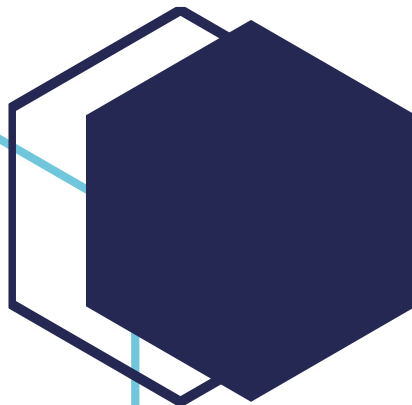




# City of Lake Dallas, TX Internal/External Assessment

## SWOT Analysis and Leadership Action Plan

Organizations today must contend with an environment of constant and accelerating change. Outstanding performance in such an environment demands a healthy and effective workforce within the organization. A core aspect of this leadership-development challenge for the City of Lake Dallas is the organizational and leadership transition over the last 5 years. This is a great opportunity for new vision and fresh ideas to fuel the City of Lake Dallas to new heights in their delivery of municipal services.





# City of Lake Dallas, TX Internal/External Assessment

## SWOT Analysis and Leadership Action Plan

### Introduction

The Lion Strategy Group specializes in your organization's most valuable asset -- people. Our mission is to help our clients identify and resolve challenges and recognize opportunities by providing valuable, long-lasting tools that foster a healthy work environment that establishes a sustainable trajectory for success.

Utilizing decades of experience in municipal government, law enforcement, military service, education, technology, and the legal community, our team is uniquely qualified to identify and deconstruct complex organizational challenges—that you may or may not already recognize. We then partner with you to design and execute a road map to not only address them, but to flip them to your advantage, strengthening your human resources in each of our founding principles: **L**oyalty, **I**ntegrity, **O**ptimism, and **N**obility.

Our process is uniquely grounded in love of service to others, dignity, and respect. These are the three elements required for the growth and development of the human personality. Woven into every human relationship, whether in the workplace, community or other areas of life, is the desire to have others acknowledge and affirm our presence, appreciate the fruits of our labor, and recognize and respond to the contributions we make. Incorporating these elements while engaging the human system within your organization you realize enhancements throughout the organization ecosystem yielding increases in motivation, performance, and workplace satisfaction.

Mike Wilson, CEO/CFO

682-429-0468 | [mike.wilson@lionstrategy.group](mailto:mike.wilson@lionstrategy.group)

Mike Alexander, COO

512-784-6580 | [mike.alexander@lionstrategy.group](mailto:mike.alexander@lionstrategy.group)

### Project Scope



Phase I Abasement–  
Comprehensive  
Evaluation and  
Assessment of the  
Organization

Phase II Raid–  
Diagnostic Meetings  
with Internal/External  
Stakeholders

Phase III  
Reconstruction –  
Deliverables

SWOT Analysis

Leader Transition  
Plan

Training

System/Process  
Improvements



## Methodology

The methodologies utilized in the evaluation and assessment of the City of Lake Dallas consisted of a review of the City's mission, vision, and values, a series of diagnostic meetings with internal and external stakeholders, a review of processes, performance, and a system wide survey covering the following areas:

- Teams
- Cohesion
- Organization structure
- Climate
- Leadership
- Followership
- Ethics
- Psychological Safety
- Wellness

Throughout the assessment, we received a 72.5% participation return rate on the aforementioned system surveys and conducted diagnostic interviews with several organizational, city council, and community members, as well as former employees.

## Summary

There is a problem with unity across the municipal departments in the City of Lake Dallas. The culture includes an alleged "mean girl" behavior that has been reported but allowed to continue with no resolution. The management of employees and the distribution of workload has caused employee dissatisfaction as well. Council would like to capitalize on the strengths of management and eliminate the catalysts for future costly turnover.

The general problem is that negative leaders are negatively affecting the wellbeing and work performance of their employees. When a workplace environment contains toxic elements, the wellbeing of employees can be compromised.

On December 14, 2020, LSG began its assessment of the City of Lake Dallas. This assessment consisted of a review and identification of the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, organizational structure, processes, and tools for personal and professional development of team members. Additionally, the assessment engaged external stakeholders to gauge levels of engagement and progress toward achieving the strategic goals of the City of Lake Dallas.



## SWOT Analysis

### Aim

The aim of this analysis is to assist decision makers share and compare ideas.

To bring a clearer common purpose and understanding of the factors for success.

To organize the important factors linked to success and failure in the city.

To analyze issues that have led to failure in the past.

To provide linearity to the decision making process allowing complex ideas to be presented systematically.

### Areas of Focus

Leadership

Service Delivery

Personnel Growth and Development

Problem Solving and Decision-Making Processes

Efficiency and Effectiveness of work teams

Resource Evaluation

Strategic Planning

Organizational Structure

Wellness Needs

Policy and Procedures

## WHO NEEDS THE SWOT ANALYSIS?

### City Council–

To understand root causes impacting performance, satisfaction, and motivation.

Fresh eyes

### City Manager –

Delivery of services not meeting expectations of internal and external stakeholders.

### City of Lake Dallas –

Negative financial impacts due to decreased performance, motivation, and job satisfaction.

Declining community engagement and relationships.

New direction



## Findings

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<p>Talent within the Organization that needs coaching and mentoring</p> <p>A desire to work with and serve the community</p> <p>Ethical Climate Survey</p> <p>Leadership Climate Survey</p> <p>Group Cohesion Survey</p> <p>Followership Survey</p>	<p>Promotional Process</p> <p>Entrenchment – This is the way we have always done it.</p> <p>Lack of motivation, satisfaction, and performance</p> <p>Willful Blindness – See no Evil, Speak no evil, Hear no evil.</p> <p>Inefficient Processes</p> <p>Policies and procedures or the lack thereof</p> <p>No Supervisory Accountability</p> <p>Assignment of personnel</p> <p>Lack of Standardization</p> <p>Lack of training</p> <p>Lack of Soft Skill Training</p>	<p>Internal Conflict</p> <p>Lack of Training</p> <p>Employees are Speaking up and speaking out</p> <p>Desire for change</p> <p>Best Practice Discussion in Police Department</p> <p>We have identified hot spots within the city</p> <p>Up and coming supervisors</p> <p>Opportunity to reset the clock</p> <p>Change in procedures</p> <p>Change in environment</p> <p>Change in initiatives</p> <p>Facelift</p>	<p>Lack of trust</p> <p>Low morale</p> <p>Lack of voice – fearful of consequences and repercussions</p> <p>Unhealthy work environment</p> <p>Toxicity in the environment</p> <p>Poor Leadership</p> <p>Favoritism</p> <p>Sexual Harassment</p> <p>Discrimination – Gender/Age/Sexual Orientation</p> <p>Dysfunctional Patterns and Practices of organization</p> <p>Compromised Sections of city</p> <p>Internal Complaint Process</p> <p>Serious Emotional and Mental state of organizational members</p> <p>Risk of lawsuits as a result of some of the aforementioned events</p>

The diagnostic interviews and system survey findings identified the following critical hotspots within the organization:

- Dysfunctional Patterns and Practices/ Ethical Compromises within Sections in the Organization/ Lack of Trust/ Poor Leadership/ Low Morale.
  - 55.56% of the organization reported receiving clear instructions that help prevent unethical behavior.



- 51.85% believes the city promotes an environment in which subordinates can learn from their mistakes.
- 22.22% of respondents reported that ethical behavior is discussed in regular counselling sessions.
- 59.26% of respondents believe unit reports submitted reflect accurate information.
- 51.85% of respondents believe members are aware of, and are comfortable using, the various channels available to report unethical behavior.
- 40.74% of respondents believe the organization treats fairly those individuals who report unethical behavior.
- 48.15% of respondents feel the organization holds accountable members of the organization who behave unethically.
- Diagnostic interview statements and statement summaries around dysfunction, ethics, trust, leadership, and morale in the organization:
  - "Accusations by employees that the city is toxic and leading to unproductivity. They may not be wrong."
  - "Not everyone is on the same page. Everyone could communicate better."
  - "Conflict between city hall and the police department." Gave examples of hostile behavior between police department personnel and the city manager, such as, police department personnel getting up and leaving events when the City Manager is speaking at group functions.
  - "The conflict between the City Manager and Police Chief." Believes the tension began in 2018 during the budget process and escalated in 2019.
  - External pressure calling for the termination of two city employees.
  - Role ambiguity and lack of direction is creating conflict. Failure to act and allowing bullying is impacting trust and morale.
  - To complete an assessment of the current state of Lake Dallas. There are some issues effecting employees. Believes the issues have grown to a point where a third-party intervention is needed. As a result, employees do not feel they can bring things forward. Conflicting personalities have gotten out of control, and there is lack of trust. The individual feels as though they are being forced to pick sides and working relationships have been negatively impacted by perceptions held as to whom they support.
  - It was reported an executive team member approached an employee in efforts to gain their support in conspiring against the city manager. The executive team member told the employee they had the votes to terminate the city manager's contract. They would become the interim city manager and would make this individual an Assistant City Manager. According to this individual the executive added he would fire two members of the executive leadership team.



- An employee reported seeing team members bullied in the workplace and advised they may not be at the city much longer due to the environment and how everyone is treated.
  - Team members have been told to be careful what you say or do around certain members of the organization.
  - Job positions are ambiguous, too many catch-all positions in the organization.
  - Executive team members bully others in the organization, and it needs to be addressed.
  - Limited information sharing.
  - There is an invisible wall in the building separating the police department from city hall.
- Unhealthy Work Environment/Serious Emotional and Mental State of Organizational Members.
    - 81.48% of respondents expressed their leaders need to exercise some control over his/her people.
    - 53.84% of respondents expressed that rigid rules and regulations cause them to become frustrated and inefficient.
    - 51.85% of respondents would prefer their boss gave them general objectives and guidelines then allow them to do the job their way.
    - 55.55% of respondents reported that overlapping or shared tasks and responsibilities do not create problems for team members.
    - 59.26% of respondents report that team members display high levels of cooperation and mutual support.
    - 44.44% believes the organization maintains appropriate, not dysfunctional, levels of stress and competition within the organization.
    - 48.15% of respondents reported being under an excessive amount of stress.
    - 48.28% of respondents would rate the current level of morale as high.
    - Diagnostic interview statements and statement summaries around work environment, and the mental and emotional state of organizational members:
      - Multiple team members referenced an internal group called the “Mean Girls”. They described them as bitter, hostile, critical, and cynical.
      - When asked why we were here? One team member replied, there are issues effecting employees. They believed it has grown to the point of needing a third party to intervene.
      - Personalities have impacted workflows. There are slow responses with communication, like emails.
      - “A lot of wielding power”



- The front office environment is bad. No customer service and you can feel the tension.
- Two executive team members are set in their ways. An ultimatum needs to be given.
- One member reported that fellow team members know their passwords for their computer and have accessed their city email.
- Members have reported being isolated and humiliated in the workplace.
- One team member identified as a member of the "Mean Girls" was heard referring to another team member as a "Fat Ass" to others.
- There is no confidence or trust in the complaint process.
- Multiple members expressed the lack of a true human resource confidential process for reporting hostile actions by others. Has created a fear for reporting.
- One member advised a reluctance to report anything due to a fear of retaliation.
- There are a lot of closed-door meetings that create paranoia in the organization.
- Personal, confidential, HIPAA related information has been released to the community.
- One organizational member described the city as "High Control, Low Trust".
- Toxicity in the Environment/ Discrimination – Age, gender, sexual orientation/ Sexual Harassment.
  - 13.79% of respondents reported seeing racist material(s) or behaviors displayed by members of the organization.
  - 13.79% of respondents reported sexually offensive materials and/or behaviors being displayed within the organization.
  - 13.79% of respondents reported being subjected to discrimination over the last twelve months.
  - 6.9% of respondents reported not feeling comfortable reporting sexual harassment or discrimination to their chain of command.
  - Diagnostic interview statements and statement summaries around work toxicity and discrimination in the organization:
    - Many members reported open bullying of team members. When incidents have been reported, they were told it would be addressed, but the behavior continues.
    - During an interview, a team member identified as being a member of the "Mean Girls" told the consultants that a team member whom they share office space with, "is old and needs to retire".





