

Memorandum

Memorandum No: 24-126

Date: July 16, 2024
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Ryan Henderson, City Manager 
Re: City of Anna Organizational Pillars

To best serve a rapidly growing community and work towards accomplishing the vision established by City Council, the City Manager's Office identified the need to define the culture of the Anna organization. Organizational pillars, also known as core values, developed with staff participation provide clarity on the current work culture, on future training initiatives, and establish a common language as we develop a culture best fit to serve Anna neighbors. The City's Success Statements, or Council's Vision for the City of Anna, determine **what** the City of Anna organization does to serve the community. The organizational culture as defined by Organizational Pillars is **how** employees and teams go about their work to serve the community.

Background

We partnered with Strategic Government Resources (SGR) in December 2023 to facilitate the development of organizational pillars. SGR is a full-service firm incorporated in 2002 to promote innovation, team building, collaboration and continuous improvement in local governments. Senior Vice President Dr. Scott Willingham was assigned to facilitate the City of Anna's organizational pillar development. He has been with SGR since 2016 and regularly facilitates council retreats and servant leadership courses. His work experience includes guiding churches and cities to focus on growth, leadership development, and strategic visioning.

Focus Groups

At the January "Next Big Thing" internal quarterly meeting, staff were invited to attend one of six upcoming focus groups. In February, Dr. Willingham led, absent senior leadership, almost every member of the City of Anna team across all shifts in small group discussions designed to allow members of the organization to review and discuss current and aspirational organizational values. These focus groups allowed leadership to understand what matters to our employees. In small groups, our staff shared what gave them pride in their jobs, what builds and detracts from morale, what kind of reputation they want for the City of Anna, and what the organization needs to go from good to great.

On Tuesday, March 5, 2024, Dr. Willingham led the City of Anna Management Team in their own, abridged focus group and reviewed the output from previous groups. The organizational pillars of We have Integrity, We are Professional, We are Innovative and We are Service-Oriented were determined. The final organizational pillar document was developed utilizing the input of the entire Anna team pulled from Dr. Willingham. The pillars with guidance on how to live the pillars were presented at the April “Next Big Thing” staff meeting.

City of Anna Organizational Pillars

We have Integrity. *We stand firm in our commitment to doing what is right.* We live this by:

- Respecting our team and neighbors
- Taking responsibility for what we do
- Building trust among us and our neighbors
- Demonstrating honesty and ethical behavior in all actions and decisions
- Talking opening with each other

We are Professional. *We are dedicated to the pursuit of excellence.* We live this by:

- Learning new things
- Working together as a team
- Improving and refining our skills
- Holding ourselves and others accountable
- Holding ourselves to high standards of conduct and expertise

We are Innovative. *We are committed to constantly improving.* We live this by:

- Being creative
- Sharing and welcoming new ideas and feedback
- Continuously learning through training and new experiences
- Preparing for what may come next in our changing world
- Never settling for “we’ve always done it this way”

We are Service-Oriented. *We put others first.* We live this by:

- Caring about each other
- Listening and paying attention
- Showing kindness and support
- Serving to make a positive impact
- Understanding the needs of our team and the community we serve

Implementation

In May, the Anna Ambassadors supervisory training class began developing a communication plan as a capstone project to their two-year leadership training. Last week members from various levels and departments of the organization presented their ideas on how to ensure long term consistency and integration of the pillars into the organizational culture, enhance employee engagement and recognition of the pillars, and visually communicate the pillars. Branded pieces such as hats, water bottles, air fresheners, stickers, desktop backgrounds as well as posters and wall art are under design. The Next Big Thing quarterly staff meeting, the weekly internal newsletter, and employee performance evaluations will be reorganized to incorporate a focus on the pillars. A recognition platform and opportunities to provide additional service and volunteer opportunities are also under review.

c: Management Team