of the most compelling reasons to embrace ongoing learning in virtue is that ethical dilemmas in public management are rarely black and white. The ability to make sound, ethical



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decisions in complex and ambiguous situations requires both moral clarity and practical wisdom. Virtue is not something that can be acquired once and forgotten. Instead, it needs to be cultivated through lifelong learning, reflection and practice. By engaging in continuous ethical education, public managers can better understand the nuances of their roles, anticipate the potential consequences of their decisions and stay grounded in the principles of justice, fairness and transparency.

Public managers must also recognize that their behaviour sets the tone for the entire organization. Ethical leadership trickles down, influencing the organizational culture and shaping the values of employees. A commitment to ongoing learning in virtue demonstrates to staff that ethical behaviour is not just a set of rules to follow but a core part of the institution’s identity. By modelling this commitment, managers can inspire their teams to adopt the same approach to ethical development, leading to a work environment where integrity and respect are the foundation of daily operations. This, in turn, improves employee morale, fosters trust within teams and enhances overall organizational effectiveness.

To foster this culture of continuous development in virtue, public managers should be provided with structured opportunities for ethical education. This could include regular workshops, seminars and discussions on ethical challenges in public management, as well as mentorship programs where experienced leaders can share their insights on navigating moral dilemmas. Additionally, public managers should be encouraged to participate in self-reflection and peer discussions that explore the ethical dimensions of their decisions. These learning platforms not only enhance individual ethical capabilities but also provide a space for collective reflection and the sharing of best practices in virtue.

Furthermore, public institutions must create an environment that supports and rewards ethical learning and development. This can be achieved by integrating ethical performance into the evaluation and promotion processes. Public managers who demonstrate a commitment to virtue and ethical leadership should be recognized and rewarded, reinforcing the importance of these qualities in career development. By aligning institutional incentives with ethical learning, public organizations can ensure that the pursuit of virtue is seen as a valuable and integral part of public service.



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Finally, ongoing learning in virtue equips public managers to respond effectively to new and emerging challenges in governance. The world is rapidly changing due to advancements in technology, increasing global interconnectedness and shifting social expectations. Public managers who are committed to ethical learning will be better positioned to navigate these changes, making decisions that not only meet immediate needs but also consider long-term impacts on society. They will be more adept at addressing issues such as data privacy, environmental sustainability and social equity with an ethical lens, ensuring that governance remains grounded in the principles of justice and the public good.

In conclusion, a commitment to ongoing learning and development in virtue is vital for public managers to lead with integrity, make sound ethical decisions and inspire trust within their organizations and among the public. By embracing lifelong learning in virtue, public managers can continuously refine their leadership skills, adapt to new challenges and promote a culture of ethical governance that benefits both their institutions and the communities they serve. Public organizations, in turn, should support this commitment by providing opportunities for ethical education, creating an environment that rewards virtuous behaviour and fostering an organizational culture that values integrity at its core.



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