- Many in the organization believe the “Mean Girls” have been empowered and do not fear repercussions for their behavior.
- One member of the organization reported that working for the city has been a “Living Hell” due to the repeated bullying and harassment. Stated they have been targeted for their age and physical limitations.
  - Two other team members reported observing the bullying against the aforementioned individual. One was approached to monitor and report back to a “Mean Girl” about the individuals daily activity. When they refused, they were exiled, and now they believe they are being forced out.
- “Hostile environment everyday”

## Leader Integration Process

Stakeholders expect leaders to deliver results very quickly after beginning their roles. However, the ideal of “hitting the ground running” remains elusive. For example, it has been found that leadership transitions may take up to a year, especially for external hires in senior roles. If the right internal promotions are made, they will add value within six months of hire.

Despite its importance, the most common approach to the transition challenge is assuming that smart people who have been successful in the past will figure things out: in other words, doing nothing to help the leaders and other internal executives responsible for leading the various city departments. In review of the survey responses and diagnostic interviews, it was discovered that the City of Lake Dallas does not have a formal transition plan. According to the 2016 Harvard Business Review, without a proper transition plan, fifty percent of new CEO's do not meet performance expectations in the first 18 months. The resulting costs—in terms of direct expenditures as well as lost productivity and engagement—are consequential, not to mention the organizational paralysis that frequently results when an executive is removed. Financial estimates for the cost of failed transitions range from 10 times to 24 times the executive's compensation. Although this is not a public company, but to make a point of the importance of a proper transition plan, the analysis of the 2,500 largest public companies around the globe found that when firms struggle to replace departing CEOs, they forgo an average of \$1.8 billion in shareholder value.

The investment of time and money necessary to ensure effective leadership transitions is an insurance policy to protect the irretrievable cost of recruiting a new person to an organization. In addition, it can guard against the high cost of failed transitions (whether an internal or external hire), at a fraction of the expense for an executive to derail and for a replacement to be recruited.



## Toxic Leadership and the Effects on Staff and Community

Toxic leadership can lead to negative organizational and employee outcomes, including workplace deviance, lower job satisfaction, lower employee self-esteem, negative organizational attitudes, and psychological stress. All of the aforementioned behaviors are playing out on a daily basis within the city of Lake Dallas. So much so that the internal strife is affecting the community. The relationship between toxic leaders and their followers is complex but may include elements of benefit maximization. Toxic leaders may desire and build their teams with passive and obedient employees for their benefit of controlling the workplace environment. Also, toxic leaders can be perceived by followers as strong, independent, and at times, autocratic, which can comfort employee psychological needs. However, toxic leadership often has negative effects on followers, including psychological, emotional, physical health issues. That being said, one of the most common practices of toxic leaders is workplace bullying.

Studies have pointed to the inequality of workplace bullying, showing that while bullying behavior is not statistically gender-specific in the United States, victims are more likely to self-identify as women. Additionally, 81% of bullies occupy higher-ranking positions. The cause of workplace bullying is varied, as both personal and contextual elements contribute to the creation of a workplace bully. In terms of personality, extroversion and neuroticism have significantly correlated with workplace bullying behavior. In terms of context, high-strain or chaotic environments can lead to greater workplace bullying behavior. Among employees, workplace bullying leads to lower job satisfaction, increased absenteeism, and negative effects on mental and emotional well-being.

Toxic bosses are not just bad for employees, they are damaging to an organization's entire culture. Researchers have found that a toxic leader's behavior spreads among the ranks. Under toxic leadership, employees are more likely to become overly critical of one another. They were more likely to take credit for other people's work and they behaved more aggressively toward their fellow employees.

This is not the first study to find that toxic behavior spreads throughout the office. Researchers from the University of Michigan found similar results when examining workplace incivility.

In the Michigan study, they discovered that rude behavior, like sarcasm and put-downs, led people to experience mental fatigue. Consequently, employees had less self-control, which made them more likely to be rude to their co-workers. Disrespectful behavior is not just bad for morale—it also hurts an organization's bottom dollars. It is estimated that workplace incivility costs organizations \$14,000 per employee due to lost productivity.

Dealing with workplace bullying and toxic leadership should be addressed across the organization through anti-bullying organizational structures, policies, and procedures. However, in cases where an organization cannot completely dismantle workplace bullying and toxic leadership, **employees often cope with the negative effects of bullying with coping strategies. Strategies like avoidance, doing nothing, seeking help, and assertiveness are common for employees trying to reduce bullying stress.** Additionally, coping strategies often



are either problem-focused or emotion-based. Problem-focused strategies typically entail altering the negative acts of bullies or directly addressing the bully. Emotion-based strategies typically involve playing the victim role and accepting sympathy from others. The research is proving true within city hall of Lake Dallas.

## **Toxicity and the Community**

Hello Mike & Mike,

Thanks again for taking the time to talk to me. I'm finally hopeful our city will be able to move forward after a long, dark time.

I wanted to add some information that was brought to my attention after I left last Friday. This information is from a city hall employee.

After I left it was reported that **Maria** ran over to **Daniel** and told him I had been in to talk to you. He said, "Why?" Could it be in part because I had a page of comments about **Daniel** and his shenanigans? It wasn't **Maria's** concern who came in.

Later in the day it was reported that **Maria** entered the council chamber to ask if you all needed anything. She then was reported to have said something to the affect that you had quite a day with **Mr. Forgey** and myself all in one day. This only shows the lack of respect and lack of realization of their ineptness. This group of people are in charge and don't see an end to their reign as many of us do. **Mr. Forgey** and I are to be reviled, not appreciated. I've known for quite some time that as far as city hall goes, they have no appreciation for what I've done and prefer I just go away.

Not that any of this bothers me considering who made the comments. It just adds to the fact that our city hall is toxic and dysfunctional and incapable of operating in a professional and forward manner. I just find it sad for Lake Dallas.

**Shortly after receiving the above email, I received the below statement.**

Mike and Mike, I am not forwarding this email to you both so that we can boast, rather I am wanting to show you the progress we've made in our ability to partner with and influence the larger law enforcement community. We are fairly regularly recognized from outside for progressive and collaborative thought, however we are rarely, if not completely, excluded from encouragement or recognition from our own City Hall non-elected leadership.

Thank you,

**Subject:** Chief's Roundtable

Good morning Chiefs,



I would like to put together a two- or three-hour block for my lieutenants and sergeants to have an open forum with Chiefs outside of our agency. We have a gap in leadership and buy-in/understanding as to where we are going as an agency, the use of IAD in accountability, and the understanding of true policing with compassion. If our sergeants and lieutenants don't get it, our cops are probably starving for the right direction. When I thought about whom I would want to have an influence on their leadership development, I thought of you all. If you could spare a few hours one Wednesday afternoon in February, please let me know. Thank you all for being great partners!

Best,

### **We can take away the following key insight from the above exchange:**

Toxic leadership and subsequent workplace bullying undermine the health of employees and the organization as a whole. Followers provide a sense of legitimacy to toxic leaders that can promote workplace bullying. If the organizational strategy to reduce toxic leadership and workplace bullying fails, victims of toxic leadership often use emotion and problem-focused coping strategies to reduce the negative effects of bullying.

### **Why Psychological Safety in the Workplace is important?**

To answer the above question, we asked questions of staff at every level to measure the safety in the workplace. To keep them guessing, we did not ask the following questions directly, but we were able to cull out what we needed in order to measure psychological safety in the City of Lake Dallas. Those questions consisted of: How psychologically safe is Lake Dallas City Hall? What do you think about staff making mistakes? What is your view on employees being able to express their ideas? Do you believe mistakes are a good thing or are they to be avoided at all costs? Do you really listen to your employees or do you sweep their ideas and concerns under the carpet?

All of this and more is relevant to the culture in the city and how psychologically safe employees feel when they are at work. What we discovered and became increasingly clear is that without psychological safety in the workplace, it is hard for employees to be at their best.

How psychologically safe employees feel when they are at work has implications for motivation, satisfaction, performance, innovation, team interactions, and ultimately business success.

The concept of psychological safety in the workplace was first identified by organizational behavioral scientist, Amy Edmondson in 1999 in her paper entitled: 'Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams'. Her research found that companies with a trusting workplace performed better.

Psychological safety is about candor; being direct, taking risks, being willing to say, "I screwed that up." Being willing to ask for help when you are in over your head. We discovered that it is not okay in Lake Dallas, in some settings, to say, "I screwed up and need help."



Feeling safe, secure and being able to work without the fear of negative consequences, even when you make a mistake, relies on feeling psychologically safe. It means people are comfortable being themselves. In psychologically safe workplaces, diversity is respected and personal risk-taking is encouraged. Above all, team members respect each other and feel accepted. The feeling is like taking a leap and knowing you will be caught.

We found many instances where humiliation, blame, criticism, and bullying has taken place in Lake Dallas. This creates a workplace where employees are filled with fear. When this behavior is present in the environment, a psychologically unsafe environment, you will not get the best out of people. They become too busy watching their own backs and fear making mistakes or crossing the wrong people.

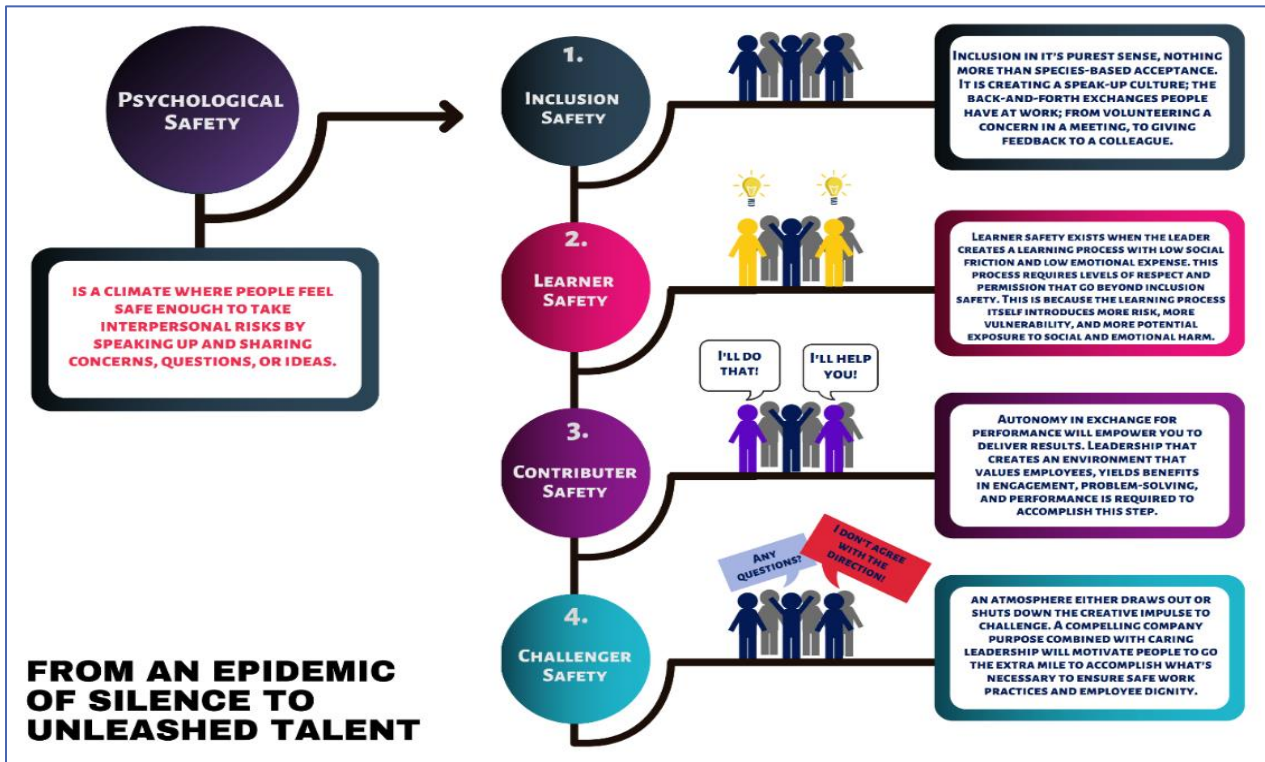
When we experience a lack of trust, respect, or conflict we feel stressed. When we feel stressed our brain triggers hormones to support a fight, flight or freeze response. Continually being in that state is bad for our health. This state also has a negative impact on our ability to think strategically. It stifles creativity and teamwork, and that is not good for business. You have many staff members and councilmembers with trapped trauma in their system due to the bad experiences at city hall.

A psychologically safe workplace is the opposite. In an environment where people are encouraged to understand each other's points of view, understand each other's strengths and weaknesses, support each other, and feel confident to make suggestions and offer ideas, teams flourish. Mistakes (essential for innovation) are made, chewed over, and learned from. This is not to imply that the organization is free of disciplinary actions when necessary. The science tells us that an organization with particular norms, such as clear goals and a culture of dependability, are vital for team success. Above all else it is critical that psychological safety is present in making a team work.



