

Culver City News



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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR CULVER CITY NEEDS IDEAS

The State of California's website describes the value of an effective suggestion/idea system by stating, in part, "Thousands of suggestions have been adopted since the program began in 1950, resulting in millions of dollars in savings to the state."

According to responses to my recent Public Records Act request, in the past 10 years, Culver City has: (1) had no suggestion system; (2) has no record of any announcement soliciting suggestions from employees or receiving any suggestion from an employee. "[T] here is a strong link between [an organization's] culture and the flow of employee ideas." ("Ideas Are Free," p. 218.) Why is Culver City government's culture wasting so much potential? Whatever the reason, this is unacceptable.

Culver City has a hard-to-find-bare-bones-online "Suggestion Form" on its website. However, professionals have long known that Culver City's equivalent of a suggestion box is not effective. ("Ideas Are Free," p. 93.)

Culver City expends large sums of money sending employees to seminars and training sessions, but that expenditure does not result in any suggestion/idea. In response to my Public Records Act request con-

cerning seminars and training sessions, Culver City was not able to produce any record "indicating what was learned and [setting forth] how it can/will be put into use for the City."

Culver City could easily establish a productive formal suggestion/idea system. It is not rocket science. "While every organization should design its process according to its unique needs, certain characteristics are common to all high-performing idea systems: 1. Ideas are encouraged and welcomed. 2. Submitting ideas is simple. 3. Evaluation of ideas is quick and effective. 4. Feedback is timely, constructive, and informative. 5. Implementation is rapid and smooth. 6. Ideas are reviewed for additional potential. 7. People are recognized, and success is celebrated. 8. Idea system performance is measured, reviewed, and improved." ("Ideas Are Free," p. 121.)

Suggesting ideas to improve Culver City should be a part of every employee's job description. Culver City's website states, in part, "Not only do we offer a competitive salary range, but an excellent benefit package." Numerous employees receive more than \$400,000 per annum and are seeking more. For that compensation, each

employee should be required to provide useful suggestions to make Culver City government more effective.

— Les Greenberg, Esquire