## How we intend to assist with fostering psychological safety at Lake Dallas

Creating a fearless environment is not easy. It takes effort and hard work to build a trusting culture. Here are four simple ways to start building a more psychologically safe workplace:



### Stage 1: Inclusion Safety

Inclusion safety satisfies the basic human need to connect and belong. Whether at work, school, home, or in other social settings, everyone wants to be accepted. In fact, the need to be accepted precedes the need to be heard. This is important because many employees feel that they are not included in many things happening in the city. Several employees informed us that the city manager plays favorites, and everybody knows it. When others are invited into certain society, they develop a sense of shared identity and a conviction that they matter. **Inclusion safety** allows us to gain membership within appropriate and inappropriate social units and interact with its members without fear of rejection, embarrassment, or punishment, boosting confidence, resilience, and independence. But what if you are deprived of that basic acceptance and validation as a human being? In short, it is debilitating. Some employees actually feel debilitated. It activates the pain centers of the brain. Here is one glaring example: It was stated to us that a particular employee is old and should retire. Some semblances of that were also placed in this same employee's personnel file. Granting inclusion safety to another person is a moral imperative. Only the threat of harm can excuse them from this responsibility. When leaders create inclusion safety for others, regardless of their differences, they acknowledge their common humanity and reject false theories of superiority



and arrogant strains of elitism. The lack of inclusion is also playing out in the presence of all with the conflict between the chief of police and the city manager.

## **Stage 2: Learner Safety**

Learner safety satisfies the basic human need to learn and grow. It allows them to feel safe as they engage in all aspects of the learning process—asking questions, giving and receiving feedback, experimenting, and even making mistakes. For some employees, when mistakes are made, they are bullied. This was told to us by a number of employees who also shared the names of the bullies within city hall. Every employee brings some level of inhibition and anxiety to the learning process. They all have insecurities. Who has not hesitated to raise their hand to ask a question in a group setting for fear of feeling dumb? Learning is both intellectual and emotional. It is an interplay of the head and the heart. When they sense learner safety, they are more willing to be vulnerable, take risks, and develop resilience in the learning process. Conversely, a lack of learner safety triggers the self-censoring instinct, causing them to shut down, retrench and manage personal risk. When leaders create learner safety for others, they give encouragement to learn in exchange for a willingness to learn. Learner safety is also happening between the police chief and city manager. They both are intellectually bullying one another.

## **Stage 3: Contributor Safety**

Contributor safety satisfies the basic human need to contribute and make a difference. When contributor safety is present, employees feel safe to contribute as a full member of the team, using their skills and abilities to participate in the value-creation process. They lean into what they are doing with energy and enthusiasm. They have a natural desire to apply what they have learned to make a meaningful contribution. There are many reasons why employees dislike micromanagers. They do not give their staff the freedom and discretion to reach their potential. A number of employees including those closest to the city manager informed us that he is involved in too much. He will not delegate things to others, which is hindering their growth. They much prefer an empowering boss, where they feel encouraged and in turn, he would receive their best efforts. The more they contribute, the more confidence and competence they develop. When organizations create contributor safety for their staff, they empower them with autonomy, guidance, and encouragement in exchange for effort and results.

## **Stage 4: Challenger Safety**

Challenger safety satisfies the basic human need to make things better. It is the support and confidence they need to ask questions such as, “Why do we do it this way?” “What if we tried this?” or “May I suggest a better way?” It allows us to feel safe to challenge the status quo without retaliation or the risk of damaging our personal standing or reputation. This component of safety is not welcomed in some segments of city government in Lake Dallas. Challenger safety provides respect and permission to dissent and disagree when we think something needs to change and it is time to say so. Several employees stated they made several suggestions about the lack of HR, bullying, etc. and feel they were simply ignored. One



employee spoke about a major HIPPA violation that took place in an unsecure place and discovered the information was repeated by a prominent citizen in the town. When Challenger safety is present, it allows staff to overcome the pressure to conform and gives them a license to innovate and be creative. As the highest level of psychological safety, it matches the increased vulnerability and personal risk associated with challenging the status quo. When leadership create challenger safety, they give air cover in exchange for candor.

### **Takeaway**

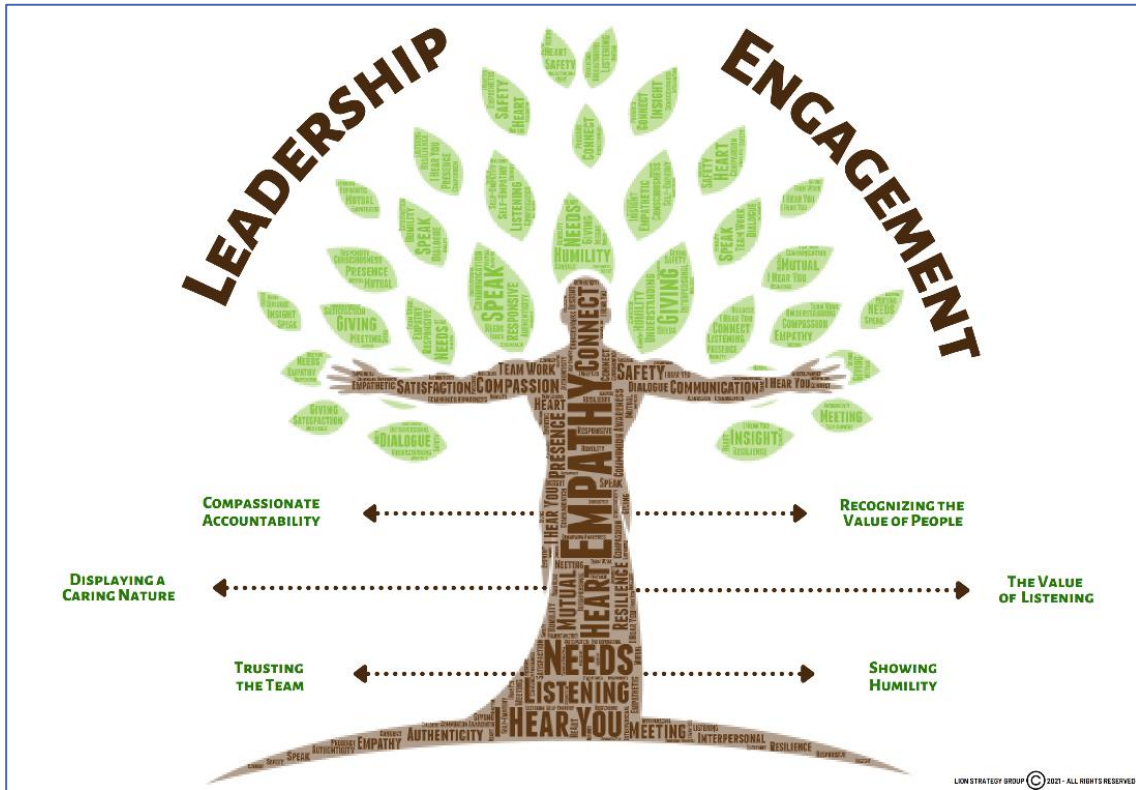
A manager promoting psychological safety will always state problems as observational facts in neutral language and engage with the team to explore the problem, ask for solutions and offer support. Encourage your team to share and discuss problems, errors, and failures, and to ask for help.

Employees will thrive in environments that respect them and allow them to (1) feel included, (2) feel safe to learn, (3) feel safe to contribute, and (4) feel safe to challenge the status quo. If they cannot do these things, it becomes **emotionally expensive** and fear shuts them down. When they are not happy, they are not reaching their potential. However, when the environment nurtures psychological safety, there is an explosion of confidence, engagement, and performance. We always ask our client to ask themselves if they believe their employees feel included, safe to learn, safe to contribute, and safe to challenge the status quo. Finally, we ask them if they are creating an environment where others can do these four things. In the process, look around and see whether their employees are respected and look freshly amazed, find deeper communion in their relationships, and more happiness and satisfaction in their life as a result of working and interacting within the city.





## Why Leadership Engagement is Important



“How can we have a healthy fund balance and a balanced budget over the last three years and still have gaps in employee engagement?” The reality is that the two do not necessarily go together. The management team, like many others fight to keep taxes low, fund balances at optimal levels, projects coming in on time, restructuring, and cost-cutting, without devoting much thought to keeping employees engaged and connected. As a result, the City of Lake Dallas finds it is hard to sustain the gains, much less drive future growth. Organizational agility, innovation, and growth are really difficult without engaged employees. At the simplest level within the City of Lake Dallas, it is generally agreed that employee engagement is critical to the city's success.

But many organizations including Lake Dallas fail to remember that engagement really lies with the leaders in the city, and that those leaders need to be guided to truly understand how to get their people inspired and energized to achieve common goals. Leaders cannot and should not air their disagreement in the presence of all, in the case of the city manager and the chief of police.

Paying attention to your people is paramount. The police chief is doing a stand-up job. He demonstrates that they are his most valuable asset. The city manager talks the talk but is not walking the walk. Some employees feel engaged with the city manager and others feel isolated from him. We found these examples throughout the departments in the city. The police department is considered the west side of the city and the city hall is the east side of the city.



People are the costliest expense (hiring, firing, payroll, disciplinary), so it is well worth maintaining them. Even more so than your car or office machinery, people too need oiling, tuning, greasing, and synchronizing for optimum performance.

We found that people were often left to get on with their job without the right level of guidance or support. Under this city manager we did find that they spend money training them to do things and perform tasks, knowledge improvement. While this type of training does have its place and is important, Lake Dallas are simply paying attention to their human “doings,” and spending little time on team members as human “beings.”

“15% of your earning potential comes from knowledge and direct skills... 85% comes from your leadership and interpersonal skills.” - Dale Carnegie

Employee engagement means different things to different people, but ultimately, it is about the relationship between the individual and the organization they work for. An engaged employee is highly motivated, absorbed, and energetic about their work. As a result, they often put more effort in, go above and beyond what is expected of them, and truly care about the success of the city. They are willing to put in discretionary effort to achieve the goals of the organization. We found that this is not the case in most parts of the city of Lake Dallas.

### **We made it clear that leadership engagement starts with the city manager.**

At the end of the day, most employees will be led solely by their direct managers, not by the council or city manager. This means the Directors and Managers in Lake Dallas may have very good intentions to increase employee engagement over time - but that doesn't translate to the day-to-day operations. The lack of any form of an HR department was found to be a major problem within the City of Lake Dallas. As the saying goes, people leave bosses, not organizations. The longest tenured employee on the city hall side of the city had a little over four (4) years on the job.

The city manager has the responsibility to make sure his leaders know what skills they need to have to get their employees engaged and give them the tools and knowledge to make it happen.

### **Shared purpose**

The way to keep employees engaged is to lead them through a shared purpose and vision – a shared way of doing things. It is about inspiring their passion to do the work the way you want it done, or at least achieve the outcomes you need. Engaged employees want to come to work and consistently give 110% effort. These employees are rarely off sick and they produce above average standards of performance.

Sometimes this happens by itself, which is a dream, and you know when you are there, because everyone realizes it is special while it's happening. More often though, if employee engagement is anything less than 100%, this process has to be led with purpose and intention.



## Vision and boundaries

Imagine if you will:

“You as the city manager. You take your team to the top of a tall building, a skyscraper in fact. It has a flat roof, it is dark, there is no barrier round the edge of the roof... and the team members have roller skates on. You ask them to skate around, but they huddle together in the middle not daring to go far – it is very scary for them. But now, if you floodlight the roof and put railings round the edge then the team will skate to the edges, using all the space, they will put on a magnificent display exceeding all your expectations.”

If you fail to shine the light (which is your vision), fail to put up the right railings (which are your boundaries), or fail to spot when some members of your team are skating exactly the way you want and not encouraging it, that's when things go wrong. It is hard work and stressful.

To achieve this clarity of purpose, to authentically shine the light and set the boundaries, the city manager needs specific skills. And one of the most under-emphasized skills to keep everything fluid and working, like in any good engineering process, is explicitness. It sits best in the early stages of the leader's journey in developing an individual or a team. It is the orientation of group or individual development.

“Explicitness is... specifying in clear, unambiguous, behavioral terms, what is required for successful operation, and what will be regarded as poor performance” The manager is monitoring both task and relationship issues. He needs to determine the energy expenditures and level of intimacy required to be a member of the team.

Here is a basic illustration of boundaries: It has been observed that when a group of children are in a big, unfamiliar field and you tell them they can play anywhere, typically they will not go far from the “base” or where you are. However, if you put a fence round the area near to you or even quite a ways away, they have a sense of boundary and security. If you tell them they can play anywhere within the fence, they will use all the available space and may even try and climb over the fence, just to see what happens and test the boundary.

For a manager then, the boundary you put up is about developing a strong, clear vision and setting the “rules of engagement” for working as part of this team. It includes the overall organizational goals, the way we relate to each other, the systems we use, the time we keep, the way we dress, what we say, the way we deliver our service.

Being explicit in this way requires the leader to be “present,” to be visible, to notice when things need to be done and how, especially, to notice when things are being done well, and when they are not. This becomes all the more acute when offices are virtual, you all work at different locations, or you are constantly travelling. Your “being visible,” the light you are shining, and being able to lead with clarity and explicitness requires attention, commitment, and passion. It is easy then for your staff to engage and support the manager.



### **The ability to motivate and inspire others.**

“Recognition” is a primary motivator for employees generally. Indeed, negative feedback or even abuse means someone is giving you attention, and it is 100 times better than being ignored. So, giving recognition in the form of feedback little and often, every day, is a fundamental leadership skill, and is part of establishing strong commitment and engagement. For some staff members, this never happens for the positive.

Here the old adage “what gets measured gets done” springs to mind, and you know wherever you place your attention, things start to happen. Rewarding staff for good performance (remember about seven times more positive than negative feedback is needed!) is part of driving high achievement, staff feel better if they know what they do matters, and it is appreciated.

### **Self-awareness**

The step change for this city manager is the recognition that before he can lead and engage others, he first needs to lead himself. This starts from a platform of heightened level of self-awareness – or leadership from the inside-out. Leaders who are self-aware will align their core identity and purpose to their behavior and results. This frees them up to express themselves authentically in everything that they do and say and to act in alignment with their purpose and values. It is only after this is accomplished that he can effectively tackle the challenge of leading others.

### **Where it can lead**

Research from the Hay Group tells us that highly engaged workers create better business outputs, less friction with citizens and better financial performance. From this data the Hay Group maintain that highly engaged employees “can improve business performance by up to 30 per cent and that fully engaged employees are 2.5 times more likely to exceed performance expectations than their ‘disengaged’ colleagues.” This is why enlightened city managers recognize that against a backdrop of cost cutting and scant resources, the single most effective way to drive results is by proactively and systematically pursuing a strategy of employee engagement.



## The Importance of Employee Mental Wellness



A positive business culture is no longer a nice-to-have. It drives employee engagement, job satisfaction and staff retention, and it defines business success. Human Resources plays a key role in developing, reinforcing, and changing the culture of an organization.

Pay, performance management, training and development, recruitment, onboarding, and reinforcing the values of the business are all essential elements of business culture covered by Human Resources. Getting culture right is not easy.

While leaders and front-line managers support employees and help them accomplish their goals, Human Resources takes a holistic view of how to ensure the city has the talent required for the organization to perform.

The importance of Human Resource management is also demonstrated in all the ways Human Resources supports the needs of employees at various stages of their career. Human Resources ensures employees have the tools, resources, and leadership they need to perform



to their potential, which is no small feat when you consider that each employee has different needs in the workplace. This function is missing within the walls of Lake Dallas.

The Human Resource department also focuses on improving the employee experience at each point in the employee lifecycle. Human Resources should know what the employee looked like when they started with Lake Dallas, as well as how and why they change. They should know their professional life and parts of their personal life. This is also missing from the walls of Lake Dallas. A good Human Resource department is critical to an employee-oriented, productive workplace in which employees are energized and engaged.

Human Resources not only owns talent management activities, but it also supports the development of a positive workplace culture.

Human Resources touches virtually all aspects of the employee experience, it has an impact on a range of business outcomes, including:

- **Employee productivity:** works with the business to identify the company structure and tools that support higher employee productivity and performance.
- **Turnover rates:** supports the development of a positive workplace culture that helps the company retain employees.
- **Training participation:** identifies training and development programs that build employees' knowledge and skills.

Your Human Resource department should deliver strong ROI in the form of risk mitigation, ensuring Lake Dallas remains in compliance with employment laws such as FLSA, ERISA, and more.

Human Resources also manages employee relations issues and aims to resolve them with minimal risk to the city. Considering that the average employment claim costs companies \$125,000 to defend, Human Resources saves cities money and protects their reputation.

Although it is true that Human Resources is often tasked with monitoring or enforcing adherence to company policies, it does not need to be viewed as the city police. Rather, a healthy employee-Human Resource relationship is one in which both recognize that Human Resources exist to help and not hinder an engaging, rewarding work experience. This is not the case in the City of Lake Dallas. Most employees informed us of the desperate need for Human Resources. In fact, many stated that if an issue surfaced requiring Human Resources to be involved, they would hire outside council instead.

It is important that Human Resources ensure employees have the support they need to achieve optimal performance and realize their career goals. Whether by introducing a new wellness program, helping two employees resolve a conflict, or introducing new technology



that helps employees get to know one another better, Human Resources can act as an advocate, a counselor, and a rich source of information for employees.

**According to Gallup research**, only three in 10 employees strongly agree that they have the materials and equipment they need to do their work right.

Human Resources supports the workforce by identifying and implementing technology and other tools that help employees collaborate, get information, and communicate with one another. An interactive organizational chart is an excellent example of modern technology that helps improve work environments by connecting coworkers and it supports a range of other Human Resource programs, from workforce planning to employee intervention, wellness, psychological safety, leadership engagement and collaboration.

Other digital tools that Human Resources typically brings to the workplace include:

- Online learning platforms that allow employees to select courses that appeal to them.
- Self-service employee benefits and payroll solutions that give the workforce greater access to their own employment information.
- Pulse surveys that ask employees for feedback about their experiences in the workplace

We at the Lion Strategy Group understand that good mental health or psychological well-being has some benefits for employee performance at work. As consultants and ex-city employees, we immediately recognized that the City of Lake Dallas has a small team of staff and limited resources. All staff must perform multiple roles within their scope of work and they simply cannot afford to commit the time and money to organize activities and programs to promote staff mental well-being.

Employee mental well-being directly affects how employees think and feel about their job and organization. Research has consistently shown that employee well-being predicts job attitudes and performance. Employee well-being is critical and not just a “nice-to-have”. It is critical because the small size of the team and the multiple roles of the employee requires that the attitudes and performance of an individual employee matters a lot to the organization. In the best organizations, the employees do not see their work as a source of unhappiness or constant conflict with what they want to pursue or enjoy. This is the case for most city employees with Lake Dallas.

The workplace can provide many positive factors that contribute to mental well-being in terms of satisfaction and happiness. Employee well-being also has important implications for productivity and work relationships. Satisfied and happy employees are more likely to trust their supervisors, comply with city's rules and regulations, provide suggestions to improve the organization, help their co-workers, and work cooperatively as a team to achieve group goals. Such behavior contributes to a high-performing organization that is productive and innovative, with employees who are socially integrated.



Therefore, it is not surprising that research has shown that employee well-being is positively associated with citizens satisfaction. During our diagnostic interviews, we discovered that many citizens are completely unhappy with the way the city staff handles their business. Research has shown that employees who are dissatisfied and unhappy are more likely to be disengaged, absent without valid reasons, cynical, noncooperative, and more likely to engage in counter-productive behavior. Again, a number of business owners stated they dread dealing with the city for anything. Taken together, the research evidence is clear that positive employee well-being is an important asset to leadership, whereas negative employee well-being is a serious liability.

So, what can leadership do to increase employee well-being? The good news for leadership is that there is a large database of research evidence showing what employers can do to increase employee well-being, and the most important of these actions involve daily interactions at work rather than spending money and resources to send employees to well-being workshops and programs. We suggest three areas for leadership to focus on.

**First**, research has shown that the quality of the interpersonal interactions that employees have with their supervisor have direct effects on their job satisfaction and emotions or moods, which in turn affect employee performance, motivation, and their commitment to the organization.

Satisfied and well-performing employees, with low intent to quit, are especially critical to leadership given that there are opportunity costs for personnel selection, on-the-job training, and turnover. Two important features of quality interaction with a supervisor are perceived fairness and trust. These are especially important for leadership given the relatively small number of supervisors and few layers in the supervisory hierarchy, which makes the influence of the supervisor incredibly important.

There are several ways that the supervisor can increase employee perceptions of fairness. For example, in addition to the equitable distribution of outcomes based on performance and contribution, employers should ensure that the process of determining these outcomes is also fair. One of the biggest complaints we heard from employees centered around the lack of performance measures. They had no idea if they were performing too standard or not. A process is more likely to be perceived as fair if the procedures are not influenced by personal bias and are implemented consistently for different employees in the same situation.

It is also important to communicate relevant information and explanations for decisions that affect employees. Research has shown that employers who are perceived as fair are also seen as trustworthy. In addition, employees with positive perceptions of fairness and trust are more likely to engage in positive work behavior. In contrast, those with negative perceptions are more likely to engage in retaliatory and counterproductive work behavior. We found several employees with a negative perception of the city and are possibly engaging in retaliatory or counterproductive work behavior.

**Second**, because interpersonal relationships provide an important source of social support, the City of Lake Dallas might create opportunities, inside and outside of work, for employees to interact socially and get to know one another better. Positive social relationships increase





social integration and create a mutually supportive work culture among the employees, which will enhance trust, increase helping behaviors, and strengthen cooperation. Strong and cohesive work groups are especially important to leadership, given the relatively small size of the same group of people working together on a daily basis.

**Third**, foster an environment in which employees feel valued and respected. In a recent Gallup survey of close to 70,000 people around the world, one of the largest contributors to everyday experiences of negative emotions was not feeling respected. Other studies have found that feeling respected and accepted by others contributed more to well-being than socio-economic status. Respect is critical.

During a busy day when everyone is performing multiple roles and meeting deadlines, leadership is often unaware of the negative impression they create when issuing instructions rudely or giving curt replies to others. Some leaders need to pay more attention to the choice of words and manner of communication in daily interactions, especially when supervisors communicate with employees. Several employees stated that they were berated by supervisors in the presence of others. Leaders in smaller cities are in a better position than larger cities to communicate and instill respect in their employees. Because of the smaller groups, leadership can be highly visible and familiar to their employees by engaging in regular individual or small group interactions.

When employees are given personal attention, they are more likely to feel valued and respected. Ironically, although the above recommendations may sound like common sense and do not involve financial resources to implement, according to most employees, they are neglected at the City of Lake Dallas. Employee well-being matters to the performance and even survival of a city manager. The best city managers are likely to be the ones that will not view employee well-being as a luxury and will not give it low priority due to limited resources. Instead, the best city managers will turn their small size into a strength to create social capital and increase employee well-being.



## The importance of a Healthy workplace



Are your employees often complaining about throat irritation or headaches during office hours? Is your HR always fighting against the increase of absenteeism in the company? Are you constantly dealing with emails and text messages of your teammates falling sick every other day?

If the answer is yes, your employees are probably suffering from Sick Building Syndrome. It is a common term for a series of symptoms that occur only during office hours to 2 out of every 10 employees. SBS (Sick Building Syndrome) is a result of poor infrastructure which directly attributes to poor ventilation - Causing bad indoor air quality in a working environment.

When a person suffers from Sick Building Syndrome that is caused due to breathing bad air quality, they may experience severe headaches, feel nauseous or even have difficulty breathing normally. In a working environment, a company cannot afford to lose any business on account of an employee's health and vice versa.

In this competitive world of city government and economic development, on an average, a person spends about 9-10 hours of his day in an office. It is the only environment in which he/she remains closest to after one's home. If this environment is not healthy, it is a definite



hindrance when it comes to proper functionality. This does not just bring a big question mark to one's existence but also brings a person's entire morale down.

A challenging working atmosphere that has a beautiful view outside can never be termed as a great working space.

*We looked at three things to determine the level of health within the city of Lake Dallas workforce environment.*

An employee performs at his best only when he enjoys working in the office. Many of the employees informed us that they do everything they can to avoid working in the office. These same employees stated that it does not matter if they were chained to their desk or mobile at all times, as long as the office surrounding is beaming with energy the workplace will always be alive and going. The energy of a healthy working environment can only come from a great foundation. Workplace environment has a direct impact on the human mind. It does not just boost productivity but also helps the employees work efficiently. It also keeps them focused and more interested in doing their parts so that the city keeps growing. Several employees used the term toxic or hostile work environment when describing the workplace.

A healthy environment endows the employees with positive energy which only improves the willingness to work. A positive environment that has every aspect in the right place also encourages the risk-taking spirit. This gives space for more creative work that automatically amps up the city's success and tax base. A common trait found in a toxic office space is employees getting tired due to constantly sitting in the same place inhaling air that is inclined towards toxicity. This poses serious issues when employees keep taking coffee and cigarette breaks and become barriers to achieving the missions of the organization.

Improving the overall work environment is an effective way to keep employees healthy for a flourishing or landlocked city. If the team is not breathing good air, it is a definite barrier on the communication front. Communication, which is one of the key factors in city government, can also be harmed by this inability to function well. Installing the Air Quality Index monitors for the purpose of measuring toxicity in the office helps in monitoring indoor and outdoor air quality in a sense. It can help the staff understand that the pollution trends (co-worker's behaviors) are the main reason for an unhealthy environment.

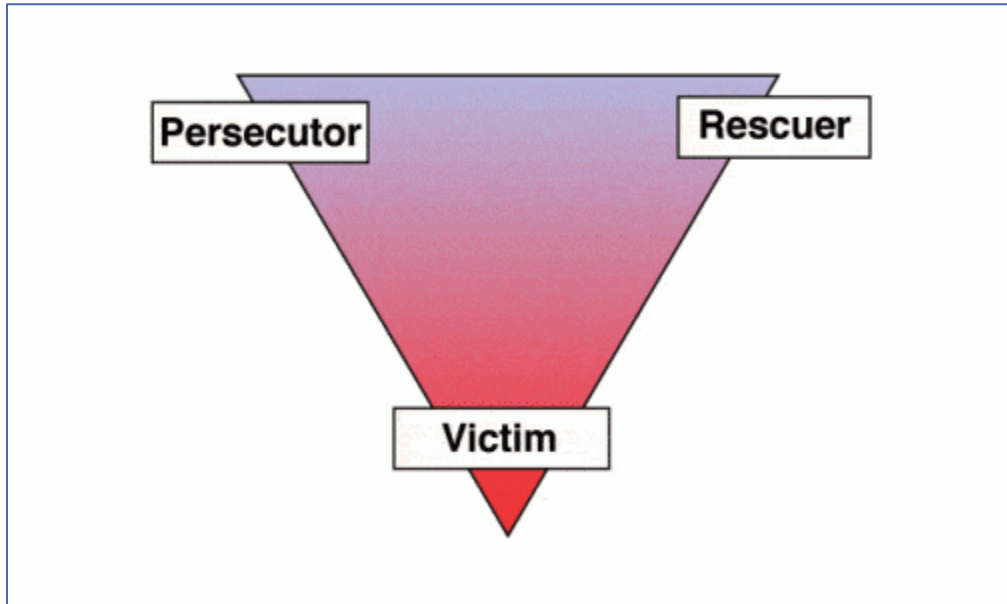
Environments free of toxicity in an office is crucial. To improve the air quality and keep the employees happy and healthy in an office environment - leadership should be installed. Proper leadership engagement helps improve the working environment. It provides the employees with a sense of calmness that is of utmost importance when challenging works are at hand. When toxicity detectors are installed to manage the breathable air that is circulating around the office space, in the right manner, it will keep the human instincts intact and allow the thinking part of the brain to function better.

It is important - Both for the city's leadership and the employees to make sure they are working in an environment that is safe. If Sick employees (mentally or physically) prevails in your working space, it is important for you to notify leadership of the behavior so it can be rectified.



Working under circumstances that keeps you sane is the most important thing. If the workplace foundation keeps shifting, it is best that things undergo a renovation.

### The Drama Triangle



Stephen Karpman, M.D., developed his “drama triangle” – victim, rescuer, persecutor – almost 40 years ago, and I find it as relevant – and just as new to many people – as it was 40 years ago.

### REFLECTIONS

Walking into city hall with Dr. Karpman’s model in mind, every person we spoke with found themselves on this triangle. Before the interview was complete some of them traveled to all three points.

The drama triangle is a dynamic model of social interaction and conflict developed by Dr. Karpman when he was a student of Eric Berne, M.D. father of transactional analysis. Dr. Karpman and other clinicians pointed out that “victim, rescuer, and persecutor” refer to roles people unconsciously play, or try to manipulate other people to play, not the actual circumstances in someone’s life. There can be real victims of crime, racism, abuse, etc. When employees live and work in toxic environments, the drama triangle ALWAYS becomes a part of the environment. What gives the drama triangle much of its power and significance is the recognition that people will switch roles and cycle through all three roles without ever getting out of the triangle. Victims depend on a savior; rescuers yearn for a basket case; persecutors need a scapegoat.



The trap is people are acting out these roles to meet personal (often unconscious) needs rather than being able to see the picture as a whole and take responsibility for their part in keeping the triangle going.

The three roles of the drama triangle are archetypal and easily recognizable in their extreme versions. The roles are:

### **Victims**

It is only when employees become convinced that they cannot take care of themselves that they move into victim. Believing they are frail, powerless, or defective keeps them needing rescue. Anxiety forces them to be on the lookout for someone stronger or more capable to take care of them. This relegates them to a lifetime of crippling dependency on their primary work relationships.

The stance of the victim is "poor me!" Victims see themselves as victimized, oppressed, powerless, helpless, hopeless, dejected, and ashamed, and come across as "super-sensitive," wanting kid glove treatment from others. They can deny any responsibility for their negative circumstances and deny possession of the power to change those circumstances.

A person in the victim role will look for a rescuer, a savior, to save them (and if someone refuses or fails to do that, can quickly perceive them now as a persecutor).

In terms of derailing resilience, victims have real difficulties making decisions, solving problems, finding pleasure in life, or understanding their self-perpetuating behaviors.

Employees who are victims, deny both their problem-solving abilities and their potential for self-generated power. This does not prevent employees from feeling highly resentful towards those whom they may depend on. As much as employees insist on being taken care of by their primary rescuers, employees nonetheless do not appreciate being reminded of their inadequacy.

### **Rescuers**

The rescuer is the classic co-dependent, enabling, overly protective team member – the one who wants to "fix it". Taking care of others may be the rescuer's best game plan to feel worthwhile. There is no better way to feel important than to be a savior!

Employees who find themselves as rescuers often gain satisfaction by identifying with their care-taking role. They are generally proud of what "helpers" and "fixers" they are. Often, they are socially acclaimed, even rewarded, for what can be seen as "selfless acts" of caring. They believe in their goodness as chief caretakers and see themselves as heroes. Behind it all is a magical belief, "If I take care of them long enough, then, sooner or later, they will take care of me, too". Common phrases for the martyred rescuer are, "After all I've done for you, this is the thanks I get?" or "No matter how much I do, it's never enough;" or "If you loved me, you wouldn't treat me like this!"



The stance of the rescuer is "Let me help you!". Rescuers work hard to help and take care of others. They have a need to help others to feel good about themselves. While doing so, they tend to neglect their own needs or not take responsibility for meeting their own needs.

Rescuers are classically co-dependent and enablers. They need victims to help and often cannot allow the victim to succeed or get better. They can use guilt to keep their victims dependent and feel guilty themselves if they are not rescuing someone.

A rescuer's greatest fear is that they will end up alone. They believe that their total value comes from how much they do for others. It's difficult for them to see their worth beyond what they have to offer in the way of "stuff" or "service." They believe, "If you need me, you won't leave me." They scramble to make themselves indispensable in order to avoid abandonment.

In terms of derailing resilience, rescuers are frequently irritated, overworked, tired, and can become caught in a martyr style while resentment festers underneath.

### **Persecutors**

The persecutor is shame based. This role is most often taken on by someone who received overt mental and/or physical abuse during their childhood. As a result, they are often secretly seething inside from a shame-based wrath that ends up running their lives. These employees may choose to emulate their primary childhood abuser(s), preferring to identify with those they see as having power and strength – rather than become the "picked on loser" at the bottom of life's pile. Persecutors tend to adopt an attitude that says, "The world is hard and mean; only the ruthless survive. I'll be one of those."

The persecutor overcomes feelings of helplessness and shame by over-powering other employees. Domination becomes their most prevalent style of interaction. This means they must always be right! Their methods include bullying, preaching, threatening, blaming, lecturing, interrogating, and outright attack.

The persecuting employee needs someone to blame. They deny their vulnerability in the same way rescuers deny their needs. Their greatest fear is powerlessness. Because they judge and deny their own inadequacy, fear, and vulnerability, they will need someone else to project these disowned feelings onto. In other words, they need other employees to be their victims. They seek them out and when they find them, they become laser focused.

It is difficult for someone in the persecutor role to take responsibility for the way they have hurt others. In their mind, others deserve what they get. These warring individuals tend to see themselves as having to constantly fight their co-workers and others for survival. There is a constant struggle to protect themselves in what they perceive as a hostile world.

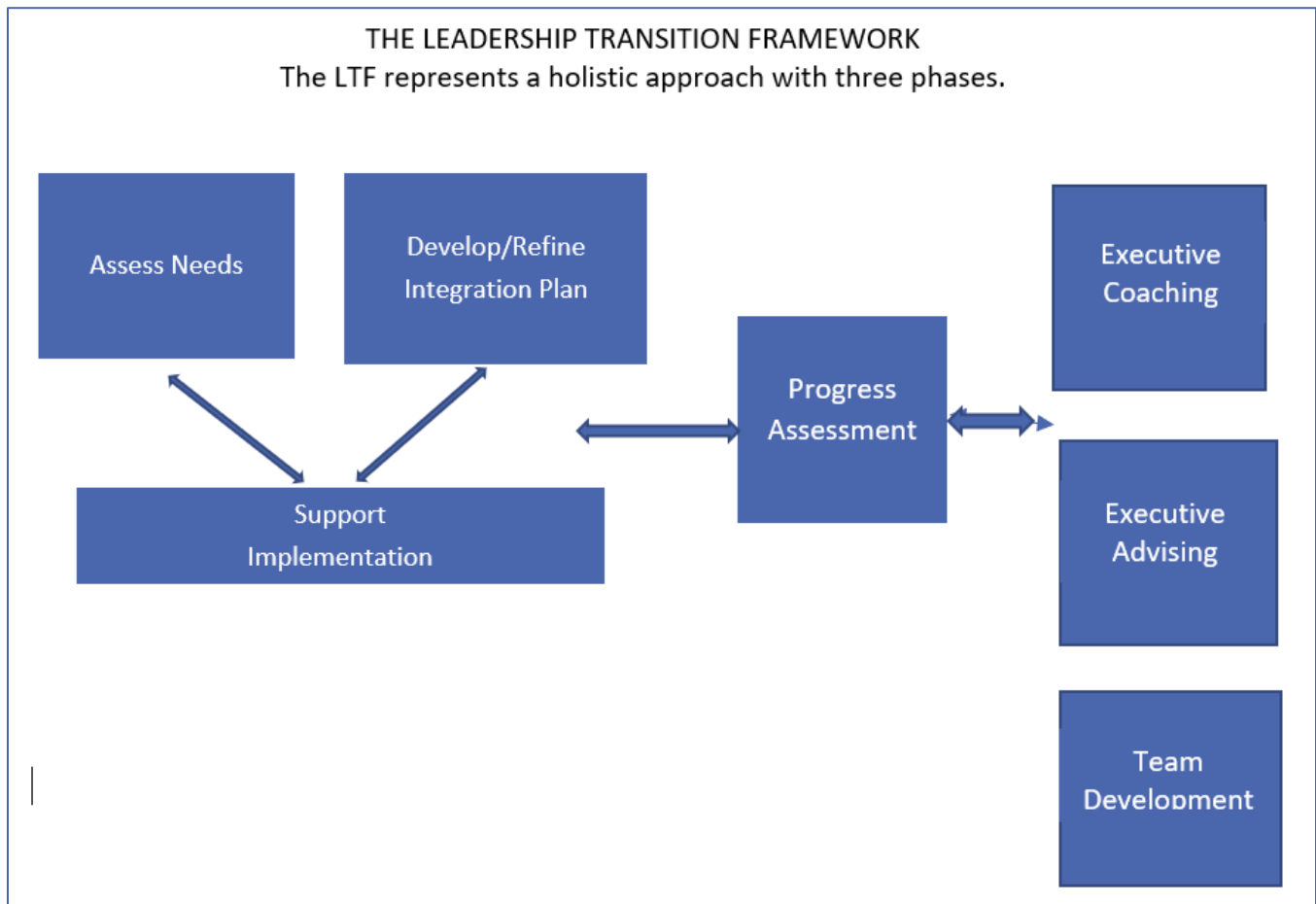


The stance of the persecutor is “It’s all your fault!”. Persecutors criticize and blame the victim, set strict limits, can be controlling, rigid, authoritative, angry, and unpleasant. They keep the victim feeling oppressed through threats and bullying.

In terms of resilience, persecutors cannot bend, be flexible, vulnerable, or human; they fear the risk of being a victim themselves. Persecutors yell and criticize, but they do not actually solve any problems or help anyone else solve the problem.

The aforementioned descriptions are the most extreme versions of these three roles, but it is common to encounter people playing milder versions of these roles on a pretty regular basis.

We were able to identify several key employees within city hall playing these three roles on the drama triangle. There is a resemblance to the critical parent (persecutor, played by several) marshmallow parent (rescuers, played by several) and the wounded inner child (victim played by several in *Games People Play*).



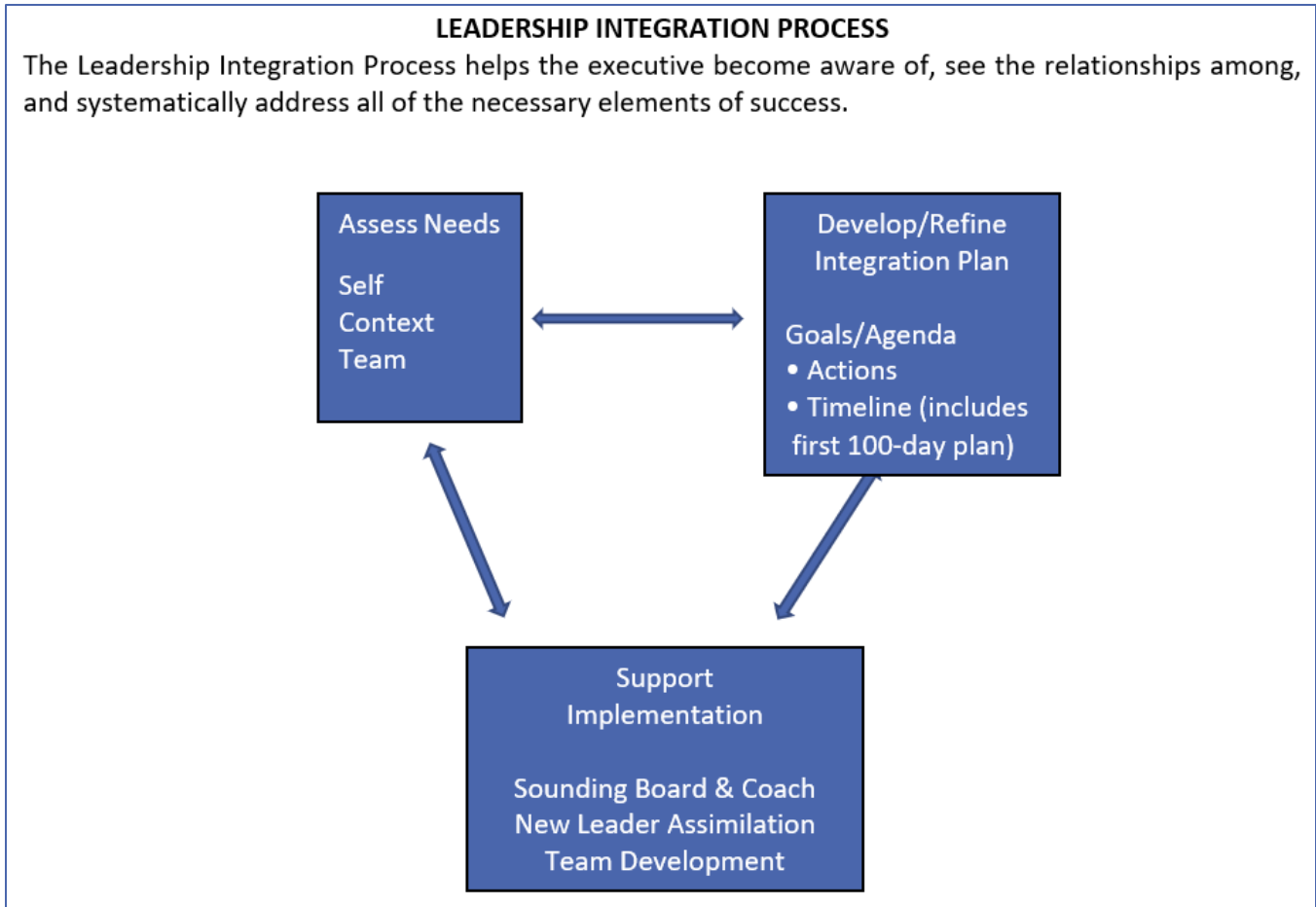


The first phase is a Leadership Integration Process. It is designed to provide leadership with the information and resources necessary to succeed in their positions. This information is gathered through one-on-one interviews and assessments. During this time, needs are identified and a social contract is developed within the organization detailing how they will conduct themselves during interactions with internal and external stakeholders. This process leads to a refinement of the culture and enrich the integration of the leadership action plan. The plan is then continuously supported to ensure proper implementation of the plan.

The second phase, beginning at about six months, is Progress Assessment. This involves a customized and comprehensive evaluation, during which we typically conduct one- on-one interviews with key stakeholders from within the police department and city hall, combined with quantitative ratings to help the executive team measure and calibrate what has been achieved to that point and adjust where necessary.

In the third phase we guide the executive in a shift of emphasis from concentrating on the specifics of a given transition to focusing on continuous learning and growth as a leader. Data from the Progress Assessment informs goals and activities that will ensure that the executive not only sustains effective leadership, but constantly improves it, consistently delivering expected results. In general, the activities that can accelerate an executive's ongoing development require three types of assistance—executive coaching (which fosters the development of behaviors, mindsets, and practices necessary for an individual to effectively influence others and guide groups to accomplish important objectives), executive advising (which provides an external sounding board to help the executive keep perspective and create an approach for ongoing decision-making), and leadership-team development (which helps the executive and his or her team systematically work together to address the fundamental elements of high motivation, satisfaction and performance).





**Summary**

Based on our assessment of the City of Lake Dallas, The Lion Strategy Group can assist with nine critical issues: self-awareness, type of situation (and its implications), organizational change, alignment with key stakeholders, most important operational issues, current state of the leadership team, the need to engage the culture, communications, and one's network of relationships. Not every issue is equally relevant in every transition. Rather, these categories prompt a leader to consider where to focus one's limited time and energy. For each issue, a series of questions must be answered.

1. *Self-awareness.* To thyself be true - How well does the leader understand his or her strengths and weaknesses—shortcomings as well as potential overused strengths—and how these lines up with role requirements? What does the leader need to stop/start/continue doing to be successful? How does the leader need to grow, develop, and change?

2. *Type of situation (and its implications).* Turnaround? Realignment? Accelerated growth? Sustaining success? What strategic agenda best fits this situation? What leadership behaviors does this situation require?



3. *Organizational change.* What is the mandate for change in this new role and from whom does it come? The council? The community? What needs to change and what should not change? What expectations need to be set? How can others be aligned with expectations? What change-management process would work best for communicating what needs to change, striking the right balance between being ambitious to change the organization, on the one hand, and being careful not to take on too much all at once, on the other?

4. *Alignment with key stakeholders.* Who are the critical stakeholders? City Council? City Manager? Department Heads? Other colleagues? How can trust and loyalty be built? How are decisions made? Where does power reside? How can productive working relationships be built?

5. *Most important operational issues.* How can credibility be built by achieving quick wins? What is the priority order for pressing problems? What decisions need to be made?

6. *Current state of leadership team.* Are the right people on the bus and in the right seats? Are the wrong people off the bus? Is the team focused on the right goals?

7. *The need to engage the culture.* What are the values, norms, and assumptions in this culture? What are the sacred cows? Is there more than one culture to consider? Where is the appropriate balance between fitting in versus transforming the culture? How much change should occur and how fast? Who can serve as a cultural interpreter?

8. *Communications.* What needs to be communicated - To whom? What is the plan and cadence for communications? How can I make communicating a continuous give-and-take dialogue?

9. *Network of Relationships.* What are the critical relationships to establish and nurture? Who are the people inside and outside the organization that my team and I will depend on to accomplish our objectives—both short-term and long-term? Which people depend on us to reach their goals? Which relationships will help with resolving problems and securing necessary resources?

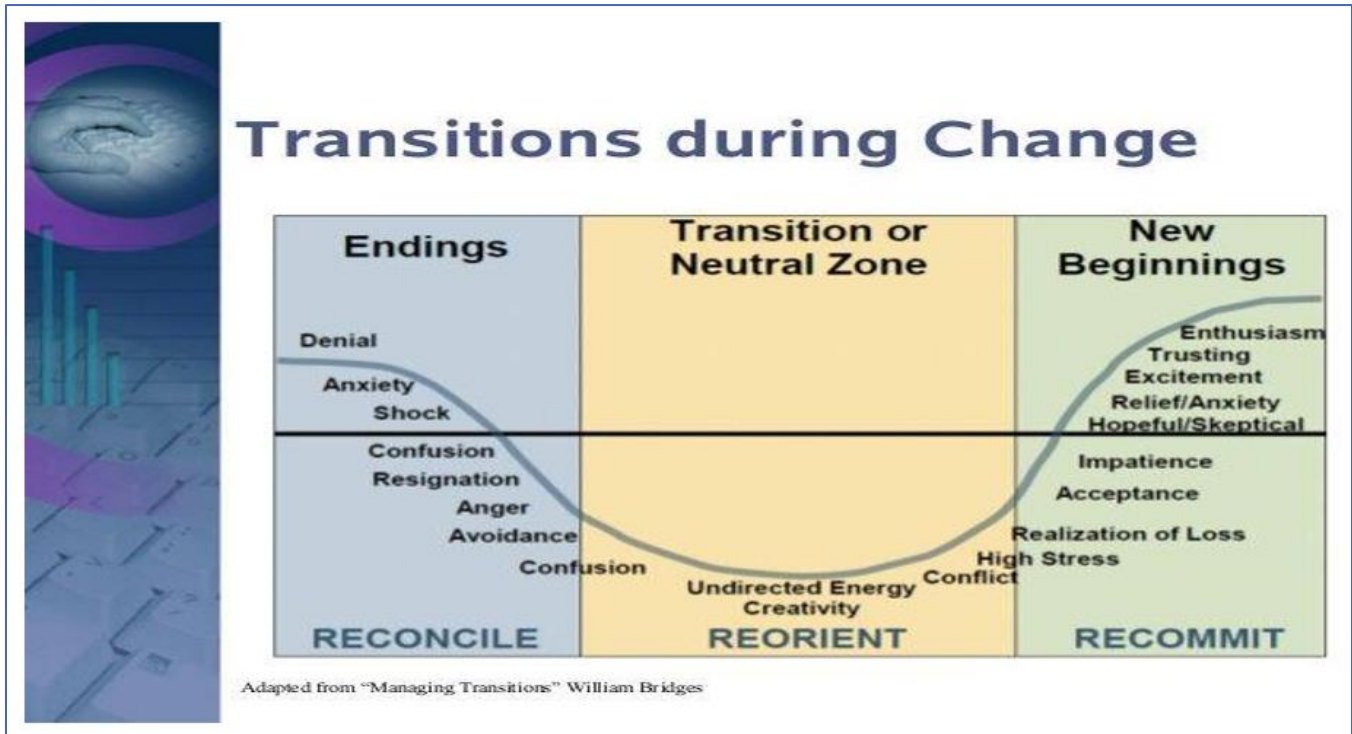
**Develop/refine integration plan.** Developing a plan is a key component in the process of leadership integration and is built on well-established practices. The establishing of goals and clear objectives that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and timely is paramount. This allows the executive leadership to then determine the appropriate sequence of actions and time frame to accomplish them. The plan is adjusted and refined as its implementation unfolds.

**Support of the implemented plan.** Executive Leadership should not be expected to implement this complex plan alone, particularly given the stress associated with transitioning an organizational culture and establishing a cadence not seen in the City of Lake Dallas. LSG will provide several different forms of help to increase the odds of success: applying appropriate research insights to the city's specific situation and context, accelerating executive



leaderships growth and development, acting as a sounding board for the executive team, facilitating a new-leader assimilation process, and assisting in the development of a high-performing teams.

**1. Making use of research.** There is valuable research (for instance William bridges managing transitions) on how leaders assimilate to new roles. The intellectual learning curve is less steep than the emotional learning curve, and that leads executives to be more adept at IQ than EQ. We will go over the relevant research with the Executive staff to explain how it applies to their specific leadership situations.



**2. Accelerating the leader’s growth and development.** An important way to support transition-plan implementation (and its continued refinement) is to improve the self-awareness of City Leadership to help them appreciate the basics of development, which include the outer work of skill improvement and behavior change, and the inner work of mindset. We will work with the City Leadership to provide guidance and education.

**3. Providing a sounding board.** Leaders can benefit greatly from having an impartial, outside perspective that helps them come to terms with emergent situations and stressors. They need to have problem-solving conversations, do brainstorming, and engage in blue-sky thinking. As Manfred F. R. Kets de Vries has pointed out:

Today’s executives face more pressure than at any other time in history. . . . One effective way of dealing with the pressures of the job is for leaders to have sparring partners who help them explore the challenges they face. . . . [They can benefit from having external people] act as impartial sounding boards free of the politics that are all too prevalent in organizations.



As executives move up the corporate ladder, feedback about their performance progressively diminishes. But the loss of feedback can be career limiting; it creates gaps in how leaders perceive themselves, and how others perceive them. And the wider the gap, the greater the likelihood of a leadership crisis, and the greater the resistance to change.

LSG's cadre of experienced coaches bring both business and psychology backgrounds to a confidential and objective thought partnership. Our clients do not fail.

**4. Facilitating a mutual-assimilation process with the leader and team.** Getting off on the right foot is much easier than recovering from a false start. Fundamental to this process is the clarification of expectations for the executive team. This lays the foundation for trust and it builds relationships. Also important is the need to establish initial priorities, action items, and a cadence for reviewing progress. A general framework that represents a starting point in customizing a new-leader assimilation process and that addresses a city leaders specific needs includes the following five steps: (1) contracting with LSG about desired outcomes of the process and how progress will be measured; (2) conducting interviews with team members; (3) reviewing themes from these interviews with city leaders in preparation for a working session with the team; (4) facilitating the working session where city leaders address questions and expectations and provides a safe space for team members to share information about him/her. During a debrief of the session, the team reviews key themes from the interviews, identifies top challenges and opportunities, and aligns on priorities, to include an initial action plan; (5) and following up, as agreed upon during the working session, on action items and any emergent issues.

In some cases, LSG facilitates this process from end to end. In other situations, we partner with internal resources from HR to conduct some of the activities. Whether facilitated internally or externally, the goal is the same: for the executive team to engage in a structured process that proactively (1) identifies and outlines steps to remedy issues that could impede collaboration, (2) promotes effective working conditions, and (3) builds strong, trusting relationships.

**5. Building a high-performing team.** Because building a high-performing team has become a crucial aspect of effective leadership, we will work with the executive team to make sure that the team has a compelling purpose, clear rules of engagement (norms), and healthy team dynamics (including trust, safety, dialogue and debate, and productive conflict).

## Progress Assessment

The Progress Assessment involves soliciting 360-degree feedback from a range of stakeholders to identify what is working and where gaps exist in the executive's leadership and to guide ongoing development. Whether data is collected by interview, survey, or a combination of both, the people with whom the executive works provide candid feedback to help him or her accomplish three objectives: (1) calibrate performance thus far and gauge the effectiveness of the transition, (2) make necessary course corrections, and (3) develop a robust follow-up plan to guide continuing individual and leadership-team development.



Interview/survey questions are tailored to calibrate the executive's specific situation; they typically cover topics such as what has gone well in this leader's past, what has not gone smoothly, and what adjustments would make this executive a better leader. The purpose of this process is to seek specific feedback about aspects of the executive's leadership team, looking for ways to bolster what is working and re-mediate problem areas at the team level. To provide a comprehensive calibration, it is important that this process offer the opportunity for a remarkably busy (and likely overwhelmed) leader to hear from staff not only about things that need improvement but also about what is going well—when or how other people have seen this leader really shine. We also routinely inquire about the personal attributes that others most appreciate, asking staff to offer words of encouragement, reinforcement, and support to the leader in transition. At a time when many leaders are painfully aware that some things are not working and may even feel inadequate to meet the challenges of their new role, positive feedback can be a welcome tonic, affording a balanced appraisal and highlighting those areas that are effective but that may be easy to discount or overlook.

The 360-degree feedback provides the executive team with a better understanding of the new context, including his or her role within it, what is effective, and where changes may be needed. Armed with this information, we will work together to refine the executive team development goals and action plan to incorporate the adjustments recommended within the feedback data.

Executing the necessary adjustments begins with clearly defining what needs to change and then determining the specific steps required to implement and manage these changes. But the effort does not end there. Part of the process of doing a Progress Assessment also involves following up with feedback providers: thanking them for their input, offering a summary of the key themes and lessons learned from the data, sharing goals and development plans for taking action based on this feedback, asking for ideas to refine the action plan further, and including other colleagues in the improvement efforts. Research has found that time and again, one variable [has] emerged as central to the achievement of positive long-term change. . . . Leaders who discussed their own improvement priorities with their co-workers and then regularly followed up with those coworkers showed striking improvement. Leaders who did not have ongoing dialogue with colleagues showed improvement that barely exceeded random chance.

In addition, being intentional about making development a team effort allows the leader to model the importance of learning and growth, tangibly demonstrating an organization-wide commitment to leadership development. Taking these steps is an important way in which the leader will create a culture that build effective leaders. Conducting a rigorous Progress Assessment ensures that data, rather than gut feeling, will guide the leader's ongoing development in a systematic way. This empirical approach maximizes a leader's learning—as has been confirmed by research showing that the most effective executives are those whose careers have been marked by taking on a variety of new assignments, learning critical lessons, and developing a wide repertoire of skills, abilities, and perspectives.

Feedback data from the Progress Assessment will guide the leader in refining leadership-development goals, crafting an action plan to achieve those goals, and specifying activities—



such as training, executive coaching, and team development—that will subsequently support the leader's ongoing development.

## Ongoing Leadership Development

The same issues that are critical to getting a leader up to speed are also important for sustaining effective leadership. Amid today's constantly changing landscape, an executive must continuously learn, grow, and develop in order to deliver expected results. Strong leadership is not just “nice to have”; it separates the best city's from the rest. And it does not happen by chance—effective leaders are made, not born. To help an executive maintain the momentum of a successful transition, focus must shift to keeping a sharp edge on his or her leadership. This is achieved by providing the person with both challenge and support in the form of executive coaching, executive advising, and team development.

**Executive coaching.** It is a process in which LSG will work one on one with a member of the executive team. LSG coaches are experts on human behavior and organizational dynamics. For this process to be successful, two fundamental principles must be followed. We will highly customize the process to address the specific needs of the person being coached, within the context of how changes in processes, culture, and direction city leadership engages will lead to improved results. This requires a thorough understanding of the environment in which the executive works. Executive coaching is based on a rigorous assessment process, grounded in empirical research and tailored to ones' situation and circumstances. Typically, this includes conducting a personality assessment (so that the executive can better understand his or her motivations and behavioral tendencies) and collecting 360-degree feedback from key stakeholders (through a survey or by one-on-one interviews) to identify the strengths, shortcomings, and blind spots that others experience in the executive's leadership. This approach helps the person set appropriate and realistic goals, create effective development plans, measure progress toward goals, and assess change at the end of the coaching engagement.

Second, confidentiality is a MUST. Although coaching serves an organizational purpose—promoting better leadership—the substance of the developmental conversations is known only to the coach and the person being coached. Confidentiality promotes trust in the relationship and provides a safe, supportive environment in which learning can occur, making it possible for the individual to take the risks inherent in change and to grow as a leader and as a person. Organizations are served by the plans developed and results achieved through confidential coaching conversations.

**Executive advising.** A recent Stanford University study found that nearly two-thirds of CEOs do not receive outside leadership advice, but nearly all want it. Therefore, frequently as an extension of executive coaching, we will serve as trusted advisors, acting as sounding boards, and listening and providing counsel on a wide range of situations where an impartial outside perspective will help inform an executive's behavior and decision-making. This has led, for instance, to notable improvements in conflict- management, mentoring, talent development,



sharing leadership, and delegating to subordinates.

**Team development.** In an increasingly turbulent world of city government, teamwork affords the possibility that a collection of people can make better decisions, come up with more innovative ideas, and implement them faster than individuals working alone. One of LSG's examples for growing organizations and teams is a "wise leader will always consider his or her group when making decisions." Given the demands of the community environment, effective teamwork is a competitive advantage. However, leadership teams often fail to fulfill their potential if they are not willing to hold each other accountable and have crucial conversations with one another about the prevailing issues. Real work happens during productive team meetings, just like games are won during practice. In order to help organizations maximize the value of their leadership teams, LSG has created a structured yet flexible process that integrates a range of practices to improve the effectiveness of leadership teams. The Leadership-team Development Plan Framework (LTDPF) provides an overview of this process. Each member of the executive team will experience our Leadership Transition Development Plan Framework over **the next twelve (12) months.**

## Leader Action Plan

PHASE/TASKS	TIME FRAME
<p><b>ACTION PLAN – Organizational Development</b></p> <p><b>Leadership New Transitional Management Norms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Organizational Chart Review for Efficiency</b></li> <li>• <b>Creation of Culture Document and Social Contract</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Executive Coaching/Advising</b></p> <p><b>Life and Leadership Coaching (Personal and Professional)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Providing sounding board for senior management and executive staff</b></li> <li>• <b>Executive leadership coaching for City Manager and Key Staff</b></li> <li>• <b>Prepare executive leadership for the psychological implications of managing around the new transitional norms and processes.</b></li> </ul>	



<p><b>Human Resources</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The appointment of person with qualifications to head HR</li> <li>• Coaching and Mentoring of the Manager on processes and systems relating to HR</li> </ul> <p><b>Leadership Processes and Tools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish workflows promoting transparency and efficiencies throughout the organization.</li> <li>• Assist Managers in creating confidential system for addressing complaints.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recruitment and Selection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partner to establish a standardized recruitment and selection program based upon National standards.</li> </ul> <p><b>Promotional Processes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of a secure and authentic promotional process.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Phase I – Individual Team Member Growth and Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work life balance (Check-in with key staff)</li> <li>• Over and under investment</li> <li>• Librarian – lead weekly book leadership series.</li> </ul> <p><b>Resilient Training Series</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stress Management – (Nurse Practitioner with Key Staff)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Phase II - Team Development</b></p> <p><b>Group Development and Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building Resilient Teams</li> </ul>	





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communicating Through Conflict</b></li> <li>• <b>Implementation of a Mental Model of Resilient Leadership</b></li> <li>• <b>Leadership Resilience Training (Police Department and City Manager)</b></li> <li>• <b>Psychological Transformation</b></li> <li>• <b>Employee Life Cycle</b></li> </ul>	
<p>PHASE III – <b>Community Engagement</b></p> <p><b>Crime through Strategic Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Engagement</b></li> <li>• <b>Code Enforcement</b></li> <li>• <b>Partner with Social Services (include Community Development Coordinator)</b></li> <li>• <b>Identifying and addressing Systemic Crime and Quality of Life Challenges</b></li> <li>• <b>Leveraging Community Resources to Enhance Quality of Life</b></li> </ul>	

### **Build Strong Relationships**

We build relationships based on trust and integrity. We do not cut corners, operating with transparency, ensuring confidentiality, and delivering on promises. Candor is only possible in a completely confidential environment.

### **Keep Score**

“The oak sleeps in the acorn. The bird waits in the egg, and in the highest vision of the soul, a waking angel stirs. Dreams are the seedlings of reality.” – Napoleon Hill – Process metrics monitor progress along the way, and outcome metrics evaluate end results to help deliver on the promise of becoming a more effective leader. We begin by clearly defining with a client what would constitute a “win” and then collaborate to deliver this outcome.



## Apply Behavioral Science

There are three areas of applying evidenced-based best practices. First, there is the science of goal setting and behavior change. Thirty years of research has identified what is effective (and what is not) when it comes to making the behavioral changes required for a person to grow and develop as a leader. We tap into this vast literature and provide practical ways for clients to benefit from its findings without getting lost in the minutiae. Second, there is the commitment to learn how to learn. As Eric Hoffer said, "In a time of drastic change it is the learners who inherit the future. The learned usually find themselves equipped to live in a world that no longer exists." Consistent with this message, we help clients apply research-based insights from the burgeoning fields of learning agility and growth (in contrast to relying on fixed mindsets). Third, there is the awareness that one must manage paradox in order to become a versatile leader. As F. Scott Fitzgerald observed, "The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in mind at the same time and still retain the ability to function." In a similar vein, the literature on developing mental complexity provides useful approaches for growing as a leader in the midst of an increasingly turbulent environment.

- **KEEP IT SIMPLE (BUT NEVER SIMPLISTIC)**

Oliver Wendell Holmes said, "I would not give a fig for the simplicity this side of complexity, but I would give my life for the simplicity on the other side of complexity." In this spirit, we help clients crystalize the key messages in their assessment results and clearly articulate compelling development goals.

- **MAKE IT PERSONAL AND PRACTICAL**

We offer truly custom-built solutions, rather than an off-the-shelf, one-size-fits-all approach to development.

- **PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH**

We are concerned with our own growth, requiring of ourselves the same level of learning, risk, and vulnerability that we ask of clients.



## Conclusion

The majority of the employees at the city of Lake Dallas want to work – and want to work hard. This is what human beings are naturally pre-programmed to do. The skill of a leader is to harness this effort and create a working environment where individuals develop a 'habit' for putting extra discretionary effort into everything they do. Cumulatively, this new habit of going the extra mile, builds a culture of high performance.

The evidence will show that this city manager is not aware of the impact he makes, and his part in creating the right environment for developing employee engagement. So being clear about his personal style, setting his vision for the city, putting the boundaries in place and being explicit about what is required, is a perfect starting point. Then giving strong, clear feedback, resiliently maintaining direction, understanding his and each individual's motivations, resolutely going about leading and developing staff directly or through the process of socialization, builds a culture of continuous improvement and engagement.

When individuals experience this laser focus of attention into them as staff, they cannot fail to shine; they want to develop, support the leader and excel. Organizations then truly appreciate that their only business advantage is their people.



## Recommended Reading

1. **The Deepest Well:** Healing the Long-Term Effects of Childhood Adversity by Nadine Burke Harris
2. **People Fuel:** Fill your Tank for life, love, and leadership by Dr. John Townsend
3. **Good to Great** by Why some companies make the leap and others do not by Jim Collins
4. **Stuck:** Dealing with Organizational Trauma by Philippe Bailleur
5. **Necessary Endings:** The employees, businesses, and Relationships that all of us have to give up in order to move forward by Dr. Henry Cloud
6. **Brain Savvy Leaders:** The Science of Significant Ministry by Charles Stone
7. **Willful Blindness:** Why We Ignore the Obvious at Our Peril by Margaret Heffernan
8. **Leading from the Inside Out:** The Art of Self-Leadership by Samuel D. Rima
9. **The Leadership Challenge:** How to make extraordinary things happen in organizations by Kouzes and Posner
10. **Leadership in Dangerous Situations:** A Handbook for the Armed Forces, Emergency Services, and First Responders by Patrick J. Sweeney
11. **The Way of the Shepherd:** 7 Ancient Secrets to Managing Productive People by Dr. Kevin Leman and William Pentak
12. Organizational Trauma and Healing by Pat Vivian and Shana Hormann
13. **The Wisdom of the Enneagram:** The Complete Guide to Psychological and Spiritual Growth for Nine Personality Types by Don Riso and Russ Hudson
14. **Man's Search for meaning** by Viktor E. Frankl
15. The Speed of Trust: The one thing that changes everything by Stephen M.R. Covey
16. **Leaders Eat Last:** Why some teams pull together and others do not by Simon Sinek
17. **The 360 Leader:** Developing your influence from anywhere in the organization by John Maxwell
18. **Becoming a person of Influence:** How to positively impact the lives of others



19. **Bringing out the best in everyone you coach:** Use the Enneagram System for Exceptional Results by Ginger Lapid Bogda
20. **The Advantage:** Why organizational health trumps everything else in business by Patrick Lencioni
21. **Launching a leadership revolution:** Mastering the five levels of influence by Chris Brady and Orrin Woodard
22. **How to have that Difficult Conversation:** Gaining the skills for honest and meaningful communication by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend.
23. **Crucial Conversations** Tools for talking when stakes are High by Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, Al Switzler
24. **Non-Negotiable:** The story of happy state bank & The power of Accountability by Sam Silverstein
25. **Thriving on Chaos:** Handbook for a Management Revolution by Tom Peters
26. **The five dysfunctions of a team:** A Leadership Fable by Patrick Lencioni
27. **The Measure of a Man:** Twenty Attributes of a Godly Man by Dr. Gene A. Getz
28. **Leadership and Self-Deception:** Getting out of the box by The Arbinger institute
29. **Shepherd Leadership:** Wisdom for leaders from Ps 23
30. **Team of Teams:** New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World by General Stanley McChrystal
31. **Leadership is an Art** by Max Depree
32. **Dare to Lead:** Brave work. Tough conversations. Whole Heart. by Dr. Brene Brown



## Lion Strategy Group Founders and Contact Information

### Mike Alexander

Mike Alexander attended St. Edwards University in Austin Texas where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Criminal Justice and a master's degree in Organizational Leadership from Southwestern Assemblies of God University in Waxahachie Texas. Mike has spent 38 years in law enforcement which began as a Correctional Officer and Deputy Sheriff at the Travis County Sheriff's Office. Mike continued his career at the Austin Police Department as a Patrol Officer and a D.A.R.E. Instructor, teaching adolescents the importance of staying drug free. Mike spent 25 years with the Austin Police Department. Mike worked in patrol, as a patrol officer, corporal and sergeant. Mike also worked as a District Representative where was responsible for developing strategies to effectively address, crime, the fear of crime, and quality of life issues. Mike retired from the Austin Police department as a Sergeant. Mike's last assignment with APD gave him the opportunity to lead the Continuing Education Division and the Leadership Command College. Mike also worked with the Louisiana Community Policing Institute where he evaluated the performance of police departments and sheriff offices in the area of community policing; he made recommendations for implementation. After his retirement from APD Mike was employed as a Major with the Office of Inspector General Internal Affairs Section, where he was in charge of a statewide Internal Affairs investigation division. This division is responsible for investigating State Employees accused of abuse, neglect, and exploitation of the elderly and people who are mentally and physically incapacitated and who reside at state supported living centers, state hospitals and group homes. Mike's team also investigated various other criminal and administrative violations committed by state employees or any outside entity that had an affiliation with state government as it related to Health and Human Services.

Mike retired from the business as a City Manager after serving first as the Interim Police Chief and Interim City Manager in Palestine Texas. Mike later served as the Interim Chief of Police for the City of Corinth Texas. Mike currently serves as the Interim Chief of Police for Jacksonville Texas Police Department. Mike is the founder of LION (Loyalty Integrity Optimism Nobility) Organizational Development Institute. LION is a leadership development institute with a focus on Leadership, Healthy Work Environments, Employee Wellness, Ethics, Emotional Intelligence, and Socialization. Mike is also the Co-founder of Commandpresence.com with a focus on stress management, mental health, and the effects of trauma within emergency services. He is also the co-owner of LION Strategy Group LLC with a focus on organizational audits, organizational development, security—onsite assessment; crime prevention through environmental design; violence in the workplace, active attack, personal safety training, expert witnesses, leadership placement and risk mitigation.

Mike is a National Certified Instructor on Ethics and Integrity through the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC). Mike traveled the Nation, training officers and Community members on Ethics and Integrity issues. Mike spent time in Belo Horizonte Brazil as well as the Virgin Islands, teaching and lecturing on Leadership, community policing, ethics, etc. Mike is also a licensed with the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE) as a Master Peace Officer and instructor as well as a national instructor with the Multijurisdictional



Counter Drug Task Force Training Center (MCTFT) located in St. Pete Florida. Mike is a graduate of The University of Texas Leadership Academy, which is a collaborative effort between the Austin Police Department, the University of Texas LBJ School of Public Affairs. Mike attended and graduated from the International Association of Chiefs of Police Leadership train the trainer program on Developing Police Leaders. Mike is a consultant with the Texas Police Chiefs Association on Developing Police Leaders in Texas and various other leadership programs. Mike is also a leadership consultant for Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool working with cities across Texas. Mike is a trainer and executive coach using the Enneagram Narrative Tradition teaching and coaching across the U.S.

Publications: Alexander, M. (2007). "Ensuring Integrity" The Society for Public Safety, Vol. 1. Pp. 16-20

Alexander, M. (Winter 2005 – 2006) "Supervision and Integrity" The Florida Police Chief Association Magazine, Vol. 32, Number 2, Pp. 73 – 77

### **Mike Wilson**

Mike Wilson retired from the Keller Police Department after nearly 25 years in policing. During his law enforcement career Mike earned a bachelor's degree in Business Administration, a master's degree in Business Administration with a Finance concentration and is currently 3 hours shy of completing a second master's degree in Communication and Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga University. Mike began his law enforcement service with the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office as a Correctional Officer and upon joining the Keller Police Department in 2001, rose through the ranks from officer to Captain in 2013. In 2015, Mike was selected to lead the Keller Police Department as its Police Chief. Under Mike's leadership, the Keller Police Department was recognized as a trailblazer in community policing, from implementation of technology and taking data-driven approaches to reducing crime, to advancing the department's relationships with public and private partners. Mike's tenure saw the national re-accreditation of the police department at the highest standard in 2015 and again in 2018; rollout of the SirenGPS emergency dispatching and mass notification system in 2016; and in 2018, a full department restructure, body camera implementation, and the first national accreditation awarded to a regional 911 communications center in the State of Texas.

As a regional service provider, Mike renewed and enhanced regional partnerships with the cities of Westlake, Colleyville, and Southlake, and with the Humane Society of North Texas. Mike was integral in the development of the Keller Independent School District's Law Enforcement and Public Safety track at the Keller Center for Advanced Learning, where he served on the advisory board and as its president and laid the groundwork for developing homegrown police officers and firefighters. During his tenure, Keller was continuously ranked as one of the safest communities in Texas and the nation, including achieving the city's best crime stats in more than 25 years in 2016.

"Mike exemplified Keller PD's traditions of servant leadership, creativity and community engagement," City Manager Mark Hafner said. "He truly led this department to a new level of excellence."



Mike has served on the Texas Police Chiefs Association Training Advisory Board, is a licensed TCOLE Instructor, and holds a State of Texas Private Investigations License, along with a Master TCOLE Peace Officer License. Mike has extensive knowledge in regionalizing public safety services, has served as project manager for municipal building projects, played key roles in municipal mergers, including the first merged municipal court in the State of Texas, and has oversaw the design and implementation of software solutions and workflows that facilitate information sharing between multiple agencies and enhance financial controls. Through regional partnership initiatives, Mike helped the City of Keller and partner agencies save over \$1.2 million annually.

### **Jeff Whitfield**

Jeff Whitfield is an Air Force veteran, Fulbright scholar, and highly experienced attorney with a uniquely developed expertise in leadership and conflict resolution. His commitment to serving for the greater good began early in life; he attended the Air Force Academy, where—a standout cadet—he was chosen to argue a case before one of the highest courts in the country and selected to represent the Academy in presentations to national and international leaders in business, the military, and in politics. He earned his Bachelor of Science as a Distinguished Graduate.

Jeff then served as an Air Force officer, where he worked as a legislative liaison; managed contract negotiations with businesses and other governments; and led national efforts to strengthen relationships between communities and the Air Force personnel living nearby. Following active duty military service, he was awarded a Fulbright Scholarship and World Peace Fellowship, which led him to earn a Master of Arts in Conflict Resolution and a Master of Philosophy in Politics from the University of Bradford in England.

Following international studies and work in peace and conflict resolution, Jeff attended the University of Texas School of Law, working as legislative aide to Texas State Senator John Whitmire during his time in law school. He went on to serve as clerk to the prosecutor at the Yugoslavian War Crimes Tribunal in the Netherlands and as clerk to Judge Rhesa Barksdale on the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Jeff has since built a successful career in the law, using his education and expertise to serve others.

A committed community member and leader, Jeff is involved with numerous organizations across North Texas, including Leadership Fort Worth, Texas Lawyers for Texas Veterans, United Way of Tarrant County, B.H. Carroll Theological Institute, Young Men's Leadership Academy, and the Rotary World Peace and Conflict Resolution program.

Mike Wilson, CEO/CFO

682-429-0468 | [mike.wilson@lionstrategy.group](mailto:mike.wilson@lionstrategy.group)

Mike Alexander, COO

512-784-6580 | [mike.alexander@lionstrategy.group](mailto:mike.alexander@lionstrategy.group)